

Palatine People

The newsletter of The Lancashire Society

Issue 5
Autumn 2011





CHAIRMAN'S JOTTINGS

By Sid Calderbank

It's some time since I wrote one of these and I'm pleased to say that everything we set out to do in the last few months happened successfully! Our away day at Bancroft Mill was the best ever, well supported by members and well received by the audience. The two stalls at Burscough and Croston created a lot of interest in what we are doing and its always encouraging to find just how keen people are to learn about Lancashire's old songs, dialect and dance. Mark, Alex and I performed to a packed room at Burscough and Mark, Julian, Richard and I had a very successful night at Queen St Mill, Burnley in our first joint venture with Lancashire Museums. Our first "The Noise We Mek!" school visit in Parbold went very well with Alex, Derek and I spending all day teaching songs, dialect and clog dancing to the pupils. More of those are planned later this year.

Saturday 2nd July saw the annual "War of the Roses" concert, this year in Cleckheaton. An excellent team of Mark, Peter & Barbara Snape, Pete & Jan Shevlin and me vanquished the Yorkist rabble and retained the trophy shield for another year. The Red Rose Blooms in Yorkshire!!

Main event at the end of the summer was on Sunday 4th September in the Mount Hotel on Fleetwood promenade when we staged a 5-hour concert celebrating all things Northern and Lancastrian as part of the Fylde Folk Festival. It was our major social and performance event of the year and I'd like to thank everybody who came along and made it such a success. We even got a thank you from the Landlord who let us use the room into the evening for a singaround.

Finally, please stay in touch. We have a regular email list managed by Barbara and a Facebook page run by Mark and these are our main methods of communication with members. If you prefer letters, write to Barbara and she'll arrange it - but if you don't tell us we'll never know.

All the best for now

SID CALDERBANK

Chairman - The Lancashire Society

LANCASHIRE NICKNAMES

by Bob Dobson



Some years ago, I compiled my first book, 'Lancashire Nicknames & Sayings'. I have since been collecting material to go into a new edition, and give LAA members the chance of seeing them first. An Anglo-Saxon term for nicknames was 'ekenames'

Grange over Sands: 'God's waiting room'. A reference to the many retired people who live there, awaiting God's call.

Atherton: Commonly known as 'Chowbent', though actually it is only part of the town.....'Chowbent is a town in Lancashire where the inhabitants are, or used to be, considered very uncouth' (Robert Holland, 1886).....'Chowbent Grubs' :- old nails, found by joiners, which have become embedded in the wood, spoiling tools. Nailmaking was a local trade.

Bolton: 'Jam Pot Estate', the district near Halliwell Lodge so named by dustbin men because of the number of jam pots found in bins there.

Liverpool: 'The black spot on the Mersey' coined because of social & hygiene conditions there in the 1840s.....One district here was known as 'the kicking district' in the 1880s because of the prevalence of wife beating.....'The modern day Tyre' (1866 Illustrated London News)....'Heenan's Rocket' and 'Paddy's Wigwam' are locally-created names for the RC cathedral.

Middleton: 'Sleepy Hollow' (Rev TM Phillips, 1925)

Lancashire: 'Little lad, little lad/Where wast thou born?/ Far off in Lancashire/ Under a thorn''He that will take a Lancashire man any tieme or tide/Must bait his hook with a good egg pie/Or an apple with red side ' (Old rhymes)

Wigan: 'Scowzers' The residents of the Scholes area

Halton, near Lancaster: Has a terrace of houses locally called 'Holy Row' because of the enthusiasm for church/chapel attendance by the occupants.

Darwen : Darwen Tower , 'the Pennine Pepper Pot, someone's unkind criticism (1977)

Morecambe: 'Bradford on Sea', because of the number of retired Yorkshire folk there.....'The English Bay of Naples'.....The Mecca for the bronchitic' and 'Gateway to Lakeland' (1923 official guide).....'A cemetery with lights' (Comedian Colin Crompton, 1970s)

Southport: 'England's Seaside Garden City' (1915 publicity brochure)

Blackburn: 'that abode of poetry and politics, piety and picking sticks' (Richard Dugdale) Blackburn is possibly the only town to have had a book devoted to its poets and their poems.

Woodplumpton: 'Woodplumpton Hen Racers' A term for local chaps who are said to have taken part in this 'sport. It is one of a number of such names created out of 'spoof' sports.

Bury: 'The hatters' cemetery', the mill lodge known as 'Old Charley's Lodge' in which several impoverished hatmakers drowned themselves (1882)

Lancaster: The town's Ashton memorial in Williamson Park is known as 'Lancashire's Taj Mahal', but locally called 'The Structure'

Prescot: 'The Geneva of the North', a reference to the town's watch and clock making.

Lytham: 'Golden Town' This is just one of the many names for townships created by the author/poet Charles Allen Clarke ('Teddy Ashton')

Oldham: 'The land of hills and bandy-legged women', a term possibly created by the 'Oldham Tinkers' folksong group.

Manchester: 'The capital of Cottodom' (1892 Abraham Stansfield)....The Cheetham Hill Road area was referred to as 'Ikey's Town' because of the number of Jewish residents. (1979)

Downham: 'Small crystal stones, capable of receiving a beautiful polish equal in lustre to the Bristol stones, are found at Downham and called 'Downham diamonds' (Baines, 1831)

Next time, I will tell you of some names for Lancashire townships created by our county's writers

THE WANDERING WORD

“Daisy Nook Fair”

by Johnny Matthews

As a few members of our Society know, I was recently away in Japan for several months. During my stay, I often made weekend forays into the countryside or to lesser-known towns in search of old books and oriental art. In one small place I was rummaging through a pile of old woodblock prints when I happened to glance up at the far wall in the back of the shop. There, almost shouting at me, was a print reproduction of a Lowry masterpiece entitled “The Fair at Daisy Nook”, which I think was painted just after the war. I must confess that I found it difficult to hold back the tears on seeing this picture, since I well remember going to Daisy Nook Fair when I were nobbut a lad, more than fifty years ago. My father took me there. He was a Failsworth man and was proud of that part of Lancashire. In those days the fair at Daisy Nook still retained a few of its old folk customs and had not been totally swamped by commercialism. I remember being surprised to see an old woman in a long black dress (and clogs, if my memory serves) selling small live chicks by the side of the road as we approached the fair. It was all very busy with people bustling about everywhere, just as Lowry had captured it in the picture. But it was not at all dark and sombre – I remember the whole thing as bright and lively. It was a happy day for me. Perhaps some of our older readers can recall the fair of those days? After our visit to the fair I remember that we walked up around the back where the canal runs for a way. However, I will cover the subject of this canal in a later newsletter since from then on I often returned to Daisy Nook. But who would have thought then that the fair had already formed the subject of one of the greatest art works of the 20th century? I read somewhere that a Lowry painting on the same theme entitled “A Lancashire Fair: Good Friday, Daisy Nook” had sold for a vast sum. It seems a long way back to that little lad eating a toffee apple his father had bought for him.

Now you are probably asking how this print by Lowry happened to be hung in a shop in Japan, on virtually the other side of the world? Well, it turned out that the owner, an elderly Japanese gentleman, had spent some time in England and had taken a shine to the northwest – to the beauty of the Lake District and to the spirit of the Lancashire people. It was a place of great contrasts, he thought, as is evident in the comparison between, say, the people of Liverpool and the Pennine hill farmers. Sometimes it takes a person from outside to see things in this way. I often marvel at the fact that the people of Japan are so resolute in the defense of their own traditional culture and yet can often hold out a friendly hand to the cultures of other lands. We in Lancashire can learn a lot from this.

“THE NOISE WE MEK!”

...is the title of our Heritage Lottery Fund Project.



Supported by

The National Lottery[®]
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



This three-year project, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, has several distinct elements.

Overall, we are following the canal from Burscough to Blackburn, studying and recording the variety of dialects and accents found along the route as it passes from agriculture in Burcough, through coal production in Wigan, to markets in Chorley and cotton manufacture in Blackburn. This gives us a snapshot of the industries that made Lancashire the centre of world manufacturing during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The recordings are continuing apace and a recent meeting with Chris, our archivist, and Mark and Barbara who are doing the bulk of the interviews focused on what we are to do with the recordings once we've done them all over the next 12 months. The aim is to have two sets of recordings. The first set will be all the recordings on CDs either as MP3 or Audio CD for people to listen to the whole interview of an individual. This helps students studying linguistics to listen to and analyse the speech patterns of that person over a good length of time - say 30 minutes or more. The second set of recordings will be based on subject matter - for example all references to Sunday School or leaving junior school to go to secondary school - there are people who are too old to have taken the 11+, people who took the 11+ and people who are too young to remember the 11+ since it was abolished in the 1970s. These segments of recordings can then be put together for students of social history to study and get an idea of how things changed over the years.

We recently sent a team comprising of Sid Calderbank, Alex Fisher and Derek Gifford into a school in Parbold to give the pupils experience of Lancashire songs and Clog Dancing. The whole school were involved - ages ranged from 5 to 11 and after the event, the pupils put a book of thank you notes together for us. One of the many pages in the booklet is reproduced below. Two more schools are being penciled in for the coming term before Christmas and the final school will be arranged after the New Year.



One page from the book of "Thank You" notes from Our Lady and All Saints Primary School in Parbold



All clogged up ready to dance and Derek Gifford singing Poverty Knock (Photos from Our Lady school website)

STREET NAMES By Bob Dobson

I have long been interested in the reason why a particular street has its name. My main line of enquiry has been the streets of Accrington, my home town, but streets in other places interest me too. I suggest that you too take up the interest and enquire why the streets in your town are so called. It would make a good competition theme for societies to challenge their members or the older children in the town, leading to a life-long interest in local history.

I grew up in Persia Street, which lies alongside streets called Russia, China, India, Holland, Swiss, Poland, and Holland. These were the names of countries to which the local textile producer Frederick Steiner exported goods. The houses were built on land that he owned, as were streets further along Blackburn Road called Frederick and Steiner. Between the two blocks were other streets bearing names associated with his extended family and well-heeled associates.

It soon became obvious to me that the owner of the land had total control over the selection of street names, and that the names were given at least twenty years before the houses in that street were built. After Steiner, the main owners of land in Accrington were the Hargreaves', the Peels' and the Royds'. They too chose family forenames and the surnames of people such as their in-laws or political allies. Probably alone amongst the families mentioned, the Peels (Jonathan of Accrington House was Robert's brother) also named streets after self-employed tradesman they engaged to work, or who were prominent at the church they were associated with. I learned that Paxton, designer of the (1851) Crystal Palace, was friendly with Robert Peel, suggesting why Accrington has a Paxton Street alongside the railway station, built in 1848.

Local history books, church handbooks, building plans and directories are valuable tools in the researching, along with the published censuses. I am fortunate to have a friend who enjoys the digging needed to unearth family members and friends, not just those living locally. She is a successor to Miss Marple in deducing relationships and why certain things have occurred in families. Recently, a Worcester address revealed names and associates of the Royds family, who owned land in Accrington and whose main home, I thought, was Belfield Hall, Rochdale. Belfield Rd lies alongside Royds Street in Accrington. I won't bother telling you why Robert Nuttall Street was re-named Belfield Rd in 1930. Changes of the names of streets are not uncommon.

I think it is Hindley which has Woodford Street running alongside its Victorian Police Station. This is in honour of John Woodford, the first Chief Constable of Lancashire.

In my village is a Dobson Road. Don't jump to any conclusions - a Mr Dobson was chairman of the local UDC in the post-war years.

I hope I have given you a taste of what is a very interesting aspect of local and family history. In your town there are stories to be turned over and tales to be revealed.

THE PIGEON MAN by Bill Mitton

**'That pigeon loft's his only love' his daughter often said
'If it wasn't for those bloody birds, he might as well be dead!
Just sits up there and talks to them and they've all got names.
Mabel, George, and dozens more E' says none of them's the same.**

**He's often up there all day long bad weather, he doesn't care.
Cleaning out or feeding them, or just sitting in that chair.
He's known for it is our dad Famous in a way
Aye up! Here comes yon pigeon man You'll often here folks say**

**You can ask him any question Any one you like
As long as it's about them birds He'll get the bugger right
And if a bird gets poorly He'll worry and he'll fret
He's had me out all hour of night To fetch him to the Vet**

**There's one up there a dappled hen she's special so he says
A ruddy pigeon she might be but she's got your mothers ways
Our mother used to humour him until she passed away
Said' she'd rather have him doing that than suppin' Ale all day**

**They helped him when she died, them birds when his heart was set to break
They seemed to understand his grief and helped to ease the ache.
He's entered them for shows an' that, he's won some prizes too
Some cups, a shield, a cut glass bowl aye,and a bob or two.**

**He used to race them once as well with some help from our Pat
But his favourite hen went missing and he stopped it after that.
But now he seems contented to sit at' loft all day
To hear his pigeons cooing and while his hours away**

**His grandkids often go up there to pass the time of day
And he's always got some time for them to tell them tales and play
But his life is centred on them birds Their the reason in his day
They seem to keep him fit and well And hold his years at bay**

**But we know that dad will leave us, aye, we know that by and by
God will call him to his house to be with mum on high
And when he passes through those pearly gates and say he's come to stay
Ay up Lord, here's yon pigeon man! You'll hear Saint Peter say.'**

SOCIETY EVENTS and MEMBERSHIP

Palatine People is published by The Lancashire Society at least twice a year and is dependant on members sending in articles for publication.

Any articles for consideration should be sent to the secretary via email to lancashire.society@gmail.com

We would also welcome any photographs taken by members at any events they attend for possible inclusion in future newsletters or on the website. Please send any photos in large jpeg format to the secretary at the above email address.

The photo on the cover of this edition is Ashurst's Beacon at Dalton overlooking Skelmersdale in the direction of Liverpool and the Irish Sea taken by the editor, Mark Dowding. The beacon once formed part of a relay league stretching from Everton Brow above Liverpool to Lancaster Castle, which was in place (though unused) during the Anglo-Spanish War of 1585. The current structure dates from around 1800, when local landowner Sir William Ashurst decided that a more permanent beacon was needed for the oncoming Napoleonic Wars. If you have any photos that you think would make a good cover for future copies of the newsletter, please email them to lancashire.society@gmail.com

To save paper and postage this newsletter is available for download on the website -www.thelancshiresociety.org.uk

The Society has a presence on both Facebook and Youtube.

For Facebook go to www.facebook.com and search for The Lancashire Society in the search box at the top of the page. You need to be a member of Facebook to access the group page.

For Youtube go to www.youtube.com and search for stuffydowding - all the videos uploaded by our publicist are under this heading including Society videos.

Past Events

Sunday 15th May 2011 - The Society had a day out at Bancroft Mill at Barnoldswick when the 1901 Smith Bros. and Eastwood Steam Engine got fired up. We had a look at the electric driven loom in action. Members of the Society sang a few songs and played a few tunes and Mark filmed proceedings for our archive. We also got an interview with Hilda Elsworth - a weaver who was made redundant when the mill closed in 1978 but who helped with the restoration of the engine. The interview with Hilda and Sid can be seen on Youtube.



Sid Calderbank talks to Hilda Elsworth at Bancroft Mill

Tuesday June 21st 2011 - The Burscough History and Heritage group held a week of events at the newly restored Burscough Wharf alongside the canal in Burscough Bridge and on Tuesday, the Lancashire Society hosted a Lancashire Night of traditional songs, poems, music, and clog dancing. The night was a great success and we had a number of people sign up to be interviewed for our Heritage Lottery Funded project "The Noise We Mek!"

Sat/Sun June 25th/26th - The Society had a stall on these days at the Burscough Wharf as part of the Burscough History and Heritage Group's events.

Membership

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Society then please complete the form on the following page and send it to the secretary who will add your details to the database. You will then receive regular updates by email with news of meetings and events.

Thanks to all the contributors for this issue - Sid Calderbank, Johnny Matthews, Bob Dobson, Bill Mitton, and also to Barbara Hindley and Mark Dowding for co-ordinating and editing the articles and the newsletter.

For more information about the Society and its aims then please visit the website:

www.thelancshiresociety.org.uk



MEMBERSHIP FORM

I wish to become a member of the Lancashire Society

My details are as follows:

Name.....

Address.....

.....

email address.....

Contact number.....

*I wish to be contacted by Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) email (no one will see my email address).....

*I am happy for my email address to be seen by other members.....

(* Tick as appropriate)

(Note: Members will generally be contacted by email to avoid postage costs)

I understand that my details will be held on the computer of the secretary of the society and no other computer. This is for administrative purposes only and will not be revealed to a third party.

If I wish to leave the society then I shall inform the secretary who will remove my details from the computer.

Currently membership is free.

Signed.....

Date.....

Please return this form to the secretary who will acknowledge your membership
Electronically - email the details to: Lancashire.society@gmail.com
Or post this form to 11 Church Street, Churchtown, Preston, Lancashire, PR3 0HT

The Lancashire Society is registered and operates under the Data Protection Act
(Reg No Z1713107)