



Welcome to the CCHT e-newsletter. Keeping you up-to-date with the VCH Cumbria project.

This is proving to be a significant year for CCHT. After twelve years, we say goodbye to Bryan Gray as Chair and welcome Roland Jackson into the role. The project website has undergone a revamp, and we hope that you are as happy with the result as we are. Our current three-year funding cycle comes to an end in September, which is also the deadline for submitting the draft of the Lonsdale Ward red book! We are currently putting together plans for the next phase of the project, which you can read more about below.

Introducing the new Chair of CCHT, Roland Jackson

I am excited to be taking on the position of chair of the Cumbria County History Trust, as I can trace my family history here over many centuries. I was brought up from my early teens on a hill farm in Ennerdale, but went south for university and career reasons, apart from frequent family visits, before returning about ten years ago to live here for as much of the time as possible. I originally studied biochemistry at Oxford University, followed by a doctorate, and then taught science in comprehensive schools in Newmarket and Bristol before becoming education adviser to the late lamented ICI. Subsequently I became head of the Science Museum, then chief executive of the British Science Association, working also at the time across government on controversial policy issues involving science and technology.



New Chair of CCHT, Roland Jackson

I now focus on research into the history of science and government in the nineteenth century, and published a biography of the physicist John Tyndall, *The Ascent of John Tyndall*, in 2018. Although my research tends to focus on national rather than local history the links are always fascinating. I think the model we have of supporting volunteers to research and write local history, with the expert guidance of Fiona and Sarah at Lancaster University, is a tremendous one, and I look forward to helping to build it further.

Roland Jackson

Tribute to Bryan Gray

Bryan Gray CBE DL stepped down as chairman of the CCHT at the AGM held on 20th June 2022, after more than ten years of service.

Bryan brought a wealth of relevant experience to the task of establishing VCH Cumbria as a project of high quality and highest reputation. Following the pioneering work of Angus Winchester and Richard Brockington, he put in place a rolling three-year programme of funding that enabled forward planning to take place. He encouraged the development of partnerships with cognate organisations across Cumbria, and in particular made certain that the relationships with Lancaster University and the CWAAS were healthy and robust. He was strongly supportive of what were then viewed as radical steps in the recruitment of volunteers as active researchers for the project.

For him, the principal focus of CCHT during his chairmanship was all about the long-term task of creating a definitive Victoria County History for Cumbria. He gave every assistance to the academic directors, first Angus Winchester and then Fiona Edmonds, and to Sarah Rose, assistant editor. He made sure that the website, developed under the charge of Bill Shannon, received the level of investment and care that makes it the widely used tool it is today. The steady growth of outputs, starting with volunteer handbooks, progressing through a gazetteer that for the first time contained succinct information about every township, and the first “short” about Kirkoswald, were all achieved during his chairmanship. The forthcoming Red Book for Lonsdale Ward, a major step forwards in the project, will be a further testimony to his leadership.

Bryan came to a fledging organisation and leaves one that is mature and confident. He has remained true to its founding principles, and has given the continuity and stability to the VCH Cumbria project that is reflected in its success today.

Marion McClintock

CCHT AGM Report

The AGM was held the evening of 20th June via Zoom, with 21 people in attendance. Bryan Gray gave his last report as chair. In it, he paid tribute to the Trust’s early founders Angus Winchester and Richard Brockington; remarked on the invaluable relationship between the Trust and Lancaster University; and acknowledged the active support of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society.

Bryan drew attention to the fact that membership is facing some difficulty. Subscriptions from members are a source of income but of greater significance is that membership is an indication of interest. The publication of the Red Book could be a major opportunity for increasing membership.

Bryan ended by paying tribute to the hard work of the officers and trustees; to Fiona and Sarah, and to all members and supporting societies. He said he had enjoyed his term of office and engagement in a high level of debate and discussion with officers, trustees and members.

Continued p.3

Richard Platt, Treasurer, presented the professionally examined accounts. These were accepted nem con. This was followed by Bill Shannon's report on the website, which during 2021 had recorded more visitors than ever before, reaching 6,000 sessions per month. Membership secretary Pam Cronin reported that membership is declining. This should be addressed and new members sought. The Project Director, Fiona Edmonds, offered her thanks to all of the volunteers; to Bill and Sarah Rose for their work with training; and to Bryan for his support and inspirational leadership. It was hoped to run another volunteer field-trip fairly soon and continue with Zoom meetings when necessary. New volunteers had been recruited working across the county. Two Skills Training Programmes had proved to be very popular and had encouraged the new volunteers which will help to ensure future research and drafts.

Fund raising for the next cycle was well under way. The next phase of the project will focus on the Lancashire North of the Sands Red Book. The structure of this work would be slightly different in that Fiona Edmonds and Bill Shannon would update the medieval/early modern history and volunteers would tackle the 19th and 20th century material. A completion date of autumn 2025 was anticipated for the full draft. There would be a change of Director from 2024 as Fiona takes sabbatical leave. A staged handover will take place during 2023-2024 with Dr Chris Donaldson taking over as Director from 2024.

Election of Officers: The following officer was elected:

Chairman Roland Jackson

The following officers were re-elected:

Treasurer Richard Platt

Secretary Lorna Mullett

Election of Trustees: The following elected Trustees were re-elected

Marion McClintock

Jane Penman

Angus Winchester

James Underwood

Timothy Sykes

In addition to elected trustees, there are also ex officio trustees representing several organisations. Roland noted that his election as Chair would leave a vacancy on the Board of Trustees and that any member interested in filling this should contact the Secretary. The re-appointment of Joanne Batey as professional examiner was approved.

The meeting was followed by a presentation – 'The Red Books' – introduced by Fiona and presented by Sarah. This was lively and enlightening and was very well received.

Taken from AGM Minutes by Lorna Mullett, CCHT Secretary

Website Improvements

In May the CCHT website underwent some essential upgrade work behind the scenes. We also used this as an opportunity to make some changes to the website's usability. One major improvement has been the key word search in the top right-hand corner, which will now bring up the township page as the first search result. Secondly, our interactive map is now far more responsive in that it shows the outlines of each township in a ward, rather than just providing a simple list of places to choose from. Huge thanks are due to volunteer Eric Apperley, and Ian Cawthorne from Upbeat for producing the maps. It is now also possible to pay your membership subscriptions on-line through PayPal and to make one-off donations using a 'donate' button on the website.



New ward-level map on CCHT website

Township in Focus: Killington

A few weeks ago, I took advantage of a sunny day to take some photographs of townships in the north of Lonsdale Ward. One of these was Killington, which lies on the west side of the Lune and was held in the Middle Ages by the de Pickering family. They built their own chapel in the 14th century, which became the parish church of All Saints in 1585. Another ancient chapel once stood on the border with Firbank, before its removal to Firbank Fell. The parish church stands directly opposite Killington Hall, the former manor house in the hamlet of Killington. Its tower was in decay when Machell stayed there in 1692, but has been fully restored by its present owners who offer visitor accommodation. The hamlet lies in the fold of the hills and so feels quite remote. There was once a pub and school, and now there is a parish hall. Curiously, Killington was marked on the Lhuyd/Ortelius map of England and Wales of 1573, while Kirkby Lonsdale was omitted.

In the north lay the medieval deer park, the leaps still visible in 1692. Much of the former common became absorbed into an estate centred on Lily Mere, a natural lake which has been artificially enlarged for sporting activities. For most of the 19th century it was owned by the Uptons of Ingmire Hall in Sedbergh. The Sedbergh-Kendal turnpike formed part of the township's northern boundary. On this road stood the former Black Horse inn, which carried the Upton crest.

Heading west from Killington hamlet brings the traveller out onto the old droving route, the Old Scotch Road. Heading north, the road passes Killington Reservoir. This was built in



Parish Church of All Saints, Killington



Killington Reservoir from the Old Scotch Road

the early 19th century to feed the Lancaster-Kendal Canal (opened 1819). It covers over 150 acres on the boundary between Killington and New Hutton. On the western side lies Killington Services on the M6 motorway. Today the Reservoir is used for water sports and the area to the south has some ecological significance, its raised bogs and conifer plantations providing nest sites for the long-eared owl.

Killington is a little unusual in having not one but two hydroelectric operations. A community-owned hydro-power plant began operating at Killington Reservoir in 2017, using a 30kW cross flow turbine. In the east of the township, Killington and District Sustainable Energy Trust (K-SET), formed in 2009 to initiate a hydro project using the weir on the Lune at Broad Raine, where a corn mill had operated until 1972.

Sarah Rose

RHC Celebrates 900 Years of Carlisle Cathedral

The Regional Heritage Centre is helping to celebrate the 900th anniversary of Carlisle Cathedral, which was founded as an Augustinian Priory in 1122, becoming a Cathedral in 1133. The RHC has arranged a full Study Day event on Saturday 26th November. This will include talks by Dr Fiona Edmonds and Dr Henry Summerson. Further details and information on how to book will follow on the RHC website soon: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/regional-heritage-centre/events/>

Adrian Allan

It was with great sadness we learnt of the recent passing of Adrian Allan after a short illness. His immense knowledge of Cumbria's archives was of great help to the VCH, and his kind assistance was always much valued. He contributed several pieces for this newsletter over the years, helping to highlight some of the county's less well-known source material. Adrian also generously shared many of his own lists of archive material, long before they appeared on CASCAT. He prepared the Jubilee Digest covering Wreay and worked on the early history of Stanwix for the project. Adrian was equally generous with his fruit crops, gifting many bags of apples to those of us he knew and ran into at Carlisle Archive Centre. He will be much missed.

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