

Newsletter

No. 40 Summer 2020

Supported by



CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORLAND
ANTIQUARIAN AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



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

The VCH during lockdown

I hope this newsletter finds you safe and well. These past few months have been extraordinary and challenging on a number of levels. For those of us engaged in historical research, the closure of libraries and archives has necessitated the exploration of other avenues of working during this period. Online resources have been invaluable in this respect and many institutions have waived subscription fees during the lockdown period or have redoubled their efforts to digitise collections. Happily, this has enabled work on the VCH Cumbria project to continue and several volunteers have been able to pull together enough information to submit drafts for comment in recent months.

I have been able to continue with research on the townships around Kirkby Lonsdale, utilising websites such as archive.org and the Heritage Gateway, as well as taking the time to explore online catalogues and examine photographs of documents taken before lockdown. On nicer days since restrictions eased, I have also left my desk and made some site visits.



Kirfitt Hall Farm in Casterton from Ruskin's View

Many of us have had to get to grips (perhaps with reluctance or trepidation) with technology that allows us to participate in online meetings and events. Research can be a lonely pursuit at the best of times, so opportunities to learn as a group or discuss work via the internet can be helpful. And this looks to be how communications will continue for a while yet. With no VCH field trip this year, we are planning an online drafters' meeting in September and there will be a series of training workshops in the autumn run by VCH Central Office (for details see p.11). The CCHT AGM, scheduled for May, was also affected by the lockdown, and as the Chairman explains (see p.2) the reports have been included in this Newsletter.

Sarah Rose, Assistant Editor VCH Cumbria

CCHT AGM 2020

A letter from the Chairman

Our AGM was due to be held in May. Due to Coronavirus we postponed the AGM hoping to hold it later in the year. It now appears that an actual meeting will not be possible for the time being, so we have decided to include the reports we prepared for the AGM in this Newsletter. If you have any queries about their content, please contact the relevant officer. Their details can be found in the 'Contacts' section at the end of the Newsletter.

As I note in my report, the constraints of the present time should not be allowed to overshadow the achievements of the past year. Indeed, our activities continue almost unaffected, due to the enthusiasm and hard work of everyone involved.

The future of CCHT depends on all of us encouraging additional people to get involved. Please spread the word about what we do.

We plan our finances in three-year periods. We are in good shape for the current period which runs through to Sept 2022. However, we always need to look ahead. With that in mind we would like to encourage recruitment of new members (£25 per annum), and particularly to encourage those who can to consider Life Membership (minimum £1000 – which can be offset against tax, and on which we can claim Gift Aid). Please consider what you can do to support the CCHT.

I look forward to seeing you, although I know not when.

Bryan Gray, Chairman

Chairman's Report 2019-20

It was with considerable regret that we were not able to hold our 2020 AGM on 6 May as originally intended. As we advised members, we have had to postpone the AGM until later in the year due to the impact of COVID-19. We will notify you of the new date as soon as possible. The lockdown measures have had an inevitable impact on the Cumbria County History Trust's (CCHT) work with restrictions on travel and the closure of libraries and archives, but as Fiona Edmonds notes in her report work is continuing using online resources. The CCHT's investment in our website has proved even more worthwhile and our thanks are once again due to Bill Shannon, Sarah Rose and Eric Apperley for their valuable work in its further development.

(Continued on p.3)

However, the constraints of the present time should not be allowed to overshadow the achievements of the past year. I began my 2018-19 report by expressing my pleasure at the recent publication of Cumbria County History Trust's first parish publication or "VCH Short" on Kirkoswald and Renwick written by Richard Brockington with support from Sarah Rose and Fiona Edmonds. I am pleased to say that this well illustrated and thoroughly researched publication has been very well received and is now into its second edition. It has set a high benchmark for our future publications and you can read some of the very complimentary reviews in the Director's AGM Report. The strong working relationships between Fiona Edmonds, Sarah Rose and our volunteers has seen the production of several new draft articles and volunteers have completed drafts on a number of Cumbrian parishes whilst work continues on the Lonsdale Ward which will be our first Red Book.

We could not have progressed so far without the vital contributions from our funders and I am pleased to report that we reached our fundraising target last year. This placed the project on a secure footing for the period September 2019-22. We are enormously grateful to Lancaster University, the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeology Society (CWAAS) and the Marc Fitch Fund for their generous support and for the Margaret Bainbridge legacy. Money from the Marc Fitch Fund will be used to fund work on the Lonsdale Red Book and part of the contribution from the CWAAS will cover skills training costs. Again, you can read more about this in the Director's Report.

Last but certainly not least I want to thank my fellow trustees, staff and all our members and volunteers most warmly for their unwavering support for the CCHT. Our Secretary Tiffany Hunt is standing down at the AGM after 6 years in the role. I should like to thank her for her diligence and hard work which I have appreciated so much. I am delighted that Lorna Mullett has agreed to become the new Secretary. It is a pleasure to work with such an impressive team who ensure the smooth running of the CCHT. The dedication and enthusiasm of so many has enabled us to make real progress over the past 10 years in some quite pioneering ways and I look forward to the future with considerable confidence. I wish everyone well and good health and hope that you will all continue to enjoy your participation with the CCHT.

Bryan Gray, Chairman.

Treasurer's Report

Cumbria County History Trust Registered Charity Number 1137379 Receipts and Payment Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2019							
2018	Receipts	2019	change	2018 Payments	2019	change	
£		£		£	£		
3950.00	Founders' subscriptions	3850.00	-100	16514	Lancaster University	12662.25	-3852
7000.00	Life Members	0.00	-7000	4680	Web site	6227.40	1547
1045.00	Members' subscriptions	935.05	-110	0	Insurance/BALH	150.00	150
450.00	Societies' subscriptions	275.00	-175	0	Admin supplies and postage	32.13	32
4000.00	CWAAS grant	2000.00	-2000	0	Cumbria CC Photo Licence	317.00	317
0.00	CWAAS Core Funding	6666.00	6666	129	AGM expenses	450.95	322
0.00	Marc Fitch grant	20000.00	20000	0	Book printing costs	1111.23	1111
0.00	Anonymous Donation	20000.00	20000				
8350.00	Donations	160.00	-8190				
0.00	Gift aid tax reclaim	5708.38	5708				
0.00	Sale of books	1489.68	1490				
88.30	Term Share Interest	111.90	24				
24.58	Current Account Interest	38.82	14				
30.05	Misc	0.00	-30				
				21322.50	Total Payments	20950.96	-372
				3615.43	Surplus Excess of Receipts over Payments	40283.87	36668
<u>24937.93</u>		<u>61234.83</u>	<u>36297</u>	<u>24937.93</u>		<u>61234.83</u>	<u>36297</u>
Statement of Assets							
37549.53	Funds brought forward: 1 Jan 2019			41164.96			
3615.43	plus Surplus for 2019			40283.87			
<u>41164.96</u>	Funds carried forward: 31 Dec 2019			<u>81448.83</u>			
<i>represented by:</i>							
Funds in Cumberland Building Society, 31.12.2017							
30837.77	Current account (1)			71009.74			
10327.19	1 year bond (0.85%) maturing 24/7/2020			10439.09			
<u>41164.96</u>				<u>81448.83</u>			

Cumbria County History Trust
Registered Charity Number 1137379

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2019

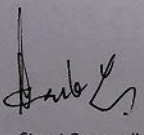
I have examined the Receipts and Payments Account of the Cumbria County History Trust for the year ended 31st December 2018 and the Statement of Assets as at 31st December 2019.

In the course of my examination no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - a. To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act 2011, and
 - b. To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act;

or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:  Date: 20 July 2020

Name: Stuart Cresswell

Address: Vale View, Threlkeld, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 4RT

*please note that 'Funds in Cumberland Building Society, 31.12.2017', should read 2019.

These accounts will be put to an AGM for approval.

Richard Platt, CCHT Treasurer

Membership Report 2020

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AS AT 05.05.20

Total number of individual members recorded 105

Of which:

Associate members 8*

Founder members 52+

Life members 7

Standard 38

* Four further postgraduate applications pending

+ A majority of Founder members continue to pay an annual subscription

SOCIETIES

Total number of societies recorded 9

Note: Subscriptions are paid at various points during the year, mainly at the beginning of January or end of March, but at other times also. This variance creates some difficulty in giving a definite figure as to numbers of 'paid up' individual members and societies.

Membership numbers remain fairly constant with few new members, 2 in 2018 and 1 in 2019. This is a cause for some concern and the Steering Group is looking at ways in which we might increase membership. The idea of extending the Associate category to include postgraduate students was one such and has attracted four expressions of interest. Sadly we have lost three valued Founder members — Michael Weaver, Stephen Harbottle, and Ted Relph who have died within the last two years.

We are also undertaking a review of Membership Categories and the recording thereof, to streamline and simplify. This is not an easy or simple matter as it involves having due regard to the Constitution and Rules. Any conclusions and suggestions for change will be taken, initially to the Steering Group, and if agreed, or amended, then to the Trustees. This review will also include looking at the possibility of introducing a single date for payment of subscriptions, probably January 1st so that we have a more accurate picture of 'paid up' membership for the year. This is important as members are responsible for electing the Trustees and for any changes to the Constitution. We do not wish to be overly prescriptive and to discourage *ad hoc* donations but a more regular pattern for payment of subscriptions would be useful.

I would welcome thoughts of members, particularly with suggestions for recruitment, so 'thinking heads' on.

Lorna M. Mullett, Membership Secretary.

Report of the Director of the VCH Cumbria project

1. The coronavirus lockdown and VCH Cumbria

First, I would like to wish everyone involved with the project well, given the present difficult circumstances. The lockdown has naturally affected the project, in that archives and libraries have been closed, face-to-face meetings cannot happen, and Sarah and I have been working from home (our University building is closed). However, a considerable number of online resources are available, which continue to facilitate the project's work. At the beginning of the lockdown period, VCH Central Office informed us about a new web page by the Institute of Historical Research on electronic research resources (<https://www.history.ac.uk/library/collections/online-resources/open-access-resources>). Some websites, such as British History Online, also waived their subscriptions until 31 July. We have informed VCH Cumbria volunteers about the relevant material. Those who have been able to continue with their research are keeping in touch with Sarah via email. We are very happy to discuss online avenues for research with volunteers.

2. Progress with parish/township articles

i) Kirkoswald and Renwick by Richard Brockington, with Sarah Rose (2019)

The success of this milestone volume continues. After the first print run of 250 copies sold out, we ordered a further 50 copies in autumn 2019. There have also been a number of very positive reviews in recent months, including reactions such as:

- 'When considered as a whole, it is very difficult to find fault with this excellent new local history.....The production quality is outstanding.....' - Brodie Waddell, Birkbeck, University of London (*Landscape History*)
- '....it takes considerable effort to find fault. The book is thorough, detailed and yet concise..... if all of the subsequent ones are of this quality, they will form an extremely valuable resource and do great service to the project as a whole' - Dan Elsworth (*Northern History*)
- 'The book clearly demonstrates the depth of research that has been undertaken and is full of interest' - Margaret Shepherd (*The Local Historian*)

ii) Lonsdale Ward volume, 2019-2022

Work continues on updating the nine drafts for the Kirkby Lonsdale parish townships, building on the very valuable work of Emmeline Garnett. Sarah and I are also laying the groundwork for the remaining four places in Lonsdale Ward, namely, Burton-in-Kendal, Holme, Dalton and Dillicar, for which no VCH research has been done. Angus Winchester has kindly offered to undertake the research and writing for Dillicar.

Once archive centres are able to reopen, the pace of the Lonsdale Ward research should increase. The full draft of the Red Book needs to be completed by the end of the current phase of the project (September 2022), given the commitments made to funders.

iii) Volunteer Progress

Draft sections of articles continue to be submitted by volunteers on a regular basis. Since the New Year, Alan Clegg has completed his draft article for Waberthwaite parish (our first west-coast parish) and has moved on to neighbouring Corney. Other recent submissions include a draft of the religious history section for Ainstable by Harry Hawkins and a complete draft of Cliburn by James Underwood.

3. Support for Volunteers

i) Volunteer Meetings and Events

In August, eight volunteers attended the annual field trip, which was an excellent visit to Waberthwaite. We also held a very successful drafters' meeting in November, at which an external speaker, Robert Fox, Prof. Emeritus of the University of Oxford, spoke about Cumbrian scientist Thomas Garnett. Unfortunately the March and June drafters' meetings had to be cancelled on account of the lockdown. With a number of new volunteers joining over the past few years, we decided that a fourth edition of the Volunteers' Handbook should be printed, which incorporates the new national guidelines. This has now been distributed.

ii) Cumbria Archives Service

A key point raised at several volunteer meetings has been the arrangements for accessing documents at Kendal Archive Centre since it reopened in May 2019. VCH Cumbria and CCHT responded to Cumbria Archive Service as part of the consultation process. Several volunteers submitted feedback about their experience and this was included in the response.

Prior to the lockdown, the Archives Service had gone some way to improving access conditions, with only 24 hours' notice now needed for an appointment, no need for advance ordering and no limit on the number of documents that can be ordered in a day. Whitehaven Archive Centre is due to close for refurbishment at some point in 2020. This will impact on the work of at least 2 volunteers. CAS has invited Sarah to represent CCHT on an archive users' consultation group.

4. Skills training programme

A key element of the generous funding allocated by CWAAS to the project's current phase is a training programme to benefit the public in south-west Cumbria, potentially attracting future volunteers. We will work with Morecambe Bay Partnership on this endeavour since they have long experience of providing training in that region. We also hope to draw on the expertise of VCH volunteers when devising the programme for the sessions. MBP drew up a thorough 30-page proposal document, which was scrutinised and approved by Steering Group and the Trustees.

The original intention was to run the course three times across the period October to December 2020. One run of the course would involve three half-days (on weekdays), and the others would be spread across two separate weekends. However, we need to keep the timescale under review since the training will involve group sessions. It is likely to be necessary to postpone the course to 2021.

Prior to the lockdown, Bill Shannon and Sarah Rose had arranged a training event with the Duddon Valley Local History Group, which was due to take place on 8 May 2020. This was to include a historical sources workshop followed by a guided tour of Angerton. In addition to strengthening links in West Cumbria, it was an opportunity to recruit participants for the training sessions described above. Though the meeting had to be cancelled, it is hoped it can be re-arranged for a future date.

5. VCH Central Office

i) Red Boxes

To mark the 120th anniversary of the VCH in 2019, the Central Office team asked every active VCH county to fill a red box with objects and accompanying text explaining how they illustrate the history of their county. These were then used to create an exhibition held at the IHR in November as part of the national 'Being Human: A Festival of Humanities'. There is now a virtual gallery of all the objects on the VCH national website: <https://www.history.ac.uk/research/centre-history-people-place-and-community/chppc-red-boxes-gallery>

ii) VCH App

In January, I attended the launch of the national VCH smartphone app 'A History of English Places'. The free version allows you to access information drawn from Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of England (1848) and the first edition Ordnance Survey map, while a subscription allows access to VCH entries on 'British History Online'.

iii) VCH Shorts in Kindle form

Central Office has temporarily made VCH Shorts available in Kindle format, as a response to the need for online resources during the coronavirus lockdown. This does not affect our own distribution of volumes, which are in hard copy form.

6. Family archives project

In conjunction with Bryan Gray and my colleague Dr Sophie Ambler, I am involved with a project to establish the potential for engagement with various family muniment collections across Cumberland and Northumberland. The Friends of Cumbria Archives have generously awarded funding so that we can employ a Research Associate to carry out a feasibility study. We hope that this report will feed into future, large-scale funding applications. Such a project would potentially have many benefits for CCHT and the VCH Cumbria volunteers.

And finally, as ever, I would like to thank and pay tribute to everyone involved with the project for its continued success.

Dr Fiona Edmonds, 09/05/20

Introducing the new Secretary of CCHT

We are delighted that the CCHT Membership Secretary, Lorna Mullett, has agreed to take over from Tiffany Hunt as Secretary of CCHT. Lorna is already well-known in local history circles; she is currently Treasurer and Membership Secretary of FoCAS, a Trustee of the CWAAS, and Secretary of the CWAAS Penrith Affiliated Group.

Lorna worked for over 20 years at Lancaster University in various capacities before gaining an MA in Local and Regional History, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Lake District Landscape and Environment. She moved to Penrith in 2008 and has been busy in local history circles. Her Interests are many and varied, but particularly Lake District geology, flora and fauna, learning Latin from scratch, and the history of the Maya, Aztecs and Incas. Lorna has two sons and two grand-daughters.

New Membership Secretary Needed

As I have moved to the position of Secretary of the CCHT there is a vacancy for a Membership Secretary. If you are at all interested in considering taking this on please do get in touch with me at wastwater@talktalk.net and I will let you know what it entails. Many thanks.

Lorna Mullett

Archive News

Cumbria's main Library buildings in have recently re-opened and work is currently underway to make the Archive Centres safe for visitors. We expect an announcement on their reopening soon.

Skills Training

The Director's report (above) contains information about a new skills training programme to be run in conjunction with Morecambe Bay Partnership. This was planned for the autumn of this year but has now been postponed until 2021. In the meantime, you might be interested in a series of online workshops devised by the VCH Central Office team, which cover some of the key topics covered within a VCH parish history. Sessions include:

- Wednesday 9 September 14:00 -16:00: Mapping and Cartography for Publication
- Wednesday 23 September 14:00 - 16:00: Analysing Historic Settlement
- Thursday 22 October 14:00 - 16:00: Reading and Writing Historic Buildings
- Wednesday 18 November 14:00 - 16:00: The National Archives, the Medieval State, Early Modern Litigation

These workshops will be held via zoom and booking is essential. Please visit <https://www.history.ac.uk/search-events>. Details about how to join the virtual event will be circulated via email to registered attendees 24 hours in advance.

If you can't attend the live workshops, they will be recorded and posted here: <https://www.history.ac.uk/chppc-events-archive>

CCHT Website

During Lockdown there have been many more visitors to the CCHT website, with more than 5000 'sessions' a month between April and July. The most popular pages are the township ones, particularly Carlisle and Windermere.

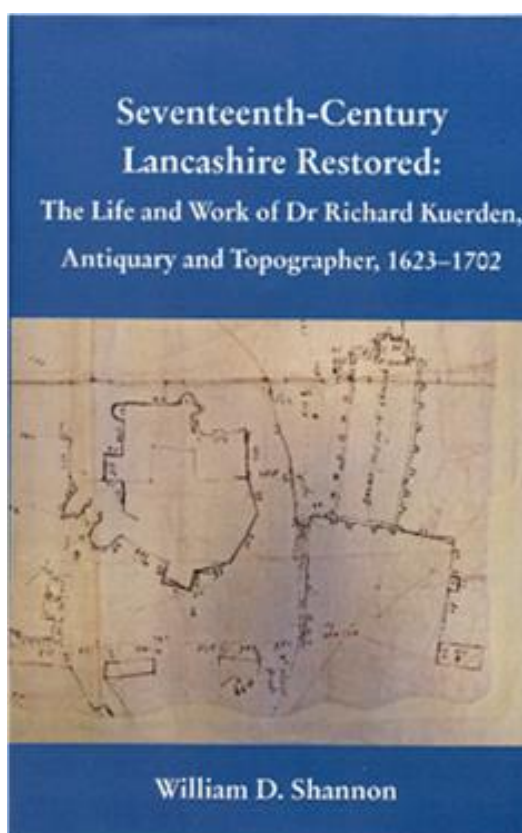
In terms of recent additions, there is now a scan of George Smith's 1751 map of the Black Lead Mines, and two county-wide guides by Eric Apperley. One of these focuses on the Romans in Cumbria and another looks at Disasters in the county since 1900. We have also been adding to our '100 Interesting Facts'. A PowerPoint presentation showing how to use the site is now accessible from the Home Page.

RHC News

The Regional Heritage Centre's physical space remains closed for the time being, but they are planning events (whether to be held in-person or online) for the forthcoming academic year. They are also aiming to resume RHC book sales through Lancaster University's Online Store in September. Registration is also open for the RHC's free Massive Open Online Course, 'Lancaster Castle and Northern English History: the View from the Stronghold'. Visit <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/lancaster-castle>

New book by CCHT Trustee

In a new book, *Seventeenth-Century Lancashire Restored*, CCHT Trustee Bill Shannon examines the life and work of Dr Richard Kuerden, a Lancashire physician, antiquary, topographer, cartographer and possible alchemist. The book, priced £39.95, is available from the Chetham Society's General Editor, Professor Tim Thornton (t.j.thornton@hud.ac.uk).



Churchwardens' Accounts

Following the VCH mini conference in June this year, a compilation of online resources mentioned in the talks was posted on the VCH national website:

<https://www.history.ac.uk/sites/default/files/file-uploads/2020-06/Virtual%20VCH%20links%20and%20publications.pdf>

Among these was a link to a new database 'The Churchwardens' Accounts of England and Wales':

https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/myparish/projects/cwa/

Hosted by the University of Warwick, this is a database of surviving churchwarden accounts in England and Wales. There is a list for each county and for some parishes with surviving documents, the database provides the expenditure for that year.

British History Online

British History Online (BHO) is currently conducting a survey about how its content and accessibility might be improved. If you have any suggestions, please email Sarah Rose (s.rose2@lancaster.ac.uk)

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