

New PHS Honorary Members

The PHS Committee are delighted to bestow honorary memberships on four great stalwarts of PHS, to thank them for their contributions and the furtherance of the understanding of the history of Preston.

Aidan and Jo resigned at the end of last season from the PHS Committee having been much valued and very active members of the Society.



Aidan took over the PHS newsletter in 2017. It was given a new look and we have all benefitted greatly from Aidan's knowledge and expertise. Aidan, a retired academic librarian, was chair of the Northwest Group of the Twentieth Century Society.

Aidan Turner Bishop In 1987 he helped to relocate the Livesey Collection to Preston from the British National Temperance League in Sheffield. He also established the Polytechnic (later UCLan) Archives. With fellow trustees of the Preston Pals' War Memorial Trust in 2016 he visited Bazentin-le-Petit, France, where many of the Pals marched to their doom in 1916.



Joe Comerford

Joe has been the Secretary of the Society since 2018 after taking over from Gill Lawson, who left following the death of her partner Paul Swarbrick. He has ensured the smooth running of PHS for the last four years and contributed to the PHS programme of talks. He is also a very active member of Preston Playhouse, which has been in the business of amateur dramatics since 1949, organising a number of performances including actor Gerald Dickens, great great grandson of Charles Dickens.



Stephen Sartin

Stephen is probably Preston's most renowned local historian and much loved by Preston Historical Society members. He is a one-time keeper of fine art at the Harris Museum and well known for his intimate knowledge of Preston. As well as being a prolific author of a wide range of books on Art, Architecture, Society and the History of Preston, he has also lectured, and entertained PHS members for over half a century. He is renowned for his guided walks around Preston.



Jacquie Crosby

Jacquie retired in March after 37 years at Lancashire's County Archives. It is difficult to over-estimate the contribution that Jacquie has made to the preservation of Lancashire's, and in particular, Preston's historical legacy. Jacquie, an Oxford classics graduate came to Preston in 1985 as an Assistant Archivist and became Archives Services Manager in 2011. We are indebted to her for the support she has given PHS and many other local history organisations.

BOOK NEWS

EXPEDITIONS TO THE PORT OF PRESTON AND DETAILS OF THE RIBBLE NAVIGATION

Compiled & edited by M.D Smith (2021)

Review by Bob Dobson

I recommend this impressive book. Details: Hardback 176pp. £15.00 ISBN 978-1-3999-0864-1

It is also available from the author/publisher at 27 Sutton Lane, Adlington PR6 9PA. Contact him on 01257 481157 or email pasmith7813@gmail.com

There have been three previous books about Preston dock and navigation of the river between it and Lytham. They were published in 1938, 1986, and 1987. This book complements them nicely, though it does much more than conduct the reader around the dock, as some of its many photographs are of the town in past years, along with some artefacts connected with the town's past. These were from the treasure box of a long-time collector of paraphernalia connected with Proud Preston.

The book's endpapers show two very useful maps and a plan of the dock. In addition to photographs some early engravings are also reproduced - all of a good size. Many of the photos of the dock have not previously been published. This is why the book complements the earlier books. All four should be on every Prestonian's bookshelves.



Preston Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

PROMOTING THE STUDY OF LOCAL HISTORY IN PRESTON AND LANCASHIRE

Issue 20

Autumn 2022

Prints of Old Preston: Illustrated talk

Stephen begins our 2022/23 season of talks. Preston is well represented in engraved prints of the 18th and 19th centuries, depicting the town in its transition from spa-town to 'Coketown', and giving us an insight into what life was like in the past. Many of these will be shown together with close-up details, and with information about the skilful artists and engravers who produced them.



Stephen Sartin, a very popular speaker, is well known for his intimate knowledge of Preston.

About the PHS

PHS was founded in 1948 with an annual membership subscription of 10/6d or half a guinea. 2023 will be our 75th Jubilee which we hope to celebrate with you. The aim of PHS is to promote the study of local history in Preston and Lancashire through a programme of talks given by local historians. Talks are held in the Central Methodist Church, Lune St. The annual member subscription is £15.00. Visitors £5.00 per talk. There are eight talks in each season.



**Heritage
Open Days
2022 -
9th-18th
September**

Every September thousands of volunteers across England organise events to celebrate our fantastic history and culture. It's your chance to see hidden places and try out experiences - all of which are FREE to explore. To find out what is happening in Lancashire check out - www.heritageopendays.org.uk

OBITUARY



It was with great sadness we learned of John Taylor's passing on 11th July 2022. He was 91. He was an enthusiastic, long-standing member of PHS. In this sorrowful time, we would like to extend our heartfelt condolences to his family.

Contact PHS

General enquiries call **07933 107 324**
or email: stewart@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk
Membership: patricia@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk

A Soldier's Letters Home



Gunner Richard Anderton: Studio Portrait

On April 4, 2022, a rather unusual reunion took place in Morrisons Café, Preston Marina. A series of letters written by Gunner Richard Anderton, a Preston soldier, to his wife during WW2 were reunited with Richard's daughter, Julia, her grandson Ryan and her great granddaughter Violet, nearly 70 years after they were written. The story of how these letters were discovered after all this time is fascinating.

The letters from Richard, whilst serving in India, to his wife Ellen, were bought at a car boot sale in the 1990s. As is often the case with such purchases, they were placed in a drawer, and forgotten. They came to light once more when the purchaser died. His son, David Holt, a Prestonian who has lived in Yorkshire for many years, found them in his father's effects. David, intending to discover their original owner and returning them to the family, once more put them in a drawer, and once more everyday life intervened.

What did you do during the lockdown?

Finally, in 2021, after retiring and during Covid lockdown, the search for Richard's family began in earnest. Unfortunately, although David found out more about the writer of the letters he had limited success in finding any living relatives. It was at this point on December 1, 2021 that, after looking on the PHS website, he contacted



David Holt (left) presents the letters to Richard Anderton's daughter Julia, his great grandson Ryan and great great grand-daughter Violet.

info@prestonhistoricalsociety.org in the hope that we might help him in his quest. This, of course, is meat and drink to the society and it wasn't long before we discovered some living relatives and Richard Anderton's story was uncovered.

Richard's story

Richard was born in July 1910 at 17 North Street, Preston to Frank and Gertie Anderton (née Botham). 18-year-old Prestonian Frank was a Fish Salesman and

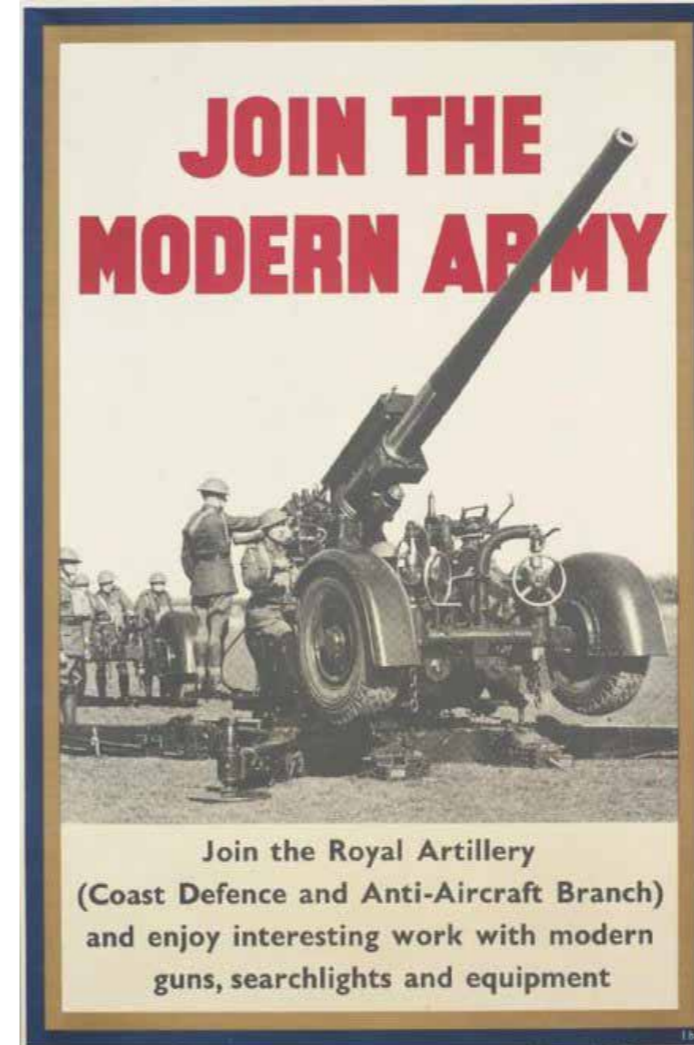


Junction of Harrison Hill & Crown Street: Preston Digital Archive

23-year-old Gertie, from Loughborough, Leicestershire, was a Cotton Worker.

In 1931 Richard, age 21, was working as a Labourer in a Timber Merchants. He married 29-year-old Ellen Hanley, daughter of Thomas and Margaret. The couple moved into 7, Crown Street (between Moor Lane and North Road).

In the summer of 1933, daughter Theresa Jean



Pre-war recruiting poster featuring an AA gun

(always referred to as Jean by the family) was born, a year later Julia came into the world. Life for Richard, Ellen and family settled down into a routine familiar to all who have small children, until one day in 1939 Adolph Hitler intervened and turned Richard, Ellen and the children's world upside down.

Richard joined the 3rd West Lancashire Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment. Richard's regiment was protecting first Liverpool, and then Manchester between 1939 and 1942, so seeing the family wasn't so much of a problem, but then the regiment was sent to India in May 1942. This may have been when the letters started but only letters from 1943 have survived.

Inevitably, Richard doesn't give us many clues in his letters as to where he was or what the regiment was doing, because all letters home were checked by the Unit Censor.

It is obvious that Richard missed the family and everyday life back home. In one letter he waxes lyrical about getting a present from Ellen of:

"English Woodbines. This is the first real smoke I have had in India".

He hated the heat where he was:

"it's 112 in the shade and we are eating sand", Sickness in the regiment was a problem (although he professed to avoiding it). He seems to have moved around regularly because on 6.7.44 he proudly comments

"Every time we go to a new place one of the boys gets yours & Jeans & Julia's photos out and puts them in a prominent place for everybody to look at. My two lovely daughters are known all over the regiment".

Even after the war in the East ended with the Japanese surrender on September 2, 1945, Richard was still in India. He sent a British Army Christmas card home in December 1946, from Shilling, Southern India.

We know now the regiment was posted to Madras, Bombay, Asansol, Calcutta, Chittagong, Ranchi and



Christmas Greetings from India

Poona. The Battery was placed in suspended animation and was reconstituted as 470 (3rd West Lancashire) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment RA(TA) in January 1947. The regiment was repatriated in 1947, Richard was demobbed, and normal life resumed once more.



Ellen, Richard, Julia, & Theresa (4th - 7th from Left) Post War.