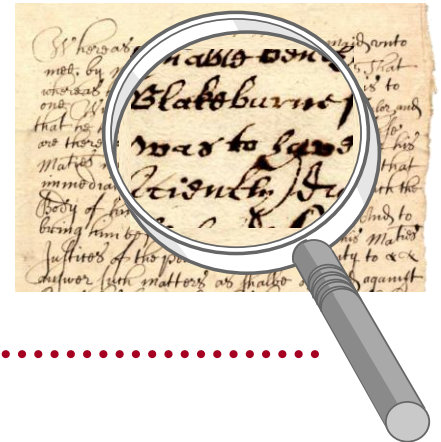




# News from the Archives

Newsletter of Lancashire Archives



## **Archive Service update**

April has seen a couple of unexpected firsts for Lancashire Archives – a 19<sup>th</sup> century sword on display in the searchroom and unusual ferreting in the loading bay when Simba crept in with a van load of magistrates court registers. I'm also delighted to report an increase in visitor figures for the first time since 2012. The increase is only small, just under 2%, but is very welcome. See further details later in the newsletter.

This month we look forward one of the outstanding events of the year when Professor Jonathan Healey talks about the origins of the Poor Law in Lancashire at 7pm on Friday 10 May, followed of course by one of Brenda Fox's excellent buffets and a glass of wine. There are still a few spaces available if you haven't yet booked.

**Jacquie Crosby**

**Archives Service Manager**



# Lancashire Archives 2018-2019: A Year in Numbers

**2,657,524** views of images of Lancashire documents on *Ancestry* in 2018

**169,691** more entries on LANCAT, our online catalogue, taking the total to **1,692,098**



These extra entries include the detailed listing of the Dalton of Thurnham Hall collection

**116,973** unique page views on Lancashire County Council's website

**95,878** page views in **68,189** visits to Lancashire Archives catalogue pages on The National Archives *Discovery* website

**19,567** documents produced for users in the searchroom (17,305 in 2017/18)

**4,904** people attended events **177** involving Lancashire Archives – **133** of these organised by the archive service

**4,505** people used documents in the searchroom (4,418 in 2017/18), some of whom left feedback:

*Helpful and knowledgeable staff...What a wonderful place!...An "Oasis"... Very busy during our visit, however staff could not have been more helpful... a great team...*

**4,205** written or emailed enquiries (3,673 in 2017/18) including **1,128** copying orders

**2404** boxes and folders made for our own use and for external customers



A before and after shot of the repackaging of the Whittingham Asylum archive (HRW)

**2210** schoolchildren experienced Lancashire Archives, either through a school visit or at the UCLAN science festival last summer



I spy Colne Christ Church CE Primary School

160 accessions of new archives received



One of these contained the World War One sketch book of Sergeant John Sibbald Deacon, of Chorley (DDX 3205)

56 volunteers gave 4954 hours of their time; one project won a national award



The project team receiving their award

11 staff provided this service

**Jacque Crosby**

**Archives Service Manager**

**Family History Friday 10 May**  
**12.30pm talk:**  
***Ancestors at Sea – crew lists for family historians***

## A Surprise Visitor



I was a bit distracted when I opened the loading bay door to the delivery driver, wondering whether there was going to be enough room for the thousand magistrates' court registers waiting to come in.

After stepping outside for no more than a minute and returning with him to point out where to shelve the registers, the driver's attention was caught by something.

*What's that?*

*What?*

*THAT...*

*Errrr...*

Before my mind could process the thought *what's a stuffed ferret doing down here?* it moved; not stuffed - very much alive, sitting on a shelf (smiling?) A great deal of surprise mixed with a tiny bit of panic as we attempted to shoo the beast from the building. It soon became apparent that, although it in no way wanted to leave, it was at least very friendly. We decided containment was the best option and managed to persuade our visitor into a crate and plonk a perplex sheet on top. We relaxed, my as yet un-introduced accomplice

and I - danger averted and a makeshift, very small-scale petting zoo into the bargain.

We later concluded that our new pet must have sneaked in just after I had opened the door to the delivery. His distinctive odour soon became apparent and, if he had been there overnight, I would have smelt him as soon as I had entered the loading bay.

Soon visitors to the "zoo" appeared; various members of staff wanting to check the truth of the ferret rumour now finding its way round the office. The RSPCA was called and the registers were unloaded.

I tweeted a picture of our house guest, this piqued interest at the BBC and, before I knew it, I was being filmed by someone from our corporate communications team. No publicity is bad publicity (and I would probably have preferred no publicity!)

Fred (he now had a name), unaware of the growing media frenzy, dined on cat food and spent the night curled up in his new billet, unsuspecting of the excitement to come.



This started with the arrival of a very helpful RSPCA officer next day. Fred was boxed

up, loaded and about to leave for Manchester. That was the end of that I thought. But no, wait! Stop that van! A colleague is running towards me across the car park. Fred's owner has been found!

Of course Fred's name isn't Fred - it's Simba - and not only did his relieved owner turn up but also Simba's brother Narby. Simba had escaped a couple of days before reaching us, climbing the curtains to get out through a high window.

Who knows what adventures he had in the mile or so between there and here...



Robin and Narby, me and Simba

David Tilsley

Archivist

**Our Saturday opening is 11 May and late Tuesday (until 7pm) 14 May**

**We are closed on 6 and 27 May**

**ANY  
COMMENTS?**

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