



LANCASTRIANS IN LONDON

Patron: His Majesty THE KING, Duke of Lancaster
President: The Rt Hon Alistair Burt

NEWSLETTER - No. 172 Spring 2025

Lancastriansinlondon.uk

Events 2025

Thursday 3 April 2025

Friday 4 April 2025

Monday 28 April 2025

Monday 15 September

Thursday 18 December

Westminster walk.

Reception for the players of Lancashire Cricket Club.

Annual Dinner RAF Club.

Quiz. Doggett's Coat & Badge.

Carol Service, Savoy Chapel - Christmas Dinner Athenaeum Club.



John, Lord Lee, passes the President's chain of office to Alistair Burt, our president until January 2026. The meeting and meal at The Union Jack Club was attended by 30 members and was led (pictured top right) by Chairman and Treasurer William Arnold, Alistair Burt, John Lee, Simon Harris, our new secretary, and Andy Lees, Membership Secretary and trustee.

The business agenda was completed in 26 minutes - possibly a record but we have insufficient data from the previous 132 AGMs to prove it. Andy Lees thanked John for his considerable contribution over the last two years and Alistair expressed his appreciation of being asked to stand as President, his work in the Middle East has reduced and he is now taking on a number of projects in Lancashire.

The following officers were duly elected: Treasurer: William Arnold (Chair), Hon Secretary: Simon Harris, Membership Secretary: Andy Lees, Communications Officer: Jim Collier. Other Members of the Committee; Ann Chant, Geoff Dawson, Janet Hails, Simon Moyle, David Roberts, Erica Stary and Adrian Waddingham were all confirmed as elected for 2025. Retiring Committee members: Peter Charlton, Jane Gill, Jenny Murray were thanked for the service they had given over the years.

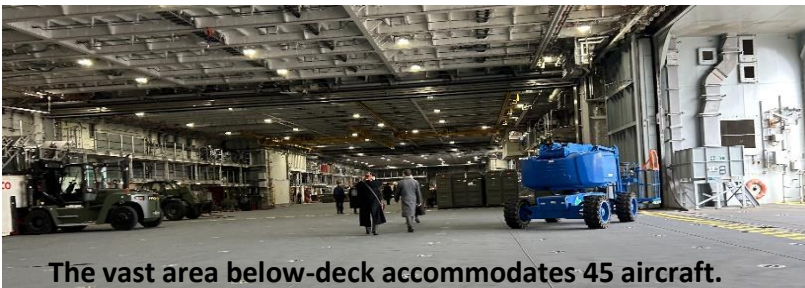
**HMS Lancaster Affiliates Day
12 February 2025**



On HMS Prince of Wales is Commander Chew who some of you will recognise as our guest at the annual dinner last June in the RAF Club. Top right is another recognisable face; Rev. Canon Thomas Woodhouse, who led our Carol Service at the Savoy Chapel, invited as a representative of the Dutchy of Lancaster.



Affiliates of HMS Lancaster include various livery companies, Lancaster politicians, the British Army's Lancaster Regiment and The Association of Lancastrians in London. Each year The crew of HMS Lancaster invite us to an open day and this year committee members Janet Hails and myself, Jim Collier, represented the Association and were entertained in Portsmouth with a tour of HMS Prince of Wales, lunch at HMS Lord Nelson and a guided tour of HMS Victory which is undergoing its greatest refurbishment since 1850.



The vast area below-deck accommodates 45 aircraft.



Affiliates at the top of the aircraft launch including the Mayor of Lancaster and deputy and below, the bow of HMS Victory.



The tour of HMS Victory was excellent, helped by the hilarious commentary from our guide. We were introduced to many common sayings that originated at sea 'letting the cat out of the bag', 'up to scratch' and not being able to 'swing a cat' all referring to the cat of nine tails punishment. Penultimately we visited the place below deck (right) where Nelson expired then we enjoyed a tot of rum in the captain's quarters.



What's your Lancashire story?

Our Association has many members who have an interesting story to tell about their Lancashire roots. Janine Mackinlay has kindly shared hers and calls it 'A Life With the Stars'



Janine and her father, Glenn Melvyn, born in Manchester 1918 and shown in a Coronation Street role on ITV in 1964.



Glenn Melvyn Summer Seasons: The Love Match 1953, Love & Kisses 1955, Friends & Neighbours 1958, Pillar to Post 1960.

Glenn, my father, wrote several plays, his first being a Lancashire farce called *The Love Match*, (released as a film in 1955) which became one of the longest running plays at The Palace Theatre in London, starring Arthur Askey, Thora Hird, Shirley Eaton, William Franklyn and Rob Wilton.

I was born in Blackpool in 1942. My mother Joan had been living with her parents in Manchester in Edinburgh Hall, a huge building also housing shops, a dance academy, a boxing ring, a ballroom, a masonic hall and vast cellars, next to Alexandra Park. My mum remembered huddling in those cellars listening to bombs dropping and fire-watching from roof. After the war my father joined Frank Fortesque's theatre company in the Tudor Theatre in Bramhall so I grew up with theatre folk who went on to become household names; Pat Phoenix, Ronnie Barker, Danny Ross, Roy Dotrice and others, rehearsing on the stairs of our little home for the the next week's play. They worked so hard performing twice nightly as well as two matinees a week. In 1949 my little brother David was born. I was seven years old and it was wonderful to have a baby brother. I loved him so much.



My mum had married my father in Edinburgh Hall in 1940. Soon after it was requisitioned to house troops so mum relocated to Blackpool with several members of Glenn's family. Shortly afterwards her father died and mum inherited Edinburgh Hall. With the legacy she bought a house in Kennerley Road, Stockport so we left Blackpool to live there.

My father also acted in *The Love Match* so the family moved to London. Dad went on to write plays for the summer season in various towns including Blackpool, where they were shown at the famous Grand Theatre. Our home was in London, but every summer mum would find us accommodation wherever dad was and we became an extended family with members of the cast including Molly Sugden and Valentine Dyall.

My connection with Lancashire continued when I was sent to board at St Anne's College in St Anne's on Sea, close to my many relatives in the county. I have lovely memories of my weekly riding lessons galloping along the beach, as well as golf lessons at Royal Lytham St Annes. We were allowed four outing days a term and I remember my auntie Mamie coming from Manchester to take me out in Blackpool to The Lobster Pot restaurant and the olympic swimming pool at Derby Baths. I once even went round Blackpool tower on a byplane. I would come back to London in the holidays on a steam train from St Anne's to Euston. My mum would be waiting for me beautifully attired in a new look suit and I would appear wearing a boater with my hockey stick and trunk.

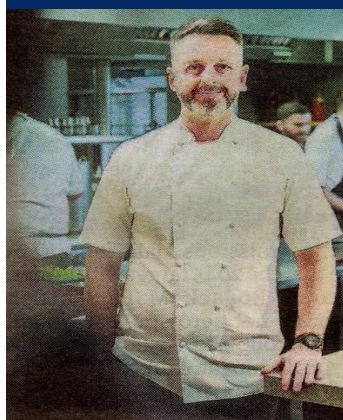
Although I ended up living in London, so much of my early life was spent in Lancashire and I feel a kinship with the Lancastrians, their wonderful humour and warmth.

Janine Mackinlay

'We've put Aughton on the map': village with five Michelin stars is latest draw for global gourmets

It has been called the culinary capital of Britain, with five Michelin stars for 8,000 residents. This is not London or Edinburgh, but Aughton, a village in West Lancashire.

The Guardian

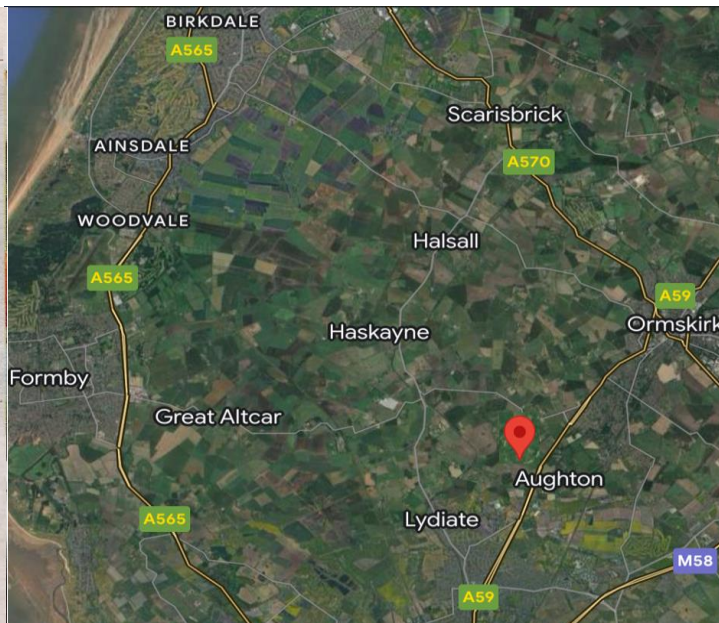


▲ Mark Birchall of Moor Hall, Aughton, one of only two three-star restaurants in the north of England
PHOTOGRAPH: JOEL GOODMAN/THE GUARDIAN

Aughton is four miles from Ormskirk down the A59 and has three Michelin-starred restaurants. One of them, Moor Hall, has just won its third star. "We've had people from the States plan their honeymoon around dinner here" said chef patron, Mark Birchall, who grew up nearby in Chorley. Moor Hall's sister restaurant next door, The Barn, also has a Michelin star.

"You're not getting surroundings and gardens like this in London" said Mark "London's amazing, you can get any food you want, pretty much. We've got to work harder for our guests. We don't have hundreds of thousands of people walking past our restaurant every day." Down the road in Aughton is sō-lō, owned by the chef Tim Allen which opened in 2021 and gained a Michelin star two years later. Moor Hall is only the second 3-star restaurant in the north of England. The other is L'Enclume in Cartmel, also within the Lancashire County Palatine. Wikipedia tells us there are ten 3-star restaurants in the UK. Six in London, two in Bray, Berkshire, and the other two in 'our' Lancashire.

If you are from Aughton or know it well, please let me know what you think. (There is another Aughton near Lancaster, it's not that one - but I do wonder how many people from the States have turned up there and ended up with a bag of chips.) Jim Collier.



Erica Stary spotted this on 19 January, one hundred years after first being published in 1925.



In 1914, when the cry of battle went forth, a Liverpool schoolboy forsook his study and joined the khaki ranks. Nearly three years later he enclosed in a letter home some verses he had written in a Flanders dug-out, the last line of which was: "We win or die who wear the rose of Lancaster."

A few weeks later this young officer, Lieutenant Leonard Wall, at the age of twenty, made the supreme sacrifice, but his written word became the motto of his division, the Glorious 55th, and was perpetuated today in carved stone at the foot of the memorial erected to the 55th West Lancs Division, which the Bishop of Liverpool dedicated in the cathedral.

The ceremony was of impressive simplicity and took place amidst military, civic and religious pomp. A representative of each unit of the division filed into the body of the church, together with ex-members of the division and relatives of the fallen. There were two VC winners present, Sgt Mayson and Cpl Howitson, while in the shadow of the pulpit sat a little girl wearing the medal — of her father.

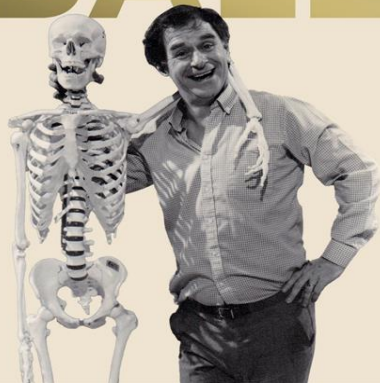
What's your Lancashire story?

One of my favourite outings as a child was being taken to Gigg Lane by my father to watch Bury football club play. You may know the club closed when it was expelled from the English Football League in 1919. However, thanks to the local efforts of pubs, shops and residents it is now back in business. The closure of the Club left a hole in the heart of the community but it has now been filled and once again is a vibrant community hub. The fans are enjoying the non-league experience, and meeting fantastic people who like them toil to keep their clubs alive. A sad story which now has a happy ending.

Mave Turner

MY PREVIOUS LIFE IN COMEDY

JOHNNY BALL



AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Former president of the Lancastrians in London, Johnny Ball, has written 'part one' of his autobiography; My Previous Life in Comedy and it has been published by The Book Guild.

Johnny says "To mark the occasion we are holding a gathering of friends at The Museum of Comedy, Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2SR. on Saturday 29th March between 1 pm and 3 pm. Being, aged 86, something of a Museum Item myself, it seemed most fitting. So do pop along and you'll be greeted with a drink of something and a short chat from me, before signing the odd copy - the contents of which are all absolutely true and often funny! Any Lankies and their friends will be very very welcome.

It would be great to see you and we could catch up on old times." - With very best wishes, Johnny (and Di) Ball. Proud Ex President of The Lancastrians in London.

If anyone would like to join Johnny, just turn up on the day, but it would help to manage numbers if you could email him:

jballprods@aol.com

Following the AGM in January the first committee meeting of 2025 was held in early March and Erica Stary was appointed Chair. William Arnold stepped down after three successful years in the post and we are all grateful for this contribution to the Association. William remains on the committee as Treasurer. Our funds remain in good health but the cost of issuing this newsletter could be reduced if it was circulated wider on email. For those with vision issues it really does enhance the reading experience when expanded on a tablet and the pictures I include are high definition. If you are able to switch to email please contact me, Jim Collier, on j.collier@ntlworld.com If you are unable to use email, would you consider increasing your 2026 standing order to £25? We now have six pages in colour to enjoy and Royal Mail continue to make distribution more expensive. If you can, please advise Andy Lees, 20 Kings Rd, Flitwick, Bedford MK45 1EL.

The Lancastrians in London Trustees have agreed to donate up to £10k in 2025 to youth charities in Lancashire. Among beneficiaries in 2024 were Manchester Grammar School with £1k for their new sports pavilion, £1k to Fylde Rugby Club community fund and £1,650 to Westminster School, Blackpool. The trust fund also provides Christmas hampers to a limited list of our oldest members who have served the Association.



Pictured here is Marjorie Bathe last Christmas with her Lancastrians hamper. More about Marjorie on the last page.



They tried to destroy us .but we are still here

Born Bury FC denied by penalty on their return to FA Cup limelight



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**Margery Bathe 1927
to 2025**

It is sad news that Margery Bathe, a member since 1987 and former committee chair, passed away early in February. Her memorial service was held on Monday 10th March in Blackburn where she had lived for the past seven years. Margery was a life member of the Lancastrians having taken up the offer in 1989 for a princely sum of £25. She was born in Oldham and moved to London in 1953, marrying John Bathe in 1958. John, pictured left with Margery, was our previous Membership Secretary, passing on that duty to Andy Lees, in 2010. John died in 2012. Many will remember Margery for her warmth, inquisitive nature and loyalty.

The Lancastrians committee offer sincere condolences to Rosamunde Price following the death of her husband and member Martin Price in November. Rosamunde continues to be a member of our Association.

New Members

Eulalee Green, Karin Renshaw,
Paul Adams from Manchester and
Louise Wilson.

Thank you David Roberts following my request for a translation around the red rose of Lancashire on the Savoy Chapel ceiling; *I hesitate to be the Latin bore, but one of the Savoy bosses reads: 'Quis separabit' (Who shall separate?). They are words from St Paul's Epistle to the Romans, chapter 8, verse 35 - in the Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible - which begins, in English: 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' They are used as a motto by all sorts of organisations which emphasise unity.*



If you haven't got a Netflix subscription then visit your family who have and watch *Bank of Dave* a story of a Burnley businessman who lends money to locals and gets into trouble with the regulator. The latest treat is advertised below. Incredibly true Lancashire stories.

**Reminder - Application form attached to this
newsletter.**

Annual Dinner 2025
MONDAY 28 April – 6:30pm for 7:30pm.
RAF CLUB 128 Piccadilly



Who spotted the county rivalry humour in the Wallace & Gromit Christmas Special on the BBC? Feathers McGraw, the evil penguin escapes over the Lancs/Yorks boarder where the signs read "KEEP OUT" and "NO, YOU KEEP OUT!" Nick Park, the creator of Wallace and Gromit, is from Preston so we can claim this wonderful animation as a Lancastrian invention!

To get in touch with Jim Collier, Newsletter editor, use email:
j.collier@ntlworld.com or go to Lancastrians in London website.