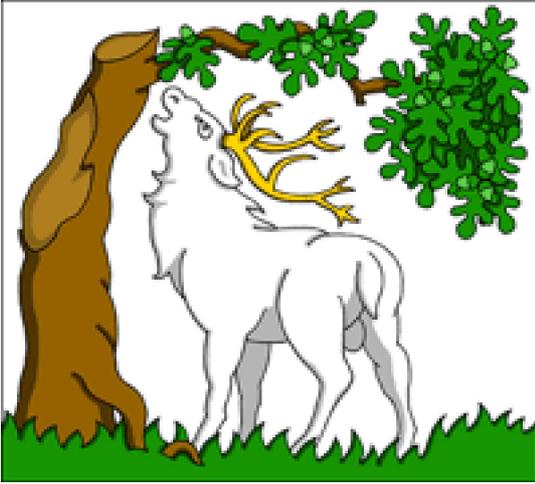


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Berkshire Local History Association



**Newsletter No 117
January 2017**

Berkshire Local History Association
Newsletter

Editor: John Chapman

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We ask all member societies and institutions to provide a short report on their activities for inclusion in the Newsletter. We are always interested in brief news reports on other matters and notice of events likely to be of interest to our members.

A word limit of 400/450 words is in place to allow for as many of you to contribute as possible, please note that when space is limited, contributions over this amount will be subject to the editorial pencil!

Contributions should be e-mailed to:- newsletter@blha.org.uk and arrive not later than the 15th of the month preceding publication (January, May and September) Word, Text or pdf copy is acceptable, but keep it simple and please do not use spaces or tabs to lay out presentations. Photographs and images should be sent separately

Alternatively material may be posted to the Editor: John Chapman, 5 Cecil Aldin Drive, Tilehurst, Berks, RG31 6YP

Cover picture - Tom Brown's School House at Uffington -see page 7

Chairman's Corner

2016 saw a very enjoyable A.G.M. hosted by the Longworth and District Historical Society, which was followed by a visit to Kingston Bagpuize House. I hope that you have enjoyed reading the newsletters, e-mails and “Berkshire Old and New” over the course of the year, and also the book, “People, Places and Context,” containing the three papers which were read at last year’s symposium. And then in November was the “special” visit to St. George’s Chapel, Windsor – of which there is a report later in these pages. This represents a fair amount of work on the part of a small and dedicated group of committee members, and I should like to thank them all.



And what will 2017 bring? The A.G.M. will be at Newbury, hosted by the Newbury and District Field Club – an organisation which itself has a long and distinguished history. We are hoping to organise another symposium, in the autumn, and there may be a return visit to St. George’s Chapel, this time to study particular aspects of its history in more detail. I believe that Dr. Jonathan Brown, editor of “Berkshire Old and New,” is in the happy position of having a couple of good articles for the next issue, but please don’t let that stop you if you’re thinking of contributing. Our journal is fairly slim when compared to those of other county societies. If you have a shorter article, or a news item, then John Chapman, our newsletter editor, will be pleased to hear from you. And may I again appeal to our affiliated local societies to send in the details of their talks, for the “diary dates” part of the website. These should go to Dave Osborne, our web designer. Among the Association’s major objectives are the facilitation of communication between the member societies, and the publication of local history research.

On a more personal note, in the last year I have received a great deal of local history material which was amassed by local historians who are no longer with us.

The first batch arrived by courtesy of John Chapman, as a result of someone clearing out a garage. I soon realised that the items had belonged to two eminent local historians from the past – Llewellyn Treacher, and F. M. Underhill. Much of the material was on glass lantern slides, well preserved in wooden boxes. Many of the Treacher slides had images already represented in his photograph albums which are in the collection of Reading Central Library. Many of them show scenes in the Twyford and Wargrave areas. However, the slides are of better photographic quality than the prints in the albums, so I have scanned the lot, and added the scans to the library’s collection. I shall now offer the slides to the Museum of English Rural Life, where there is already a large collection of Treacher’s images. Mr. Underhill’s slides are a mixed bunch, but include pictures of the interiors of the buildings of the Reading University Extension College, and some photographs taken during the Second World War, from R.A.F. bombers over German cities. There are also rather a lot of pictures of his family on holiday. The Berkshire Record Office is in the process of cataloguing

its Underhill material, and they have kindly agreed to take away a part of the clutter which is at present on my dining table.

A week or so after this delivery, I learned that the Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group, an affiliated society, has recently acquired a large collection of 35mm slides, many of them with Berkshire subjects. I have promised to help them in the sorting and scanning in January, and hopefully I can get them “in the public domain” using the Reading Libraries website.

And then yesterday, lots of photographs and postcards arrived from the collection of the late Gerry Westall. I remember Mr. Westall as a researcher at the Museum of English Rural Life, and we were occasionally able to help one another with queries. The images are mainly of Reading town, and I have agreed to check each one against the holdings of the Central Library, and to catalogue and add to stock anything where they don't already have an original. These will then be scanned and put on the library website, where they can be accessed by searching the catalogue. Yesterday afternoon and evening, with some excitement, I glanced through them, and can tell that this is a very valuable collection.

I regard it as something of a privilege to be able to have a hand in preserving this kind of material for local historians of the future. Even though it will take some months, it is worth doing as far as I am concerned.

David Cliffe

A Word from the Editor

David, our chairman, has told you about the need to preserve material, collected by local historians in the past. It is not just paperwork, photos and artefacts we need to preserve but the information. This may seem a bit esoteric but there is a great deal of difference between the raw material and the information content. Much of the work of local historians in extracting this information has been published in some form or other, in newspapers, journals and magazines.



Until very recently all we had, if we were lucky, were old copies of some of these publications in printed form. And these copies were scattered about the world and in people's lofts ready to be thrown out by relatives after the funeral. Nowadays, however, we can get digital transcripts of these articles and I am putting in a plea for local societies to have a look through what they have in their cupboards and lofts and get someone to transcribe them. Digital material like this can be easily stored, indexed and copied around and is a rich source for future historians. If we don't do it then our successors will lose out.

This came to me when I was looking into the work of carriers recently. They were generally uneducated, hard working, unregulated individuals who dealt almost exclusively in cash, kept no records but knew everybody's business in the villages they served. What a source they would have been had they put pen to paper!

John Chapman

The 2017 Annual General Meeting

The Berkshire Local History Association's 40th Annual General Meeting will be held at the St Nicolas' Church Hall, West Mills, Newbury. RG14 5HG on Saturday 11th March 2017

We are greatly looking forward to our trip to West Berkshire for our 40th Annual General Meeting. Many thanks to our hosts, Newbury and District Field Club.

We will follow the usual format, arriving from 11:00am for refreshments and the AGM commencing at 11:30am. There will be a pre-lunch talk and after lunch there will be the option of either walk around the nearby historic sites, or remaining indoors for a talk. Full details will be circulated in the eBulletin and on the website and will be sent out to those who have booked. Booking form is included in this newsletter and is also available on our website: www.blha.org.uk. If booking by post, don't forget to include SAE. Booking forms should be sent to: Ann Smith wokinghamsmith@gmail.com or by sending booking form and SAE to Ann Smith, 151 Old Woosehill Lane, Wokingham, Berks. RG41 3HR.

Ann McCormack

Miscellanea

Celebrations for Berkshire Archives

In recent weeks two of Berkshire's archives have had cause to celebrate, the Museum of English Rural Life (MERL) and the Mills Archive Trust (MAT). On the 9th of November, the National Archive awarded both archives full Accredited Archive status an accolade that as yet is only shared by about 60 organisations. The award of Accreditation is only given after the awarding body are satisfied that an archive meets the necessary rigorous and demanding criteria relating to the care and management of its collections and both archives are to be commended on their achievement. The Accreditation process, which sets standards for archives in the UK, made its first awards at the end of 2013 and it is a process that is reviewed at regular intervals ensuring that high levels of quality are maintained.

For MERL it was a double whammy, the award coming less than three weeks after the Grand Opening of the new museum following two years of closure and a £3 million redevelopment project. During a very busy week in October 2016 the new galleries were revealed to the public for the first time, the Grand Opening taking place on the evening of Tuesday 18th October. Invited guests were allowed to wander round the new galleries after drinks and canapes were served and the necessary speeches of thanks were dispensed with including one from the guest of honour Timothy Bentinck, aka David Archer, from Radios 4's long running soap about country life in Ambridge. The enlarged museum has increased gallery space, an enlarged education studio, shop and recreation area which now offers refreshments.

The concept of the new galleries is *Our Country Lives* and throughout the nine galleries returning visitors may recognise a few old friends, but this is a new, fresh and lively interpretation in which the exhibits are displayed to their full potential.

The Museum of English Rural Life can be found on Redlands Road, Reading, opposite the Royal Berkshire Hospital; but for opening hours and events please go to <https://www.reading.ac.uk/TheMERL>

MAT should be especially proud of their achievement being I suspect the youngest and maybe even the smallest of the archives to achieve Accredited Status. They are doing a very important job of collecting and caring for what has been an overlooked part of our industrial heritage, that of milling history. Since the Trust became a registered charity in 2002 it has worked hard (as an entirely self-funded archive) to raise awareness of its existence within the milling community and of the importance of the archive as a repository for milling related material and individual collections. The Archive Service Accreditation Panel praised the work of the archive recognising its contribution as a model for other smaller archives working towards accreditation. In a few short years, MAT, has an established its office at Watlington House, Reading, where a professional team manage the expanding archive and where researchers are welcome.

For more information about MAT, how to become a friend or to find out what they hold in their collections visit their website at <https://millsarchive.org/>

Dr Margaret Simons

The Court of Star Chamber

The Elizabethan Star Chamber Project, hosted by AALT at the University of Houston, is putting county names on cases in TNA STAC 5 (Records of the Court of Star Chamber in the reign of Elizabeth).

There are now sufficient cases identified to make the web site interesting to local historians, and I would be grateful if you would inform your membership of our existence. Secretary hand is not for everybody, but the documents are all in English. Most of the cases are completely unknown to historians, and this is because of their chaotic storage at TNA (cases may have up to twenty different references) and the previous inadequacy of finding aids. All the cases are social history of one locality or another.

Have a look at http://www.uh.edu/waalt/index.php/Elizabethan_Star_Chamber_-_Project

Helen Good

I had a look and found references to a number of cases in Elizabethan England. Here is a quick summary of some of them:-

John Arnold of Didcot Berkshire yeoman and Johan his wife, in re copyhold land in Didcot.
STAC 5/A2/8

Bagnall v Edes

TNA Note: Forgery of a bond in deceased's name. Edward Brooker, vicar of Hungerford.
STAC 7/1/37

Darrel v Weldon

Maidenhead, Berks. Assault while staying at the Greyhound in Maidenhead. William Darrell of Lytlecote in Wiltshire. Edmund Butterfeld & James Cater constables of Maidenhead at the time). STAC 5/D11/31

Wallingford: Maintenance of quarrels, and corrupt and illegal practices concerning the borough. STAC 7/11/20

Thomas Fetyplace of Pusey in the co of Berk., Esquire . . free warren of coneys called Pusey Warren. STAC 5/F11/20

Roger Figgins of Kintbury (? Knitbury) Berkshire dyer. STAC 5/F2/4

STAC 5/H35/38 - Moryce Hore of Newbury, Berks, brewer. 2 messuages in Newbury.

Richard Hoore of the City of London, bricklayer in re property in Appleford in Co Berks -

Hyde v Dayrell

TNA Note: Breach of trust under a power of attorney - STAC 7/12/38

Loveden v Digwede

TNA Note: Destruction of a house and fence. STAC 7/13/16

Marbury v Fish

Account of Marbery v Clarke, Fische, Jolde & others (Berkshire, riot 38 Eliz) in Les reportes del cases in Camera Stellata, 1593 to 1609 from the original ms. of John Hawarde edited by William Paley Baildon Published 1894, p. 42-43

Owen v Blagrave

Interr tbn on part of John Blagrave,ye Blagrave, Humfreye Bate, John Kyrton & Thomas Hawe defts agt Michael Owen, John Hersye & Richard Okham complts. Action of trespass brought at Abingdon, Berks assizes, land at Soonyng, Berks STAC 5/O3/2. (dk)

Ward v Appleton

TNA Note: Hurst: Enticing away plaintiff's wife, and seizure of his goods. STAC 7/9/2

Marquess of Winchester v Bromley

Action of trespass in Common Pleas. Stratfield Mortimer co Berks. STAC 5/W3/11

Woodward v Winchcombe

Bill of William Woodward of Lincolns Inn co Middlesex gent. In re Land in Bynam (Benham?) co Berks. Answer of Francis Winchcombe Henry Eysham and John Cordrye, three of the defendants.

Almoner v Newberry

John Cleare husbandman of Berkshire, driving a cart near Reading, deodand. STAC 5/A2/12

Almoner v Stevens

That whereas on Edmonde Bullock late of Eaton in the parishe of Appleforde in co Barf. labourer 14 Jan 37 Eliz thatching a certain stack or rick of beanes and pease one of the staves of the ladder. STAC 5/A6/17

Imp: whether had youe at any tyme any conference or speche with Sir Thomas Sherley thelder knight touchinge the buyinge of certen wood and trees growing and beinge upon a fearme Late in he occupation of Thomas Blythe in the parishe of Inglefeilde co Berkshire, yea or no. Item was not the writtinge that was made for the saide Bargayn made unto the said John Conway only or else unto youe, yea or no. STAC 5/A6/23

Reading: Arrest of Simon Aldworth, constable, while guarding royal treasure. STAC 7/1/4

Editor

Visit to St George's Chapel, Windsor

On a sunny afternoon in early November, a group of us met on Castle Hill to await our guides, in their red robes. The guide who led the way, and who explained things to us was “our own” Ann McCormack, who was Secretary before I joined the Association, and who is at present looking to stand down from those duties. We had been asked in advance if there was anything we particularly wanted to see, and the guides did their best to accommodate us.

The visit was of particular interest to me because I was (and still am) engaged in cataloguing Reading Central Library’s collection of photographs, prints, drawings and watercolours of the Windsor area. Sometimes I’m looking at a postcard from the 1980s, and sometimes it can be a print that is over 300 years old.

It was also interesting to compare this visit to the first visit I made, now over 40 years ago, when things were rather more free and easy, with not so many closed doors and rope barriers. At the time, you just walked into the Albert Memorial Chapel, despite its slippery floors.

Another memory of St. George’s Chapel is of going to a concert one evening. Bach’s “Wachet auf” cantata was rather spoiled by the echoing boom caused by overhead jet aircraft.

On entering the chapel, there was once more that “wow factor.” Very sensibly, on entering we were invited to sit down and look around, and upwards to the fan-vaulting. Another highlight of the tour was being able to visit the Edward IV Chantry Chapel, which visitors don’t usually get to see. From there, high above the chancel, we had a splendid view of the stalls of the Knights of the Garter.

Like all the best visits, I left, as I’m sure did everyone else, wanting to see more and to go back again.

Then came the icing on the cake – and I don't mean the cake I enjoyed with a cup of tea after the visit. Most of us returned the chapel later, for choral evensong. I had almost forgotten the exquisite sound that boy trebles can make – and I remembered that I used to be one myself, years ago.



The BLHA Group at St George's Chapel

At the end of the afternoon, I felt privileged to have experienced all this. I cannot imagine how the visit could have been better – there were no crowds, and the sunlight made the windows sparkle and the whole castle look stunning. If you missed this visit, a further visit is planned, where we shall be able to look at aspects of the history of the chapel in greater depth.

David Cliffe.

The Next Berkshire Record Society Book

Our cover picture is of Tom Brown's School, Uffington. In May the volunteers working on the Berkshire Schools Project visited Abingdon and Uffington. Their research is now complete, the writing is in progress, and the resulting book is due to be published by the Berkshire Record Society in 2018. BLHA has supported the project.

David Cliffe

Berkshire Historic Environment Day School

On 22nd October 27 people met in the Barn at Purley on Thames to hear explanations of the archaeology and history of Reading, Thatcham and Bracknell.

Katie Meheux started proceeding with details of *the occupation of the Forbury area of Reading in AD 870 -871 by the Viking Great Army*. She presented evidence that this was probably an Anglo-Saxon royal estate which was taken over by the Vikings who improved the fortifications to create a longphort. This was followed by John Painter who gave a history of Reading Abbey and its relationship with monarchs down to Elizabeth I.

Steve Ford then gave us a presentation of *the archaeology of Roman Thatcham*. The first part of his talk focused on the challenges of identifying the exact course of

the Roman road. He positioned Roman Thatcham as a road side settlement which was probably sponsored by the local elite. This was followed by a talk by John Chapman which summarised the *history of Thatcham from the Mesolithic to modern times*.

Andrew Hutt started the last session by explaining *the farmsteads surrounding Caesar's Camp* in the Iron Age and the development of an iron working centre based on Wickham Bushes. This was followed by a talk by Andrew Radgick who gave a presentation of the *history of Ramsden Farm* through Victorian times, and its conversion to a military establishment during WWII and on to the end of the 20th century when the land was taken over for housing and the house demolished.

This was a really interesting day with lots of things to think about.

Andrew Hutt

New Books and Reviews

Twyford and Ruscombe through the Ages

by Audrey Curtis

A memorable day for the Twyford and Ruscombe Historical Society was October 3rd. 2016, when a book written by our Secretary, Audrey Curtis, was launched. The book is entitled 'Twyford and Ruscombe through the Ages' and Audrey has done us proud. An immense amount of research has gone into this book and she has unearthed some very interesting facts. It is a 'must' and would make an excellent Christmas present for any historian, local or national as it is a fascinating read.

The book can be purchased from Newberry in London Road, Twyford (price £9.95) or direct from our web site www.trlhs.com.

Reading - Red One

By Duncan Mackay ISBN 978-1-909747-23-4

Starting 145 million years ago, the geology of the natural landscape provides the context for Reading's historical development. This book tells the town's story in terms of its location at the junction of the rivers Thames and Kennet, its landform and the living requirements of its prehistoric inhabitants, medieval communities and industrial forebears. Did you know that Reading's name is probably derived from 'the place of the people of the red one', an Anglo-Saxon settlement for which no physical trace remains?

Reading is a special place where multiple migrations, invasions, battles, plagues, wars, tragedies, songs, writings, artistic works, dogmas, festivities, industries, technologies and ideas have shaped both its people and the fabric of the town. Be a part of writing its next chapter by understanding its past.

Price £8-99 - Order directly from Two Rivers Press: <http://tworiverspress.com/wp/reading-the-place-of-the-people-of-the-red-one/>

Reading in the Great War 1917-1919

by David Bilton ISBN 9781473854277

The book looks at life in an important industrial and agricultural town. It charts the changes that occurred in ordinary people's lives, some caused by war, some of their own doing.

On the surface Reading was a calm town that got on with its businesses: beer, biscuits, metalwork, seeds and armaments but its poverty impacted on industrial relations leading to strikes. However, underneath, it had a darker side, all of it exposed in the book: drunkenness, desertion, suicide, child abuse, murder and underage sex - It was all there.

Available from Pen and Sword Books at £12-99 www.pen-and-sword.co.uk or by phone 01226 734222

Spotlight on

Stanford in the Vale and District Local History Society

A Local success story

In Spring 2002 Philip Morris edited and published the first issue of The Stanford Historian. In his debut editorial he reminded us that Local History can appeal to people of all ages and from all social backgrounds. He hoped that his magazine could be a recorder of local village tradition and rural country ways. At that time David was attending the Oxford English Local History Diploma course after moving to the village in 1998 following retirement, and Philip and David discussed the possibility of setting up our own village Local History Society.

On the evening of 9th February 2004 Philip, Cheryl White and David met in the bar of the local hostelry, The Horse and Jockey, to finalise arrangements for the first meeting of "The Stanford in the Vale & District Local History Society" due to be held in the small village hall on the following evening. These three were the core of the new society's management committee until the first AGM a year later. Cheryl had already agreed to manage the society's finances; seventy-three pounds as a result of a raffle at the 2003 village festival, where the proposed new society had been publicised. Because David was the last to arrive, by default he was declared the first chairman!

The next evening twenty-three people met in the small village hall to hear a fascinating talk by Dr John Wilson from Cogges Farm Museum, Witney, on the subject of "Early Photographers and Local History". Also present were Cliff Debney and his wife, Jean, from the village of Purley. (Jean would later speak to members of the Society about parish records, and how to date old photographs). They had come to

wish the new Society well on behalf of both the Berkshire Family History Society and the Berkshire Local History Association, of which Cliff was then Vice-President. Sadly Cliff died in 2013 just a few weeks short of his 83rd birthday. He will be remembered by many with an interest in the history of Berkshire. He gave the Society much help and advice in the first months of our existence.

In 2014 the Society celebrated its tenth anniversary, and now, in 2016, the Society is still going strong with a membership of 43 families (63 members) holding regular meetings throughout the autumn, winter and spring months. By the end of 2015 the Society had hosted over 100 speakers in the small hall with an attendance ranging from 25 to 44, the maximum above which it would be necessary to move into the large hall. Recently, under the chairmanship of John Travis, who took over in 2010, the Society had a couple of week-end "Pop-up" museum events to show off the results of new archaeological results from a project by a young archaeologist which are part of his PhD thesis.

Over these years the *Stanford Historian* has also included a great fund of local historical information from the Society members and parishioners of the past. The latest issues for summer and autumn 2016 are numbers 28 and 29 and include articles on the history of Stanford Primary Schools since the 18th century and a transcription of a 1924 article entitled "Looking back about 900 Years: Stanford-in-the-Vale, Past and Present".

At a time when the shape and size of the village is being affected by the needs for new housing developments the Local History Society provides the information so that new villagers can understand where the village came from in the past.

Philip Morris and David Axford

Articles

Slough and the Importance of the year 2017

by S. Fairbank of the Friends of Merton Priory

Everyone knows the date 1066. It is the year that Saxon England began to change, some think for the worse, others for the better. The Normans, who had only recently decided that Christianity was an improvement on paganism, came over from Normandy bringing a zeal which began the building of numerous convents, monasteries and many of our ancient, beautiful cathedrals.

In 1100, when William's son became King Henry I, (Aug 6th), he instituted the Statutes of Liberties with his father's declaration that "above all things he wishes one God to be revered throughout his whole realm, one faith in Christ to be kept ever inviolate"

Henry's settled reign had enabled his godson, Gilbert, to build the Augustinian priory at Merton. Christianity had been introduced to England very shortly after The

Resurrection. The Romans had witnessed the event, brought this knowledge with them and demonstrated it by their use of Christian symbols. The massacre of The Theban Legion in around 1280 resulted in cathedrals and churches being named after the Roman Legionary, St Maurice. Another Roman legionary, St Martin, is remembered to this day. When the Romans departed the Saxons took over and built their own churches but it was left to the Normans to build our great cathedrals.

How is this relevant to us today?

When we bury our dead we might install a stone to mark the spot. When we go to our parish church we remember all those whom we knew have worshipped there and if it is an old building it begins to root us in our history. So it is also with local landmarks. One local Augustinian landmark is in Slough: St Laurence church, Upton, is the oldest building in Slough and was cared for by the canons of Merton Priory. The godson of Henry I founded Merton Augustinian Priory in 1117 and later the canons built some of St Laurence, Upton, adding a house next door. The beautiful ceiling groins in the church are thought to be their work.

St Laurence, Slough, is mentioned in the Records of Merton Priory and the canons also cared for Hitcham and Taplow churches, Chessington and Guildford and over 50 others. Any reference to St Thomas à Becket reminds us of Merton Augustinian Priory because he trained there.

Local Augustinian landmarks are Bisham and Sandford, two of at least 200 Augustinian foundations in England alone. The Augustinians used a suggested rule put together by St Augustine of Hippo and the greatest of all the foundations in this country was Merton Augustinian Priory famous for Merton College, Oxford, Holyood Abbey and Nicholas Breakespear.

Merton Priory, which gave its name to the London Borough of Merton, also produced the Eleven Statutes of Merton (housed in the House of Lords) which were the refining of Magna Carta. Runnymede is another local landmark of this mainly Augustinian event..

It is hoped that every church will light a candle on May 3rd 2017 in memory of the work of the canons of Merton Augustinian Priory. May 3rd 2017 is the 900th anniversary of the first service held at the priory in their new building on the River Wandle. It was None, said and sung at 3pm. "This is God's house, the place of peace and rest, where the poor with Solomon's own wealth are blessed." was the hymn sung on that day. Martin Luther, the well known Augustinian is considered to have begun The Reformation in 1517 when he hung his challenge to his Church on the local church door. So 2017 is a year when we celebrate the Augustinians and all we owe to them.

Pendon Museum

Overview

The English countryside changed dramatically in the course of the twentieth century. Many farms and cottages, the traditional methods of farming, the means of transport, and even the landscape itself changed beyond recognition or disappeared, and are now distant memories.

Books and images, however evocative, have their limitations, but a realistic recreation in the form of a model can record those lost rural scenes in three dimensions. This was the vision that Roye England, the founder of Pendon Museum, had back in the 1950s.

Pendon Museum has reproduced, in miniature but in incredibly accurate detail, glimpses of the beauty and the hard reality of the English countryside in the pivotal years around 1930. As well as modelling the countryside of that time, the models serve as a starting point for better understanding the fundamental changes that have taken place in the way of life during the last hundred years.

Pendon Museum includes three main exhibits or scenes. All of them are inspired by real landscapes and railways. First is Madder Valley Railway – the work of one man and the first realistic model railway built in England. We then move on to Dartmoor, which was Pendon's first model. The highlight is the Vale Scene which captures the essence of the area to the west of Pendon – its scenery, its buildings, its workplaces, its transport.

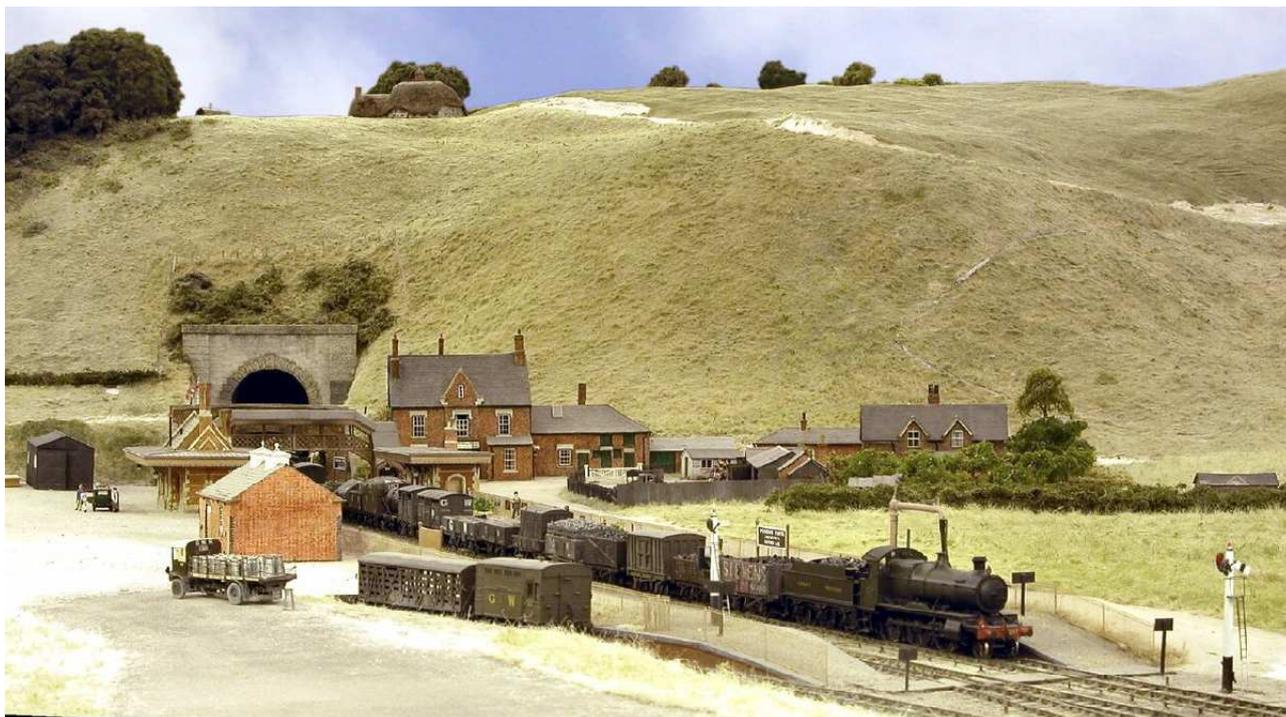
The Madder Valley Scene

Built entirely by John Ahern, this layout dates from the 1930s and is an historical relic of the early days of scenic railway modelling. It pioneered the idea of scenic craftsmanship. It showed what could be done and many light railway and branch line layouts built in the last fifty years are its descendants.

It was not an absolutely precise dimensionally accurate replica of a real prototype and featured models of narrow gauge locomotives from the Isle of Man, Wales, Devon and even India, built to run on 16.5mm gauge track alongside models of standard gauge stock. The buildings were based on those buildings that had caught John Ahern's fancy "Most of my buildings are derived from something, but they are not exact copies".

The Dartmoor Scene

The Dartmoor Scene portrays a typical but imaginary Great Western branch line, turning from the real South Devon main line at the fictional Pen Tor Road junction to run north-westwards across the tors and into Cornwall. The services in the scene reflect traffic and operations of the area during the period between the Railway Grouping of 1923 and the outbreak of the Second World War – considered by many to be the heyday of Britain's steam railways.



Pendon Parva Station

The buildings are all accurate representations of long-lost structures that once stood at Launceston, Ivybridge and Yelverton, on the edge of the moors of Devon and Cornwall. The branch terminates at the fictitious holiday town and fishing port of Porthkerrick, on the north Cornish coast. An imaginary line can show a wide range of stock and operations and demonstrate the changes that took place between the beginning and end of the Pendon period. It also provides an opportunity to contrast the traditional railway operation shown with that of today – for example, in all likelihood the yard would now be a small industrial estate.

The Vale Scene

The Vale isn't a real place; it's a collection of buildings and country settings from the Vale of White Horse that have been brought together in a realistic setting. All the buildings are copies of real ones as they were around 1930. The founders of Pendon went out and measured and photographed them.

Villages in the Vale in 1920s and 1930s were to a very large extent self contained and self sufficient communities, in many ways having more in common with even earlier times than with today.

For example, few people had a telephone, there were no mobiles, no internet, no television and no supermarkets. Very few people had cars and most people lived their whole life in one village or small town. They grew or bartered much of their food and only ate what was in season or stored, and made many of their own clothes. You can hear more about this as you move around the model.

The late 1920s and early 1930s were a time when things were starting to change and these changes would eventually make the world much more recognizable to us.

Before long innovations such as running water and waste drainage; electricity and gas mains; and proper roads would become commonplace. This in turn created new opportunities – not least the possibility jobs in nearby towns.

At the same time farming would also change with new methods, chemicals and tractors and other machinery and as a result fewer people working on the land would be able to produce more food. This made it possible for towns to grow in size.

Roye England's Tale

In 1925, 18-year-old Roye England came from Australia to England hoping that he could market an automated model train control system.

He landed in Plymouth and travelled from there in a Great Western Railway train hauled by Star Class locomotive *Westminster Abbey*. He claimed that he fell in love twice on this first day, initially with the GWR, and then with the countryside through which he passed – which was quite unlike anything back home.

For a time he lived near Swindon on the western end of the Vale of White Horse. The Vale was a depressed farming area where thatched cottages were common. Towards the end of the 1920s he noticed that the buildings and landscape were starting to change – in his view not for the better!

He vowed to preserve the scene in model form so that future generations could witness some of what was around him. His great vision was to model a village that was typical of the Vale, set it on a hill, surround it with farming and have the GWR main line crossing the landscape below. The modelling was to be to a very high standard so that it was convincingly realistic and show the smallest of details.

Paul Thompson

For those who don't know it, Pendon Museum is in Long Wittenham in what we regard as 'occupied Berkshire'. I first visited it many years ago and have dropped in a few more times over the years. It really is a fascinating place to visit and I am sure you will be made very welcome. Perhaps you can persuade the museum to join the BLHA!. Details can be found on their website <http://www.pendonmuseum.com>

John Chapman

Society News

Berkshire Archaeological Society

In the Autumn, the Society and Research Group returned to Blounts Court, Sonning Common, at the invitation of Johnson Matthey, for a third year of excavation. In previous years, Tudor chalk floors and a Georgian garden wall were uncovered in the grounds of the multi-period house. Geo-physical investigations showed further anomalies over which we placed two trenches. We found just fragments of old glass and building materials in one trench but the other revealed walls and tile finds that could indicate a very early building. Mortar samples were taken for radio carbon dating

which the company generously offered to fund. We await the results.

The monthly meeting of the Berkshire Saxon Group assessed the material they have collected in their investigations with the possibility of a publication considered. The Group received a talk by Colin Berks on the augering and geophysics work that Marlow Archaeology Society is carrying out at Odney, Cookham. It is recorded that King Alfred placed one of his Viking defence forts on the Thames there but definitive information is proving elusive thus far.

During the Autumn the Society received lectures on timber buildings, the ancient Mayas and the amazing excavation at a Thame new housing estate, which revealed Neolithic henges, Roman and Saxon occupation. The year finished in traditional style with wine, mince pies and four presentations from members showing their archaeological holiday visits to Malta, Orkney, the Holy Land and France.

Ann Griffin

Hungerford Historical Association

David Chandler brought exceptional knowledge about horses and saddlery to his talk on 26th October entitled *The Horse in History*, having been a seventh generation saddler in the Marlborough family business begun in the 18th Century. He is a member of the Saddlers' Livery Company and was Master in 2009-10.

In Britain the 1900s marked the peak of ascendancy of the horse. Horse traffic was a major problem in London! The Army maintained reduced cavalry until 1940, when armoured vehicles replaced horses. In WW2, however, horses were once again used in agriculture, replacing fuel-driven machinery.

The earliest 'wild horses' came from the Eurasian Steppes: small, compact, tough animals of 13-14 hands, resembling our native ponies. They flourished in a 5,000 mile area from the Eastern Steppes to the Danube recorded in Kazakhstan in 4,000 BC.

Initially hunted for food, their potential for 'hauling' became obvious: faster than plodding oxen, and the lighter weight donkey. 'Domestication' followed, assisted by hunting dogs.

The invention of the wheel revolutionized civilizations. The solid wheel was superseded by the lighter 'spoked' wheel, as metal-working skills, initially in iron, were overtaken by bronze. A flourishing Bronze Age industry rapidly spread. The chariot 'war machine' was adopted throughout ancient civilizations: Egyptian, Assyrian, Hittite, Persians, for example. It was critical for conquest and in use for over 1,000 years.

In Greek and Roman times chariots were also used for sport 'status' in addition to military use.

Interestingly, riding came after driving chariots. 'Controlling' the horse was a problem. Initially, the rider sat further back as on a donkey in 1,000 BC, with a loose 'bridle' and nose ring, sitting on a cloth. The single mounted archer with the crossbow, the latest weapon, gave rise later to 'mounted cavalry'. Alexander's military suprem-

acy was based on his cavalry and disciplined infantry superseding the chariot.

The invention of the saddle in the 4th Century BC, by nomadic tribes in Siberia, enabled the formidable cavalry of the Mongols to establish its vast empire. Riding more comfortably over greater distances became possible. Stirrups were only invented in 1 AD by Chinese and Asiatic peoples dependant on the advance in metal-working skills from iron to bronze, which rapidly spread to 'industrial' bronze foundries in Europe.

In the medieval period of massive social and political change the horse played a crucial role. The rise of feudalism, changes in warfare, the Crusaders, chivalry and the symbolic 'medieval knight' and charger: the horse was the key component. The highly skilled metal-working and leather-working for armour and saddlery achieved the highest status for knights and horses. Horses were bred to bear the heavy weight.

The horse was crucial to the conquest and settlement of the Americas. The Spanish took 100 horses to South America and vanquished the Maya and Aztec civilizations. Within 30 years 'wild horse' from escaped horses populated both South and North America – and played a huge role in colonization and settlement.

The bloodline of the British thoroughbred of today can be traced to three Arabian stallions introduced to refine the native breeds. 'Byerley Turk in the late 1600s then 'Godolphin Arabian' and 'Darley Arabian' were brought in in the early 1700s; this direct bloodline is yet another chapter in the fascinating history of the horse.

Our November meeting was about *Motoring in the Kennet Valley* by Roger Day and Tim Green. The earliest motorized road vehicles, successors to the stage coach, were considered potentially dangerous, such that legislation was passed to protect both the public and horses. The Red Flag Act 1896 required any vehicle to be preceded by a person carrying a Red Flag of warning to reduce speed – a maximum of 4 mph, later amended to 4-8 mph in towns and 12 mph in the countryside.

In 1907 Lord Handsworth of the Daily Mail sponsored a 1,000-mile Round Britain Trial; 83 vehicles took part. It was very well organized: marshals at check points were tasked with monitoring speed and recording on time sheets. Fuel was paid for in advance at pumps along the route! The London to Bristol leg was won by Montague in a 1899 Daimler at 12 mph. The Berkshire police were out in force to check speeding! Large crowds lined the route, many seeing "motor cars" for the first time. Vehicles travelled through Thatcham, Newbury and Hungerford at 5 mph.

The necessity of having readily available fuel gave rise to petrol pumps springing up nationwide for passing motorists. Initially attached to local shops and private houses on any convenient site, they were soon to add essential repairs and maintenance.

World War I created a huge demand for vital motorized transport for both men and equipment, and gave an immediate impetus to development. At the end of the war masses of surplus vehicles were bought up: lorries, for example, were converted to 14-

seater "charabancs", others "multi-purpose". To meet the increasing demand "garages" opened to include the facilities for working on vehicles as well as selling fuel. In towns and villages, locally in Newbury, Hungerford and Ramsbury, garages sprang up all along the A4.

After 1918 increasing use of advanced technology led to a rapidly expanding number of vehicles. This necessitated a move to construct "purpose built" roadside garages for both fuel and maintenance and later, sales.

In 1920, the first local petrol station at Aldermaston with "hand pumps" was the typical pattern. Later a small shop for "extras", accessories and motor oil was added. By 1930, however, Halfords had developed stores throughout the country.

The design of these "new" garages in the 1930s mirrored the contemporary design, for example "The Sun" garage in the Bath Road A4. In 1934 Murray and Whittaker had a prestigious architect-designed garage filling station complex in Newbury, boasting electric petrol pumps! Towns and villages often had several garages, reflecting the popularity of motoring.

Some rapidly moved into sales, of any make of car, before "franchising". Newbury had a number of prestigious "family run" garages: Stradlings, Wheelers, Nias and Whittakers, Murray, Marchant.

Both parts of this very interesting and entertaining talk were greatly enhanced by the impressive collection of photographs, newspaper cuttings and memorabilia about an absorbing aspect of local history. Its nostalgic appeal was reflected in the many questions from the audience of over 80, who were invited to provide their own contributions for further research by Roger and Tim.

Daphne Priestley

Project Purley

Our regular meetings in the Barn started back after the summer recess in September with a lively Members' Evening focused on special birthday celebrations. Three members, John Chapman, Lee Hall and Jean Chudleigh, opened proceeding with talks on their experiences at the *national and local celebrations of the Queen's 90th birthday*. Finally David Downs shared the story of the 100th birthday celebrations of his wife's uncle, Bill Lloyd, a veteran of the R.A.F. whose daring antics kept the audience enraptured throughout the talk. In October, Abbot Geoffrey Scott of Douai Abbey came to talk to us about western monasticism and the *history of the Order of St Benedict*. He managed to fit nearly 2000 years of history into an hour of fascinating chat. Our November speaker, member Ben Viljoen, was a last minute step-in due to illness, but captivated members with a talk on his very recent return to *Zambia*, fifty years on from when he and his wife had initially met there. Richly illustrated with photographs of the countryside, its infrastructure, its people and food, Ben took us on a very personal journey, interwoven with some of the historical changes which have occurred in southern Africa in the last fifty years.

In December, we once again hosted the Rain or Shine Theatre Company for its annual winter performance in the Barn – this time *The Hound of the Baskervilles* – which proved to be very popular. The evening raised money for The Blind Children’s charity, adding £600 to the £1,000 of donations the society has already made to local organisations during 2016. A week later, members enjoyed the annual Christmas party in the same venue. This was well attended and, as always, was a relaxed evening with a ‘bring and share’ buffet and the usual testing Christmas quiz – this time a photographic teaser on lesser-known places in Purley.

Our archival collection has continued to grow this year and we continue to attempt to bring some sense of order to the back collection of items awaiting cataloguing. It is good to see some new research utilising the archive now underway, and we hope more will be encouraged. Membership numbers have also grown this year and we once again finish the year at a record high.

Catherine Sampson

Sandhurst Historical Society

September brought Sally Botwright to tell us that *the London Docks* were the largest in the world. In the 18th century there could be as many as 1800 ships and barges loading and unloading with some cargoes taking up to 3 months for this to happen! Imported bags of sugar caused the dockers' skin to become raw leading to one street being named Blood Alley. Alcohol was decanted from barrels at the dockside and at one time Wapping High Street had 37 pubs – now there are only 3. In 1930 100,000 people worked in and around the docks. Owing to the Thames needing dredging, competition from foreign ports and outdated equipment everything closed down between 1968 and 1981. Regeneration of the docklands gave us Canary Wharf and London City Airport. 112,000 people now work here with more building still ongoing.

In October Mr. and Mrs. Hayes gave us an insight into the *Royal British Legion and the poppy appeal*. On 22nd April, 1915 the German Army launched the first gas attack and Major John McCrae ministered to the injured and helped bury the dead. His poem “In Flanders Field” was seen by Moine Michael at Columbia University which inspired her to begin selling poppies in the States. Major Howson established a poppy factory on 5th June, 1922 with 5 disabled servicemen. Poppies are now made in Richmond and Aylesbury resulting in 40,000,000 poppies and 5,000,000 petals together with numerous wreaths and sprays being put together each year. There are 350,000 collectors as well as many shops selling poppies. The Royal British Legion helps homeless people, widows who need financial assistance, has seven care homes and is the largest employer of the disabled in the country. This year it is hoped that the appeal will raise £45,000,000.

In November Simon Williams, a retired policeman, gave us a talk entitled “*Eyewitness*”. From this it was shown how reliable or unreliable memories can be when asked to describe a person or a sequence of events. We were told a story of a girl who was attacked on campus in the States. Detectives thought she was one of the best witnesses they had ever come across and the culprit was subsequently sent to prison.

However 11 years later it transpired the wrong man had been convicted. Memories of a witness can be influenced by the wrong line of questioning. It is very important that a witness recalls events in the correct order as something they may consider trivial then proves not to be the case. Mr. Williams called two of our members out, placing them back to back. They were then asked to give a description of each other. Despite knowing each other very well for some time they did not find this easy. Nowadays witness interviewing is carried out using DVD's which gives the advantage of studying the witness after they have given evidence.

Janice Burlton

Shinfield & District Local History Society

Our September and October meetings were working sessions discussing progress on our projects.

In November Graham Bilbe gave a talk on “*Reading’s Trams and Trolley Buses*”. Dressed in a tram driver’s coat, Goldline shirt, Reading Transport tie and Smith’s Coaches cap he began with reference to the first street tramway (horse drawn) in the UK, introduced in Birkenhead in 1860. The driver’s coat was, of necessity, a very warm garment and was quickly removed by Graham before continuing with his talk. In 1879 the Reading Tramway Company was set up running horse drawn trams between Cemetery Junction and Brock Barracks. This company was bought out by Reading Corporation in 1901 and the line extended to Palmer Park. 1903 saw the introduction of electric trams with further extensions to the line. In WW1 the first female staff were employed as conductors; tram drivers were known as “Motor Men”. In 1936 trials were undertaken using trolley buses which had become popular in London. Reading corporation acquired 6 trolley buses and in 1939 the main line was established between The Bear Inn and The Three Tuns. Further routes were added during WW2 and in 1949 more trolley buses were bought. There were more acquisitions in 1961 but on 3rd November 1968 the last trolley bus ran in Reading. Finally, Graham gave a brief history of motor buses in Reading and we all had a go at using a conductor’s ticket punch to round off a very interesting evening.

George Taylor

Swallowfield Local History Society

We were delighted when, in September, one of our local residents Barbara Stanley former head of Reading's Abbey School came to talk about the *History of girls' education*. She talked about a number of establishments such as Bedford school, and of the work of pioneers in the field, including the celebrated Miss Buss and Miss Beale, who famously "cupid's darts did not feel" as they set up the North London Collegiate School and Cheltenham Ladies' College. We also heard some of the history of the Abbey School and other Reading schools. Barbara highlighted the widespread 19th Century view that females were unsuited to academic study and too fragile to

cope. This had to be modified when Philippa Fawcett came top in the Cambridge Maths Tripos in 1890, but listeners were reminded that women could not be awarded degrees there until after the Second World War! Everyone agreed that this was a very interesting talk and a reminder of just how much things have changed since the mid 19th century.

The Hon. Mrs Mary Bayliss JP CVO joined us in October to talk about *her time as Lord-Lieutenant* for the Royal County of Berkshire. Her Majesty The Queen appoints the Lord-Lieutenant for each County on the advice of the Prime Minister. She had been given three weeks' notice by the then Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, he asked if she was prepared to serve. On consulting with her husband she gracefully accepted, she was appointed in 2008 and is the first woman to hold the post in the County. The Lord-Lieutenant is Her Majesty's representative, it is her foremost duty to uphold the dignity of the Crown. The office is unpaid and the age of retirement is 75.

She then described some of the myriad of duties involved in this Role:

- Attends and is responsible for the arrangements for Royal visits
- Presents medals and awards
- Advises on submissions for Honours nominations
- Prepares the guest list for Royal Garden Parties

She had a superb support team including two clerks, a team of deputy Lord-Lieutenants and four Cadets, who would be her 'gofer' when on official duties all of whom she praised very highly. We were fascinated to learn the intricacies of such an important appointment and were so pleased we had the opportunity of learning just what was involved in such a prestigious position.

'*One Hundred Years of Shops in Reading*' was the subject of Ann Smith's presentation to our members at the November Meeting. Before retiring she was responsible for the Local History Collection housed at the Central Library and so her insight into the History of the town is boundless. Many memories were revived by views of numerous shops that had long since disappeared. In some cases caused by redevelopment, such as the building of the Butts Centre which was responsible for the loss of Cork Street together with Reading Garage and other shops in Broad Street. Lots of interesting questions at the end of her presentation added to the knowledge and interest of us all.

We will be ending the year with our Chairman Ken Hussey on the 15th December telling us about the intriguing subject of the *Lartique's Irish monorail*. We'll enjoy mulled wine and nibbles to wish each other a very Happy Christmas. January meeting date will be spent enjoying a meal together. In February we welcome Sally Ballard and look forward to hearing of her Childhood Memories living in Swallowfield.

Our Web site www.slhsoc.org.uk will give you all the details of our forthcoming Programme. Visitors are always welcome, if a subject attracts your attention, just

come along and join us for the evening. The Rose Room, Swallowfield Parish Hall, 7.45 for 8 pm. If you would like to know more about the History Society please contact either Ken Hussey (Chairman) on 0118 988 3650 or Maggie Uttley (Secretary) on 0118 988 2954 or email kcuttley@aol.com

Maggie Uttley

Twyford and Ruscombe Local History Society

After the summer break, we resumed in September when our speaker was Mr Paul Lacey, and his subject '*Pioneer Buses of the Thames Valley*'. Mr Lacey's knowledge of this subject was prodigious ; and he had some old photos which showed not only technical details of the actual buses, but also interesting background sites where those photos were taken.

At our October meeting Mrs Joan Dils talked to us about '*The History of Whiteknights*' and took that part of Earley through the centuries from being a medieval manor to being a seat of learning in the shape of Reading University. A very interesting and enjoyable evening, illustrated by slides.

Meanwhile, undaunted by the setback to our Osier Heritage Project, (when the sets were eaten by muntjaks). Graham Starkie has erected a fence around the site, which we hope will be high enough to deter any deer from treating it as a restaurant. So now it's a case of 'watch this space'.

Mrs Ann Roberts came in November to talk to us about '*The History of the Theatre Royal , Windsor*'. We learned many interesting facts from its start in 1793 to the plays produced there and the actors who performed in them: we were then treated to a tour of the building, seeing parts not normally seen by the public .

This talk rounded off the year nicely as, apart from our Christmas party, we do not meet again until January.

Denise Wilkin

Wargrave Local History Society

As we reached the centenary of the mid-point of World War 1, it seemed appropriate for the Wargrave Local History Society to look back in September meeting to see what was happening to Wargrave and Wargravians at that time. The major impact was the men who "joined the Colours". It is impossible to detail them all, but a few were highlighted, to discover 'who they were' and 'what happened to them' – both the 55 named on the war memorial and those who survived the war. In all, 488 men are listed as having come from Wargrave - to put this into perspective, the 1911 census gave the population of the civil parish as 2112. Other members of the village also 'played their part', with the "Woodclyffe Auxiliary Hospital", run by ladies from the Red Cross, or the "Wargrave Hospital Dressing Emergency Society" who despatched about half a million dressings to all theatres of war from Wargrave.

In October Sue Hourigan, who has been conservationist at the Berkshire Record Office for about 25 years, gave an interesting and useful presentation on *Collection*

Care. She explained what can happen to treasured documents, photographs, etc – not only in the official archives, but with the treasured collections people may have themselves, and some of the ways to look after them, categorising them into eight factors – housekeeping, high humidity, high temperature, exposure to light, poor handling, ‘D-I-Y’, fastenings, and poor packaging. Sue concluded her practical advice by commenting that, for any document or collection, “if it’s worth keeping, it’s worth preserving”.

In November Barbara Ratings gave an outstanding presentation, full of interest, laughter and thought-provoking observation, of her *Experiences as a Vicar’s Wife* from Germany. Barbara began by defining a ‘vicar’s wife, starting with Martin Luther’s wife, Katharina von Bora, who she contrasted with Charlotte Lucas in *Pride and Prejudice*. Barbara then went on to explain how she and John had met – John in training at Cuddesdon, and Barbara as an au pair to the Runcie family. The churches where John served used vestments and candles, and had processions, and regular communion services – things Barbara was not used to. She was also unaccustomed to some of the social practices of Wargrave, or some of the English sayings that had no German equivalent! Barbara also recalled her work teaching locally, which (for strengthening British-German relations) was recognised by the German government.

At the Christmas Party in December, when the traditional mulled wine and mince pies were enjoyed, a presentation was shown recalling the Society’s 21st century visits.

Our meetings start at 8 pm in the meeting room at the Old Pavilion on the Recreation Ground, Wargrave. See the Society’s website www.wargravehistory.org.uk/ or for more information.

Peter Delaney

Museums and Libraries

Stanford in the Vale ‘Pop-up Museum’

and Archaeological Excavations, July 23-24 2016

This twin event consisted of a large exhibition in the village hall, along with test pits opened on Church Green, at the heart of this ancient village lying between Wantage and Faringdon. It was held both to showcase the many archaeological finds recently unearthed in Stanford, and to raise awareness of our shared heritage in a community that is now rapidly expanding. It was organized by the Stanford in the Vale Local History Society as part of, and with the support of, the national Festival of Archaeology 2016.

There were high levels of interest and constant streams of visitors to both sites throughout the weekend. The closing talk given by archaeological Project Director

David Ashby of the University of Winchester was also very well attended. Altogether, the event was felt to have been a big success.

Archaeological investigations began in 2008 and to date many test pits and trenches have been dug around the village, and various non-invasive survey techniques have been employed. These activities, together with the study of ancient documents and surviving early buildings, have helped us to learn much more about the past of our village and its people.

We now know that hunter gatherers roamed the area 10,000 years ago. We can also say that there has been continuous occupation ever since the era of settlement and farming began. With its own market charter from 1230, Stanford had in fact grown into a town with many different trades and crafts by the medieval period. This growth is mirrored by the remains of two smaller stone-built churches recently discovered by scanning beneath the present substantial fourteenth-century structure.

That prosperity did not last, however. It is now clear that climate change brought negative economic conditions which reduced the community's size and importance in the late medieval period. Growth only came slowly then until we reach the modern era.

The exhibition set out to reflect this long history. Archaeological finds from every period were presented. A further section used various types of written records – wills and inventories, as well as court and church records – to open a window on ordinary villagers' lives in the 16th and 17th centuries. A further collection of visual materials showed the changing face of Stanford in modern times. Aerial views revealed the growth and changing face of the village, while a collection of old photos presented the people, their trades and their leisure activities in the very different community that existed here not so many years ago.

Out on Church Green, intriguing new finds demonstrated that much more remains to be discovered. They point to the future, and to a programme of archaeological investigation that is set to continue.

Michael Macfarlane

Opportunities

Education Education Education

500 years of learning at Eton College

Drawing on the rich holdings of College Library and the College Archives, this exhibition traces the development of Eton from its beginnings in 1440 to the modern, vibrant school it is today, with a particular focus on education and learning. The catalyst for this change was the Public Schools Act of 1868. The exhibition looks at the methods of teaching; the curriculum; school books and their use and personalisation by boys and others; and the Pote family of publishers who produced school books

for Eton for over two centuries.

This free exhibition at the Tower Gallery, Eton College is open until 31 March, Monday to Friday, 9.30-1 and 2-5 by appointment. To book, please contact us at collections@etoncollege.org.uk or 01753 370590.

Reading Museum Events

Archaeological Finds Surgery 12 Jan 2017

Bring in your local archaeological finds to be identified and recorded by East Berkshire Finds Liaison Officer David Williams. Find out more about the Portable Antiquities Scheme and how it is adding to our knowledge of the past. Second Th...

Museum Surgery 12 Jan 2017

Visitors can discover more about the collections, or ask for help in identifying interesting objects (NB no valuations can be given). Every Thursday, in the Box Room. Who: All ages When: 12.00pm - 4.00pm, on Thursdays How Much: Free, ...

Reading Museum Gallery Tour 14 Jan 2017

Join one of our trained volunteers for an introductory tour to the galleries. Our volunteers begin the tour with an update on the Abbey Quarter project; find out about the exciting plans to transform Reading's Abbey precinct into a 'U'.

Bayeux Tapestry Tour - Saturdays

Enjoy a guided tour of the famous full-size facsimile Tapestry – no need to book. Every Saturday in the Bayeux Gallery. Who: All ages When: 2.15pm - 3pm, on Saturdays How Much: Suggested donation £2, drop in

West Berkshire Museum

Special Exhibition: The Lie of the Land (in Gallery 9)

An exhibition of landscape paintings from the museum's collection that have taken inspiration from West Berkshire's beautiful and varied countryside, dating from the 19th century until the present day.

The artists range from unknown to local amateur enthusiasts to several who have exhibited internationally, including at least three who have exhibited at the Royal Academy. These include respected artist and former mayor of Newbury, Christopher Hall, nationally known impressionist painter Frederick Hall who lived in West Berkshire for some 26 years, and internationally renowned local artist William Henry Gore, who is buried at Newtown Road Cemetery.

Runs until 27 August 2017

BLHA AGM

Don't forget the AGM to be held at St Nicolas Hall, Newbury on Saturday 11th March - see page 3

History Societies

- Arborfield Local History Society:** Secretary Tina Kemp, Kenneys Farm, Maggs Green, Arborfield RG2 9JZ [tina@geoffkemp.force).co.uk] see www.arborfieldhistory.org.uk
- Berkshire Archaeological Society:** Andrew Hutt, 19, Challenor Close, Wokingham, Berks, RG40 4UJ [info@berksarch.co.uk]
- Berkshire Family History Society:** Research Centre, Yeomanry House, Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7TJ [www.berksfhs.org.uk]
- Berkshire Industrial Archaeological Group:** Secretary, Peter Trout, 7 West Chiltern, Woodcote, Reading, RG8 OSG or Mr. Weber, [bentwebershops@waitrose.com]
- Berkshire Record Society,** Secretary Margaret Simons, 80 Reeds Ave, Earley, Reading RG6 5SR [margaretsimons@hotmail.co.uk]
- Blewbury Local History Group:** Audrey Long, Spring Cottage, Church Road, Blewbury, Oxon, OX11 9PY tel 01235 850427 [audrey.long@waitrose.com]
- Bracknell & District Local Historical Society:** Mrs Jane Moss, 31 Huntsman's Meadow, Ascot, SL5 7PF [MossSandalwood@aol.com]
- Burnham Historians:** Mary Bentley, 38 Conway Road, Taplow, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 0LD tel 01628 665932 [burnhamhistorians@btinternet.com]
- Cox Green Local History Group:** Pat Barlow, 29 Bissley Drive, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 3UX. tel 01628 823890 weekends only. [alan.barlow2@btinternet.com]
- East Garston Local History Society:** Jonathan Haw, Goldhill House, Front Street, East Garston, Hungerford, RG17 7EU [jonathanhaw@btopenworld.com]
- East Ilsley Local History Society:** Sue Burnay, White Hollow, High St, E.Ilsley, Berks RG20 7LE tel 01635 281308 [info@eastilsleyhistory.com] [www.eastilsleyhistory.com]
- Eton Wick Local History Group:** Teresa Stanton, 35 Eton Wick Road, Eton Wick, Windsor, SL4 6LU tel 01753 860591 [teresa.stanton@talktalk.net] [www.etonwickhistory.co.uk]
- Finchampstead Society:** Mohan Banerji, 3 Tanglewood, Finchampstead, Berks, RG40 3PR tel 0118 9730479.
- Goring Gap Local History Society:** Janet Hurst, 6 Nun's Acre, Goring on Thames, Reading, Berks RG8 9BE tel 01491 871022 [goringgaphistory@gmail.com] [www.goringgaphistory.org.uk]
- The Hanneys Local History Society:** Ann Fewins, 'Lilac Cottage', East Hanney, Wantage, OX12 0HX. tel 01235 868372 [annfewins@beeb.net]
- The History of Reading Society:** Vicki Chesterman, 7 Norman Road, Caversham RG4 5JN [vickichesterman@yahoo.co.uk] [www.historyofreadingsociety.org.uk]
- Hungerford Historical Association: Secretary:** Secretary Mark Martin, 23 Fairview Road, Hungerford RG17 0BP. Tel: 01488 682932. [mandm.martin21@btinternet.com] [www.hungerfordhistorical.org.uk]
- Longworth & District History Society:** Pam Woodward, 22 Cherrytree Close, Southmoor, Abingdon, OX13 5BE. tel 01865 820500 [prwoodward@btinternet.com] [<http://www.longworth-district-history-society.org.uk/>]
- Maidenhead Archaeological & Historical Society:** Brian Madge, 11 Boulters Court, Maidenhead, SL6 8TH [bandgmadge@btinternet.com]
- Mid Thames Archaeological & Historical Society:** Jane Wall, 143 Vine Road, Stoke Poges, SL2 4DH [sec.mtaha@yahoo.co.uk]
- Mortimer Local History Group:** Mrs Janet Munson, The Laurels, Ravensworth Road, Mortimer, RG7 3UD [munsonsinmortimer@yahoo.co.uk]
- Newbury District Field Club:** Ray Hopgood, 23 Lipscombe Close, Newbury, RG14 5JW [secretary@ndfc.org.uk]

Oxfordshire Family History Society: Wendy Archer, The Old Nursery, Pump Lane, Marlow, SL7 3RS [chairman@ofhs.org.uk]

Pangbourne Heritage Group: Lyn Davies, 1 Hartslock Court, Pangbourne, RG8 7BJ [lyndav87@aol.com]

Project Purley: Catherine Sampson, 32 Waterside Drive, Purley on Thames, Berks, RG8 8AQ tel 0118 9422 255 [chairman@project-purley.eu] [www.project-purley.eu]

Sandhurst Historical Society: Mrs Jennie Ogden, 46 High St, Sandhurst, Berks GU47 8DY [j.ogden08@tiscali.co.uk][www.sandhurst-historical-society.org]

Shinfield & District Local History Society: Ann Young, 'Roselyn', School Green, Shinfield, Reading, Berks RG2 9EH. tel 0118 9882120. Reporter George Taylor [georgetaylor29@btinternet.com]

Sonning & Sonning Eye History Society: Diana Coulter, Red House Cottage, Pearson Road, Sonning, Berks, RG4 6UF tel 0118 9692132 [diana.coulter@orange.net]

Stanford in the Vale & District Local History Society: Dr David Axford, Honey End, 14 Ock Meadow, Stanford in the Vale, Oxon SN7 8LN tel 01367 718480 [dnax@btinternet.com]

Swallowfield Local History Society: Ken Hussey, Kimberley, Swallowfield RG7 1QX [www.slhsoc.org.uk]

Tadley Local History Society: 5 Church Road, Pamber Heath, Tadley, Hampshire, RG26 3DP [www.tadshistory.com]

Thatcham Historical Society: Mr P Laverack, 2 Ashworth Drive, Thatcham, Berks, G19 3YU tel 01635 863536 [enquiries@thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk] [www.thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk]

Theale Local History Society: Graham Reeves, 52 Parkers Corner, Englefield, RG7 5JR [thealehistory@aol.com]

Twyford & Ruscombe Local History Society: Audrey Curtis, 39 New Road, Ruscombe RG10 9LN tel 0118 9343260 [audreycurt@googlemail.com] reporter Denise Wilkin

Wargrave Local History Society: Peter Delaney, 6 East View Close, Wargrave, Berks, RG10 8BJ tel 0118 9403121 [secretary@wargravehistory.co.uk] [www.wargravehistory.org.uk]

Windsor Local History Group: Sue Ashley, 49 York Avenue, Windsor, SL4 3PA [nutritionasashley@hotmail.com] [www.windsorhistory.org.uk]

Friends of Windsor and Royal Borough Museum: Malcolm Lock, 1 Duncannon Crescent, Windsor, SL4 4YP [malcolmlock@hotmail.com] [www.friendsofwindsormuseum.org.uk]

Would you all please check these entries and let us know of any changes. The entry should show:-

The name, postal address and e-mail address for formal correspondence with the society and optionally a telephone contact number.

Your website url (if you have one)

Optionally the name and e-mail address of the person who will send in reports of your society's activities (if different from official contact)

e-mail changes and corrections to membership@blha.org.uk

Archives, Libraries & Museums

Abingdon Library: The Charter, Abingdon, OX14 3LY. tel 01235 520374
[abingdon_library@yahoo.co.uk]

Allen County Public Library: Genealogy, PO Box 2270, Fort Wayne, Indiana, USA tel 001
468 012270 [www.genealogycenter.org]

Berkshire Record Office: 9 Coley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6AF tel 0118 901 5132
[www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk] [arch@reading.gov.uk]

Bracknell Library Local Studies: Hue Lewis, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1BH. tel
01344 352400 [bracknell.library@bracknell-forest.gov.uk]

Centre for Oxfordshire Studies: Helen Drury, Central Library, Westgate, Oxford, OX1 1DJ
tel 01865 815741 [enquiries@oxst.demon.uk]

Eton College Library: Eton College, Windsor, SL4 6DB [archivist@etoncollege.org.uk]

Guildhall Library: Serials Assistant, Guildhall Library, Aldermanbury, London EC2V 7HH.
[Andrew.Harvey@cityoflondon.gov.uk] [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/guildhalllibrary]

Hungerford Virtual Museum: – [www.hungerfordvirtualmuseum.co.uk]

Maidenhead Heritage Trust: Fran Edwards, 18 Park Street, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 1SL.
[administration@mhc1.demon.co.uk]

Maidenhead & Windsor Local Studies Library: Chris Atkins, St Ives Road, Maidenhead,
SL6 1QU tel 01628 796981 [chris.atkins@rbwm.gov.uk]

Newbury Reference Library: Fiona Davies, Newbury Central Library, The Wharf, Newbury,
RG14 5AU tel 01635 519900

Reading Central Library: Local Studies Librarian, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BQ tel
0118 9015965

Reading Museum Services: The Curator, Town Hall, Blagrove Street, Reading, RG1 1QH. tel
0118 9399800 [www.readingmuseum.org.uk]

Reading University Library: Kate Devaney, PO box 223, Whiteknights, RG6 6AE. tel 0118
378 8785 [k.r.devaney@reading.ac.uk]

Museum of English Rural Life: The University of Reading, Redlands Road, Reading, RG1
5EX. tel 0118 378 8660 fax: 0118 378 5632 [merl@reading.ac.uk] [www.merl.org.uk]

Oxfordshire County Council Library Service fao Marco Lazzarini, Library Support
Services, Holton Wheatley, Oxon OX33 1QQ [askalibrarian@oxfordshire.gov.uk]

Windsor & Royal Borough Museum: The Guildhall, Windsor, SL4 1LR. tel 01628 796846
[museum.collections@rbwm.gov.uk] [www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/museum_index.htm]

Slough Library Local Studies: Slough Library, High Street, Slough, SL1 1EA. tel 01753
787511 [library@slough.gov.uk] [www.slough.gov.uk/libraries]

Slough Museum: Ground Floor, High Street, Slough, SL1 1EA tel 01753 526422
[info@sloughmuseum.co.uk]

West Berkshire Museum: The Wharf, Newbury, RG14 4AU [museum@westberks.gov.uk]

Wokingham Library Local Studies: Denmark Street, Wokingham, RG40 2BB. tel 0118
9781368

Berkshire Local History Association

Registered Charity 1097355

President: **Professor E J T Collins**

Vice-Presidents:- **Brian Boulter, Joan Dils,
Dr Margaret Yates**

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tel: 0118-948-3354,
e-mail chairman@blha.org.uk

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5 Gloucester Place, Windsor, Berks SL4 2AJ
tel 01753-864935,
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Secretary **Ann McCormack**

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e-mail secretary@blha.org.uk

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Sue Burnay (Berkshire Bibliography)

John Chapman (Newsletter Editor)

Dave Osborne (Web Designer)

Dr Margaret Simons (Newsletter Distributor and
Temporary Membership Secretary)

Elias Kupfermann

Dr David Axford

Ann Smith

Membership

Berkshire Local History Association exists to provide a meeting place for all those interested in the history and heritage of the Royal County of Berkshire. We cover the areas of Berkshire both before and after the 1974 review of local government. We are a registered charity.

We have three classes of membership

Institutional - for institutions, including libraries, archives and museums

Society - for local history and similar societies

Individual - for individual or couples living at the same address

We publish a **Journal** (Berkshire Old and New) once a year containing detailed articles on Berkshire's past - all members get one copy

We publish a **newsletter** three times a year in January, May and September and you can opt for a hard copy version by post or an electronic version by e-mail

We hold an **Annual General Meeting** in Spring each year with an exhibition and followed by a **Presidential Lecture**

We usually hold a **Day School** in the autumn with a number of eminent speakers

We organise **day trips** to visit archives and places of interest (usually with privileged access to material)

We award a number of **prizes** to authors of articles and students at the University.

We offer **grants** to assist authors to publish their results.

We maintain a **website** to keep you up-to-date with society activities [www.blha.org.uk]

We maintain a **Bibliography** of publications held in our public libraries relating to the history of Berkshire

We work with a variety of organisations to protect and document the heritage of Berkshire

Membership fees

The rates for 2014 are:-

	version of newsletter		no of copies	
	electronic	hard copy	Journal	Newsletter
Institutional	£18.00	£20.00	2	3
Society	£18.00	£20.00	2	3
Individual and Family	£9.00.	£12.00	1	1

A surcharge of £2 will also be levied on those who opt to pay by cheque.

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Membership Secretary membership@blha.org.uk

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Forthcoming Events

see also Opportunities Pages 23-24

11th March - Annual General Meeting in Newbury

We do not list meetings of our local societies, but see our website www.blha.org.uk

Next Newsletter

The next Newsletter is due to be published in May 2017.

The DEADLINE for copy is 15th April 2017 - preferably we would like to have it much earlier. To avoid some of the problems we have had recently could you please address e-mails to newsletter@blha.org.uk and copy it to j.chapman458@btinternet.com