

Chairman's Corner



If you didn't manage to get to the A.G.M. and Symposium in March, then I'm sorry, because it really was a treat. The fact that we were able to run it without having to charge seems amazing, considering that the subscription rates are so modest. I have been complimented by many people, both during the day and afterwards.

At this juncture, I feel I can't do better than to quote from a letter which was sent to me by Joan Dils, in whose honour the Symposium was held:

Saturday was a truly splendid day, a credit to B.L.H.A. and all the organisers. I enjoyed every minute – the efficient A.G.M., the chance to meet many good friends, and to relish some inspiring presentations of good local history. I shall treasure my memories of the day as much as I shall the historic gift you gave me . . . Please convey my thanks to all those who helped make the day so special.

All good wishes,
Joan.

I remember how people in the Market Place smiled when they came unexpectedly on the morris dancers. Later, I was standing by the church door as the bells were being rung, and being told that it was entirely appropriate for such a celebratory occasion. Several people commented afterwards on the friendly atmosphere around the church, and several more, including the speakers, told me what a good venue it was – steeped in history, but warm, light, and with a good sound system so that everyone could hear. For myself, I thought it was well worth while paying for the young man who kept an eye and an ear on the proceedings, and adjusted the equipment without having to be prompted.

The brisk A.G.M. where the various reports had been distributed in advance gave ample time for looking at the displays, exploring the church, hearing about the history of morris dancing, and seeing it being performed. It was many years since I had been up the tower of this church, so I took the opportunity to do so once more, along with a group of others. To stand on the bell-frame, when just one of the smaller bells was being tolled, was quite deafening! My only regret was failing to notice, when I came down, that my clothes were rather dusty, which shows up on the photographs!

Like Joan, I feel I must reiterate my thanks to the committee members, speakers and others who made the day such a success, including the hundred or so who turned up to enjoy it. This must be the most ambitious event the Association has organised, and it was a triumph. Now we must get on and prepare the celebratory publication, which will contain the three talks and probably more.

Inevitably, on occasions such as this, there are things I wish I'd done a bit differently, and other things that I forgot to say. One of the latter was to mention that, on the day before the A.G.M., some of us learned that one of our Vice-Presidents, Brian Boulter, was to be given a Lifetime Achievement Award by the British Association for Local History. The presentation will be on Saturday, June 6th, in Birmingham, and hopefully we will have a photograph in the next Newsletter. On behalf of the committee and members of our Association, I should like to congratulate Brian. He is one of those characters whom it is always a pleasure to meet, and the award is richly deserved.

David Cliffe, Chairman, B.L.H.A.

Words from the Editor

The members of the Committee are trying to get our contact lists consistent. We all do different things with it and often have to send things to different people. Please do check the list at the end of this Newsletter and be sure to keep the Membership Secretary posted on any changes.



We also ask you to make sure all your members get a chance to see the Newsletter. It is a good idea to sign them up for an electronic copy which usually comes out well before the paper version and gives you a slight reduction in fees. We have a team visiting local societies to explain who we are and what we do to try to help you by sharing information.

Again thank you to all those who have contributed to this edition, especially to those who get it in early.

John Chapman

Miscellanea

For King and Country

We've all walked past War Memorials.

The names etched on wood and stone, here in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, make us stop and reflect even today about the impact of the Great War. Across the Borough, the cost in human life was high. A generation of young men left these towns never to return.

At 'For King And Country' – Windsor and Royal Borough Museum's Heritage Lottery Funded project – we believe the greatest way to honour them is to find out the stories behind the lists of names on the memorials. About who they were, where they lived, what brought them to enlist and how they fell.

We are privileged to be helped in our task by some of the foremost organisations in the field in the Borough: our partners include the Windsor Local History Group, the Maidenhead Heritage Centre, the Berkshire Family History Society and the Berkshire Rifles Museum, part of The Wardrobe – Home of the infantry regiments of Berkshire and Wiltshire.

There are many ways to take part in this 18 month project, which closes in February 2016. Check at home and bring any WW1 artefacts to one of our roadshows where we can photograph, scan and record stories behind objects for museum archives. Volunteer as a web or field researcher; join one of our guided walks; take part in our drama workshops and performance; ask us into your school, youth group or community organisation to tell you more.

You can find out more by going to www.fkac.info, calling 01753 743947 or e mailing ww1.rbwm@rbwm.gov.uk

Hannah Sami

Berkshire Sins are Forgiven

Well not quite! - in the book review I have explained the source of these appeals to the Pope for dispensations from sins, real or imaginary, but here are a few of the cases from Berkshire.

Case 1386 - 1468 John Rix (alias Ramsay) was a monk at Bisham Priory - he had been excommunicated for apostasy and asked for absolution.

Case 2099 - 1473 Richard Berdi, vicar of St Lawrence Hungerford asked that he not be obliged to live in the parish while he studied to take a Doctors degree.

Case 2510 - 1473 John Kennington, monk of Abingdon Abbey had been ordained before he was 23 but had not celebrated Mass. He asked that his ordination could become effective when he reached 23.

Case 2511 - 1473 - as above but for John Glasteynbury

Case 2601 - 1475 Robert Dieson a chaplain at St Mary's Chantry in Wokingham asked that

the fruits of his chaplaincy could be his while he was away studying at University for five years.

Case 3009 - 1486 William Bren vicar of Bucklebury practiced medicine and failed to live in the vicarage.

Case 3370 - 1485 Request from the Dean and Chapter of St George's Chapel Windsor that they may be allowed to grant absolution in reserved cases.

Case 3664 - 1501 John Taylor rector of Shottesbrook had been studying in Lincoln diocese where he had been granted a church for life - he had forgotten to mention this and asked dispensation to hold both benefices.

Case 3945 - 1500 Margery Twynhoo, Abbess of Shaftesbury sought permission for a portable altar. When she died in 1500 her will asked for a chantry at Greyfriars church in Reading and she gave donations to many parish churches around Reading.

Case 3976-1492 Godfrey Philips, later rector of Farnborough, sought a dispensation to be ordained priest before he was 23

Case 4024 - 1498 - John Vaughan, canon of Windsor had himself ordained without a licence from his bishop and celebrated Mass.

In most of the cases relating to couples the parish is not named but here are a few samples:

Case 1801 - 1471 - John son of Simon and Elizabeth Darebl were related in the fourth degree of consanguinity and asked permission to marry.

Case 1802 - 1471 - Richard, son of Gregory of Ewelme had married Joan Halow knowing that her father Nicholas had acted as godparent to Richard - they asked that their marriage could be made legitimate.

Case 1948 - 1475 - John Malaines and Elizabeth Pleasani had fornicated several times while her husband Thomas was alive. After he died they married and were seeking assurance that present and future children would be legitimate.

Historic England

On 1 April 2015, English Heritage separated to become two organisations:

Historic England, a public body to champion and protect England's historic environment, everything from prehistoric remains to post-war office buildings, and

The English Heritage Trust, a new independent charity retaining the name English Heritage, to look after – on behalf of the nation – the National Heritage Collection of more than 400 historic sites across England including Stonehenge, Dover Castle and some of the best preserved parts of Hadrian's Wall.

I am writing to you now, together with Sir Tim Laurence, Chairman of the new English Heritage charity, to introduce you to both organisations and to share news of some of the exciting projects that each will be pursuing in the coming months.

The charity is receiving a one-off grant from Government of £80m, primarily to address the high priority conservation backlog across its estate. This will amount to the largest conservation programme in its history, but it will need to continue to grow its commercial and fundraising income in order to achieve a target of financial breakeven by 2023.

English Heritage already brings the story of England to life for over 10 million people each year. The charity's vision, values and priorities are set

out clearly on the new English Heritage website and in its Making History launch prospectus

Historic England will champion the historic environment all around us. It will provide expert advice to everyone from national policymakers to local communities, from owners of listed buildings to volunteers saving heritage at risk. It will promote constructive conservation, produce research and provide grants to aid better understanding and enjoyment of our historic environment.

Historic England will licence the new English Heritage charity to look after the sites in the National Heritage Collection, all of which remain under the ownership or guardianship of the nation. We have published details of the major projects that Historic England will be undertaking.

Simon Thurley, our Chief Executive for the last 13 years and architect of these changes, is stepping down. We are delighted, as previously announced, that he will be succeeded by Kate Mavor as Chief Executive of the English Heritage charity and Duncan Wilson Chief Executive of Historic England.

Do visit us at our new websites english-heritage.org.uk and historice-ncngland.org.uk and tell us what you think. We hope you will enjoy the short film on the Historic England homepage that represents something of what England's wider heritage means to us.

We would not have reached this point in the transformation of English Heritage without the collaboration and support from the whole heritage sector. We know we can count upon your continuing support for the vital work we all do to ensure that England's heritage is understood, protected, championed and loved.

Sir Laurie Magnus, Chairman, Historic England
Congratulations

....to our President:

Ted Collins's article '*The Great War in the Berkshire Countryside*', published in Berkshire Old and New no. 31, 2014, has been selected as a winner in the short article category of the British Association for Local History's publications awards. The award will be made at the local history day in Birmingham on 5 June.

Jonathan Brown

Spotlight - on the

Berkshire Record Society

In 2015 the Berkshire Record Society comes of age with the publication of its twenty-first volume. Though a relatively late arrival on the record publishing scene (some county record societies trace their histories back to the nineteenth century), it has already an impressive list of titles to its credit, as well as two editions of the Historical Atlas of Berkshire. Some have queried whether, at a time when access to original sources, often in their original form, is easier than ever before, there is still a place for traditional record publishing. The answer surely is an emphatic yes. Record Societies offer not only reliable, carefully edited texts, but also, with their critical apparatus, commentary and extended introductions, help to explain those texts, offering both context and insight which add immeasurably to our understanding of what we read.

And what we read is often remarkable, full of rich colour and detail. The accounts of the churchwardens of St Laurence, Reading, for example, which the Record Society published in 2013, take us straight into the world of the English reformation, and reveal the immensity of the impact it had on a local community. Between 1547 and 1553, in response to the instructions of Edward VI's ministers, these churchwardens made massive changes both to the appearance of their church and to the form of services that were offered there. They sold their communion vessels (Nicholas Bull, a London goldsmith, paid them the substantial sum of £36 8s 8d for two censers, a cross, a basin and an incense boat, and a further £11 9s 4d for a monstrance and a chalice); they took down altars and destroyed images (in 1547 they paid 12d to two carpenters for taking down images and tabernacles, 12d to Geoffrey Penne for mending the walls where the images had stood, 12d for four 'bokettes' for workmen to white-lime the church, and 17s 3d to Alexander Lake and his man for doing the white-liming – which incidentally took 23 days); they removed the church's stained glass, and they paid £15 10s 5d for 777 feet of plain glass to replace it; and they disposed of their liturgical books. Much of this had to be reversed during the reign of Queen Mary (1553-1558), and then reversed again after the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558. All is vividly documented in Joan Dils' edition of the accounts, and is enhanced by her careful and scholarly – but eminently readable – introduction.

Similar detail and colour can be found in many of the Society's other volumes. In 1357/8, for example, the total expenses of Reading's merchant gild amounted to £10 19s 6d. A good deal of this was spent on food and drink ('for roebuck meat and mutton, 15d'; 'for congers, 6d') and for wine for the abbot

(‘item, sent to the abbot 3 gallons of wine ... price 2s’), but substantial sums were spent on repairs for the guildhall, including taking down a gable and replacing it with a lantern, for which 23 men were paid in kind with 14d worth of bread, 26d worth of meat, one pennyworth of garlic and a hefty 3s ½d of ale.

We know this because it is recorded in the first surviving gild account roll, edited by the late Cecil Slade. Dr Slade’s two volumes, published in 2002, actually include all surviving account rolls from 1357/8 to 1515/16, and from them we gain a vivid picture of life in medieval Reading – the market stalls, the street cleaning, the maintenance of public buildings, the borough courts, the street entertainments, the relations with the abbot - evocatively brought to life in his extended introduction.

Other examples abound. Ian Mortimer’s edition of the glebe terriers compiled at the insistence of Archbishop Laud in 1634 contains not only a comprehensive account of church glebe and tithes, but also numerous field names (Bushie Roses and Holly Roses, Coales Piddle, Goers Hedge, Maple Hays, Sparrow Acre, Stuckwell Foot, Swilly Acre and Thorny Down are just a few) and incidentally tells us of the existence of a poor house in Finchampstead. Lisa Spurrier’s edition of Berkshire nonconformist meeting-house registrations allows us to explore the spread of non-conformity in the county between 1689 and 1852, and reveals that while most congregations, not surprisingly, registered a building, one registered a field (where presumably they intended to erect a tent). And Harry Leonard’s edition of the diaries of Robert Lee of Binfield takes us into the world of an eighteenth-century country gentleman and magistrate, a cultivated, conscientious and humane man who took his role as a gentleman and magistrate seriously but not solemnly, who on the whole enjoyed his life, liked the company of his friends - and admired a pretty girl. The diaries open a window onto Lee’s life and the life of a rural community in the 1730s and 40s.

We see him in London, where he went to the theatre (and we know some of the plays he saw), visited Vauxhall Gardens and Sadlers Wells, frequented coffee houses, dined with friends, and played billiards with the painter Hogarth. And we can see him at home in east Berkshire. Here he dined with his friends, and had them dine with him, (and occasionally drank too much); he visited the Trumbulls at Easthampstead Park, attended the Assembly at Bracknell (in August 1736 he was one of a large company of 24), and drank the waters at Sunninghill Wells; he went shooting (though not always very successfully: in September 1737 he records that he 'W[en]t shooting with the Young Farmer and Danll Louch. Young Farmer shooting at a hare hit Mr Heads man in the back ... The Young Farmer shooting at another hare shot Farmer Matthews of Bottomst-

ead servant boy in the hand and put severall shots in the Horses Hare. We all shot nothing’); and here he performed his duties as a magistrate at Quarter Sessions and Assizes, dealing with poor relief, bastardy, licensed premises, minor assaults and breaches of the peace.

Whilst you may not find that every volume is relevant to your own research interests, like most members you will probably discover sources that you had not thought of, and will marvel at the wealth of material available. I am probably the only person in Berkshire who can claim to have read every volume from cover to cover (and sometimes more than once) – but having done so I can certainly testify to the richness of the records presented and to the fascination of the stories that they tell.

A subscription to the Society costs a modest £14.50 a year. As a member you will receive a copy of every volume as it is published and an invitation to an annual lecture. More than that, you will know that you are helping to make Berkshire's rich legacy of records more accessible to historians both within and beyond the county boundaries. Why not join? Full details are available on the Society's website,

www.berkshirerecordsociety.org.uk.

Copies of most earlier volumes are still available, and information about these, and about forthcoming titles, can also be found on the website.

Peter Durrant

New Books and Reviews

Royal Windsor: images of a bygone age,

by Elias Kupfermann, £10. ISBN 978 0 992 9694 0 0.

George Moore Henton (1861-1924) was an artist – ‘now regarded as one of England’s foremost landscape painters’, according to the Leicester Chronicle website. He painted mainly in watercolour, and exhibited at the Royal Academy and the New Watercolour Society among other places.

He was born in Leicester, a banker’s son, and did most of his work in the east and south Midlands. But, he also had a connection with Windsor, through Alfred Young Nutt, a Leicester friend who moved south to work in the Office of Works at Windsor Castle, rising to become Surveyor of St George’s Chapel. Henton visited his friend regularly in the 1890s and 1900s, painting a number of views of the town, several of which are reproduced in this book in colour, and,

somewhat bafflingly, also in black and white.

Henton was also a photographer, and it is his photographic work which makes up the core of Elias Kupfermann's volume. After his death, Henton's photographs have been at Leicestershire record office for some time. A volume of his Leicestershire photos was published in 2011, but this is the first time that those of Windsor have been 'brought home', as Elias puts it.

Henton's photographs were mainly for his private use. Biographical information describes him as not a 'modernist' in his painting, favouring a precise, detailed style of landscape, but he was modern in that evidently used photographs as reference sketches, rather like George Clausen. He made notes of date and time of the photograph, to give him reference data of light and shade. The precision of his painting meant that he paid attention to detail of buildings, and people. He liked to include characters in his paintings, and people feature in many of his photos – the ordinary day-to-day people of the town. He set up little tableaux of characters because he liked to include such people in his paintings. There is a set reproduced of young boys in various poses in Church Street. His street scenes, although posed because of the slow emulsions of photographic plates, are full of naturalness and life. Because they are reference shots, he did not mind some being askew, but he also was imaginative in his employment of low camera angles.

To go with Henton's photos, we also have the work of local Windsor-based photographers, working at the same time, c1890-1915. Most featured are the two Thomas Cochranes, father and son. They were primarily postcard publishers, and their work contrasts with that of Henton, for they were taking scenes of Windsor that would sell. Often they were very similar views year after year. Soldiers parading in the street, might seem limited in variety, but Cochrane had to employ subtlety to make his 1910 cards differ from those 1909. Like Henton, he was setting up posed, busy street scenes, with everybody looking at the camera.

The USP of the book is the Henton work, paintings and photos; together with the others it adds up to a good collection of local life before the First World War, at reasonable price.

Jonathan Brown

Berkshire in the First World War

ISBN 978-0-9566341-6-0 Edited by John Arcus

Over the last eighteen months a group of volunteers have been beavering away in research on a variety of aspects of the First World War. The result has been a

set of 29 essays on a bewildering variety of topics, skillfully edited by John Arcus to present a marvellous picture of life in Berkshire in this turbulent period.

They range from the experiences of author's relatives in several theatres of war to the consequences of a man whose conscience made him an objector. It covers life on the farm, in hospital, as a prisoner both of the Germans and the British. Particularly interesting are the changing role of women and a summary of village life in Burghfield.

The introduction by John Chapman brings out some of the effects of the war on technology and society. When the sons of the lords of the manor face the same appalling conditions as the sons of the labourers they all come to realise that their humanity binds them together more than wealth divides them. The progress made in surgery, aircraft design, telecommunications and road transport compressed what would ordinarily have taken 25 years into five. And for almost the first time ability was going to count more than social status.

The book is priced at £18 but for the short term copies will be available in Reading libraries and a few other outlets for only £10 - sensational value for money.

The History of St Mary's Church Purley on Thames

by John Chapman ISBN 978-0-9566341-5-3 Goosecroft Publications, 2014, £16.

Many of us will remember St. Mary's because in 2011 our A.G.M. was held at Purley, and we visited the church in the afternoon. There is a brick-clad tower, a nave and chancel of stone, mainly the work of architect G. E. Street in 1870, and a Norman chancel arch which was moved round through 90 degrees at that time, to stand on one side of the chancel. There is also a modern extension to the north, where we were served tea and home-made cake.

Maybe £16 is a lot to pay for a church history, but the author has discovered rather a lot to say about this ancient church. He rarely misses a trick. All you might expect to find is there – the vicars, rectors and curates, the churchwardens, the alterations to the building, the memorials, the bells, the church plate, the furniture, the churchyard, etc. There are copious illustrations.

The book also contains much that the reader might not expect. The basic arrangement is chronological, by incumbent, and there is lots of detail about the incumbents – the absentees, the pluralists, and those who, before the 1549 Act of Parliament, kept concubines.

Some interesting sidelights are shed on agriculture in Purley – such as the

keeping of bulls, and the arguments over the tithes payable in clover crops in 1711. Apparently, clover was then a fairly new fodder crop, and a farmer could harvest it twice in a year, and might be called upon to pay double the tithe on it.

There is the case of the Elizabethan embroidery, used as an altar-cloth. It had scenes from Ovid's "Metamorphoses," which were deemed unsuitable for a church by a Victorian vicar, who removed it to the vestry. A later vicar sold it to the Victoria and Albert Museum. There are notes on various bell-founders, including the one at Reading, there is an account of the "notorious Purley Incident" of 1912, and a humorous account of the singing dog which joined in with the hymns in 1946. The style of the book is distinctly lively!

By the 1980s, some thought that the church was too secluded and far from housing, and there were moves to abandon St. Mary's and move to a new church by a roundabout where Knowsley Road was to meet a proposed Purley By-Pass. Mercifully this never happened, and instead, the church was extended to the north.

The book scores considerably from its author having lived in the area for a long time. For instance, we are fortunate that he was there to record and photograph the graves of some Anglo-Saxon parishioners, exposed when earth was being moved for the foundations of the 1980s extensions.

I have only one quibble with the book. It is surprising, in a work as comprehensive and thorough as this one, not to find a list of sources of information. In many cases it is fairly obvious where the facts would have been recorded, but it would have been good to have had at least a list of the documentary sources and their whereabouts, if not foot- or end-notes. There is a full and useful index, which is a great advantage for a book which is as full of facts as this one.

Purley will not need another church history for a very long time!

David Cliffe

Supplications of the Apostolic Penitentiary 1410-1503

The latest volume from the Canterbury and York Society completes a three part record of petitions from England and Wales seeking Papal dispensations for sins (real or imaginary) committed which the British dioceses seemed unable to resolve themselves. About half of the final volume is taken up with the indexes which are the most comprehensive I think I have ever seen. 97 of the supplications come from the Salisbury Diocese (of which Berkshire was part) whereas no less than 261 come from St David's and around 600 from Norwich. The period covered is 1410 to 1503 and 4085 cases are summarised, however the Latin text

is reproduced for every different form. There are lots of cases involving consanguinity where cousins, often several degrees apart, only found the relationship years later and wanted their marriage approved so that their children were not classed as bastards. Other cases include such subjects as becoming a priest too early in life or to hold a second benefice.

In a separate article I will summarise some of the cases from Berkshire - they do shed light on social and religious attitudes and are more likely to refer to ordinary people than to the nobility as is the case with most records of the period. I think the University library will hold copies but I deposit my copies in the library at Douai Abbey if anyone wants to follow up the references.

John Chapman

Society News

Goring & Streatley Local History Society

At our December meeting Alan Turton, who is a member of the Mary Rose Trust, told us about the history of Henry VIII's famous warship, launched in 1511. The Mary Rose sank in the Solent in 1545, with the loss of most of her 600 crew, and the wreck remained there undisturbed for centuries. Divers located the ship in the 1960s and in 1982 the wreck was raised and thousands of artefacts excavated and brought ashore. The museum then founded at Portsmouth has recently received a multi-million pound makeover and now provides a wonderful insight into life aboard a 16th century warship. The talk complimented a visit made to the museum by members earlier in the year.

A watery theme also featured in our January talk when Sue Milton took us on a lavishly illustrated five day trip on the Thames from Sunbury to Abingdon with the swan uppers. All swans on the river belong to either HM The Queen or the Dyers' or Vintners' livery companies and in July each year a flotilla of boats, headed by the swan uppers' skiffs, goes up river to check the swans' health and allocate the new cygnets to the appropriate owner. This colourful ceremony has been going for many years and in Goring and Streatley we are lucky enough to be able to see the activity for ourselves.

It was '*On your bike*' in February when local historian and keen cyclist Tony Hadland spoke on the history of this mode of transport. Surprisingly,

the bad weather at the beginning of the 19th century which caused a shortage of fodder for horses led to the invention of an alternative way of getting around - the first bicycle called the 'draisine' after its German designer, Carl Drais. Improvements in the weather brought the horse back into favour and it was not until the 1860s that the 'bone shaker' came along, which sold in large numbers. Cycling took off as a hobby in late Victorian and Edwardian times, with huge developments in the technology. Today racing and rough terrain bikes are all the rage.

The March meeting provided the opportunity for members to give a short presentation. Our Chairman, Alan Winchcomb, related the amazing achievements of Goring resident Sir Beachcroft Towse, who was awarded the VC in the Boer War for an act of heroism which left him blind. This veteran soldier devoted the rest of his long life to helping ex-servicemen and people blinded by war. He was instrumental in setting up the British Legion after World War I and a leading figure in the Royal National Institute for the Blind. The Local History Society was able to ensure that Sir Beachcroft's name is remembered in Goring by suggesting that a new sheltered housing development in the village be named Towse Court. The other speaker was Clive Bidwell who explained how he had researched the army service of a family member in the Great War. This man, Billy Briggs, typical of many 'Tommys', joined up in 1914 and survived many vicissitudes in France, only to die on the Hindenberg Line right at the end of the conflict.

The Transport History Group's 2015 programme of visits began in February with a rail trip to the Sea City Museum at Southampton where the Titanic exhibition and the War Games toy displays proved fascinating. This was followed in March with an outing to the model railway museum at Pendon which is closer to home, preceded by a well-supported pub lunch at Long Wittenham. In April we are off to the Morgan Car Museum in Malvern, again by train.

Our last item of news is that the Society finally has a website: www.goringaphistory.org.uk

Janet Hurst, Secretary

History of Reading Society

In December Joan Dils, the Society's president and a founder member, gave her annual presidential address the subject was *100 years of Berkshire*

County Council, a talk she remembered giving 21 years earlier for its centenary. Joan recalled that the council first met in the Assize Court in the Forbury, Reading in the 1880s before moving to the purpose built Shire Hall next door in 1910. The post-war period would see the county council expand the provision of education through the building of schools and libraries. In 1974, one third of the county's territory was transferred to Oxfordshire this coincided with the transfer to Berkshire of Eton and Slough. The final blow came in 1998 with the council's abolition and replacement with six unitary authorities.

In January Mike Cooper a well known speaker on local and military history gave a talk about the *History of Tilehurst*. Mike explained that there were few written accounts of the area before the eighteenth century even the compilers of the Domesday Book overlooked it. The first mention of Tilehurst was in 1289 in a charter by the Bishop of Salisbury granting land to the Abbot of Reading Abbey. For the next 600 years the economy would develop around local agriculture; manufacturing industries arrived with the railways in the nineteenth century, particularly bricks and pottery. With Reading's westward expansion the village was absorbed by Reading in 1911.

In February the Trooper Potts V C Memorial Trust gave a talk, its chairman, Richard Bennett, explained that the Trust was founded to raise funds for a permanent memorial to Trooper Fred Potts who was the only Reading soldier during World War One to be awarded the Victoria Cross. In 1915 Fred and his comrade Arthur Andrews were fighting for the Berkshire Yeomanry when Arthur was injured in the leg, Fred dragged him to safety with the help of a shovel despite his own wounds. For this act he was awarded the VC for valour. The Trust has now raised sufficient funds to erect the memorial. It will stand outside the Forbury Gardens in Reading in time for the centenary of the event in August 2015.

In March we had our Annual General Meeting followed by Professor Brian Kemp lecturer on Medieval Studies at University of Reading and president of the Friends of Reading Abbey who gave a talk about *Reading Abbey's royal connections*. The Abbey was founded in 1121 by King Henry I for the salvation of his soul; on his death in 1135, he was buried before the High Altar. In 1164 during the reign of King Henry II the Abbey was consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Beckett. In 1359,

during the reign of King Edward III, his son, John of Gaunt married Blanche of Lancaster at the Abbey; their son King Henry IV was the first Lancastrian King of England. In 1539, the Abbey was closed by order of King Henry VIII and its abbot, Hugh Cook Faringdon, was executed for treason. Thus began a period of deterioration as its treasures and fabric were plundered by the Crown and townsfolk.

For 2015 the Society produced its first calendar on the subject of old postcard views of the town all contributed by the members; 150 calendars were printed and 144 so far sold leaving a profit of £80. We continue to receive royalties from the sale of Reading Book of Days; a book of local stories one for each day of the year covering the town's history written by the members. In May the talk will be on the Timms family of Reading by Katie Amos, followed by field trips to Reading Synagogue and Reading Bluecoat School at Sonning. More information at our website www.historyofreadingsociety.org.uk

Finally, Agnes Brooks has written a short history and personal account of her time as a pupil at Malvern House a school for girls in Reading. The school opened in 1869 and closed in 1961. It stood at the junction of Addington Road and Redlands Road. Agnes was there in the 1950s and would like to hear from any former pupils or if you would like to buy a copy it has 15 pages with photographs and costs £5 including postage, she can be contacted by email: agnes.brooks@btopenworld.com

Pangbourne Heritage Group

In Newsletter No 111 (January 2015) our chairman, Rosie Nurick, reported that the Pangbourne Heritage Group had passed its tenth anniversary, summarising its achievements to date. But then, at the 2014 AGM in October, she announced that she would be retiring after ten years of very hard work and in January I became the new chairman. I had not been a founder member of the Group but had been inspired to join after seeing in 2005 their first big exhibition, on "*Pangbourne at War*". It had celebrated the 60th anniversary of VE Day with a wealth of memorabilia from both members and other volunteers in the village. I became a member, contributing to the work of the Group through my research into the growth of Pangbourne, giving talks and to our big exhibition in 2010, on "*Pangbourne, a Century of Change, 1830-1930*."

With Rosie's retirement, the work of the Group continues, initially

with the most interesting talks which she had organised as a farewell. In January came a fine talk about “*Unusual aspects of Berkshire Churches*” by our neighbour Catherine Sampson from Project Purley. She discussed their locations and histories, with a wealth of photographs, but, her usual practice, tactfully there was no mention of our own church, St James-the Less, as the talk was being given in the church. The talk in the following month was by Françoise Richardson, a volunteer at the Police Museum, Sulhampstead, who gave us a riveting, detailed talk about *Crime and especially Punishment* in earlier centuries around the world. She gave us many illustrations, sometimes, I confess, in rather more detail than I really wanted to know. Still to come, in May, will be “What is it? - an interactive quiz on historical objects lead by Richard Anderson, in support of Pangbourne Rotary Club. Outside events in the summer will continue with a village walk around Pangbourne, and a visit to Wallingford castle and museum.

But I must end by paying tribute to the work of Rosie Nurick. It was she who took the lead, with others, in establishing the Pangbourne Heritage Group, building a programme of monthly talks and events that continued to the present day. We are now turning our minds to the next ten years, reviewing our aims and objectives and what should be our priorities, looking at our programmes of talks, developing our archives, and continuing our researches.

Lyn Davies

Project Purley

Project Purley’s first activity of the New Year was to host the Rain or Shine Theatre Company for one of their twice yearly performances in The Barn. *Great Expectations* was very well received by a near-capacity audience and £300 was raised in a leaving collection for Macmillan Cancer Research with the remaining profits being retained by the society for future archival storage.

January’s Members’ Evening was focused on World War One with three society members, Bridget Pollard, Jack Livesey and David Downs all giving short talks on their research on various lesser-known actions of the war. An extensive display of war-related research and memorabilia was brought in by members who also enjoyed home-made Anzac biscuits with their tea and coffee.

In February local farmer Tim Metcalfe gave an extremely interesting and informative talk on ‘*Farming in Purley*’ intriguing the audience with a collection of farming equipment which they were invited to pass round and guess their use. A challenge it turned out we were pretty rubbish at!

March’s meeting began with our AGM at which Catherine Sampson and Ann Betts were re-elected chairman and secretary respectively and Marjorie Butler, treasurer. Two members of the committee stepped down this year and their places have been filled with two new volunteers who strengthen our skills around technology and websites. John Chapman and Ben Viljoen were the speakers in March on the subject of ‘*Purley Magna*’ and they gave a potted history of what is currently perceived of the history of Purley’s main manor from 1086 to present with particular emphasis on the late eighteenth century when Humphry Repton was commissioned to put together one of his famous red books on Purley.

March was also the last meeting of Jean Debney before her move to Shropshire and Catherine Sampson paid tribute to her work both as one of Project Purley’s founding members and also over the subsequent 33 years as variously chairman and committee member. A presentation of flowers, a card, cake and a framed montage of images of Purley was made to Jean in the hope that they bring back fond memories for her.

*Jean Debney
receiving her
memento at Project
Purley's AGM.*

*Jean is well known in
the Local History and
Family History
scenes in Berkshire
and her late husband
Cliff was a Vice-
Chairman of the
BLHA for many years*



Project Purley's membership has been steadily rising over recent years and in January topped the one hundred members mark for the first time. Most of our members are encouraged to join by word of mouth and also because they enjoy reading the monthly write-up of our meetings in the parish magazine. This summer we have outings planned to the Historic Naval Dockyard at Portsmouth and the village of Sutton Courtenay where we are being given a talk on the village and walking tour by Sutton Courtenay's local history society. In June we once again host the Rain or Shine Theatre Company and also hold our annual barbecue.

Catherine Sampson

Sandhurst Historical Society

There being no meeting in December, our first speaker for 2015 was David England who entertained us with *Some Berkshire folk tales*. One of these is the tale of Wolwin Spillecorn's Pilgrimage. In Speen there is an ancient sacred spring called the Ladywell reputed to have miraculous properties for eye diseases and other ills. Wolwin was a woodcutter and, after a tiring morning felling wood, he fell asleep under a tree. The sun moved round falling full on his face causing his eyeballs to fill with blood, which struck him blind. He was told by a monk that he must pray to Our Lady, St. Mary the Virgin that his sight be restored. Wolwin took the monk at his word and began his year-long pilgrimage going from church to church. After visiting the 87th church he dreamt one night that the Holy Virgin told him only King Edward the Confessor (later proclaimed a saint) could cure his blindness, so he set off for Windsor and waited to gain admission to the King's presence. The King heard his story and had his servants bring him a bowl of holy water. He dipped his fingers into the bowl and placed them on Wolwin's head. Blood dripped from Wolwin's eyes and he exclaimed "I see you O King! I see you O King". With the same holy water 3 blind men and a man with one eye were also cured. David England and his sister have written an interesting book entitled *Berkshire Folk Tales*.

This February Sue Hester gave us a very interesting talk on *The London Open Air Sanatorium*, later renamed Pinewood Hospital in July 1912. In 1898 land was purchased in Wokingham Without in order to build a sanatorium for those suffering from TB. This land was chosen as the soil was too poor for agriculture and the many pine trees around were considered to be beneficial to health. It took 3 years to build and was opened on

22nd July, 1901. The hospital could accommodate 64 patients but, according to the 1911 census, there were only 27 male and 19 female patients who were charged 3 guineas a week. Postcards from 1904 showed that the windows were open all year round as fresh air was considered essential to recovery. Rubber sheets were placed over the beds should the rain come in! During WWI those with chest complaints came here and there were 11 Canadians and 1 New Zealand Maori. During WWII New Zealanders billeted at Pinewood were given land to build on. In July 1940 this building was opened housing patients suffering from mumps and measles. The Queen Mother visited several times in the 1940's. In May 1950 10,000 people had TB, 2,000 of them in the Windsor area. In May 1951 the BCG vaccination was introduced. The sanatorium was closed in 1966 and put up for sale in 1971, the buildings being broken into 7 different lots. Hewlett Packard bought one lot which was later sold to Johnson & Johnson. Sadly TB is once again on the increase, the UK having the second highest rate of this disease in Europe.

At March's meeting Catherine Sampson kept us entertained with a very interesting talk on *Georgian kitchens and cookery*. Most of the cooking was done on open fires and, as the menus were very long and varied, this meant life in the kitchen was extremely hard work. There were spits which, in some cases, were turned by a small dog working a wheel and some of the larger houses had ovens. The rich had bricks heated to keep food warm but for the majority most of the food was almost cold by the time it reached the table. Wealthy families also had ice houses and game larders. Much meat was consumed in those days averaging one and a half pounds per person! French chefs were very popular in the early 1800's around which time spices were coming into the docks. Surprisingly tomato ketchup and curry paste were also in evidence then. Pies such as eel, veal and ham and cornish pasties came into fashion around the 1800's too. In the dining room tablecloths were very long reaching the floor, the idea being to catch spilt food! These cloths were removed for the dessert courses. As there were no forks at this time diners ate off knives and people brought their own cutlery as this was expensive. A commode was placed in the corner of the room for men and there was a ladies room just outside. Cookery writers were on the increase, Hannah Glass being one of the more well known. There were recipes to guard against the plague. Catherine brought samples of a "Plain"

cake which was very tasty, so much so that I requested another piece!

Janice Burlton.

Shinfield & District Local History Society

Our December and January meetings were our Christmas Party and AGM respectively.

In February we had a short talk by one of our members, Margaret Bilbe, on her time *Working at Huntley and Palmers*. Her recollections of working in the factory laboratory for seven years in the late 1940s/early 1950s, checking the quality of raw ingredients, were both informative and amusing. Company policy at the time was not to employ married women so Margaret had to leave when she married, although she was recalled for a 3 month period to help investigate the reasons for water biscuits cracking.

March saw a return of Tony King to give his presentation on *The Way It Was; recollections of growing up in the 1940s and 1950s*. Setting the scene, Tony began with the early 1930s and took us through the Great Depression and the lead up to World War 2, before recalling various aspects of life during the war years and into the mid-1950s. As usual with Tony's presentations this one was packed with information and amply illustrated. As most of our members also grew up during this period it was easy for us to identify with Tony's experiences.

All our meetings are in Shinfield Parish Hall, John Heggadon Meeting Room, commencing at 7:45pm.

George Taylor

Twyford & Ruscombe Local History Society

Once again the Society took part in Twyford Church's biennial Christmas Tree Festival. This time the theme was 'Victorian' - and the many organizations in Twyford had made the church look really lovely: this, in turn, brought in many visitors.

We then rounded off 2014 with a very enjoyable Christmas party held in the Piggott School's Sixth Form College Common Room: there we were entertained by staff and volunteers from the Museum of English Rural Life with their performance of *The Swing Riots*. Some of you may never have heard of these riots and you would not be alone because some of us had to admit that we did not know either! However, by the end of the performance, we were left in no doubt. So perhaps a quick review of the 1830 Swing

Riots, as they affected Berkshire, will not come amiss.

One of the causes was the invention of the threshing machine which took away work from the labourers. Add to this the inadequate wages; the Parish Relief being discontinued; and the scene was set for protest.

The term Swing comes from the motion of twacking the corn with a flail. The rioters, in addition to their demand for money, sought the destruction of threshing machines. Lord Melbourne, then Home Secretary, was unsympathetic to their demands and the rioters were treated in an appalling manner. By December 1830, 200 people involved were awaiting trial - and of these 19 were executed and over 500 transported.

Rather a dismal topic for a Christmas party perhaps; but the performance was so well done and so full of interest, that we would not have wanted to miss it. In any case members, and of course 'rioters' soon regained the Christmas spirit with the delicious food supplied by members!

The New Year was started off with a talk by Graham Horn entitled *Restoration of the Kennet and Avon Canal*. This proved most interesting and was very well illustrated. Originally an important link for transporting freight between Bristol and London, the arrival of the railway signalled a decline in the canal's fortunes and, by 1952, it had largely become unnavigable. Fortunately, in 1955, popular opposition prevented complete closure and the Kennet and Avon Trust was formed to promote restoration. What a job lay ahead! - derelict locks, crumbling aqueducts, abandoned pumping stations, wharves and buildings. Mr Horn's pictures gave an idea of the colossal amount of work involved; but British Waterways, with the help of the Tusty and the local authorities managed to restore the canal to a navigable waterway - in 1990 it was re-opened by the Queen. Today the canal is mainly used for leisure purposes; but how grateful we should be to all those who refused to let such a magnificent feature become totally derelict.

In February we welcomed back Mr Tony King who, on that occasion, talked to us about *The Edwardians*. As usual his talk was beautifully illustrated and he started off by reminding us of certain facts about King Edward VII's life. Bertie, as he was called, came to the throne in 1901. His life was so full of pleasure that it was a wonder that he ever found time for affairs of state. In fact he did a lot to improve relations with Europe,

particularly with France, and the nation loved him and mourned the death of 'good old Teddy'.

The Edwardian social scene was based on a rigid class system where many of the 'have nots' lived in appalling conditions. Many charitable organizations played their part in trying to alleviate suffering. The Boer war was in full swing when he came to the throne and other events of his reign were the loss of the Titanic, the arrest of Crippen, the 1908 London Olympic Games, the Suffragette movement, Marconi's first transatlantic wireless signal, the growing use of telephones and Bleriot's cross channel flight in 1909.

The shopping scene was changing: Mr Selfridge set up his store in 1909 and the 'nation of shopkeepers' had never seen anything like his massive department store before. At the other end of the market were F W Woolworth's 3d and 6d stores which started at the same time. Motion pictures had just been invented and Mr King had some remarkable examples. For instance it was fascinating to see history unfolding before our eyes as we watched the Coronation of King Edward VII.

In March we had our AGM which was very well attended. James Fort continues as our Chairman and Peter Burrows takes over as Vice-chairman. With the formal business concluded, members had the opportunity to chat over a glass of wine and also to view a brief video of the history and closure of Jackson's Department store in Reading.

Denise Wilkin

Wargrave Local History Society

In January, Trevor Ottlewski made a return visit to the Wargrave Local History Society to show his audio-visual presentation about *Purpose Built Villages*. In the 19th century many town and city workers were housed in squalid and insanitary tenement buildings. These were often back to back blocks with no running water, no lighting, no main drainage, where maybe as many as 100 people might share use of a single toilet. Some people of influence, however, began to realise that good living conditions were not just for the privileged classes, and that by creating healthy conditions for employees, the workforce would be more productive. Trevor illustrated this with examples of 4 such villages created by wealthy philanthropists. Styal, near Manchester for workers at the Quarry Bank Mill, dating from the 1790s, was one of the earliest; Price's Candle Company set up Price's

Village at Bromborough in 1853; the (non-industrial) Holly Village, built for estate workers at Highgate, north London in 1865; and Port Sunlight, for workers at William Hesketh's soap factory on Merseyside.

In February, Peter Hearn gave a fascinating and entertaining talk about *Hennerton* – how their family business diversified from farming to golfing. Peter's father bought the 50 acres of wooded parkland after the war - one of the most beautiful pieces of countryside in the area. At first, there was no electricity, heating was by log fire, and lighting by paraffin. In the 1950s it was mixed farming 'a bit of everything'. Peter described the way in which the farm grew – having pigs, sheep, chicken and a herd of Jersey cattle. Farming advances in the 1950s included mechanisation, improved plant breeding, spray chemicals and fertilisers, all of which helped increase the production of food. However, the market changed, supermarkets replacing small local shops. In due course farming came to an end, and the fields reverted to a form of parkland – as it had been before farming began there – as a golf course. The audience had been given not only an account of farming at Hennerton, but a concise history of post war farming in England.

Following the AGM in March - when the past year was reviewed, the 2015-16 committee elected, and details of the 2015-16 programme given – two videos recording the recent unveiling of a memorial to the crew of a wartime bomber crash (reported in the previous BLHA newsletter) were shown, followed by a slide presentation by Philip Smith on the *History of the Wargrave Tennis Club*.

Our meetings start at 8 pm in the meeting room at the Old Pavilion on the Recreation Ground, Wargrave. Contact me, Peter Delaney, on 0118 9403121, or visit our website www.wargravehistory.org.uk/ for more information about the Society.

Peter Delaney

Museums and Libraries

Reading Local Studies Library

Reading Local Studies Library has moved from the top floor to the 2nd floor of the Central Library. We have kept all the books, maps, newspapers etc and more materials such as the Reading electoral rolls are now on open access. But we only have two microfilm readers for the newspapers so please book in advance if you are making a special journey.

Our Heritage Lottery funded project on Berkshire in World War One came to an end with a book launch on February 24th . The book *Berkshire in the First World War* was researched and written by a team of volunteers . It covers the military history and home front in Berkshire and costs £10.00 from Reading Borough Libraries, Reading Museum, Berkshire Record Office and local bookshops. The Berkshire Stories website www.berkshire-stories.org.uk has digitised pages from the four volumes of *Berkshire and the War*, *The Reading Mercury*, *Reading Standard*, *Berkshire Chronicle* and *Reading Observer* newspapers 1914-1920, photos and street directories from the war years. It was set up with the idea of covering other Berkshire topics as well as WW1, so if you have research that you would like considered for publication on it, please contact me.

The library has held two book launches for Scallop Shell Press; for *Reading's Abbey Quarter* by John Mullaney and *The Timms Family of Reading and London* by Katie Amos. In March Una Chandler launched her book *A Long Way From Home*, about her life and journey from Barbados to Reading. We also commemorated the hardships which led to the Swing Riots of 1830 with a performance of the play *Captain Swing*.

Ann Smith

Opportunities

For visits, activities, talks, conferences or projects

11th June Pioneer Buses of the Thames Valley

Paul Lacey will give an illustrated talk at Reading Central Library about the early history of local buses. Daily bus services started in the Thames Valley in 1915, when 5 green-painted 'British' Leylands started running between Maidenhead, Reading and Streatley. It was the start of what would become a huge network under the 'Thames Valley'.

Tickets: £4/£3 for library members.

For tickets email libraryevents@reading.gov.uk, phone 0118 901 5950 or collect from Reading Central Library.

History Societies

- Arborfield Local History Society:** Secretary Tina Kemp, Kenneys Farm, Maggs Green, Arborfield RG2 9JZ [tina@geoffkemp.force9.co.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 Record Society:** Margaret Simons, 80 Reeds Ave, Earley, RG6 5SR [margaretsimons@hotmail.com]
- Berkshire Industrial Archaeological Group:** Secretary, Peter Trout, 7 West Chiltern, Woodcote, Reading, RG8 OSG or Bent Weber, [bentwebershops@waitrose.com]
- 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:** Geoffrey 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 & Streatley Local History Society:** Janet Hurst, 6 Nun's Acre, Goring on Thames, Reading, Berks RG8 9BE tel 01491 871022 (Mob: 07799 583524) [e-mail gslhs@w-mark.demon.co.uk] website www.goringgaphistory.org.uk
- The Hanneys Local History Society:** Ann Fewins, 'Lilac Cottage', East Hanney, Wantage, OX12 0HX. tel 01235 868372 [e-mail annfewins@beeb.net]
- The History of Reading Society:** Sean Duggan [e-mail sduggan34@googlemail.com]
- Hungerford Historical Association: Secretary:** Mrs Shelagh Parry, 9 Cottrell Close, Hungerford. RG17 0HF. Tel: 01488 681492. [shelaghpparry@btinternet.com] [website 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 (Chairman) 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:** Tony Hadland, 4 Barcote Cottages, Buckland, Faringdon, Oxon SN7 8PP

- Pangbourne Heritage Group:** Lyn Davies, 1 Hartslock Court, Shooters Hill, Pangbourne, RG8 tel 7BJ. 0118 984 2026 and email lynndav87@aol.com
- Project Purley:** Catherine Sampson, 32 Waterside Drive, Purley on Thames, Berks, RG8 8AQ tel 0118 9422 255 [clspurley@aol.com] [www.project-purley.eu]
- Sandhurst Historical Society:** Janice Burlton, 16 Scotland Hill, Sandhurst, Berks GU47 8JR tel 01252 872504 [janiceburlton@hotmail.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 [george.taylor29@bt-internet.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:** Philip Morris, 71 Van Diemens, Stanford in the Vale, Faringdon, Oxon, SN7 8HW tel 01367 710285
- Swallowfield Local History Society:** Maggie Uttley [kcuttley@aol.cm] [www.slhsoc.org.uk]
- Tadley Local History Society:** 5 Church Road, Pamber Heath, Tadley, Hampshire, RG26 3DP [www.tadshistory.com]
- Thatcham Historical Society:** Alf Wheeler, 22 Park Lane, Thatcham, RG18 3PJ tel 01635 863536 [enquiries@thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk] [www.thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk]
- Theale Local History Society:** Mrs. E. M. Fuller, 58 The Crescent, Theale, Reading RG7 5AZ [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 [peter.delaney2@btinternet.com]
- Windsor Local History Group:** Sue Ashley, 49 York Avenue, Windsor, SL4 3PA [nutritionssashley@hotmail.com] [www.windlesora.org.uk]
- Friends of Windsor and Royal Borough Museum:** Jinny Melville, 15 Gloucester Place, Windsor, SL4 2AJ [www.windsormuseumappeal.org.uk]
- Winnersh & District Historical Society:** Brian Eighteen, 50 Watmore Lane, Winnersh, Berks, RG41 5JT [b.eighteen@btinternet.com]
- Wokingham History Group:** Trevor Ottlewski, Uani, Holly Bush Ride, Wokingham, Berks tel 01344 775920.
- Wraysbury History Group:** Gillian Hopkins, 45 Staines Road, Wraysbury, Staines, TW19 5BY tel 01784 482947 [gillian_hopkins@tiscali.co.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 newsletter@blha.org.uk and copy 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: Andrew Harvey, Principal Library Assistant Printed Books, 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: The Curator, Town Hall, Blagrove Street, Reading, RG1 1QH. tel 0118 9373400 [mail@readingmuseum.org.uk] [www.readingmuseum.org.uk]

Reading University Library: Val Davis, Library Assistant, PO Box 223, Whiteknights, RG6 6AE. tel 0118 378 8785 [v.j.davis@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]

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: 278-286 High Street, Slough, SL1 1NB tel 01753 526422
[info@sloughmuseum.co.uk]

Vale & Downland Museum: Dorothy Burrows, Church Street, Wantage, OX12 8BL tel 01235-771447 [vale.downland@gmail.com] [www.wantage-museum.com]

West Berkshire Museum: Museum Collection Store, Unit 3, Bone Lane, Newbury, RG14 5SH
[museum@westberks.gov.uk]

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

Berkshire Local History Association

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