

# **A Gazetteer of Berkshire Schools before 1833 – Special Offer**

This, the latest publication from the Berkshire Record Society, is due to be launched on February 25<sup>th</sup> next year.

There is a general introduction, outlining the development of education up to the time when the central government began to take a hand in education provision, and to make grants, in 1833, but the main part of the book is the gazetteer. It is a parish-by-parish account of all schools that are known to have existed across the county – the long-established grammar schools, the private schools, the charity schools and dame schools are all included. Of course, there is a lot more information available about some schools than others, and of course, from this publisher, the book is fully referenced and indexed. It should prove useful for local historians for many years.

It has taken around six years to research and write, and it has been very much a collaborative effort, steered by Dr. Peter Durrant, who was County Archivist at the time of its inception. In this, he was helped by a small team, comprising Mark Stevens, the present-day County Archivist, Joan Dils and David Cliffe, and Dr. Sue Clifford, who did most of the editing, writing and indexing.

The only sad part in the book's production was the unexpected and untimely death of Sue Clifford in the summer of 2018. By this time, she had virtually completed the work, but did not live to see the result. The small team enjoyed working with Sue, and will miss her, especially since another research project has started. Her expertise, and good humour, will be especially missed.

The extraordinary aspect of the way in which the book was produced is that the vast bulk of the research was carried out by volunteers. If you have been a BLHA member for the last six years, you may remember Sue coming to an A.G.M. inviting members to volunteer, and how the progress was reported, year by year, in my "Chairman's Corner" in the newsletter. There has always been a core of around a dozen volunteers, with people occasionally leaving and joining. The fact that some of them want to continue researching is another measure of the project's success. Their next project is another gazetteer – this time of school buildings across the county, built between the time of the 1870 Education Act and the outbreak of war in 1914. This was the era of the school boards, but schools of all kinds are included. The emphasis will be on the buildings themselves, and the book will be illustrated with drawings, photographs and plans.

The BLHA has made a financial contribution towards the production of the first of the books, and in return, its members, and the members of affiliated societies, can obtain copies at a discounted price - £17 rather than £25. To obtain the discount, please complete the form below, and send it with a cheque, to arrive by the end of January. You can collect your copy from the Berkshire Record Office after the launch date, 25<sup>th</sup> February, or you can have it posted to you for £2.50 extra.

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Name.....

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Please send this form, with a cheque payable to the “Berkshire Record Society,” to  
the Berkshire Record Society, Berkshire Record Office, 9 Coley Avenue, Reading,  
RG1 6AF, to arrive before the end of January, 2019.