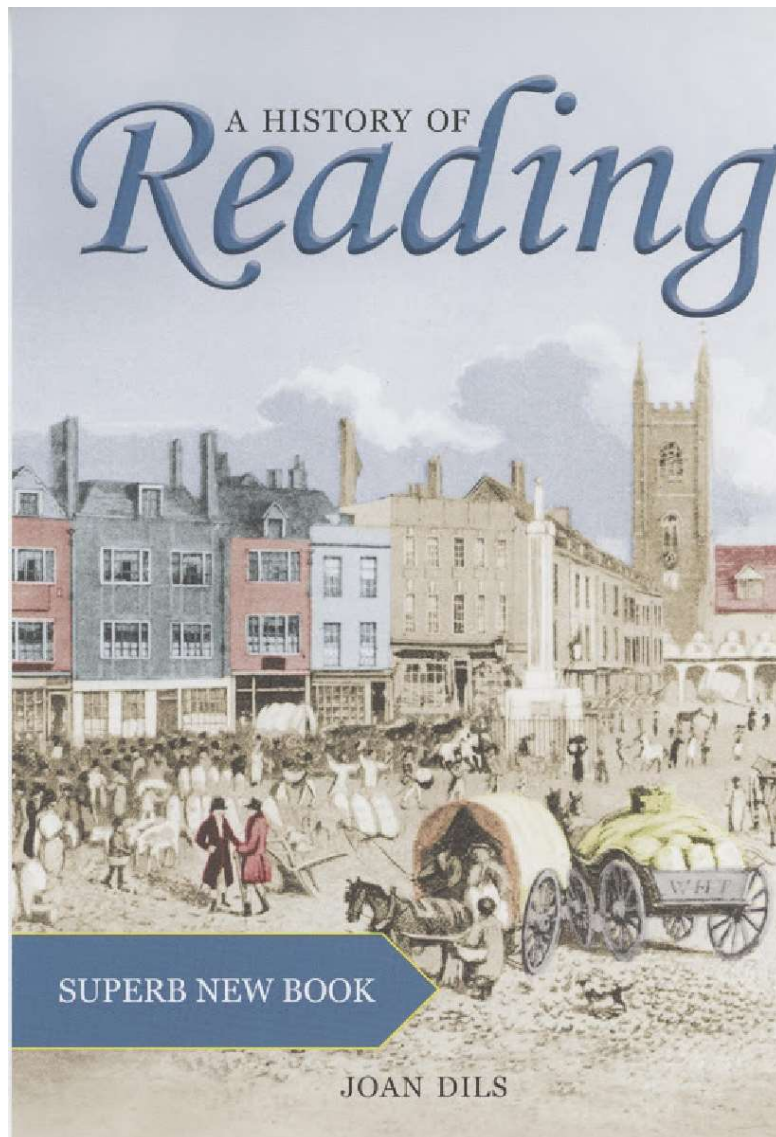


Berkshire Local History Association



**Newsletter No 126
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***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.

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 but please include your society in the name of each photo.

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

Cover picture - **The front cover of Joan Dills new book on the history of Reading - see page 3**

Chairman's Corner

Whilst it is a pity that the day on community archives did not happen in October, I'm hoping that it will be possible to put on another event before too long. Bearing in mind the undoubted success of our symposium on religious beliefs and church monuments in the Middle Ages, I've been thinking about a session on the "Swing Riots" in Berkshire. We have the Museum of English Rural Life at the University of Reading, and we have the Berkshire Record Society about to publish a volume called "Records of the Swing Riots in Berkshire": either or both organisations may be willing to help.



The subject occurred to me as I was looking through the ephemera collections at Reading Central Library, and at the Department of Typography at the University. Two Rivers Press have asked if I'll put together a book of Reading ephemera, though goodness knows what we'll call it! I came across a flimsy sheet of paper, measuring 9¾ by 7½ inches, headed "Sentences of the Prisoners Tried at the Special Assizes at Reading, begun Dec. 27, ended 4 Jan. 1831." The publishers, Cowslade and Company, must have thought that the outcome of the Special Assizes was sufficiently newsworthy.

The "Swing Riots" seem to have something in common with the Luddite Riots of around 1812. The Luddites were active in the textile manufacturing areas of the midlands and the north of England. The introduction of new, steam-powered machinery meant that fewer people would be needed to run the spinning-mills, so the Luddites resorted to threatening letters signed by "Ned Lud" – who never existed – and to smashing things and setting them on fire.

The "Swing Riots" were a bit later in the century, in southern and eastern England, the main corn-growing areas, where steam-powered "thrashing-machines" were coming into use. Traditionally, when the corn was harvested, it was stored until the winter, when work on the land was limited, and there was time to do the threshing and winnowing by hand. The new machines could do the work in a fraction of the time, leaving farm labourers unemployed – and unpaid – in winter. The threatening letters were signed this time by the mythical "Captain Swing." I have read that the "swing" was part of a flail, used for threshing, but can't help wondering if there was a veiled threat that if the farmer refused to comply with the demands, he might find himself swinging from the end of a rope!

Over 100 men were tried at the Special Assizes at Reading. They came from across the county, but with many from the Kintbury and Hungerford area.

They were accused of smashing machines, usually on farms, but also at a factory where they were being built, as well as assaulting constables and rioting. The sentences included imprisonment, transportation, and death by hanging – though in the event, most of the death sentences were commuted and only one man was hanged.

The whole subject is interesting and important enough to be worth a special day.

Coincidentally, a few weeks after finding the leaflet, I was encountering steam thrashing-machines again, this time in company with an old friend who had grown up on a farm in the 1930s and 40s. I was recording his memories, with a view to presenting him with a copy of the recording and a transcription of his stories, which could be copied again and given to family and friends. They might also form the basis of a publication. He remembered that during the Second World War, the War Agricultural Executive Committee – which he called “the War Ag” – had said that his father must plough up some of his hay-meadows and grow corn. In north Lancashire, the only corn that would grow successfully was oats. So a plough was bought, the fields were ploughed, using horses, the oats were sown and harvested and stored in a barn, and then the steam-powered thrashing-machine was sent for, and a supply of coal also. The irony was that the oats were then fed to the cattle – which might as well have eaten the hay that had been growing in the fields in the first place!

So, hopefully, the BLHA will hold another “symposium” next year, maybe at Reading, but maybe in Hungerford. And we may be able to present a show of old movie films, taken in different parts of the county. In the mean time, we will continue with our annual journal, the website, the newsletters and the occasional e-mail bulletin. I’m looking forward to the A.G.M. on March 28. The booking form should be in this issue, or you can find it on the website. The meeting will be at Marcham - somewhere I’ve never visited, but have occasionally passed by on the way between Abingdon and somewhere in the “Wild West” of Berkshire. The Marcham Society - our hosts for the occasion – have a website which is well worth a look - www.marchamsociety.org.uk

David Cliffe

A Word from the Editor

A big thank you to all those who sent in material this time. And a happy New Year to all whether you sent in anything or not. I had to do a bit of editing on several items and hope that is acceptable.

John Chapman



Book Reviews

Reading: a History, by Joan Dils.

Carnegie Publishing, 2019, £25.

Reading needed an authoritative, comprehensive, scholarly but readable one-volume history, and this is it.

For any one person to attempt such an undertaking it would be a brave, if not rash, undertaking. No one person can know about every aspect of the subject. Wisely, this author has asked various people with specialised knowledge to read through the preliminary drafts, so that errors and omissions can be avoided as far as possible.

Then there is the question of balance. In the era of the Anglo-Saxons, information sources are limited; for the Victorian expansion of Reading they are copious; and for the 21st century they are still appearing. The book needs to come up-to-date, you have to decide what to include, and you have to stop somewhere. The arrangement of this book is chronological, and the author has got it about right, ensuring that the main aspects of what is known about each epoch are covered, none of the chapters is unduly long, and her comments are relevant and to the point.



Joan cutting the cake at the launch of her book (photo Chris Widdows)

The book is not an “easy read”, with 301 pages in the main text, packed with facts. The main strength of the book is that it gives you the facts from the contemporary sources: the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the Domesday Book, the Berkshire Eyre of 1248, the Hearth Tax Returns, wills and inventories, parish registers, the census returns, and so forth. Charts and graphs appear where appropriate. Then, of course, we have the interpretation of the facts, with perceptive and occasionally wry comments.

The author’s years as a local history tutor in the School of Continuing Education at the University of Reading have paid rich dividends here, and her readers are the beneficiaries.

When we come to the final “Reading since 1960” chapter, there are some interesting observations as to what constitutes “Reading” and “Greater Reading.” Caversham and Tilehurst, the two villages which were brought within the Borough of Reading by stages in the 19th and 20th centuries, are not dealt with

in any great detail here. Both were large medieval parishes, and their inclusion would have made the book even heavier! Hopefully the volume of the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire which includes Caversham will be published soon.

I'm in two minds over the interjections in the main text on particular topics. They are on tinted paper, and use a different typeface, and so are easily identifiable, but they do mean that the thread of the story is broken, and has to be picked up again after the diversion. These diversions are always to the point, and cover such subjects as the woollen cloth industry, Reading as a fashionable town in the late 18th century, and personalities such as William Isaac Palmer.

If £25 seems rather a lot for a paperback book, it is certainly well printed and illustrated. It has a shiny, reasonably thick cover, the text is on good quality paper, and the illustrations are well chosen from many different sources, and are in full colour throughout, and of reasonable size.

Inevitably in a book such as this there will be mistakes, and statements which are questionable. I have noted down a number of these on a preliminary reading, and guess that such nit-picking is unavoidable among people who think of themselves as local historians. There are very few slips: they are few and unimportant.

Here are a few examples: the caption to the photograph on p. 186, showing St. Mary's Church with Queen Victoria's jubilee fountain in front and to the right, is plainly wrong, and Seven Bridges House, illustrated on p. 211, is not these days thought to have been designed by Sir John Soane. Richard Aldworth, founder of the Blue Coat School, appears as Robert Aldworth on p. 155, and on p. 215, the horse tram on Oxford Road could not have been "en route for Palmer Park," since at the time the rails stopped just short of the cemetery.

But all of this pales into insignificance when you consider what we have here – something that no-one else could have done, and a magnificent achievement. This is the book which people will be turning to for years to come.

David Cliffe.

In Grateful Memory

by John Dearing

St Mary's Episcopal Church on Castle St in Reading dates from 1798. So its memorials do not refer to crusaders or civil war participants. However they do refer to people whose details can be found in relatively modern records and John has taken advantage of these to tell the story behind almost everyone who is commemorated in the church.

In a very well produced A5 booklet he gives us a picture of early ministers

and their families, of soldiers in the Boer War, the First World War and the Second World War and of other people who have left their mark on the life of the church.

It is very modestly priced and copies can be obtained from John Dearing at 27 Sherman Road, Reading RG1 2PJ by sending a cheque or postage stamps to the value of £2.75 - this includes postage and packing.

John Chapman

The Register of John Salmon 1299-1325

Ed Elizabeth Gemmill - ISBN 978-0-007239-82-6

This is the latest volume from the Canterbury and York Society and records the activities of John Salmon, Bishop of Norwich from 1299 to 1325. It has very little in it for students of Berkshire; but if your interest is in Norfolk or Suffolk then it is a goldmine. Almost every parish gets a mention as do all the clergy and a very high proportion of the gentry. The index alone runs to 75 pages.

There are only six references that might be of interest to Berkshire historians:-

Buttermere - Sir William Pachet, rector of Buttermere was patron at an installation of the rector of Beeston. (8 June 1318)

Oseney Abbey was the location for a court hearing of a claim by the Bishop for the First Fruits which was disputed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. (17-22 September 1307)

Ogbourne - The bishop passed through on 28th December 1320 when on his way to Marlborough.

Reading - he passed through on the 21st December on the same visit.

Wallingford - King Edward presented John de Mere to the living of Honnington, Suffolk at Wallingford. (7 June 1302)

Windsor - King Edward presented John de Beylham to the living of Chelsworth, Suffolk (7 Feb 1313) and Thomas de Evesham to the living of Rishangles Suffolk (14 May 1313)

If you have never seen Bishop's Registers and are interested in your local church's history they are full of titbits about the affairs of the diocese. Many of those for Salisbury and Canterbury Dioceses that have been printed can be found in the library of Douai Abbey at Woolhampton. Those that haven't yet been printed for Salisbury can be found in the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office.

John Chapman

Radley Manor and Village

Published by the Radley History Club

This illuminating book tells the history of Radley's manor and its relationship with the village from around the time of the Norman Conquest to the present day. It was researched and written by a group of Radley History Club members in collaboration with Radley College's archivist. It includes:

- 44 illustrations and maps, 17 in colour
- evidence for the two 'Radley Parks'

- evidence from probate inventories
- Stonhouse and Bowyer family trees

Radley Manor and Village: a thousand year story provides a detailed case study of the manorial system and how it flourished, evolved and eventually declined. An introductory first chapter sets out recurring themes, such as land ownership, and each chapter starts by reviewing the national context.

Chapter 2 explains the manorial system and covers the period c.1050 to 1500 when Radley was part of the manor of Barton, held by Abingdon Abbey. During this period some villagers began to escape servility, acquiring larger land holdings and building durable homes.

Chapter 3 takes us to 1560 by which time Radley was a manor in its own right, newly acquired by the Stonhouse family, aspiring gentry. They remained lords of the manor for over 200 years.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 look in detail at the family, their buildings and grounds in Radley, and their changing relationship with the village as land was enclosed. In the 1720s the Stonhouses commissioned William Townsend and Bartholomew Peisley to build Radley Hall, now part of Radley College.

Chapter 7 covers the period 1795 to 1914, for most of which the Bowyer family held the manor. Following their eventual bankruptcy in 1889, most of their land was sold to Mrs Josephine Dockar-Drysdale and then to Radley College.

Chapter 8 completes the story of Radley manor by taking us up to the present day and includes details from the lives of villagers David and Beryl Buckle.

*Available from Radley Village Shop or order from the Club's website at
<https://www.radleyhistoryclub.org.uk>*

Price:£15 plus postage and packing

Harriet Mogridge

***Early Independents of the Bracknell, Crowthorne and Wokingham
Areas***

by Paul Lacey

Whenever I see one of Paul Lacey's books on buses and coaches I get hit by fits of nostalgia. Its not that I recall the areas he is covering or the companies concerned; but the photos of the buses and coaches of the 40s and 50s remind me of childhood trips to zoos and seashores which were the highlights of the days just after the second world war. So many vehicles were leftovers of the 20s and 30s and put into store during the war to see a few more years of active life..

In his latest volume he covers the Bracknell, Crowthorne and Wokingham areas and Paul provides a detailed history of no less than 35 independent operators including lists of trips made in certain years and of the fleets of most of them.

As well as transport history we get family history, local history and social history. Prior to 1930 you could start up a transport business with very little capital and perhaps an old lorry left over from the first world war and converted by adding seats. Then the government tried, in the 1930 Transport Act, to impose some regulations, but despite the economic situation, so many local operators flourished and were able to survive the war transporting workers to work and troops around the country. At the same time bus and coach design improved immensely with lovely streamlined looks so typical of the period.

Paul has spent over 50 years researching road transport issues and the amount of detail he provides is astounding. You can get a copy of this latest effort by sending £15 to Paul Lacey, 17 Sparrow Close, Woosehill, Wokingham RG41 3HT (post free) and I can assure you you will be getting a bargain.

John Chapman

Articles

Restoring Foremarke Hall

Project engineer John Cruxon became Restoration Manager for the GWR locomotive '7903 Foremarke Hall' engine in 1986 and has been engineer in charge ever since. He led a team of experts and volunteers who returned the scrapyard wreck to a fully operational steam engine.

Built in 1949, the engine is one of 259 'Hall Class' locomotives built at Swindon railway works from 1928-50. It has two cylinders and was built to carry 4,000 gallons of water and 6 tonnes of coal. By 1963 the engine was looking tired and unloved as the steam era came to an end. In 1964 it was sent to Barry Dock scrapyard in South Wales where it decayed extensively.

John purchased the engine and transported it back to Swindon in 1981, still displaying its original number and name plate. The restoration began with a dedicated team of volunteers and engineers working long hours in difficult conditions. Slides showed the restoration team hard at work cleaning stripping down, polishing and replacing old parts as 30% of the engine was missing. All copper piping and tubing in the engine cab were replaced with new versions to the original specifications, ensuring the restoration was as authentic as possible.

With its new boiler and cladding, the engine travelled to Blundesden where it was loaded with coal, ready for use, finally getting its insurance certificate 18 September 2003 before being painted in its original livery colours. The engine was put back into service in 2004, taking day trippers to the races from Toddington to Cheltenham Racecourse. It has proved popular with steam enthusiasts and celebrities, such as the actor Martin Clunes who was even allowed to drive it.

Steam engines need to be serviced every 10 years involving a complete overhaul. This was done in 2014 at a cost of £220,000 for repair and renewal of almost every part to meet stringent insurance requirements. Finally, the 7093 Foremarke Hall arrived at the GWR Didcot Gala in May 2016 in all her glory, newly repainted and returned to service.

Caroline Ness

Miscellanea

Archives and Local History Societies

Most local history societies will acquire material as time goes by - photos, documents, magazines etc etc. The key question is how and where to store it. We have put an article on our website which we hope will be of some help. It gives guidance on how to catalogue, store and digitise material so that the information content can be preserved for future generations. One key piece of advice however is if you have anything of real historical importance, then offer it to the Berkshire Record Office and just keep a copy.

Newtown Road Cemetery

It's over a year since the Newbury Weekly News kindly printed an appeal by the Friends of the Newtown Road Cemetery for relations of J.W.T. Allee who'd tragically lost his life whilst bravely saving his father from being run over in 1920. The beautiful and unusual gravestone was in a sorry state so the Friends were attempting to reconnect in order to facilitate some restoration work.

We're happy to report the call was taken up at first by relative Michael Stevenson and then gradually other family members, including a modern day Jonathan Allee, and funds were raised - as indeed was the column!



The family gathered around the grave

And so it came about that recently relations convened at the cemetery (many of whom had not met before or were even aware of each other!) to raise a glass in memory of heroic JWT, to see how they fitted into the family tree, and to reminisce. A photo of the assembled family and the restored grave also appears above.

So Newbury Weekly News, many thanks.

Brian Sylvester

Reading Abbey Manuscripts

Professor Anne Lawrence-Mathers of Reading University gave an informative and engaging talk to the Friends of Reading Abbey looking in depth at the surviving manuscripts from Reading Abbey in November 2019.

She discussed the creation of the manuscripts and their collection into an impressive library, and shows some examples of the kinds of manuscripts that were used in the abbey church. She also looks at some of the treasures of the Abbey's library and how they were treated by King John and Henry VIII!

Reading Abbey, having been founded by Henry I in 1121, remained one of the most important religious institutions in England - and even in Northern Europe - for centuries. It is only relatively recently that the library and surviving manuscripts of the abbey have attracted much attention. Her talk focused on the twelfth-century manuscripts, arguing that a huge effort went into producing of a high number of impressive biblical and theological books and manuscripts within the abbey's first decades of existence.

Reading also seems to have had a large collection of legal texts - both of Church law and secular law - and of expert commentaries on them. Those which survive are high-quality manuscripts. This was somewhat unusual, but perhaps fitting for a royal abbey where parliaments and councils were held.

John Painter

A Reading Centenary

Local passenger transport in the Reading area in the early 20th century was provided by the Reading Corporation Tramways, which had begun in November 1901 when the council took over the horse tramway company. The system was converted to use electric traction as from 1903.

However, there were parts of the town that were not served by the tram lines, and so in 1919 the town's Tramways Committee decided to introduce a motor bus service. Following an inaugural run by the Mayor on Friday, December 5th, the public service began the following day, on a route from Caversham Heights to Tilehurst (mainly along roads not served by the trams). The tramways

continued until 1939, being replaced by electrically powered trolleybuses until 1968, when motor buses took over those routes as well. In due course, the network expanded, and now Reading Transport's motor buses reach out well beyond the town boundaries.

In December 2019, the inaugural run was recreated, with a commemorative service using a pre-war Reading double deck bus, on the corresponding Friday, whilst on the Sunday (December 8th) vintage Reading buses from the 1930s to the 1990s provided a free service, running as close to the original route as the current road pattern allows.

To mark this centenary, an 84 page book has been published which chronicles the history of Reading's motor buses throughout the past 100 years. Copiously illustrated, (over 100 of them in colour) with photographs of vehicles, street scenes, maps, tickets and other artefacts, "100 Years of Reading Motorbuses" is published by the Thames Valley and Great Western Omnibus Trust, and costs £11.95. Copies can be ordered, adding £2.50 for post and packing by sending a cheque for £14.45 payable to 'TV&GWOT' to Ledger Farm, Forest Green Road, Fifield, Maidenhead SL6 2NR.

Reading Abbey Revealed

Whoop! whoop! Reading's Abbey Revealed project has been selected to receive a National Award at the 2020 Civic Trust AABC Conservation Awards next March!

Society News

Berkshire Archaeological Society

At long last the Berkshire Archaeological Journal volume 84 has been published with reports of ten excavations in Berkshire from Hungerford to Eton.

The Study Group working on Roman Berkshire is moving back to RISC from Brock Keep which has been home for several years.

The December meeting had three member's talks, Sue Dormer talking about *The Council for British Archaeology's 75th anniversary*, Kenelm England on *Observatories in Berkshire* and Tim Lloyd retelling the *History of the Society's logo*



Guests boarding a commemorative bus in St Mary Butts.

Berkshire Family History Society

Thursday, 26th September marked the beginning of a fresh chapter for the society. After development and testing through the summer, the society launched two new websites - one for the society itself, the second for its bookshop. Built on a WordPress platform, the websites convey the many facets of today's society activities to online visitors from across the world. New features accessible to everyone include Berklopedia (an enhanced reference section) and a Research Wizard (that may help in tracking down that elusive ancestor). Once logged in, society members can access valuable additional content. If you have yet to explore these new websites, go to <https://berksfhs.org> and, for the shop, <https://shop.berksfhs.org>.

Also in September, The Centre for Heritage and Family History opened to visitors over six days as part of the local Heritage Open Days programme, offering short introductory talks on starting family history research on two of those days.

The autumn events programme (on the theme of 'Institutions') was heavily subscribed. Talks focussed on Reading Abbey, Reading Gaol, Reading's Hospitals and the town's 19th century schools. Booking opened in October for events taking place in the first quarter of 2020 at The Centre for Heritage and Family History. 'A Potpourri of History' provides the theme for that quarter. The five afternoon talks range from London Transport design, Quaker ambulance units in the First and Second World Wars and Caversham Court's history, to a further talk on the Nabobs of Berkshire, and Pirate Radio Stations — so look forward to a genuine historical potpourri!

After autumn workshops on Parish Registers, Writing up family history and Suffragettes, the first workshops in 2020 will look at The Old Poor Law, The New Poor Law, Tracing your Jewish Ancestry and Making the most of autosomal DNA. To secure your place for any workshop, booking is essential. And given the growing popularity of the afternoon talks, it is wisest to book your place in advance for these too when you can to avoid the disappointment when all seats are taken. The new society website offers a very quick and easy means to book, and to pay securely, for any event.

The Research Zone computers and other facilities at The Centre have been much in demand from researchers. During shortened winter days, pursuits like family history and local research reassert themselves into people's leisure schedules. Extensive media focus on wartime exploits of previous generations and on ancestral links of TV presenters has helped in keeping genealogy and social history firmly in the spotlight too.

For researchers unable to get to Reading, a further 150,000 record transcriptions made by society volunteers of baptism and marriage entries from parish registers across Berkshire have recently been published on Findmypast.

And of course, the society's six branches - in Abingdon, Bracknell, Newbury, Reading, Windsor and Woodley - continue to meet monthly. You can find full programme details at <https://berksfhs.org>

Derek Trinder

Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group (BIAG)

The second half of our 2019 programme began on 16th September with a talk on '*Gas: its history and technologies*' given by Graham Alexander and Jo Alexander-Jones. It covered the early technical developments and wider history of the gas industry in the UK and especially in Reading. The event also included stories from the speakers' personal experience of the industry over the last 40 years.

In October Edwin Trout gave an informative talk on *Henry Scott; the invention of Selenitic Cement*, Scott was the inventor of Selenitic Cement and the talk covered his role in the design and construction of the Albert Hall, the Victoria & Albert Museum and much else of the period.

Daniel Gooch was the topic for our November meeting. John McGuinness spoke on how Daniel Gooch became the first locomotive superintendent of the Great Western Railway and in turn its saviour. John McGuinness is part of the Association for Industrial Archaeology.

December saw our annual Christmas meeting and this year we had a photographic quiz, challenging our members to identify 100 local, regional and world-wide industrial archaeology sites and in so doing drawing out lots of information on the subjects from our knowledgeable membership.

As well as our regular meetings we held a well-attended visit to the Acton Depot of the London Transport Museum in September, to experience an event focussed on the golden age of travel and London's rich heritage of rail termini.

More information on our programme of activities and membership can be found on our website www.BIAG.org.uk.

Jo Alexander-Jones

History of Reading Society

In September, Martin Andrews gave a talk on the subject of the *Life of the Victorian bookseller of Reading, George Lovejoy*.

Lovejoy's early career was served with Messers Smart & Cowslade the publishers of the Reading Mercury newspaper; whilst there he became a highly competent compositor, printer and bookseller. Later, he established a bookshop

and circulating library at London Street, Reading. When he died in 1883, his library contained 80,000 books. Among his customers were Mary Russell Mitford and Charles Dickens.

In October, Naomi Iliff gave a talk about *Quakers in Reading*. Quakerism is the common name for the Religious Society of Friends established in England in the 1640s by George Fox. In 1655, after hearing Fox speak in Reading, local man George Curtiss established a meeting at his home, later, they moved to premises behind London Street; William Penn the founder of the English colony of Pennsylvania in North America was a member. In 1712, after Curtiss died, the meeting moved to its present site at Church Street, Reading. It has a burial ground where many eminent Reading citizens are interred, among them, Joseph Huntley of Huntley & Palmer's biscuits.

In November, committee member Joy Pibworth gave a talk about the *Heroes of Woodley Airfield*. Today, the site of Woodley airfield is covered by suburban sprawl. On the eve of WWI pioneer aviators would visit the site at Woodley Farm to demonstrate the latest aircraft to the public. Following the war a flying club was established there by local businessmen Jack Phillips and Charles Powis. Later, they would go into partnership with aircraft designers Frederick Miles and Blossom Freeman-Thomas to form the Miles Aeroplane Company. Today, the most tangible reminder of its aeronautical past is the Berkshire Aviation Museum.

In December, the Society's president, Joan Dils, gave a talk on the subject of *What Did Newcomers Do For Reading*. Reading's ability to attract migrants has played an important part in its development since it was first settled by the Anglo-Saxons in the 9th century. In 1121, the town's status and demographics were profoundly altered when Henry I founded a Benedictine Abbey there; many craftsmen and labourers would move to Reading to build it. A significant period of migration would occur in the 19th century with the arrival of the railways: migrants from Ireland were employed to build the GWR and in their wake migrants from across southern England came to work in the Huntley & Palmer's biscuit factory.

In recent times immigrants from British colonies such as India and the West Indies have come to Reading to work in the NHS. Recently, the most significant wave of immigrants have come from across the EU to work in the town's booming services sector.

The talks will begin again on 15th January 2020 the subject '*A Trip Along The IDR*' the speaker will be Graham Turner.

More information about future talks and membership can be obtained from our website: www.historyofreadingsociety.org.uk Sean Duggan

Hungerford Historical Association

The 40th Anniversary of Hungerford Historical Association was celebrated on Wednesday evening 25th September 2019 with a wonderfully interesting talk by Archaeologist Bryn Walters who gave the inaugural talk in 1979. Bryn returned to his original theme "*Littlecote: Before and What Came After*", recounting his excavation of the Roman Villa at Littlecote. This time, however, he also discussed his earlier archaeological work and revealed his investigations and findings following the uncovering of the Littlecote Villa.

To a full house of 147 members and guests, Bryn regaled his audience with tales of rescuing artefacts from the appalling destruction of major Roman Sites and a Saxon settlement during construction of the M4 motorway around Swindon in the 1970s. He also discovered the giant hill figures at Foxhill. It was in 1977, whilst still a student, that Bryn and colleague Bernard Phillips located the site of the Roman Villa at Littlecote.

In 1978 work was initiated to excavate the site with the patronage of the owner of Littlecote, Sir Seton Wills. They discovered evidence for Saxon activity as well as early agricultural activity on the Roman site. Among the buildings an early 2nd century bakery, brewery, large fish tank and smokehouse were also discovered. During the 4th century agricultural activity was phased out and the buildings converted to more mysterious purpose. The villa had five towers, an impressive gatehouse and a tri-conch chamber housing the now famous Orpheus mosaic with pagan iconography. Bryn subsequently compared the villa with many others from the Roman Empire in Britain and abroad. He believed the structural evidence revealed that sometimes the buildings were more likely to be small water sanctuaries or health spas. This challenged earlier identifications of 'farming villas'. The villa at Littlecote, Bryn theorised, had undergone a religious transformation possibly inspired by the success of the great Roman spa at Bath and was in effect a place of ritual rather than a domestic building.

On 27th November John Cruxon came to talk about the *Restoration of Foremarke Hall*. John's fascinating and knowledgeable lecture was accompanied by photographs of the 7903 Foremarke Hall and similar engines, taken by renowned steam rail photographers, such as Kenneth Leach and Dick Blenkinsop. (see 'Articles' for more details)

Caroline Ness

Project Purley

The society's autumn programme began with a fascinating talk by Clive Williams about the *Nabobs of Berkshire* and their houses. Concentrating mainly on those Nabobs with local connections, Clive began by talking about the history of

the East India Company, and the odds that were stacked against survival for those who made India their home. John Leighfield, our October speaker, gave a fascinating talk about the *History of mapping* using examples including Purley, wherever possible. We booked John back in 2017, such is his popularity, and the wait to hear him talk was well worth it. He finished with an extensive display of original maps going back over four centuries from his own collection. In November, Mike Cooper spoke about *Food in World War Two*, focusing mainly on Britain, but comparing the actions which the British Government and its agencies took and their ensuing consequences, to what was happening elsewhere across the world. Some hugely sobering statistics.

Project Purley members supported both Purley and Sulham's armistice services in November, the latter included a special centenary tribute to Winifred Helen Burtenshaw, a VAD who died in October 1919, as a result of injuries sustained whilst on duty at No. 1 War Hospital in Reading. Winifred had lived in Purley for a few years in childhood and two of her brothers were born here. Four generations of the descendants of Winifred's brothers and sisters made the journey to St Nicholas' Church for the service, which also included amongst the congregation the current owner of the cottage in which Winifred had lived, and the granddaughter of one of the mourners at Winifred's funeral one hundred years ago.

The Rain or Shine Theatre Company returned to the stage in Purley at the end of November, once again hosted by Project Purley. "Wind in the Willows" was enjoyed by a near capacity audience, our largest to date, and the Child Beale Trust will receive the leaving collection and half the profits from the evening. Project Purley's annual Christmas party took place on December 13th, this year for the first time it included a complimentary raffle, alongside the usual bring and share buffet, table quiz and general camaraderie.

The society's programme ahead for 2020 includes talks by Bill King on "*Dad's Underground Army*", David Downs on his experiences as a local custody visitor (the experiences he can tell us about) and John Chapman on the history of *The Barn in Purley*.

Catherine Sampson

Radley History Club

A bright, sunny day and the wonderful setting of The Mansion at Radley College, on 30th November 2019 provided the ideal setting for the launch of Radley Manor and Village: a thousand year story. The Mansion was built by the Stonhouse family in the 1720s as their manor house and is a fine building designed by William Townsend and Bartholomew Peisley.

The Radley Women's Institute served hot drinks and a huge array of cakes in the entrance hall from where visitors entered the Blue Room for the exhibition. Displays included a timeline of 1000 years of national and local events, family trees of the Stonhouse and Bowyer families, photos and facts about Radley servants, and banners with detailed information about Radley college grounds and Capability Brown. Also on display were artefacts belonging to the college, such as a laundry maid's goffering kit from the 1850s/1860s, used to put fine pleats into the shirts of Radley masters. (*see book review*)

Harriet Mogridge

Shinfield & District Local History Society

Our speaker in September was Mr Richard Brett of Wheathampstead and District Preservation Society who gave a presentation entitled "*How we preserve local heritage*". Wheathampstead is a village near St. Albans, in Hertfordshire, with a population of about 6400. The talk began with a profile of the area. The original settlement, in the Lea Valley, began with the Saxons and was given to Westminster Abbey by Edward the Confessor. During the Wars of the Roses fighting, associated with the Battles of St. Albans, took place in the area.

The traditional industries were farming, brewing and straw plaiting (for the hat industry in Luton) but in the 20th Century a chemical works and helmet factory opened – both now closed. The present industries are mainly service related but many people commute.

A conservation area has been established around the High Street containing 30 Grade 2 listed buildings. Wheathampstead and District Preservation Society was founded in 1997 to preserve and improve the village environment. It monitors planning applications and has provided input to a village plan and Signage Design Statement (covering shop signs, finger posts, etc). A Heritage Trail covering 21 historical sites, each marked with a green plaque, has been devised and the History Society has been re-launched. The History Society has 3 major achievements, so far, - the History of the High Street, "The Pubs of Wheathampstead 1830 to 1914" (book) and a Neighbourhood Plan.

Richard ended his presentation with pictures of some of the interesting sites in and around Wheathampstead – The Devil's Dyke, "The Bull" pub, Wheathampstead Place, the Old Railway Station, the corn mill, Crinkle-Crankle Walls, St. Helen's Church (late 1300s) and Mackerye End (Elizabethan house). This was a thoroughly enjoyable and interesting presentation on a village which, in its central area at least, has retained its character into the 21st Century.

We did not meet in October. The speaker booked for November was unable to come so we spent the meeting looking through a collection of records (mostly

minute books and financial accounts) relating to Shinfield Old Age Pensioners Club. These records were no longer required by the club and were passed to us for use or disposal as we see fit. We have yet to decide if we can extract anything of general interest from them.

December's meeting was our Christmas Party.

George Taylor

Twyford and Ruscombe Local History Society

Twyford and Ruscombe local history society began our summer break with a buffet lunch enjoyed by our members in July.

Returning to our programme in September we heard a talk about *Boudicca, Warrior Queen or Rebel* by Jill Eyers. An interesting look at perhaps one of the first feminists.

Before the end of summer we managed a trip to Hinton Ampner in Hampshire where 30 of our members were able to visit the refurbished Neo-Georgian house and admire a surprising collection of Blue John ware normally seen in Derbyshire before strolling in the lovely gardens.

Cliveden and the Astors was our subject for October, it being just before the 100yr anniversary of Nancy Astor taking her seat in parliament. This, with all the links to politics over the years proved a very popular talk by Jennifer James.

In November Sue Milton showed photographs of the reopening of Reading Abbey after the restoration work. Linked with the history of the Abbey many of those familiar names came alive for us and it was agreed that future visits there would be more meaningful.

December will find us celebrating the end of this year with a party and some musical entertainment.

Jean Poulter

Wargrave Local History Society

Local GP Dr Mark Puddy took a look back at the 70 years *History of the National Health Service*, and in particular how it influenced the provision of medical services in the village, at Wargrave Local History Society's September meeting.. When the NHS was founded, in 1948,. There was one village GP, Dr John McCrea, the surgery being at his house, and there had also been a district nurse, Olive Cameron, who had just retired after 20 years. As well as the Royal Berkshire in Reading, there were voluntary hospitals in Henley, and Battle Hospital in Reading. The intention was for the NHS to provide a service 'free at the point of delivery' and that as people were treated for their illnesses, the need (and cost) would drop, although the result was rather different! Subsequently, a

new purpose-built surgery were provided which now caters for about 7,200 people and rated in the top 1½% in the country

The October meeting was a presentation by Linda Humphrey-Evans on *Caversham Court Gardens* - described as “Caversham’s best kept secret”. Recorded as belonging to Earl Godwinson in Saxon times, in the late 11th century, it passed to the Augustine Notley Abbey. When Henry VIII caused the dissolution of the monasteries, the Caversham site was given to what is now Christ Church College, Oxford. In 1666, Thomas Loveday, a wealthy jeweller, became the tenant, the family staying for 134 years until the Simonds – wealthy Reading brewers and banker - occupied it for the next hundred years. By the 1930s the house was in disrepair, so the site was bought by Reading Council, the house was demolished, and the grounds became a popular public open space, where guided tours – either historic or sensory - are available on the first Sunday of the month.

Architectural historian and Sonning resident Diana Coulter explored *Sonning Through the History of ten of its Buildings* in November. Telling of their development and occupiers, as well as architectural style, the properties Diana featured ranged from the medieval Bishop’s Palace, which had belonged to the Bishops of Salisbury, through to the 1970s built Pool Court. Unfortunately, the 1912 archaeological excavations of the Palace in 1912 ignored the evidence of later structures on the site. Other properties included the late medieval Turpins, St Andrew’s Church, Sonning Mill, the 1850 Palmer Cottages built for retired estate workers, and The Deanery.

December saw the Society hold its traditional Christmas Party, with delicious festive fare prepared by WLHS member Wendy Smith, and “Recollections and Ramblings” presented by renowned local photographer Tim Hodges, including Wargrava as a community, a hidden secret, and several Wargrave ‘characters’.

For more information about the Society, see the Society’s website www.wargravehistory.org.uk/

Museums and Libraries

The Vale & Downland Museum

Tucked away behind Wantage Market Square, you’ll find the town’s main tourist attraction, The Vale & Downland Museum. From the outside, this 17th century cloth merchant’s house and former doctor’s surgery looks unassuming.

However, once inside, you'll discover the space opens out into a large foyer area with a gift shop, coffee shop and art gallery and bright contemporary signage leading to the main galleries. Here, you'll find everything from fossils to a Formula One racing car. Telling the story of the local people and landscape, the collection has objects to fascinate all ages, family trails and dressing up clothes galore. Gallery highlights include an Anglo-Saxon skeleton, the remains of the medieval market cross and a bronze bust by Sir Joseph Edgar Boehm of Robert Lloyd Lindsay, Lord Wantage, one of the founders of the British Red Cross.

For the local historian, the main attraction will undoubtedly be the resource room housed in the recent extension. Here you will discover a treasure trove of local history books and research documents and the chance to browse through the museum's extensive collection of old photographs. Thanks to the work of museum volunteers, the records have recently been reorganised making access easier. Anyone wanting to use these facilities will need to book an appointment by emailing museum@wantage-museum.com or telephoning the museum on 01235 771447. Groups can also book tours of the main galleries led by members of the museum's volunteer education team. Afternoon talk and tea sessions are another popular option. These consist of an in-depth talk in the galleries on a particular aspect of the town's history, eg The Wantage Tanneries, followed by tea and cake in the coffee shop.

We hope to see you soon!

Dorothy Burrows

The Verey Gallery, Eton College Museum

Eton College Museum is open to the public on Sunday afternoons 2.30-5.00. Until 8th March 2020 there is a special exhibition on the Eton Choirbook, which was created from 1500-1504.

It was added to the Unesco UK Memory of the World Register in 2018 in recognition of its unique character. For details see www.etoncollege.com/Exhibitions.

News from the Berkshire Record Office

By Ivone Turnbull, Senior Archivist at the Berkshire Record Office

What new archives are now available at the BRO?

Recently catalogued items which may be of interest are records relating to the appointment of Sheriffs of Berkshire, 1994-2018, (SH/); deeds of a house and land called Edwards Lands near Bearwood in Wokingham, 1652-1743 (D/EZ199); deeds of a house and land called Edwards Lands near Bearwood in Wokingham, 1652-1743 (D/EZ199); deeds for property in Caversham, 1899-

1978 (D/EX2711), and papers of the Revd Herbert Wilkinson, vicar of Woodley 1948-1974 (D/EX2733) which includes material on Woodley CE School.

Other records include those for three cemeteries in Reading covering Reading Cemetery (London Road/Cemetery Junction), 1843-2007 (R/UC1); Hemdean Road Cemetery, 1885-2007 (R/UC2), and Henley Road and Reading Crematorium (R/UC3 and DC/R/UC3); the 1946 inspector's report for Malvern House, a small private school for girls in Reading (D/EX2254); handbooks for the Berkshire Royal British Legion, 1962-1972, and sale catalogues of the Sulhamstead Estate, 1943-1948 (D/EX2630); admission registers for Ranikhet School, Tilehurst, 1970-2004 (SCH47) and the papers of Anthony Cooper which includes a photograph of boys from Battle School, Reading, at a potato picking camp in the late 1940s (D/EX2506).

Other news

We're excited that our latest project to catalogue the Thames Conservancy collection has begun. The collection forms a unique and unbroken record over 200 years, covering the river's management from its source to its tidal reach at Teddington. It will be of interest to those looking into the Thames as well aspects such as water purity and flood management. We hope to plan public engagement events for 2021, when the 250th anniversary of the conservancy will be celebrated. The 'Liquid Assets' project is funded by a grant from the National Archives' 'Archives Revealed' scheme and you can read more about it on the TNA's website: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/finding-funding/archives-revealed/cataloguing-grants/current-projects/>

Did you know that you can now search our wills index online? It has over 38,000 entries and you can search it to see what Archdeaconry of Berkshire wills, administrations and inventories we have for someone during the period of 1480 to 1857. Why not take a look? <https://berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk/wills-index>.

Our website also has lots of information about family and local history in general as well as our opening hours and online catalogue; you can even read our latest newsletter and see what events we have on – why not take a look: <https://www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk/>. If you're interested in seeing something, please do visit, but if you're not able to come in person we can still assist you remotely; just use our online contact form on the website and get in touch.

Ivone Turnbull, Senior Archivist

Opportunities

For talks, visits and other events.

The Centre for Heritage and Family History

Held at The Centre on the second floor of Reading Central Library. Booking for workshops is essential, and is strongly advised for other events. Book online at <https://berksfhs.org/whats-on> or in person when The Centre is open or by downloading, or phoning for, a booking form [0118 950 9553]

Thursday, 9th January 2 - 4 pm TALK: **London Transport by Design** with Paul Joyce

Saturday, 11th January 11 am - 1 pm WORKSHOP: **The Old Poor Law (1597-1834)** Tutor: Joan Dils

Saturday, 18th January 11 am - 1 pm WORKSHOP: **Tracing your Jewish Ancestry** Tutor: Leigh Dworkin (Chairman of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain)

Thursday, 23rd January 2 - 4 pm TALK: **The Friends' Ambulance Unit in World Wars I and II** with Sue Smith

Saturday, 25th January 2.30 - 4.30 pm DNA Interest Group meeting. Facilitator: Debbie Kennett (Booking is advised, 28 places only; pay on the door only if places remain)

Thursday, 6th February 2 - 4 pm TALK: **Caversham Court and its History** with Dr John Evans

Thursday, 20th February 2 - 4 pm TALK: **The Nabobs of Berkshire Part 2** with Clive Williams

Saturday, 7th March 12 - 2 pm TALK: **Pop Pirates of the 1960s** with Tony Hadland

Saturday, 14th March 2.30 - 4.30 pm WORKSHOP: **Making the most of autosomal DNA** Tutor: Debbie Kennett

Saturday, 21st March 11 am - 1 pm WORKSHOP: **The New Poor Law (1834-1929)** Tutor: Joan Dils

Friends of Reading Abbey

Professor Brian Kemp Memorial Lecture - Friday 20 March 2020

An important date for your 2020 diary. We have re-named our Spring Lecture after our late President, and the inaugural Professor Brian Kemp Memorial Lecture will be held on Friday 20 March 2020, at St Laurence's Church, at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. The speaker will be Dr Adrian Ailes, a Friend, who was one of Brian's early post-graduate students at the University of Reading. He will be talking on The Heraldry of Reading Abbey and its Legacy.

Berkshire Record Office

We will be having a **World War Two exhibition** from late April 2020. Full details will be available on our website in due course <https://www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk/events>.

How to Read Old Handwriting

Workshop 10th February 2020, time 10:15 to 14:45

Always wanted to know how to read old handwriting, but don't know how? Then come along to our workshop! It will be held at the Berkshire Record Office where we will look at samples from 16th to 18th century documents held here. Cost is £20 per person. There are 10 places available and booking is essential. Please email arch@reading.gov.uk or call 0118 937 5132.

Behind the Scenes at the BRO

24th February 2020, time 10:30 to 11:30

Ever wanted to know what goes on behind the scenes at the BRO? Then come along and find out! You will be shown some historical documents, where we store them and given an insight into how our conservator repairs them. It's FREE and there are 12 spaces available. Booking is essential. Please email arch@reading.gov.uk or call 0118 937 5132.

Berkshire Archaeological Society

18th January - **Bluestones and White Bones** - the origins of people buried at Stonehenge by Professor Rick Schulting at RISC on London St Reading, come through the shop and up the stairs. Meetings start at 2.00 pm for 2.30

16th January - The Marlow Lecture - **The East Berkshire Project** by Paul Seddon. The result of a year long study by Reading University to assess all the archaeological evidence for East Berkshire At the Garden Room, Liston Hall, Marlow - pay at door tel 01628 523896

Until 12th January - Exhibition **The Last Supper at Pompei** at the Asmolean Museum Oxford

The 2020 Annual General Meeting

The 2020 AGM will be held in Marcham thanks to the Marcham Society on Saturday 28th March 2020

The plan for the day is to have an informative talk about the Marcham area before the formal AGM proceedings, then a walk around the locality led by one of the Society's members.

Here is little about the Marcham Society as a taster -

The Society was founded in 1994 to encourage community interest in the history, natural history and environment of the village and the local area. They arrange eight evening meetings each year with talks by guest speakers or

members, and there are monthly walks and group visits to local places of interest. They are also a publishing society and a new volume of their journal 'Coral Rag' (a pun on the geology of the village) is in production at the moment. Their largest work to date is 'Marcham Remembered' a pictorial work with commentary, published with the help of a grant from the National Lottery. There are two other current projects - the 'Archive Project', which is cataloguing their archive for researchers to be able to use effectively, and the restoration of the network of paths around the village, put in place with the permission of the local landowner. The Society currently has eighty-five members and hopes to continue to grow this membership as the village grows. You can find out more at The Marcham Society website - <http://w/index.php>

Jo Alexander-Jones



Marcham Church by Bill Nicholls

**HAPPY NEW
YEAR**

And Finally

The Rocket

Peter Delaney came up with some thoughts on the picture we showed in the May 2019 edition. In the early 1900s these sort of carriages were popular for local excursions and it was the era of the picture postcard. They were the equivalent of a coach or charabanc tour which came later and in order to see the sights the passengers seemed to prefer to be on top of the coach rather than inside.

It is noteworthy that the majority of passengers seem to be female and they would have had to climb a steep ladder in order to get to their seats - perhaps not quite as prim and proper as we now think of ladies of this era!

Although motor charabancs had begun in a limited way around 1903 or so many firms ran both horse and petrol powered vehicles up to the start of WW1. During that war the 'Defence of the Realm Regulations' forbade the use of petrol for pleasure trips. Horses took over again until the restriction was lifted and then motor vehicles took over almost completely.

What often happened was that a photographer would take a picture as the excursion started and have ready postcards for sale by the time it returned.

Does anyone recognise the hotel in the background? The picture, sent in by Peter, was produced by a Bournemouth firm in 1913.



History Societies

- Aldermaston History Group.** Chris Boott, Kennet, Church Road, Aldermaston RG7 4LR
[blha@aldermastonhistory.uk]
- Arborfield Local History Society,** Secretary Rosemary King [roking@henforyd.plus.com]
[www.arborfieldhistory.org.uk]
- Berkshire Archaeological Society,** Anne Harrison, [secretary@berksarch.co.uk] [www.berksarch.co.uk]
- Berkshire Archaeology Research Group,** Richard Firth, The Bailiff's Cottage, Barkham, Wokingham RG41 4TG, [tel 0118 978 7434][www.barg-online.org]
- Berkshire Family History Society,** Centre for Heritage and Family History, 2nd Floor, Reading Central Library, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BQ, [tel 0118 950 9553]
[www.berksfhs.org]
- Berkshire Gardens Trust.** Fiona Hope, 23 St James Close, Pangbourne, RG8 7AP [fina.hope@btinternet.com] [www.berkshiregardenstrust.org]
- Berkshire Industrial Archaeological Group,** Secretary, Graham Smith, 114 Shaw Rd, Newbury RG14 1HR [secretary@biag.org.uk]
- 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 [audreyrosettalong@gmail.com]
- Bracknell & District Local Historical Society,** 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.barlow@btinternet.com]
- East Garston Local History Society,** Mrs Karen Sperry, Church Cottage, Front St, East Garston, Hungerford, RG17 7HJ [karen@kado.cloud]
- East Ilsley Local History Society,** Sue Burnay, White Hollow, High St, East 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 [teresams35@virginmedia.com] [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, mob 07799 583524 [goringgaphistory@gmail.com] [www.goringgaphistory.org.uk]
- Hanney History Group,** Andrew C W Robertson, Hale Cottage, Mill Orchard, East Hanney, Wantage, OX120JH tel 07899 913281 [andycwrob@btinternet.com]
- The History of Reading Society,** Vicki Chesterman, 7 Norman Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 5JN, tel 0118 947 3443, [vickichesterman@yahoo.co.uk] [www.historyofreadingsociety.org.uk]
- Hungerford Historical Association,** 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.mtahs@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**, Jane Burrell, Walnut Tree Cottage, Oxford Rd, Donnington, Newbury, RG14 3AG [tel 01635-46497] [secretary@ndfc.org.uk][www.ndfc.org.uk]
- Oxfordshire Family History Society**, Chairman:Malcolm Austen. Secretary: Angie Trueman c/o Oxfordshire History Centre, St Luke's Church, Temple Road, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2HT, [email: secretary@ofhs.org.uk or 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, [secretary@project-purley.eu], [www.project-purley.eu]
- Shinfield & District Local History Society**, Eileen Taylor, Long Meadow, Part Lane, Swallowfield, Berks, RG7 1TB. tel 0118 988 3580. Reporter George Taylor [george.taylor-29@btinternet.com]
- Sonning & Sonning Eye History Society**, Pauline Simmonds, Robins, Thames St, Sonning, Berks, RG4 6UR tel 0118 969 7033 [paulinesimmonds@gmail.com]
- Stanford in the Vale & District Local History Society**, Mike Macfarlane, 53 High St, Stanford in the Vale, Oxon SN7 8NQ [tel 01367 710 358 [mmacfarlane1@btinternet.com]
- Swallowfield Local History Society**, Ken Hussey, Kimberley, Swallowfield RG7 1QX, tel 0118 988 3650, [www.slhsoc.org.uk]
- Tadley and District Local History Society**, Carol Stevens, 5 Church Road, Pamber Heath, Tadley, Hampshire, RG26 3DP, [tadhistory@googlemail.com] [www.tadshistory.com]
- Thatcham Historical Society**, \susan Ellis, Oprn View, New Road Hill, Midgham RG7 5RY [susancarver@gmx.com] [enquiries@thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk], [www.thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk]
- Theale Local History Society**, Graham Reeves, 52 Parkers Corner, Englefield, RG7 5JR, [thealehistory@btconnect.com]
- Twyford & Ruscombe Local History Society**, Jean Poulter, 17 Weir Pool Court, Silk Lane, Twyford RG10 9GY, [jeanpoulter@tiscali.co.uk], [www.trlhs.org.uk]
- Wargrave Local History Society**, Peter Delaney, 6 East View Close, Wargrave, Berks, RG10 8BJ, tel 0118 940 3121, [secretary@wargravehistory.co.uk], [www.wargravehistory.org.uk]
- Windsor Local History Group**, Sue Ashley, 49 York Avenue, Windsor, SL4 3PA, [nutritionsashley@hotmail.com], [www.windsorhistory.org.uk]
- Friends of Windsor and Royal Borough Museum**, Len Nash, 27 Bourne Ave, Windsor, SL4 3JP, [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**, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1BH, tel 01344 423149
[bracknell.library@bracknell-forest.gov.uk]
- Eton College Library**, Eton College, Windsor, SL4 6DB, [archivist@etoncollege.org.uk]
- Guildhall Library**, Serials Assistant, 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, tel 01628 780555 [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]
- Museum of Berkshire Aviation** Mohawk Way Reading RG5 4UE tel 0118 944 8089
[www.museumofberkshireaviation.co.uk]
- Newbury Library**, Newbury Central Library, The Wharf, Newbury, RG14 5AU, tel 01635 519900 [library@westberks.co.uk]
- Oxfordshire History Centre**, St Luke's Church, Temple Road, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2HT, tel. 01865 398200, e-mail: oxhist@oxfordshire.gov.uk
- 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]
- The River and Rowing Museum**, Mill Mradows, Henley on Thames, RG9 1BF tel 01491 415600 [curatorial@rrm.co.uk]
- Windsor & Royal Borough Museum**, The Guildhall, Windsor, SL4 1LR, tel 01628 685686, [museum.collections@rbwm.gov.uk], [www.windsor.gov.uk]
- Slough Library Local Studies**, Slough Library, The Curve, William St, Slough, SL1 1XY, tel 01753 875533, [library@slough.gov.uk] [www.slough.gov.uk/libraries]
- Slough Museum**, The Curve, William St, Slough, SL1 1XY, tel 01753 875533, [info@sloughmuseum.co.uk]
- Wallingford Museum**, 52 High St, Wallingford, OX10 0DB, tel 01491 835 065 [www.wallingfordmuseum.org.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

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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

Individual - for individuals and couples living at the same address

Family - for families living at the same address

Corporate - for local history societies and institutions, such as libraries, archives and museums

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 send out occasional **e-mail Bulletins** in between Newsletters with the latest news.

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

We hold an **Annual General Meeting** in Spring each year where local societies bring in displays and copies of their publications. The formal meeting is followed by a variety of activities - talks, walks and visits - dependent on where we are. Meetings are held in different parts of the county.

We hold occasional **Seminars, Workshops** and **Day Schools** with eminent speakers

We organise occasional **Day trips** to visit archives or places of interest (usually with privileged access to material)

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

We offer **Grants** towards research and **Loans** to assist authors to publish their results.

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

Membership fees

The rates for 2019-2020 are:-

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

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

Applications for membership can be made via the website or by contacting the Membership Secretary by e-mail - membership@blha.org.uk

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Next Newsletter

The next Newsletter is due to be published in May 2020.

The DEADLINE for copy is 15th April 2020 - preferably we would like to have it much earlier.

We like to hear of your society's activities over the last four months and will publicise future events that are open to the public (but not regular society meetings)

Please address e-mails to newsletter@blha.org.uk but please include BLHA in the title of the e-mail.

E-Bulletin

We will be launching an e-bulletin to go out every month or so; so if you miss the deadline for events for the Newsletter, the chances are we will be able to include it in the next bulletin which will go to all members and appear on our website. Please send details to webdesigner@blha.org.uk

PS - do not forget the AGM at Marcham on March 28th.