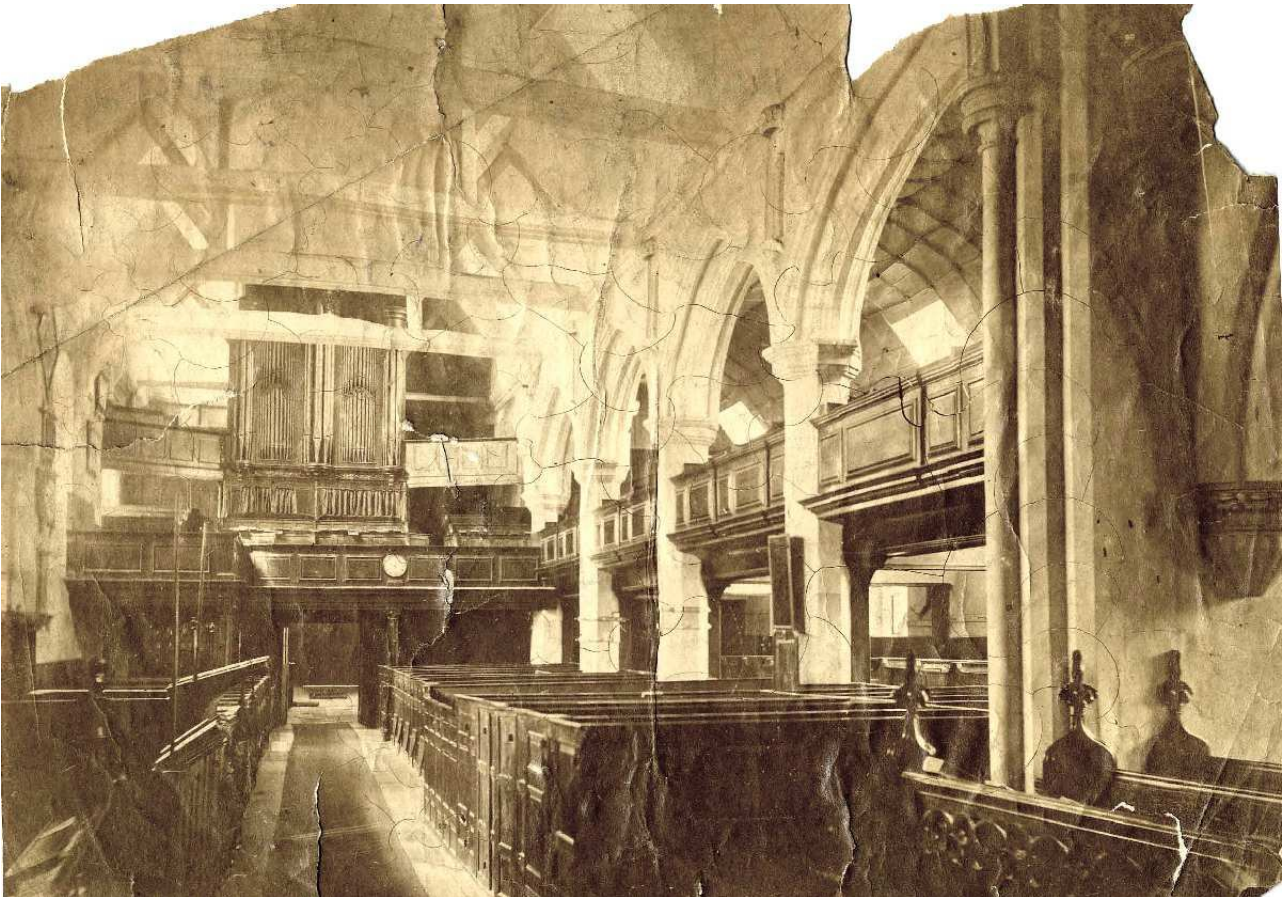


Berkshire Local History Association



**Newsletter No 111
January 2015**

Berkshire Local History Association

Newsletter

Editor: John Chapman

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PRINTED BY:- Reprographics Department,
Whiteknights House, University of Reading,
Reading, Berkshire RG6 6AH

Distribution: Dr Margaret Simons

Website www.blha.org.uk

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

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

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

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

Cover picture - The interior of St Laurence's Church in Reading showing the old galleries - it will be the site of our AGM in March (see page 2)

Membership

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

We have three classes of membership

Institutional - for institutions, including libraries, archives and museums

Society - for local history and similar societies

Individual - for individual or couples living at the same address

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Membership fees

The rates for 2014 are:-

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

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

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

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Forthcoming Events

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

17th January The Work of Allan Seaby at Reading Museum - *see page 23*

31st January Small works sale at Reading Museum - *see page 23*

26th February Launch of Berkshire in WW1 - *see page 12*

26th February Talk on Royal Yacht Britannia at Maidenhead Town Hall - *see page 23*

7th March Berks Arch Soc Day School - *see page 23*

14th March BLHA AGM at St Laurence Church Reading - *see page 1*

10th April Reading Abbey & Catholicism at St James Church Reading - *see page 23*

Next Newsletter

The next Newsletter is due to be published in May 2015.

The DEADLINE for copy is 15th April 2015 - preferably we would like to have it much earlier.

Chairman's Corner

As the end of 2014 approaches, it seems a good time to look back and see how things have moved on.

Many of us will have been saddened in September to hear of the death of Sabina Sutherland, archivist at the Record Office. As seemed befitting, she was quietly spoken, but you were immediately aware of a keen intelligence and a sharp wit.



It was shortly after that that the County Archivist himself announced his intention to retire at the end of the year. It was Peter Durrant who masterminded the building of the new Record Office, and the safe removal of many thousands of irreplaceable documents. Then, unlike other county archivists, instead of one committee to report to, he has had to keep six unitary authorities happy, and this he has done without losing his sanity. He has been a good friend to our Association, and will be a hard act to follow, as they say. Speaking personally, I shall miss his tasteful neckties – he must have a very extensive and exclusive selection!

Then in October, Jameson Wooders wrote to say that he wished to resign from the BLHA committee. He was finding that he just didn't have the time to give that he felt was needed. Naturally, the committee members wish him well in his continuing research and the resulting publication. On the other hand, Elias Kupfermann has joined us.

The move-round at Reading Central Library has happened, rather sooner than expected. The local studies collection is now on the second floor. At present it seems a bit cramped, but will be able to expand into the area occupied by "New Directions" when they have moved to the top floor in January. For me, I had mixed feelings, because I had the job of organising the move up to the top floor in 1996. From an operational point-of-view, I can see that running a library on four floors takes a lot of staff. Once things have settled down, the re-arrangements should mean that there should be little or no diminution in access or service. It is my intention to continue adding images to the Library's catalogue, to be scanned and made viewable on the website.

Looking to the future, I was in St. Laurence's Church on Tuesday last, in connection with next year's A.G.M. and Symposium on March 14. Four committee members were looking at space, tables and chairs, projectors, microphones, kitchens, mugs and rubbish bins. (The church can be fined if we put rubbish in the wrong-coloured sack!) Also, we had to ask about access to this town-centre church if you needed to unload things from a vehicle, which is not altogether straightforward.

I have fond memories of what was at the time the Municipal and Parish Church of St. Laurence-in-Reading, because in the 1970s, I was a member of the St. Laurence

Players. We often performed in the church, and I shall never forget being a tramp in a play in verse, "Good Friday," by John Masefield. I had to enter from the back of the church, and my soiled clothes, dirty face and battered hat were so effective that I was refused admission, until I could explain that I was in the play! The church seemed cold, even in summer. The plays were often medieval, and I still shudder when I remember having to pull on cold, damp tights, night after night, and it was very difficult to make yourself heard in that vast stone space. I'm very pleased to be able to report that the church now has effective heating, and a sound system.

It was interesting, going back. Since the church doesn't publish a guide-book these days, I thought I'd better try to write something for the visitors on March 14, pointing out some of the more interesting monuments and furniture. I thought I'd better check to see that they were where they always used to be, and that they were still accessible, following the "re-ordering" of the church. In contrast to how I remember it, a big building with a small and mainly elderly congregation, the church is now a busy centre for young people. There is a gallery over the west end and north aisle, just as there used to be between about 1740 and 1865, only now it's called a mezzanine.

The rather tattered photograph for our cover is the only one I have ever found of St. Laurence's with its old galleries. The organ is in front of the west window. The new gallery is of steel and glass, reached from a spiral staircase, and unlike the hard and unforgiving pews in the photograph, has a meeting room and recreation area with sofas and easy chairs. I hope that you can join us for what promises to be a very special day, when you will be welcome to try them out!

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

Words from the Editor

First of all a big thank-you to all of those who provided material for my first go at editing the Newsletter and to Margaret Simons for her help in getting me going. There has been an excellent response for this issue, so again, many thanks to all who have sent in material. There are still a lot of societies we have not heard from for a very long time. One of the items this time is an article by Nigel Suffield-Jones which I have pinched from the Pangbourne Magazine. It is very illustrative of the sort of item we would like to see from a lot more of you as it covers names from places all across the county. You will also find a piece about Peter Durrant who is retiring from the Berkshire Record Office. I have known Peter since he was a mere lad at Shire Hall when it was at Shinfield and have greatly appreciated his advice and help over the years. He has done so much to preserve Berkshire's past so now that he has so much time on his hand (?) perhaps

John Chapman



Miscellanea

Berkshire War Memorials

Two years ago many local historians attended a conference in Wokingham organised by the Berkshire Heritage Environment Forum. Each year the forum tries to initiate research into some aspect of Berkshire's heritage and that year we launched the Berkshire War Memorials Project. Since then we have been steadily building a website to catalogue all the war memorials that can be found in Berkshire. It covers both the 'old' and the 'new' Berkshire and is organised by District/Borough then Parish/Town and then the locations within the community. So far we have identified over 1100 and the results can be seen at www.berkswm.org.

Some of the pages are still fairly primitive just listing the memorials, but gradually we are building more elaborate pages which show images of the memorials. Please note we are not trying to research all the names on those memorials, although we are pleased to note that many societies and groups are doing just that for their area and we will always promote any booklets or link to websites that arise from that research.

We would like to invite anyone who knows about their local memorials to provide us with photos and basic details of them for us to publish on our website. However it must be made clear that we are putting information and images into the public domain for anyone to use without restriction, although we will always acknowledge sources if desired. We are particularly interested in knowing about memorials in schools, businesses and non-anglican churches as they were not included in the lists made by the Berkshire Family History Society in the 1990s.

If you have a booklet to sell please let us know and if you have a website that documents your research then please let us have the url. Please check first with our website to avoid undue duplication and then send information and material to john.chapman458@gmail.com

John Chapman

News from the Reading Abbey Quarter

The bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund is progressing and now a detailed activity plan is being developed. Lets hope it all goes well and Reading BC get the grant which is needed to restore the Abbey ruins so that we can enjoy the grounds again without having to be on a guided tour and wear a protective helmet! Round 2 of the bid will start in September 2015.

A new temporary roof was fitted to the Abbey Gateway in October to stop further damage from water leaks - it is not visible from the road. (*see also the contribution from Reading Museum on page*)

New Wargrave Memorial

An event of historic interest took place in Wargrave during November. On November 13th, 1943, an American Flying Fortress was one of many bombers heading to Bremen. It had left Northamptonshire early in the morning – the first active mission for its crew - but whilst flying over Wargrave disaster struck. The pilot managed to turn the plane round, so as not to crash on the houses of the village, and jettisoned all the bombs in the river. One engine had caught fire, and the plane then broke in two, just behind the wings, and crashed to the ground in the fields between the river and the Wargrave – Henley road. Just one member of the crew, the radio operator, who was thrown out when the plane broke up, survived, parachuting down into trees near the Henley road. It appears that there was a low cloud-base that morning, which hid a cumulo-nimbus cloud, and the turbulence within the latter is thought to have been a significant factor in the accident. Due to the difficult weather conditions, the mission was abandoned for this group – three other planes being lost over neighbouring counties that morning, although many other bombers did carry out the intended task over Bremen.

Although the US Army Air Force removed most of the wreckage soon after, a few pieces have been found since. The survivor of the crash, Alan Purdy, subsequently made contact with a villager- Jim Waldron – who had witnessed the crash, and in due course the families of more than half of the crew have been in touch, many coming to visit Wargrave to see where it was their relations had perished. (The nephew of the pilot visiting during 2014). Despite this, there had never been a memorial to the crew in the village – the land where the debris landed being private fields accessed along a private road, where there was little opportunity to see anything.

Early in 2014, however, a small team from the local history society and the local Royal British Legion got together to see if something appropriate could be put in place. A site was identified at the Hennerton Golf Club that overlooked the whole area where the plane had broken up and crashed. The Golf Club were very supportive of the idea to have a memorial there, and plans were drawn up for a memorial to be sited there, including a map that would enable visitors to identify where the various stages occurred.

The memorial was then officially unveiled on the anniversary of the crash, November 13th, by the local MP, the Rt Hon Theresa May, with the US Defense Attaché also being present. Mrs May was assisted by Jim Waldron, from Wargrave, and Mary Burge, from Shiplake, – both of them having been eye-witnesses of the incident in 1943. Following the formal ceremony, a commemorative luncheon was held in the adjacent Clubhouse, where a display of documents and photographs relating to the plane, its mission, the airfield it came from and the – most importantly – its crew had been mounted. Also on view were part of the parachute used by the survivor, part of the tail of the plane, a piece of bomb shrapnel, etc.

*Spotlight - on the***Berkshire Archaeological Society**

The Berkshire Archaeological and Architectural Society was founded in 1871 and held meetings in Reading. In 1878, it started publishing annual reports and transactions and has been publishing details of the archaeology and history of Berkshire ever since. You can find these publications on the Archaeology Data Service website at http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/berks_bas_2007/

In 1895, the Society changed its name to the Berkshire Archaeological Society. In the following years, the membership of the Society included the great and the good of Berkshire, and the main focus of its work was to record the history and archaeology of the county. Their efforts were recognised by Queen Victoria who agreed to become the Society's Patron, an event recorded in a letter from the Queen and held in the Berkshire Record Office. Successive Monarchs have continued to act as patrons to the Society and in 2012 two of us went to St Pauls Cathedral to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

From the end of the First World War until the 1960s, the Society played a leading role in investigating and excavating sites across the county. Sites were identified as being of particular interest or at risk of development and the Society, Reading University and the local museums worked together to get teams on site to investigate. Notable results were the excavations at Cox Green Roman villa, Reading Abbey and barrows on the Berkshire Downs.

In the 1970's the Government put archaeological investigations on a more formal footing by requiring counties to establish archaeological companies with professional archaeologists. The Society worked with the Berkshire County Council to establish a professional archaeology company, the Berkshire Archaeological Trust with some senior members of the Society and the Council acting as trustees. This company carried out a number of significant excavations including the Reading Abbey Water Front. One of the features of excavations during this period was that the teams included professional working for the Trust, academics from Reading University and members of the Society. Eventually the Trust combined with similar organisations in Hampshire, and Wiltshire to become Wessex Archaeology.

Through the last years of the 20th century, the Society's activities included organising lectures and day schools so that people could learn about the history and archaeology of the county; publishing the Berkshire Archaeological Journal to record what had been found, taking members on archaeological tours to various parts of Britain and sponsoring fieldwork.

Today, the Society is continuing with the above activities. In the New Year we are looking forward to Archaeology on Saturday lectures on Early Bronze Age women, Lindisfarne and Old Windsor; a Day School on recent archaeological work in

Berkshire at the Cornerstone, Wokingham on Saturday 7th March 2015; and a tour of archaeological and historical sites in the Heart of England in May 2015.

In addition the Society is moving to play a more significant role in the investigation and recording of the archaeology and history of Berkshire. To do this it has formed four working groups. These focus on

Geophysics and surveying: in order to identify and record new sites and features in the landscape. So far this group has run training sessions (see below) and surveyed a Roman site in Knowl Hill

Excavations and finds processing: so that sites can be investigated in detail

Historic Building recording: with the aim of recording the many timber-framed and other historic building which abound within the county. This group are currently surveying the medieval houses in Rose Street, Wokingham

Discussions of the county's archaeology: these discussions are currently focussing on Saxon (Early Medieval) Berkshire

Archaeology investigations are team efforts so if working in one of the above groups sounds interesting; come and join us. Also, if in your local area you have some archaeology which you would like to investigate, we would be pleased to work with you.

For more information about the Society see our website at www.berksarch.co.uk
If you want to contact us send an email to info@berksarch.co.uk.

Andrew Hutt and Ann Griffin



The BAS in action with a bit of geo-phits

Obituary - Sabina Sutherland

Berkshire Record Office has lost a valued colleague and the historical community in Berkshire a committed and knowledgeable friend with the untimely death of Sabina Sutherland in July 2014. For more than twenty years Sabina had held the post of Senior Archivist: Cataloguing in the Record Office, a post that embraced not only cataloguing but acquisition, accessioning and all aspects of collections care, as well as a part in the Office's public service work and the events and exhibitions that it promoted. Her knowledge of the collections was legendary, and she was generous in sharing this with others. Many local historians in Berkshire will have cause to be grateful for the advice and guidance she gave them. In the Record Office she was tireless in working with depositors, recognising the importance of the interest and support of record owners when it came to building up the collections. Between 1992 and 2004 she was actively involved in the Berkshire Overseers Project, helping to open up the Record Office on many Saturdays for the dedicated band of transcribers, and contributing to the publication in 2005 of the Berkshire Family History Society's calendar on CD. Outside the Record Office she had been a member of the Council of the Berkshire Record Society from its foundation in 1993. Her special area of research interest was the Victorian Church in Berkshire, and Berkshire Record Society hopes to publish her edition of the church notebook of a mid-Victorian archdeacon of Berkshire in 2015.

Margaret Simons

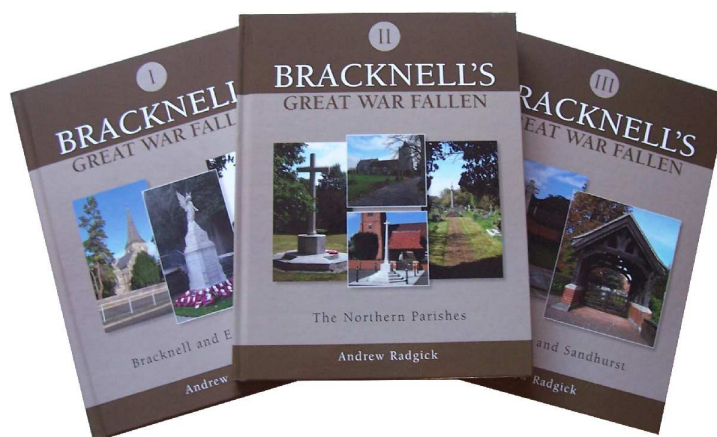
New Books and Reviews

Goring and Streatley Journal no 16

The Goring & Streatley Journal is published annually and the 2014 edition contains several articles of interest to a wider audience. I have never heard of a turologist but the story is told of Major Patrick Rance, a Streatley turologist - seems it has something to do with cheese! There is also an excellent article on the proposed Streatley by-pass from the 1960s with maps detailing the proposed alternative routes. A good read.

Bracknell's Great War Fallen by Andrew Radgick

Andrew has produced a trio of books commemorating the fallen in the Great War from Bracknell Forest parishes. It is in three volumes each are £20 and available from the author: Andrew Radgick tel:01344 862683 e-mail: a.radgick@btinternet.com



Windsor in the Great War by Derek Hunt and Brigitte Mitchell

This 360 page paperback is packed with information about Windsor and its men during the Great War. It covers a bewildering array of topics and its 38 chapters are mostly a series of short essays without any obvious structure. However, the information is good and the book is excellent value at £10. It is a pity that the index is out by two pages due to a 'technical problem'

Reading's Abbey Quarter - by John Mullaney

An illustrated description and history of the Abbey Quarter in Reading. Cost is £15 and it can be obtained from local bookshops, Reading Museum, Reading Central Library or from the Scallop Shell Press (www.scallopshellpress.co.uk)

Life in the Victorian Asylum by Mark Stevens

– as inspired by Fair Mile Hospital and what was built as the Moultsford Asylum – though became synonymous with the village of Cholsey – plays a starring role in my new book *Life in the Victorian Asylum: the World of 19th Century Mental Health Care*. I've used Moultsford to provide some real life examples in what is a description of staff, patients and ward life in a typical asylum. I have also tried to provide a companion text for the stories in my *Broadmoor* book – something that delves deeper into the daily routine and medical practice that you found in Broadmoor, Moultsford and similar institutions. The Victorians tried hard to promote good mental health, and perhaps they offer us some lessons for today.

The book is published in hardback and e-book form.

Place Names in Berkshire

John F. Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States of America, was assassinated on 22 November 1963. He was, when elected, the youngest ever President, as well as the first Roman Catholic to hold the office. A Democrat, he was passionate about equal rights for Americans, and led an assault on privation and poverty. He laid the foundations of American pre-eminence in space travel, and was the architect of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Due to his efforts the world of the time became safer and more peaceful.

The assassination of 'JFK' occurred at the time that the development of the part of the land known in 1839 as Brook Furlong in Pangbourne was being planned. When names were being applied to the resulting network of roads, it was decided that the name Kennedy Drive would be a suitable local tribute to his memory.

The name Kennedy follows the pattern, present in a number of languages, of a surname derived from a nickname and first applied to an ancestor, almost certainly in the Middle Ages or even earlier. Some nicknames were uncomplimentary, and no doubt originally given by enemies, but then borne by the individual and his family as a

badge of honour. Kennedy means ‘ugly head’ in Irish Gaelic, and is in the same vein as the Scots Gaelic Cameron, ‘crooked nose’, and Campbell, ‘crooked mouth’. One thinks of the similar depiction in the Bayeux Tapestry of King Harold and his retinue.

Anglo-Saxon names in our area are not as direct in their comment, but not necessarily complimentary either. The man remembered at Moultsford was ‘(as stubborn as a) mule’, and at Curridge he was ‘clumsy’. At the enclosure (-worth) at Pibworth Farm, Aldworth, he was inclined to ‘puff and blow’, and at the marsh (mor) at Snelsmore, Chieveley, he was ‘quick-witted and bold’.

Critics with a perceptive eye pick on a particular trait in giving nicknames, and those of Norman origin in modern local place-names seem kinder. Remembered at Crowmarsh Gifford is Walter Giffard, a major figure in William the Conqueror’s army, whose family acquired substantial estates in our area, and already had the hereditary nickname in Normandy of ‘chubby’. At Curtis’s Wood, Tilehurst, the man remembered was ‘courteous’, and at Purdue’s Farm, Stratfield Saye, he was constantly cursing, saying ‘For God’s (sake)’ – ‘Pour Dieu’. This compares with the modern surname Pardew, for whom the oath was ‘By God’ – ‘Par Dieu’.

Most noticeable, however, are complexion and hair colour, especially since they are in the genes, and tend to repeat from one generation to the next. At Beale Park, Lower Basildon, and Beal’s Farm, Tilehurst, the man was ‘fair haired’, and positively ‘blond’ at Blounts Court, Rotherfield Peppard, and Blundell’s Copse, Caversham. His hair was ‘golden’ at Gould’s Farm, Streatley, ‘curly’ at Cripps Farm, Bradfield, and the colour of his locks at Whitelock’s Farm, Bracknell, is obvious. In contrast, Morris Copse, Midgham, and Morris Close, Aldermaston, recall men who were dark complexioned, thought of as being like a ‘Moor’ from North Africa.

Particularly striking, both for hair colour and the temperament that tends to go with it, is red. The equivalent of the modern ‘Ginger’ exists in many languages, including Old French rous, giving Russell Road, Newbury, as in a ‘russet’ apple. The surnames Gough and its variant Gooch show the adjective in Welsh, and Corcoran is the same in Irish. Erik the Red led the band of Norsemen who landed in Greenland in the year AD 982, and it was a ‘red (headed)’ man who gave his name to the tribe (-ing) that settled at Reading. This explains its correct pronunciation – and the frustration of many a foreign visitor.

Nigel Suffield-Jones

The Retirement of Peter Durrant

Our County Archivist has decided to retire at the end of 2014, after 26 years at the top. He has worked in Berkshire for 40 years, and so will have seen the county archives move from their cramped and inconvenient location at Shire Hall in The Forbury, Reading, to the new Shire Hall at Shinfield Park in 1980, only to have to organise yet another move, to the present Record Office at the top of Castle Hill, in 2001.

Peter was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 2002, and was made an M.B.E. in the New Year Honours List, 2009.

Over the years he started a number of notable projects, most of which have now reached a successful conclusion. One of them is still in progress. And Peter has proved himself adept at finding volunteers and partners, and in securing funding. Among others, we have had The Overseers' Project, the Berkshire Probate Index, the cataloguing of the Broadmoor archives, and now the Schools Project, the one which is continuing, but over half way to completion. The B.L.H.A. has been involved in this project, which will result in a volume, published by the Berkshire Record Society.



It was in January of 2013 that the local papers announced that grants had been secured which enabled the Reading Abbey Formulary to be purchased, which was a triumph for the Record Office, and for Peter.

He has been General Editor of the Berkshire Record Society from its inception in 1993. Until then, Berkshire was a county without an organisation to publish its important historical documents, and Peter has helped rectify the situation. So far, 20 volumes have been published, plus the two editions of the "Historical Atlas of Berkshire." No-one knows, except possibly Peter, the hours that he has devoted to this formidable but worthwhile task.

Education has been one of Peter's interests. He has taught at day-schools organised by Oxford University Department of Continuing Education, and he is a Visiting Fellow of the University of Reading's Department of History. Recently, there has been collaboration with the English Department at Reading, resulting in a lecture and an exhibition on Oscar Wilde and Reading Gaol.

Many organisations have received the benefit of Peter's experience and expertise: the Standing Conference on Archives, the Berkshire Churches' Trust, the Berkshire Family History Society, the Reading Branch of The Historical Association, and the Friends of Reading Abbey.

We must not forget that he has also been a good friend of the BLHA, serving on its committee in the 1980s, and continuing to hold liaison meetings, several times a year, which are attended by a couple of our committee members, by Peter, and by Mark Stevens, Senior Archivist. These have worked to our mutual advantage, and it is to be hoped that they can continue.

It is also hoped that it would be premature to say that that Peter will be sorely missed. He surely will, in many quarters, and not least at the Record Office, but if we are lucky, he will not be relinquishing all his posts, all at once, on January 1st. The

BLHA committee wishes him well, in whatever he chooses to do, and trusts that he will now be able to devote more time to some of his other great loves – his music, and his garden.

David Cliffe

Great War Centenary

Books and Talks

Lots of books on the Great War are coming onto the market produced by our local groups - see the Book Review section. Also many societies have been having talks on WW1 themes - see the Societies section.

The Christmas Truce

Windsor and Maidenhead Council have been giving their support to the remembrance of the Christmas Truce of 1914. It has had some very good coverage from the Maidenhead Advertiser and the BBC.

Following the football match between Maidenhead United and Ebbsfleet (which Maidenhead lost 0-2) teams from Desborough College in Maidenhead and The Windsor Boys' School in Windsor took part in a commemorative football game on Saturday December 6th to remember the Christmas Truce 1914.

It was organised by the Royal Borough as part of the For King and Country project to honour those from the area who lost their lives during the First World War. The event included a poppy parade and a performance of Silent Night by Maidenhead Choral Society.

For King and Country

The project aims to create a lasting legacy for those who lost their lives, in the form of an online database including the names of everyone included on the Royal Borough's 203 known war memorials, along with their stories.

At the launch event on November 14th, the Mayor of Windsor and Maidenhead, Cllr Richard Kellaway, reminded the gathering that those who died were 'people like you and me'. The council's project began in September following a successful bid for around £94,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The database will be hosted by the For King and Country website which is set to go live early next year. The site will also include an interactive map, stories found during research, a schools page and an events page. see www.fkac.co.uk

Trooper Potts VC Memorial

Following a very successful Ball at the Hilton Hotel the Trust were able to announce that sufficient funds have been raised to go ahead with the memorial which will be located opposite the Crown Courts in Reading and unveiled in October 2015. The artist, Tom Murphy, is already well on his way to making the full scale sculpture.

World War One blog

Berkshire Record Office began its World War One blog in August. It gives you a daily glimpse of what was going on in the county 100 years ago, and will run between now and some point in 2019 – quite an undertaking! Please take a look at:

<https://berkshirevoiceswwi.wordpress.com/about-berkshire-at-war/>.

Reading Library BWW1 Project

Next February will see the launch of *Berkshire in World War One* - a book of 39 articles by members of the Volunteer group that has been beavering away for some time now. It covers many aspects of Berkshire from recruitment to conscientious objection and brings to life how Berkshire changed from a sleepy agricultural community to one with thriving industry and commerce in a few short years while still retaining its own character. Great credit is due to John Arcus who has been masterminding this and at the same time overseeing the digitisation of Reading newspapers which will hopefully be available free on line at about the same time.

Society News

Berkshire Archaeological Society

On the 20th September John Smith came to give a talk on '*The Roman Army and its equipment*'. It turned into a bit of a fashion show as John showed us some of the costumes and armament used by your average Roman legionnaire. He demonstrated most clearly how the costumes usually portrayed in films and popular publications were totally impracticable.

The 18th October brought us Stuart Brookes on '*Anglo-Saxon Assembly Places*' - These were meeting places for the Hundreds which met from the 7th Century until the Norman invasion and are often mistaken for Bronze age burial sites. These were where freemen met to discuss issues and resolve disputes every month and where English Common Law was developed.

In November we heard from Ann Dod talking about *Oxford before the University*. She mentioned some of the finds in the city centre relating to Mesolithic and Neolithic hunter gatherers and then a long gap in the archaeology until the emergence of a Saxon town.

December brought Dominik Fleitmann talking about *Climate Change and Society*. He took us back half a million years and through many ice ages and long periods of drought. He explained how modern technology allows a detailed history of climate changes to be determined from geological samples such as stalacmites and layered deposits. Then he traced human migrations making use of periods of heavy precipitation to cross deserts and expand into new territory, comparing the archaeology with the climate record. It put all our current worries about climate change into perspective.

Goring & Streatley Local History Society

Our new season's programme began in September with Shaun Morley who talked about *Custom and Ritual in 19th century Oxfordshire*. Customs such as village feast days, Plough Sunday and Guy Fawkes Night were never dictated by statute or common law or written down, but they provided a light relief to the hard daily grind in rural communities. Other rituals such as 'rough music' enabled villagers to show their disapproval of antisocial behaviour by transgressors.

In October Mike Willoughby described his work *Tracing the names of local servicemen who gave their lives in the 1914 - 18 war*. Studying war memorials in over 40 villages in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire and making many visits to cemeteries in England, Belgium and France, he located more than 80 soldiers whose sacrifice had not been recorded on a monument. This omission is now being redressed. He also demonstrated through his large collection of equipment used by the troops what daily life was like in the trenches. This was a moving and thought-provoking presentation.

November saw the welcome return of Liz Woolley, always a popular speaker at Society meetings, who talked about a different conflict – *World War II*. She focussed on the life of children in Oxfordshire, particularly evacuees whose experiences were often unpleasant. For everyone, children and guardians alike, daily living was a trial. Food rationing, clothing coupons, little entertainment and the blackout meant that everyone suffered. Many children spent time potato picking and collecting salvage. For most of the London children it was an experience they would never forget.

The Transport History Group continued its regular outings, with a highly enjoyable round trip by boat and train from Goring to Windsor in August, followed by a visit in October to the special steam weekend at Hampshire's 'Watercress Line'. The outing to the Imperial War Museum in early December was a natural follow-up to the Society's World War I commemoration and the excellent new galleries relating to that conflict engendered particular interest.

Our exhibition to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I took place over the weekend of 1-2 November. This was an ambitious and challenging project that aimed to show the impact of the war on home life in our villages, as well as to honour those who served. It included display panels on a wide variety of topics, artefacts and documents loaned by local people, a programme of talks and a 'room' set out in the period. Pianist Roger Selman played music of the time and refreshments were served throughout by the WI. The local scouts brought along a WWI trek cart and displays showing the important role played by their members in 1914-18. Children were invited to colour in a poppy and to find a WWI penny in a box of old coins. The objective was to hold an event for the whole community and in this it succeeded with nearly 800 visitors and over £700 collected for the Royal British Legion.

Janet Hurst, Secretary (01491 871022, gslhs@w-mark.demon.co.uk)

Maidenhead Archaeology and Historical Society

Our recent monthly meetings have been Lectures as follows :-

Wed Sept 24 “*Three Berkshire Brothers go to War*” by Stan Cornford

Wed Oct 29 “*The Suffragettes 1860 – 1928*” by Edward Dixon

Wed Nov 26 “*Watermills of the Thames and tributaries*” by Sheila Miles Viner

Wed Dec 10 “*The Fight for Cookham Commons*” by Keith Parry

Our monthly meetings continue in 2015 on the last Wednesday of the month at the RVS York Hall, York Road, Maidenhead. Our AGM is on Wed 29th April followed by a short talk by the Chairman, which now seems to have become a tradition! We aim to make our meetings friendly, lively and stimulating and are fortunate in that our convenient venue has an excellent small cafe where we gather for coffee, tea, biscuits etc afterwards.

We will run 3, possibly 4 one-day coach trips between May and September to include Laycock Abbey, Avebury, Mid-Hants Railway, Hinton Ampner, Cirencester and Kelmscott Manor. Non-members are welcome on trips on payment of £1 for day membership and £2 for meetings. After a successful visit to Silchester last July we hope to visit wherever Reading University’s archaeology department are exploring in 2015.

Brian Madge

Pangbourne Heritage Group

In September we noted that the Group was entering it’s 11th Year. During this period we have held three exhibitions “Pangbourne at War” in 2005, “Pangbourne A Century of Change 1830-1930” in 2010 and “Do You Remember Do You Recall 1947 -53” in 2012. We have collected numerous oral histories, digitised personal and photographic memorabilia but have much more to do as we have yet to start with our early Pre Roman history. We continue to meet in St James the Less Church in the evening of the 2nd Wednesday of the month and this year had several interesting presentations including “*A History of Wine*” and an accompanying tasting with Richard Nurick, and in this anniversary year, “*Living in the Shadow of Dylan Thomas*” by Lyn Davies who grew up in the house that Dylan had lived in. In November John Chapman gave a very interesting presentation on the *Royal Berkshire Regiment in WW1*, in which he explained Army hierarchy and deployment at the time, as well as the myths and reality of the overall and personal conflict for the troops. The Group also looked in depth at Copyright and Data protection with Sue Broughton Data Protection Lead for West Berkshire. In October we enjoyed a fascinating guided visit to the REME Museum of Technology in Arborfield which will be relocating to Lyneham in Wiltshire with the Garrison in 2015.

Our programme for 2015 includes speakers who hope to present on a variety of topics including “Unusual Aspects of Berkshire Churches” in February, “History of

Crime and Punishment” in March and later in the year, a Quiz involving Historical objects. We are still seeking a Webmaster but our progress and programme can be followed on Twitter@pangbournehg

Rosie Nurick

Project Purley

Project Purley’s September meeting began with a presentation of a cheque for £500 to Marion Jacobs of Crossroads Care which was raised by the society when it hosted the Rain or Shine Theatre Company’s performance of the Merchant of Venice in June. This was followed by an illustrated talk “*Purley from the Air*” by the society’s archivist John Chapman on the collection of aerial photographs he has built up dating from 1947 through to 2013. They showed in great detail how the village developed in the post-war years and several showed the extent of flooding in 1947 and more recently in 2003 and 2013. John explained with great clarity the main features in all of the images making it a thoroughly enjoyable evening.



Purley Church from the air 1988

Nick Brazil gave a fascinating talk entitled ‘*Literary and Artistic Footprints of the Thames*’ to a packed hall in October. The talk began with the Catholic house of Mapledurham, just across the river from Purley, where Alexander Pope was a regular visitor and great friend of the unmarried Blount daughters Teresa and Martha. Nick then went on to discuss a vast array of artists and writers including Cecil Aldin, the Lybbe Powys family of Hardwick House, Kenneth Graham, Eric Kennington, May Wedderburn-Cannan and D H Lawrence. Nick was recommended to us by Pangbourne Heritage and we likewise thoroughly recommend him to other groups.

November’s audience was our largest recorded to date with many visitors joining members to hear Trevor Sapey, the education officer for the Mary Rose Trust, talk about *The Mary Rose*, its construction, sinking, raising and conservation. Trevor brought with him a large collection of artefacts – real and replica – found with the ship and these were passed round the audience for them to guess the object and its usage. It was a memorable evening which really brought alive what we can deduce about life on board the Mary Rose and with lots of audience participation. This was an excellent talk ahead of our planned outing to Portsmouth Harbour in July 2015 and our thanks go to Newbury History Society who recommended Trevor.

Over the last few months the society has supported several local organisations with small displays. In August we staged a small exhibition on schooling in the village

at 'Purley in the Park' and also displayed a number of maps and memorabilia. In October the society mounted a display at Berkshire Family History Society's conference - The early twentieth century: Conflict and change. This time our focus was on the development of early-twentieth-century plot land developments with a case study on Purley Park, one of the two large planned plot land developments in Berkshire.

The society's next meeting is our Christmas party in December before our talk season recommences in January with a Members' Evening focused on World War One. January also sees us host the winter performance of the Rain or Shine Theatre Company – this time 'Great Expectations'.

Catherine Sampson

Sandhurst Historical Society

July's talk on *Parks* by Peter Halman began and ended with the Forbury Gardens in Reading. The lion in the gardens is one of the largest iron sculptures in the world. It is a myth that the lion was incorrectly sculpted and that the sculptor committed suicide. After 1066 AD, the Normans established parks for the hunting of deer and boar and by 1350 there were around 1900 parks. Town parks came about during the Industrial Revolution, being places for people to escape the dirt and smoke. Parks became more popular from the 1820's onwards with the introduction of funfairs. There were no bandstands before parks either. Later, some parks were divided into separate parts for cricket, football, bowls and the like.

August's meeting brought Jane Hirst to give us *A taste of life in 1942*. Saving paper and cardboard was a priority and a prize of £1,500 was offered for the most collected. Paper was required for cartridges, bones for glue, rags for blankets, rubber for tyres and string and twine for maps and charts. A scheme was devised to adopt a Corvette costing £120,000 as the Navy desperately needed more ships. This was achieved in War Ship week by investing every spare penny in National Savings when £200,000 was raised! People sustained some serious injuries by falling off buses in the blackout. Shop deliveries ceased other than for milk, coal, medical supplies, wreaths and papers due to lack of petrol. Eradication of bracken was needed to allow more land for growing crops. Carrots seemed to be the main vegetable grown along with potatoes. Recipes were placed in the paper each week and then demonstrated in the local gas showrooms. The RAF advertised for older men who could cook as they were needed to feed crews on airfields.

Our AGM was held in September taking up just 15 minutes of the meeting! After this we were treated to a very amusing talk by Mel Rees which consisted of a light-hearted look at life and family.

October's talk on *Ghosts and Ghouls of Surrey Heath* proved to be another lighter subject covering ghosts supposedly seen in this area. Connaught cottage in the

Sandhurst Academy grounds was turned over to troops at the time of WW1 and a soldier was purported to have been sitting on a lady's bed. In Frimley Green there was a WW1 prisoner of war camp near the fuel allotments where a man was seen accompanied by a dog. A ghost was seen in Mychett Place too. Lots of stagecoaches used the Golden Farmer Inn at Bagshot (now an American golf shop) and there a 16 year old boy was said to have seen a coach drawn by 6 horses in 1966. No one appears to have seen any highwaymen though! At the White Hart, Frimley a smiling nun has been seen turning lights on and off. She was last seen at the Frimley Childrens' Centre in 1986. A ghost lurks at Johnsons Wax Company where a workman died some years ago. In 1990 on the site of the M3 motorway bridge a young lad was seen walking towards someone who just disappeared. On the site of Dormer Close off the New Wokingham Road, Crowthorne used to be Fintry Cottage and there have been quite a few sightings of a Centurion walking up the stairs and disappearing in one of the houses now there. Furniture was also said to move in the cottage. This was experienced by my husband's uncle, a level headed man. The cottage was owned by my husband's grandmother and we also know someone who has seen the Centurion.

In November John Harrison, himself an experienced campanologist, gave us a talk accompanied by slides and a short video on *English Styles Bell Ringing*. He explained in great detail exactly how bell ringing works and how one doesn't have to use brute force to ring those heavy bells! Many bells weigh threequarters of a ton although St. Michael's bells in Sandhurst are much lighter. Liverpool Anglican Cathedral has a bell weighing 4 ¼ tons! Church bells are on a quadrant enabling them to swing further. As they go higher the sound becomes louder. Changing the order of ringing gives rise to the saying "Ringing the changes". Bells are blessed and some are christened with ale! Whitechapel Foundry in London is one of the most well known foundries and was established in the 1500's. Bell turning proper only came about around 100 years ago and, as bells changed shape over the years they produced a better sound. Bell ringing contests were very popular in the past especially around Wokingham and Reading. Most Clergy were able to ring the bells and most ringers were men until around 1918 when women began to partake. Ringers used to be paid in beer! Mr. Harrison has written a book on the subject covering 300 years of bell ringing.

Janice Burlton

Shinfield & District Local History Society

We spent much of the summer months, including an additional meeting in August, preparing a display to commemorate the start of the First World War. The display mainly comprised details of those men named on the Shinfield war memorial and was prepared for inclusion in a flower festival held in St. Mary's Church, Shinfield, in September. It will remain on view in St. Mary's Church for the next four years.

Owing to several of our members being unavailable our September meeting was cancelled and the planned talk postponed until November.

Our October meeting was attended by a member of Spencers Wood Local History Group and was devoted to discussing our parallel projects to record the history of local trades and businesses in Shinfield parish with a view to collaborating and sharing information.

In November we had a talk, postponed from September, by Robert Hughes on "*The History of Photography*". Robert began by explaining the basic technical requirements of a camera, making a comparison with the human eye. He then explained that although the necessary elements for producing a photograph had been known since ancient times it was not until the 19th century that these were brought together in a single process. The talk, which was well illustrated throughout, took us through the development of photography from the first attempts to capture an image to present day digital photography. The evening ended with members looking at the speaker's collection of cameras dating from the 1940s to more recent times.

George Taylor

Swallowfield Local History Society

18th September 2014. We had a great evening when John Harrison came to talk to us about *English Style Bells and Bell ringing*. It happened to be the same evening as our own Bells Ringers at All Saints Church in Swallowfield meet to practice. We persuaded them to let us join them in the Church and hear the bells being rung. We sat mesmerised as we watched and listened to the different peels. Visitors arrived to ring with the local team and John a keen Bell Ringer joined in. His talk was all the more interesting following our unique opportunity of seeing the practice unfold.

16th October 2014. Andy Thomas came to talk to us about *Crop Circles and other Mysteries*. So many fascinating things to tell us, origins lost in the mist of time, oddities that perplex and amaze. All part of the rich mosaic of history that surrounds us.

20th November 2014. Another most interesting evening as we were addressed, in full regalia, by the *Town Crier from Farnham*, Jonathan Jones. A tradition which goes back to before Roman times - to give news to the people. His explanation of the Tradition and the Role it plays made us want it listened to him for so much longer. The questions it evoked showed how much everyone enjoyed the evening.

To find out about our full Programme for the year do visit our Web Site www.slhsoc.org.uk

If you would like to know anything about the History Society please contact either Ken Hussey (Chairman) on 0118 988 3650 or Maggie Uttley (Secretary) on 0118 988 2954 or email kcuttley@aol.com.

Maggie Uttley

Twyford and Ruscombe Local History Society

After the Summer break our first meeting was in September when Mrs Cecily Amos spoke to us about the *History of Huntley & Palmers*: and her own memories of working there for 38 years.

Later that month we had a very enjoyable outing to the National Trust's Uppark House and Garden. This magnificent house near Petersfield was badly damaged by fire in 1989, but has been carefully rebuilt and is well worth a visit.

In October, Cory Stirling - the miller at Mapledurham - gave us a remarkably interesting talk about the history of the house and his own work as the miller there. He had many pictures showing the detailed process of milling, and a very interesting and enjoyable evening was had by all. An outing to the Mill is now being planned.

Doreen Scott was good enough to arrange another visit, this time in conjunction with the Horticultural Society: and on 18th October a group visited Lacock Abbey. I understand this was a great success.

In November Mr David Ford gave us a great evening, full of interest, when he talked about *Dangerous Times in Tudor Berkshire*. After a brief review of the Tudor dynasty, Mr Ford took us around many of the homes linked with that dynasty giving us some lovely pictures and a wealth of details with each one. Tudor Berkshire was, of course, 'Old Berkshire' and some of the dwellings would now be found in Oxfordshire. It was a dangerous era for many people, particularly Catholic priests. People engaged in sedition or anything which displeased the Crown ended up in the Tower of London - and often execution.

Denise Wilkin

Wargrave Local History Society

Wargrave Local History Society welcomed well-known local historian Joan Dils in September, when she spoke about *Tudor and Stuart Feasts*. Although the lives of the kings, queens and nobility of the Tudor and Stuart period is described in many places, the lives of 'ordinary people', what they ate, how they entertained their friends and celebrated community life is less easy to discover. Churchwardens' accounts recorded the arrangements for these feasts, and the early accounts for Reading survive. By using such sources, Joan was able to reveal something of what life was like for those of more humble status. The reformation did away with many of these feasts and celebrations, so many cultural traditions were lost at that time.

Barbara Askew gave an interesting illustrated talk in October about *The Windsor Fire Restoration*, following the 1992 disaster. The oldest continuously inhabited castle anywhere, it has been used by our monarchs for 900 years. The fire started on November 20th 1992, being discovered at 11.30am in the Private Chapel. Rewiring and the installation of fire detectors was in progress at the time, but even so many priceless objects had to be hurriedly removed. The subsequent restoration, which Barbara described in some detail, followed the principle of 'equivalent restoration'

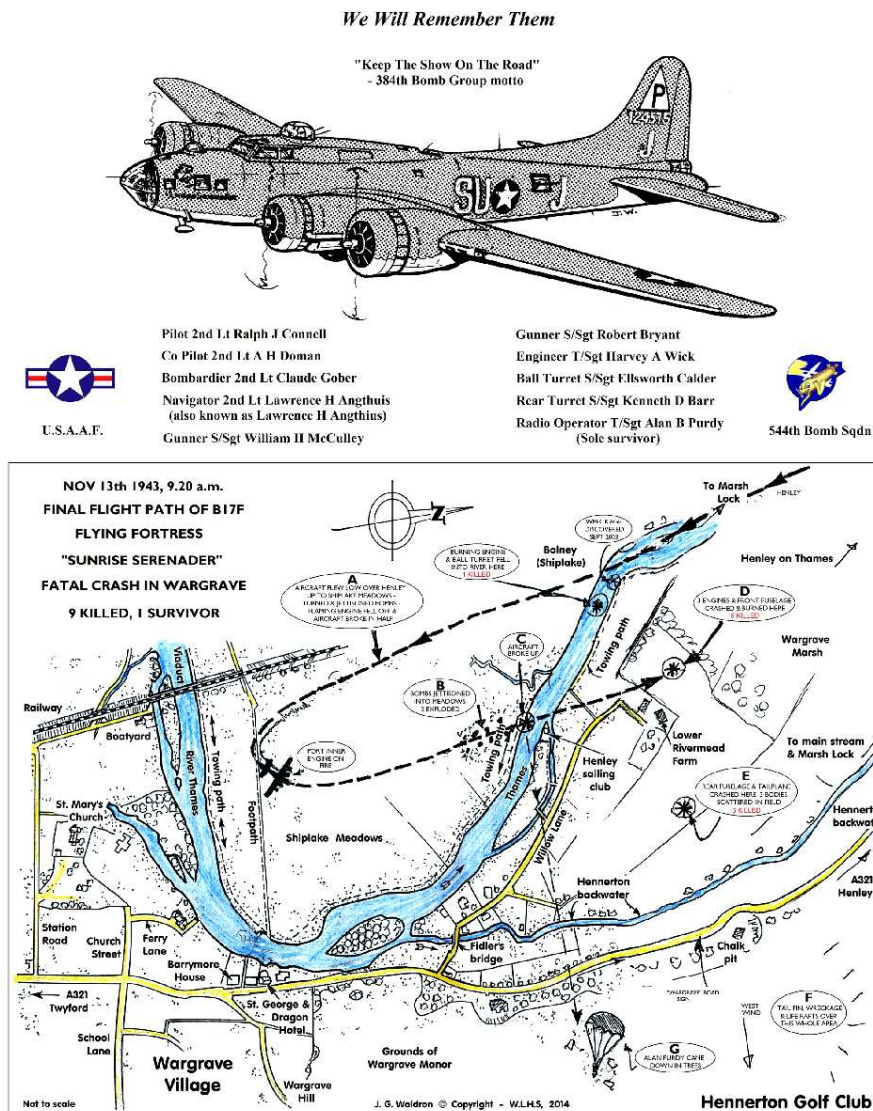
where possible, and where the building fabric had been totally destroyed, a fresh approach was adopted, creating new spaces using modern techniques, yet styled to blend with the old. The work was completed in time for the Queen's 50th wedding anniversary – precisely 5 years since the fire.

In November, Dr Christina Hill-Williams enlightened members about *The History and the Role of the High Sheriff*. Having served as the High Sheriff of Berkshire, Christina gave a personal and authoritative account. Alfred the Great had divided up Wessex, to be easier to control. Each part was called a shire – 'portion of the kingdom' - and Berkshire was the part of the kingdom which was a land of hills. A person who administered an area was a reeve, so the one in charge of the shire was the shire reeve - later contracted to sheriff. High Sheriffs in Berkshire can be traced to pre-Norman times. Christina outlined their role, both in medieval and modern times, the process of appointment, and highlights from her year in office.

The Christmas Party was held in December, when members enjoyed the traditional refreshments, and puzzled over old photographs, showing shops that had existed in the village, and others of details of historic interest around Wargrave.

Our meetings start at 8 pm in the meeting room at the Old Pavilion on the Recreation Ground 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

Berkshire Record Office

Our autumn exhibition, *‘Oscar Wilde and Reading Gaol’* opened for visitors on Wednesday 22 October. It runs during normal Record Office opening hours until 6 February 2015. The exhibition was launched with a free public event on 20 October, at which Merlin Holland, Wilde’s grandson, delivered a lecture entitled *‘Oscar Wilde: in court, in prison and in exile’*. We then had a question and answer session, chaired by Gyles Brandreth, the broadcaster, Wilde enthusiast and author of a series of *‘Oscar Wilde Murder Mysteries’*. Beautiful displays of sunflowers, lilies and green carnations (all flowers associated with Wilde) were provided by Sonning Flowers.

The prison was opened in 1844 as Berkshire’s county gaol, and received men and women from across the south of England. We have what remains of its archive, and some of that is on display, as well as the Prison’s Victorian key safe and examples of the fine publishing that Wilde promoted.

Mark Stevens

Maidenhead Heritage Centre

Our exhibition *“Maidenhead in the Great War”* concentrates on the Home Front. Like many places, the town welcomed some of the 250,000 Belgians who fled to this country. However later in the war, when bombing of London caused a second wave of refugees, the national press reported it as an *“Alien Invasion”* of Maidenhead. This was because some of them were Russian Jews who had settled in the East End after being expelled from their homeland. Even the local newspaper reported that Maidenhead was becoming *“a Dustbin for Foreigners of Every Kind.”* There is no evidence of any anti-semitic activity in the town, and the Borough Council deplored the reports and told the press to check their facts. There were probably less than 300 Jews, not the 3000 reported by the Daily Mail.

The exhibition continues until 28 March 2015 and is proving popular with schools. Group visits can be arranged.

Brian Boulter

Reading Museum

New Online Collections

Reading Museum has created an online showcase for its collections thanks to funding from Arts Council England. The new Collections Online catalogue at <http://collections.readingmuseum.org.uk/> has launched with over 2,700 objects to discover. A major highlight for local residents will be almost 2,000 photographs of Reading during the 20th century, many from the Reading Chronicle collection. The website will be a growing ‘shop window’ for the museum’s diverse archaeology, art, natural history, social history and world collections.

The project began last year when the project team started selecting the objects that would launch the online catalogue. Vintage photographs of Reading, taken between 1938 and 1964, were chosen to give visitors a chance to step down memory lane and see how Reading has changed. While an eclectic group of world objects were selected to show Reading's global links through the ages. Even more will be added in future to extend coverage to other areas of the collections.

Topics have been created to give an introduction to the collections at Reading Museum. Visitors can browse these topics to discover fascinating facts about Reading's history and museum's collections. For example the 'Air Raid 1943' topic reveals a series of fascinating photographs showing the Second World War bomb damage to the town centre. While the 'Famous Faces' topic shows many of the actors, musicians, politicians, sports people and writers that have visited Reading, such as 'Carry On' star Hattie Jacques opening the Battle Hospital fete in July 1962. This time of year the 'Christmas in Reading' theme is sure to be of interest, including an unusual image of Father Christmas arriving at McIlroy's department store by 'helicopter' in 1954.

Collections Online was part of 'Reading Connections' a partnership project between Reading Museum and the Museum of English Rural Life, funded by a grant from Arts Council England's Renaissance Strategic Support Fund. The website can be found at <http://collections.readingmuseum.org.uk/>

Reading Abbey Revealed

Work has started on developing more detailed plans for the 'Reading Abbey Revealed' project. Our new approach to the conservation and interpretation of Reading's historic Abbey Quarter will be detailed in a second round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) that will be submitted in September 2015. Independent specialists have now been appointed to develop educational activities and interpretation around the Abbey Quarter. It follows the announcement in June that the HLF had given a "first round pass" to the project.

In addition, during October a temporary scaffolding roof was installed on the Abbey Gateway. A condition survey on the building last year, funded by a grant from English Heritage, found that the current roof was no longer weather-tight. The temporary roof sits on top of the current roof and is not visible from ground level. This will allow the building to dry out and prevent any further damage to the Abbey Gate until money is secured for permanent repairs.

These next steps build on the extremely successful public consultation held in January 2014 which received 1156 responses and showed overwhelming support for the project. There will now be a wider consultation with stakeholders and the public to develop the plans for educational activities and interpretation, which will form part of the round two application to the HLF for around £1.7 million. Find out more at <http://www.readingmuseum.org.uk/get-involved/projects-consultation/abbey-quarter/>

Slough Library

Slough Libraries has recently started providing access to another family history resource online – Forces War Records. Alongside Findmypast and Ancestry, Slough Libraries this provides some great resources to help you trace your family tree, all free to Slough Library members using their library card on computers at Slough's Libraries.

We also offer our library members access to a range of online resources that can also be accessed from home including our brand new emagazine resource Zinio. Through Zinio you can access a range of popular titles such as Computer Shopper, Cycling Active, National Geographic and also a the family history title "Your Family Tree". Another new resource – PressDisplay gives access to over 2000 current national and international newspapers and magazines from around the globe in over 60 languages from more than 100 countries.

You can also find a wide range of other interesting resources online, free with a Slough Libraries card including Encyclopaedia Britannica, Oxford English Dictionary, and Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

Gaby Koenig

Opportunities

For visits, activities, talks, conferences or projects

New! Gallery Tours – every Wednesday

Join one of Reading Museum's trained volunteers for an introductory tour of the galleries. The volunteers will offer a personal insight into the museum's collection. Each tour guide gives a different tour and will pick out items that fascinate them. So come along and find out more about the stories behind the objects, like the man beheaded for supporting the king, the links between the museum and the Palmer family or what was held in the HUGE Roman pot.

All ages, 2.30pm – 3.15pm (approx.) Donations welcome, drop in

17th January The Work of Allan Seaby

Martin Andrews will discuss the inspirational work of Allan W Seaby whose work is currently on show in the Madejski Art Gallery from 2pm to 4pm at Reading Museum-admission £12 - phone 07751965334 to book. The exhibition entitled *Art and Nature* will close 22nd March.

20th January - Aviation Lectures

To mark the 80th Birthday of White Waltham Airfield, Maidenhead Heritage Centre has arranged a series of 6 Tuesday evening lectures at the West London Aero Club starting 20th January 2015. There will also be a daytime visit to see the aircraft currently in the hangars. Cost £60 (£50 for Friends).

Details at www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk or phone 01628-780555

31st January Small Works Sale: Reading Guild of Artists

Guild members will be in the Sir John Madejski Art Gallery with small art works of all sorts at affordable prices. They will be surrounded by woodcuts made by their founder and first President, Allen W. Seaby. Everyone is welcome to browse among the etchings and linocuts – you could find the perfect piece to brighten your home. All ages, 11.00am – 3.30pm Free, drop in

26th February H.M.ROYAL YACHT “BRITANNIA”

The Maidenhead Heritage Centre has arranged for a lecture on life on the yacht to be given by a former Officer at Maidenhead Town Hall on 26 February 2015.

7th March - Archaeology Day School

The Berkshire Archaeological Society will be holding their annual Day School at the Cornerstones, Norreys Avenue, Wokingham starting at 10.00 Details on the BAS website www.berksarch.co.uk No need to book - just turn up and pay £10. It will cover recent finds in Berkshire, Silchester, Roman and Saxon activity in the area and lots more.

10th April Reading Abbey and Catholicism in Reading

John Mullaney will be giving the Abbey Quarter Spring Lecture at 7.00 for 7.30pm at St James RC Church. The theme will be the *Abbey and Catholicism in Reading* and will provide an opportunity to see Pugin's Romanesque church - quite unlike his Gothic Revivalist style for which he is more generally known.



St James' Church from Forbury Gardens

History Societies

Arborfield Local History Society: Secretary Tina Kemp, Kenneys Farm, Maggs Green, Arborfield RG2 9JZ [tina@geoffkemp.force.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 Industrial Archaeological Group: Secretary, Peter Trout, 7 West Chiltern, Woodcote, Reading, RG8 OSG or Mr. 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 [gslhs@w-mark.demon.co.uk]

The Hanneys Local History Society: Ann Fewins, 'Lilac Cottage', East Hanney, Wantage, OX12 0HX. tel 01235 868372 [annfewins@beeb.net]

The History of Reading Society: Joy Pibworth / Sean Duggan [sduggan34@googlemail.com]

Hungerford Historical Association: Secretary: Mrs Shelagh Parry, 9 Cottrell Close, Hungerford. RG17 0HF. Tel: 01488 681492. [shelaghpparry@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 (Chairman) [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: Rosie Nurick, 1 Thames Avenue, Pangbourne, RG8 7BU tel 0118 9842565

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 [georgetaylor29@btinternet.com]

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

Stanford in the Vale & District Local History Society: 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: A.D. Spurling, The Fifteenth, Broadlands Close, Calcot Park,
Reading RG31 7RP [thealehistory@aol.com]

Twyford & Ruscombe Local History Society: Audrey Curtis, 39 New Road, Ruscombe RG10
9LN tel 0118 9343260 [audreycurt@goolemail.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 [nutritionasahley@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

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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