



Berkshire Local History Association



**Newsletter No 124
May 2019**

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.

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 - **Watlington House** - see page 5

Chairman's Corner

The 2019 AGM proved to be an eventful one – for your Chairman at least! Before the meeting I was concerned because I hadn't been able to contact our new secretary, Carol Dixon-Smith. She was the only person who knew who had booked to come. In the end, helped by our Newsletter Editor, John Chapman, I produced the paperwork for the meeting, and Dave Osborne, our Web Designer, and Ann Smith, Membership Secretary, sent it out.



Then the committee members heard of the family problems which had caused Carol having to be away. We are disappointed that she has had to relinquish the secretary's post before we had the chance to elect her into it! And we know that Carol also is disappointed. We send her our best wishes, and we'll miss her common sense, humour and enthusiasm at meetings.

However, as one door closes, with a bit of luck another one will open, or so they say. I had met Jo Alexander-Jones in connection with the Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group. At our AGM, she volunteered her services as Secretary, and such was my surprise and delight that I had to steady myself! To make the Association run smoothly, the Chairman and Secretary have to work hand in hand. For much of the year nothing much happens, but when we have an event, this co-operation is vital. I feel that we are going to get on well – maybe because we were both trained to be librarians!

So I feel that we now have a good working committee, rather different from the old days when I first agreed to take on the chairman's job. Some of the committee members then seemed to be there because they enjoyed going to the meetings, but didn't have particular jobs. I respected them as local historians, and came to grow fond of them, but these days it's rather easier to have shorter meetings and still to get things done.

I was also very pleased at this year's AGM to meet Peter Steere, of The Marcham Society. We had only corresponded by e-mail until then. So the 2020 AGM has been arranged for Saturday March 28, at Marcham, near Abingdon.

This year's AGM was a very happy occasion, with lots of conversation and exchanges of ideas going on in the background, which is just as it should be. A report on the meeting itself appears later in this edition. We didn't have the traditional presidential address this time, but after the formal part of the meeting, had a talk from Ron Cookson on the work of The Mills Archive, followed by a chance to look round the Archive. The idea had come from Margaret Simons,

who has worked with the Archive. We had the meeting in the hall in the garden of Watlington House, and then visited the Archive in the house itself. I produced a leaflet giving a brief history of the house, and of the inner Reading suburb in which it is situated.

Then after lunch, I led a short walk around the area, where we admired some of the grand Bath stone houses and the Royal Berkshire Hospital designed by architects Henry and Nathaniel Briant. We also looked at some of the humbler terraced brick houses. People who didn't already know the area seemed to be surprised by how pleasant it was, having most of the old buildings intact, a fine day, and motor traffic



The Isaacs statue

restricted. Some were surprised to find that the statue in the George V Gardens in Eldon Square did not represent King George V, or Lord Eldon, but Rufus Daniel Isaacs, First Marquess of Reading and Viceroy of India. The government of India removed the statue from New Delhi and gave it to Reading in 1971.

During the walk, we visited two large churches, both of them opened in 1873. Jonathan Brown, our Journal Editor, gave us a brief history and a chance to look round Wesley Methodist Church. I did the honours at the former Anglican Church of St. John. This church was declared redundant by the Church of England in 1978, when they had built the new Church of St. John with St. Stephen in the Newtown area. St. John's looked likely to be demolished, but the Polish Catholic community saved the building, and have lovingly restored it to its former splendour. It is now the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The Association has made donations to The Mills Archive, to Wesley Methodist Church and to the Polish Catholic Church, and we have received messages of thanks from all of them.

I recall that the first local history talk I ever gave was on the history of St. John's. Reading Central Library had several wooden boxes of glass lantern slides – well over 100 of them – which no-one had ever done anything with. My job was to exploit the collection, so I had digital copies made of all the slides and



*The Polish Catholic church (formerly
St John's Anglican church)*

then set about cataloguing them. They turned out to be pictures from this church, showing not only the buildings – church, schools, mission room and institute – but also people and social occasions. The slides are a window into a golden era, just before the First World War, and can be seen by searching for St. John's Church in the library catalogue.

Those who visited the former St. John's will, if they're anything like me, remember it for three reasons – the exuberance of the polychrome stonework, the warmth of our reception, and the excellence and sheer quantity of the Polish home-made cakes. I received a message from Mrs. Nicpon, the lady who welcomed us, which said: "May I assure you that you will always be welcome in our community – you have been such fantastic and appreciative visitors"

David Cliffe

A Word from the Editor

What with Easter, the AGM and lots of other matters I am afraid this issue is going to be a bit delayed - my apologies. Again thanks to those who got their contributions in on time and apologies to those who had to visit their local hospital with an arm twisted behind their back. As I said at the AGM, we would really like to hear from some of the societies that never contribute and a bit more from those who sometimes contribute.



One of the key aims of the BLHA is to act as an umbrella organisation for a wide variety of institutions and societies, some with a defined geographical interest and others with a very specialist interest in history that relates to Berkshire. With our day schools and seminars we like to bring people together to discuss and learn about general topics. There are many societies which have problems and others which have had solutions to those problems. One of the key questions which almost all societies face is how to preserve for posterity the information and knowledge that they have gained.

There are two quite different principal solutions. The oldest is to get everything down on paper and store it away and we have libraries and the Berkshire Record Office to help us.

The newest is to use a computer to convert material to a digital form and store it so that it can easily be reproduced and moved around with little cost. Here we have the British Library and their digital archive and numerous web designers to help.

Come the 26th October we will be putting on a seminar when we can hear about some societies' experiences and get advice from some of the national and local organisations working in this field. There will be more about this in our September edition.

John Chapman

New Books and Reviews

Early Independents of the Henley & Marlow Area

Local historian Paul Lacey has written a number of books on the history of the bus services that served the Berkshire area. They are the result of very many years extensive research in archives, company records combined with the memories of many people who worked to provide transport facilities in and around the county.

His latest – *Early Independents of the Henley & Marlow Area* - may not, at first sight, appear to be of special interest to Berkshire historians. However, the companies concerned in both towns provided services through Berkshire villages, including to both Reading and Maidenhead. The book covers operations of many small independent firms (although some were later absorbed by the larger Thames Valley concern) in the first half of the 20th century, especially the 1920s and 30s when such concerns thrived. The book is as much a social history of the era and the area as it is about vehicles – of trips by charabanc to the coast, of carrier services, market day buses, special services for those attending church, or the provision of golf club buses. There are many human stories within – some



Morris Commercial bus YW 5365

about 'local characters', others of tragic events. Also recorded in the pages are the names of businesses – most long since gone – and other descriptions of places that were passed by the local bus services. A number of the tradespeople mentioned acted as the local agent for the bus proprietors, so here is also evidence of who was the local shop-keeper or publican in these

Berkshire communities. Many photographs, maps, timetables and other ephemera are included to help 'tell the story' about this aspect of local history – a story of much more interest than just local bus provision.

Two similar further volumes – one covering the Bracknell / Wokingham / Crowthorne area, and the other that around Maidenhead - are due to be published later this year. The present book (ISBN 978-0-9567832-4-0) of 96 A4 sized pages, is priced £15 and can be obtained post free from the author at 17 Sparrow Close, Woosehill, Wokingham, RG41 3HT.

Many of the routes described in the book linking villages to nearby towns were run with small buses. Some were run by 'family businesses', having maybe just one vehicle, sometimes as an addition to another enterprise. In one case, YW5365, a Morris Commercial bus, new in 1928, belonged to the Great Western Railway. Although a large railway company, their local bus operations (described in the book) had similarities to the 'one-man' concerns. The GWR services linked Littlewick Green, Holyport or Jealotts Hill to Maidenhead Station, where it is awaiting its next journey.

Peter Delaney

Newbury Roman Cemetery

by David Peacock ISBN 978-1-84674-377-1

I must confess that when David came to talk to Project Purley I had no idea that there was a Roman cemetery in Newbury so when he showed me his book I snapped it up. I should have been better informed as the cemetery had first been discovered in 1856 on a site near the present Sainsbury supermarket when at first it was thought to be burials from the Battle of Newbury.

Many of the finds were distributed around the country and never attributed to Newbury, even the material that found its way into Newbury Museum. In his book David records his efforts to locate some of these finds.

Romans were very careful not to mix burials with settlement and urban development and usually made cemeteries just off a Roman road outside a town area. The nearest urban area could have been Speen on the Silchester to Cirencester road but why make the cemetery where it was? However there is no evidence of Roman occupation at Speen.

The book presents all the evidence in a very readable way but we are still left with a feeling of mystery. There were over 100 burials and lots of cremation remains and grave goods dating from the 3rd and 4th centuries. But where was the settlement?

Why not get a copy from Countryside Books, 3 Catherine Road, Newbury for £15.00 and join the speculations.

John Chapman

The 42nd Annual General Meeting

The meeting was attended by around 40 members, and was held a little later in the year than usual. This was because the hall in the grounds of Watlington House was in use every Saturday during school term time.

As the BLHA Constitution stipulates, the meeting was chaired by the President, Joan Dils, who kept things flowing smoothly. Most of the reports of the committee members had been circulated before the meeting, but some had not.

David Cliffe (Chairman) apologised for the delay in sending out the paperwork, and the fact that not all the reports had been sent out. He explained how, for very understandable reasons, our secretary had found it necessary to stand down at short notice, and hoped that we could find a volunteer to take on the job. (See “Chairman’s Corner” – a volunteer came forward.)

David Lewis (Treasurer) could not be present, but had submitted a report in advance. The accounts were accepted by meeting.

The report from Jonathan Brown (Journal Editor) had already been circulated and was accepted.

John Chapman (Newsletter Editor) gave a verbal report. He asked for more book reviews, and for more short articles, maybe about interesting discoveries people had made during their researches. John was able to announce the date of the forthcoming seminar on managing archival collections belonging to local history societies and private individuals – Saturday 26th October at The Barn, Purley on Thames.

Ann Smith (Membership Secretary) reported that membership was similar to last year’s – 80 individuals, 16 museums and libraries, and 39 local history societies.

Dave Osborne (Web Designer) reminded local societies to send in advance notices of their events for the website, and to make sure that their contact details were up-to-date. He also answered a query about linking the websites of local societies to the BLHA Newsletter page.

There were no matters needing discussion, and there were no new nominations for committee members. All of the “old” committee members were willing to serve for a further year, so the President, Vice-President, officers and then the committee members were duly re-elected.

It was likely that we would need a new Honorary Examiner of Accounts, and one of the members kindly agreed to ask suitably qualified people known to

her if they might take this on.

The formal part of the meeting drew to a close after about 40 minutes.

David Cliffe

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Articles

The closure of St. Gilbert's RC Church in Eton Wick

It was the beginning of December last year when parishioners were informed that St. Gilbert's was to close and that a final service would be held there on the 6th January (The Epiphany). For the previous few years, services had been reduced to one Sunday and one Friday Mass per month (plus Christmas Day and Easter Sunday) and the congregation had hoped that that arrangement might be allowed to continue indefinitely, thus providing a visible Catholic presence in the village and an appropriate religious facility for Catholic Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. A letter from the Bishop outlined the reasons for closure: he referred to the reality of there now being fewer priests; and the need to spend a lot of money on the church on maintenance issues to bring the building up to a legally compliant modern standard. Hence, the Diocese took the difficult decision to close St. Gilbert's and sell the land.

A little about the Church.

There is no record of a post-Reformation Catholic Church between Windsor's St. Edward's and Boveney's St. Mary Magdalene until 'Our Lady of Sorrows' was built at the side of The Brocas at Eton in 1915: Lord Bray, an Old Etonian, had thought that the Catholic boys at Eton College were lacking in instruction and so arranged the building of the little church. The tiny church of St. Mary Magdalene, close to the Thames towpath at Boveney and built prior to 1266, like Eton College Chapel (built 1440), would have been Catholic until the time of the Reformation.

And so, to St. Gilbert's: it was in 1954 that a Father Dunstan (formerly a Torpedo Boat Coxswain!) encouraged Eton Wick's Catholics to strive to finance the construction of their own church in the village. At that time, Sunday morning Mass was being celebrated in the Village Hall (for which the hire charge was 4 shillings per week and the clearing of Saturday night's debris); and, prior to that, villagers had made their way to 'Our Lady of Sorrows' at Eton. A committee was elected, a raffle held and the £3 raised was the first contribution to the fundraising. A few years (and a lot of jumble sales, bazaars, and dances) later, the funds had reached £4,000 and money subsequently pledged



St Gilbert's Church

realised the total required for construction to commence, with the foundations being dug by the parishioners themselves. Ten years after Father Dunstan's challenge, on the day before Palm Sunday in 1964, the Roman Catholic Church of St. Gilbert was blessed by Bishop Leo Parker, assisted by the Prior and Chapter from the community of Canons Regular at Datchet. St. Gilbert's was built at a cost of £16,000 on land which was purchased for £1,500. The church was originally served by priests from Datchet, but for the past twenty-five years or so it was part of the parish of 'Our Lady of Peace' at Burnham, and this arrangement worked well.

Needless to say, Eton Wick's Catholics were very fond of their church; they looked after it as well as they could. They much appreciated the arrangements made to enable services to continue to be held for as long as was practicable; thus, enabling the church to continue to be shared with other local denominations and ecumenical happenings: St. Gilbert's took its turn in hosting the (Women's) World day of Prayer and 'prayer breakfasts' and Carol Services; and there was a youth club (called Charlie's Angels) for 5 to 12 years olds which ran for twenty-five years.

Attendance at the Sunday morning Mass was very good, right through until the end; and the Eton Wick Catholics have now scattered to various local churches for Mass (although they officially remain in 'Our Lady of Peace, Burnham parish). Loyal supporters of the Friday evening service will certainly have found a similar quiet, reverential service elsewhere. It is always sad to see

a church close – a place which has been home to so much emotion and comfort. The building now stands empty of people; and, at the time of writing, the future of the site is unknown.

Eton Wick History Group

Kate Tiller, OBE, FSA, FRHistS

Kate left her native Lancashire to study history at the University of Birmingham. Here she gained a PhD and met and married Liam. She was appointed a staff tutor in local history at Oxford University Department for Continuing Education (OUDCE) in 1979, later becoming a University lecturer.

Her arrival was marked by a blossoming of local history provision in Bucks, Berks and Oxon: weekly classes, day schools, weekend conferences abounded. In the 1980s to meet a demand for more sustained study, she founded and developed a Certificate in English Local History for part-time adult students. It was originally a 3-year course taught by historians and local historians mainly from OUDCE, the University of Oxford and, for a short while from Reading University and its Extramural Department. It became a two-year undergraduate Certificate course, linked with the Open University with CATS points awarded to successful students. Later its name changed to a Diploma. It was an extremely successful venture from which many able local ‘graduates’ emerged as talented local historians some of whose research was published in refereed journals. Others became local history tutors or led productive workshops in their local societies.

Successful completion of a certificate or diploma course whetted the appetite of some students for a higher degree. For them Kate developed a two-year Master of Studies (MStd, later MSc) which restored the requirement, once part of the Certificate, to write a dissertation based on original research. With the support and encouragement of members the Oxford University, Kate broke through another university ceiling, opening the way for some part-timers to achieve a DPhil, known in other institutions as a PhD.

Kate was one of founding Fellows (in Local History) of Kellogg College, founded in 1990 as a graduate college linked to but separate from OUDCE; she became Senior Tutor 1994-6 and College Vice-President 1997-8. Kellogg College had and has a flourishing graduate programme as other subject areas produced their own masters’ and doctorate courses.

In numerous other ways, Kate has supported and promoted local history. Between 1983 and 1988 she edited *The Local Historian*, a peer-reviewed journal which publishes research mainly by amateur local historians, many of whom have profited from Oxford courses or similar provision in other extramural



Kate Tiller

departments. In 1992 her *English Local History: an Introduction* was published, proving so valuable a resource that a new edition was soon produced with a third now promised.

Her own research has ranged

widely over many fields but has concentrated on nonconformity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Among her many research projects, Berkshire and Oxfordshire researchers will especially remember three: her 1987 edition of the 1851 Religious Census for Oxfordshire, following it in 2010 with her edition of the Berkshire Religious Census 1851 for the Berkshire Record Society. The latter provides not only the details of every congregation and place of worship in this county but also an Introduction which adds another important dimension to the value of the work. The same year she co-edited *An Historical Atlas of Oxfordshire*.

She continues to promote and support local history. Arguably her most important and challenging role is now as Chairman of Victoria County History of Oxfordshire Trust, which since 1997 has organised and raised funds for professional research on Oxfordshire and is on track to complete the coverage of the county in the not-too distant future. Work is well underway on historic South Oxfordshire, where parts of the old parishes of Caversham and Mapledurham are now part of the Borough of Reading.

In the New Year's honours of 2019, Kate was awarded an OBE for services to local history, a well-deserved and long-overdue recognition of her achievements. We local history neighbours in Berkshire send our sincere congratulations on the award and our thanks for the many local historians and local history projects which have resulted from her enthusiasm and support.

Joan Dils

Miscellanea

The Rocket Rides Again!

Can any of our readers help with this photograph of a stagecoach outside an inn



called the Something-or-other's Head? Though photography existed at the end of the stagecoach era, this looks like a re-enactment, perhaps marking an anniversary or other celebration. It was found at the bottom of a box containing old pictures and postcards which was purchased at an auction sale in Waltham St. Lawrence, many years ago, and probably arrived there as the result of a house clearance. The present-day owner would like to know if anyone recognises the hotel, which may or may not be in Berkshire, or knows what the event was. There is no writing on the photograph, apart from the few words on the left margin, which were probably transferred there when the paper got damp at some time. Please respond to the editor if you have any thoughts, and he'll pass the message on.

David Cliffe

Society News

Berkshire Archaeological Society

The Society lecture programme in Spring included a talk from Dr Jennifer Foster of Reading University on Experimental Archaeology. Experiments were carried

out by undergraduates at Reading including chopping down trees with stone axes, making replica Neolithic clay pots and using them to cook nettle stew, and measuring male and female footprints in mud from the Severn Estuary. In February we heard from Dr Duncan Garrow on prehistoric grave goods in a project aiming to understand further grave goods and their significance in the Neolithic and Bronze Age. March brought us to the Roman period and a talk by Dr Simon Elliott on the Classis Britannica - the Roman fleet based around Britain - and how it supported the invasion and subsequent occupation. In April the Society organised its annual Day School held in Wokingham on 'Archaeology in Berkshire' with a number of speakers discussing aspects of their work in and around the county.

The Society has been making plans for archaeological project work during the summer months, beginning with a short excavation in Sonning Common and continuing with geophysical investigations at Ankerwycke, near Runnymede. The Society possesses a considerable amount of excavation and geophysical equipment and would welcome enquiries from groups looking for such work as part of their own projects. Please contact the Secretary in the first instance. (info@berksarch.co.uk)

Anne Harrison

Secretary

Berkshire Record Society

Over the last 25 years the Berkshire Record Society have published many volumes providing invaluable sources of information which would otherwise have languished in archives and accessible to only a few. We recently produced the Gazetteer of Berkshire Schools in the eighteenth century and have teams working on Swing Riots, Poor Law from Hungerford, Churchwarden's accounts from Stanford in the Vale, Quakers and Berkshire Schools 1870-1914.

The 25th AGM is coming up at 7.30 pm on 20th May at the Berkshire Record Office and we would like to see more members, both subscribers and volunteers, as unfortunately age has its down side. The annual lecture will be given by Joan Dils who will be talking about her work on the Churchwardens' Accounts from Stanford in the Vale. So why not come along and join - membership is only £14.50 which includes a copy of all new volumes and you can purchase back numbers of volumes for only £10.

John Chapman

Hungerford Historical Association

On the 27th March 2019, almost 150 members and guests filled the Corn Exchange to hear a talk by Graham Bathe who has 40 years experience in wildlife conservation for charities and in the public sector, both in this country

and overseas. Graham worked on the formulation and implementation of the Commons Act 2006 and is committed to commoning as a mechanism which integrates the agricultural, cultural, historical and environmental values of the countryside. He retired to concentrate on historical research and is chairman of Britain's oldest conservation body (founded 1865), now called the Open Spaces Society. He has conducted an intensive 20-year study of Savernake based on hundreds of original documents dating from the 1100s onwards, which provides the context for historical research into Wolfhall and the famous Seymour family of Tudor Burbage.

The current Wolfhall is a multi-phase building, comprising a substantial brick and timber-framed Tudor range, with a mid-18th century Georgian north frontage and a Victorian extension. It incorporates architectural features of the Tudor villa of Wolfhall, which in turn was built on the site of earlier medieval buildings.

This part of the Kennet and Avon Valley has been inhabited for at least 1,000 years and a modest Manor House is listed here as Ulfela in the Domesday Book of 1086. Modifications made in the 1400s produced a massive stone Mansion with a Chapel. In 1531 the buildings received a palatial makeover to accommodate the visit of King Henry VIII in 1535. However, by 1575 the place was empty and decayed and was eventually replaced as the family home by Tottenham Park. A Wolfhall farmhouse was later mentioned in 1633. Maps dating from 1175-99 showed the huge extent of the Savernake estate which was divided into Bailiwicks, each one extending out from the pond which is still visible today at the South end of Burbage High Street opposite the petrol station.

In order to try and 'reconstruct' the layout of Tudor Wolfhall some geophysical studies (more commissioned for 2019) have shown an extensive system of underground 'tunnels' across the site built in brick; they are really the drains required to service each of these buildings. Some show structured inlets directly below the garderobes (latrines) from the more opulent rooms in the buildings above.

No original paintings or drawn information survive from Tudor times but the estate accounts give detailed insights into elements the building fabric by costed references to repairs required over the years, including clearing out of the drains.

The Tudor residence, built in the very latest style of intricate red brickwork, shows it as contemporary with Hampton Court Palace and it must have had all the trimmings associated with somewhere awaiting the visit of the King and his Court, all of whom required accommodation and feeding at lavish banquets. Brickwork had not been commonly used since the departure of the Romans, the

site had its own brickworks.

Mark Martin (Secretary)

Newbury District Field Club.

This year has seen major changes in the Newbury District Field Club (Newbury's local history society). After many years meeting in Newbury Town Hall, the Club has moved to West Berkshire Museum where meetings are now held at 2pm on the second Wednesday in the month (except July and August). So far this year we have heard from Jane Burrell on The History of the Quakers in Newbury, Terry Nelson on The Men Who Built Britain, John Harrison on Brickwork (and how to read history in it) and Phil Wood on 17th Century Alehouses in West Berkshire.

Forthcoming talks are by Dr Nick Young on Newbury and district: The Cold War Era (12 Jun) and, after the summer break, Dr Andrew Hutt on The Dovecotes and Pigeon Lofts of Old Berkshire (11 Sep). The Club is also preparing for its annual History Day on 26 Oct (10am-4.30pm) when the theme is Transport: River, Road & Rail.

Next year will be the Club's 150th Anniversary, known as a Sesquicentennial. Since its foundation in 1870 the Club has seen many peaks and troughs, and its history will be explored in a special exhibition at the West Berkshire Museum which will run from 27 Nov 2019 until 26 Apr 2020.

A special book-length edition of the Club's publication, The Transactions of the Newbury District Field Club, is also planned. This will mix new articles with a selection from past editions marking the contributions of the Club's leading members over the years.

Phil Wood

Oxfordshire Family History Society

The Oxfordshire Family History Society runs a joint DNA/Surnames project. The DNA project is hosted at FamilyTreeDNA and we are happy to accept anyone who has an Oxfordshire surname going back before 1875, ideally with at least 3 generations in the county prior to 1900. We include 'Old Berkshire' before the 1974 reorganisation as part of our research and if ancestors lived near the current borders with long-established surnames, we will usually accept them too. Ideally we are looking for males whose pure male (surname) line comes from Oxfordshire who have had a Y-DNA test. The project can be found at www.familytreedna.com/groups/oxfordshire and the volunteer administrators can be contacted at dna@ofhs.org.uk.

In conjunction with the DNA project we are researching all the surnames in Oxfordshire from medieval times up to 1899. We have a list of about 1550 names (along with their myriad variant spellings) and a shortlist of about 350 that we are focusing on in 2019/20. The surname list and project details can be seen at <https://news.ofhs.org.uk/oxfordshire-surname-project/>. Of course, defining ‘Oxfordshire’ surnames is an ongoing challenge and our priority list is not fixed. Having several DNA tests for the same surname to compare to paper documentation is a key aim of the research. Apart from documenting families and their histories, collating documentary evidence from a wide range of original sources and plotting movement within Oxfordshire over time for each surname, we are very keen to find out the earliest known immigrants and their source. We know from our preliminary research that migration occurred from the North Cotswolds down through the areas around Stow-on-the-Wold, into the Banbury area from Warwickshire and Northamptonshire, into the Thame district from the east, along the present-day A40 from the west and into the south of the county from Berkshire. There were also more distant migrations from northern England. If anyone has knowledge of geographic or economic migration trails, especially in the 15th-18th centuries we would be keen to hear from them at surname-project@ofhs.org.uk.

These projects are large and will take some time to produce significant outputs, but the small core team welcomes input from anyone who may have supporting data.

Sue Honoré

Project Purley

The society’s programme for 2019 began with a fascinating talk by Joy Pibworth on The Thames Valley Austens. The story of the Austen and Leigh family and their fortunes over the years could probably be told in a series of quotations from Jane Austen’s own writing, as she used so much of it in her narratives. From Reading Ladies’ School in the Abbey Gateway (probably the model for Mrs Goddard’s school in Emma), where she went with her sister Cassandra, to the most unwelcome family move to Bath when her father retired in 1801 (in Persuasion, the Elliot family move to Bath when Sir Walter Elliot was embarrassed by money problems), Jane’s experiences were woven into her novels.

Hugh Grainger, was our February speaker, on the topic of Famous Spies. He took us through the lives of two extraordinary people, both of whom earned a very good living out of espionage, but who were poles apart in almost every aspect of life. Sidney Reilly was a Russian Jew, born Sigmund Rosenblum in the Ukraine in 1873, with an Irish Catholic mother. Reputedly, the model for James

Bond, he was well educated, with a degree in Chemistry, and a brilliant linguist. Eddie Chapman was English, born in County Durham in 1914, and a career criminal when the Second World War broke out. He started his spying career working for the Germans, as he was in prison in Jersey when they invaded.

The society's AGM, in March, saw the current committee and officers (Catherine Sampson – chairman, Ann Betts – secretary, and Marjorie Butler – treasurer) re-elected. After wine and nibbles, Cory Starling gave a beautifully illustrated talk about milling at Mapledurham Mill, which is situated on the north bank of the Thames opposite Purley. In April, Newbury local historian and author Dr David Peacock gave a talk on tracing the origins of the names of local places in West Berkshire – towns, villages, rivers and geographical features. Dr Peacock explained the origins of many of the components of current place names, including 'ford' (still the same), 'ham', 'ing', 'hurst', 'ton' and many more. Our own name, Purley, comes from 'lea' meaning 'clearing in wood' or later 'meadow' and 'pur' meaning 'snipe' or 'bittern' – hence the snipe in the Project Purley symbol. (Purley, near Croydon, got its name from the Berkshire estate workers who went to work there, not from snipes or bitterns).

Our programme for the summer includes visits to Sulgrave Manor in Oxfordshire and Reading Abbey and our annual BBQ. The Rain or Shine Theatre Company visit The Barn, Purley, once again on Friday 7 June with their adaptation of Shakespeare's *As You Like it*. As usual profits from the performance will go to a local good cause.

Catherine Sampson

History of Reading Society

In January Anna Ellis gave a talk on the subject of the 'Influence of Victorian Mourning at Reading Cemetery'.

On 6th May 1843 the Berkshire Chronicle reported the first interment at the new Reading Cemetery. The burial was of Elizabeth Jacobs of Eldon Terrace, Reading.

The Reading Cemetery Company was established by an Act of Parliament in 1842 to build and maintain a cemetery outside the town; it would be funded by the sale of company shares and burial plots.

In 1861, after the death of her husband Prince Albert, Queen Victoria influenced the vogue, following a bereavement, for more flamboyant, ritualized forms of public behaviour at funerals and a more outward mourning etiquette.

Burial plots would be marked with expensive headstones: granite, marble

and stone were popular materials. The wealthy would erect ornate monuments: statues on plinths, obelisks and broken columns.

Today, there are 12,000 monuments at the cemetery, two of which were listed by English Heritage in 2002.

In February, Evelyn Williams gave a talk on the subject of Reading's Allotments.

The first allotments established around Reading date from the early nineteenth-century, one, at Armour Road, Tilehurst still exists and is administered by the Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity.

During the Second World War, the town's allotments were an important food resource; Huntley & Palmers, the biscuit manufacturer, established an allotment at Culver Lane, Earley.

Today, around Reading, there are 20 allotment sites with 1,160 plots.

In March, Mike Cooper gave a talk on the subject of 'Defending Reading'.

Since Anglo-Saxon times, Reading has been a strategically important town because of its position at the confluence of the Kennet and Thames rivers.

In the English Civil Wars of the 1640s, the town was occupied by a royalist garrison; it was an important outpost to defend the Royal Court at Oxford against any attack by Parliamentary forces from London. In the Forbury Gardens a reminder of the siege is the mound where cannon were once positioned.

In April, the Society's chairman, David Cliffe, gave a talk on the subject of Industrial Reading: Pictures of Sixty Old Reading Firms in Sixty Minutes. David showed a selection of slides from the collection of Reading Central Library. The range of companies included: boat builders, brick makers, food manufactures and iron works.

It was announced at the AGM in April that Sidney Gold and John Whitehead would both stand down from the committee; the Society would like to thank them for the services they have given over the years. A member, Caroline Piller, has agreed to join the committee.

Future talks in 2019 include the subjects of Catholicism in Reading; George Lovejoy, the Reading Bookseller and Quakers in Reading. More information about future talks and membership can be obtained from our website: www.historyofreadingsociety.org.uk

Sean Duggan

Shinfield & District Local History Society

The speaker at our January meeting was Mike Cooper who gave a presentation

on “The Abbey and the Castle – Reading in the Middle Ages”. The main theme of the presentation was Reading Abbey, founded in 1121 by Henry I and dissolved by Henry VIII in 1539. Mike suggested different ways of thinking about the abbey – as a religious house, as a set of buildings, as an institution/organisation, as a political and social force, and as an idea. The Abbey site had a chequered life following the dissolution, through the construction of Civil War defences, being taken over by Reading Corporation, construction of air raid shelters in WW2 where cloisters once stood, to being closed for safety reasons in 1982 and, finally, being refurbished and re-opened in 2018.

Mike explained the importance of the Abbey to the town of Reading and the way in which the fortunes of the two interacted and affected their relationship. He spoke briefly about Reading Castle, the location of which is, as yet, unknown. The existence of Castle Street might suggest that it was to the west of the town but other suggested sites include what is now Forbury Gardens.

Following this thoroughly interesting presentation we held our AGM. As has been the case for many years now, all officers were re-elected to serve for another year.

St. Mary’s Church in Shinfield is, this year, celebrating 950 years since its foundation. As part of a series of events planned for June/July we are preparing a display, to be mounted in the Church, on various aspects of Shinfield’s history. Our February and March meetings were devoted to deciding which aspects should be included and we are now preparing material for this.

The speaker at our April meeting was Jenny Mallin who gave a fascinating presentation on “Five generations of a British Raj family seen through the eyes of their granddaughter”. Jenny’s story began with the discovery of an old family book containing records of life of her Anglo-Indian ancestors during the 19th century. The book, started by her 4 times Great Grandmother in Madras in 1844, contained many recipes and details of household expenses and was added to by subsequent generations. The story Jenny told centred on 5 generations of her female ancestors born in India and took us through family connections with the British Army/East India Company, Indian Civil Service, Indian Post Office and Indian railways. She told of a great aunt who walked from Rangoon to safety in India when the Japanese invaded Burma in World War II. Jenny’s mother was born in Calcutta but her parents moved to England in 1954 following the partition of India. Jenny’s research led to her writing a book, “A Grandmother’s Legacy”, for which she won an international award. This was a thoroughly fascinating story.

George Taylor

Swallowfield Local History Society

We started the year with our New Year Dinner evening which has become a fixture on our Calendar, a convivial social occasion enjoyed by us all on 17th January 2019

21st February 2019. Jennifer Highwood has been carrying out research on Local Women: Some Insights from the Archives – she introduced us to the Foundling Hospital set up in London by Thomas Coram in 1739, which aimed to help the many, many babies being abandoned by their mothers who had no means of supporting them. This is the oldest incorporated charity in the world and Parliament had to grant permission for it, which was refused until a group of aristocratic ladies persuaded their menfolk to support the cause.

Young babies were sent all over the country for nursing until they were five and in the 1750s and 1760s there were about 500 nurses in Berkshire. Jennifer found names of 39 around Swallowfield alone. John Dodd who owned Swallowfield Park at this time was a trustee and Jennifer focused on his young wife, Juliana, who was one of the inspectors who agreed to find wet nurses and keep a close check on them. Her letters to the hospital reveal much about the nurses and her concern for them and for the children's health and wellbeing. She ensured that the foundlings learned to read and write and when the time came for them to be apprenticed she persuaded many local employers to take them on.

Jennifer's audience was kept engrossed as this story unfolded realising the importance of one woman's determination to be involved in "Care in the Community".

18th April. Part 2 of her 'Personal experiences of the Northern Ireland Troubles: Why did it happen and how did we work for peace'. We were so very pleased to welcome back Barbara Stanley to continue the absorbing story of her family in Ireland during the long struggle to between those who wanted Home Rule and those who wished to remain British. She has found that across the generations they were allied to all the different groups involved in the evolution, but they still maintained contact with each other.

She is a natural raconteur and she guided us through this intriguing story which finished with her own experiences of the Troubles in Ireland and her own involvement as a student and graduate in working to bring reconciliation to the warring sides.

Our future programme includes:

16th May 'Farley Castle. A history of the building & the life of its charismatic owners & residents.

From bankers, farmers, brewers and the role model for Indiana Jones, to a country club and school for disabled boys, Farley Castle has had a very varied and fascinating history. Playing a key role in the life of Farley Hill, the 200 year old Castle, at its peak, housed a rich family with a large supporting household of around 36 servants. Its low point was when it was stripped of all valuables by a Peace Convoy in the 1990s as it lay empty, roofless and neglected. Today, the Grade II listed building has been restored and is the centre of a busy community once again.

Sue Dormer has a History & Archaeology degree and worked for ten years at the Museum of London as an Archaeologist. Today she has her own marketing consultancy and is also a Trustee for the national charity the Council for British Archaeology. From the day she moved into the Mews at Farley Castle, Sue has been intrigued by the history of the Castle and its residents and her talk will give details about what she has uncovered.

Our meetings are on the third Thursday of the month in the Rose Room at the Swallowfield Parish Hall. Visitors are always welcome. Any queries please contact Ken Hussey (Chairman) on 0118 988 3650 or Maggie Uttley (Secretary) 0118 988 2954 or email kcuttley@aol.com

Maggie Uttley

Wargrave Local History Society

In January local historian and author Audrey Curtis recounted the history of Twyford and Ruscombe as a Crossroads. Evidence showed the Twyford area had been settled from 6,000BC, but in Anglo Saxon times it was less important than Ruscombe or Hurst, lacking a church until one was built in 1847. Twyford's location on the Bath Road led to its 23 pubs catering for travellers, and its prosperity increased. Arrival of the railway in the 19th century facilitated further industry, and enabled residents of new 20th century housing to commute to London. Audrey also enlightened her audience about local battles, charities, and much more.

Graham Horn spoke on The History and Restoration of the Kennet and Avon Canal in February, tracing its history from making the Kennet navigable between Reading and Newbury in the 1720s, and the Avon between the Severn and Bath around the same time, to the opening of the Kennet and Avon link between them in 1810. Profitable until 1852, the railway then provided quicker and cheaper transport. The GWR then bought the canal, which went into decline. A planned closure in 1948 was opposed, and the Kennet and Avon Association (later Trust) formed. Subsequent restoration made the canal again navigable throughout in time for the Queen's formal opening in 1990.

Following March's AGM business, Peter Delaney outlined Wargrave Vill-

age Festival's history. Originally proposed by the vicar, John Ratings, in 1974, the first was in 1975. His idea was to "unite the community and have fun together". It was a success, and has become a regular bi-annual event. More recently each Festival has had a 'theme', and many events are 'adapted' to suit. The evening concluded with film of the 1981 festival - the audience recognising many 'familiar faces' from 38 years ago!

A Society visit in April to Leander Club began with a talk on its 200 year history by Society member (and former British rowing team Head Coach), Brian Armstrong. Based originally in London, the earliest rowing was all long-distance – such as Lambeth to Gravesend with side-by-side racing against following a challenge by Christchurch College, Oxford – Leander winning. The Club built a new boathouse at Putney in 1860, and came to dominate rowing, before moving to Henley in 1897. Leander athletes have become a large part of the GB team at successive Olympics - their 27 athletes and 3 coaches at the 2012 event gaining 14 medals –and it is the only club, in any sport worldwide, to gain 100 medals. The evening ended with a tour of the clubhouse facilities.

Our meetings start at 8 pm at the Old Pavilion on Wargrave Recreation Ground - more information about the Society is available at www.wargravehistory.org.uk/

Museums and Libraries

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 include the papers of Lovejoy's Library. Founded by George Lovejoy in 1832, the library was based in London Street, Reading and closed in the 1980s (R/D131). We also have records deposited by a Reading solicitor (D/ESE) which relate to properties in Reading and the surrounding area, 1675-1970. There are numerous deeds including those of the South family's estate in Caversham, 1632-1895 (R/D138). We've catalogued the papers of the Weedon family, 1694-1892, which relates to property in Caversham and Reading (R/D139). We also have the original apprenticeship indenture of John Jarvis of East Ilsley to William Savory of Newbury, surgeon, 1791 (D/EX2704). Finally, we recently acquired the original parish copy of the tithe award for Bray, 1843-1844, which had previously been thought to be lost (D/P23).

Our website 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.

Have you read our World War One blog? Each post relates to that day or month 100 years ago as the 1914-1918 war unfolded before Berkshire's eyes. Why not take a look and see what you can discover? <https://berkshirevoiceswwi.wordpress.com/about-berkshire-at-war/>.

Don't forget to find us on Facebook : The Berkshire Record Office <https://en-gb.facebook.com/berkshirerecordoffice/> and follow us on Twitter : @berksarchives <https://twitter.com/berksarchives/>.

Ivone Turnbull

Opportunities

- For Lectures, Visits and Exhibitions

We do not publish meetings of individual societies only public events.

Ladybird Books

At the Madjeski Gallery Reading Museum until 17th August

An exhibition celebrating the history of the nation's favourite children's book

Reading Abbey Tours

on 4th May, 1st June, 6th July and 3rd August

A one and a half hour walking tour of the Abbey quarter starting from the foyer of Reading Museum at 11.00. Cost £10 and booking essential. Ring 0118 037 3400

Abbey Gateway Rooftop Tour

15th June starting at Reading Museum at 9:30 am

45 min tour of the newly restored Abbey Gateway as part of the Waterfest. Cost £15 booking essential - call 0118 037 3400

Medieval Tiles Workshop

31st May and 1st June at Reading Museum

Two workshops 1.30 pm to 4 pm to look at tiles from Reading Abbey and then

try your hand at making one to be taken away and glazed and collected later.

Cost £30 booking essential Call 0118 937 5132

How to Read Old Handwriting Workshop

1st July 2019, 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.

Maidenhead's Inspirational Women

4th July to 23rd August at the Maidenhead Heritage Centre.

An exhibition about women from Maidenhead.

Behind the Scenes at the BRO

15th July 2019, 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.

Portable Antiquities Finds Day

24th July Maidenhead Heritage Centre 11:00 am to 2:30 pm

Helen Costar who is the Finds Liaison Officer for the PAS will be waiting at the Heritage Centre for people to bring in their finds from digging in the garden or metal detecting etc.

'A great deliverance': Berkshire and the aftermath of World War One

22nd May to 16th August 2019, during normal opening hours at the Berkshire Record Office.

The Treaty of Versailles in June 1919 was the official end of the First World

War - this exhibition will look at how the county responded. Available during our opening hours (Tuesday and Wednesday 9am to 5pm, Thursday 9am to 9pm and Friday 9am to 4.30pm). FREE admission. Why not come along and take a look?

The Origins of Bray

24th July at Bray Village Hall 7.45 pm

Maidenhead A & HAS in collaboration with the Council for British Archaeology will hold an open meeting for Bray villagers and anyone around interested in archaeology. Paul Seddon will be giving an illustrated talk.

Heritage Open Days

13th - 22nd September

Watch out for events in your area. We will publish a few more details in September. Reading Museum will be hosting a talk (with afternoon tea) on Reading in the time of Jane Austen.

Workshop on Archives for Local Historians

26th October at Purley Barn

Put the date in your diary - more details next edition.

And Finally

Two recollections from the AGM



The garden at Watlington House

The delicious selection of cakes set out for us by the Polish community at the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.



History Societies

Arborfield Local History Society, Secretary Rosemary King [roking@henforyd.plus.com see 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]

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.uk]

Berkshire Industrial Archaeological Group, Secretary, Graham Smith, 114 Shaw Rd, Newbury RG14 1HR

Berkshire Record Society, Secretary Margaret Simons, 80 Reeds Ave, Earley, Reading RG6 5SR, [margaretsimons@hotmail.co.uk]

Blewbury Local History Group, Audrey Long, Spring Cottage, Church Road, Blewbury, Oxon, OX11 9PY, tel 01235 850427 [audrey.long@waitrose.com]

Bracknell & District Local Historical Society, Mrs Jane Moss, 31 Huntsman's Meadow, Ascot, SL5 7PF, [MossSandalwood@aol.com]

Burnham Historians, Mary Bentley, 38 Conway Road, Taplow, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 0LD, tel 01628 665932, [burnhamhistorians@btinternet.com]

Cox Green Local History Group, Pat Barlow, 29 Bissley Drive, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 3UX, tel 01628 823890 weekends only, [alan.barlow2@btinternet.com]

East Garston Local History Society, Jonathan Haw, Goldhill House, Front Street, East Garston, Hungerford, RG17 7EU,, [jonathanhaw@btopenworld.com]

East Ilsley Local History Society, Sue Burnay, White Hollow, High St, E.Ilsley, Berks RG20 7LE, tel 01635 281308, [info@eastilsleyhistory.com] [www.eastilsleyhistory.com]

Eton Wick Local History Group, Teresa Stanton, 35 Eton Wick Road, Eton Wick, Windsor, SL4 6LU, tel 01753 860591 [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, [goringgaphistory@gmail.com] [www.goringgaphistory.org.uk]

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

The History of Reading Society, Vicki Chesterman, 7 Norman Road, Caversham RG4 5JN,, [vickichesterman@yahoo.co.uk] [www.historyofreadingsociety.org.uk]

Hungerford Historical Association, Secretary 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 9883580. Reporter George Taylor [george.taylor2-9@btinternet.com]

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

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

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

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

Thatcham Historical Society, Mr P Laverack, 2 Ashworth Drive, Thatcham, Berks, RG19 3YU, tel 01635 863536, [enquiries@thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk], [www.thatchamhistorical-society.org.uk]

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

Twyford & Ruscombe Local History Society, Jean Poulter, 17 Weir Pool Court, Silk Lane, Twyford RG10 9GY, [jeanpoulter@tiscali.co.uk], reporter Denise Wilkin

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, Courtney Rudge c/o Windsor Library, Bachelor's Acre, Windsor SL4 1ER , [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,
[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, Newbury Library, The Wharf, Newbury, RG14 5AU, tel 01635 519900

Oxfordshire History Centre, St Luke's Church, 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]

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

Windsor & Royal Borough Museum, The Guildhall, Windsor, SL4 1LR, tel 01628 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]

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

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

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Dave Osborne (Web Designer)

Dr Margaret Simons (Newsletter Distributor)

Elias Kupfermann

Ann Smith (Membership Secretary)

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

Membership fees

The rates for 2019 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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Next Newsletter

The next Newsletter is due to be published in September 2019.

The DEADLINE for copy is 15th August 2019 - preferably we would like to have it much earlier. To avoid some of the problems we have had, could you please address e-mails to newsletter@blha.org.uk and copy it to john.chapman458@gmail.com