

in touch

Berkshire Family History Society



Hungerford - Celebration of Hocktide - the 2 weeks after Easter

[click image for more details](#)

Image courtesy of Jim Bradshaw

Hello

Happy May Day everyone.

Thirty years ago I would have been atop the church tower at 6 am singing May Day songs with the local chamber choir. For once the conductor had our keen attention as we all determined we should NOT look down. Piping hot drinks and freshly baked croissants awaited us at the local French patisserie after we had caroled the town - not to every resident's delight it has to be said.

These days, I'll take the hot drink and the croissants but the early rise and vertiginous climb up deeply-indented, centuries-old spiral stone steps I'll leave

to others thank you very much!

So, to business. We're delighted to tell you about two new additions to YourTrees - media and boomerangs. There, that got your attention didn't it?

If you want to know what boomerangs and family trees have in common read on ...



YourTrees + Media

Major upgrade to YourTrees

When we launched YourTrees in Sept 2021 we promised that we would add the ability to include media files to bring your family tree to life. Well, that moment has arrived.

Members can now submit media files to accompany their tree. Photos, Office documents, PDFs, text and audio files, TIFF, BMP, JPG, JPEG, PNG, GIFs and more can all be uploaded to the site.

You send us a GEDCOM file as normal, upload a zip file of your media files to our server and we marry them up so they display in your ancestors' records. There's no limit to the number of family tree related files you can send us although we will convert and downsize all images to make them suitable for online viewing.

Full instructions on how to prepare and upload your media are given on the website. Use menu option **YourTrees > Members' Area**

Boomerang Trees

New service for YourTrees users

How would you like your tree to wing its way back to you all spruced up with some common issues fixed?

When we import your GEDCOM file we run a program to clean up some common issues We will:

- Convert Chapman codes to the full county name and country
- Abbreviate month names to their three character version
- Remove ordinals (st, nd, rd, th) from date fields
- Convert date modifiers such as Between, After, Before etc to their GEDCOM compliant versions, BET, AFT, BEF etc
- Convert invalid date qualifiers, e.g. Circa, Ca, Say and Maybe to the valid version, ABT
- Correct incorrect Nickname tags used by Family Tree Maker



We do this so your data is as consistent with the GEDCOM standard as we can make it, and to make it more accessible to others users. It also creates a version which is much more portable should you be thinking of changing to another family tree program.

We'll send you the modified version so you can import it as a new tree, compare it with the old and decide which you prefer. It's a free member service with no obligation for you to use it. All you have to do is check a box on the GEDCOM submission form and we'll Boomerang your tree back to you. Why not give it a try - you've nothing to lose.



University of
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**SHOWCASING THE
BREADTH OF
DOCTORAL
RESEARCH**

FAIRBROTHER LECTURE

University of Reading Public Lecture

Members of Berkshire Family History Society have been invited to attend this year's Fairbrother Lecture at the Department of History on the Whiteknights Campus at 7pm on 17th May. This is a free lecture. Francesca Baldwin will be talking on the subject "**Face of War: Hidden Stories of Female Fighters**".

Our strongest images of participants in war are often deeply masculine. Where women do step into view as armed fighters, they are painted as exceptional, at the extremes of violence and are often highly sexualised. Alternatively, if their contributions lie away from the battlefield, their efforts are dimmed as supporting roles in the story of the war. Join historical researcher Francesca Baldwin to explore what it means to be a woman in war and how history can warp our view of the contributions women make to conflicts. As the Tigray War (2020 – present) and now, of course, Ukraine threaten to be the greatest humanitarian crises of the decade, Francesca explores the deeply gendered dynamics underpinning the current conflict in Ethiopia.

Find out more and book at:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/fairbrother-lecture>



Next on

NEW SERIES
Episode 1
Series 2

WED 11 MAY 2022 21:00
BBC TWO

Stacey Dooley helps people find answers to life-changing questions through the power of a DNA test.

DNA Family Secrets

A few weeks ago, we announced that DNA Family Secrets, presented by Stacey Dooley, would be back on TV the following week. At the time just the date but no timings had been announced, so we checked schedules on the day concerned

only to find it not listed. We can only assume it was the victim of a last-minute scheduling reshuffle.

The good news is that we have now been advised it will launch on Wednesday 11 May at 9pm on BBC Two – which sounds more definitive.

There will be six episodes altogether, broadcast weekly.

In the first episode Stacey Dooley is in Liverpool to meet 52 year old Richard, who is on a life-long mission to discover the identity of his father. With his mum never revealing the truth while she was still alive, Richard has hit a number of dead ends researching on his own. When Professor Turi King and the team test his DNA, they deliver far more than Richard expects and he's blown away when finally learning the truth.

It sounds as if it will be another very interesting series.

For more info: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000sthc>

East Surrey Family History Fair

East Surrey are running a virtual Family History Fair on Saturday 7th May. There are two sessions 10am-12 noon and 2-4pm. Sessions are free but you need to book a place in advance.

You will be able to talk to a number of different family history societies at the virtual fair including volunteers from Berkshire Family History Society. So do come and say hello!

Find out more and book at:

<https://www.eastsurreyfh.org.uk/index.php/37-virtual-meetings/200-family-history-from-education-records>



Events

Our events programme is mostly online

Join us - wherever you are



May Natter Group

Facilitators: Chad Hanna and Gillian Stevens

03 May 18:45 for 19:00

Online

Join in this online discussion from your own home, wherever where you live. Open only to members of Berkshire Family History Society.

Informal discussion group, facilitated by Chad Hanna and Gillian Stevens. Topics are chosen by the group on a monthly basis. End time varies.

Free to attend, but pre-booking is required so that the meeting link can be emailed to you.

Book now



House Histories Course

Tutor: Dr Margaret Simons
Saturday May 7th and 14th.
Each session 11.00 - 13.00

Online

Researching the history of a house can be both exciting and rewarding, revealing fascinating stories of those that lived there before you. Do you have a

house that you are interested in knowing more about, have you come up against a dead end or do you just want to know how to approach the subject?

If so, then this online course will help you reveal people, dates, events and much more using familiar resources like the census, but also introduce you to the less familiar such as the national Farm Survey, 'Modern Domesday', the 1910 Inland Revenue valuation survey, rate books, tithe records, local authority records, sales particulars and auction catalogues. You are welcome to bring your housing project to these sessions.

Two sessions: May 7th and 14th, both sessions 11am – 1pm

Week 1. Establishing what you know already and a starting point for your research. Identifying those records that will get you started.

Week 2. Where next? Using the facts and figures of our data collection as our base we will consider those sources that can help us to give context to our research and flesh out our house history.

Tickets cost £20 (members £18)

Pre-booking required

[Book now](#)



Quaker Records

**Newbury Branch Meeting with
talk by Simon Burbidge
11 May 13:30 for 14.00**

**West Berkshire Museum, The Wharf,
Newbury**

Simon Burbidge has been using Quaker records in his own research back to the seventeenth century. They are more informative than parish registers of the established church. His talk also describes the administrative structure of Quakerism.

The talk follows a short annual branch meeting

Free to members

We request a donation of £3 from non-members

Pre-booking required

[Book now](#)



Windsor Castle 1100 – 1700

Speaker: Dr David Lewis

12 May 14:00 - 15:00

**Face-to-face at The Centre for
Heritage & Family History, Reading
Central Library**

Discover the history of Windsor Castle, the oldest and largest occupied castle in the world. The castle has been home to 39 reigning monarchs. It was founded by William the Conqueror in the 11th century, and originally built as a motte-and-bailey, but has been gradually rebuilt over time. It survived a protracted siege in the 13th century and being used as a military headquarters for the Parliamentarians during the English Civil War.

The castle has been the setting for some of the most stunning and expensive architectural achievements, yet at the same time it was designed to function as a practical arm of government. Find out more in this fascinating talk by Dr David Lewis.

After the talk, tea/coffee and cake will be available (included in the price).

Pre-booking is preferred, but you may pay on the door, if there are spaces available.

Members £4

Non-members £5

[Book now](#)



Drop In Advice Session

09 Jun 14:00 - 17:00

Bracknell Central Library

Bring your questions, problems and 'brickwalls' ... and get some new ideas and advice from members of the Berkshire Family History Society.

For ALL family historians wherever your ancestors came from.

[More details](#)



Guided Tour of Caversham Court Gardens

Tour by Dr John Evans and Vickie Abel

12 May 14.30 - 16.00

Caversham Court Gardens, Church Rd, Reading RG4 7AD

Join us for a walking tour of Caversham Court Gardens with expert guides from the Friends of Caversham Court.

The land known today as Caversham Court Gardens has a long recorded history, dating back to the 12th Century. The first house on this land was for the priest of St Peter's Church. Subsequent houses provided homes for some prominent people. The Alexander/Milward family lived here in the 16th century. The Lovedays in the 17th and 18th centuries. And the banking and brewing, Simonds family, throughout the 19th century. No house remains today, but you will be able to see where the last one once stood. Most importantly, you will how the

families developed their gardens, now fully restored following a substantial development project. Special features include the gazebo, believed to date from the 1660s, and the centuries-old yew hedge planted by the Loveday family.

Afterwards, you may choose to stay on and enjoy the wonderful refreshments on offer from the tea kiosk. Please note, refreshments are not included in the ticket price.

Tickets cost £5 (members £4)
Pre-booking required

[Book now](#)



1-1 Family History Advice Session

16 May 15:05 - 15:30 (last remaining slot!)

Online

Are you just getting started in family history and wanting guidance as to how to proceed? Or are you stuck at a particular “brick wall” and need some help?

These popular family history advice sessions are online, using Zoom technology – so you can book a session, wherever you live in the world. Sessions are 1-1, free of cost and are available to members and non-members alike.

Book a 25 minute slot with our advisers and you’ll receive help from our experienced research assistants. We will provide whatever help and suggestions that we can within the time frame and will book a follow-on session with you if needed. Four 1-1 slots are available in this session:

Slot 1: 14.00 – 14.25 sold out

Slot 2: 14.30 – 14.55 sold out

Slot 3: 15.05 – 15.30

Slot 4: 15.35 – 16.00 sold out

Pre-booking is required because full joining instructions will be emailed to attendees in advance. You will also be asked to confirm the advice you are seeking, so that we can make the session as useful as possible for you. Bookings close one week before the event.

[Book now](#)



Who Did Your Ancestors Meet?

Face-to-face Branch Annual Meeting with speaker Dr Colin Chapman
16 May 19:15 for 19:30

Long Furlong Community Centre, Abingdon

Many family histories compiled by enthusiasts, recounting basic data on their ancestors, do merely that, resulting in dry pedigrees with bland, colourless texts – the lifestyles of those ancestors, vibrant or mundane, are totally missing.

Yet few ancestors lived in isolation: besides being born, possibly marrying, and ultimately dying, they worked or relaxed somewhere and most were influenced by their environment, their neighbours and by local, national, even international events.

In this illustrated lecture Dr Chapman offers suggestions to enliven a family history by incorporating characters and events that, with a bit of further research, are retrievable from contemporary documents.

This talk will follow a short Branch Annual Meeting.

Non Members are welcome. Pre-booking is preferred but not essential.

Free to members

Non-members £3

[Book now](#)

That was just a selection from our extensive
events programme ...

[... click here for the full programme](#)

Events routinely sell out so book early to secure
your place



Berkshire Family History Society
for family history research - in Berkshire and beyond

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