

in touch

Berkshire Family History Society



Image courtesy of Jim Bradshaw

Hello

In the A-Z of Berkshire Places that features in [Berkipedia](#), Yattendon is last but not least and on our [dedicated page](#) you'll see a modern-day image taken in almost the same place as the photographer of this week's main image must've stood all those years ago, I wonder what became of the people in that image - are any of them YOUR relative?

This week we have our usual mix of news and events but we kick off with an appeal for help in our Research Centre in Reading Central Library. Could you see yourself helping visitors with their research? If so, please follow the link below to get more info or to make your interest known.



Looking to do some voluntary work?? Why not join our team of Research Assistants?

Our small charity is run entirely by part-time volunteers. Research Assistants (RAs) play an important role by meeting, greeting and assisting visitors to our Research Centre in Reading Central Library.

Would you like to become an RA? As well as the buzz from helping a visitor move their research forward, there are positive benefits for your own family history research

Find out more and apply at: <https://berksfhs.org/berksfhs-research-assistant/>



Who Do You Think You Are? is back!

The long awaited 19th series of WDYTIA? brings us five new episodes featuring the genealogical journeys of discovery made by Sue Perkins, Richard Osman, Matt Lucas, Anna Maxwell Martin and Ralph Little.

This latest series brings us some familiar themes - the Wars, the holocaust and family tragedy and many new ones, plus as usual a fair bit of travel - to Holland, Germany, Ireland amongst other places.

Episode 1 airs on BBC One on Thursday 26 May and stars comedian and presenter Sue Perkins. There will be no episode broadcast on Thursday 2 June due to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, but it will resume broadcasting on Thursday 9 June



Purley During the Queen's Reign - Exhibition

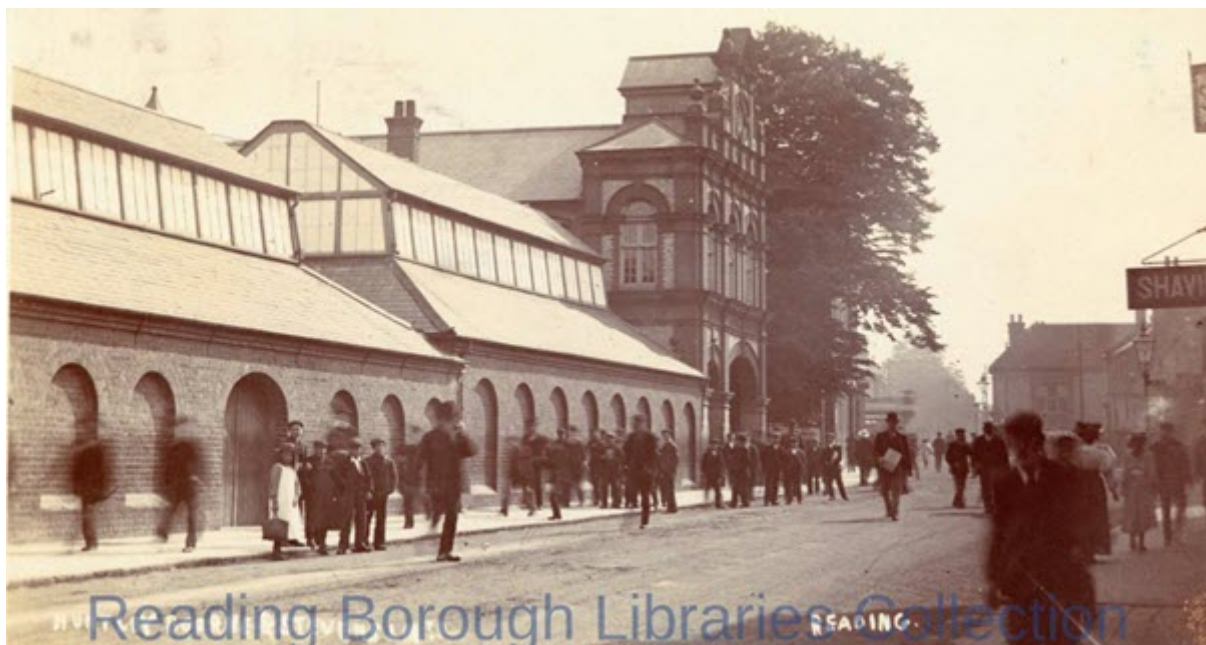
Between 2nd and 5th June communities across Berkshire, will be celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Amongst the many planned activities - in Purley on Thames - an exhibition of Purley during the Queen's Reign which charts the many changes during the last seventy years.

The exhibition has been organised by Purley's history society and takes place on Thursday 2nd June 10am - 5pm and Friday 3rd 10am - 12noon at The Barn, Goosecroft Recreation Ground, Purley on Thames RG8 8BW. It's free to visit, although there is a small charge of £2 per adult (£1 per child) on the Thursday to come onto the site during the Goosecroft Extravaganza event.

There's plenty to see with lots of images, many never previously displayed, and objects, and refreshments available all day Thursday. So if you have family interests in Purley - do try and come along if you can.

Find our more at:

<https://www.purleyonthames.org.uk/jubilee/>



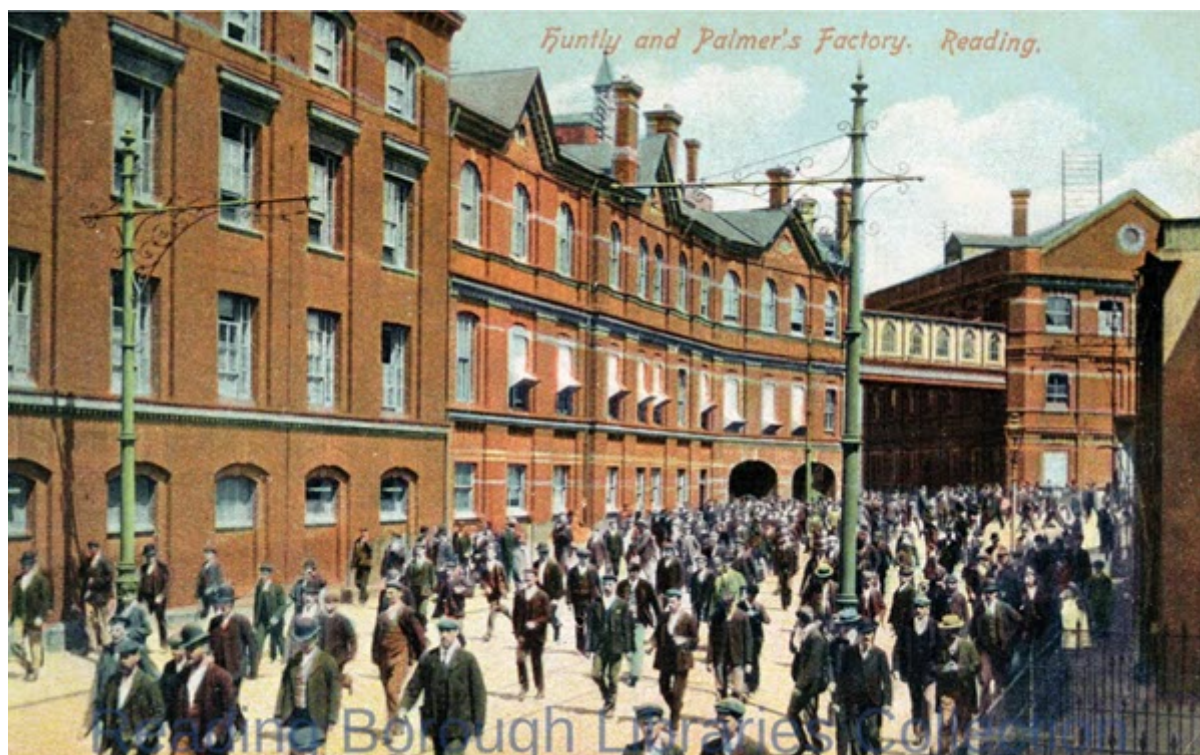
Did one of your ancestors work for Huntley, Boorne and Stevens in Reading?

Nowadays the biscuit tins made by Huntley, Boorne and Stevens for Huntley and Palmers biscuits are collector items. Reading Museum Services has an amazing collection of them.

There's good news for those whose ancestors worked for the tin makers - Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group have now added a detailed illustrated history of the company to their website which is sure of interest.

Check it out at:

<http://biag.org.uk/hbs-tin-makers/>



Did one of your ancestors work for Huntley and Palmers in Reading?

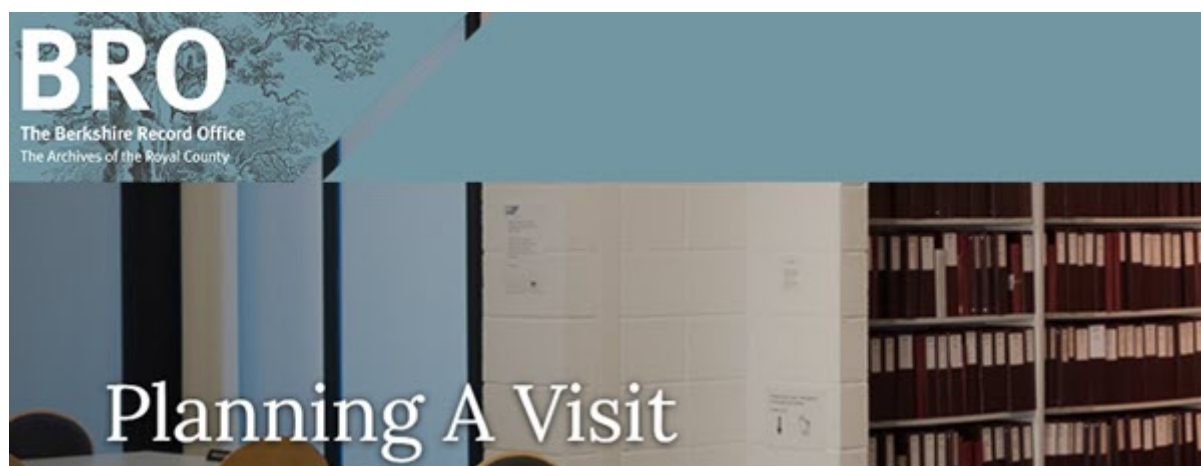
The more famous Huntley business in Reading is of course the biscuit company co-owned with the Palmer family.

If you live within visiting distance of Reading, you may be interested to know that the Museum of English Rural Life (MERL) has a new display on Huntley and Palmers.

Housed in the beautiful Victorian staircase hall, the display explores Huntley & Palmers' impact on the growth of Reading, both physically and culturally, as well as examining the company's overseas reach. Additionally, it takes a more personal look at some of the people impacted by the company's development, including those working within the innovative King's Road factory. The stories are illustrated by a selection of gems from the Huntley & Palmers' archive, such as photographs, packaging, catalogues and more. Even more materials are available to view in drawers throughout the museum galleries.

The display will be available to view from 10th May to 25th September and admission to MERL is free.

Find out more about the exhibition and also MERLs' Huntley and Palmers' archive at:



Increased Opening Hours at the Berkshire Record Office

The Berkshire Record Office in Reading is now open 09:00 to 17:00 Tuesday to Thursday; 09:30 to 16:30 Friday. They are also open until 21:00 for one Thursday evening each month for a trial period from May until October 2022 (the last one being in September).

Thursday evening opening will be on the following dates: 9th June, 7th July, 4th August, 8th September.

You still need to pre-book your visit and pre-ordering your documents is recommended. You can even buy hot drinks and snacks - life is getting back to normal!

Find out more at:

<https://www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk/visit-us/planning-a-visit>



Useful sites

There's hardly a day goes past without a family history related enquiry dropping into our inbox. Mostly they're very specific requests but occasionally we get one that applies to everybody. This week a member asked if we had a list of useful websites (to a family historian that is, we're not Google!) because maintaining such a list was a challenge for an individual. Indeed we do and you'll find it here:

<https://berksfhs.org/info/research-guides/useful-links/>

Please feel free to share it with your friends, because it's one of our many public-facing pages.

If you know of any sites that could be added to the list, please let us know by emailing webmaster@berksfhs.org.uk. We're looking for sites that are permanently available such as the Irish Genealogy one mentioned earlier.



Events

Our events programme is a mixture of online and face-to-face (F2F)

Join us - wherever you are



With Whom Did Your Ancestors Meet?

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

Venue: 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



Free web sites that can help

**Woodley Branch Meeting with talk
by Chad Hanna and Gillian
Stevens**

18 May 19:15 for 19:30

Venue: Online

A quick look at some more unusual free websites that can be used for our family history research.

Help provided for children's hospital admissions, civilian war dead, workhouses, maps, surnames, lost pubs and more. A web address, a picture or two and a quick explanation of why the site is useful. A handout of the web sites will be emailed to attendees after the meeting.

What is your favourite free web site?

Free to members

We request a donation of £3 from non-members

Pre-booking required

Book now



1-1 Beginners' Family History Advice – May

19 May 11:00 to 15:00

**Venue: The Centre for Heritage &
Family History, Reading**

Are you just getting going with your family history, or just picked it up again after a break? Not sure how to get going, where to focus, and how to organise your records?

The third Thursday of each month is a great day to come into The Centre for Heritage and Family History. Between 11am and 3pm you can gain guidance and help from two very experienced family historians – Hilary Waller (a member of AGRA) and Vanessa Chappell. You will be able to use the Centre's computers to access Ancestry Worldwide, Findmypast Worldwide, The Genealogist and The British Newspaper Archive. Plus of course, a host of other free websites. You can access the vast selection of books in the society's reference library. And also, in the adjoining Local Studies Library.

It doesn't matter where your ancestors came from – we will attempt to help you.

No booking required, just turn up.

Free to members and non-members, but donations always gratefully appreciated.

[Book now](#)



Thomas Lawrence and the Warfield Brickworks

Bracknell Branch F2F Meeting and BAM with Speaker Paul Lacey
20 May 14:15 for 14:45

Venue: The new Priestwood Community Centre, Bracknell, RG42 1TU

Thomas Lawrence was born in Binfield and after becoming a Draper and Tailor he started making bricks and moved to Mount Pleasant in Bracknell. The 'TLB' bricks were of a very high quality and were used in a number of prestigious projects. Hear how he expanded his business in many different ways. These included the impressive Bracknell Supply Stores in the old High Street as well as smaller branches in the surrounding area. By 1881 he was employing 265 men and boys.

The talk will follow the Branch Annual Meeting.

FREE to members

Non-members £3

[Book now](#)



World War One Army Records Workshop

Tutor: Nigel Parker and Trevor Hancock

21 May 11.00 - 13.00

Venue: Online

Did your ancestor serve in World War I?, then this workshop will help. The majority of records for the men and women who served in the Great War 1914-1918 are now online (though not everything) but what are they and where can you find them? Have you got stuck with your research into a serviceman and need advice? We will discuss what sort of records are available from medal rolls to operational records and where they are to be found, as well as how to interpret them.

Attendees are invited to bring with them their own research and any relevant items they would like to ask questions about ie medals, diaries, letters. Copies are recommended rather than the originals, where practical.

Tickets cost £10 (members £9)

Pre-booking required

[Book now](#)

More than Biscuits, Beer and Bulbs Reading's Other Industries

Speaker: Jo Alexander Jones



26 May 14:00 - 15:15

Venue: Online

While Reading is rightly renowned for its baking, brewing and seed businesses, the town had many lesser-known industries that brought with them prosperity and just as importantly jobs for the wider population.

In a time when most companies were privately owned, we will explore a number of these companies and the people who owned them covering industries such as printing, ironworking and brickmaking; names like Cox and Wyman, Katesgrove Foundry and Poulton's Waterloo Kiln Brickworks.

Tickets cost £5 (members £4)

Pre-booking is required

Book now



The History of Reading's Hospitals

Reading BAM with speaker: Lionel Williams

26 May 19:15 for 19:45

Venue: F2F at Church of the LDS. Reading. RG30 4PE

After a brief Branch Annual Meeting we will be discovering the history of Reading's Hospitals from 1837 to the present day in this fascinating talk.

The talk mainly focuses on the Royal Berkshire Hospital, which opened on London Road, Reading in 1839, but also includes some information about Battle & Prospect Park Hospitals.

Booking preferred but not essential

FREE to members

Non-members £3

[Book now](#)



The Green Room Plaque

**Windsor Branch Meeting with
speaker: John Frearson
31 May 19:15 for 19:30**

Venue: Online

The Green Room Plaque was “found” and photographed when it came up for auction in a Sale Room in Rugby, Warwickshire, in 2009. The Plaque commemorates twelve actor members of the Green Room Club who died in WWI.

Since that date, considerable research has been undertaken, using family history sources, military archives and contemporary newspapers in UK and USA, to find the stories of these actors, their backgrounds, careers and military service.

Prebooking required

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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Registered Charity Number 283010

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