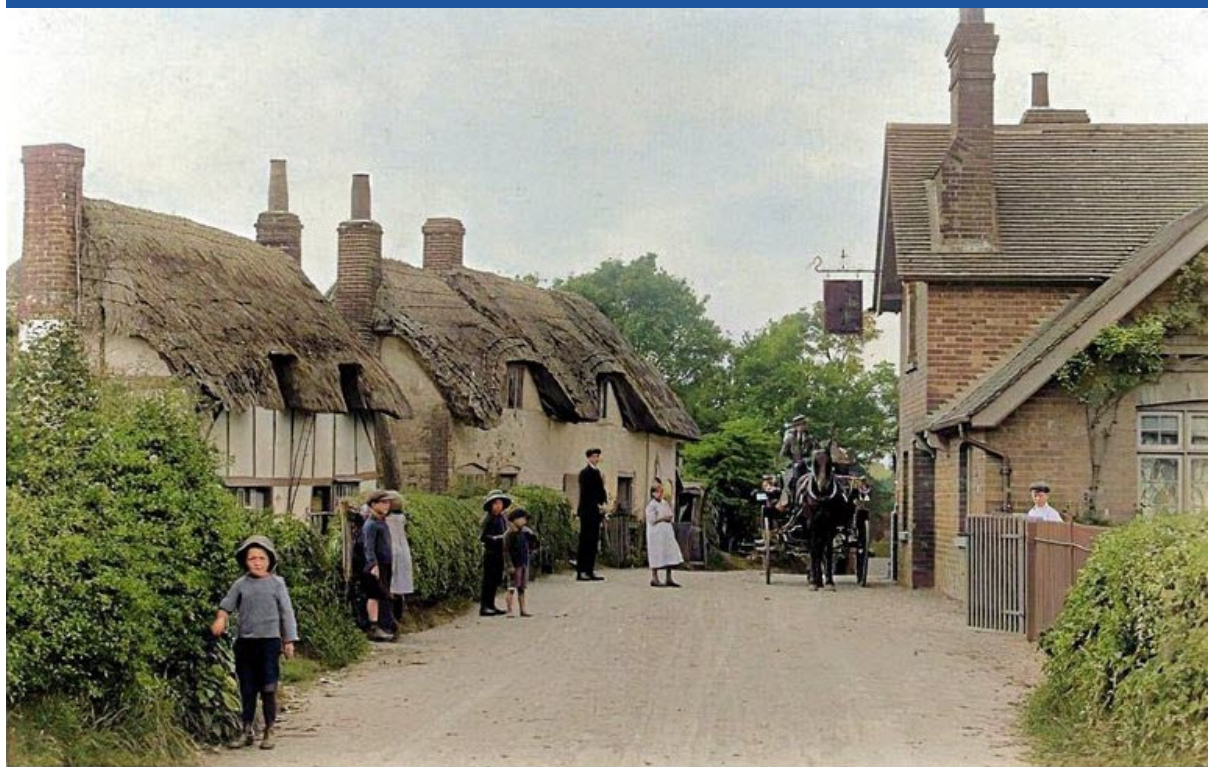


[View this email in your browser](#)

in touch



Berkshire Family History Society
for family historians, wherever you are



Beenhams Village

Colourised image courtesy of Jim Bradshaw

Hi

Locating the banner image on the modern map was a very quick task this week - the village is small and the [Six Bell's Inn is instantly recognisable](#) even if the buildings opposite are very different.

The inn took its name from the bells of St Mary's Parish Church. So far so good. Yet, the current churchbells were cast in 1800 by Thomas I Mears, which is unusually late by bell standards, especially when the church had a bell tower well before this. These bells replace an earlier set which were destroyed when the church burnt down in 1794. After this disastrous event, the canny villagers collected enough bell metal to considerably reduce the bill for casting six new bells which were rehung in or after 1800. But that wasn't the only fire to befall St Mary's. In 1859, the church again caught fire - however, fortuitously, this time the tower and bells survived. And the inn name - well it commemorates the 1794 fire and subsequent restoration of the bells.

The photo itself begs some questions. First, just how tall *is* that man in the centre of photo? Compare him to the horse and cart/carriage and the inn. Second, why is the child in the left foreground wearing a hoodie? Is there something strange in this neighbourhood?

One of our aims is to bring you new inspiration for your research. This week we are delighted that the 'new' word features so much in our news section



And the Survey Prize Draw Winners are ...

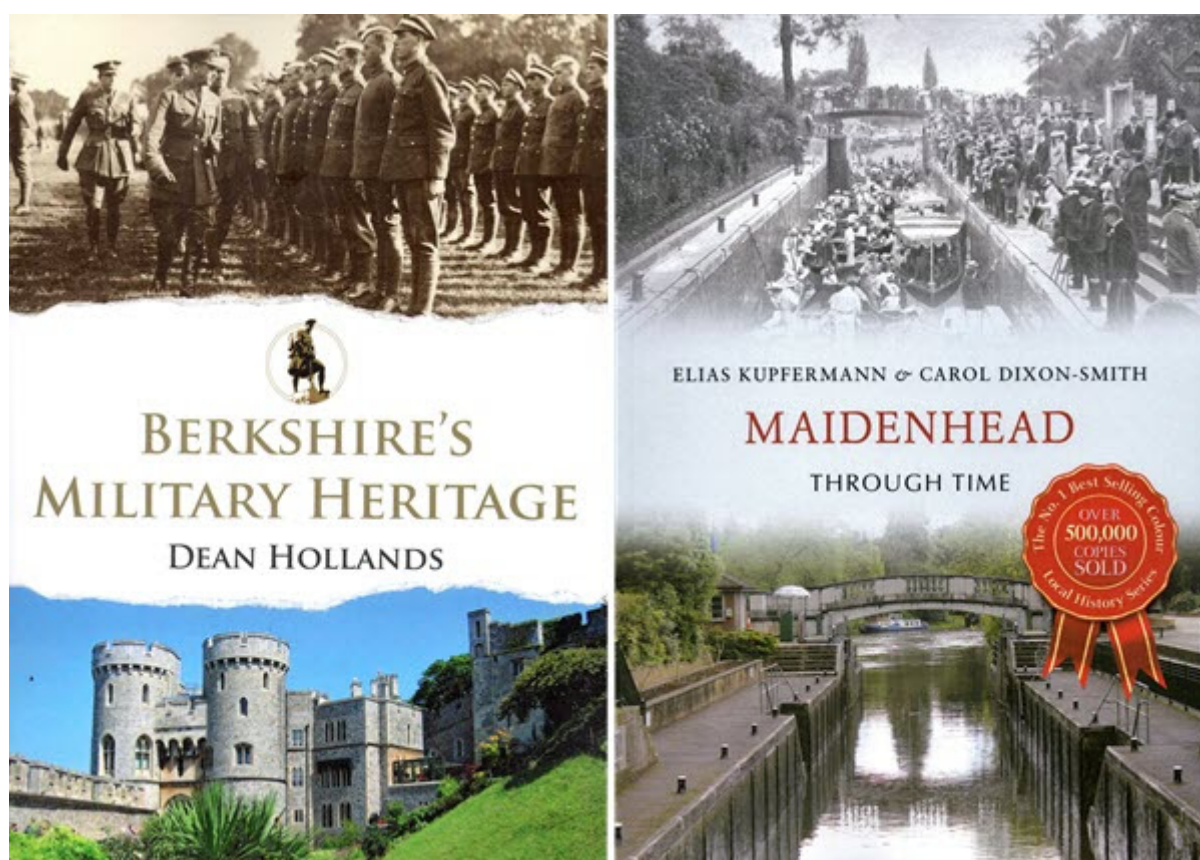
Thank you to the 348 of you who responded to the survey. We are busy collating and cogitating the data it has provided and we'll report back in due course. In the meantime, the ten lucky winners of the prize draw (out of 216 entries) are:

1. Alan Rice
2. Brenda Parsons
3. Brian McDonald

4. Don Barlow
5. Jenny Gill
6. Maggie Bonfield
7. Mike Bailey
8. Russell Turner
9. Sarah Swatridge
10. Pauline Witton

Congratulations to the winners. You should have been contacted by now with details of how to claim your vouchers. If you haven't please email:

chairman@berksfhs.org.uk



Just In - Two New Books

Berkshire's Military Heritage

This newly released, liberally illustrated book traces the story of Berkshire's military forces and actions from the Roman to modern times, and includes sections on Sandhurst, RAF Staff and Pangbourne Nautical Colleges also Memorials to the fallen.

<https://shop.berksfhs.org/product/berkshires-military-heritage/>

Maidenhead Through Time

In *Maidenhead Through Time*, authors Elias Kupfermann and Carol Dixon-Smith invite the reader on a captivating photographic tour of Maidenhead past and present, showcasing the town's many historical features. From industry to entertainment, shops to parks, every aspect of Maidenhead's past is explored in this fascinating volume. *Maidenhead Through Time* is essential reading for anyone who knows and loves this Berkshire town.

<https://shop.berksfhs.org/product/maidenhead-through-time/>



New Exchange Journal Editions

The arrival of March has seen a slew of new editions of journals from other societies - listed below. And Vicki Chesterman, our Historian Editor, has been hard at work recruiting new societies to the cause. We have **eleven** new ones, bringing the total number of exchanges to thirty-seven

- Aberdeen and North East Scotland **(New!)**
- Airedale & Wharfedale
- British Columbia Genealogical Society
- Bedfordshire FHS **(New!)**
- Buckinghamshire FHS
- East Yorkshire FHS
- Eastbourne & District FHS **(New!)**
- Essex FHS
- Gladstone Genealogy (Queensland) **(New!)**
- Hillingdon FHS
- Isle of Wight FHS **(New!)**
- London & West Middlesex FHS **(New!)**
- International Society for British Genealogy and Family History **(New!)**
- New Zealand Society of Genealogists
- Ormskirk and District Family History Society **(New!)**
- Richmond-Tweed

- Shropshire FHS **(New!)**
- South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society **(New!)**
- Wagga Wagga & District FHS Inc (New South Wales) **(New!)**

You can view them here:

<https://berksfhs.org/member-protected-content/journal-exchange/>



Volunteers needed to scan documents and build family trees from home

Over the years, the society has been given a large number of family trees in paper form. These are the culmination of many years of research by members and former members who gave a paper copy of their tree to the society, so that it could be shared with others.

To date, these trees have been kept in a filing cabinet in our Centre, accessible upon request by any of our visitors. We would now like to make this collection more widely accessible and YourTrees gives us the perfect vehicle by which to do so.

However, we need help to do so, and are seeking volunteers who can do any of the following tasks:

- scan the documents
- transfer the information into digital trees using a basic family tree builder program

- check the digitised tree against the original data, to make sure it has been keyed correctly

All of this can be done from home, wherever you live.

Is this something you could spare a little time to help with?

If so, please could you contact Peter Beaven at:

peter.beaven@berksfhs.org.uk



Craft your stories with Ancestry's new feature, Storymaker Studio!

The big players in family history are falling over themselves to release new tools to help us. This time it's Ancestry's turn, with StoryMaker Studio, the only downside being that you need to be comfortable using a mobile device app to enjoy the service.

Follow the link below to see a video demonstration of the app, and how you can carry your family history in your pocket. If you're trying to interest your family in your hobby, your grandchildren will be way more interested in an app than a ring binder!

<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/c/product/storymaker>

Events

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



Drop In Advice Session

28 March 14:00 - 16:30
Bracknell Branch

Wokingham Library, Wokingham

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.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WOKINGHAM LIBRARY HAS MOVED TO:

Carnival Hub,
Wellington Road,
Wokingham,
RG40 2AF.

The entrance to the Centre is on the right of the building looking from the road.

[Find out more](#)



Flanders and the Somme – then and now

28 March 19:30 - 21:30
Windsor Branch Meeting and Talk
by Ian Everest

Online

40 years ago, Ian Everest decided to research his family history and his life hasn't been the same ever since! I wonder how many of us will echo a similar life experience. As he will explain in the talk, his first piece of research was looking at a Great-Uncle who died in the Great War. Within a few months he was tracking down his grave in Northern France, knowing that he was the first member of his family to do so – a humbling experience. Such is the impact it made on him, he has been back nearly every year since, often taking others who are visiting for the first time. His illustrated talk reflects on his family history experience, some of the significant sites on the Western Front and what can be seen today on the 'old front line'.

Tickets cost £5 (members free)

Pre-booking required

Book now



Parish Registers for Family Research Workshop

29 March 19:00 - 21:00

Tutor: Catherine Sampson

Online

Since their introduction in 1538, parish registers have gone through a number of changes. Throughout, they bear witness to life within each parish, and record the important personal events of baptism, marriage and burial and of course, after 1753, the reading of banns. They also evidence local, national and societal changes.

Increase your chances of success with family historians' core resource. Better understand what registers can provide for you. Including, where to find them, how Church of England and non-conformist registers differ, and how to interpret them. Discover some of the hidden codes which can appear in registers. Why a child could be apparently baptised more than once and in different locations. Also, the benefits and pitfalls of indexes and transcripts.

Image: reproduced with the kind permission of Berkshire Record Office

Tickets cost £10 (members £9)

Pre-booking required

[Book now](#)



Let's Meet Our Criminal Ancestors

30 March 19:45 - 21:00

**Reading Branch Meeting and Talk
by the members**

**The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day
Saints, Tilehurst**

In all families there is at least one 'black sheep'. Their story will add life to your family history and, as such, we should embrace even our ne'er-do-well forebears. Why not tell us about yours?

Join us for an evening of sharing the stories of our family members. If you wish to share your family story, please drop us a line at reading@berksfhs.org.uk to let us know.

Image: The criminal prisons of London, and scenes of prison life by Henry Mayhew ... and John Binny. Credit – Wellcome Collection (Public Domain)

Free to members.

We request a donation of £5 from non-members.

[Find out more](#)



DNA Special Interest Group

01 April 14:30 - 16:30

Facilitator: Debbie Kennett

Online

This special interest discussion group is aimed at those wanting to get the most out of their DNA results. It is facilitated by international DNA expert, Debbie Kennett. Sessions are held quarterly, but there is no obligation to attend on a regular basis and first time attendees are always welcomed. This is a great opportunity to ask questions and pick up ideas for how you can use your DNA results to resolve queries and break down brick walls.

Tickets cost £5 (members £4)

Pre-booking required

[Book now](#)



Online Family History Advice Clinic

03 April 14:00 - 16:00

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

Slot 2: 14.30 – 14.55

Slot 3: 15.05 – 15.30

Slot 4: 15.35 – 16.00

For members and non-members of Berkshire Family History Society
Free

[Book now](#)



April Natter Group

04 April 19:00 - end time varies

Online

Join in from your the comfort of your home, wherever 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](#)

That was just a small selection from our extensive
events programme

[Click here for the full programme](#)

Our events routinely sell out -
book early to secure your place



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