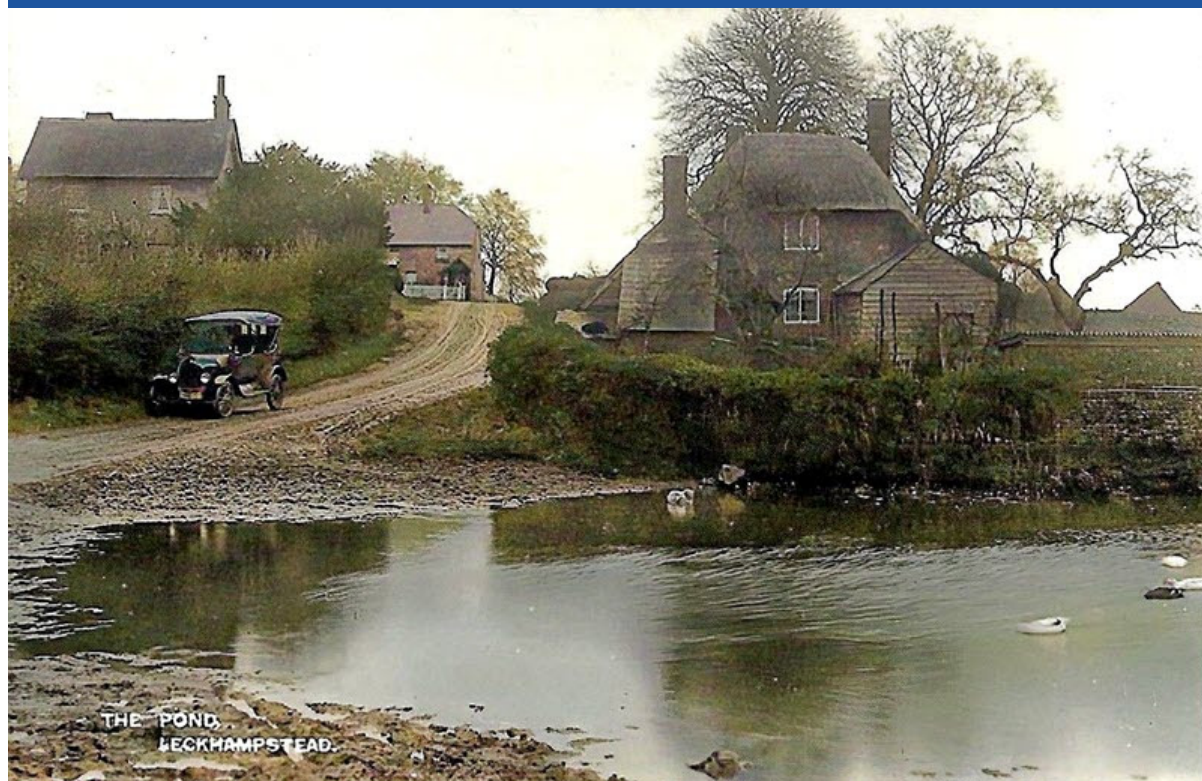

In Touch

1 message

in touch



Berkshire Family History Society
for family historians, wherever you are



Colourised image courtesy of Jim Bradshaw

Hil

My sleuthing skills have let me down this week. Many of the iconic scenes we feature are instantly recognisable on the modern map but I can find no trace of this pond. I took a tour of Google Street view looking for the buildings but even that wasn't easy. There was one that looked similar, in Shop Lane, but if that's correct then the pond is no more, having been replaced by modern houses or possibly a

grassed area. [What do YOU think?](#)

This week we have a our usual list of events - talks and walks for you to enjoy - and a curated list of links to third party sites that we hope you find useful as you pursue your family history research. Enjoy!



New Exchange Journal Editions

There's no holding Vicki Chesterman back. This week we have three more. And we have some more new editions form existing partners. New sign-ups often give us some back copies so there are over two hundred editions to choose from in our back catalogue.

City of York & District FHS **(New!)**

Cheshire FHS

Essex FHS

Family History ACT

Herefordshire FHS

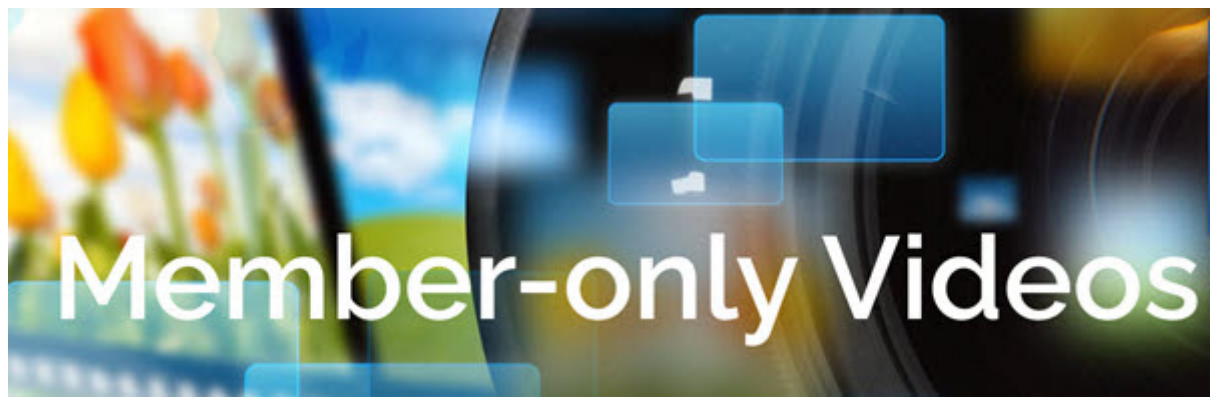
Hertfordshire FHS

Society of Australian Genealogists **(New!)**

Suffolk FHS **(New!)**

You can view them here:

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



For those who were unable to catch the live Windsor Branch event, the latest in our series of FREE recorded talks is now available in the Members Area.

Flanders and the Somme - then and now

Speaker: Ian Everest. Duration: 1hr 26

40 years ago, Ian decided to research his family history and his life hasn't been the same since! His first piece of research was 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. 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'.

You can view it here:

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



Centre closure on Easter Monday

The Centre for Heritage & Family History will be closed, as you might expect, on Monday 10th April. It opens as usual on Tuesday 11th.



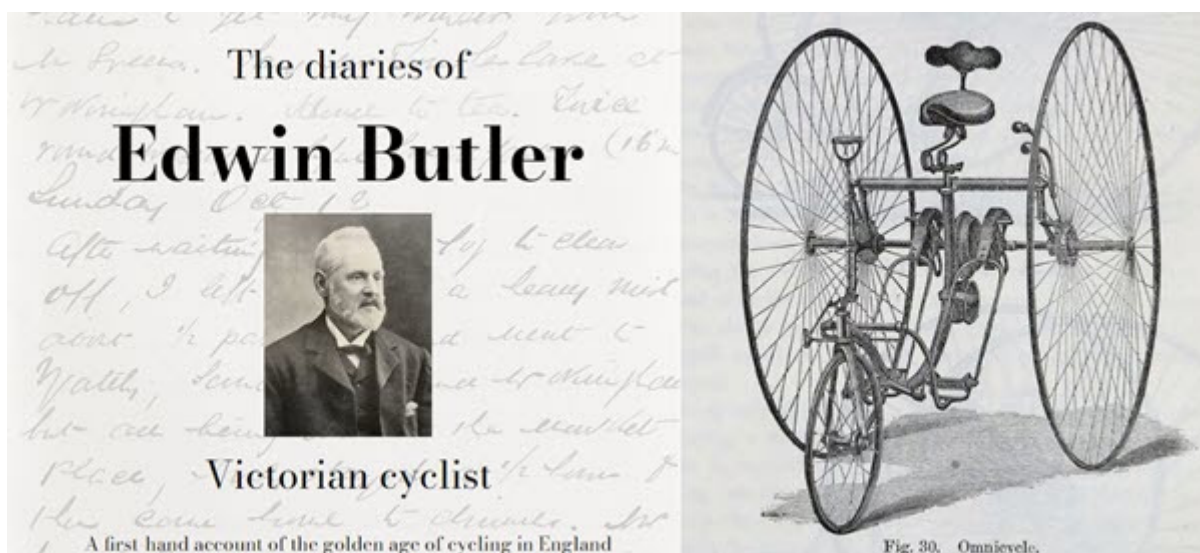
Slough History Online

Those with Slough ancestors may be interested in the Slough History Online website, launched and managed by Slough Library Services.

Whilst it's not the most visually attractive of websites, it contains some useful material, not least the digitised Slough Observer between 1883 and 1934. There are also stories of past events, people and businesses in Slough and photos and other material from Slough Local Studies Collection. It's worth following each link through as some have considerable depth, which isn't always apparent at first glance.

Check it out here:

<http://www.sloughhistoryonline.org.uk/ixbin/hixclient.exe?a=file&p=slough&f=slough.htm>



Wokingham Family Diaries Published Online

If you have family connections to the Wokingham area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries then you've a treat in store with the newly published website of the diaries of Edwin Butler. If your ancestors had keen cycling interests - it's also worth a peruse.

Edwin, a grocer and keen cyclist from Wokingham, kept a diary about his life and travels from 1879 to 1907. His family recently rediscovered his journals and are now putting them online volume by volume for anyone to read. Many of the residents of Wokingham and surrounds of that time are mentioned. In addition, Edwin describes everyday life in the town, the shops he frequents, events he attends and Chapel services and sermons.

The website is well laid out and illustrated with extensive research into the businesses and cycles mentioned.

Check it out here:

<https://edwinbutlerdiaries.com/>



Wokingham Virtual Museum

More good news for those with ancestral links with the newly launched Wokingham Virtual Museum.

This is very much work in progress and the site is a little basic and sparse at the moment but we can hopefully expect more articles and items over the coming months. However, there's a good range of collections already which will likely be of interest to those interested in Wokingham including Wokingham remembers WW1 and WW2, Wokingham people and Wokingham Industries.

Check it out here:

<https://www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk/museum/>

Events

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



World War Two Talks Series

Thur 13 Apr 14:00 - 15:30

Thur 11 May as above

Thur 08 June as above

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

This all series ticket covers all three talks in the “World War Two” talks series, for the discounted price of £12.50 (members £10.00). You may also book each talk individually – see each separate event page. All three talks are on Thursdays at 2pm in The Centre for Heritage and Family History, Reading. They last about an hour with time for questions and discussion afterwards. Tea, coffee and cake after the talk is included in the price.

Early Closing Day – Air Raids on Reading in WW2

13 Apr 14:00 - 15:30

Talk by Mike Cooper

Forty-one people were killed by just four bombs during Reading’s only fatal air raid on 10th February 1943. Most of the fatalities occurred in The People’s Pantry, a popular restaurant at 175 Friar Street, staffed by the Women’s Voluntary Service. It provided cheap and nutritious meals for an affordable price to supplement rations and was demolished. Had it not been early closing day in Reading the casualties would have most likely been even greater. We commemorate its 80th anniversary this year and remember its victims and their families. Before that the town had been bombed around ten times. This is an account of how Reading prepared for air attack, and what can be told of the air raids themselves

[Thursday 13 April “Early Closing Day – Air Raids on Reading in WW2” with Mike Cooper](#)

Britain’s Railways in World War Two

11 May 14:00 - 15:30

Talk by Richard Marks

Find out the important role that Britain’s four railway companies had in achieving victory in World War Two. Discover the war work that was undertaken in the railway company works across the country and the impact of Luftwaffe operations over Britain’s railway network during the war. This talk will also look at how the legacy left

by the Victorian railway builders benefited Britain in World War Two.

[Thursday 11 May "Britain's Railways in World War Two" with Richard Marks](#)

Tilehurst in World War Two

08 Jun 14:00 - 15:30

Talk by Mike Cooper

Was there any such thing as an "ordinary" community in WW2? Mike Cooper looks at the experience of Tilehurst from newspaper and official records. Tilehurst was bombed, saw the arrival of US airborne troops, raised a Home Guard company and its people welcomed evacuees. From as early as October 1939, the village suffered losses and was also organised as part of Civil Defence and food production.

[Thursday 8 June "Tilehurst in World War Two" with Mike Cooper](#)

Please note that these are face-to-face talks.

The all series ticket cost £12.50 (members £10)

Pre-booking is preferred but you can just turn up on the day

Book now



Early Closing Day – Air Raids on Reading in WW2

Thu 13 Apr 14:00 - 15:30

Talk by Mike Cooper

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

Forty-one people were killed by just four bombs during Reading's only fatal air raid on 10th February 1943. Most of the fatalities occurred in The People's Pantry, a popular restaurant at 175 Friar Street, staffed by the Women's Voluntary Service. It provided cheap and nutritious meals for an affordable price to supplement rations and was demolished. Had it not been early closing day in Reading the casualties would have most likely been even greater. We commemorate its 80th anniversary this year and remember its victims and their families.

Before that the town had been bombed around ten times, and this is an account of how Reading prepared for air attack, and what can be told of the air raids themselves.

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

Tickets cost £5 (members £4)

Pre-booking is preferred but you can just turn up on the day

[Book now](#)



Drop In Advice Session

Thu 13 Apr 14:00 - 17:00
Bracknell Branch

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.

[Find out more](#)



Enclosure Maps for Family Historians Workshop

Sat 15 April 11:00 - 13:00
Tutor: Joan Dils

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

This workshop will look at enclosure maps when and why they were created, how to use them, what information they contain and what use they are to family historians.

The enclosure of open fields and commons took place from medieval times. This was done initially by private agreement and then also by private acts of Parliament. General Enclosure Acts passed in 1801, 1836 and 1845 made the process easier. The

majority of surviving records come from the age of Parliamentary enclosure c.1750-1850. These can be incredibly detailed and throw important light on the lives of both the wealthy and those living at the poorer end of the economy.

Tutor, Joan Dils, is an experienced local historian and writer specialising in 16th and 17th century Berkshire. Her books include: the first and second editions of "An Historical Atlas of Berkshire", the latter edited in conjunction with Margaret Yates, Reading St Laurence Churchwardens' Accounts, 1498-1570: Parts I and II, (Berkshire Record Series) and "History of Reading" (2019).

Tea, coffee and biscuits are included in this workshop.

Image: Field paths, Heart of England Way by Michael Westley CC-BY-SA-2.0

Tickets cost £10 (members £9)

Pre-booking is required

[Book now](#)



Coffee, Cake & Chat

Mon 17 Apr 19:30 - 21:30
Abingdon Branch Meeting

Long Furlong Community Centre, Abingdon

A relaxed evening, with coffee and cake, to get to know your local members of Berkshire Family History Society and try out some new ways of staying in touch.

Raffle

Large free car park adjacent to the hall.

Visitors and Non-Members are welcome

Free to members.

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

[Find out more](#)



Walk Around Woodley

Tue 18 Apr 14:00 - 16:00

Walk Leader: Ann Smith

Meeting Point will be notified within booking process

Join historian Ann Smith for a circular walk around Woodley, looking at Woodley's listed buildings, the forge, pub, and what remains of Miles Aircraft and aviation heritage. The walk will last around 2 hours.

Numbers are limited, so pre-booking is required.

Image: By Mike McMillan, CC BY-SA 2.0

Tickets cost £5 (members £4)

Currently fully booked but you can...

...add your name to the waiting list



Face-to-Face Family History Advice Clinic

Thu 20 Apr 11:00 - 14:30

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

Just beginning your family history research and need some advice? Baffled by so many competing research websites? Banging your head against a brick wall? Or struggling with some other issues? In this one-to-one session, one of our seasoned advisors will help you make some progress.

Session 1: 11:00 - 11:30 (*booked*)

Session 2: 11:45 - 12:30

Session 3: 13:45 - 14:30

To make the most of your session our advisors will carry out some preliminary research beforehand, and for that we need you provide us with some information please:

- to tell us what you've done so far
- describe the nature of the problem
- attach copies of any key documents such as BMD certificates, research notes
- if possible, provide a link to a family tree we can view (members – if your tree has been uploaded to YourTrees, that would be perfect) or at least attach a copy of a hand drawn tree of the immediate family of the people you're researching

For members and non-members of Berkshire Family History Society

Free

Pre-booking required

[Book now](#)



WW2 Navy Records Workshop

Sat 22 Apr 11:00 - 13:00

Tutor: Richard Marks

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

This workshop is designed for family historians who are researching their relatives who served in the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines, the Fleet Air Arm or the Women's Royal Naval Service in World War Two. We will look at the ranks, roles and divisions of each service, the ships and aeroplanes they served on, and what that meant to the lives of the people who served. This will help researchers gain an understanding of what family relatives were doing during World War Two. Attendees will also have the opportunity to ask questions pertinent to their own research.

Workshop includes tea, coffee and biscuits.

Tickets cost £10 (members £9)

Pre-booking is required

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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