

Berks, here's your latest In Touch

1 message

Berkshire FHS <noreply@berksfhs.org.uk>

11 February 2024 at 08:00

in touch



Wantage with King Alfred's statue in the square

Image colourised by Jim Bradshaw

Hi

Unlike the previous location, this week's is instantly recognisable and easy to find, although my rose-tinted spectacles make me much fonder of the original than [the modern](#).

Spring is in the air. Even in the far north of England where I live the snowdrops and

daffs are appearing, and to go with them, Spring Editions of Exchange Journals are also springing up. We have another video for you, along with the usual mix of interesting articles and events. Have you booked your places for the Berkshire Heritage Fair yet? No? Then see below so you don't miss out.

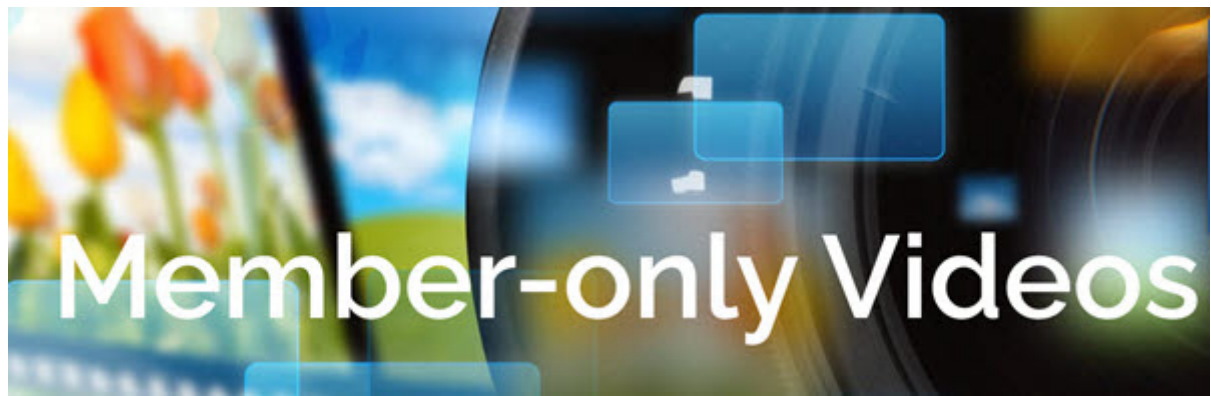


Exchange Journals

Spring is in the air and Spring editions are starting to appear from our exchange partners - snowdrop editions, if you will.

- City of York & District FHS
- Eastbourne & District FHS
- East of London FHS
- East Yorkshire FHS (x2)
- Highland FHS
- Isle of Wight FHS
- Queensland FHS

[View online \(login required\)](#)



The Mystery Brooch: How family history research helped solve the puzzle

Speaker: Mike Bailey. Duration: 32 mins

A jewellery case was found when a cousin of the speaker died. The picture shows the inscription on the top, but who were B.P. and G. A. H. and why was the brooch given?

Mike Bailey has been involved in researching his family history for about 20 years. Some years ago following the death of a cousin he was asked if he could solve a mystery. His talk shows how with minimal initial information, some knowledge of the family structure and specific further research he was able to suggest answers to the puzzle, and in doing so gain additional insight into the life of some of his ancestors.

[Click to view \(login required\)](#)

THE MERL IS PLAYING AT FARMING...

NEW 'MODEL FARMING' GALLERY



Researching your Ag Labs at the Museum of English Rural Life

The Museum of English Rural Life (MERL) preserves and displays objects, archives, photographs, film and books, recording changes in the countryside and the lives of agricultural labourers.

The museum's website is easy to use and navigate, with plenty of useful information presented in a visually-stimulating, digestible way.

Family historians will probably find the Collections section of particular value. This gives an introduction to MERL's collections along different themes. You can also search the museum's catalogue online to find out if it's worth a visit (it's based in Reading). The database covers the main MERL collection (library, old photographs, archives and objects) and the Bibliography of British and Irish Rural History.

Check the website out here:

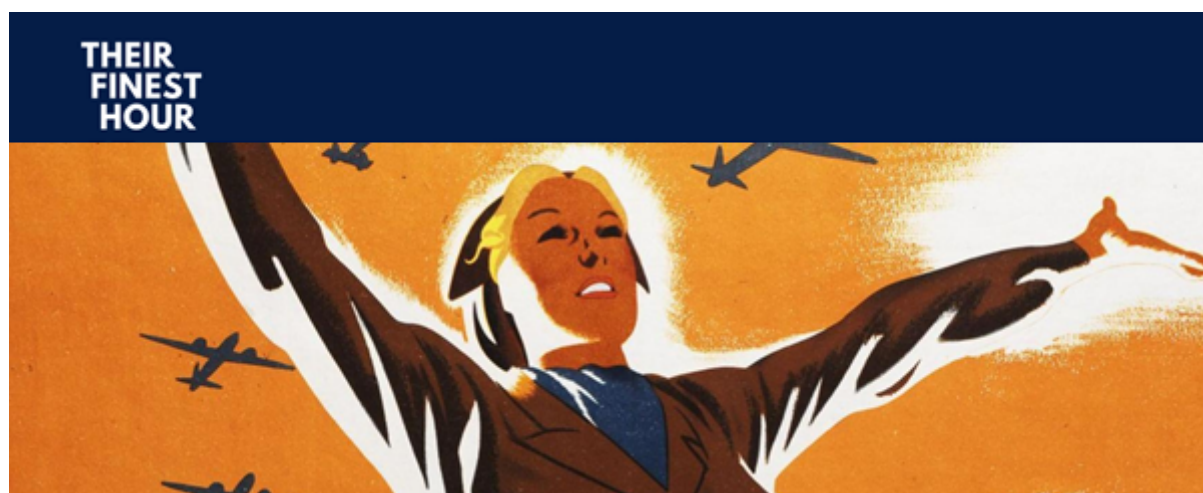
<https://merl.reading.ac.uk>

Rootstech

The World's largest annual Genealogy Conference, Rootstech, takes place between 29 February and 2 March 2024. The online version of the conference is free to take part in and you can still register for a place, if you haven't yet done so.

The session schedules are now in place, and with hundreds of sessions to choose from, now is a good time to plan your schedule of talks.

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/registration/online/>



Their Finest Hour

Many of us have Second World War-related stories and objects that have been passed down to us from our parents, grandparents and other family members. Their Finest Hour, a University of Oxford project launched in July 2022 and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, aims to empower local communities to digitally preserve these stories and objects before they are lost to posterity.

A number of collection events have been held across Berkshire in recent months. If you haven't yet had the chance to share images and stories you can do so online **before the deadline date of Friday 5th April 2024.**

Simply follow the instructions online to tell a story that you would like added to the archive, add information about objects that you would like added to the archive and upload photographs of the objects.

Find out more and submit here:

<https://theirfinesthour.english.ox.ac.uk/home>

Events

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



Pinpointing the Origin of a Surname

Wed 14 Feb 19:30 - 20:30

**Newbury Branch meeting with talk by
John Titterton**

Online

John Titterton was a teenager when he saw an obituary for a John Edenzor Titterton, a distant family ancestor. This article started off his family history research which went on to become a one name study.

Join John as he explains how visiting his local records office allowed him to trace his family back to the 1700's. Following these discoveries, he then shows how he expanded this knowledge to determine which of two brothers was the father of William Titterton b. 1739 and from this evolved his one name study of the surname Titterton.

Again, using his knowledge, documentary evidence and statistical techniques on the available Titterton references, John established that the Titterton family had its origins at about 1400 in the North Staffordshire village of Alstonefield.

In this talk John will explain how the same techniques can be used to expand on your own family history.

Image: by John Titterton of Narrowdale Farm Alstonefield, Staffordshire. The farm

where the Titterton's are first recorded in 1397.

Free to members.

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

Pre-booking is required.

[Book now](#)



Lost, Stolen Away or Strayed

Fri 16 Feb 14:45 - 16:30

Bracknell Branch meeting with talk by Sue Ellis

**The New Priestwood Community Centre
Bracknell**

Everyone has experienced the problems which arise when you lose track of a family member. They may have disappeared from the census, or a marriage has been untraceable, or perhaps they have emigrated, or died. It's one of the most frustrating aspects of family history research. This talk suggests, with genuine examples, what resources you can use and the tricks you can employ to trace people who seem to have become untraceable.

The attached photo shows a concert (the Messiah) by the Ipswich Choral Society in 1909. What is the connection between this and Benjamin Britten? All will be revealed!

Branch library available to members to borrow books. Refreshments available. Car park outside the hall.

Free to members.

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

[Find out more](#)

Online Family History Advice Clinic



Mon 19 Feb 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 – 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.

You’ll receive help from our experienced research assistants. We’ll provide whatever help and suggestions that we can within the time frame and book a follow-on session with you if needed. Four, 25-minute, 1:1 slots are provided, starting at 14.00, 14.30, 15.05, and 15.35. Check availability on the website by clicking the button below.

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.

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

Check availability and book



Starting and the next steps in Family History Research

Mon 19 Feb 19:30 - 21:30

Abingdon Branch meeting with talk by branch members

Long Furlong Community Centre

An evening when we go back to basics. Our experienced researchers will show and

discuss how to start and continue your family history research, wherever they came from.

We will show you how to get the best out of subscription sites and also which free websites you can use to help your research. Discuss Birth, Marriage and Death Certificates and when and where to get them from.

Perhaps you are struggling with how to document your research? We can advise you.

Come along and join in the open discussion and maybe some breaking down of brick walls. An enjoyable evening where even the most experienced family historian can learn something new.

This meeting is ideal for those new to family history.

Tea and Coffee will be available.

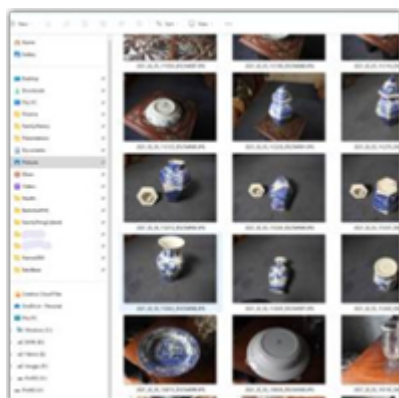
Raffle

Large free car park adjacent to the hall.

Free to members.

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

[Find out more](#)



Managing your images

Wed 21 Feb 19:30 - 21.30
Computer Branch Online Meeting

You're getting a lot of images of family photographs and other memorabilia onto your computer. How can you organise them? Second of a series on digital media, following the November 2023 meeting.

This will cover schemes for naming files and folders, removing duplicate files, images, and derived images. There will be more about metadata (the writing on the back of digital photos), maintaining context, backups and archives.

How do you do this stuff? Do you have one folder with thousands of images or is it neatly organised by year and month, or family name or something better? Please let us know at your computer branch.

This talk is free to members of Berkshire Family History Society and we request a donation of £5 from non-members. Pre-booking is required, because the meeting link will be emailed in advance. Booking ends one day before event.

[Book now](#)



Maiwand and The Great Game

Thu 22 Feb 14:00 - 15:15
Online Talk

Image: The_Maiwand_Lion Tom Bastin CC-BY-2.0

The impressive cast iron statue of a lion in Forbury Gardens, Reading has become one of the most iconic images of Reading.

The Lion is posed snarling defiance to the north – towards Russia. Built by George Blackall Simonds and unveiled in 1886, it commemorates those who died in the Battle of Maiwand. Yet few of us probably know much about the battle and its tragic association with Berkshire.

In this talk, Mike Cooper looks at the Battle of Maiwand against the background of Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia – The Great Game – something he's been following for 40 years – and the history of the lion itself.

This talk is the second of three in the Winter Potpourri online talks series.

Pre-booking is required, because the event link will be sent in advance.

[Book now](#)

Berkshire Heritage Fair



Sat 24 Feb 10:00 - 12:00
14:00 - 16:00

Online

If you have an interest in historic Berkshire or a particular family, location, industry or transport system within it, you will almost certainly find this online Heritage Fair beneficial.

You will be able to:

- Connect with local experts about locations, businesses, industries or families of interest.
- Ask questions and seek their advice.
- Find out about the archives which many of these organisations hold (majority not online) and how you can access them.
- Benefit from general and specific information, sources and images - many of which you may have previously been unaware.
- Share information on your own family or heritage research with the participating organisations.
- Gain advice and guidance on Berkshire-specific resources and sources.
- Get help with your own family, local, military, transport or business history research - from getting started to breaking down brick walls.
- Pop into our specialist rooms on topics such as local businesses and industries (including Huntley & Palmers, Sutton Seeds, and the Katesgrove Iron Works), Transport, Military, Wills & Probate and Parish Registers.
- Build lasting connections with new contacts beyond this event
- Find out how you can join and get involved with these organisations.

Many of the Family History societies from our adjoining counties are also joining us for the day and will be able to answer questions on their counties.

Session timings are pitched to allow as many people as possible from across the world to join in. Last time, participants joined us from the US, Canada and Australia – can we add even more countries this time? The event uses Zoom breakout rooms, and each participating heritage organisation will have their own room

The list of participating organisations and individuals is growing and you can see the latest position at: <https://berksfhs.org/berkshire-heritage-online-fair-2024/>

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

Free to attend.

Pre-booking of either or both sessions is required because places are limited.

[Book now](#)



Research Zone Tour

Mon 26 Feb 11:00 - 13:00

Tour Leader: Catherine Sampson

The Centre for Heritage & Family History, Reading

Yet to visit The Centre for Heritage and Family History and would like to know what's available there and how it can help your family history research? This tour will introduce you to the facilities of the Centre and also those within the adjoining Local Studies Library.

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

Free to attend.

Pre-booking is required because numbers are limited.

[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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