



1 message

here's your latest In Touch

25 February 2024 at 08:00

in touch



West Ilsley - School House

Image colourised by Jim Bradshaw

Hi Paul

This week's image took less than a minute to find on the modern map. It's a small village, so let's start near the Church because the old school house is unlikely to be far way, and bingo - [look](#) - another instantly recognisable scene.

This week's recurring theme is 'new'. We have a **new** Exchange journal to add to the ever growing list; a **new** video (for the third edition in a row); and a **new** way to contact us via the website, especially for those common questions, such as "I've forgotten my password - what do I do?"



Exchange Journals

We have another new one this time, bringing the total to 58. Kudos to Historian editor, Vicki Chesterman, for her recruitment campaign - a little over a year ago we had just 11 - another example of how hard we're working to bring you more content.

Just received - new editions from:

- Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies
- Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society (*new partner!*)
- Ormskirk and District FHS
- St. Louis Genealogical Society
- Society of Genealogists
- Suffolk FHS
- Tasmanian FHS
- Wagga Wagga & District FHS

View online (login required)



A Guide to Shinfield Church with Chris Young - Churchwarden.

St Mary's dates from 1069, when the Earl of Hereford ordered it built. Since then, it has been a home of worship and a significant part of life in Shinfield. The building is Grade 1 listed, and is known for some remarkable architecture (especially the fine, uncommonly timbered roof).

Join Chris on a guided tour of the church.

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



Royal Archives

Royal Archives at Windsor Castle

Do you have links to the Royal family, the people who served or worked for them, or St George's Chapel?

The Archives at St George's, Windsor Castle receive all sorts of enquiries from family and social historians attempting to find out more about individuals connected to the

Royal Household. The archivist there, Kate McQuillan, has kindly provided this handy guide to help you know what records are available and where to find them.

The records of four centuries of past Royal Household employees can be searched through Find my Past. A Find my Past account is required.

<https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/royal-household-staff-1526-1924>

For enquiries about the Royal Household, you can contact the Royal Archives directly:

RoyalArchives@royal.uk

For queries about the collection in the Royal Library:

royallibrary@rct.uk

For St George's Chapel, historical enquiries can be sent to:

archives@stgeorges-windsor.org

The St George's [website](#) also carries a number of published resources, such as the 'Historical Monographs' series. This fascinating collection includes lists of past Knights of the Garter, lists of past employees of St George's Chapel, lists of the extant burial monuments and transcripts of the Chapel's baptism, marriage, and burial registers.

A new & easy way to get answers!

Need a quick answer? We've got you covered! Introducing our helpful new chatbot, now on every web page in the bottom right corner.

Click the chat icon on any of our web pages to get instant answers to common questions about opening hours, passwords, parish registers, and more.



Stuck on something trickier? Leave a message, and one of our friendly volunteers will reach out soon. We'll use those trickier questions to train the chatbot, so it can help even more people in the future!



'Lend a hand on the land' poster (cropped) from the Ministry of Agriculture from the Second World War. Catalogue reference: INF13-140 (11)

WW2 Farm Records to go online

The National Archives (TNA) has announced a project to digitise the National Farm Survey, taken in 1941, thanks to a £2.13 million grant from the Lund Trust.

The survey includes details of over 300,000 farms in England and Wales including how the land was used, location, condition and management as well as details of owners and tenants. The digitisation will not only help to preserve the much-requested original documents, it will also improve access for family and local historians.

The first records to be digitised will be the individual farm records (MAF 32) with the accompanying survey maps (MAF 73) coming later.

The first records should be online from March 2026, and the project completed by March 2027. The resulting database will be freely available online, enabling researchers to discover more about family farms or their local area.

Read the full announcement here:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/300000-farm-records-going-online-thanks-to-grant-from-lund-trust/>

Events

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



Drop In Advice Session

Tue 27 Feb 14:00 - 16:30

Wokingham 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.

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](#)

The Poor and the Parish

Tue 27 Feb 19:30 - 21:30

Windsor Branch meeting with talk by Gill Blanchard

Online



Discover what local parish records can tell us about provision for the poor and those who maintained them.

Learn how to use parish poor law records for family history, local history, and house history research, as well as where to find them locally, nationally, and online.

What happened to the poor before union workhouses came into force in 1834, and what changed afterwards.

Photo: The Illustrated London News, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Free to members.

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

Pre-booking is required.

[Book now](#)



Create an enduring family tree in YourTrees

Wed 28 Feb 19:00 - 21:30

Tutor: Paul Barrett

Online

Purpose of this event

Do you wish that your grandparents had kept a family history? You can ensure your grandchildren have easy access to their backstory. How durable and easily interpreted is your current family archive? Will it stand the test of time, or ultimately end up in a cardboard box in the attic? Create an enduring family tree in YourTrees and avoid these common problems.

What is YourTrees?

YourTrees is a free member-only service to:

- Easily pass your research on to family members

- Allow members to easily share their research discoveries – now and in the future – and benefit from the wisdom of others
- Allow members to tackle research challenges together – a problem shared is a problem halved
- Grow a bespoke collective resource for people, names, places and more

About the workshop

In this workshop, you will actively create an enduring family tree, ensuring your hard work is never lost. Don't just build a family tree – share it for the future. Store a relevant and accessible copy on YourTrees for next generations. Already a YourTrees pro? Take your skills to the next level with advanced tips and tricks. New to YourTrees? Get started on the right foot with our beginner-friendly guide. Unsure if YourTrees is for you? Discover the possibilities and ask your questions!

Get ready for interactive sessions! Dive into your digital preservation questions with dedicated Q&A sessions after each section, ensuring all your queries are addressed.

The sessions are very interactive, and with a lot of content to cover we will have Q&A sessions at the end of each section.

As one attendee put it:

"I recently loaded my data to YourTrees and have found it very useful in showing up mistakes/anomalies in my original. It offers reporting on some fields which are hard to get to on my desktop program. I thought I would let you know that it has already helped."

It is a member exclusive Zoom workshop and FREE.
Pre-booking required.

Book now



Getting to Know Your Army Ancestors

Thu 29 Feb 19:45 - 21:00

**Reading Branch meeting with talk by
Captain Graham Bandy**

Online

When researching your family history, one of the first questions you may have is “With which Regiment did my ancestor serve?” and sometimes the only clue is a battered old wartime photograph, a medal or a few pages from an old pay-book. This fascinating talk will provide you with some of the skills needed to study your old photographs and memorabilia in order to unlock the information they contain. Illustrated by a wide selection of military images and artefacts, this talk will take you through the basics of identifying uniforms, medals, regiments and rank accompanied by hints and tips for your own follow-up research.

Bring along some of your own photographs for the question and answer session. You never know what you may learn! If possible, so that answers can be found in advance of the night, please send an image (600dpi or more with no colourisation) along with your query to reading@berksfhs.org.uk

This meeting will be recorded.

Image: Medal created and awarded by the British Government in 1945, image created by Col André Kritzing, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons.

Free to members.

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

Pre-booking is required.

Book now



Reading Conservation Areas Walk

Fri 01 Mar 10:00 - 12:00

Walk Leader: Terry Dixon

**Meeting Point will be notified within
booking process**

Join guide, Terry Dixon, for this walk through three of Reading's conservation areas – The Mount, Redlands & Alexandra Road. The history of much of this area is inextricably tied up with the growth of Huntley and Palmers, in particular, in its heyday, and the growth overall of Reading in the Victorian period, accelerated by the coming of the railway. From farms to smart 'des-res' & so much more!

The walk will finish at the Museum of English Rural Life where you can stop for a biscuit and a drink if you so wish.

Please arrive 10 mins early for signing in and safety briefing etc.

Image: Andrew Smith / NHS Building, Erleigh Road, Reading /CC BY-SA 2.0 (cropped)

Tickets cost £5 (members £4).

Pre-booking is required because places are limited.

[Book now](#)



March Natter Group

Tue 05 Mar 18:45 for 19:00

Online

Join this discussion from your own 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](#)

A History of Wargrave

Thu 07 Mar 14:00 - 15:30

Talk by Peter Delaney



The Centre for Heritage & Family History

The village of Wargrave is on the Berkshire bank of the river Thames between Reading and Henley. The parish includes the hamlets of Crazies Hill and Hare Hatch.

Recorded in the Domesday Survey, the talk will look at people, places and events from over 900 years of its history. The story includes kings, queens and bishops, village benefactors, farmers and many others – some well-known, others less so. The impact of forward-thinking villagers, national events, and its growth in the 19th and 20th centuries will be illustrated with photographs from the last 150 years.

This is the last of three talks in the *Around Reading* Talks Series.

After the talk, tea/coffee and cake will be available (included in the price). Pre-booking is preferred, but you can pay on the door, if there are spaces available.

Ticket cost £5 (members £4)

Image: High Street, Wargrave, Berkshire by Oswald Bertram – Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 license

[Book now](#)



Education c.1860 – c.1914 Workshop

Sat 09 Mar 11:00 - 13:00

Tutor: Joan Dils

Online

Discover how the provision for education for our English ancestors was transformed between 1860 and the start of the First World War. After 1870, schools run by local elected boards (Board Schools) supplemented those founded by religious bodies; in turn in 1902, schools became council schools administered by local education

authorities (LEAs). Throughout the period, teacher training was improved, the school syllabus developed and pupil numbers increased until, in the 1890s, compulsory free schooling was provided for most children.

Tickets cost £10 (members £9).

Pre-booking is required because places are limited.

Book now



Coal Mining Ancestors Course

Mon 11 and Mon 18 Mar 19:00 - 21:00

Tutor: Richard Marks

Online

Coal was an important part of Britain's history and many families have some involvement in the industry but what did they do? What was it like to work in the Victorian collieries and how did it change in the 20th century? Who were the miners and how did they live and where? What role did the Miner's Unions play in the life of the collieries and what was the 'Miner's Welfare'? Where do you look for more information about the miners in your family ?

Find out more in this short two-week course with industry historian Richard Marks.

Two sessions: March 11th and 18th – both sessions 7 – 9pm.

Tickets cost £20 (members £18).

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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