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in touch

Berkshire Family History Society



Welford St Gregory Church with Welford Park in the background

Image courtesy of Catherine Sampson

Hi Paul

Our email newsletters are proving to be more popular than we could have imagined so we're looking to expand the tiny team that produces them. You'll find an appeal for help later.

We completed the marriages downloads two weeks ago so sadly there are no downloads for you this week but don't worry, the Projects & Publications team is busy preparing the baptisms downloads. They'll be here soon. Keep an eye out for announcements in this newsletter.

In the meantime we have the customary set of news articles and upcoming events to keep you occupied.

Can you help?



Would you like to help produce our newsletter?

We're looking for someone who could help us produce the bi-weekly events newsletter. For regular readers, that's not *"this one"* but *"the other one."*

Once a fortnight you'll be given a list of the week's featured events. You need to source the event data from the online Events system and compose the newsletter in MailChimp, before circulating it for approval. Then, on Sunday morning you get the pleasure of releasing it into the wild - to nearly 1,300 recipients!

Competent users of Microsoft Word or an equivalent will have relevant skills and we'll give training and support in using MailChimp. Everything is done online so it makes no difference where you're located (although for practical purposes a UK location is best)

We anticipate that it will require about 2-3 hours work every fortnight. The list of the featured events is usually available on the Wednesday prior to publication and the finished product goes out Sunday morning. But it's a team effort and we all work together to achieve the goal - so there's support.

If you're interested please email:

webmaster@berksfhs.org.uk

News



British Newspaper Archive - more Berkshire content

By mid-April there are over 42 million digitised pages in the British Newspaper Archive. And besides titles from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, there is a growing collection of publications from Southern Ireland too.

Additions this month include the ***Reading Standard*** (nearly 50,000 pages from 1891-95 and 1897-1961) and the ***Oxford Chronicle and Reading Gazette*** (for 1898).

From the pages of the *Aberdare Times* to the 120 issues of the *Young Woman*, many of your ancestors featured in the press during their lives and can be found somewhere within this collection of digitised newspapers and magazines.

[Go to the site](#)

From the Family Tree Magazine: The Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies (IHGS) 2021 Diamond Essay Competition

The IHGS has launched a family history-themed essay competition, in celebration of its Diamond Jubilee and entry is free! Read on to find out how telling your family story could land you a great prize.

[More information](#)



London Metropolitan Archives announce reopening

London Metropolitan Archives has announced that it is reopening on Monday 10 May for pre-booked visitors. Bookings opened on 21 April for the period 10 May to 29 July 2021.

Find out more at:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/london-metropolitan-archives>



SmartSearch the 1939 Register

The Genealogist has provided some new and valuable search options for the 1939 Register. Using the combination of its unique and powerful search tools and SmartSearch technology, you now have now flexible options when searching for your ancestors in this important resource.

Learn more at <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/1939-register>

You can now find your ancestors in this '1939 census' by using keywords (eg occupation or date of birth), by using an address, or even by forename.

Once you've found a family record in the Register, click on the street name to see the neighbours on that street, and perhaps find other relatives living nearby.

By using The Genealogists's SmartSearch facility, you can jump straight to an ancestor's birth, marriage or death record too.

Two further reminders.

- The 1939 Register lists people with their full dates of birth (so often better than an age in a census record or a GRO index reference).
- Do't forget, with The Centre for Heritage and Family History closed at present, **The Genealogist remains accessible to members who sign into the society website (under Info) - one more benefit of society membership!**



Events

Our events programme is exclusively online -
join us - wherever you are

May Natter Group

Discussion Group facilitated by: Chad Hanna and Gillian Stevens
04 May 18:45 for 19:00

Join in this online discussion from your own home, wherever where 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 members.

Prebooking Required

[Book now](#)



Education 1860-1914 - Workshop

Tutor: Joan Dils
8 May 11:00 - 13:00

In this workshop, discover how English education was transformed between about 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. 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.

The result enabled many of our ancestors to seek new and more varied employment opportunities that their forefathers could only have dreamed of.

Tickets cost £10 (members £9)

Pre-booking required

Book now

Jane Austen's School Days in Reading

Talk by: Joy Pibworth

08 May 15:00 - 16:15

This is the first of two talks, in celebration of the 900th anniversary of the founding of Reading Abbey by Henry I, focusing on aspects of the Abbey.



The first features the Abbey Gateway, home to the Ladies Boarding School which Jane Austen attended from 1785-6. With the help of contemporary sources we shall look at the buildings, daily routines, the teachers and the local environment Jane would have become familiar with (and possibly even muse on the echoes in her writing).

£4 members - £5 non-members. Pre-booking required.

Book now



My Ancestors came from Hampshire Talk and Newbury BAM

**Speaker: Les Mitchison
12 May 19:15 for 19:30**

Do you have ancestors in Hampshire? It's a large county. It has naval and shipping connections. Newbury is only a couple of miles from the Hampshire border, so it's not such a strange choice for our May meeting. We are holding our brief AGM before the talk.

Les Mitchinson is a Hampshire based course tutor with the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies, and is their Director of Training. He will describe the archives to visit and the records to use if you have Hampshire ancestors in your family tree.

Free to members. Non-members £3

Pre-booking required

Book now

Victim, Villain, Crime & Punishment Talk and Abingdon BAM

17 May 19:15 for 19:30

Our meeting this month is a chance to chat about our ancestor's and their connection with crime.

Where they the victims of crime or were they the villains. Were any of your ancestors transported? Come along and share your research stories.

But, perhaps you just want to seek some general research advice from fellow members or share a eureka moment. We are happy to go with the flow.



Before lock-down hit last year, our 'Show & Tell' Branch Meetings were steadily growing in popularity. These meetings are designed to be an informal opportunity to share.

Free to members. Non-members £3

Pre-booking required

Book now



Marriage Laws and Customs

Woodley Branch Meeting

Speaker: Chad Hanna

19 May 19:15 - 21:30

Around the world and throughout time.

Can you marry your first cousin? How do you get married in the USA? What about all those people who go overseas to marry? What happens to your Will when you get married? Why do some Spanish brides wear black when they marry? When are wedding photographs taken in Hong Kong? Why was "Hardwicke's" Marriage Act enacted in 1753.

All these questions and others will be answered in this talk.

Free to members. Non-members £3

Pre-booking required

Book now

These are just a few examples from our extensive

events programme....

[... click here for the full programme](#)

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



Berkshire Family History Society
for family history research - in Berkshire and beyond

The Centre for Heritage and Family History
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Registered Charity Number 283010

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