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Hertfordshire People

The Journal of Hertfordshire Family History Society



**No 177
June
2026**

SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS

Apart From our Monumental Inscriptions and Militia Lists books, did you know that Hertfordshire FHS has also produced several special publications? They have been produced over the years in a variety of formats, print, CD and flash drive.

- **Transported beyond the Seas** - criminals convicted in Hertfordshire who received transportation sentences to Australia 1784-1866.
- **Fleet Marriages of Hertfordshire People to 1754** - an alphabetical list of grooms and brides.
- **Hertfordshire Settlement Certificates**
- **Hertfordshire Removal Orders**
- **Hertfordshire Examinations**
- **Nonconformity in Hertfordshire**
- **Hertfordshire Places**
- **Hertfordshire Obituaries** - from *The Gentleman's Magazine*
- **Hertfordshire Burial Index (CD)**
- **1851 Hertfordshire Census (CD)**
- **Hertfordshire Militia Ballot Lists (CD)**
- **Hertfordshire Quarter Sessions 1585-1615 (CD)**
- **Herts Marriage Links 1538-1837 (CD)**
- **Hertfordshire Strays Index (CD)**
- **Herts Poor Law** - Settlements, Removals & Examinations books above (Flash Drive)

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Contents

Your emails, letters, comments and contributions for publication are welcome and should be sent to the Editor. Please quote your membership number if possible and include a stamped addressed envelope if you wish for items to be returned. Articles should not have been published elsewhere and where necessary copyright clearance must have been obtained for illustrations, quotations from books etc. The Editor reserves the right to edit contributions.

The views expressed in these pages are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Society.

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Journal deadlines: 31 December for the March edition, 31 March for the June edition; 30 June for the September edition and 30 September for the December edition.

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From the Editor

I do hope you enjoy reading this issue of *Hertfordshire People*.



This issue is the first one I have put together using a new Windows 11 computer and also a new program, Adobe InDesign, as Microsoft Publisher which I have used for many years is being phased out. Hopefully you will not see the join but I would be interested in what you think.

Since the last journal our new website is now 'live' which is an exciting development. Members will have been contacted with information on how to access the members area etc. There is still work to do with adding various features but we are on the right track. Prospective members can now join the society via the website and also there is a direct link to our GenFair page for buying publications. We are working towards adding Events so you can access our online talks direct from the website. It can only get better.

I am always happy to receive your articles, snippets and research queries. It is your contributions that make *Hertfordshire People* the great journal that it is.

Jane

LATEST NEWS! Important Updates!

1. Our AGM has been postponed until the afternoon of Saturday 27th June 2026. It will take place by Zoom prior to the Zoom talk about DNA.

2. We are missing some members! Please check that you have renewed your membership. As it says on our website: Annual membership of the Society represents great value for money – a whole year's worth of talks, journals and research help, all for less than the price of a coffee and a slice of cake. Message membership@hertsfhs.org.uk if you have any questions.

3. Our new website has arrived at www.hertsfhs.org.uk The same web address but it looks a bit different:



You have been sent a message about how to login as a member and check your details so we can continue to send you information, zoom links etc. That also provides access to the members area with recordings of talks and lots of other information. **Not seen a message about the website – check in spam.**

Queries, comments etc. Contact chair@hertsfhs.org.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Don't forget that Subscriptions were due at the beginning of March.

UK Individual - £13/£9; UK Family - £14/£10; Overseas (airmail) - £16/£10

If you haven't renewed yet, please send your remittance to me, the Membership Secretary at:

50 Chelwood Avenue
Hatfield
Hertfordshire AL10 0RE

or you can pay electronically, instructions below.

Sue Jackson
Membership Secretary

Renewing Membership by Internet Banking

If you have signed up with your bank for internet banking, please consider using it to renew your membership. To set up the Society as a payee three items are essential:

The Sort Code is 40-40-01

The Account Number is 72239752 (Business Account)

Name of Payee: Hertfordshire Family History Society

And you will need to quote a reference so that we know who has paid us. The reference should be in the form NNNN SURNAME, where NNNN is your membership number (to be found in the address label of your copy of Hertfordshire People) and SURNAME is as much of your surname as your bank's system will accept.

There is one trap for the unwary. Some banks allow you a one off payment without quoting a reference. Please do not let this happen to you.

And one reminder. If you have changed your postal address or your e-mail address, then let us know by e-mail to registrar@hertsfhs.org.uk

HFHS Online Query Sessions

These hour long sessions are designed to help with brick walls, give an opportunity to share your research stories and interesting sources you have used with other members and for members to get to know each other and the Committee. Our helpful members will be on hand to help you with any family history queries. The sessions are inclusive and welcoming to members and occasionally non-members too.

Information about joining will be sent out by the registrar and we will also publicise on social media. Query sessions start at 14.30pm (UK time) and last for about an hour, unless otherwise stated.

Dates for 2026

Saturday 11 July - online at 9.00am (for members in the Antipodes and UK early risers)

Saturday 10 October - online at 14.30pm

New Publications

Do keep an eye on our website for the announcement of any new publications and refer to the pink publications list on our website for a full list of publications available.

M.I. Vol 115 - Hockerill, All Saints - price £6

Ruston, Alan *Nonconformity in Hertfordshire*. revised edition - price £7

For online orders please visit our GenFair page

https://genfair.co.uk/search/?s_id=&pc_id=&county=&is_download=&q=hERTFORDSHIRE&sort=

To order these publications by post contact our Book Sales Officer

pub-orders@hertsfhs.org.uk

From the Chair

Recently we have been busy promoting our Society.



Our stall at the Really Useful Show on 18th April was very busy – see our flags against the wall (top left). We will be back again in 2028.

We chatted about family history as well as selling our publications, memberships and old books. Most of the latter came from tidying the large store that houses our publications and other accumulated material so that we can rent a smaller, cheaper storage space.



Many thanks to Elaine, who sends out the postal sales, for masterminding the spring clean and downsize.

One person we met at St Ives arrived at our busy help session on 2nd May to follow up some of his ancestors in the 17th century via parish records and in the 20th century using directories.

Our new flier is clearly visible on the table we use at Hertfordshire Archives. It was made and printed for distribution at St Ives by Sue Day and her son Ash, both of whom were involved with the organising and running of the St Ives event.

WE OFFER:

- Regular online talks with knowledgeable guest speakers
- Advice to help you find your ancestors in Hertfordshire or elsewhere using a wide range of Parish and historical records
- Regular advice sessions via Zoom and in person
- In-person meetings at Hoddeston
- Quarterly Members' Journal
- Participation in local research projects
- Society visits to places of historical interest in Hertfordshire
- A dedicated Members' Area on our website with access to additional publications, talks, and reports, some of which are not available anywhere else



Find us on:

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Hertfordshire
FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY



**WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU
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RESEARCH**

www.hertsfhs.org.uk

ABOUT US

Our Society was founded in 1977 and is run by volunteers who do their own research and who are keen to share their enthusiasm with others.

We hold quarterly research sessions at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS) where our team are on hand to guide you in your own research using the valuable resources held by HALS. See our website for details.

Whether you are researching your ancestors in Hertfordshire or elsewhere you are welcome to join our Society and enjoy all the benefits we can offer you.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
note two rates, i.e. Printed / Digital PDF:

- UK Individual £12 / £9
- UK Family £14 / £10
- Overseas (airmail) £16 / £10

Subscriptions run from 1st March to 28th February each year.

UK families receive one journal per household. Subscriptions only accepted in Sterling.

All subscriptions can be paid by credit card online using the website www.genfair.co.uk

More information available on our website.



We can offer guidance to help you find your ancestors' births, marriages and deaths in Parish Records.



OUR PUBLICATIONS INCLUDE

- over a hundred Monumental Inscription books from Hertfordshire churches
- research guides
- special publications focusing on subjects such as Poor Law Records, Militia Ballot Lists and Obituaries

All these have an emphasis on Hertfordshire, and are available to purchase from Genfair.
www.genfair.co.uk



Find out where and how your ancestors lived and worked from a range of archive sources.

Next Saturday Help Sessions:

11 Jul 2026 - Zoom group help (9-10 am for UK & Antipodes)

1 Aug 2026 - In person help at Herts Archives (10 – 12 noon)

10 Oct 2026 - Zoom group help (2.30 – 3.30pm for UK & America)

7 Nov 2026 - In person help at Herts Archives (10 – 12 noon)

AND our new website is now live and will continue to grow!

Save the date: **26 June 2027** for our 50th Birthday Event.

Felicity Brimblecombe
chair@hertsfhs.org.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

For details of in person and online events and lectures from The Society of Genealogists and Family History Societies and groups do check out the GENEVA website which is updated regularly.

geneva.weald.org.uk/doku.php

Captain Charles Ambrose McAvoy/McEvoy (8-1-1824 – 12-4-1905)

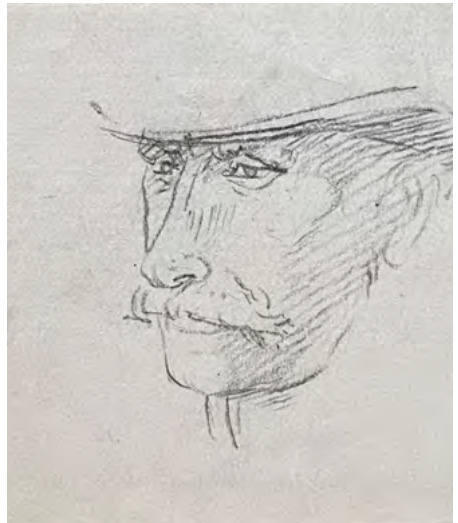
By Susan Leach

As with so many family stories handed down there is usually a grain of truth.

Charles Ambrose led a life which seemed fanciful.

To the best of my knowledge this is the truth of it. I have copied evidence in the form of birth, marriage and death certificates, papers signed by General Robert E. Lee and requisition slips for goods.

Charles was not born in Hertfordshire, but in Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland of Catholic, Irish parents. Sarah and Daniel had travelled there from Belfast in 1822 as Sarah was five months pregnant with Charles' older brother, Hugh. Charles was born there in January 1824 when life was getting harder for the growing family. But that's another story.



However, Charles ended his days in Codicote, near Hitchin, where he lived with his wife Jenny and son, Charles Alfred **McEvoy** and his wife, Gwendoline, in the Mill House which they rented. Charles Snr. had been a well-respected engineer whose *forte* was the safety in firing weaponry, specifically torpedoes. He fought in the American



(C) <http://codicotelocalhistorysociety.co.uk/>

Civil War first for the Virginia Militia, then the Confederate Army from whence he was seconded to the Confederate Navy.

His is a complicated story. He was a pacifist by nature, a gentle man and gentleman. He taught dancing in Richmond, Virginia US before the Civil War. 1861 – 1865.

He had run away from home in Baltimore when he was 16, stowed away on a small ship bound for Cuba (so far unnamed) which sadly sank off Cape Henry in a treacherous stretch of water in Chesapeake Bay.

As far as I can tell, at this time he was still a British Citizen by nationality but due to the fact that he was rescued by a Southern Merchant from Richmond, Virginia, he fought for the South, declaring that he had been born in Virginia.

He met with Dr. **Whistler** during this time and became friends with him. The story goes that this was during the capture of

John **Brown** but has yet to be corroborated. Considering the other things that happened to him, it might well be true.

He was captured in Richmond in 1865, imprisoned but to escape he signed Allegiance to the Union.

Once freed he fled to England, once more declaring his birth in censuses as Glasgow, Lanarkshire.

I do know that the friendship with Dr. Whistler was a lasting one, one which assisted Charles's escape from America, as companion to Dr. Whistler on the *SS Edinburgh* bound for Liverpool.

Once back in England he applied to the Royal Navy to teach their men about torpedoes, firearms and naval warfare as he had had much experience during the Civil War when he had developed fuses so that submersibles which planted the charges could delay the explosions until they had left the area, among other things. (Development had sadly caused several deaths of the sub-mariners until the correct fuses were developed by him. The 'Little David' submersibles are well documented online but I cannot reproduce the information due to copyright)

He successfully followed this career, still developing and patenting ideas. During this time he met Jenny **Huggins** from Althorne, Wiltshire. Married her and had two sons, Arthur Ambrose and Charles Alfred.

Charles Jnr. was a playwright who became friends with George Bernard **Shaw**, mostly because he pestered him to frustration when he was writing his early plays. Thus, when Charles Snr. retired he went to live with Charles and Gwen at the Mill House which they rented. Charles Snr. had had chronic disease of the tongue which, eventually led to his death on 8th April 1905.

Glossitis can be cured easily now with antibiotics.

He was buried in an unmarked grave (one of three) in the graveyard at Ayot St. Lawrence, a year before George Bernard Shaw moved there, so, I believe it is coincidental that he is there. It may be that they had all met at the Mill House on occasion, it is not that far from London – who knows?

The search for information continues...

My thanks to Maurice Rigby who supplied much of the information from America through his research into Civil War Veterans.

Notes:

The Confederate Veteran states that Ambrose McEvoy, once of Virginia, was the celebrated inventor of submarine mines, and who manufactured many explosives for the Confederate Navy. The writer of the notice, a Mr Hayden Church, goes on to remark that Ambrose McEvoy died in Europe in 1905 and that "It would be a tragical thing if America knew how her old veterans are living and dying all over Europe". Mr McEvoy had the wolf more than once approach his door.

(The original text of this article appeared as 'Charles Ambrose McEvoy, Inventor' in *Crossfire*, the magazine of the ACWRT (UK) no. 55 - December 1997)

Researched by Maurice Rigby 1997 and 2001.

Inbox

Buckingham of Ickleford and the Gatward connection

As my paternal ancestry dates back hundreds of years, predominantly in Ickleford, it has been a little disappointing to see no mention of the **Buckingham** family, albeit they weren't renowned, but a working class family of artisans. I believe I have traced them back to Adam Buckingham born circa 1614 in Ickleford, but there are a number of Johns in the line, which is confusing, but I'm confident my research is authenticated to John Buckingham (1771). Visiting the Hertfordshire Archives and time with an archivist provided no further information than I already had. I would, therefore, be grateful if anyone has any information about the Buckingham family or to receive any information from past issues of *Hertfordshire People*. Then, in the December issue, I read the article on the **Gatward** family and I found a connection, however slight.

My three times great-grandfather (1821-1887) was George Buckingham, who married Ann **Cooper** (1822) at St Mary's, Hitchin on 15.2.1844. Ann was a dressmaker from Leighton Buzzard, George a wood turner. They had five children: Thomas (1845), Mary Ann (1846), Elizabeth (Eliza) (1847), Helen (1852) and Jane (1853). After Ann died, George married Catherine **Burroughs** (1837-1864) in 1858. He married again on New Year's Eve 1864 at Hitchin Registry. His third wife was Fanny **Marslin**.

My connection, however, is with Eliza.

In 1861 Eliza was thirteen, working as a nursemaid at the *Swan* Inn, Luton for John **Lines**, blacksmith and publican, his wife

Martha and their three-month- old daughter, Martha E.

In 1866 Eliza's illegitimate son, Walter, was born at the Hitchin workhouse. There is no mention of his father. Walter, my great-grandfather, resided with George and Fanny so Eliza could work and George taught him the skills of a woodturner.

In the 1871 census Eliza is seen as a servant to Willson **Gatward**, presumably Cornelius Willson, clock and watchmaker at the Market Place, Hitchin. Eliza married in 1873. Her husband, widowed cabinet maker John **Russell** (1835), moved the family to Paddington.

Linda (Buckingham) Pattison

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X

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Mastodon

@Herts_FHS@genealoysis.social

Do follow these accounts to keep in touch with HFHS Talks programme, open to all, and posts relevant to local and family history with an emphasis on Hertfordshire. You can post queries on Facebook too!

Written In Stone: Close in Life and Near in Death

By Simon Goodwin

Originally published in the Flamstead Parish Magazine

Just outside of the south-eastern corner of Flamstead Church stand two gravestones, one in front of the other, that are as close together in death as they would have been in life, they bear the quite simple inscriptions



"Charles Henry **Garden** departed this life March 1st 1853 aged 5 months"

and

"John Larkins **Garden** Incumbent of this Parish who departed this life January 1st 1858 aged 48"

John Larkins **Green** was born in Kennington, Surrey on the 31st May 1809, the son of Henry and Harriet Garden and was baptised on the 2nd

March 1810 at St Mary's Church, Lambeth, London.

In October 1829 John began studying for a degree at Peterhouse College, part of the University of Cambridge. Peterhouse has always been the oldest of the colleges that make up the University (having been set up by Hugh **de Balsham**, Bishop of Ely, in 1284). John successfully completed his Bachelors degree in 1833 and followed that up by completing a Masters Degree three years later.

Having completed his studies John took up his first role as a Rector in Fairfield, Kent, in 1840. His responsibilities grew when, just five years later in 1845, he was given an additional role as Curate in Gillingham. It must be assumed that it was during these years that he must have met, Ann, his wife to be.

On the 20th December 1849 John married Ann **Bathurst** in Faversham, Kent and pretty soon thereafter he took up the role of Rector in Flamstead. In 1851 the Census tells us that the family were living at Cheverells, Flamstead and comprised of John, Ann and their one month old son Frederick, along with Ann's sister, Eliza Bathurst, and two servants Ann **Heritage** (cook) and Mary **Henderson** (housemaid). John stated his occupation to be that of Perpetual Curate of Flamstead.

While living in Flamstead John and Ann had a further three children ... Charles Henry (christened on the 14th November 1852), Harriet Anne (christened on the 3rd October 1854) and Eleanor (christened on the 12th October 1856). Sadly, Charles Henry died on the 1st March 1853, aged just five months old.

John died on the 1st January 1858 and was buried, a week later, in Flamstead Churchyard next to the grave of his infant son Charles.

Upon John's death his effects (in total worth less than £50) were paid, rather surprisingly, to his sister Harriet **Larkin Samson Ramsden** (wife of John George Ramsden, Surgeon) rather than to his widowed wife.

In his book "*A New History Of Flamstead*" Eric Edwards highlights that as John was an ordained Priest then he would have most likely been laid in church in the run up to his funeral and he might be buried (unlike most others in the Churchyard) facing West rather than East. This is because of the long standing belief

in the Church that come the day of the Final Judgement, when all the dead will rise up and greet Jesus in the East, then the Priests will rise up facing the congregation they have attended to in life to lead them.

Looking at the two headstones today, side by side, it is difficult not to consider how close the two were in life and are in death. This is especially true when you see the almost identical nature of their memorial crosses and, more importantly, the fact that John decided to lay facing the same direction as his son.

Three years later, in 1861, Ann and her three surviving children (aged between four and ten) had left the village and, were living at a house on Maidstone Road, Cranbrook, Kent.



From 'The Gentleman's Magazine'.....

July 1786

I have wondered at not seeing in any of the papers an account of a remarkable wind in this neighbourhood on the last day of July about 6 o'clock in the evening. Its effects were most conspicuous in Sacombe Park, the seat of Timothy **Caswall**, Esq., where many very large trees were almost instantaneously torn up by the roots, many others snapped in two, and carried to a considerable distance from where they had been standing in perfect security for some centuries. The blast came in a northwest direction, and defied all opposition. The wall of Mr Caswall's kitchen garden, though stout enough in appearance to withstand a storm of cannon balls, fell before it; a man at work on it concluded the end of the world was come, and for once (it is hoped) was wise enough to apply to him, who "rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm".

12 June 1795

This afternoon, between three and four o'clock, the most tremendous storm was felt near Hatfield Broad Oak and Sawbridgeworth, ever known in those parts. The storm commenced at Hatfield town, and took direction of more than three miles over the heath, extending about three quarters of a mile wide, and hurled destruction in its course. Whole fields of wheat, &c., &c. are totally cut to pieces, and the damage to many individual farmers is very considerable. The hail-stones, or pieces of ice, measured four inches over, and drove in such torments as to be in many places of five feet deep, and were several days in melting away.



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Research Hints

Using DNA data from Family Members

As long as you have the time to process all the data it is both useful and intriguing to have DNA data from several relatives.



My brother's DNA has helped with our Buckinghamshire maternal ancestors such as those connected to our 3rd great grandfather, the Bassoon player in the painting of *A Village Choir* by Thomas **Webster** in the Victoria and Albert Museum (1847, Bow Brickhill).

But we are still stuck on our maternal **Jackson, Webb** and **Williams** mob in the Midlands at the start of the 19th century. They were very inconsiderate and did not stay alive long enough to state in 1851 where they lived before moving to Birmingham. I need to ask a maternal cousin to provide their DNA but not the one who refers to my hobby as 'I don't do dead people!'

My dad began researching in the 1970s and he would be delighted that he is still helping as he provided his DNA 6 years ago when he was almost a 100.

I have just gained the DNA results for the son of my dad's brother. That hasn't helped with my **Brown** theatrical ancestors as mentioned in an earlier *Hertfordshire People*, but he has much better data for our elusive **Dellow/Deller** ancestors in Albury which might help untangle them from muddled trees on Ancestry.

Very recently, up popped another set of DNA results for Will, the grandson of my dad's sister. It was nice to contact him and have someone to chat to about our paternal ancestors and ask him to invite me to use his results. Using both sets of data, I looked at our shared matches. As expected, our matches were almost all to my paternal side. BUT one 55cM match was to my maternal side! Will has the same match at 21cM.

As typically occurs on Ancestry they didn't have a tree, but they did have a shared match to another person with whom Will and I match at 10 and 34cM. That person had a tree extending back to a family of blacksmiths called **Hall** in Kensworth.

Having just read Alan Ruston's recent article that mentioned the small village of Kensworth as a 'focal point' of early Nonconformity in the 17th century (page 11, *HP* 176, March 2026), I wondered how easy it might be to find a connection.

Hertfordshire Names Online provided details of a possible marriage:

Thomas Hall	Mary Scot	Kensworth	marriage register	22 Aug 1763
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The extensive coverage of Hertfordshire Church of England records in Find my Past provided the image of the marriage. Thomas probably died in 1798 as that is the only burial of a Thomas **Hall** in Kensworth during the period of 1825 +/- 40 years.

Record Set	Category	Subcategory	No. of Records
Hertfordshire Baptisms	Birth, Marriage, Death & Parish Records	Parish Baptisms	919,234
Hertfordshire Burials	Birth, Marriage, Death & Parish Records	Parish Burials	688,951
Hertfordshire Banns & Marriages	Birth, Marriage, Death & Parish Records	Parish Marriages	535,673
Hertfordshire, Parish Registers Browse, 1538-1988	Birth, Marriage, Death & Parish Records	Parish Registers	132,034
Hertfordshire Probate Records, Index, 1415-1858	Birth, Marriage, Death & Parish Records	Wills & Probate	27,631

Thomas and Mary had 2 sons, Thomas Hall in 1765 and James Hall in 1777, both blacksmiths. Thomas Hall 1765 had a descendant who married into my **Garratt** family. James Hall 1777 connects to Will's ancestors.

How common are marriages connecting different branches of families?

As the historic population was not enormous, we can't all have the 2 million distinct ancestors that are predicted mathematically in 20 generations. Many of our distant cousins must have married. As our trees grow then there is often a marriage between cousins on either one's maternal or paternal line. Not often found are recent connections between one's maternal and paternal lines especial with a 55cM match!

More Information about using your DNA results will be available in a Hertfordshire Family History Society talk on 27 June 2026.

Best wishes for your research in 2026

Felicity
chair@hertsfhs.org.uk

Quick and Dirty Trees

Using trees is a vital component of working out how a DNA match is related to you, but what happens if they only have limited information? Our speaker will explain what a quick and dirty tree is, how to create one and what they mean for your DNA match list. Focusing on where to find information about your match and some tips and tricks for success.

Saturday 27 June 2026

at 2.30pm

Speaker: Karen Evans

After completing a history degree Karen taught in primary schools before retirement. She has written two 'Grim Almanacs' for the History Press and now writes for *Family Tree Magazine* on all things genealogical.



A Village Life: Florence Eleanor Sparkes 1891-1988

By Sue Konrad

The first part of this article appeared in Hertfordshire People, No 176, March 2026.

A Change of Scene

Herbert George **Butler** 1894 – 1987 (known as George)

George Butler was born on 6th December 1894 in Somerset. In 1913, aged 19, he joined the Dragoon Guards and went to France at the start of the 1914-18 war. He was wounded three times, and was awarded the Mons Star. On leaving the army, he returned to his home in Somerset and lived with his parents in South Cheriton. At some point he met and fell in love with Nell. They were married on 6th June 1927 at Layston Parish Church, Buntingford. Nell was 36 and George was 33. George's father was a Platelayer and Nell's father was deceased. The witnesses were: Ernest John **Sparkes** and Roland Charles **Sparkes** (both brother's of the bride). The reception was held at Nell's brother's pub – *The Sailors* in Buntingford.

In the marriage certificate it states that George resided at Northend, Warwickshire and Nell resided in Buntingford. George worked as a groom and had moved from Hertfordshire to Warwickshire



in 1927 when his employers bought The Manor House in Northend. George and Nell set up their first home in a tied cottage (Manor Cottage) on the road leading into the village.

George bought a Singer car with “dickey” seats which Ruby and Hazel sat in when they travelled down to Hunsdon for holidays. Traffic was much less then and although the roads were not as good, the journey didn’t take too long. They would stop at the side of the road and eat sandwiches on the way.

Whilst living at Manor Cottage Nell became involved in village life and especially with the circle of villagers who were raising funds to build a village hall and reading room. Rehearsals for plays and concerts were held in their home in Manor Cottage as Nell had a piano (probably bought for Ruby to learn to play, but she was not very good at it and didn’t learn to play it). The actual events were performed in the village school and the funds raised helped to build the village hall in 1934.

As previously mentioned, village life was very contained, and Nell continued to make fancy dress outfits for the plays and fetes held in the village school at which both of Nell’s daughters – Ruby and Hazel – attended. Ruby left school when she was 14 (1928) to be a nursemaid to two children living in a house on the Burton Dassett hills to the south of the village. Both Ruby and Hazel met and married spouses who also lived in the village of Northend.

Ruby married Harry Denis **Freeman** in October 1933 and Ruby gave birth to the first of Nell’s grandchildren – Alma Rosemary Freeman - in May 1934. Ruby’s second child – Denis Roland Freeman – was born in May 1935.

In June / July 1935, Nell’s mother Emma came to stay with her for a few days in Manor Cottage but unfortunately was taken

ill and died on 3rd July aged 87 years. Her body was returned to Hertfordshire and she was buried with her husband John Sparkes in Brent Pelham on 6th July 1935.

Nell's second daughter – Hazel – actually met her future husband – Frederick **Jeffs** – at Northend school, they were the same age. They married when they were both 23 in April 1939 at All Saints Church, Burton Dassett. Fred was a baker and Hazel was a second housemaid at a large house in Kineton. They set up their first home in a rented flat in Leamington. However, by this time the owners of the Manor in Northend had sold the property and moved away, so George and Nell moved to a rented house in Church St., Gaydon, approximately 2 miles away from Northend and this is where they lived for many years, George working as a grounds man at Gaydon Aerodrome.

In September 1939 WW2 started and Nell's son-in-law Fred enlisted in the Royal Army Service Corps. Following his training he was stationed for most of the war in North Africa and Hazel, being pregnant, moved to live with her parents at Gaydon. Nell's third grandchild – Anne Stephanie Hazel Jeffs – was born on 1st March 1940. Both Hazel and her daughter lived with Nell and George throughout WW2 until 1945 when Fred came home from the army when they moved away to Balsall Common where Fred returned to the baking trade.

Nell's other son-in-law – Harry – was a platelayer for the railway and was exempt from service. Unfortunately, unknown to everyone he had a bad heart and in July 1944 he suffered a serious heart attack at work and died two days later. Ruby had two small children, but the family, both in Warwickshire and Hertfordshire, were very supportive as were the local villagers and a house was found for her to rent back in Northend.

Gaydon Village Life

Life for Nell continued quite happily with John, her fourth grandchild arriving in April 1946 and her fifth grandchild Susan arriving in July 1948. Nell was able to see her grandchildren regularly as both Northend and Balsall Common were commutable by bus. The military army camp near Northend was a large employer in the area, as was the RAF aerodrome near Gaydon and Nell found employment at the aerodrome working for the NAFPI. Both her daughter Ruby and granddaughter Alma were employed at the Army camp near Northend where Alma met and fell in love with a soldier whom she married at All Saints Church Burton Dassett in Dec 1957.

Unfortunately during 1955, Nell's daughter, Hazel, started to suffer some disturbing symptoms and following extensive investigations it was discovered that she had Motor Neurone Disease (MND). This is a progressively debilitating disease and Nell started to travel to Balsall Common every weekend to help Hazel cope with things. Hazel's health slowly deteriorated over 3-4 years and she eventually sadly died in December 1958 just following the birth of Nell's first great grandchild – Stephen – in early December the same year; a bitter/sweet time for Nell.

Nell and George continued to live at Gaydon and enjoyed close family ties with both Ruby and Denis in Northend; Alma and her growing family in Colchester; Fred and the three children in Balsall Common and also her many sisters and brothers, most of whom remained in the Hertfordshire area and with whom many holidays were spent.

George and Nell had a big garden and plenty of room in their house in Gaydon and lots of family visited regularly. George grew many vegetables and made homemade wine, which the visitors enjoyed perhaps on occasions rather too much!

In 1962 Nell took on the care of her eldest brother Harry in his final years, and did the same for her sister Lill in 1964.

Village life continued relatively happily and George and Nell lived without television and with no bathroom and an outside loo for many years. In 1977 they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary and the event was marked by the villagers at the same time as HM Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee.

Their daughter Ruby eventually retired in 1979 and, in 1983, with the onset of old age and George's ill health, they decided to give up their home in Gaydon and returned to Northend to live with their daughter Ruby. They again joined in with village life, Nell joining the "over 60s" club and the Women's Institute.

Unfortunately George by this time was becoming immobile and needed a wheelchair. His health deteriorated and he eventually died in May 1987 aged 92. He was buried in All Saints Church, on Burton Dassett hills.

Nell died at 11.30am on 22nd July 1988 aged 97 at Warwick Hospital. She died of 1) Myocardial Infarction, 2) Congestive Cardiac Failure, 3) Ischemic Heart Disease, 4) Diverticular Disease of the Colon. Her funeral took place at 2pm on 29th July 1988 and she is buried in the same grave as her husband George in Burton Dassett churchyard on the hills.

Things I remember about my Grandmother Nell:

- She was a strong and capable woman but very thoughtful and loving.
- No television so evenings spent listening to the radio and writing many letters.

- A drink of hot Bovril for elevenses and a last night drink of homemade wine.
- The smell of preparing carrots and other fresh vegetables in the “scullery”.
- Cooking the most gorgeous Yorkshire Pudding without weighing the ingredients.
- Hot water bottles in the bed – magic!
- If she could not visit us then she would send, through the post, comics and sweets every week so that they arrived on Saturday morning. And there would always be fireworks for 5th November (her birthday).

Siblings in birth order and brief history...

Henry Alfred (Harry) Sparkes 1872-1962 (aged 90). Harry was a Coachman/Chauffeur. He married Flo in 1901 and they had two children and lived in Essex. All predeceased Harry and in his old age Harry came to live with Nell and her husband George in Warwickshire.

Dorothy Sparkes 1875-1942 (aged 67). Dorothy married Kennard W **Kent** in 1897 and they had three children. In later life Dorothy and Kennard lived with their eldest daughter in Buntingford.

Lily Rose Sparkes 1876-1964 (aged 87). Lily never married and worked in several large households as a cook. During the war she had two evacuees who lived with her and maintained contact with her as they grew up and had families. In her old age she moved from her home in Bennington to live with Nell and George in Warwickshire where she died. She was buried back at Hunsdon where she grew up.

Sarah Jane (Jennie) Sparkes 1877-1943 (aged 65). Jennie married Arthur G **Stacey** in 1898 and they had one daughter and lived in Saffron Walden.

Edith May Sparkes (May) 1879-1953 (aged 73). May married Charles **Humphrey** in 1900 and they had three daughters. They lived in Hornchurch, Essex.

Ernest John Aylott Sparkes (John) 1881-1950 (aged 67). John was first married to Gertrude who died in 1927. He then married Winifred and they had two children, their son Alan immigrated to the USA. John ran *The Sailors* pub in Buntingford; he was also a carpenter, a coal merchant and had a fleet of coaches.

William James Sparkes (Will) 1884-1951 (aged 65). Will immigrated to Australia in 1912. He left two children in the UK and had a further two daughters in Australia. He maintained contact with Nell until he died.



Ronald Charles Sparkes (Ron) 1885-1963 (aged 78). Ron married Maud in 1919 and they had three children. He was a blacksmith and they lived in Buntingford and then later in Hertford.

Frances Annie Sparkes 1886-1958 (aged 72). Frances was a Housekeeper at Haden Hill House near Hunsdon for many years. She married Alfred (Pip) **Bradley** quite late in life in 1931. Her husband had two children by his first marriage. She was very close to Nell.

Frederick Orson Sparkes 1887-1970 (aged 82). Fred married Lily **Ainsworth** in 1912 and they had 8 children and lived in London.



OBITUARY

Shirley Staniforth

Shirley was born and grew up in north London, where she lived until her husband died in the mid 1980s. Then, with her two children Vincent and Donna, she moved to Woolmer Green where she became involved in many local activities such as the Brownies, becoming a Brown Owl and working with the gardening club.

When the Herts. FHS moved to hold our monthly meetings in Woolmer Green village hall in the early 2000s Shirley came along to see if she could find out more about her birth name of **Wilsher** (she soon found that this name has many variations).

Shirley soon became involved helping out. She served on the Committee for several years and managed the journals that came in from other FH Societies, taking them home each month keeping them sorted and making notes of which members had borrowed a journal. She could also be found serving refreshments when we had an invitation meeting.

I remember her as one of the participants in our Monumental Inscription recording days in various parties of the county.

On several occasions she volunteered to go to open days put on by other Societies and sell our publications, or advise people about our activities.

She had a stroke in April and was in hospital for a couple of weeks before she died. Her funeral was on 5th May.

Janet Pearson

What's new at Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies?

HALS on the move ... new opening hours

A reminder that to accommodate the work needed to prepare for the move to the Hertford Fire Station site, HALS is no longer open on Friday mornings and open only on the first Saturday of each month (by appointment) but no longer the third Saturday. All other HALS services continue as usual from the County Hall site.

Hertfordshire Hearth Tax digital launch

HALS recently hosted the launch of the digital edition of the Hertfordshire Hearth Tax. Records of this important 17th century property tax, which was based on the number of hearths present in every household, can now be found online for Hertfordshire. Search for 'Hearth Tax' on the website of the University of Roehampton (roehampton.ac.uk).

Events at HALS

Getting started at HALS - a guide to researching resources at HALS

Tuesday, 7 July, 11:00am – 12.00pm.

Wednesday, 9 September, 2:00pm – 3.00pm.

Thursday, 12 November, 11:00am – 12pm.

Free event; booking essential

Contact details for HALS

Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies,
Register Office Block,
CHR 002,
County Hall,
Pegs Lane,
Hertford, SG13 8EJ.

Tel: 0300 123 4049 (ask for Local Studies)
Email: hals.enquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk
website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hals

You can follow HALS on Facebook.

HALS opening hours (recently revised)

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9am – 5pm
	First Tuesday evening of the month only, 5pm - 7:30pm, and only by appointment
Wednesday	9am – 5pm
Thursday	9am – 5pm
Friday	Closed
Saturday	10am – 2pm
	First Saturdays of the month and only by appointment
Sunday	Closed

Please be aware that there are no longer any facilities for buying hot drinks or snacks at HALS. You are advised to take your own refreshments which can be consumed in the foyer. It is a ten minute walk into Hertford with quite a climb back up.

Useful links

www.findmypast.co.uk Hertfordshire parish registers, school logbooks, historic newspapers & the 1939 National Register searchable online (subscription site, free to use at HALS and Hertfordshire libraries)

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> Images of local newspapers from across the county including several Hertfordshire titles (subscription site, free to use at HALS and Hertfordshire libraries)

www.thegenealogist.co.uk Hertfordshire tithe maps and apportionments searchable online (subscription site)

www.workhouses.org.uk the story of the workhouse with information about workhouses in Hertfordshire and across the country

www.hertfordshire-genealogy.co.uk Genealogy in Hertfordshire

www.hertsmemories.org.uk history, memories and photos of Hertfordshire

www.halh.org.uk Hertfordshire Association for Local History, with links to local history societies' websites. Details of free online local history talks can be found on the home page.

www.hertspastpolicing.org.uk Herts Past Policing: crime and policing in Hertfordshire through the ages

www.hertsatwar.co.uk Community led project to commemorate the diverse experiences of Hertfordshire during WW1

www.prisonhistory.org Database of prisons, prison records and lock-ups in England, searchable by county

maps.nls.uk/os Historic Ordnance Survey maps, including of Hertfordshire, at the National Library of Scotland

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk The National Archives (TNA) Entrance to The National Archives at Kew is free and there is no need to book although visitors are encouraged to do so and to order documents in advance. A reader's card is required to view original documents and this can be ordered online. More on the website. At the time of writing, downloadable files were still available at no charge (usually £3.50). These include PCC wills, navy and marine records, New Poor Law correspondence (Bishops Stortford Poor Law Union only for Herts) and certain deeds.



Really Useful Bulletin - The Federation's Newsletter

<https://www.familyhistoryfederation.com>

Visit the website for articles on a wide range of research topics - click on Explore Your Genealogy. Whether you are a beginner, or a more experienced researcher you will find articles of interest and links to societies and organisations that are Federation members and also access back numbers of the Bulletin. To receive the next edition of the FHF Really Useful Bulletin subscribe at:

<https://familyhistoryfederation/#contactlink>

Society Talks

February 2026

Researching your Rural Ancestors presented by
Clare O'Grady

Our speaker gave a comprehensive presentation on the types of records where you can find information about your rural ancestors, and to be honest if your family came from Hertfordshire you may well have a proportion of them who were 'sons of the soil'. She also provided a very useful handout which is in the members area.

March 2026

William Schaw Lindsay: Victorian Entrepreneur
presented by Bill Lindsay

The amazing life of William Schaw **Lindsay** 'from cabin boy to shipping magnate' was expertly regaled by our speaker.

He told us of the unpublished Diaries and Papers of William Schaw Lindsay that were discovered in a trunk by a family member and which were subsequently sold to the National Maritime Museum in the 1980s for £20,000. Our speaker has studied these archives in depth and took over 6 years in transcribing them.

William Schaw Lindsay was born in 1815 in Glasgow and ran away to sea at the early age of 16. By the time he was 25 he was a Captain of an ocean going vessel. He married Helen **Stewart** in November 1843, and the family soon after moved to London.

By 1854 he owned 22 ocean-going ships and chartered a further 700 *per annum*. He supplied coal from Northumberland rather than Wales and had dealings with The West India Steam Packet Co. and P & O Steamers.

His son, William Stewart Lindsay was born in 1849. His ship, *W.S. Lindsay*, was built in 1852 and was the same sort of size as the *Cutty Sark* - see below.



The 1850s saw him enter politics for the first time, electioneering in Monmouth and Dartmouth in 1852 and being elected by 17 votes as MP for Tynemouth in 1854. This coincided with the Crimean War 1853-1856 where his ships were used as auxiliary and transport ships. By the 1860s the American Civil War was at its height and Lindsay was on a lecture tour of America on Navigation at this time. He was a savvy businessman, for example his ships took out railway track and brought back cotton to sell on. He was aware of the Industrial North and the Agricultural South and the fact that the Southern States taxed more than the North. Lindsay backed the case of the Confederates but was essentially a free trader. Lindsay was involved in the efforts to build a Confederate Navy - the \$60,000 needed was raised by Lindsay and his contacts

When in England Lindsay lived at Shepperton Manor on the River Thames. He eventually sold his company and semi retired.

On 9 December 1864, five days before his 49th birthday he suffered a stroke / heart attack which left him with limited mobility. Undaunted, he turned to research and wrote his four volume *History of Merchant Shipping*

When 'the old boy' died in 1877 at the age of 61 he was a very wealthy man but what happened to his money? His son and grandson lived the highlife and frittered it all away.

The speaker is now the proud owner of a portrait of William Schaw Lindsay, his ancestor.

Apart from the archive material our speaker also highlighted many other sources that he used to verify what had been written in the Diaries and Papers, his biography and also his anecdotes and reflections on

the famous people he had met in his life, from Charles **Dickens** to James **Buchanan** and Abraham **Lincoln**.

He also highlighted the Lloyds Register Foundation online resource for anyone with merchant shipping ancestors.

<https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk/archives-library/lloyds-register-of-ships-online>



A Hertfordshire Heraldic Miscellany

By John J. Tunesi of Liongam

74) The Grant of Arms of Wittewronge, of Rothamsted in the County of Hertfordshire

This paper is a study of the grant of arms made to Sir John **Wittewronge**¹, (born 1st November 1618 died 23rd June 1693) of Rothamsted Manor, Harpenden in the County of Hertfordshire in the year 1648.

Sir John's grandfather was Jacques Wittewronge (born 1531 died 1594/94), sometime councillor² of Ghent, an émigré from Flanders during the mid-16th Century came to England when troubles were afoot against Protestants in the Netherlands in 1564. At that time, he was accompanied by his wife, Maria **Everdey** (who was living in 1594)

¹ Also spelt as 'Wittewronghele', 'Wittewrongle' or 'Wittewrong'.

² Counsellor in this context means a lawyer. Jacques is stated as pursuing the profession of being a public notary in the City of London.



(c) HALS

and his second son, Jacob³ (born 15th January 1558 died 5th July 1622). Jacques and Maria's eldest son, Abraham **Wittewronghele**, also of Ghent later joined his father and brother in the City of London. It is known that Jacob settled at West Ham in the County of Essex and that he married twice⁴. Jacob's second wife was Anna **Vanacker**⁵ (died 7th January 1646/47), she was a daughter and co-heiress of Garrard

3 Also known as 'James'.

4 Jacob's first wife was Susanna Tielman, the dates of their marriage are not presently known, either is the exact date of Susanna's death. She is stated as being a daughter and co-heiress of Bernard Tielmand. Her family is to have been of German extraction.

5 Also spelt as 'Van Acker'. It is also be noted that after Jacob's death 1622, she married secondly, Sir Thomas Myddleton (born 1550 died 12th August 1631), of The Bear, Tower Street in the City of London, Stansted Montfichet, Co. Essex and Chirk Castle, Co. Denbighshire. Sir Thomas amongst other officers served as the Lord Mayor of London for the year 1613. Upon Anna marriage to Sir Thomas, she became his fourth wife and therefore he became stepfather to John to whom he bequeathed estates in Co. Montgomeryshire and Co. Denbighshire.

Vanacker, of Antwerp. She was the mother of Sir John Wittewronge.

Jacob was a Spanish subject given that the Spanish Netherlands were in personal union with the Hapsburgs of Spain although not under control of the Spanish crown. He became a denizen of England on the 20th May 1582. Once settled in the City of London, the Wittewronges took up the trade of brewers which was undoubtedly a skill they had brought with them from the Low Countries which allowed them to amass the wherewithal to eventually translate themselves from City brewers to landed gentry in Hertfordshire. At least two of the daughters of Jacob and Abraham married brewers, which further consolidates a connection with the trade that was highly regulated by the Worshipful Company of Brewers in the City of London.

Rothamsted Manor was acquired by Sir John's mother Anna from Edmund **Bardolph** in 1623 after the family had

leased the estate from 1611. They retained the house and its surrounding demesne until the death of Sir John's great great grandson, Thomas Wittewronge in 1763.

As mentioned above Sir John was born in November 1618. Through the wealth acquired by the family through their brewing and other interests, he lived the life of a country gentleman. He was knighted in 1640 and perversely served within the Parliamentary Army during the War of the Three Kingdoms as the Colonel of the Orange Auxiliary Regiment within the Hertfordshire Trained Bands. He later served as the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire for the year 1646 - 47 as well as the High Sheriff of Montgomeryshire for the year 1664 - 65. This last appointment was in consequence of Welsh connection through his stepfather, Sir Thomas **Myddleton**. Sir John also represented Hertfordshire as its Member of Parliament

at Westminster for the period 1654 - 58.

Sir John was created as a baronet within the Baronetage of England, styled as 'of Stantonbury in the County of Buckinghamshire' on the 2nd May 1662. Stantonbury being another estate that Sir John acquired. The baronetcy fell into extinction for the want of a male heir upon the death of Sir John Wittewronge, the 6th Baronet on the 13th January 1771.



Sir John was the only son and heir as mentioned above of Jacob Wittewrong and his

second wife, Anna Vanacker. He himself had married three times: 1) Mary **Myddleton** (died 4th April 1640) whom he married on the 30th December 1638; 2) Elizabeth **Myddleton**⁶ (buried 18th October 1649) whom he married on the 23rd June 1642 and 3) Catharine **Thompson** (died 10th April 1659) whom he married on the 4th July 1650.

Sir John was confirmed the quartered arms as illustrated here by Edward **Bysshe**, Garter Principal King of Arms on the 27th November 1648 upon as attestation by Jean **Lyncenich alias de Luxemburg** and Henry **Prevost alias La Val** respectively Hainaut and Artois Kings of Arms. As Bysshe was appointed as Garter by Parliament in 1646 and was subsequently ejected from that office at the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 all his grants of arms (along his those of the other intruding Parliamentary appointed Kings of Arms) were invalidated by Royal Warrant dated the 4th September

1660.

Sir Edward Bysshe⁷ was later appointed as Clarenceux King of Arms on the 10th March 1661. Here it should be noted that both arms and crest although invalidated by the Royal Warrant of 1660 were later recorded in the Heralds' Visitation for the County of Hertfordshire and that of the County of Buckinghamshire of 1669. So there was a rehabilitation of family's armorial bearings.

Upon his death in 1693, his son, John by his first wife, Mary succeeded to the baronetcy of Wittewronge, of Stantonbury as the second baronet.

The arms and crest as confirmed by Sir Edward Bysshe as Garter may be blazoned as follows:

⁶ A Myddleton cousin.

⁷ Edward was knighted on the 20th April 1661.



Arms: Quarterly 1st and 4th Argent three bends gules on a chief sable a bar dancetty or (for **Wittewronge**) 2nd and 3rd Gules a bend between two demi-stags couped or (for **Vanacker**)

Crest: On a wreath or and gules a man's head couped at the shoulders and bearded proper wreathed about the temples or and gules (for **Wittewronge**)

Members Interests

Name	Period	Parish	County	Ref
Hill	1750-1880	Any	Hrt	4733
Kidman	Any	One name Study	Any	4749
Smyth	1700-2000	Clothall	Hrt	4749
Elliott	1750-1850	Shenley	Hrt	4749
Turner	17-19c	North Mymms	Hrt	4751
Turner	18c	Kings Langley	Hrt	4751
Turner	18-19c	Northchurch, Weston	Hrt	4751
Kettle	1750-1900	Bramfield, Stapleford	Hrt	4753
Shadbolt	1700-1880	Bramfield, Datchworth, Watton at Stone	Hrt	4753
Ward	1750-1900	Aston, Codicote, Datchworth, Shephall, St Pauls Walden, Stapleford	Hrt	4753
Skeggs	1750-1900	Bramfield, Kings Walden, Sacombe, Stapleford	Hrt	4753
Tipler	1750-1850	Sacombe, Stapleford	Hrt	4753

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Number	Name	County / Country
4740	Mrs. Anne Watson	South Australia
4741	Mr. John Fields	Wisconsin, U.S.A.
4742	Mrs. Angela Paterson	Ontario, Canada
4743	Ms Alyx Jenkins	Middlesex
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4747	Mr. Nick Anderson	Aberdeenshire
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4751	Mr. Steven Turner	Gloucestershire
4752	Mr. Alan Atkinson	South Australia
4753	Ms Jennifer Kennerley	London

Hertfordshire Family History Society (Established 1977)

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Note two rates i.e. printed / digital PDF

UK Individual - £13/£9; UK Family - £14/£10; Overseas (airmail) - £16/£10

UK families receive once journal per household. Subscriptions only accepted in **Sterling**, overseas members may pay by credit card online using the website www.genfair.co.uk

Subscriptions run from 1 March to 28 February each year. Subscription payments by post are payable to 'Hertfordshire Family History Society' and sent to The Membership Secretary at 50 Chelwood Avenue, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 0RE. All correspondence by post regarding membership of the Society should be addressed to the Membership Secretary. Changes to personal details should however be sent to the Registrar - registrar@hertsfhs.org.uk

SOCIETY PROJECTS: Projects are ongoing and volunteers for transcribing and checking are always welcome. If you would like to know more, contact the Projects Coordinator: John Pearson - johnwelburn@talktalk.net

PUBLICATIONS: A full list of Society publications is issued with the September journal and can also be downloaded from our website - www.hertsfhs.org.uk. You can buy Society publications online using a credit card at www.genfair.co.uk

- **MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS:** over 100 volumes published with transcriptions of memorials in over 120 churches and churchyards in the county.
- **MILITIA LISTS:** Individual parish booklets or the full set on a fully searchable flashdrive.
- **SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS:** In print or on flashdrive,,check our website for availability.

MEMBERS INTERESTS: Apart from the new listings in each issue of *Hertfordshire People*, a free search facility is available to members only of family names being researched by members. Contact the Registrar who will act as the intermediary between the member and enquirer - registrar@hertsfhs.org.uk

EXCHANGE JOURNALS: The Society exchanges journals with other family history societies in the UK and overseas. Digital journals are uploaded to our website Members Area, hard copies can be loaned to members at physical meetings by arrangement.

JOURNAL DISTRIBUTION: If there are any problem with the delivery of your copy of *Hertfordshire People*, printed or digital, please contact the Registrar - registrar@hertsfhs.org.uk

UNWANTED GRO CERTIFICATES: Can be donated to the Society, making them available to other members.

LIBRARY & ARCHIVE: Members family trees or family histories are welcome additions to our library and archive. We also have a reference Library of books which can be viewed by arrangement.

HODDESDON AREA GROUP - With our main meeting talks now being delivered online there is also the opportunity for local members to meet in Hoddesdon. New members are always welcome.

The group meets on the first Tuesday of the month at the Methodist Church Hall, Middlefield Road, Hoddesdon, from 2pm until 4pm. Organiser: Janet Pearson - johnandjanet@ntlworld.com.

HFHS SEARCH SERVICES: Our Society is always looking for ways to help members with their research.

The Hertfordshire Burial Index 1800-1851

Searches can be requested via www.genfair.co.uk

ONLINE SHOP

All sales of books and flash drives are via Genfair - www.genfair.co.uk

Search for Hertfordshire Family History Society



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Information is also available on our website
www.hertsfhs.org.uk

Hertfordshire Family History Society

Meetings Programme 2026

All our talks are online via Zoom.
log in from 2.15pm - Talk starts 2.30pm UK time

Please check our website News & Events page and our social media platforms for last minute changes to the programme.

June 27 - Quick and Dirty Trees presented by **Karen Evans**. Using trees is a vital component of working out how a DNA match is related to you but what happens if they have only limited information? Our speaker will explain what a quick and dirty tree is, how to create one and what they mean for your DNA match list

July 25 - TBC

August 22 - Visit to a local museum

September 26 - Rev. Henry Small and the Missing £20,000 presented by **Jon Mein**. Elected rector of the Abbey parish in St Albans in 1817, Small embezzled some £20,000 from the locals. When the balloon went up he fled to France. The ensuing scandal made the national headlines and questions were raised in Parliament. To understand why Small did what he did, this talk considers his difficult family history and the state of the Church of England in the late Georgian period.