



Shropshire Family History Society



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There are three vacancies on the Executive Committee

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Post will be passed to the appropriate member of the Society team and a reply issued as soon as possible.

Telephone contact: Dave Morris, 07980 870007

Front cover: Some images from our 'Forward to 50' event in October: Our guest speaker 'arriving in style' (with thanks to Lucy); our celebration cake; Dave Annal, our guest speaker; Talking Family History over lunch!

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Thoughts from the Chair

Thank you!

As a youngster I recall my parents would give 'tokens of thanks' (tips in an envelope) at Christmas to the postman, the coalman and the milkman. A tradition which I think may have significantly died out now, although my sister-in-law still gets some gifts as a postie.

I hate to disappoint, but I will not be sending tips in envelopes. However I do want to thank all our volunteers who help in keeping the Society on the road. For fear of missing someone out I am not going to name everyone but I am sure you know who you are - and thank you.

However, there are a few people who have recently or will soon be stepping down from their roles and I do want to thank them specifically: Liz Roberts, for all the work she has done in overseeing our helpdesk volunteers; Joan Gate for organising our monthly talks and communicating with the speakers; and Cathy Matthews for her work on the Committee, including the role of Minutes Secretary. All your contributions have been invaluable and appreciated. Gill Lewis has kindly stepped into Liz's shoes as co-ordinator for the Helpdesk volunteers but we are still looking for someone to step forward to take on the job of organising and coordinating our Talks programme. If you think this might be your way of helping the Society please let me know.

I particularly want to put on record my thanks, and the thanks of all our members, to Paul Quartermaine for all his work for our Society as he steps down as Treasurer and Committee member. He joined the Committee in 2016 and was elected to the role of Treasurer in 2017. His commitment to many aspects of the work of the Society has been immense, as alongside the Treasurer role he has been our representative on the Friends of Shropshire Archives Committee, volunteered on the SA helpdesk, worked on some of the transcription projects, collated the Monumental Inscription files in preparation for our project to create PDFs of them all and, very significantly, he has devoted many hours to our website, especially over the last year or so as we work towards securing a new site. Paul, you will be missed - thank you.

Our AGM

Elsewhere in the Journal you will find details of our AGM, which is approaching fast. It is on Tuesday 21 January 2025, online, and will precede the monthly talk and I hope many of you will be able to join us.

As our Constitution requires us to do, we will be electing our officers and committee members. We have a number of vacancies and so if you are interested in joining us please let Dave Morris know by Christmas Eve. Dave Morris and I have indicated we are willing to stand again (although others can stand if they wish to), as have Dawn Blundell, Simon Davies, Loraine Hunt and Graham Shenton and I am pleased to say we have a nomination for Treasurer - Lorna Emms, who has been working with Paul over the last few months so we can ensure a smooth handover - and Steve Jones has come forward to join the Committee. However, that still leaves four vacant seats so please consider if you could be the person to fill one of these, to bring fresh voices to our work. We are a friendly bunch and the meetings are held online. To find out more about what is involved please contact any of the committee who will be happy to explain how things work.

Forward to 50 - next steps

It was good to see and meet with people at our Forward to 50 event in October and you can read more about what we got up later in the Journal. As part of the event we had a session where everyone was invited to share their ideas of what we could or should be doing as we move towards our 50th anniversary in 2029. This was a lively discussion with many suggestions being put forward for consideration, with a list of the main points included on page 163.

An important point was made that we also need to consult with those who were not there, so, this is your opportunity! If you have any suggestions/ideas of what or how we can make sure we are thriving as a Society in 2029, or observations of the ideas already put forward, please let us know. All of these ideas will be considered by the Committee in the next few months and we will feed back on how we can take at least some of these ideas forward. However, I do need to mention that if we want to implement any of these we will be looking for help, as without more volunteers we will not be able to make things happen.

Wearing two hats

As you will be aware I have been doing two roles within the Society over the last two years and believe the time has now come for me to plan to relinquish one of them in the coming year. Therefore if there is anyone who might be interested in taking on the role of Chair or Editor please get in touch.

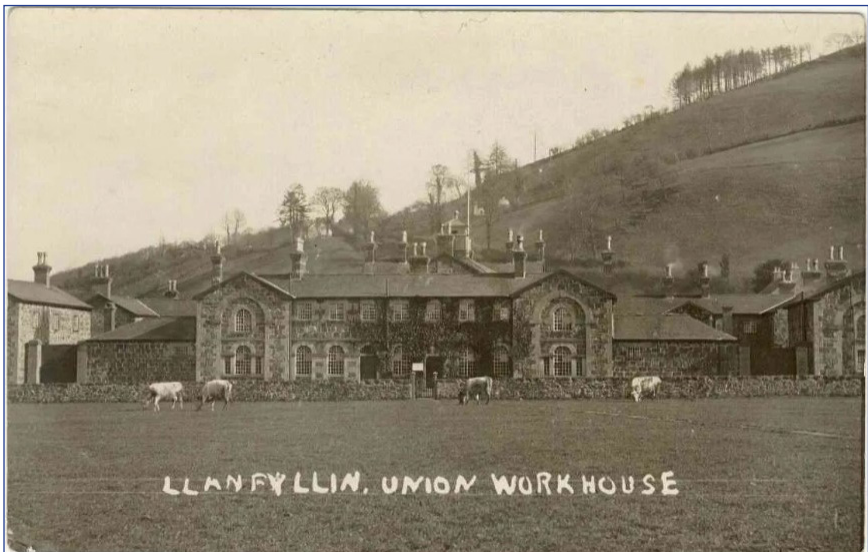
With all good wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year.

Karen Hunter, Chair chair@sfhs.org.uk

Workhouse Lives

In the September SFHS Newsletter there was an article promoting “A History Day at Llanfyllin Workhouse”. Some of my ancestors, the Socketts came from the Welsh side of Shrewsbury in and around the Oswestry area, my interest was piqued. So having discussed the event with a friend, also a Sockett and SFHS member we decided to go to the event. However, when talking about it with my daughter I was promptly told “how could her Mum with a fast approaching milestone birthday possibly consider driving the 120mile round trip in a day”. I wonder how she thinks we “oldies” cope. Nonetheless both she and my grandson played chauffeur for the day.

The journey to Llanfyllin was quite uneventful despite the weather warnings. On arrival I was surprised at the size of the site, not expecting the large carpark and extensive building complex which also housed the Meadows Café where we had an excellent coffee, hot toast with real butter (not the usual spread pretending to be butter) and homemade cookies. Whilst chatting to two ladies on the next table about the lunchtime menu choice I discovered they were locals who often came to enjoy the cuisine on offer. But what was most incredible, one of the ladies was a “Sokett”. I have never in twenty plus years of research just bumped into someone with that name. Yes, she is in my family tree, opening up further avenues. Apparently, several “Soketts” were employed in the Workhouse when it became a care home in later years. But enough waffling back to the History Day.



After a very warm welcome, the first talk was given by members of the Church Stretton Area Local History Group on their book "Could Be Worse". We heard how using the 1881 Census for the Church Stretton Workhouse they researched all 71 individuals residing there on the night of April 3rd: the children, women and men, vagrants and even the Master, Matron and Schoolmistress ranging in age from one month to 85 years. The 1881 census was chosen because it allowed the individual stories to extend before and after that date.



Together with a brief history of the workhouse, characterised as being a mix of an orphanage (with single mothers) and a care home for the elderly, designed with the Master's accommodation in a central hub so that he could inspect all areas, very like our modern-day prisons. We heard about changes to the Poor Law and Parish Relief, how the Guardians were selected. (One from each of the surrounding parishes plus Justices of Peace and local clergy).

There were only three paid staff, the Master and Matron who were preferably married with no encumbrances (children) and a Schoolmistress. The Master, in overall charge of the Workhouse, was capable of keeping the accounts as prescribed by the Poor Law Board to be presented fortnightly to the Board of Guardians. The Matron was in charge of the women and children and day to day running of the institution. The Schoolmistress not only for teaching but also the supervision of the children outside of lessons.

All the routine tasks, cooking, cleaning, gardening, laundry, looking after the livestock, odd jobs and repairs were carried out by the inmates in return for their board and sustenance. The children who left the workhouse at fourteen were all taught a trade, albeit sewing and housework for the girls and agricultural labouring for the boys. The Board of Guardians placed the children in employment and monitored their progress, sometimes removing them if they were ill-treated by the employer.

There were many little anecdotes, workhouses were no further apart than one could travel in a day. The vagrants on arrival were bathed and given workhouse garb whilst their

own was steamed, not washed, to kill any vermin. Before leaving the following day they had to break a prescribed volume of stone into regulation size pebbles (the broken stone was pushed through a mesh in the cell wall to check the size) which was then sold for road building. Many vagrants used the workhouses as cheap accommodation on route looking for work, it was common practice to hide any possessions in the hedgerows to be collected the following day to avoid them being confiscated or used in payment.

The book which took two and a half years to fund, research, compile and print is an excellent read and well-illustrated but not with real photographs, there weren't any. Instead the team used AI, not the type used in animal husbandry, there is an app that you can ask to produce a photograph to specific parameters and judging by the quality of the pictures it really does work.

Before the lunch break Frances Ward from the Workhouse History Group launched a new project about the Workhouse School at Llanfyllin. [See the poster on page 152.] Volunteers are needed so if you think you would like to help please contact Frances.

The Meadows Café – Caffi Y Dolydd provided lunch at a very reasonable price. During the lunch break there was time to explore the site, see the restored Masters House with the Workhouse History Centre with a film and displays relating to the development of the building and those who lived there.

After lunch we were treated to a talk on the Masters and Matrons of the Llanfyllin Union Workhouse 1839-1982 by John Hainsworth.

The workhouse catchment area covered the surrounding 23 parishes and was said to be within a ten-mile walk. Thomas Penson, a prolific architect designing many buildings in the Welsh borders including the Parish Church in Llanymynech and the old Powis Hall Market in Oswestry, was tasked with planning the Llanfyllin Workhouse. Built to house 250 inmates in four two storey blocks forming a cross with central octagonal three storey accommodation for the Master and Matron. The design both segregated and controlled the men, women and children. Most of the building was utilitarian but the front façade was quite grand, boasting two entrances one of which was reserved for the guardians.

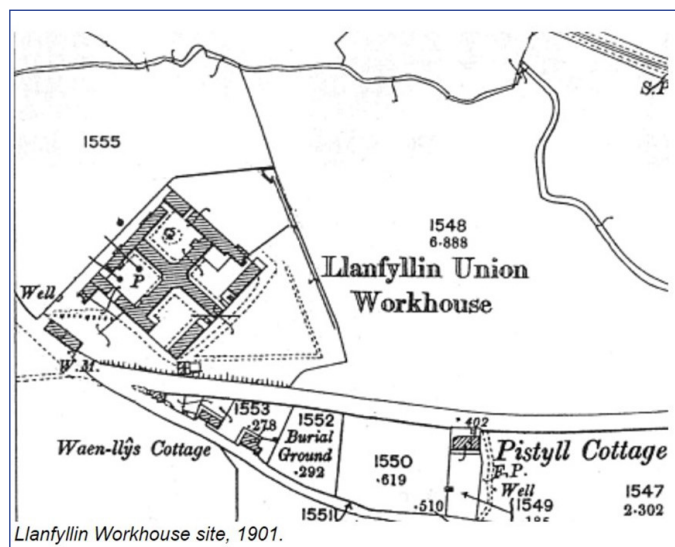
The first Master in 1839 was William Jones, a solicitor's clerk and Methodist Lay Minister. He was threatened with dismissal when his wife, the Matron, died. However, after much controversy his sister was allowed to take over the role of Matron.

It was an arduous task with many of the Masters finding the job of running the workhouse beyond their capabilities, especially the accounts. Though it was a prerequisite that the Master and Matron were Welsh speaking the fortnightly accounts had to be submitted

in English, a ruling by the Poor Law Board in London. I wonder how much was lost in translation.

One Master even sloped off to Liverpool when £74 was found to be missing from the Provision Book. His successor Joseph Jones made the account book illegible, with “blots and erasings”. He was also known to frequent the local public houses in the evenings.

The book “Masters and Matrons of the Llanfyllin Union Workhouse 1839 – 1982” published by the Llanfyllin Dolydd Building Trust is available on line. So if you want to hear more of the Masters and Matrons, one even kept a monkey, another whose son fathered two children by workhouse inmates, plus more of the history of this incredible building which in later years became a well-loved Care Home which incidentally employed at least three of my Sockett ancestors, is well worth £9.50.



After a short break Martin Davies, the archivist, took us on a tour of the grounds and buildings some of which are leased to local artisans. Unfortunately, the rain that had been threatening all day came with a vengeance and we were forced inside, but not before Martin pointed out the Workhouse cemetery across the road. Over

2000 souls are buried in the consecrated ground with just a small plaque marking their final resting place.

We were the last visitors to leave. Did we enjoy our History Day at Y Dolydd, the local name for the Workhouse? A resounding “yes”, for which we paid the princely sum of £3. My 21-year-old grandson remarked “so now when you talk about our ancestors being in the workhouse I know what you are talking about”, that’s got to be praise indeed. For myself I realised there was a vast difference between the urban and rural workhouses. Many of the rural sites were never full to capacity preferring to give out-relief to the poor

to enable them to stay in their own homes. I'm not sure it made life easier but they didn't have to live with the stigma of being "in the workhouse".

This Grade II* listed building has seen many owners in its life span, but is now safe in the hands of the Llanfyllin Dolydd Building Preservation Trust. It is the only workhouse museum in Wales and is open daily free of charge.

Pauline A Maguire 7517

The Workhouse School



A Victorian schoolroom

What was the workhouse school like?
How many children were there?
Who taught the children?
What did they teach?
How did the school compare with others?

In 2021 the Workhouse History Group published *Masters & Matrons of the Llanfyllin Union Workhouse* – which has sold well, and received enthusiastic reviews from the Powysland Club, and from the British Association for Local History.

And we think that now is the time to start on another research project about the workhouse!

Would you be interested in being involved?

There are lots of different bits of the subject that we need to look at – from what schools were generally like in the 19th century, to finding out more about the men and women who were teachers here at the workhouse.

We'd like to hear from you if you've done historical research before – and also if you haven't, and would like to give it a go, as members of the group can help get you started.

The project is being co-ordinated by Frances Ward – and if you're interested in being part of it, please contact Frances to discuss it further:
frances.ward1514@btinternet.com



Llanfyllin workhouse

The 1931 Census

Could this copy be the lone survivor?

This narrative has the loosest connection with Shropshire imaginable via my great grandmother; only her daughter is the heroine of this extraordinary salvage story. A great grandmother, Emily Southall Andrews, born in Donnington Woods in 1856, found her first teaching assignment in Chesterton, Oxfordshire, where she married Walter Andrews, and although giving birth to three daughters and a son, continued teaching in Bicester. She later accepted a post in Hints, Staffordshire, as Principal of a Church School and continued there until retirement, assisted by two of her daughters, one of whom was my grandmother, Effie Margaretta Andrews Banks.

Effie and her sister Bob (Amy Robsart Andrews), as well as their mother Emily, formed a very useful triumvirate in the parish, playing the organ at church services, organizing school games, garden parties and church activities. Effie had married John Emmerson Banks, a retired army NCO master tailor employed at the Tamworth Labour Exchange and in the fulness of time, my father, Jack, and twin daughters were born to them. Bob remained single and formed one of the vast brigade of war virgins, aunts and great aunts.

Fast forward to the 1931 Census. We learned from Dave Annal's wonderfully informative lecture that the Enumerator, a person with in-depth local knowledge, would personally deliver the census forms to each household in the week preceding the Sunday of the Census date. This allowed time to examine, digest and complete the forms, which would be collected on the Monday following and checked for accuracy by the Enumerator. Mr Leonard Arthur Brawn of Canwell, Sutton Coldfield, in the Lichfield area, a yeoman farmer - or as he styled himself, a smallholder - settled down to fill in the form, his pen charged with ink. He must have been a man endowed with tremendous self-confidence, because in addition to the accurate information requested, he decided to add his own tongue-in-cheek commentary as a subtext and what follow are some extracts from his offerings.

Under the heading requesting the relationship of the occupants to the head of household, he correctly indicated himself as "Head," then "Tail" for Lucy Mary, his wife. The three children were dubbed son, daughter, etc., but "1st Chip, 2nd Chip," and so on. He had some fun with the boarder, Arthur Wright, whose age and gender he gives as "18 & a bit; 'M' ashamed to ask," and Marital Status, "Single, except on Sundays". This young man is locally employed at a Café and Garage, his occupation described as "Garage Attendant & Café Chef à la Canwello", the accents carefully noted! Endearingly, he notes under Personal Occupation, his daughter Edith is, "General favourite Mothers help Fathers Darling," and

for elder son Dennis, "Fathers assistant as Chaw Bacon". Wife Lucy Mary's Occupation is, "All family worries", underlined for emphasis; Employer's Business: "Everything conceivable". And to round it out on her entry, "Home sweet Home". Instructions are given at the top to complete the form in ink, which he has underlined, and at the bottom of the page, he has added as a grace note, "Please send 1d. stamp for ink. Time chucked in".

What a delightful, cheerful household it must have been, the impression is light-hearted and open and surely it would have gladdened any Enumerator's heart as well as those of his superiors. Yet the context was cheeky and inappropriate, and Leonard, sleeping on it, sensed that he had overstepped the mark and wondered what to do.

He decided to consult someone discreet, someone who knew the family well and could be trusted to advise a suitable course of action: How about asking Mrs Effie Banks, the school teacher? Apparently, Effie could scarcely hide a smile when she read the form, but said that although a duplicate was not permitted, she knew the Enumerator well and would ask for a replacement form as a special favor only if Mr Brawn would promise to complete it properly, dealing with the "bad" one herself. The dignity of all was thus preserved.

Except - except - that she may have broken the law by not destroying the original, keeping it among her papers clandestinely...and her family knew and rolled their eyes. My father came across it and much later, shared it and the story with me. I chose not to stash it in a drawer, but to preserve it archivally under UV glass, carefully framed so that it could long be enjoyed and thus it hangs at eye level in the guest loo where those testing the facilities can and often do, wonder at it.

After I acquired it, I did try and trace any Brawn descendants via Ancestry, but no one responded; their loss. And when only a year or so ago, I learned of the destruction of the entire England and Wales 1931 Census records, it dawned on me that this could be a unique survivor. I was also charmed by the idea that my grandmother had once had a sense of humor, as well as the substantial presence of mind to hang onto this gem! It represents a particular and very British pride in self-expression and in standing up to worldly authority. Leonard Brawn wanted the world to know that he accepted his civil duty, but did not feel it necessary to take life too seriously. Bravo Leonard!

Alyson Breuer, 7893

The images on the facing page are of the left and right sides of the completed form, which was never submitted.

The Fardo-Fardoe family

The family story is that in 1506 a Fardo merchant came from Portugal or Spain, was shipwrecked off Wales, hopped onto a horse cart and ended up in Shropshire, England. Our earliest known Fardo ancestor was Roberti (Robert) Fardo (born 1580) and his wife Janae. The early Fardo's were shoemakers and bootmakers.

My great grandfather William Fardoe (1856-1936) was born to Samuel (1831-1897) and Ann (1831-1899) Fardoe and had six brothers and one sister.

1) John (1859-1917) was in Parker House, a workhouse, in Shropshire, UK from age 12-59. He was mentally challenged and passed away there.

2) Mary (1863-1863) passed away in infancy.

3) Thomas (1865-1865) passed away in infancy.

4) George (1879-1926) his brother, who my grandfather was named after, came to Canada in 1904. He lived with William for two years. He was a footman at Gunton Hall in Suffolk, as well as in the British army in WW1. He lived in Vancouver, BC, Canada. He was married to Emma Seagrove for four years who was from Knightsbridge.

5) Joseph (1871-1955) had the Fardoe general store in Middlesex. He was married to Bessie Hake (1884-1947).

6) Samuel Jr (1862-1881) was killed in a farming accident in Shropshire at the age of 18.

7) Richard (1868-1923) was a soldier and a farmer. He was married to Emma Heath (1873-1936) and they had ten children.

My great grandfather was William Fardoe, born on 7 Dec 7 1856 in Haston, Hadnall, Myddle, Shropshire. He was a ship's carpenter on two sailing ships. The Renfrewshire and the Wairo. He sailed around the world twice and had some interesting adventures in Australia and New Zealand. He had a daughter Maryann (1878-1928) with his girlfriend Margaret Cocker (1856-1882) of Lancashire. They decided to move to Canada. William went first to establish a home for them. He sailed on the SS. Peruvian passenger ship and arrived in Canada in 1879. He homesteaded eight miles south of Brandon in the Cornwallis municipality, and originally built a sod house by the Little Souris River. When he sent for Margaret and Maryann in 1882, he had completed a four room house for his family. Margaret Cocker and Maryann arrived on the SS. Polynesian passenger ship in August 1882; came to Brandon and settled in their new home and were married in

the same year. However, Margaret died of Typhoid fever in the same year, shortly after coming to Canada, leaving William a widower with a young child.

Maryann went to Central school. She then worked at Yorkshire House, a boarding house, where she met her husband James Dean (1864-1952) who was from Lancashire. They were married in 1894 and moved to Springfield, Massachusetts, USA. for work in the cotton mills. They had their first two children there then moved to Hymers, Ontario, Canada and went on to have seven more children. Maryann passed away in 1928 and James went on to marry a second time, to Kathleen Couch.

My great grandfather married again in 1884 to my great grandmother Sarah Ellen Tebo (Thibault). Sarah was from a family of ten children, and came from Iroquois, Ontario, Canada to Brandon in 1881 with her sister Lucy.

William and Sarah had seven children: Thomas, Nellie, Lucy, John, George, Harry and Ann and, as the family grew, William built a bigger house and barn.

Thomas (1885-1912) married Sadie Murray (1885-1979) from Cumberland, England in 1911. He worked on the railroad and they had a son.

Lucy (1887-1983) married Alexander Foster (1874-1938) in 1909 at Hazeldean Farm, the Fardoe family farm. They resided in Douglas, Manitoba, Canada and she was a housewife.

Nellie (1889-1970) was a dressmaker and was married to Alfred Marshall (1882-1964).

John (1891-1986) took over the farm after William passed away and was married to Edith Alma Bowslaugh (1895-1966).

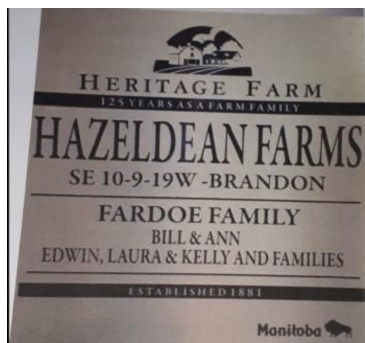
George (1893-1967) was my grandfather. He served in WW1 in England and France. On his furlough he went to Shropshire to visit his family, including visiting the Fardoe family home, 16 Harmerhill. He married Edith Erickson in 1922.

Harry (1897-1968) was an Electrical Engineer and was married to Susan Dunlop (1902-1978). They lived in Toronto, Ontario.

Ann (1903-1996) was married to Lloyd Bowslaugh (1898-1986) at Hazeldean Farm in 1924. She was a housewife.

The Fardoe family were musically inclined: they played the accordion, flute, harmonica and violins.

Ronaele Fardoe, 2623



The 'Shropshire' Surname

In response to the query in the last Journal about the origin of the surname 'Shropshire' I have received two responses, as follows.

Joan Gate has offered this, in the hope it might help:

'I noticed a query from the past in the current Journal about the surname Shropshire. In my dealings with parish registers over the past few decades I have very occasionally come across the surname - not very often - as I have also come across English and Welch as surnames. It simply meant that sometime in the 13th Century when surnames were becoming established, a man, we'll call him John, moved over the county boundary and took up residence in a new community. There were other John's already there, so to differentiate between them ways had to be found, so the occupational surnames came into being, and places within a parish could be used, hence Underwood, Atwood, Underhill etc. and our John, coming from over the border, was surnamed "Shropshire". In my lifetime there was a John Shrewsbury named as a producer on the television!'

And Val Mace highlights she is descended from a 'Shropshire' family.

'Having just read my September edition of the magazine I noticed an interesting snippet on page 133 relating to the family name of Shropshire. I am descended from the Shropshire family. The ancestors I've searched to date all hail from the Cheswardine/Market Drayton area. My grandmother was born Katharine Mary Shropshire. *[Editor: Katherine's father was Charles Shropshire (1861-1921); grandfather was William Shropshire (1816-1891) and great grandfather was John Shropshire (1787-1871). Val did send an image of part of her tree to illustrate this but it did not reproduce well enough to include here. I did find a tree on Ancestry which includes the family, if you are a subscriber and want to explore further.]*

The original enquirer was questioning whether the Shropshire family name came from the county name. This has always been a widely held belief in my Shropshire family that the first settlers there named themselves Shropshire after the place name they found themselves in. However, I don't have any factual evidence to support that theory.'

Editor: Thanks for this feedback.

I have never come across a Shropshire surname, but have come across at least two doctors with the surname Shrewsbury!

Forward to 50!



It was good to see so many people at our 'Forward to 50' event in October at Cross Houses, in celebration of our 45th Anniversary as a FH Society.

We were entertained and educated with our talks with excellent speakers, had lots of opportunity to meet up with fellow members and chat about family history and a few things besides, and we had a good discussion when we shared ideas of what we could/should do to make sure we are still around to celebrate our Golden anniversary in 2029.

Unfortunately the WiFi did not work well enough for us to be able to record the talks but here follows a summary of each, thanks to Bill Allison and Christine Head for preparing them.

Shropshire Archives - Past, Present and Future

This was a most fascinating talk given by Sarah Davis, an archivist in Shrewsbury. Shropshire Archives was started in 1899 by the Quarter Sessions Committee in the Old Shirehall in the Square in Shrewsbury. The Quarter Sessions Committee, of course, dealt with the criminal court records but also kept registers of Catholics, canals and highways, licences for publicans etc. In 1935 the first archivist was appointed and took over all the records including the Poor Law and workhouse records. In 1946 Miss Hill was appointed archivist and she used to travel by train, bus and bike, collecting all sorts of documents from estates and businesses etc. The estate records include details of estate workers, interesting receipts for goods and diplomatic correspondence.



In 1966 the Archives moved to the New Shirehall and in 1974 the borough records came in from many boroughs in the county. These include charters (one from 1369 was shown), details of freemen, guild records, apprenticeships, etc. District authority collections were also acquired and the parish records with baptisms, marriages and burials, which are familiar to us all. These are now available on FindmyPast.

The building of the present Archive offices was completed in 1995 and that is when the library collections were inherited, including deeds and pedigrees. There are many projects going on and the Archives is still collecting records and documents. There are also volunteer projects, one of which at present, is the digitising of fire insurance policy books from 1780-1899. There are, of course, many visits from the public to use the facilities and look at the available records. (Shropshire Family History Society has a help desk there on several mornings in the week to help researchers.)

There are some future challenges. The Archives holds about six miles of records so storage is a problem. Another challenge is the digitising of records and how to preserve things as technology changes. Another matter of concern is funding in these days when councils are in financial difficulties.

A Shropshire Lad on the Western Front

The final days of George Henry Jones Davies (1888-1917)

Our very own Simon Davies gave a talk on his great grandfather's nephew, George Henry Jones Davies (1888-1917). The talk was detailed and very well illustrated with the aid of slides, as we have come to expect from Simon. His presentation was well researched and very professional. It told the story of George Henry, using family diaries and other documents.

George fought at the Battle of Messines, including all the Battles of Ypres and Simon took us through all details of the Battle minute by minute.

With the power of Google Earth Simon was able to "go live" and take us to the site of the Battle as it is today, indeed as it looked exactly at the time that he spoke about it.

Not only did the talk remind us of the horrors of War, things that we don't need reminding of right now because our TV screens do this for us on a daily basis, Simon also highlighted something that never ceases to amaze me. He was only able to research his talk and present it because of the amount of Family History documents he was able to access. As Family Historians we all have many documents such as these, not only from war, that



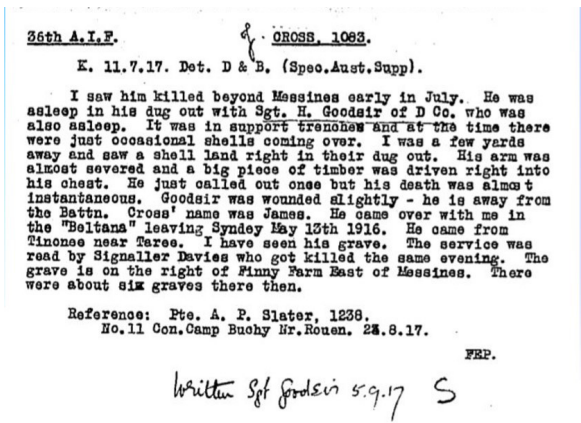
provide insight for us. We have not only to thank Simon for demonstrating this to us by his detailed talk but for delivering it in such an excellent manner.

Final Diary Extracts

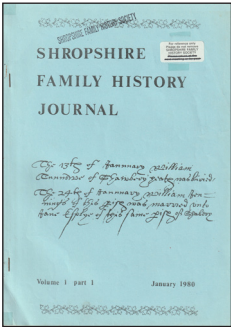
“Trench conditions are not the best, one wallows in a sea of mud, one’s clothes get muddy, the rifle is absolutely hidden in mud, mud here, mud there, mud everywhere, you walk in mud, you talk in mud, you look over a parapet of mud, and a parados of mud is behind you. When a shell strikes in your vicinity it covers you with mud; when you eat food, you find it spread over with mud, and your breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper is bread and mud.

These were our conditions, when, in 1916 A.D., we fought the Germans, (or the Bosche, or the Hun).”

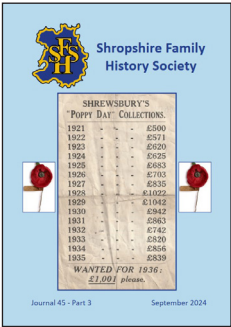
From the diary of George Henry Jones Davies



Our Journal over the Years



The first journal produced by the Society consisted of 12 A4 typed pages. In the early days articles were received by post and typed up on a typewriter on wax duplication sheets. They were then duplicated, collated and sent out in hand-written envelopes. How times have changed in such a short time! By 2024



most articles are received by email with only the occasional letter. Publishing software is used to put the journal together and a pdf copy is emailed to the printer. A distributor then sends out the journals by post.

Karen went through various styles of cover that have been used over the years and different series of pictures decorating the fronts, such as churches, fonts, places, etc, and, in the centenary year of 2014, a series of War memories. The contents of the journal have changed over the years. There used to be a 'help wanted and offered' section and it was thought that it might be a good idea to reinstate this. There also used to be numerous blue pages in the centre of the journal showing new members and their interests. Nowadays we would not be allowed to publish the level of people's contact details used then. Sometimes the journal contained themes such as fire brigades, schools, etc. At one time there were even competitions for the best article and snippet with prizes for the winners.

Karen summarised the contents of the current journal and the numerous functions of the Editor. She also showed a list of past editors and hinted that a new editor may be needed in 2025.

Fact From Fiction: What The Great 19th Century Novels Can Tell Us About Our Ancestors

Dave Annal, with the aid of slides, delivered a very important talk for all us interested in Family History. The thinking behind the talk was that if we use 19th Century Fiction by major novelists, we cannot have any better background for our own research as these writers were there on the spot and therefore recorded in their own style what they saw and what they felt.

So now how can this material help us? Clearly, without doubt, all of us as Family Historians have come across in our own research all the major themes that Dave mentioned in his talk. From our own families we have records from birth to death involving all major stopping points along the way. Marriage, children, occupations to name but a few.

Dave's avid reading was obviously wide ranging. From this reading, he went on in the talk to offer us a model that would help develop our own understanding of these events. The model is shown in the table below.

We have to thank Dave very much for his interesting and detailed talk. As I said at the beginning this was a very important talk for Family Historians. So now we can settle down with some of this material over the upcoming winter months, learn from this reading and apply it to our own research. Thank you Dave from all of us.

Below is a list of the books and topics Dave referred to during his talk.

Topic	Book	Author	Chapter
Birth	Oliver Twist	Charles Dickens	1
	Bleak House	Charles Dickens	67
Baptism	Silas Marner	George Eliot	4
	Tess of the d'Urbervilles	Thomas Hardy	4
Marriage	Great Expectations	Charles Dickens	56
	Silas Marner	George Eliot	13
	The Woman in White	Wilkie Collins	9
Death	The Old Curiosity Shop	Charles Dickens	72
Education	Great Expectations	Charles Dickens	7
	Hard Times	Charles Dickens	1
	Nicolas Nickleby	Charles Dickens	8
Work	Tess of the d'Urbervilles	Thomas Hardy	14
	Oliver Twist	Charles Dickens	21
	Great Expectations	Charles Dickens	8
	Far from the Madding Crowd	Thomas Hardy	10

Suggestions for Moving Forward to 2029

Member evening particularly for New Members	Engage with Students/colleges/schools/ younger people – link to curriculum eg Study of WW2
Library at Cross Houses – Access?	Two 'in person' meetings a year
Build up/retain 'Shropshire based local knowledge'	Once a month (on Zoom) focus on place – involve people from that locality and others looking for knowledge from that place.
Links with U3A – Wellington?	Social Meeting at Cross Houses
Develop Social Media links – able to draw on 'world knowledge'	Facebook Group – explore best way to extend reach
Local publicity	Breadth of Talks - keep it up - extend horizons
Information – eg MIs and others – unique resource to give added value to members	

Our rural ancestors

Review of the talk by Dr Nick Barratt on 17 September 2024

Family historians will have met the term 'Ag.Lab' in census and other records. Many think it is boring. The bulk of the population had connections with the land especially in the past. The speaker wanted to show that digging deeper may unearth more details.

So who were they? Some were farm-based farm servants with fixed contracts. Others were agricultural labourers who were usually field-based with only seasonal contracts. Most started working as youths aged about 13-14, training slowly to do agricultural work. One test was could they drive a plough alone? 'Ag Lab' covers many activities: thatchers, drainage digging, ploughing, hedging, as well as more basic fieldwork such as sowing or reaping. Girls and wives worked alongside the menfolk. Agricultural labourers show up in census records (perhaps as husbandmen or yeomen), BMD certificates, and further back, in parish registers. When examining records, it is important to look at the historical development of an area to track migrants; when work was available elsewhere some were forcibly repatriated or paid to move.

Where might you look? Local studies centres may have information (e.g. check the excellent Victoria County History volumes), as well as County Archives and The National Archives (TNA) for land surveys. Also, look at The National Farm Survey (1943), which can give a lot of information. Maps are in TNA, at MAF73 and files at MAF32. Each farm was coloured on the maps and given a number which can be found in the files. The arrangement is by county.

A bit earlier is the Valuation Office Survey (1910). Maps can be tracked back to files or field books. Earlier still are Tithe Apportionments from 1836; in TNA maps can be found under IR30 and schedules under IR29. Tithes at 1/10th of the value were payable to the Rector or Lay-apportioner. Eventually, due to fluctuations in the price of corn, values were averaged over 7 years. Duplicate sets of these sheets can be found in county archives.

Earliest are Enclosure Awards, begun in the 16th century as landowners started condensing small farmed land strips from the Middle Ages, into larger areas. This drove many away from the land, many becoming migrants, or vagrants or even paupers. Enclosure awards usually needed Acts of Parliament; the awards are often housed in county archives. The TNA has research guides to help find them.

The speaker said it was important to understand local land holding. The lord of the manor usually kept some land for himself (the demesne), and most manors fit into a parish. The

church also held land (the glebe). The rest was allocated to tenants (freeholders) subject to the rules of the manor. Disputes were settled at the manorial court several times a year. Land surrendered to the lord was re-allocated and a copy document showing ownership given to tenants (hence known as copyholders). They were entitled to lease out land to others. Court rolls are probably held in county archives, but not always. Rental or survey records show how land ownership changed over time. The speaker also referred to estate records of stewards who employed men to do the work. These can be challenging, especially prior to 1732 when they were written in Latin!

The speaker said it is worth looking at patterns of life. Much work was seasonal, usually from November to October. 'Mop Fairs' were regular events for hiring workers and may be reported in newspapers.



1861 advertisement for a hiring fair (Wikipedia)

Those hired for a year could not walk away, but equally could not be sacked. But times were tough, and much dissatisfaction was expressed as shown in the Swing Riots of 1830-32, the Tolpuddle Martyrs of 1834, and the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. Unions expanded to protect workers' rights and pay. Some parishes used parish clearance schemes, as it was cheaper to move people. Other patterns to look at involve crime and punishment, and taking the Queen's shilling and emigration.

Finally, putting life in context, the speaker suggested looking at web sites for the Museum of English Rural life (www.reading.ac.uk/merl) the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library for English Folk Music (<https://www.efdss.org/vwml>) and even the Weald and Downland Living History Museum (<https://www.wealddown.co.uk>)

Following the talk there were some questions:

- Have trade unions retained their membership records?

To some extent but it depends upon the union, the area and the time.

- For an enclosure without a map, where would you look for a map

Sometimes detached maps didn't survive. Try looking in Tate, W E, *Domesday of English Enclosure Acts and Awards* (1978), which gives the location, date of awards and maps in England (*see also below)

- Trying to research a man in the mid to late 17th century from a tiny rural Shropshire village, who died in Middlesex, and want to know what his parents did.

Find out who owned the land, estate owners. Look at manorial records. Some land was seized in the Civil War and some records might be in TNA.

- What is a yeoman?

Someone who owned land which gave some status, It was a low to mid rank but they could employ others. If they had land and had leased it, it might be listed in a will.

- When land was transferred to the lord after death, was a fee paid?

Yes, it was a form of inheritance tax.

(*) Reviewer's note:

NB. *The Enclosure Maps of England And Wales, 1595-1918*, (2004) by R J P Kain, J Chapman, and R Oliver is a more recent guide to Enclosure maps.

Peter Tandy 7709

The Mourning Brooch

Review of the talk by Jean Renwick on 15 October 2024

This talk showed a departure from other SFHS talks, in that the title is that of two books (of three planned) which are novels. That said, they are based on some deep research including much genealogy, done by the author/speaker into real people.

The stories centre around an oval mourning brooch, passed down to the speaker. Unlike much mourning jewellery, this one is not made primarily of Whitby jet, but consists of a gold pierced surround on a black base, around an oval window containing a lattice of silver and brown hair.



The speaker inherited the brooch, plus a canteen of cutlery, in 1989, on the death of her godmother, Dorothy Walker, who lived in Liverpool. On the back of the brooch was neatly inscribed "Mrs Addy, Ob: Jan. 3rd 1849, AE I 39.". Research showed she was Elizabeth Addy, a farmer's wife from near Doncaster, Yorkshire. The question was, how did the brooch get from Yorkshire to Lancashire? The initial key was a brass plate on the cutlery box, which showed it to be a wedding gift from the Earl of Derby to Dorothy's parents, on 6 August 1903, and it transpired that Dorothy was the great-granddaughter of Elizabeth Addy. When Elizabeth died, she had two daughters, Mary Ann and Francis ('Frannie'). The speaker followed the lives of the two daughters, eventually identifying over 70 descendants. At that point, she started to imagine the daughters as real people, and to bring them to life in a novel. The story starts in 1839 when Elizabeth marries Joseph Addy, but the research goes as far afield as Philadelphia and the wool trade there, and California in the gold rush. The speaker outlined the lives of a number of people in the story. She stressed that while the people are real, the exploits are not necessarily so, and have been added to give dimension to the novel. Books 1 and 2 are available, and book 3 is in preparation with a date of 2026 for publication.

Following the talk, SFHS member Lucy Gilchrist showed her own example of a mourning brooch, consisting of a black or dark-blue oval cartouche on which is mounted a golden spray of flowers, and with a photograph of her ancestor mounted on the back. She said it had come from Buxton (Derbyshire), but didn't know what it is made of. Member Peter Tandy suggested it could well be 'Ashford Black Marble', a slight misnomer as it isn't a true marble, but is a dark limestone. Mined in the Ashford area of Derbyshire, it was used extensively for pietra dure (inlay) work. Buxton museum has an extensive collection of such items.

Peter Tandy 7709

Editor: The brooch Lucy showed during the talk is below, showing both the front and back and the images are reproduced with her permission.



Tales from the Red Church



“The Old Red Church on the Hill, Jackfield” by Edward W Ball

Back in March 2021, I had the pleasure of giving a talk to the Society on ‘The Forgotten Church in Broseley.’ This talk included the formation of our volunteer group ‘Friends of the Red Church,’ and summarised our efforts to make the old church site, officially known as the Old Jackfield St Mary’s Chapel, more respectable - and respectful. Very helpful volunteers have helped clear unwanted vegetation, started to tidy up heavily damaged graves and memorials and to reveal the foundations of the church building so that it can be made more obvious. Contractors have felled damaged and diseased trees and the site, particularly in winter and spring has a much more orderly appearance than in summer when vegetation is allowed to give nature its head. Many have appreciated the attractive profusion of wild garlic after the little - but increasing - presence of spring flowers.

However, one of the main objectives of the Friends is to see what we can find out about the people baptised or buried at the church. Following the demolition in 1961 there are only a dozen or so obvious memorials with readable inscriptions, however, the Parish records indicate that some 1200 persons were buried there. What did all these people do? What contributions did they make to the history of the district? What events influenced their lives?

Well, we’ve started to get some answers. Four years ago, we published the pamphlet ‘Tales from the Red Church 1’. In that, we had a snapshot of important ironmaking industrialists from the Brodie and Cochrane families, accomplished china designers in the Stephen family, and others such as the Amphlett family forced to change from barge working to other businesses when iron and coal resources ran out and more reliable canal and rail transportation was developed. We had a glimpse into the tough life for

families in those times, such as the Booths suffering the sad death of a mother and her baby after childbirth, and another daughter, a tragedy reflected in the painful poetry of the memorial inscription. One surprise was the burial of members of the manorial Phillips family; the memorial to them remains today in the new St Mary's Church in Jackfield.

Now we have expanded our findings into 'Tales 2'. Among the items in this, we cover the major influence of the river through stories of the Beard family - it was a friend providing employment in barge building and trading but at times an enemy as catastrophically demonstrated by the Coalport ferry disaster. The consequences of the cholera epidemics of 1832 and 1834 were similarly disastrous. We deal with comments from a brickmaker to the Children's Employment Commission contributing to better employment conditions for children. The Ball family were involved in many baptisms and burials and more recent members of the family included two cousins who were important artists for the Coalport China and Craven Dunnill companies. An example of the work of Edward W Ball headlines this article.

We also have the opportunity to demonstrate the mobility, emigration and changes in occupations through different generations. There's one case of a progression through generations from farmer to metal plater to a vicar and then a member of the Army Veterinary Corps in World War One. Perhaps the most surprising is the example of a labourer in a brickyard leaving to become a successful businessman in Manhattan. Another remarkable story is of the unlikely link between a young girl born in the Broseley Jitties and a naval disaster.

We would welcome any members who would like to support our group and copies of Tales from the Red Church 2 are available for £4 each plus postage. Additionally, if any members would like a guided tour of the site or would consider volunteering there or in exploring relevant family records, please get in touch as that would be very welcome.

Graham Hollox

Editor: For more information see their website <https://broseley.org.uk/redchurch/index.html> where you can also find images and transcriptions of the memorials in the graveyard.

Image to the right:
The churchyard today (courtesy Judy Moore)



News From Shropshire Archives

For 2025 Shropshire Archives will be reducing public opening to one day a week (Thursdays) and pausing most current volunteering projects.

Shropshire Archives staff are working in partnership with their Records Management colleagues to take on a major project to inventory and relocate 55,000 boxes of corporate records. The documents cover the operation of Shropshire Council and include adults and children's care records, as well as coroners and magistrates' records. These are currently cared for by the Records Management Service at Shirehall. With the closure of Shirehall, 550 cubic metres of documents will be inventoried and moved. [The image to the right is of one of the Records Management stores which needs moving!] The collection held by Shropshire Archives will also be assessed to accommodate additional storage and over 6,000 boxes of historic council material at Shropshire Archives will be catalogued.

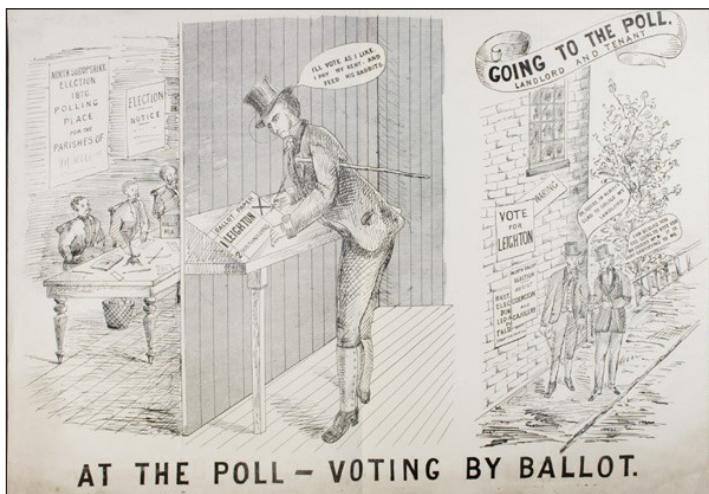


Archives staff will be heavily involved in the project which means Shropshire Archives will only be open to the public for one day per week from 1 January 2025. It is anticipated that the project will take 12 months to complete.

We know this will have a big impact on our regular users and thank you for your understanding. There will be an element of seeing how best the day opening works so please let us know our feedback.

Shropshire Archives will continue to operate, including responding to enquiries, the digitisation service and work with partners to give wider access to records.

We are hosting Ancestry to digitise historic electoral registers and poll books. The poll books are particularly interesting, although only a small percentage of the population could vote until 1832. They date from 1676-1876. The books show voters names and, until the Ballot Act of 1872, record how they voted sometimes with details of residence, occupation and qualification. Digitisation is well underway, but it will be a little while before the indexed entries are added to their site.



The image above is 'Going to the Poll. Landlord and Tenant' from the collection held by Shropshire Archives (665/4/1357), illustrating people voting in days gone by. The voter is saying 'I'll vote as I like. I pay my rent and feed his rabbits'.

We are delighted that the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society have funded some more days work on the Liddle and Heane Solicitors Collection (ref 1101). This contains a lot of information relating to families in the Newport area.

We will continue to provide updates through the year.

Sarah Davis, Archivist, Shropshire Archives

Chair: We are conscious of the potential impact of the reduced opening of the Archives in 2025 and have offered our on-going support to them during what will be a challenging time for everyone.

Gill Lewis is liaising with the Archives and the Help-desk volunteers to work out how we can provide an on-going presence during this time, with the hope it might be possible for us to be there for the full day when it is open, but the arrangements are still to be finalised. Our recent call for more help-desk volunteers will be reviewed in the coming weeks as we see how the requirements pan out.

Remember that the Archives does have a website, <https://www.shropshirearchives.org.uk/>, through which you can find information and updates on their activities so do keep an eye on that and their social media feeds - they can be found on Facebook and X.

From the Society's Journal - 40 Years On

One of the strange things about the Minutes of an Annual General Meeting is that the first people to get recorded are the people who aren't there! Whereas the majority of those who are present don't get a mention at all! So it is, with the 5th AGM of the Society in the December 1984 Journal. Top of the list of absentees was the President, which meant that the Society's Chairman, Major Evison took the meeting.

Major Evison was able to report that the monthly meetings attracted *'an average of just below 100 members'*.

He especially mentioned the co-operative work with the Shropshire Women's Institute in recording Monumental Inscriptions on tomb stones and thanked Kenneth Braim and Janice Capewell retiring as Journal Editor and Project Secretary respectively. Welcomed to their new roles were Mr A T Kitchen (Journal Editor) and Mr R Jones (Project Secretary)

The AGM was held at The Gateway, a new venue opened in October 1984, as an Education and Arts Centre in Shrewsbury. Whilst the venue was viewed as impressive, a lack of parking facilities was not!

This was a time when Family History research was really buzzing and 37 new members had been enrolled in the last three months from as far away as Australia, though there was a large cluster from Shrewsbury.

A lovely article by Mabs Turner recounted how *'the highest accolade my father could bestow for a job well done was 'That's how they do it in Shropshire'. Good marks in school, well-polished shoes, eating every scrap of food on the plate, not crying when mum changed the dressing which had stuck to my scabby knee...these are just random samples which would earn dad's praise'. I grew up with the idea that Shropshire was the place where everything was done to perfection'*.

Attending the AGM at the Gateway, plus a lot more visits over many years, she wrote, confirmed all that she had learned from her dad about his love of Shropshire. The editor noted that Mabs had also done her bit for SFHS by name-indexing the 1861 census return for Shrewsbury. Thanks Mab!

Although retiring, Janice Capewell still managed to fill three pages with valuable information. She paid tribute to Charlie Watson, of Rhode Island, USA *'who must be the Society's Star volunteer. He has single handed indexed the 1851 census for the whole of*

the Clun Registration District which comprises...14 Parishes...for which everyone in that area will be grateful'.

Mike Hulme represented the Society at a National Federation Seminar concerning the recording of Monumental Inscriptions. Mike has always been our expert in this field and is still available to give advice to members on M.I.s. He would tell you there is still work to be done!

Mike also provided information about the Crimean Research Group. which was researching ancestors associated with the Crimean War.

Headed '*The Travels of a Cornish Lifeguard*' V. Howell tells the story of a man who was Born, Married and Died in St. Ives. She comments '*When I speak of my interest in Family History, friends tell me that the task cannot be all that difficult because people didn't move about much in those days. How wrong can they be?*'

Her story, covering three pages, tells of an ancestor who sailed to and lived in Ireland, Cockbush, Woolwich, Scilly, and Porthillic with his wife and children whose births are registered in several towns and villages along the way.

A quote from Thomas Fuller; The Worthies of England in 1662

I cannot but condemn the carelessness, not to say ingratitude of those who can give no better account of the place where their fathers were born, than the child unborn...I could almost wish that a moderate fine were imposed on such heirs, whose fathers were born before them, and yet they know not where they were born!

Reg Wilford, 5564

East Surrey Family History Society Virtual Fair

Enjoy all the benefits of a family history show from your own armchair, free of charge, using Zoom.

We will be 'attending' this event and if you are interested you can register for either or both sessions at

<https://www.eastsurreyfhss.org.uk/index.php/events?view=article&id=233:virtual-talk-fair2025&catid=23:virtual-events>



EAST SURREY
Family History Society

Virtual Family History Fair

Saturday, 25 January 2025

Sessions: 10.00 to 12.00 | 14.00 to 16.00

Book Review

The Lost Fifty-Seven

The Lost Fifty-Seven: A Genealogical Journey of Discovery, Deception, Secrets and Scandal, by Ron Williams

If, as a family historian, you were told that your paternal grandfather had possibly had another family that no-one knew anything about I am sure that your inclination would be to see what you could find out - I know it is what I would want to do. And so it was for Ron Williams, the author, who, when told this as a child, thought little more about it, but then as an adult started to question what those lost years might have been like.

Essentially this is two books in one. The first is telling the story of Alfred Victor Williams, the man who seemed to have lived a rather secretive life for much of his first 57 years. It takes the reader on a journey from Worcestershire (with a hint of a connection to Shropshire) to Canada and the USA, before he arrives in Vancouver in 1947, at the age of 57, shortly before getting married and becoming father to Ron's dad.

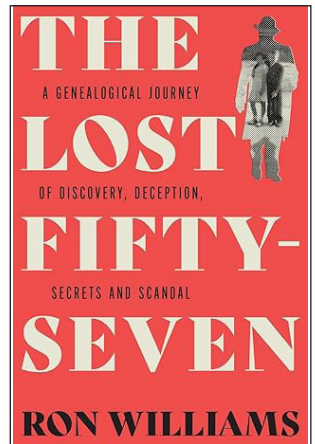
Running alongside this is a fascinating documentary of the work that Ron put in, having taken up the gauntlet of researching those lost 57 years, as he unravels the secrets and gradually stitches them together, so that he was able to tell the story of his paternal grandfather and his elusive past.

When embarking on this quest Ron was very much a novice genealogist, but over a number of years he developed the skills and the tenacity to keep searching, even when it seemed that the trail had gone cold. He discovered new family members, made contact with a number of others in the world of genealogy

After finishing reading this book I shared with the author this comment - '*a great story and a detailed illustration of the joys and frustrations of undertaking genealogical research*'.

I am sure many of us would recognise the challenges of breaking down brick walls in our own family stories but I wonder if anyone has faced a wall quite as large as that with which Ron Williams was confronted.

Karen Hunter, 7646



Committee Meetings Update

Over the last few meetings the following topics have been discussed.

Website: Much of the focus of work and discussion to date has been around the back-end functions of the site, but we are beginning to also work on the front-end elements. Some progress has been made, although it is still rather slower than we would hope, and there are still some elements of the system that have to be set up and tested. Until there has been full testing of the whole site it will not be possible to launch it.

Subscription renewals: Consideration was given to how to manage the outstanding subscription payments following the year-end process. Those for whom we hold an email address will be contacted to establish their intentions regarding renewal and any late renewals would receive a PDF Journal if they missed the printer cut-off date of 20 November.

Monumental Inscriptions - creating PDFs: The files are now accessible via the shared workspace and KH has created a style template for the work and will liaise with the volunteers who have come forward to do the work.

Annual Report and Accounts: These were approved and signed off by the Committee, and the accounts were forwarded to our Independent Examiner in readiness for the AGM in January.

2024/25 Budget: The committee has considered a draft of this document and aim to finalise it at the December meeting.

Shropshire Archives: The committee were made aware of the changes to opening hours of the Archives, to be implemented during 2025, in light of the requirement for staff to focus on the transfer of records from ShireHall. It is hoped the Help-desk volunteers will be able to continue supporting the Archives when open, with the possibility of this extending to a full-day cover. It was noted that the Friends of Shropshire Archives will continue their activities.

The need for volunteers: Discussions have been held on the need for more volunteers to help with the various activities of the Society. Paul Quartermaine has been working with Lorna Emms (our prospective new Treasurer) in recent weeks to ensure a smooth handover in January, but we still need some more Trustees and Karen Hunter has indicated that she feels it is not sustainable or realistic to continue in both roles (chair and Editor) for too much longer.

Shropshire Family History Society

Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Shropshire Family History Society will be held online via Zoom on **Tuesday 21 January 2025** at 7.30pm. The link will be sent in January by email to all members with a registered email address.

Agenda

- 1 Members attending
- 2 Apologies
- 3 To approve the Minutes of the previous AGM held on 16 January 2024
- 4 Matters Arising from these Minutes
- 5 To receive the Annual Report presented by the Chair, Karen Hunter
- 6 To receive the Certified Accounts for the year ended 30 September 2024 presented by the Treasurer, Paul Quartermaine
- 7 Election of a Competent Person to Examine the Accounts of the Society
- 8 Election of Officers: To confirm the appointment of the Officers in accordance with applications received by 24 Dec 2024
- 9 Election of Ordinary Committee Members: To confirm or elect the Ordinary Committee Members in accordance with applications received by 24 Dec 2024
- 11 Any Other business (Accepted at the discretion of the Chair - to be submitted in advance to the Secretary by 24 Dec 2024)

Minutes of the Forty Third Annual General Meeting of Shropshire Family History Society held on Tuesday 16 January 2024 via the Zoom platform

The Chair, Karen Hunter, welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited our Patron Mrs Anna Turner JP, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire to conduct the business of the AGM.

1. MEMBERS ATTENDING

88 members attended the meeting. Their names are available from the Secretary.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from J Pemberton (3430), B Evans (7914), T Hazan (5357), L Gowans (7120), R Morris (7813)

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM held on 17th January 2023

The minutes were approved by the meeting and signed by our Patron.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES

There were none.

5. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT

Karen Hunter, Society Chairman, presented the report which had been published in the December 2023 journal and summarised the main activities in the year. Karen finished by thanking all members, committee members and volunteers for their support during the year. The report was approved by the meeting.

6. TO RECEIVE THE CERTIFIED ACCOUNTS for the year ended 30 September 2023

Paul Quartermaine, Society Treasurer, presented and explained the certified accounts which had been published in the December 2023 journal, and thanked Andrew Fairchild, Independent Reviewer, for examining the accounts. Paul explained the fluctuations in the accounts in relation to certain items. The accounts were accepted as a true record of the Society's activities during the year and approved by the meeting.

7. APPOINTMENT OF A COMPETENT PERSON TO EXAMINE THE ACCOUNTS OF THE SOCIETY

Paul Quartermaine, having ascertained his willingness to continue in the role, recommended that Andrew Fairchild be officially appointed as the Society's independent assessor of the accounts for the year to September 2024. The appointment was approved by all present.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The appointment of officers in accordance with applications received by 19th December 2023 was approved by the meeting:

CHAIRMAN:	Karen Hunter
SECRETARY:	Dave Morris
TREASURER:	Paul Quartermaine

9. ELECTION OF ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The appointment of ordinary committee members in accordance with nominations received by 19th December 2023 was approved by the meeting:

Dawn Blundell	Simon Davies
Loraine Hunt	Cathy Matthews
Graham Shenton	

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Our Patron formally closed the meeting at 19:48 and handed over to Karen Hunter., who introduced the speaker for the evening.

Dave Morris, Secretary

Shropshire Family History Society
Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts
Year Ended 30th September 2024
Legal And Administrative Information

Charity Number 514014

Charities Act 2011

Trustees and Executive Committee

Patron		
Anna Turner JP HM Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire		
Vice Presidents		
Ann Kirby	Michael J Hulme	Dr David R Burton
Trustees		
Chair: Karen Hunter	Secretary: David Morris	Treasurer: Paul Quartermaine
Dawn Blundell	Simon Davies	Loraine Hunt
Cathy Matthews	Graham Shenton	Lorna Emms - co-opted

Bankers

Lloyds Bank PLC
Business Banking, BX1 1LT

Hampshire Trust Bank
55 Bishopsgate, London, EC2N 3AS

United Trust Bank
1 Ropemaker St, London, EC2Y 9AW

Contact details

c/o SFHS Secretary
48 Oakley St
Shrewsbury
SY3 7JY
e-mail – secretary@sfhs.org.uk

Website

www.sfhs.org.uk

Independent Examiner

Andrew Fairchild BA ACMA CGMA
Chartered Management Accountant

Chair's Report

Structure, governance, and management

Shropshire Family History Society (SFHS) is registered with the Charity Commission (number 514014) and governed by a Constitution initially drawn up in 1979 and last amended in 2023. Registered charities are required to comply with statutory and Charity Commission Public Benefit requirements and we believe that our activities as outlined below meet this guidance.

The Executive Committee members are Trustees of the Charity with the responsibility to administer the affairs and funds of the Society. The Executive Committee members for the last year are as listed on the first page of the report.

Objectives

The objects of the Society as contained within the Constitution are:

to promote the study of genealogy and history especially of Shropshire families and places; to educate the public therein through advice and instruction and for the public benefit; to encourage the preservation and transcription of relevant documents and records especially for the County of Shropshire.

Activities, Achievements and Performance

Membership of the Society, as of 30 September 2024, stood at 964, (a reduction of 70 from last year) with members from across the world. This suggests we need to look at ways in which we can attract new members and work on retaining current members and is something the Committee will be considering in the coming months.

The Society Journal continues to be published quarterly and distributed to all members, either in printed form by post or as an electronic copy. Through its publication we are able to keep in contact with and communicate with all our members. The content aims to be informative, interesting and educational and offers our members the opportunity to share their experiences of delving into their family history. We have also introduced a monthly digital Newsletter which is circulated to all members who have provided us with an email address.

Our monthly talks continue to be offered online (apart from July and August), covering a wide range of topics related to genealogy and family history. Using an online platform enables us to include members from across the world and it is encouraging that we usually have upwards of 60 people in attendance.

The Talking Family History Online sessions continue with a core membership coming together on a monthly basis to share their enthusiasm and interests in family history. The topics discussed are varied and wide ranging and some good connections between members have been established.

This year we have also introduced an online DNA Special Interest Group, bringing together members with a particular interest in using DNA to support their research.

In October 2023 we held a Talking Family History LIVE event at Cross Houses, with 35 members joining us to hear talks covering topics including One Place and One Name studies; A Few Forgotten Women; Ways of telling our stories; Maps and Family History; and provided an opportunity for people to meet up, chat and share their ideas.

We have not attended any in-person Fairs but have participated in some of the online events held during the year. This offers an opportunity to promote our Society and to help attendees in their Shropshire based family history research.

The help desk at Shropshire Archives, staffed by volunteers from the Society, is open two days each week and the first Saturday each month and provides help and advice to anyone interested in tracing their family history. Operating from the Archives enables access to paper-based and microfiche records, Internet resources and other computer-based records.

Work on developing our new website has been continuing during the year although progress has been frustratingly slow and has thrown up a number of challenges along the way. Unfortunately we are not yet able to give an indication of when we will be able to launch the new site but can assure members that we are doing everything possible to expedite this.

Our Society is reliant on volunteers for everything we do, and I would like to put on record my enormous thanks to all those who have given of their time and energy in so many ways during the year.

Karen Hunter, Chair

Financial Review

The Society continued to use spreadsheets as opposed to an accounting package given the limited transactions.

Policy on reserves:

The Trustees believe it necessary to maintain unrestricted funds for the following purposes:

- a) to cover obligations to pay future hire and storage fees of the Cross Houses Community Centre in the event of a fall in normal revenue income.
- b) to buy research material which may become available from time to time.
- c) to renew and to buy further equipment to assist research and education.
- d) to invest in website improvements and other technology to enable greater engagement with members.

The Trustees believe that the current level of funds is adequate for these purposes.

The Society's General Fund shows an excess for the year of £1,146 which, when carried to reserves leaves a balance to carry forward of £95,517.

The Society will keep the level of reserves retained to ensure it is sufficient to fulfill our future obligations. Although the Society's funds are healthy, membership of family history societies continues to fall. The Society will continue to look at investing its reserves to build up capital to replace any anticipated fall in membership income. The Committee and Trustees will continue to keep payments and receipts under review during the coming year.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Karen Hunter

Chair

Date: 5 November 2024

David Morris

Secretary

Date: 5 November 2024

Independent examiner's report on the unaudited financial statements of Shropshire Family History Society

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Shropshire Family History Society ("the Trust") for the year ended 30 September 2024.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general instructions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts as set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Andrew Fairchild BA ACMA CGMA Chartered Management Accountant

Date: 12 November 2024

Receipts and payments account for the year ended 30 September 2024

	30/09/2023	30/09/2024
Receipts	£	£
Subscriptions	9,228	8,163
Gift Aid	1,071	1,059
Interest on Bank and Investment Account	1,123	3,348
FHF Quarter sessions	754	568
Profit on Sales - see below	(1,012)	231
Donations	380	842
Miscellaneous	-	123
Total receipts	11,544	14,334
Payments		
Journal Postage and distribution - 121 Direct Mail	3,932	3,759
Journal Printing - WPG Ltd	2,605	2,533
Journal Costs - Sundry	182	182
Depreciation -- see assets sheet	572	518
Room Hire	193	45
Zoom fees	292	171
Mailchimp Fees	161	238
Storage hire	700	550
Subscriptions	479	458
Website expenses	144	174
New website	-	2,700
Printing and Stationery	80	-
Postage and telephone	178	76
Lecture Fees & Expenses	662	800
Insurance	238	238
Travelling expenses	16	10
Archive Costs	1,103	717
Purchases for the Library	74	-
Cross Houses Infrastructure costs	188	-
Miscellaneous	261	19
Total payments	12,060	13,188
Excess / (Deficit) for year	(516)	1,146

Sales	2023	2024
Sales of Books, CDs, etc	1,039	231
Opening Stocks	2,306	255
Purchases	0	0
	2,306	255
Less Closing Stock	(255)	0
Profit / loss on sales	(1,012)	231
	-97%	100%

Shroshopshire Family History Society

Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2024

	30/09/2023	30/09/2024
Fixed Assets	£	£
Per Schedule below	2,252	1,734
Current Assets		
Stock of Publications at Cost	255	255
Current account & cash	8,136	6,453
Bank Deposit Accounts		
Hampshire	15,002	15,630
Lloyds Deposit Account	16,563	16,772
United Trust Bank	52,163	54,673
	94,371	95,517
Less Current Liabilities		
Sundry creditors	0	0
	94,371	95,517
Capital Account		
Opening Balance	95,887	94,371
Excess of Receipts Over Payments	0	0
Excess / Deficit for Year	(516)	1,146
Closing Balance	94,371	95,517

Fixed assets movement				
2022/23	Additions	Depreciation	Loss on sale	2023/24
2,252	0	518	0	1,734
2,252	0	518	0	1,734

Paul Quartermaine (Treasurer)

On behalf of Committee

Date: 5 November 2024

Notes to the Accounts

Year ended 30 September 2024

1. Accounting Policies

a. Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on a Payments and Receipts basis in accordance with the Charity Commission guidance.

b. Tax reclaims on donations, gifts and subscriptions

Gift Aid is claimed when there is a valid declaration from the donor and is included in receipts when the claim is settled by HMRC. Any Gift Aid amount recovered is considered to be part of that donation, gift or subscription.

c. Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

d. Trustee expenses

During the year expenses totaling £1,204 (2022/23 £1,219) were paid to Trustees to reimburse them for administration costs e.g. postage, travel expenses, Zoom fees etc. incurred on behalf of the Charity.

e. Depreciation policy

Provision for depreciation of fixed assets held by the Society is made at rates calculated to spread the cost less residual value of each asset evenly over its expected useful life. The rates applied are as follows:

Current year purchase	10% if purchased between 01/10 & 31/03, 0% if purchased after 01/04.
General depreciation	20% of previous year's closing Net Book Value

The Family History Podcast

Series Eight of The Family History Podcast has recently been launched. Described as a show for and about family history addicts, each week there is a guest, a life story, a brick wall and a bit of time travel. In this series you can hear about a Marchioness, a homesick migrant, a collier, a singing sensation, a marine, a twin sister, and a nationalist.

The talks from this and previous series can be found either through their website <https://familyhistoriespodcast.com/episodes/> or wherever you might access your podcasts.

From the Editor

An empty cupboard!

As you will have seen in this edition of the Journal, a number of pages were taken up by the important AGM papers - agenda, minutes from last year, and our Annual Report and Accounts, and without that I would have been very short of items for publication.

As I have mentioned a number of times previously the Journal relies significantly on contributions from our members to fill the pages. The articles I do receive are greatly appreciated as it does make my job as Editor easier, as I am not having to hunt around for items to add in to fill the pages. So please let me have your contributions. I have given some suggestions below but anything related to family history/genealogy would be welcomed:

- Some of our long-standing members could write something about their memories of the Society in days gone by.
- Do you have a family history related book or magazine you could write a review about?
- Have you taken a Pharos Tutors course you could review/recommend?
- Are you undertaking a One-Place study from which you could highlight the approach you have taken and share some key findings from it?

Without the articles continuing to come in, you will be receiving a slimmed down version of the Journal in the future.

Could you become our next Editor?

I have been Editor of this Journal since June 2021, making this my 15th edition! As you will have read in my 'Thoughts from the Chair', I am looking to stand down from one of my roles in the coming year. So, would you be interested in finding out what the role of Editor entails? If so please get in touch - you wouldn't be committing to anything but it would give you an opportunity to find out what is involved and how everything comes together.

In the meantime keep the articles rolling in - I look forward to hearing from you.

Merry Christmas!

Karen Hunter, Editor

Talks Programme 2024-2025

17 December	Posted in the Past <i>Helen's well-illustrated talk looks at the family stories behind some of the post cards sent in the early years of the 20th Century, one of our earliest forms of social media.</i>	<i>Helen Baggott</i>
21 January 2025	Apprenticeship Records <i>Learn about the history of apprenticeship and the numerous sources available for family history research. Discover how these sources can help research a "brick wall" ancestor.</i> <i>This talk will be preceeded by the Society's AGM</i>	<i>Richard Holt</i>
18 February	Sin, Sex and Probate – the work of the Church Courts <i>There is a wealth of information to be found in the records of the Church Courts from fines our ancestors paid for playing football on a Sunday to excommunication and its aftermath, with lots of saucy doings in between, as Dr Chapman will demonstrate.</i>	<i>Dr Colin Chapman</i>
18 March	Just a Job - Revitalise your Family History with Occupational Research <i>Dr Kay makes the case for why occupations matter in family history research. The talk includes some general tips and tricks for research, and a section on occupational health and job-related deaths.</i>	<i>Dr Sophie Kay</i>
15 April	Bread, Gruel and Suet Dumplings – Workhouse Life <i>This talk looks at life in the Workhouse, what the alternatives were, what conditions were like and discusses the many records available to find information about either an inmate or a staff member.</i>	<i>Ian Waller</i>

Re-thinking your research

I started researching my DULEY family over 20 years ago. The furthest back I got, reliably, was 1755, with Edward DOOLEY, from Old Swinford. DULEY/DOOLEY surnames change, but the family is the same from other sources, no matter how their name was spelt. Along the way different lines of the family have names including DULEY, DOODY, DUDLEY, AUTY and HUDLEY. When I get to 1755, I think that the name was changed as I believe that his father was Edward DOWLEY baptised 1738, also from Old Swinford, And his father was Edward DOWLEY, baptised Benthall 1689.

How do we ever know that our research is correct? I think that this is the correct path for our line, mainly because the first son's name was always Edward. Until in Edward DOWLEY's case, born in 1689 from Benthall, as his father was James DAWLEY!

I have also considered accents. I was born in Wolverhampton, so I know their accent, Duley/DOOLEY sounds like DAWLEY? This is when I thought that the original name may be DAWLEY. I decided to google Dawley (I don't know why I don't do this more often?) This is when I found <http://dawleyhistory.com/> (only http, so I had to add it to my trusted sites for the computer's firewall) and <https://www.dawleyheritage.co.uk/> and I found lots of information here. This is the line I am taking now. I don't know Shropshire, but have enjoyed reading about it and I thought some of our members may like to read them too.

Pam Reveley, 7897

Clandestine Marriages

Whilst looking at newspaper archives, I found this interesting article from the Shrewsbury Chronicle 28 January 1860.

Clandestine Marriages- At the National schools on Monday last, was held before Archdeacon Allen, under 7 and 8, Vic. c. 59 s.5, into the conduct of Thomas Price, parish clerk. It appeared that he received five shillings for banns, paying one shilling to Rebecca Cotton, of Wombridge Hill, as a pretence for a lodging for Allan Burgess of Forton Parish, married at Wombridge to a woman of Gnosall parish on the 5th of last month. The misconduct having been proved, and there having been previously complaints of marriages clandestinely celebrated at Wombridge, the parish clerk was suspended from his office for six months.

Pam Reveley, 7897

New Members

Welcome to the following new members who have joined us in the past few months.

- 7972 GREGGS Mr B, Sandibel, Florida, USA
- 7973 FOSTER Ms M, Mallabula, NSW, Australia
- 7974 POOLE, Mr R, Alpharetta, Georgia, USA
- 7975 POOLE, Mrs K, as above

Obituary - Sue Poulson



We regret to report the death of Mrs. Susan (Sue) Poulson (member 406) at her home in France on 22nd April last.

Sue was a stalwart of the Society and soon after she joined in 1985 became the Publicity Officer, a post which she served for many years. Her job in the local libraries in Telford made her particularly well known, especially in the Dawley area. Whilst working there she held a history day and encouraged local people to research their area and record their findings.

Sue and her husband Brian lived across the road from my husband and myself and through a mutual interest in researching our families we became firm friends. Sue even found an Everall in her family tree and our families were joined when their son married our daughter.

At Sue's prompting, soon after we joined the Society I became Speaker's Secretary and with her invaluable help we were able to compile a successful programme for a number of years.

In the late 1980s, Sue, Gina Lewis (former Secretary) and myself set the ball rolling to hold our first Open Day in June 1989 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Society. This event continued for many years and the fact that they were so successful was in no small part due to her enthusiasm and help.

Sue was a keen supporter of transcribing Monumental Inscriptions and willingly helped with a number of projects at churches in the Telford area including such large ones as

St. George's and Wrockwardine Wood. It was through her work on the latter that the incumbent was able to ascertain that the churchyard was full and able to have it closed.

Sue was ably supported in her work by husband Brian whose occupation as a photocopier engineer was much valued by the Society.

Over 20 years ago Sue suffered from an Acoustic Neuroma and had to undergo an extensive brain operation at a Liverpool hospital which left her partly deaf but she fought hard to make a good recovery and carried on to lead an active life.

Over 15 years ago Sue and Brian decided to move to live in France but even there her interest in local history was not diminished and she soon started her researches in the locality which led to her being called upon by several villages in the area which wanted to record their own patrimony.

In her passing the Society and Family History in general has lost a valued supporter. May she rest in peace.

Cheryl Everall, 697

Research Queries

Editor: Can anyone help with Michael's query below?

I have come across several cases recently of somebody having died in a care home and being buried in our new graveyard in Cheswardine, where the date of death cannot be ascertained. I have only been able to find the date of burial from the burial record of the church. I do not know if this is a problem associated with care home deaths or perhaps some other reason.

Michael Hendry 6764 chipnall1@gmail.com

Useful Websites

Populations Past: Atlas of Victorian and Edwardian Population

<https://www.populationspast.org/imr/1861/#6/51.985/-4.098/bartholomew>

Landed families of Britain and Ireland

<https://landedfamilies.blogspot.com/>

Notes for Contributors

Please:

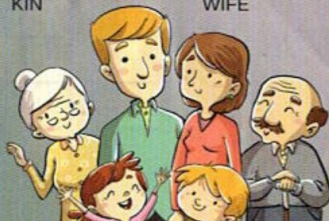
- All contributions should be sent to the Editor at editor@sfhs.org.uk, or by post using the address inside the front cover if you don't have email.
- Include your name, membership number, e-mail and other relevant contact details in the same file as the text of your article and indicate which of them can be included. Otherwise, only your name and SFHS number (if appropriate) will be printed.
- Send pictures as separate image files (eg e-mail attachments), and only include them within the item or article as well, to give the editor an idea for suitable positioning. The relevant place could just be clearly referred to in the main body of the text.
- List the filenames of any pictures you are sending in the e-mail with relevant acknowledgements.
- It is assumed that place names, surnames etc will be spelt correctly and they will be printed as submitted unless otherwise informed.
- If possible, please CAPITALISE all family surnames within your submitted articles.
- Any pictures or other images should have a file size as large as possible. Most digital cameras and those in mobile phones are more than adequate but the higher the resolution, and therefore quality, the better.
- Scanned photographs etc should be at a minimum of 300dpi if at all possible. JPG (or JPEG) is the preferred file format but in certain circumstances, others could be considered. Please contact the Editor for clarification if necessary.
- Original pictures, documents etc, can be submitted and scanned by the Editor but this should preferably be a 'last resort'.
- All items (articles, images, photographs) submitted must have permission to print granted with the correct acknowledgement included when submitting them.
- Please note that items which essentially consist of full or significant transcriptions from Wikipedia or other websites will not be published.
- Any submitted articles may be edited by the Editor.

A Wordsearch to keep you entertained
over the Christmas break!

WORDSEARCH - FAMILY

T S R E T S I S H E W F C
A Y N E G O R P M E E I H
L D W I F E Y A T L H I I
A C N S W A N R N C P H L
N O A A V T G E U N E E D
C U N I B N A N A U N A R
E S U O P S H T I L D E E
S I B O N D U S R L O A N
T N R T K I N H E L B G E
O S M U M S S W H C O I Y
R H A L F B R O T H E R S
R L D M A R R I A G E I O
D A U G H T E R F C L A N

ANCESTOR
AUNT
BOND
CHILDREN
CLAN
COUSINS
DAD
DAUGHTER
FATHER
GENEALOGY
HALF BROTHER
HUSBAND
KIN
MARRIAGE
MUM
NEPHEW
NIECE
PARENTS
PROGENY
SIBLING
SISTERS
SON
SPOUSE
TWIN
UNCLE
WIFE



Copy Dates

Publication Date

March 2025

June 2025

September 2025

December 2025

Items to be submitted by

1 January 2025

1 April 2025

1 July 2025

1 October 2025

Advertisements

The Society welcomes adverts relevant to the interests of family historians. Prices are per issue.

Members

£20 full page

£10 half page

Non Members

£24 full page

£13 half page

Copy should be submitted to the Editor. The Society reserves the right to refuse any advert it considers inappropriate.

Other appointments

Membership

Gift Aid	Paul Quartermaine	treasurer@sfhs.org.uk
Subscription Renewals	David Burton	subs_renewals@sfhs.org.uk

Programme

Programme Secretary	Joan Gate	speakers@sfhs.org.uk
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Enquiries/Help

(Please note we do not undertake personal research but will assist if we can)

General Enquiries	to the Secretary	secretary@sfhs.org.uk
Research Queries (Members only)	Christine Abram	enquiries@sfhs.org.uk

Reference Material

For look-ups or loan see Website for details

Certificate Exchange	Christine Head	xchangepcerts@sfhs.org.uk
Members' Interests		members_interests@sfhs.org.uk
Library/Exchange Journals	Graham Moore	library@sfhs.org.uk
Parish Registers Books	Graham Moore	library@sfhs.org.uk

Sales

Microfiche	Ruth Wilford	fiche@sfhs.org.uk
Monumental inscriptions	Ruth Wilford	copies@sfhs.org.uk

Projects

Original P.R. and 1851 Census Microfiche (Shropshire)	Christine Abram	enquiries@sfhs.org.uk
Help Desk Volunteers at Shropshire Archives	Gill Lewis	archives_volunteers@sfhs.org.uk



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