



BERKHAMSTED LOCAL HISTORY AND MUSEUM SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 803417

Founded 1950 as Berkhamsted & District Local History Society
SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2011

Society News At the AGM in March Jenny Sherwood was elected to serve another two years as Chairman. Linda Rollitt resigned as Secretary but will continue to manage the Society and Castle websites. We thank her for the most efficient way in which she has worked for the Society. Jimmie Honour resigned as Archivist. We are grateful for his many years of service to the Society. He was unanimously elected an Honorary Life Member. Both these posts are currently vacant. The rest of the Committee remains as before. We welcome Robin Gee as a new member to the committee.

Programme and Summer Outings After the AGM in March Ned Hunt gave us an interesting talk based on extensive research entitled 'The Tring Hundred, its Boundaries and Berkhamsted', which gave us a different aspect to Berkhamsted's history.

In June a number of members enjoyed an interesting tour of the village of Redbourn led by Roy Craske. We learnt how a flourishing town, on a coaching route from London in the eighteenth century, had lost some of its influence to towns, which were enhanced by the building of the canal or the railway in the nineteenth century.

On 28th July a joint outing with the Gardeners' Society is scheduled to visit the Luton Hoo Walled Garden. This has aroused a lot of interest. Further enquiries to Ken Wallis 877592.

The Castle The number of visitors to the Visitor Room has been just over 2,000 so far this year. We have had a number of school groups from Dacorum, Linslade, Bath, Colney Heath and Hampstead and adult groups from Cheddington and Bromley. 'The Walk Back in Time' guided tours continue to be supported, often by people coming from some distance. I am grateful for the support of Ken Wallis, Jimmie Honour, John Waller and Paul Dottridge with these tours and especially thank Brian Norris for arranging the rota and all those valiant stewards who have manned the Visitor room, sometimes in cold and wet weather.

The Clark/Birtchnell Collection. The sorting and accessioning of this collection is now almost complete. It contains a number of photographs, which we have not seen before. I am grateful to all the Wednesday morning volunteers who have helped with this.

DHT and the Audit Extra help has been requested for this. Thanks to Bill Willett, Robin Gee and Ian Cheese who have agreed to help. If there is anyone else who would like to help please contact me on 865158 or KShew9100@aol.com

The Percy Birtchnell Memorial Prize 2011 The subject for this year's prize awarded each year to Year 4 children at Victoria School in memory of Percy Birtchnell was 'Local Heros.' Prizes were awarded to Jonathan Below and Ben Pierleoni for their projects 'Thomas Coram' and 'Charles de Gaulle is my Hero.' Phoebe Day and Mary Robinson were Very Highly Commended. I am grateful for Robin Gee's assistance in judging the entries.

Heritage Open Days 8th-11th September The full programme for this year is available on the Society's website www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk and on www.heritageopendays.org.uk You will see that there are two tours to the BFI at Kingshill on Thursday 8th September at 10.30 and 11.30. I am unfortunately unable to give priority to Society members and each group is limited to 10 people. Booking is essential. If these tours go smoothly I am hoping we can make these visits a regular feature of the HODs.

The other site for which booking is essential is the former Foundling Hospital, Ashlyns School, which is open from 1300 to 1730 on Sunday 11th September. Tours guided by former foundlings are at 1330 and 1530. Additionally there will be the opportunity to see the Foundling Voices travelling exhibition with a short film of recorded memories.

The Census of Shops This census of shops, restaurants and other buildings in the High Street from The Old Mill Hotel to Gossoms End is progressing well under the direction of Jenny and Jimmie Honour, assisted by Robin Gee and Keith Farmery.

Local Listing in the Conservation Area. I have been approached by BEAMS at the suggestion of DBC to help in the completion of suggestions for local listing of buildings in Berkhamsted's conservation area. Paul Dottridge is assisting in the North Road/ Kitsbury Road/ Cross Oak Road area. I should like help from perhaps a couple more people with the Kings Road area. We have been asked to complete the list by the end of the month, if possible.

The Programme for 2011-2012 This is enclosed. I hope you will find it of interest. All meetings are held in Berkhamsted Civic Centre starting at 8pm. The first meeting takes place on Wednesday 14th September when Dr Kate Thompson, Vice-President of the Hertfordshire Association for Local History, will be giving a talk entitled 'Housing the Deserving Poor in Hertfordshire: Almshouses and their Inmates.'

HALH Annual Symposium This takes place on 13th November 2011 at Abbots Hill School and is organised by the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust. Further details will be available at the September meeting.

Rew Houses Following on from my request in *the Chronicle*, *Your Berkhamsted*, *The Citizen* and *Berkhamsted Living* for help in identifying local houses designed by Charles Henry Rew and his son Noel Ackroyd Rew I have received a number of responses and positive suggestions. These will be analysed and written up. If these houses fall within the conservation area they would be appropriate for inclusion in the local listing catalogue.

Contentious Planning Issues Many of you will be aware of the plans of a large property company to develop a 'satellite' town in the area between Chesham Road and Swing Gate Lane, which is apparently by-passing local stages of planning consultation. This would severely damage the character of Berkhamsted as it has developed over the centuries. The plans of Berkhamsted School to enlarge their sports' facilities so close to Berkhamsted Castle is also a cause for concern.

Thank you for your support. I look forward to seeing you on September 14th. Have a good summer.

Jenny Sherwood July 2011