



BERKHAMSTED LOCAL HISTORY AND MUSEUM SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 803417

Founded 1950 as Berkhamsted & District Local History Society

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2010

Society Matters Firstly our apologies for the very late arrival of *The Chronicle* this year. I hope you will feel it has been worth waiting for! The delay has meant that the Spring Newsletter has only reached those members who have email. In this mailing however you will now receive not only the *Chronicle* but two newsletters and your programme for the new season 2010- 2011.

Summer outings On the 12th May Christopher Green gave a most interesting guided tour of the architecture of St. Peter's Church. It is hoped that another visit can be arranged since a number of those interested were unable to manage that date. On 23rd June a number of members had a fascinating and well-arranged guided tour of the British Film Institute at Kingshill. Regulations placed a restriction on numbers and many were disappointed. It is hoped that a further visit can be arranged. A guided tour of Redbourn had been arranged for 21st July. Unfortunately this has had to be postponed for the time being since Roy Craske has had an accident. For further details please contact Ken Wallis on 877592.

A Walk Back in Time. The last of these walks for this summer arranged by the Society in conjunction with the Chiltern Conservation Board takes place on Sunday 25th July, starting at the Castle at 2pm. These consist of a guided tour of the Castle and of the historic sites of the town centre and last approximately 2 ½ hours. The cost is £3 and £1.50 for children. Any members new to the town might like to avail themselves of this opportunity.

Archaeology and Local History Family Day, Sunday 18th July. The Society had a stall at this event, which took place at Ashridge by the Monument. We were the only Local History Society represented. There were a number of very interested visitors from a very wide geographic area. It seems likely the event will be repeated next year.

Exhibition, 'Sixty Years of Preserving History'. The exhibition to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Society has come and gone. Attendance figures were disappointing, although once again those who took the trouble to attend in the sweltering heat were very positive with their comments. The figures for the last four exhibitions show a steady decline in attendance figures from 1,250 in 2001 (Berkhamsted –the past 150 Years), 516 in 2004 (Berkhamsted Trades & Industries through the Ages.), 417 in 2007 ('Unwillingly to School – Education in Berkhamsted Through the Ages') to this year, 361. Only one school took the opportunity to use the exhibition as a valuable education

exercise. There is not the same support from local media or from local traders as there used to be in advertising local events. Because of high postage costs more invitations to schools and other individuals are sent by email. Maybe this has less impact!

I should like to thank all those who worked so hard to put the exhibition together, especially Jimmie Honour, and all those who helped with putting up and taking down and the large numbers who acted as stewards.

The Castle. Attendance Figures (2,170 by 11th July) at the Castle Visitor Room are very promising and requests for guided tours from schools and other groups are on the increase. It is pleasing to see that only St Thomas More School, Potten End School and Thomas Coram School of the First and Middle Schools in the town have not so far availed themselves of the opportunity of visiting since the room opened. Schools and groups from increasing distances are now also booking.

Foundling Voices Project Plans for the exhibition in connection with this lottery-funded project are now underway. The main exhibition will take place in the Foundling Museum, Brunswick Square. A smaller exhibition will be shown in Lyme Regis, Redhill and Berkhamsted (probably at Ashlyns School and the Civic Centre.) As soon as the dates, some time in 2011, are known, members will be notified.

Programme 2010-2011 The new season opens on 15th September when Oonagh Kennedy will be speaking on 'The Walled-garden of Luton Hoo.' Oonagh is the Walled- Garden Research Co-ordinator and will, I am sure, provide us with an interesting introduction to the new season. We endeavour to provide as varied a programme as possible but welcome suggestions for new topics or the recommendation of good speakers.

The Chronicle VIII We shall soon be starting work on the next edition of *The Chronicle*. If any member has researched a topic of local history and would like to share the findings with other members please do get in touch.

Birtchnell's I am sure you will be aware that Birtchnell's shop is closing. We are grateful to Bob Clark for donating to the Society the remaining photographs and memorabilia, belonging to Percy, which were in the rooms above the shop. Among them are some very interesting old photographs, Percy's Hertfordshire Yeomanry uniform, a waistcoat and jacket made by a Berkhamsted tailor and the printing blocks for Percy's first book *A Short History of Berkhamsted*. These will be sorted and accessioned into our collection in the Museum Store.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and I look forward to seeing you all at the first meeting in September.

Jenny Sherwood, July 2010