



BERKHAMSTED LOCAL HISTORY AND MUSEUM SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 803417

www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk

Founded 1950 as Berkhamsted & District Local History Society

Spring Newsletter 2018

Alan Cummins

When Alan first joined the BLHMS committee he held a 4-digit phone number, which says something!

Initially, as a committee member, he reported from the Dacorum Museum Advisory Committee, who were considering the purchase of Lockers in Hemel Hempstead for the purpose of creating a Dacorum Museum. He was delighted to then be commissioned to research Public Houses in Berkhamsted for The Hertfordshire Magazine. Right up his street! He became assistant treasurer to Mr. CHC Kingham in 1987. In those days he collected subs and kept the membership lists. It was under his auspices that subs were raised from £1 to £2 to keep the society in the black, something we are pleased to report he has maintained ever since. He took over as Treasurer in 1989, and I can record his first balanced books came in at £109.03 in the black. I am glad to report he has diligently maintained our books twenty-fold. Alan has decided to step down as Treasurer after 30 years, and we are most grateful for his attention to this that he has given, which leaves our accounts in excellent order. We are pleased he will remain as a committee member. Thank you Alan

Jimmie Honour

Over the years Jimmies contribution to the Society has been enormous, in the archives he meticulously accessioned the Percy Birtchnell/Bob Clark collection. As a token of which he was elected unanimously as a life member of the society and has stood as President for many years. Jimmie is standing down as our president and we thank him for being such a wonderful one. He did of course follow Jenny, his wife, who had been a previous President.

Electronic messaging

For this newsletter we can send it with the Chronicle. If we sent out the Chronicle by post it would cost in excess of £100 in postage. So, we send out as many as we can by hand. In future where there is nothing to send out other than printed sheets, we shall send the information out by email attachments and you can print your own. The cost of printing black only A4 sheets, folding, enveloping and then delivering by hand exceeds 30-man/woman hours! So this is the reason. We shall continue to deliver to members for whom we do not have emails. Please update Robin Gee if you have acquired email as this greatly assists us with communication. Please can those on email clarify that you are receiving emails from Robin and if not to check their Spam folders robin.gee@btinternet.com there is an important email which needs to be replied to on GDPR (data protection form).

read

'Your Berkhamsted' - The Parish Magazine

For many years Percy Birtchnell, and later John Cook, wrote local history articles for this monthly magazine. You can all of these articles on our website www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk. There are over 400 of these dating back to the 1940's. Jenny Sherwood continues with this tradition; do look at her very good and varied articles.

At our meetings Trish and Ken man (woman!) the bookstand at the back of the Hall. Not only that, but they sell books from their own collection (vast), adding to the Society's funds. Many thanks to them for this. Please support them.

Two of our committee members have made momentous changes to the historic fabric of our town. **Norman Groves** has spear-headed the creation of a Historic Hub which is bringing together the bodies of the town that are concerned with our history; they have gained a lottery grant to begin the journey. **Adrian Barham** has formed a Trust that will look after the town's interest in our castle and as part of that, has been donated the piece of land that lies between the castle and the New Road from an American pharmaceutical company, who owned it, together with some money to help its foundation. Many thanks to both of them.

Berkhamsted Heritage Hub thanks National Lottery players for £61,000 grant.

Norman Groves, Project Officer writes:-

For locals and visitors alike, our rich heritage is all too often hidden, disjointed, and hard to grasp. As one young person said during our market research "We know more about London!"

The time is right to join with local people and community groups in investigating how to bring this exciting past to life. The Heritage Hub project aims to join with partners to build a sense of "our place" by finding out

- what residents and groups feel would appeal to them to get delving into the local heritage
- the best ways of enthusing many more people, of all ages and backgrounds, including young people and families
- how the large collections of locked-away historic memorabilia can be best used to tell the stories
- How people representing sites and buildings with local heritage stories can plan and work together in a Network to make a much stronger impact, to the benefit of all.
- The feasibility and costs of establishing the Hub as a central support resource in a local heritage building (such as the Town Hall), and of mounting its key services. Or whether sustainability and accessibility are better achieved by strong online resources along with Network activities.
- if enthusiasm is strong to form an active team of Network representatives and others to make it all work

The Heritage Lottery Fund has now agreed (27th Feb 2018) that our ideas are well worth investing in, through a much appreciated grant of c£61,000. This, together with financial support from the Town Council (£3,500) and the History Society (£1,000), will enable wide consultations, detailed studies, and governance training, all supported and co-ordinated by

industry experts. We hope to listen to the views of many people in 2018 and 2019. Once the investigation stage is completed, we will assess and plan for the implementation stages. The Heritage Hub Project is led by BLHMS, with a project team involving Berkhamsted Town Hall Trust, Rectory Lane Cemetery Project, Berkhamsted and District Archaeological Society, and Dacorum Heritage Trust.

Berkhamsted Castle Trust

Adrian Barham, Chairman of the Trust writes:-

Members of the Committee have been involved with the establishment of a new registered charity called **Berkhamsted Castle Trust** (reg. no. 1176286) to focus specifically on providing education about, promoting and maintaining Berkhamsted Castle. It aims to foster the use and enjoyment of the castle by the public, and undertake historical research and archaeological investigation into the castle and people or events of historical significance connected to it. It will also be the recipient of a donation of part of the scheduled monument site from a US pharmaceutical company, to hold for the benefit of the public.

The new charity has also been registered with HMRC for Gift Aid purposes and donations can now be made online at donate.berkhamstedcastle.org.uk. You can also donate to Berkhamsted Castle Trust via text message on your mobile phone, by texting the words "MOAT00 £5" to 70070 to donate £5.

Berkhamsted's Coat of Arms

2018 marks the 400th anniversary of the Royal Charter incorporating the town as "The Bailiff and Burgesses of the Borough of Berkhamsted St. Peter", and of the granting to that incorporated entity of a coat of arms. Although the Town Council still uses the coat of arms as its own, the arms have never been legally transferred to it. In this 400th anniversary year, we would like to correct this oversight, and help to preserve this most visible symbol of the town's history, by applying for a Royal Licence from HM The Queen (which costs £3,550). It would be wonderful if we could raise the money to be able to resolve this legal anomaly in time for a Royal Licence to be issued on the actual day of the 400th anniversary, in late September. If you would be interested in pledging an amount of money towards the costs of applying for a Royal Licence, please e-mail: adrian.barham@blhms.org.uk or call 07834 163065

Dacorum Heritage Store

The DHT store continues to be closed for new objects. We have recently been offered the objects from the Northchurch Society and while they are being researched preparatory to them entering into our collection, there is nowhere for them to go. Dacorum are making a Lottery bid to develop the Bury building in Hemel as a Museum; even if this is successful, that facility will not be available till 2020/22.

Trip Programme for 2018

We run our trips in conjunction with the Berkhamsted Probus Club. We try to organize these trips where a midday meal is available for those that require it. The cost is usually between £20 and £30 pp. If you are interested please get in touch with Bill Willett (01442 863760 or bill@billwillett.co.uk)

31 May National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

On this trip, there is the opportunity to visit the Naval College, Cutty Sark and the Royal Observatory. At the NMS there is a photographic exhibition 'The Great British Seaside.'
(Entrance fee, but the Museum is free)

2 August Althorpe House.

This house is to the north of Northampton and is the home of the Spencer family. Princess Diana is buried there. The house (with its picture collection) and gardens are superb.

27 September Blenheim Palace

This is well-established on the Tourist-Trail but we have never been there. It is truly a Palace set in a Capability Brown landscape and the home of the Duke(s) of Marlborough.

Heritage Open Days: 6th -9th September and 13th -16th September.

This year for the first time the Heritage Open Days will be held on two weekends. The main, older established event are likely to be held on the first weekends but a selection of guided tours, still being arranged, are likely to be held on the second weekend. We hope this will make it easier for visitors to fit in most of the events on offer. Events will be registered with HOD by the end of April so there is still time to suggest new sites to visit. Please contact Jenny Sherwood 865158 or Sandra Lawman 870504.

Thank you to all those who have volunteered to man the Castle Visitor Room for the coming season. Also a thank-you to our new rota co-ordinator Andrew Holder for taking on the task from Brian Norris N.B. The Castle opens for the season on Easter Saturday 31st March/Easter Sunday 1st April/ Monday 2nd April, then not again until the First Bank Holiday weekend May 5th/6th/7th, then every weekend as usual 10-6 until the Autumn.

We hope to see you on some of the trips during the summer. Our new programme resumes on Weds 26th September with a talk about Berkhamsted's charter and coat of arms - the 400th anniversary by Patric Dickinson LVO who has served as Clarenceux King of Arms since 2010. A respected genealogist, he has worked at the College of Arms in London since 1968.

Mary Casserley, Chairman, March 2018

