



BERKHAMSTED LOCAL HISTORY AND MUSEUM SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 803417

www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk

Founded 1950 as Berkhamsted & District Local History Society

BLH&MS Summer newsletter 2023

We welcome our 6 new members, which brings our membership to 200.

Ashridge WAAT (Wednesdays at Adelaide Tower)

The cataloguing and digitisation of the new items held at the Adelaide Tower; Ashridge House is ongoing. Our volunteers meet every Wednesday morning to digitise and catalogue. We have nearly completed the Northchurch Collection photographs. Several interesting items and photographs enabled **Janice Boakes** to create a film and display to complement the town's Coronation party of 20th Century Coronation Celebrations in the Civic Centre which we hope you all saw and enjoyed.

To create a lasting memorial to Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, **Berkhamsted school** has planted an English oak tree in Tompkins Meadow. The tree's presence will serve not only as a reminder of Her Late Majesty, but of the strength, longevity and stability that underpinned her reign; qualities symbolised by oak, and which make it an especially fitting choice as a memorial tree.

Your archivist **Janice Boakes** contributes monthly on "*One thousand Years of Berkhamsted*" feature in *Berkhamsted News* free magazine and **Jenny Sherwood** writes local history articles monthly for *Your Berkhamsted* the Parish magazine. **Linda Rollitt** posts on our BLHMS Facebook page regularly. She also manages our website, so lots of local history continuous titbits for you to tide you over until September when our talks resume.

Berkhamsted Castle Trust report: In keeping with 'The Big Help Out'- King Charles III volunteering legacy volunteers are on site at the weekends May-Sept. We would always welcome more. Historic England now offers FREE passes to volunteers. How's that for an incentive for sitting in the sun? Two performances of Macbeth were performed in June. A Development Plan for the Castle is underway. The Castle's 17th century cottage is now Grade II listed.

The cottage started life as a stable and brewhouse in the 16th c. An upper storey was created in the early 19th c. A scrapbook belonging to Lady Marian Alford, the wife of the owner mentions an extension was built in 1865, which linked the cottage to a new building that acted as a soup kitchen for the poor – 'the soup-house at the Castle grounds' was mentioned in the Bucks Advertiser & Aylesbury News 26th January 1867. See also article in the Chronicle (XIII 2016) To protect those queuing to receive their soup to the kitchen door, another veranda was added to form a covered walkway.



Harry Sheldon Watercolour of the Lodge courtesy Adrian Barham

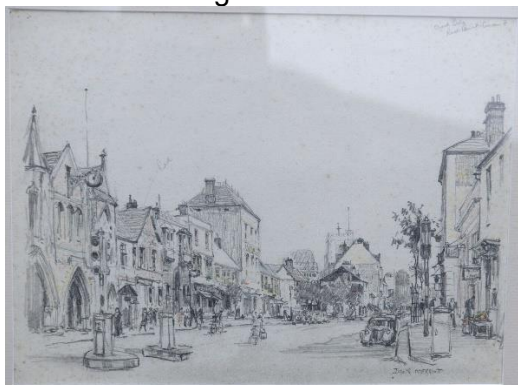
From the Archives: A ROYAL “AGITATION” Percy Birtchnell July 1977

While the Kings Coronation is still a happy and recent memory, you may like to know that an earlier royal occasion had some very nasty undertones. In July 1902, everybody was looking forward to Coronation Day. It was to be a public holiday, and plans were made for festivities. However, Edward VII fell ill, and the ceremony was postponed. Incensed by the loss of a holiday (and free beer), gangs of men roamed around, brawling, and threatening the organisers.

Crowds gathered outside the King's Arms, and one man shouted: “*There may as well be a riot at Berkhamsted as anywhere else.*” A policeman was struck by a whip, and four Berkhamsted men were charged with being drunk and disorderly: the *Gazette* commenting those troubles at Berkhamsted as an “agitation”, not a riot. Edward VII soon recovered and the postponed Coronation celebrations at Berkhamsted were enjoyed by all on the great day, if not the morning after.

Recent Acquisitions

We have received a donation of a large oil painting of the field by Bell Lane by Olive Walker, it will be on show at our September talk. Olive Walker ran an art gallery in the Dower House. We were also fortunate to be able to purchase from ebay (with assistance from a charitable and generous benefactor) the original artwork/drawing by Jack Merriot for his watercolour of Berkhamsted High St used as an LMS railway advertising poster 1940's. Below:



Heritage Open Days September 2023

Sandra Jenkins reports the following **FREE** tours: This year's theme is “The Arts” All places must be booked via Eventbrite and are **FREE**. Bookings open 4th August

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/> See all the HOD nationwide events here:

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk>

Date	time	Description	
Sept 8 th	2.30pm	The Secret side of Berkhamsted:	Family Event to discover the darker side of Berkhamsted, with former documentaries producer Dan Perry
9 th	10am	Crusaders, Murders and Ghosts	
16 th	10am	Meet at Castle gates	
9 th	10-4pm - 1hr sessions on the hour	Church Clay Build and Tile making in St Peter's Church	Family Event to create clay windows, doors, roof tiles and other features of the church with members of Berkhamsted's Art Society & Open-Door Pottery Shed members on hand to help. Tiles created to take home.
		Meet at St Peter's Church	
9 th	2pm	Graham Greene's Common	A 2-mile woodland walk past the former WW11 trenches, including readings from Graham Greene's
		Meet at car Park opposite The Inns of court memorial	

			novels
9 th	2pm	A Radical Village, The Baptists in Northchurch Meet at N'church Social Club	An introductory talk outlining the strength of non-conformists in the area.
17 th	10.30am & 2pm	Old Hall and Chapel Berkhamsted School Meet at Berkhamsted School Castle St entrance	Visitors will have the opportunity of seeing the original schoolhouse built in 1544 (Grade I listed), to learn the history of the school (founded in 1541) and see the beautiful Victorian chapel.
10 th	1.30 and 3pm	Berkhamsted Foundling Hospital Meet at Ashlyns School	Two former Foundlings will tell their experience of what life was like for the children in Berkhamsted Foundling hospital 1935-55
10 th	3pm	St Peter's Church and Courthouse Meet at St Peter's Church	A detailed tour of the church pointing out important architectural and historical features and a visit to the Tudor Court House.
11 th & 15 th	1pm	Art of Berkhamsted Now and Then Meet at Castle gates	An artistic meander through Berkhamsted highlighting views painted by artists over the years and to see how landscapes and scenery has changed.
13 th & 16 th	10.30am	The Lost Wharves of Berkhamsted Meet at bridge over canal by Bank Mill Lane	A guided tour of yesterday's canal
14 th	2pm	A Walk Back in Time Meet at Castle gates	A guided tour of Berkhamsted's Historic town. Starting at the Castle gates, walking on down Castle Street onto the High St en-route there is much to see and explain
15 th & 16 th	11am	A Walk in the Past- Berkhamsted Place Meet at top of Castle Hill/ Murray Rd.	Visitors will experience something of the grandeur of what remains of the original 'Royal' Mansion. Tours will include a visit to the Great Barn - older than the mansion. There will be a small display explaining the history of the house and of Reg Butler's work - a sculptor who once lived here.
16 th	10.30am & 2pm	Berkhamsted's Finest Architect Charles Henry Rew Meet at All Saints Church.	This tour celebrates the remarkable but largely forgotten legacy of Charles Henry Rew who designed a lot of Edwardian /Victorian Berkhamsted buildings.

Mary Casserley- Chairman