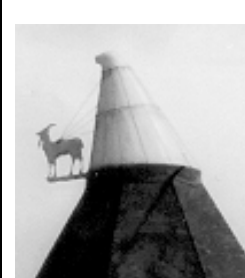


*Burton & District Family History Society Newsletter

* Burton & District Family History Society is a branch of the Birmingham & Midland Society for Genealogy & Heraldry



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Editor's Comments:

As members will know, the Burton Branch does not have a meeting in August. However, with this really lovely weather we are having just now, why not get out and about and carry out that "long-promised to yourself" piece of family history research? If you do, and you find something interesting, please let your Editor know for future inclusion in Newsletters. It is always heartening to read about other members' successes, however small. Your Editor would like to thank members Janet K, Delia and Roy for their contributions to this Newsletter, especially the *breaking news* by Janet regarding the digital images of Staffordshire Parish Records on page 5 of this Newsletter. Your Editor hopes you all have a very pleasant summer break – we'll meet again in September. (Future meeting dates are on page 6.)

Top genealogist backs BMD petition

<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/>

After being mentioned in a newsletter about the petition to make historic BMD registers for England & Wales available online, the number of signatories more than doubled - but the target of 100,000 signatories is still a long, long way off. Now top genealogist Else Churchill has

given her backing in an article in the May 2014 issue of *Your Family Tree*. Else was not only one of the top speakers at *Genealogy in the Sunshine* last month, she's also the genealogist at the Society of Genealogists - and you can't get more prestigious than that! Only UK residents and UK citizens can sign the petition but - and this is the good news - you don't have to be a family historian. If every family historian who signs the petition can persuade friends and members of their family to sign the target will soon be reached! You'll find the petition at <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/62779>

Petition to open historic registers

Responsible department: Home Office e petition website. We ask that historic birth marriage & death registers be open to public inspection at county record offices or the National Archives.

Until 1973 registers of BMD held at superintendent registrar's offices were open to public inspection.

Today's technology available allows the registers to be digitized and made available as facsimile copies protecting the original from damage. Commercial concerns are willing to scan the registers and make them available online under licence at no cost to the public purse.

A new accurate index of BMDs could be compiled by volunteers thereby complying with the 1836 legislation for the first time in 177 years. The benefits include taking pressure off Superintendent Registrars and the GRO enabling them to concentrate on the core task of recording & administering current registrations. Revenue would be created for the County Record Offices or the National Archives swelling the government coffers. All at no cost to the taxpayer or government.

London Gazette site update causes problems.

Findmypast aren't the only people to cause consternation by changing their site the [London Gazette](#) now has a new website which "has been digitally transformed, both inside and out, to deliver a more feature and functionality rich resource for all of its customers". Supposedly all of their articles have been recategorised, going right back to 1665 - but if you search for wills it only lists the last 10 years.

Historical directories free online. For many years the Historical Directories site run by the University of Leicester has closed - you'll now find the directories at <http://cdm16445.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16445coll4>, on the university's *Special Collections Online* website. There are 675 directories in all, covering most of England & Wales.

In Australia the city of Sydney has made available online digitised copies of the Sands Sydney, Suburban and Country Commercial Directory, which covers most years from 1858-1933 - you can search them at www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/learn/history/search-our-collections/sands-directory.

Meeting Summaries:

April 2014: Border Hoppers by Jaqui Simkins.

The majority of us have families who hop between parishes and across County boundaries. However, sometimes three or even

four counties are very close together. The most problematic junction near Burton is that of Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Ancestors could be born, baptised, married, died and buried in different parishes and counties although only a few miles apart. With changing county boundaries some parishes even changed county and consequently diocese and where records are held. Jaqui reminded us of all the problems that this could cause and that Family Historians must be prepared to do a lot of searching. Sometimes parishes have the same time such as St Mary's at Atherstone, Lichfield and Warwickshire; some parts of parishes are detached and others may be divided by another parish. Jaqui also reminded us of the many records available to prove (or disprove) a relationship, the need to accept variant spellings for people and places and to consider the reasons why our ancestors moved.

May 2014: an Evaluation of the three main Family History websites by Sue W. Sue stepped in to replace the advertised speaker and gave us a talk she had given to the U3A. She insisted that we all participate and discuss and share their experiences or the talk would not last very long! Sue had researched the records provided, ease of use and cost of Ancestry.co.uk, Findmypast.co.uk and TheGenealogist.co.uk.

Ancestry has the biggest set of records and extensive world-wide records and is excellent for London Parish Registers. It is available free at most libraries so you can save money by subscribing to another website at home. However, it tends to search in an illogical and unfathomable way producing results that are nowhere near the search parameters. There appear to be more transcription errors and corrections are difficult to report.

Findmypast has fewer collections, Scottish records and is becoming the preferred website for Parish Records. Finding the records you want is easier, the transcriptions are better and it is easy to report errors. However, members expressed concern that the new search facility,

claimed to be easier for beginners to use, lacked the rigour of the previous search facility.

The Genealogist has many of the same records as the other two websites. A few members had tried the site but did not find it as easy to use and saw no advantage in subscribing.

Sue compared standard level, UK and World-wide subscriptions. All gave slightly different access but Ancestry was the most expensive and the Genealogist the cheapest with Findmypast giving a loyalty bonus on renewal. It was generally agreed that ancestry and Findmypast were the most useful and many subscribed to both. Some use Ancestry at the library and Findmypast at home but for serious family historians being able to access records at any time of the day or night without booking constraints and saving time travelling to archives far outweighed subscription costs. A total of about £285 for World membership costs just over £5 per week. And more records including copies of the originals are put on line daily.

June 2014: Visit to Tutbury Museum and Guided Walk around Tutbury. About sixteen members divided into two groups. One group left for a walk around the strategically important mediaeval settlement overlooked by the castle and church. We learnt about the simultaneous arrival of non-conformism and the glass-making industry, both from Stourbridge about two hundred years ago and the markets and hiring fairs held in Lower High Street and looked at some of the old buildings along High Street, Monk Street, Ludgate Street and Duke Street on our way up to the Church where we admired the architecture and the alabaster carving around the west door. In the museum we were told about its development and the acquisition of its fascinating collection of artefacts, photos and records donated by local people and businesses. Everything has been carefully catalogued and computerised for ease of access by family and local historians. Several members were given some useful information and if you were one of them could you let your

Editor have a few details of what you learnt for the next newsletter?

Our very many thanks to the volunteers (Jeanne and Robert Minchin, Chris Tipper and our own Margaret Bowring) who gave up their evening to help us. If you have an interest in Tutbury please use this archive.

Events attended:

De Ferrers Academy and Local Community

WW1 Event: We helped quite a few local people with making a start or progressing with their family history and finding WW1 ancestors. Despite being aimed at Year 9 pupils there were very few there! There were some computer problems because we like mice and the internet security settings did not like family history website names!! It was interesting to see what various parishes are doing.

BBC Radio Stoke WW1 event: We were roped in to give advice in case there were any East Staffordshire questions. No-one had but we did help visitors despite our very limited knowledge of the Stoke area and hope that we boosted membership of the North Staffs Branch. One visitor began by telling me that he had no idea how to trace his father's Polish ancestry – a classic 'I can't, but I know someone who can' scenario. His father came from the Ukraine and Janet Kisz was able to give him a lot of advice.

Stretton Community Day: Compared with previous years we had very few requests for help although Janet Kisz had another Polish ancestry question! However, magazines, programmes and membership information were handed out and we hope to see several new faces on Wednesday. Delia went on the guided tour of Stretton Church. The original Chapel of Ease was built in 1837, in 1873 Stretton-cum-Wetmore became a separate parish and the new church paid for by various wealthy local people was consecrated in 1897. John Gretton specified that the church 'be built of nothing but the best'. Renowned London craftsmen were employed to provide the

stained glass windows, to carve the Durham marble font and the woodwork and to apply gold leaf to the organ pipes. One of the windows is the village war memorial. An interesting scrapbook details events in the Church's history from 1837. It's open every day so do visit.

Many thanks to all the committee members who came to help with these events, although they aren't exclusive to the committee.

Future Events:

Saturday 19th July: The Ridwares and Armitage (and surrounding parishes) WW1 Event t Hill Ridware Village Hall, 2 – 5 pm. Admission free.

Friday 25th – Monday 28th July: The Magic Attic WW1 Commemoration Exhibition. 10 00 am – 4.00 pm.

Monday 4th August: Unveiling of a sundial in Roma's garden, Egginton Road, to commemorate all those from Hilton and Marston parish who served in any conflict. Hilton Methodist Chapel will be open afterwards with history displays.

Saturday 9th August: Kings Bromley WW1 Event.

Saturday 9th August: Worcester Family History Fair at Worcester City Football Ground.

Sunday 10th August: Rolleston-on-Dove 'Lest We Forget' Memories, pictures, archive records and music to commemorate those who served in WW1 and their families. Rolleston Church at 7.00 pm. £5 entry for the Almshouses Restoration Appeal.

Saturday 13th September: U3A F H Conference and stalls at Buxton Pavilion. Contact Sue for details.

Saturday 20th September: Derby FHS trip to Kew for the National Archives and the Gardens. Coach leaves Hilton 7.00 am, Derby 7.30 am.

Returns to Derby about 7.30 pm. Cost £15. Contact Delia for details.

Monday 6th October – Friday 28th November: Staffordshire Hoard Mercian Trail Exhibition at St Wystans Church, Repton.

Find My Past is expanding its coverage

Those who like to compare the various offerings of the major players in the genealogy industry online will no doubt be aware that **Find My Past** has been making a great fuss over its acquisition on 23 June 2014 of **Mocavo**, a for-profit genealogy search engine operated by a privately held internet company based in Boulder, Colorado. Mocavo was founded in 2011 and made a great feature of its intention to be different - to keep its content free forever. However, many users have challenged this claim as highly misleading. Buying up Mocavo has given Find My Past access to a lot of US material. This strengthening of Find My Past's portfolio comes shortly after they bought out Origins.net, which focused on providing access to some harder-to-find British and Irish records. These recent acquisitions put Find My Past/Mocavo (owned by DC Thomson) in a strong competitive position with the other three major online genealogy groupings: Ancestry, FamilySearch and MyHeritage.

The Burton Local Studies and Family History Collection

has been moved into different accommodation within Burton Library. On entering the library by the main doors from the car park, the new room will be found on the ground floor over to the right-hand side beyond the service desk. It is rumoured that the old room will become part of the premises used by Burton Registration Office, who will leave their retro Georgian style building in High Street.

More service records become available

Another batch of service records has been made available to assist those researching individuals who saw active service during the Great War. **Find My Past** announced on 30 June 2014 that they were making available the service records of some 450,000 officers and

men who served with the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Air Force. Most of the records date from the period 1912-1939.

Digital images of some Staffordshire parish records

Digital images of some Staffordshire parish records are now available on **Find My Past** as part of what will be their Staffordshire collection. A list of the parishes and dates covered so far is available at http://www.findmypast.co.uk/articles/staffordshire-parish-records-coverage?_ga=1.253050633.1010886862.1367779866

Some words of caution, however. Some local parishes have not been included such as Barton under Needwood, Newchurch (Christ Church on Needwood), Abbots Bromley, Ellastone and Rocester. None of the Lichfield parishes have been included as yet. Some parishes are listed with strange dedications such as Tatenhill St Mary and All Angels, which indicates a bit of sloppiness on FMP's part. They also claim to have baptisms, marriages and burials for Burton Holy Trinity for dates in the 1500s. This is rather surprising as the church was not opened until 1824! It's clear that some records for Burton St Modwen's have been mislabelled. Searching on Burton on Trent and Burton upon Trent produces different results.

Let's hope these are just teething troubles and that the quality of the transcriptions themselves is better. Happy hunting!

Lost Cousins' website

Our member Roy has sent in the following information regarding the June Newsletter of the Lost Cousins:

It's a great time to research your family tree, with loads of new records online:

Findmypast offer alternative to football
Ancestry index millions of extra names from WW1 records
WW1 paintings online
Electoral register dispute settled
Who Do You Think You Are? Live moves in 2015
Origins & Mocavo bought by findmypast
The dangers of online trees
Genes Reunited introduce 1 month subscription
French "Sherlock Holmes" anticipated
LostCousins system
Interesting events at the Society of Genealogists
Millions more Lancashire records online
Icelanders hang on to their genes
Irish petty sessions collection continues to grow
Findmypast well on the way to target
Late registration of deaths prompts letter to PM
Corrections on certificates
Do you collect rubbish?
Peter's Tips

To read the articles please access:

<http://www.lostcousins.com/newsletters/latejun14news.htm>

Future Branch Meetings:

There is no meeting in August 2014.

17th September 2014. WW1 memorabilia and Short Talks. Election of Branch Officers.
Members' evening but open to visitors.

15th October 2014. Philip Astley and the Modern Circus. Speaker: Patsie Jarman.

19th November 2014. Free Websites.
Members' evening but open to visitors.