

The History of Reading Society



The object of the Society is to cultivate interest in and to encourage research into the history of the town of Reading

Chair & Newsletter Editor John Dearing 27 Sherman Road READING RG1 2PJ Tel: 0118 958 0377	Hon Secretary Eddy Hooper	Treasurer & Membership John Starr	Programme Organiser Vicki Chesterman 7 Norman Road Caversham READING RG4 5JN Tel: 0118 947 3443
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No 26

EDITORIAL

This is likely to be my last Editorial as Chairman of the Society although, unless there is someone else with a burning desire to do the job, I expecting to continue as Editor under the "new regime". We are into a new year and what a year of anniversaries this is! The 400th anniversary of the "King James Bible", still probably the best known translation despite the plethora of modern versions. Closer to home it is 100 years since Caversham became a part of Reading Borough and much longer ago it was in 1311 that the Greyfriars arrived in Reading. They disappeared with the dissolution of the monasteries but the name survived and we still have the remains of the glorious church they built, restored by our Victorian forefathers. Some readers may recall that shortly before her untimely death Elspet Naish treated us to a very fine talk on the Greyfriars in Reading.

Continuing with this "churchy" theme, some with long memories may recall a visit by this Society to St James RC Church in the Forbury one summer when, in the absence of any "official historian" at the church, the present writer had to cover up his Protestant sympathies and act as guide!

Happily this has all changed and under the inspiration of a new Parish Priest, Father John O'Shea, the church is busy collating and recording its archives and that of its daughter church, St William of York. If any readers have access to any relevant material they are invited to contact : Mr Mike Keep, 12 The Triangle, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4RN.

Father O'Shea has also launched a campaign to commemorate a significant event in Catholic history that occurred in Reading on August 27th 1849. This was the death aged 57 of an Italian priest, the Blessed Dominic Barbieri, who was sent to England in 1841 as a member of the

Passionist Order to propagate the Roman faith. He is perhaps best remembered for receiving John Henry Newman into the church in 1845. He suffered a heart attack four years later on a railway journey from London to Worcester but after leaving the train at Pangbourne found that there was "no room at the inn", as the two hotels in the village apparently suspected him of having contracted cholera in the big city. So he was taken back to Reading where he died at the more compassionate Railway Tavern, Caversham Road (later the Duke of Edinburgh). St James' wish to erect a plaque on the site of the inn and would welcome any offers of assistance from members of the society. Again please contact Mr Keep if you can help.

NOTICE OF 34th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Abbey Baptist Church, Reading, 7.30 p.m. Wednesday 16th March 2011

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Apologies.
2. Approval of Minutes of 2010 AGM.
3. Matters Arising.
4. Chairman's Report and Review.
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Election of Officers and Committee for 2011/12.

Present Officers

Chairman	John Dearing**	Willing to stand again Retiring
Vice Chairman:	Sidney Gold	✓
Secretary	Eddy Hooper	✓
Treasurer	John Starr	✓

Present Committee

Vicki Chesterman	✓
[Programme Organiser]	
John Whitehead [Publicity]	✓

** Also Newsletter Editor.

7. To elect an Independent Examiner of Accounts.
8. Any Other Business

The formal proceedings will be followed by a talk entitled "Berkshire Manorial Records" given by Sarah Charlton, Archivist at The Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, Aylesbury.

There are at present no nominations for Chairman, although a member has expressed an interest in taking over the post. More will be revealed at the AGM. The retiring Chairman, John Dearing, is willing to continue as Newsletter Editor. Proposed by Eddy Hooper, Seconded by Sidney Gold. The Committee propose Sean Duggan as a Committee Member, Proposed By Sidney Gold, Seconded by Eddy Hooper. Other nominations for Officer or other seats on the Committee should be given to the Secretary prior to the opening of the meeting, together with the names of the Proposer, Seconder and agreement of the nominee.

Please note that subscriptions to the Society have been due since 1st January. You need to be a fully paid-up member to nominate an officer or vote at the AGM. Please pay Nine Pounds to the Treasurer as soon as possible, if you have not already done so.

NORMAN WICKS

It is sad to have to record the passing of our oldest member, Norman Wicks, who has died peacefully and at home, aged 99. Until very recently Norman was a regular attendee at our meetings and himself gave a number of talks, notably on Reading's royal wedding – in 1359. He also contributed to this Newsletter. His funeral will be at St Peter's Church, Earley at 10.30 on Thursday 17 February.