

THE HISTORY OF READING SOCIETY

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April, 1978.

Dear Member,

After a very successful inaugural meeting, your committee has been hard at work planning the Summer programme. We hope that everyone will find something of interest in it.

Dates for your diary.

Thursday, 11th May, at St. Mary's Church in CASTLE STREET.  
7.30 p.m. for 8 p.m.

Talk by Peter Southerton on 'Cages, Gaols and Prisons' - the history of Reading's penal establishments.

Peter, who is the Society's Chairman, is the author of 'The Story of a Prison', a definitive history of Reading Gaol. This meeting takes place at St. Mary's Church which stands on the site of the ancient County Gaol. We hope that members will have an opportunity to look over the building before the meeting.

Sunday, 16th July. A Reading walkabout led by Ken Major and Jane Wight. Meet outside the Jolly Porter (opposite Railway Station) 2.30 p.m. The walk will take about two hours.

Ken Major is a well known writer and lecturer on industrial archaeology and is an authority on wind and water power. Jane Wight who has made a special study of bricks and brickwork is also known for her writing and exhibitions. If the weather is kind, this should prove a stimulating safari.

Date yet to be fixed. A conducted tour of COURAGE'S BREWERY followed by a buffet meal and a sampling of the finished product.

The party must be limited to 30. If you would like further details when firm arrangements have been made, please complete the slip at the foot of this newsletter and return to me before May 28th.

Summer Project

Due to the ravages of the weather, atmospheric pollution and, I am sorry to say, sheer vandalism, the inscriptions on the various tombstones and monuments in St. Mary's and St. Giles' Churchyards are fast disappearing. A great service to local historical recording would be rendered by the compilation of an up to date record of these. A group of volunteers is required to transcribe the inscriptions onto special record cards and to photograph or draw the various tombstones. It is hoped that Ms Sue Lobb, Field Officer of the Berks Archaeological Unit will advise us.

If you would like to take part, please complete the slip below and return to me as soon as possible. A meeting will then be arranged to review the task and to prepare a plan of campaign.

Special Interests

I would be pleased to hear from Members concerning their special interests and whether they are currently engaged on any study or project. It is possible that through the medium of the newsletter we may be able to put you in touch with fellow members with similar interests.

Mrs Mary Southerton of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who is working on a study of Reading's BROAD STREET from 1800 to the present day would appreciate information concerning the various businesses carried on in that street and their proprietors. Photos and advertising material which could be made available on loan will be treated with the greatest of care.

Has anyone any information concerning Mrs Elizabeth Soper, gunsmith, or of the Pecover family?

We look forward to seeing you all at St. Mary's Church on the 11th May and at future meetings. Your news and views for inclusion in future newsletters, too, will be welcome.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Dils

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I/We are interested in the tour of Courage's Brewery and would like further details. It is anticipated that tickets will be required.

Name .....

Address .....

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Please return to Mrs J. Dils, [REDACTED]

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I/We would like to assist in the recording project at St. Mary's Churchyard. I/We can help with copying/photography/drawing \* (please delete as appropriate).

Name .....

Address .....

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