



July 2023 E-Newsletter

FAREWELL AND THANKS JACKIE

Sadly Jackie Cotterill the General Secretary and the Editor of this Newsletter formally resigned at the AGM. She announced her intention to stand down at the AGM in her final edition of this newsletter at the end of April. After around 20 years in post who can blame her when she says she has done enough?

Over those years the Society has seen many changes – a new Constitution, a new Membership Management system, the use of Zoom triggered by Covid, this Newsletter (started on her own initiative) and the more widespread use of technology as a Society. It is all now part of our daily lives.

Jackie has been at the forefront of the Society's efforts to adopt and embrace all of these along with work related to indexes, projects, outreach events, fairs and the like.

We thank her for the unstinting commitment she has shown over those years.

WELCOME TO KIM WALKER our new General Secretary

By the time you read this, I will have met with Jackie, the outgoing General Secretary for the 'handover' and I am under no illusion that I will need to walk before I can run! A massive thanks to her dedication - if the Society issued medals, she deserved one!

We all have an interest in family history and mine started with discovering a 20"x 16" oval card photograph of my great grandfather William HOLLOWAY (1884-1917) in full army uniform - The Royal Warwicks. If I had not been curious as to what lay on top of my late grandfather's wardrobe when clearing his house, I would not be writing this introduction. The photo is damaged - not being in a frame and I have applied to the BBC's - 'The Repair Shop'. We shall see! My family history journey started that day, and I was hooked.

Later, whilst lying in a hospital bed, a kind couple - complete strangers- gave me a family history magazine to read. Night school classes with a brilliant tutor, Ann Ash, in the 1980's helped with my understanding of how and where to start and I joined the BMSGH (as it was then). My biggest regret is that I never enquired into my history when my grandparents were alive. It would have saved me hours of research. My only claim to fame was according to my dad - my GGgrandfather was footman to Joseph Chamberlain. But what a journey to date and it continues!

My research has enriched my life in so many ways - finding long lost cousins to become great friends, travelling to places I had never heard of and collaborating with the transcribers who are still working on the Warwickshire Parish Project with me. Yes, folks volunteering can make one nervous at first for all sorts of reasons, but I would urge anyone to have a go - you just might enjoy it!

So, to the future - exciting times for the Society. It is an honour to have joined the team who work so hard in the background ensuring the Society runs smoothly. I hope that I can bring fresh ideas and, with members' help, move Midland Ancestors forward. If you have any ideas or suggestions that you would like discussing with the Executive Committee please email me at k.walker@mid-anc.uk



NEW EDITOR

I'm Jacqui Kirk, retired professional genealogist and archival researcher. Some of you will know me from the Covid weekly newsletter I edited back in lockdown. When Jackie Cotterill resigned I agreed to take over the Midlands Ancestor Newsletter.

I hope you like the new look. Do share this newsletter with anyone who is interested.

BIRMINGHAM EVENTS

Venue : BMI 9 Margaret Street Birmingham B3 3BS

MOBILITY IN YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

Saturday 1 July 2023 at 2pm

Speaker: Dr Mike Haynes

"Human beings are always restless. Throughout history we have moved in different ways. We can migrate to live in different places.

But mobility is something different. It is about our journeys to work, to school, the trips to the shops, our holidays. Mobility takes us from our homes and back again."



This talk is about how this mobility has changed over the last centuries – the first trips our ancestors took,

their travel to work, their holidays. Who was the first to have a cycle, a driving licence, a car. And when did we first take to the air?

NATIONAL ARCHIVES INTRODUCTORY SESSION

Saturday 29 July at 10am in the Family History Centre, Kingsley Norris Room at the BMI

Intended for those who have possibly wanted to visit the National Archives, found their website a little daunting and then left it at that. Also for those who have visited perhaps just once and felt they have not had the best out of it.

This is a group participation live computer assessment of the TNA website and their Discovery search engine, finding out how to be undaunted by it so that you can make the most of your visit.

You can use your own laptop or suitable mobile device and tap in to the BMI WiFi or use the society computers. The session lasts about 2.5 hours, with places strictly limited. It includes some handouts and time for some 1 to 1 afterwards.

Cost: £5 in advance which can be considered as part payment for a seat on either of the next two coaches to Kew.

Register your interest: coachtrips@midanc.uk

ONLINE SELF-HELP WORKSHOP

Wednesday 19 July 2023 at 7pm

Via Zoom see <https://midland-ancestors.uk/event/on-line-members-self-help-workshop-7/> for details

An online informal workshop where you can hear about other members research experiences - how they knocked down their brick walls, what new websites they found, how they got to grips with better known and the more obscure websites, about archives or libraries, or how they tackled computer problems plus Tips & Tricks to help with research or software and all the issues that family historians frequently come up against.

These workshops have a fairly loose format and may go all over the place but that is half the fun! Recent topics have been pre 1841 census material, Ethics in Family History, Army service during 1st WW. Local interest has included Castle Bromwich Hall & Gardens, street names in Redditch. In May Sandra Robinson gave a workshop on Huguenot Ancestry and June was mainly about maps.

We always try to get just a tiny bit of technology and have covered fonts for family history write ups and storing lists in spreadsheets.

Don't be shy - you **do not** need to be an experienced researcher to contribute an issue or topic for discussion. If you have a query or are stuck somewhere let us know (in advance if possible) at eventsonline@mid-anc.uk and we can talk about it at the meeting.

NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE GROUPS



SPOTLIGHT ON THE LONDON GROUP



A branch of Midland Ancestors has existed in London for almost twenty-five years. Its chair, Dave Kerr, tells me that this should really be called the "London and South-East England" branch as not many of the members actually live in London. At the last meeting there were attendees from Oxfordshire, Bedford, St Albans, Horsham and other parts of the Home Counties. But the furthest travelled came from Stone in Staffordshire! The average distance travelled by each attendee was around 120 miles. It is an early start for many but they normally have a dozen to fifteen attendees who have become good friends over the years.

Meetings take place in the friendly Wesley's Chapel in City Road near Old Street tube station, meeting from 10am

If you live within commutable distance you are warmly invited to the branch's meetings so contact Dave for more details and to be placed on the mailing list:

david.b.kerr@btinternet.com

INSANITY

Our next event is Kathy Chater talking about Insanity on 8 July (see next page)

SHOT AT DAWN (rearranged from May)



Speaker: **David Bardell**

Tuesday 3 July at 7.30pm - North Staffordshire Group – St John's Centre, Newcastle Road, Stoke on Trent ST4 6QD

MEMBERS EVENING SUMMER REFRESHMENTS

Wednesday 12 July at 7.30pm - Kenilworth & District Group – The Kenilworth Centre CV8 1QJ

SUMMER EVENING VISIT TO ENVILLE CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD

Tuesday 18 July at 7.30pm - Stourbridge and District Group St Peter's Church Centre, Pedmore DY9 0SW

HISTORY OF THE FORMER WOLVERHAMPTON ROYAL HOSPITAL

Wednesday 26 July at 7.30 pm - Wolverhampton & District Group Perton Civic Centre Church Road Wolverhampton WV6 7PD

This is a talk based around Roy Stallard's DVD.

HELP WANTED

We always need volunteers of various kinds check out:

<https://midland-ancestors.uk/volunteering-opportunities/>

PROJECTS OFFICER

To oversee and coordinate our projects.

Coordinates those volunteers who are engaged in project work, monitoring progress and ensuring that there is no duplication of effort. Flexible hours.

Contact Kim Walker our General Secretary for more details: gensec@mid-anc.uk

LONDON EVENT – “INSANITY” Speaker: Kathy Chater

Saturday 8 July at 10.15am - London Group – Venue Wesley’s Chapel & Leysian Mission 49 City Road London EC1Y 1AU

This talk offers clues about possible sufferers from mental illness in the family, what kinds of records there are and where to look for them.

Kathy Chater has been tracing her own ancestry for over forty years. She is the author of “My Ancestor Was A Lunatic” (2014); “Tracing Your Huguenot Ancestors” (2012); “The Reformation in 100 Facts” (2016) and “Tracing Your Family Tree in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales” (2nd ed. 2008)

PACIFISTS AND CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS IN YOUR FAMILY? – YOUR HELP WANTED

Was anyone in your family a pacifist between the wars or a conscientious objector in WW2?

Open University PhD student **Phil Lines** is researching the interwar peace movement and conscientious objection in WW2 and is keen to find written interviews, oral recordings, memoirs or letters relating to this across Britain - or any information about family members who campaigned for peace and refused to fight or perhaps changed their mind and joined the forces. Much has been written about conscientious objection in WW1 but there has been much less research about it in WW2 even though there were many more in terms of numbers.

Contact: phillines53@gmail.com

STOP PRESS: At the 10 June AGM the Constitution was amended - Clause 10 (g) “A quorum shall now be 30 members”

CONTACT THE EDITOR

A newsletter is only as good as the news it contains.

Email me:

newsletter@mid-anc.uk

if you have any news or articles!

SoG RAILWAY WORKERS DAY SATURDAY 8 JULY

A full day from 10 to 4.30 with a break for lunch, this online Zoom event costs £50 with a £10 discount for SoG members and is aimed at everyone researching railway workers.

Chris Heather starts it all off with what the National Archives can offer, followed by **Melissa McGreechan** taking about the Transport for London Corporate Archives collections. **Mike Esbester** of the Railway Life Work and Death Project will be talking about what that has to offer for family history.

Jenny Mallin will be exploring her grandfather’s life growing up on the first railway colony of its kind in India and other railway worker’s stories and **Jacqui Kirk** (yes me your editor)’s subject is railway workers who went off to fight in the First World War.

Else Churchill will show what the Society of Genealogists’ collections hold about railway workers and the day rounds up with a Panel Q & A session.

Find out more and how to book on the SoG events page:

<https://members.sog.org.uk/events>