

**Peterborough and District
Family History Society Newsletter
April 2023**



From the Chairman...

Last month I talked about causes of death among my ancestors. This month I want to share thoughts about the 'death' of the various societies to which we belong whose members are growing older without being replaced by younger folk.

In the church where I worship we no longer have the numbers of children and young people which way back necessitated a separate building for them. Out of a morning congregation of 60 they number less than 10. I belong to a Philatelic Society, and we are all getting older without attracting younger/middle aged persons. I had my stamp album at 8 years and have kept going but it seems to be an older person's thing. Our own Family History Society is composed of mainly older folk. We are not alone in not attracting younger age groups as Federation research shows.

How do we combat this issue? How can we encourage younger people in? I talk to my grandchildren about 'the family' and show them my 'trees' but I am not sure about the long-term effect.

Do you have any ideas?

Please let Sadie know.

Michael Kennelly

From the Editor...

Spring has sprung! It feels good getting out of doors again.

I was visiting Huntingdon Archives recently looking at the school log books for Conington and Woodwalton. It struck me then that we are very detached from the seasons, unless of course you are an avid gardener or allotment keeper.

The holidays that the children had, between 1900 and 1950, for both schools were governed by the local requirements of the farmers. In Conington children had two weeks holiday in the summer, but then four weeks off, between mid-September and mid-October, for the potato harvest. In contrast, Woodwalton had, what we think of, as a traditional long summer holiday, presumably for the wheat harvest.

Even in the school log books for Fletton, in the early 1900s, by which time industry had taken over from agriculture as the main source of occupation, children had time off for 'the harvest'.

I wonder what your memories of school holidays are? or your parents, or grandparents, memories? what are your memories of the seasons? and the different activities you could do in each?

Please share these with other members through a short article or perhaps a photo

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sadie McMullon

Websites

Peterborough lies on the edge of the Fens and is influenced by what has taken place there. Websites that may interest you, about life in the fens include:

Ramsey Tunnels

[Home | \(ramseytunnels.co.uk\)](http://ramseytunnels.co.uk)

Sawtry Local History Society

[HOME | Sawtry History Society](http://SawtryHistorySociety)

Ramsey Rural Museum

[Ramsey Rural Museum](http://RamseyRuralMuseum)

Fascinating Fens

[Fascinating Fens – Enjoy and explore your Fascinating Fens](http://FascinatingFens)

The Great Fen Project

[About the Great Fen | The Great Fen](http://AbouttheGreatFen)

Early Photographic Studios

Are you interested in old photos? This site may be of interest to you.

Many of you will be familiar with Robert Pols' books and articles for family and local historians on dating and interpreting old photographs. Robert also published a comprehensive website on early photographic studios in Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Leicestershire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Rutland and Suffolk.

The site was at www.early-photographers.org.uk but has now moved to www.earlyphotostudios.uk.

The site lists over 1700 photographers operating in the seven counties between 1840 and 1916.

Also on the site is a list of Robert's books and a discount code to purchase a number of these from the Family History Federation.

Les Waters
webmaster@fadingimages.uk



The REALLY USEFUL Family History Show

17-18 November 2023

Please view www.fhf-reallyuseful.com for details



'Childhood Comics and Annuals'

By Pauline Kennelly

I have been parting with my old annuals from the 1950's and taking them off to various Charity shops. It has taken me a long time to part with them and they bring back many memories of my childhood. The ones I had were: Girls' Crystal, School Friend and Girl in the main. With a December birthday closely followed by Christmas I always looked forward to receiving these books as gifts. I had the associated comics each week during the year and loved the picture strip formats, puzzles pages and competitions. Sometimes too there was a Club you could join and receive a badge to wear.

Friends have remembered similarly but also recalled with fondness the Beano, the Beezer, Bunty, Eagle and Judy. I wonder if the Beano was so popular because in our well-disciplined childhoods we admired the reprobates found inside its pages such as Dennis the Menace and his dog Gnasher; Beryl the Peril and Minnie the Minx. I also had a weekly small booklet called Sunny Stories by Enid Blyton – a much maligned author since that many of us grew up with and remained unharmed by her criticized over simplistic text!

The girls' comics fed my imagination and I longed to go to a Boarding School such as described in these books and have midnight feasts and have the exciting detective adventures featured there. My parents firmly vetoed this idea however. I had failed to thrive at my own ballet classes held in the GER Club in March but that did not stop me loving the Belle of the Ballet stories in the Girl annual. I also wanted to be an Air Hostess when I grew up as a result of stories in that same comic.

Michael, my husband, had a cherished Chicks' Own Annual he donated with mine and that dated from his early childhood. His brother, David, recalled Boys' Own comic, Radio Fun and Film Fun. I hope these memories will re-awaken for you happy thoughts of some of your childhood weeklies and annuals.

Thank you for this trip down memory lane Pauline. My grandson has just found the Beano and loves it.



Remember Membership Subscriptions Due

Don't forget your annual subscriptions are due April 2023

Individual and Overseas £10 Joint £12

Head over to the Family History Federation website and opt for 'Parish Chest'.

Then opt for 'Society Subscriptions'

Scroll down until 'Renewal UK member individual/ joint' appears beside our logo.

Enter in your details and continue receiving our amazing member benefits for another year.

New password, to continue accessing our website and archives, will be sent out June/ July,

Maps

Maps can tell us so much about the world in which our ancestor's lived. They are wonderful because they show you features that have since been demolished or changed.

The National Library of Scotland has a unique facility where you can have the historical map on the left of your screen and the current google map on the right. This aids easy comparison.

A series of maps, centred on Peterborough, can be found at:

[Peterborough, 1:500, Surveyed: 1884-85 - OS Town Plans of England and Wales - National Library of Scotland \(nls.uk\)](https://www.nls.uk/collections/os-town-plans-of-england-and-wales)

Look on sheet Northamptonshire VIII.11.24 to see the Crescent, before it was demolished to make way for the bridge, and the old cemetery in Cowgate.

Explore the maps and tell members what you find.

Communication

Have you changed your e.mail or snail mail address recently?

Please keep us up to date with your current contact details.

Zoom Talks

All meetings are currently being held by zoom. Joining instructions will be sent in the week prior to the meeting.

Wed 5th Apr	7.30pm	'The Life and Times of Old Scarlett'	Stuart Orme
Wed 3rd May	7.30pm	AGM followed by 'Thomas Stokes Apprentice'	Steve Manning
Wed 7th June	7.30pm	'A Most Notorious False Lying Fellow'	Sue Paul

Books

Books which have agriculture as a theme include:

'Far from the Madding Crowd' Thomas Hardy

'All Among the Barley' Melissa Harrison

'Meadowland: the private life of an English field' John Lewis-Stemple

'Our Village Ancestors: A Genealogist's Guide to Understanding the English Rural'

Helen Osborn

'Farming Industry: Images of the Past' Jon Sutherland and Diane Canwell

If you have a book recommendation then please share it with members.