



Peterborough and District Family History Society Newsletter April 2025

From the chair...

As I write, I am reminded that approximately 5 years ago we faced the closure of so many things as a result of the coronavirus epidemic. Schools, places of worship, meetings, any gathering of folk – all closed down. Our society was affected in this way and led to us meeting by Zoom, which we still do. While we miss the personal contacts there are benefits: no room hire or speaker travel fees.

The newspapers suggest that Covid is to blame for many things including poor educational results. Yet many of my generation lived during the second world war; some of us sat the 11 plus exam during these war conditions: schools were evacuated; we went without luxury food (I remember my first banana when peace was declared!). We had to make do and mend, not use war as an excuse for poor exam results. Twenty years earlier was the Great War and the Spanish Flu epidemic which killed more people than the war.

Do you have memories of some of these times? What about your ancestors' involvement? Do put pen to paper and send the result to Sadie for the Journal. Oh, and please do join us on Zoom. I have noticed that numbers are slipping and I would hate our Society folding through lack of support.

Now a reminder that we hold our AGM in May and we shall shortly send out details about this. Meanwhile, I send you my best wishes for your continued research.

Michael

From the Secretary...

Unfortunately, I am writing today with some upsetting news: my stock of journal articles is very low. Without your kind contributions the journal will be very slim in June. Please put pen to paper and share your research highs and lows with other members. I must give a word of thanks though to those of you who have already answered my appeal.

On a more positive note spring is definitely in the air. At the weekend I spent a lovely afternoon at Mount Grace Priory, Yorkshire. The priory ruins were a sea of daffodils and christmas roses and as I explored I could feel the peace that the Carthusian monks must have felt as they led their solitary lives. I can't claim that any of my ancestors were drawn to this world of prayer and devotion, but I did wonder what unusual occupations, interests or callings your ancestors may have had. Perhaps this might be an idea for a journal article?

Sadie



Zoom Talks

Please find below the programme of meetings for the next few months.

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

Wednesday 2nd April

Members' Evening

'Childhood Games'

Wednesday May 7th

AGM and Alan Johnson

'From Wisbech to the World'

Wednesday June 4th

Dr Judith Hill

'Life of the Poor and Emigrated from Britain at the Beginning of the 19th Century'

Programme of Talks—Your View

Our monthly programme of talks, with social time, is vital to keeping the society members in touch with one another, whilst at the same time listening to a speaker educate and enlighten us. But the committee has noticed a gradual decline in attendance.

We would like to explore why.

Please answer the simple questions below, by sending an e.mail to Sadie, the secretary, with your thoughts and opinions.

If you attend the monthly zoom talks

1. What do you like about this time?
2. How do you think this time could be improved?

If you do n't attend the monthly zoom talk, or if you attend occasionally, can you look at the following options and let us know why

1. Is the talk at an inconvenient time?
2. Do you struggle with the technology?
3. Is it the content of the talks?
4. Is there another reason why you haven't tried the zoom talks?
5. Did you know that some of the talks are recorded and are available from Sadie after the event?

We look forward to receiving your answers.



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Historic England's Interactive Map

Research is telling us that getting outside, and connecting with history is good for our mental health, and what better hobby to do this than family history.

Historic England have now introduced an interactive map to help you find their historic sites. With hundreds of thousands of blue pins on the map identifying their location, there is bound to be a historic site near you.

So visit the site, and next time you go on a walk witness the heritage that's on your doorstep. I look forward to hearing about your walks.

[Do you live near one? Interactive map reveals the locations of England's 400,000 heritage sites - and scientists say living near one 'makes you happier'](#)

Beginner's Guide - Marriage Certificates

What does 'Of full age' mean?

On a marriage certificate, 'Of full age' means that the bride or groom was over 21. If the certificate reads 'minor' or 'under age', it means that, until 1929 when the law changed to 16, the bride was between 12 and 20 and the groom between 14 and 20 years of age. A person is of full age from their 21st birthday.

However, giving the wrong age does not in itself invalidate the marriage.

Do you have an abbreviation, or phrase, that you think others might benefit from understanding a little more. If so please get in touch.



Subscriptions are now due

Yes, its that time of year again, subscriptions are due. Please head over to the Parish Chest website, www.pariahchest.com, where its easy to pay your annual fee. A tip if you can't find PDFHS is to keep scrolling down.

If you pay by direct debit or standing order, or have paid already then thank you we appreciate your continued membership.

April Members' Meeting

Can you remember jacks, what's the time Mr. Wolf, skipping, marbles, building dens, making go-karts?

It's not too late to be part of our April members meeting.

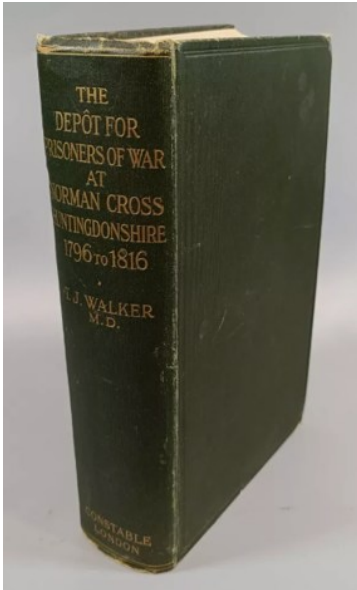
If you have memories about the games that you once played, and would like to share these during the meeting, then please let me know.

This is your meeting so please consider contributing.

Book Review

When we have our library drop ins I have spent some time each week browsing the book shelves. Its' amazing how many books have been written about our local area.

Many of these are now unfortunately out of print. But I urge you to drop by and see what there is on offer. There are books which cover a broad range of topics and villages.



One which was of particular interest to me is *The Depot for Prisoner's of War at Norman Cross, 1796-1816* by Thomas James Walker, a local doctor, written and published in 1913.

This book is actually still available as a facsimile on Ebay. An original copy can be found, but you won't get much change from £100.

So please use the local history centre and archive at Peterborough Library. As they say, use it or lose it!

Schooldays recalled

23.11.95



THIS old school picture was kindly loaned to us by Mr N Titman of Leeson House, St Mary's Court, Peterborough. It was taken in 1921 at Lincoln Road School – now St Paul's Community Centre. And Mr Titman has even managed to identify some of

the children on the picture.

Mr Titman told us that the headmistress was Miss Thorne.

He identified some children on the back row as being called Whittington, Barratt, Afford and Martin.

On the middle row he identified C Clarke and a boy called

Grey and on the front row he remembered the names Coles, G Day, M Young, Atkins, Login, Stamper, J Broughton and Buck.

Do you know any other people on this picture and have you any old school photographs we could borrow? See address below.

'School Days—The Best Years of our Lives'

Pauline Kennelly has very kindly given me a selection of school photos from local newspapers. These are too good not to share, so over the next few newsletters I am going to do just that.

Hopefully they will trigger some memories. Perhaps you attended the school pictured, or one of your ancestors did, or perhaps you can put names to some of the faces.

This one was taken at Lincoln Road School.

Please share your thoughts with other members.