



TIMES PAST

The Newsletter of the Kennington History Society
Issue 22
Winter 2013

KENNINGTON HISTORY SOCIETY'S LONG STANDING TREASURER RETIRES

Doreen Horseman, the society's treasurer since its formation in 2003 is to retire at the end of the year. Over these ten years Doreen has been a wonderful servant to the membership and she will be sorely missed. David Jones has agreed to become the new treasurer, taking over in the new year.

YOUR SOCIETY

Also a **NEW CHAIRMAN REQUIRED**—George Ross, chairman of the society since 2003, has decided not to seek re-election following the AGM in February next year. If you are interested in joining the committee, with or without the possibility of becoming the new chairman, please volunteer.

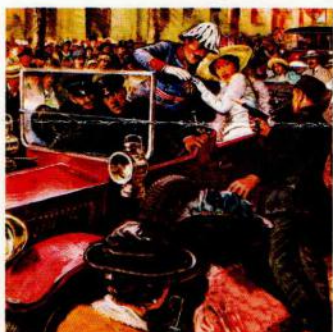
Your History Society needs YOU!



BLAST FROM THE PAST

The 28th June 1914 is a warm Sunday morning in Sarajevo and Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire with his wife Sophie have arrived in the city to inspect the army. Seven young Bosnian Serbs plan to assassinate Franz Ferdinand but when the first conspirator throws a bomb at his car it misses and he is arrested. The archduke decides to abandon the visit and return home.

No one tells the driver the route has been changed and he uses the published route. When told of the error he stops to turn round, unfortunately directly in front of another of the conspirators, Gavrilo Princip, who is on his way home thinking he has failed. Taking the opportunity he shoots Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie dead. No one could have known that day, that this event would lead directly to the bloodiest war in history.



FEEDBACK

The committee would like suggestions from members for future speakers / subjects, and would welcome any member who wishes to join the committee.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

20th January: Britain under the Eagle:

The story of Roman Britain -Martin Way.

17th February AGM and Members Short talks Evening. Please tell George if you would like to speak.

17th March The History of Morlands Brewery - Bill Mellor

PROGRAMME FOR 2014

Our Speaker's organiser Terry Cale, has now arranged next years programme and a copy is enclosed with this newsletter.

HISTORY SOCIETY WEBSITE

Keep up to date with the latest details of the society's events via the village website www.kennington.org and clicking History.

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE (NO INCREASE)

Annual Subscriptions are due on the 1st January 2014. A renewal form is enclosed.

£12 Individual £20 family



Recent Publication by Radley History Club **Radley People and the Railway 1843—2013**

By Christine Wootton

Published October 2013

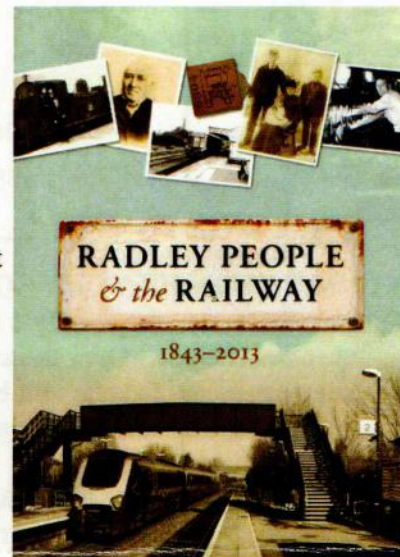
ISBN 9780956863218 155 pages £10.00 + p/p

This book tells the story of Radley and its railway, including the much loved but now defunct branch line to Abingdon (The Bunk). The coming of the railway had a great effect on rural communities, and this history recounts not only its origins, but also the lives of people impacted by from the beginning to the present day. The book contains a wealth of photographs, and much to satisfy the railway enthusiast, including some of the technical detail including gauge and hardware.

However there is considerable human interest with stories and anecdotes of those who worked on the railway and those who used it. Principally written and researched by Christine Wootton, the book includes contributions by Radley History

Club members and others - interviews, personal writing, photographs and more.

To buy a copy please contact Christine Wootton, 11 Hound Close, Abingdon OX14 2LU tel 01235 202725. or Radley Village shop.



The next publication by Radley History Club (due in 2014) is:

THE CHANGING BOUNDARIES OF RADLEY AND SUNNINGWELL PARISHES

As affected by the boundary changes at Abingdon, Bagley Wood, Chandlings Farm, Kennington, Northcourt, St Helen Without, and South Hinksey To be published early in 2014.



The St Brice's Day Massacre in Oxford? **13th November 1002**

This massacre of Danes was ordered by King Aethelred in 1002. The Danelaw area lay north of a line from Chester down to London, dividing Britain in half. Danes had settled this land for three generations, from 850 to 950, with numerous battles fought beforehand, until the establishment of the Kingdom of England under Saxon rule from Wessex. From 980 a second wave of Viking invaders began, leading to Aethelred to "buy them off" by paying Danegeld until he believed they were intending to kill him, whereupon he ordered their extermination. This act appears to have been aimed at mercenary groups in the Danelaw border towns and cities, since these were where the new invaders were causing the most trouble – Oxford being one such town. Aethelred was confident of suc-

cess because of an alliance with the Duke of Normandy, whose sister he had married.

In 2008, work in the quadrangle of St John's College, revealed the bodies of 34 to 38 men, aged between 16 and 35 years old, of vigorous build and with spear puncture marks and knife cuts on bones and six attempted decapitations. Analysis showed them to have been eating more fish and shellfish than land farmers, suggesting these were not local but Viking seamen invaders.

The St Brice's Day massacre had referred to Danes being driven for refuge into St Frideswides Priory, now Christchurch Cathedral, where it (and they) were burnt to the ground, including the sister of King Sweyn of Denmark. The following year King Sweyn conquered England in retribution, establishing it as a Danish kingdom for 35 years.

The bodies found at St John's were buried outside the then Saxon city walls, tumbled into a Neolithic henge ditch. A similar grave of 54 decapitated Viking mercenaries has been found in Dorset and analysis confirms these too were most likely Viking mercenary seamen from the same period, captured after a raid and executed by decapitation.

No burials from the 1002 massacre have ever been confirmed from Oxford. Roger Gelder

