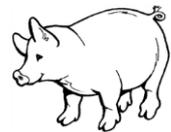




WILTSHIRE

OPC



NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the second Edition of the Wiltshire OPC newsletter.

We hope you will find this informative, and helpful it is also our aim to include helpful links and maybe some less known information for you to browse through. As with any Newsletter it is only as good as it's content.

So having said that, I am looking for stories that you would like to share with your fellow OPC's, as I am sure not one of us looks through all the parishes that we have on site. Why not introduce yourself to us. We are all working for one goal and it would be nice to know who we are working with. Let us know who you are looking for so that if any of the OPC's come across any information relating to that surname we can let you know. How would it be if you have a whole army searching for you.

Have you come across anything funny while transcribing...share it with us all we could all do with a good laugh. Photos or pictures look great in a newsletter. Have you discovered any new ones that could be published? There are a million things that can go in here. So let's make it our Newsletter.

Thanks

Chris (editor)

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*Life can only be understood backwards,
but it must be lived forwards.*

Soren Kierkegaard

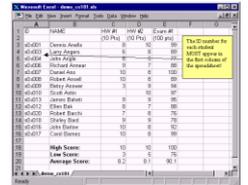


Teresa's Tidbits

We are now registered with the Wiltshire Volunteer Centre and may get either volunteers to adopt a parish or volunteers to transcribe items at WSHC or photograph items. They have also suggested that groups such as Scouts and other youth groups under supervision could carry out cemetery and churchyard surveys and allow us to use their records. They may also take up war memorial recordings and photograph projects. Most of this type of help would be carried out by those groups working towards Duke of Edinburgh awards. However it remains to be seen if any groups take up the gauntlet. We have already received 6 enquiries - one lady is transcribing records already - another couple may take on the Trowbridge and surrounding (contiguous) parishes apart from those already covered when they retire at the end of October.



2. The changeover from spreadsheets on pages to pdf format is still an ongoing project and is taking more time than expected. This is mainly due to the different formats used by our OPC's and their transcribers. A small team of us our working our way through parish by parish but this is not expected to be completed for some time yet.



3. The searchable database is still under construction by a very kind enthusiast from Canada who is working on this tool in between his own commercial commitments. This the reason why the spreadsheet conversions is a bit of a priority. It is also the reason why any new transcriptions that our wonderful OPC team supply in future should be recorded on the templates available on the site in the useful documents section.

4. We would like to introduce 2 new OPC's since the last newsletter - Christine Brooks (me) who has now taken on the task of editing the newsletter as well as being very brave and taking on the Calne parish. I am also working very hard transcribing other bits and pieces especially the early parish record marriages. Cathy Sedgwick is now OPC for Dinton and again is working hard transcribing items for her page



5. Several other volunteer transcribers have come on board too. One lady is currently working on census returns for parishes she is interested in personally and will progress from them. I believe her first project is Bishopstone (Wilton) (1911 completed). Another is working on Winterslow although her time is limited or else she would have taken on the parish as her own. A number of OPC's are also working on items for their pages.

6. A Surname Index is being built again a slow process since it involves checking each parish page to extract names and dates and document types - but from the number of hits it has already received is already proving a very popular addition.



7. The county wide page is growing with a lot of criminal records being added here. There is so much more to add and slowly but surely it is being made available.

THANK

YOU!

8. Thanks as always for your support and input making this project as successful as it is. Although the guestbook is not used much in proportion to the amount of users we get on the site the comments left are an indication of how the site is progressing. Although we have had one or 2 negative e-mails from people who seem to think we can provide the same amount of information for free as they can find elsewhere on subscription sites - our reply to these is dignified with a heavy use of the words "free" and "volunteers".



Housekeeping

(The bits that have to be done)

you have probably noticed our Surname index is growing weekly and we now have well over 25,000 names. This is a time consuming task and we are trying to make things easier for us extract the names.

How you can help

1. Can you please make sure that **NONE** of the names or places in your transcriptions are in capitals. As I come across them I have been converting them to lower case and I will continue to do so, but if in the future you could just use lower case with a capital at the beginning it will make things a lot easier.
2. When transcribing, the Surname column should always come before the given names column, and it should be that way for both male and female entries.
3. **VERY IMPORTANT** please please use the templates that have been provided even if one of the columns in that template is not needed in the transcription that you are doing. Again we are currently going through every transcription on line and changing the ones that need to be changed so that all transcriptions have uniformity. (Apart from the sacred few) You may feel this is petty and nit picking but this needs to be uniform for ease of extraction to the the data base when it is up and running





When the Wilts OPC site first opened it was intended that the Photo Gallery showed photographs of the parish church and surrounding area.

This has since expanded into other categories such as people, non-conformist churches to name a few, from the demand of some members for more flexibility to their parish page.

One of these categories was postcards. The donation of some postcards made us realise that the old postcards of churches, street scenes etc were part of the parish social history.

A few members started buying postcards especially for the site and I suppose they have now become a postcard collectors, called a deltiologist; or a 'dead' deltiologist if your spouse finds out you spent all the household monies on buying postcards!

A couple would be great if you can't source photographs for a particular article on your parish page.

You can also make an appeal for help to your parish visitors for postcards, old family photographs and engravings. Refer to the Potterne parish page for suggested wording.



For my part I have started collecting colour tinted postcards covering the period 1902 – 1922 which covers the introduction of the tram.

Some are reasonably priced but although I will accept a slight edge and corner wear, I will ignore any which have minor creases or tears. I live in Suffolk so have naturally progressed to looking out for postcards covering my local church parishes and those which strike me as interesting of Wiltshire.



In 1902 the Post Office changed its rules on postcards and allowed a picture to appear on the front and a message and address both to appear on the back. The message was to be written on the left hand side and the address on the right. Great Britain was the first country to allow this practice.

From around September 1902 onwards, postcard manufacturers began to issue cards with a line drawn down the middle of the back to show where the message and address should be written.

These cards soon replaced the earlier ones with 'undivided backs'.



The normal postcard postage rates for this era are given below

½d until 1918

1d from 3 June 1918

1½d from 13 January 1921

1d from 24 May 1922

The period covers the reigns of King Edward VII (1901-1910) and King George V (1910-1936). Where can I purchase postcards ?. Postcard and stamp dealers, antique centres, ebay, ebid and other internet sites which can be found on search engines.

John Pope, administrator support

OPC Bishopstone, Little Hinton, Keevil, Potterne and Rowde



All about you



This is where we find out all about you. Each one of us in volunteering for Wiltshire OPC has a story.

What are your ties with Wiltshire and who are you looking for. By telling us a little about yourself and who and what you are researching we may be able to help.

I have started off with myself to make things easier.

My name is Christine Brooks nee Pinniger and I am the OPC for Calne and the transcriber of a thousand lists (or so it seems)

I live in NSW Australia on the east coast but was born in Poole, Dorset. It is the relations on my father's side that come from Wiltshire. So far I have traced back to my 10th Great Grandfather John Pinnegar. He came from Hilmarton. The trouble I have with this side of my family is the various spellings that they have from Pynegar to Pinnager and all variations in-between. I have been researching for around 7 years now, but I made the big mistake of taking on both sides of my family at the same time...oh well now time to concentrate on the Wiltshire mob. I get very excited when I finally find information that I have been looking for, and I think that it is marvellous that there is so much information available. I would love to be in the UK so that I could get to a graveyard or a historical society, or just to check through parish records in the flesh...that would make me very happy. Well what do I do in my spare time..I don't seem to have much these days so most of my time is spent researching or transcribing with the odd bit of scrapbooking thrown in.

The surnames and places I am interested in are as follows:

Pinniger/Pinnegar (all variations) in Calne, Bremhill, Christian Malford
Martin in Chiselton and Liddington
Beevan in Calne
Ferris in Warminster, Lyneham



So you can see how easy that was.
Now it's your turn...tell us who you are.

Susan's Snippets



Age is the only thing that
comes to us without effort!

Dear all,

I am constantly impressed by how our website is flourishing, it is wonderful to see a germ of an idea take shape and grow. This is only thanks to your hard work and enthusiasm and even more importantly the hours of dedication that Teresa puts in day in day out. I can safely say that the site wouldn't be what it is today without her.

In recent times I have taken more of a back seat, I am, when I get chance to do web work beginning to build a Yorkshire OPC site, it is in its early infancy at the moment, once I get some interest in helping it will no doubt spur me on to work a bit faster. If anyone has interest in that area does get in touch, I'll be needing a Teresa of Yorkshire!

My role in the site is now principally bug fixing and helping to set up new features. Sometimes this is frustrating, I am only self taught so I sometimes struggle to achieve what I would like to, in the time frame I have.

Like I am sure many of you I also have all sorts of other hobbies, commitments and interests as well as a day job, they say if you would like something done ask a busy person... we are fortunate to have a selection of "busy people" working on the Wiltshire site.

I look forward to seeing your research grow and the site continue to go from strength to strength (and do get in touch if you have and Yorkshire interest...)

Warmest wishes,

Susan

Before the year 1752 the new year used to begin on 25th March which is known as Lady Day. To stop any confusion dates between 1st January and 24th March pre 1752 have been labelled with both years ie 1735/6.



Did you know?

Hair Powder Tax 1795

A tax on the use of Hair Powder was introduced by an Act of Parliament in 1795. Citizens who wore powdered wigs (or powdered their hair direct) had to obtain a certificate from the local Justices of the Peace to confirm that they had paid the annual tax of one guinea [£1 1s 0d, or £1.05 in modern money].



In 1795, powdered wigs were all the rage in men's fashion. Desperate for income to pay for military campaigns abroad, British Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger levied a tax on wig powder. Although the tax was short-lived due to the protests against it, it did ultimately have the effect of changing men's fashions. By 1820 powdered wigs were out of style.

England is old and so small that they started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and re-use the grave. In reopening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on their wrist and lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night to listen for the bell. Hence the terms "graveyard shift", "saved by the bell" and he was a "dead ringer".

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock them out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a "wake" and the origin of "making enough noise to wake the dead".



Brickwall

Do you have one?

If you do let me know and perhaps we can help you knock it down.



Descendants are
the consolation prize
of a life fulfilled.



TERI'S TIP OF THE MONTH

Treat your page as a timeline scrapbook - what you find interesting or boring will prove of interest to someone so add it.