



*W*itheridge

Family History Society

Autumn - Winter 2019 - 2020

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Letter from the Chairman



It's a matter of great regret that we weren't able to produce the planned December - January *Newsletter*. While our Secretary Amy was ready to do her usual excellent production job, what was completely lacking was content.

The *Newsletter* is intended to be for, about, and by, our members. In the past we've enjoyed an interesting variety of contributions from the wider membership, but these contributions are now seriously lacking. In practice, about 90% of the material now comes from just one person – our Research Co-ordinator, Kim Cook. While it makes sense for her to compile any material that comes in from the Family History Federation (FNF), the Guild of One-Name Studies (GoONS), and other sources, we also need contributions from members.

When almost every contribution comes from just one person, and that person is out of action, the inevitable result is no content, and therefore no *Newsletter*. This is what has led to the current situation.

As some of you may know, shortly after the 2019 AGM and Reunion, Kim was diagnosed with cancer again. In August she had major surgery at Guy's Hospital in London. Initially her recovery went remarkably well, but later it was beset by complications. It's only in the last couple of weeks that Kim has been able to return to a limited work schedule.

Somehow, she's managed to compile and collate all the material in this issue, apart from Officers' Reports and this letter. To make up for the long wait for this *Newsletter*, we've made this one larger than usual, and are planning to produce the next issue as soon as possible after the 2020 AGM and Reunion, now being held on 18 April. All being well, Kim hopes to provide some additional material for that issue but, with further medical tests now due, there are no guarantees.

So, while apologising for the unavoidable delay in producing this letter, I'm also asking members to be more proactive within WFHS, particularly in terms of *Newsletter* contributions. Please share your research discoveries. Write about one of your ancestors, a family location, your experience of DNA results, or anything that has had an impact on your research. Finally, please keep us up to date with your family news – births, marriages, achievements, holidays – anything that enables us to know one another better, even though we may be geographically far apart.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Jason Cook

Family News

Travelling in a dry land

In late October 2019, **Jennifer** and **Richard Woolcott** set off on a 1,200-km (750- mile) round trip to visit family. Jennifer wrote:

“First call was to Inverell to celebrate Grandparents’ Day* (27 October) with Alex and Kaylee. The day after we watched Alex play cricket. The match was played in the evening, as it was too hot to play in the day. Early next morning, 8-year-old Kaylee was taking part in a tennis competition, in a field of 10-12-year-olds, and showing lots of potential. Then we went on to Tamworth, to deliver Christmas bags to our 5 grandchildren there, as we won’t be able to visit them again until about February.

It was wonderful to get away for a few days from the wildfires, but the journeys have been very depressing. What hasn’t been burned out is unbelievably dry. In places there is no ground cover, and even the trees are dying from lack of water. On our last day in Inverell the whole place was enveloped in a huge dust storm. We drove most of the way to Tamworth through dust and more smoke. The strong winds were picking up more dust to thicken what was being blown in from the west. The landscape is almost colourless, and we’ve seen few animals and almost no birds as we’ve passed through vast cropping and grazing countryside as well as forested areas. It’s a complete disaster.

Richard had to look up the ‘Fires Near Me’ as well as checking ‘Live Traffic’ apps to check that our usual route home was safe.”

Since that trip, Jennifer has been to Newcastle for surgery on her hand. For some time she has suffered from painful carpal tunnel and a massively swollen hand but now, after a long convalescence, she is delighted to be able to use both hands again.

** Editor’s note: See article on Grandparents Day on page 27*

News from Canada

Just a few lines to let you know the latest news from **Paul** and **Kathy Witheridge** in Canada.

“Paul has been suffering from Parkinson’s for the past few years and is steadily going downhill. He gets very frustrated as his shaking is getting very bad. He is having some surgery this week for a very complex bunion, which will have to have a plate and screws inserted under his foot. Sadly he will not be able to put his foot to the ground or drive for 6 weeks.

As for myself, I am still struggling being insulin dependent and am now at 55 years. I received a medal for 50 years and must say I have done very well.

I am still having a hard time trying to recover from the death of my dear son Paul, who committed suicide 2 1/2 years ago, at the age of 50. I miss him so very much.

Our best wishes go out to all our friends at the Witheridge family History Society.”

We’re very sorry to learn of the difficulties Paul and Kathy are facing. We send our best wishes for a successful operation for Paul, with a speedy recovery, and trust that the coming spring will bring brighter days’

Family News

Fire! Fire!

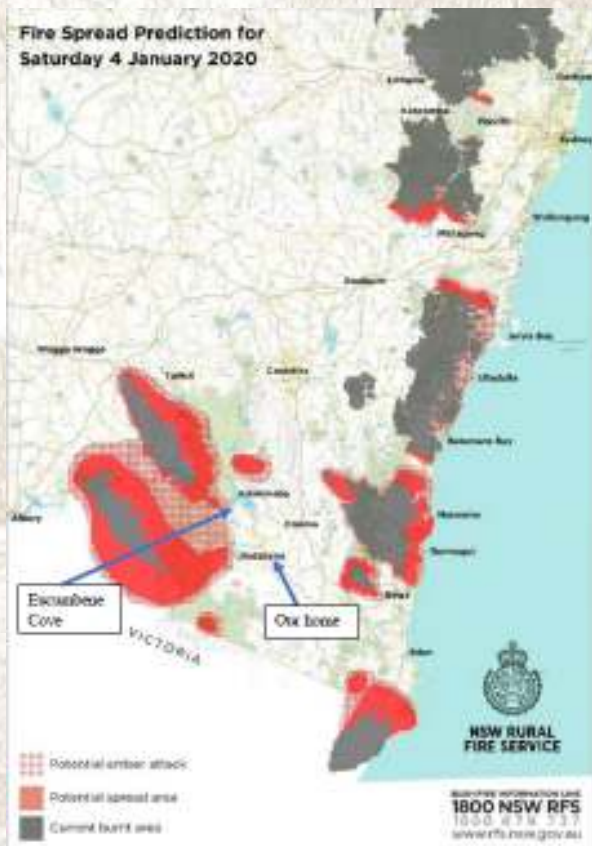
Most of our members will be all too aware of the disastrous fires that have been sweeping across Australia for the last few months, as television news bulletins were shown world-wide. We've been keeping in touch with all our members in Australia, checking on their safety.

Events have been seriously scary for Jennifer and Richard Woolcott, and for **Rob and Cathy Staples**. Throughout November and December, the smoke affected Jennifer's asthma, and she was unable to open windows or go outside for weeks. Being cooped up in heat of over 40C was uncomfortable to say the least. But at least Jennifer and Richard were spared the fires that burned about 10-12 miles away, reaching right down to the shore-line.

Early in January, fires came very close to the home of Rob and Cathy Staples. Rob had the car packed with photos and important things ready for an emergency escape if needed, but just as it seemed inevitable that their property would be engulfed, the wind changed and took the blaze in a different direction. Rob sent these pictures which show just how close and fierce this fire was.

Although during January, fires continue to rage nearby, none came as close as this one, and in February came the unexpected arrival of rain, bringing relief to all in the affected areas.

All of us with friends in NSW were greatly relieved to hear of the rains, sufficient to extinguish all the wildfires at last. Sadly, some areas were flooded but, dreadful though flooding is, there's usually some prospect of salvage and repair, unlike the total destruction of homes and everything in them by fire.



Eucumbene Cove - photos from 4 January sent by a friend who lives there. No houses lost - a miracle.

Family News

Fire! Fire! continued

About 3pm – the initial ember attack to the north of us – strong westerly winds came in around 2pm. The predicted north westerly winds would have sent the ember attack to our house. The westerly wind change pushed the ember attack path approximately 10km north of us – we were on the edges and received only a few charged leaves and ash falling from the sky.



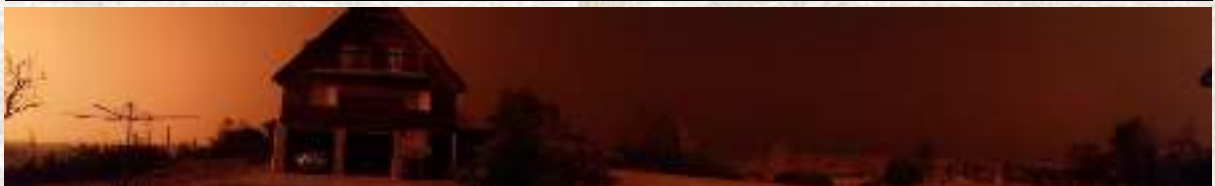
About 3:30pm – view to the north of our house showing the ember attack commencing.



About 4pm – from the same location – pitch black and thick smoke and ash.



About 4:15pm



Family News

Fire! Fire! continued

Saturday 4 January 2020 – Prepared, our 96,000 litre (20,000 gallons) storage tank full. We had another 50,000litres in two other tanks. All tanks full. Tractor and fire trailer unit at the ready. Notice the smoke haze in the hills has been around for the past two weeks.



Sunday 5 January 2020 – What a difference a day makes.



On Monday 17 February 2020, some wonderful rain, plus a 'flood' from a localised storm cell that produced 300 mm of rain in 1½ hours, soon produced welcome green patches on what had been brown arid soil.



Family News

Double Congratulations

In September, **Ethan Cook**, son of Jason and Zoe, and grandson of Kim and Roy, celebrated his 21st birthday. On the day after his birthday, the family gathered for a celebration meal. It was a warm, humid evening so, during a gap between courses, Ethan and his long-term girl-friend, Millie, slipped out into the restaurant's garden for a breath of fresh air. When they returned, Millie was wearing a pretty diamond ring! Neither said anything, but the eagle-eyed spotted the ring, and it was more congratulations all round. We wish them both every happiness.

Thank you

Neil and Rowena Witheridge wrote at Christmas to send their greetings, and to say thank-you for the tribute to their late mother, Judith Witheridge, published last year. Judith had been our Australia representative for many years, before being succeeded by her niece Jennifer Woolcott and husband Richard.

Read all about it!

Regular readers of Family Tree magazine will have spotted articles by **Kim Cook** in issues dated October 2018, February and June 2019, and March 2020. All these were commissioned months before publication date, with the March 2020 one finalised in August 2019, before Kim's operation in September. Another article has been commissioned for later this year.

Accompanying each article is a profile of Kim, mentioning Witheridge FHS. Where appropriate and permissible, she aims to mention the Witheridge name in the text of an article. It's a small way of bringing our Society to a wider audience in the field of family history, and we're hoping it will spark some interest.

Cover of the February 2019 issue of Family Tree, featuring Kim's article, with description on the contents page.



Family News

Tasmanian Troutfest

As President of the hosts, Fly Fish Australia, WFHS member **Rob Staples** played a key role in the World Fly Fishing Championships held in Tasmania from 30 November to 8 December 2019. The championships attracted 23 international teams, with 600 people attending the closing dinner in Launceston, Tasmania.

The weather through the duration of the event was atrocious, with high winds, rain, sleet and snow features of the highland lake fishing throughout the five days of competition. Nonetheless everyone had a fantastic time with over 2,000 trout caught and released during the event! The team event was won by France followed by Czech Republic and Spain. The individual event was won by Howard Croston of England.

Rob Staples with International Vice President Edoardo Ferraro of Italy and Minister Guy Barnett representing the Tasmanian Government

Rob Staples with a brown trout caught on one of the competition venues, Penstock Lagoon, before the competition. Rob was not a competitor in the event.



Individual medallists – Howard Croston of England in centre

Family News

Congratulations!

We're delighted to learn that, in September 2019, **Hannah Shingler** (daughter of Geoff and Catherine, and granddaughter of Alison Smith), achieved her Bronze Arts Award. Hannah had been working towards this between January and July 2019. Unlike the GCSE course, the Arts Award isn't limited to what the student creates, but also covers what the student appreciates and understands in the work of other people, and what inspires the student.

The Bronze syllabus is split into four parts. Part A involves participating in the Arts, using a variety of media, including clay, charcoal and watercolour. Part B was about experiencing the Arts by visiting exhibitions and taking part in online virtual tours. For Hannah, this included going to the Leonardo 500 exhibitions in Birmingham and Derby and reviewing them. Part C was about Arts inspiration. Hannah chose to research Gerry Anderson, explaining how he and his work inspire her own work. She's a fan of Thunderbirds, and has done some fan art. She also researched and reviewed the creator of a Japanese Manga (comic) that she likes. Part D was about skill sharing. For this, Hannah taught her mother, Catherine, to crochet. Hannah is very competent at crochet, makes up her own patterns, and also adapts existing ones. She succeeded in teaching her mother to progress beyond a chain so that she can now follow a simple pattern.

Hannah's work was sent for moderation in Norwich, but she decided to send a digital version of her work, rather than risk the original work being lost in the post. This was a wise choice, because the disc containing her work disappeared without trace at the moderation centre!

In September, Hannah learned that she had passed, and was given a certificate and her Bronze badge. Hannah is now working towards her Silver Arts Award, and should complete that in July this year.

We're privileged to have such a talented artist in our midst, and delighted that she designs our WFHS Christmas card each year. Well done, Hannah!



*Hannah with her Arts Award Certificate
The Bronze Arts Awards badge*



Family News

Anniversary gathering

In October 2019, **Roy and Kim Cook** celebrated their Emerald (55th) Wedding Anniversary with an afternoon party for 36 guests, including many Witheridge FHS members and other Witheridge descendants. These photos, taken by their son Jason Cook, record the occasion, but as he was behind the camera, there isn't one of him! All told, there were 14 direct descendants of William Witheridge (1870-1939) of the Wembury branch, and two descendants of Mary Grace Witheridge (1842-1923) of the Bradworthy branch.

As a thank-you to the surgical team on Dorcas Ward (where Kim has twice been a patient), Roy and Kim asked for donations (via JustGiving) to the Dorcas charity instead of presents. Dorcas is a specialist ward for surgical patients with lung cancer and mesothelioma, and patients have the option of allowing specialist researchers to have access to cell and tissue samples in order to advance research and treatment. To date, Kim's JustGiving page (Kim-Cook13) has raised almost £500 (including Gift Aid), and she's now aiming for £1,000.



Roy and Kim preparing to cut the cake.



Left: Roy and Kim's son Adam, with his daughter Amelie. **Centre:** Jason's wife Zoe, with daughter Lauren (left), son Ethan, and his fiancée Millie (right). **Right:** WFHS members Philip Milnes-Smith and his mother Alison Smith. The Smith family became personal friends of the Cooks in 2001, when both families were living in southern Kent.



Left: Mary Foster (centre), flanked by sister Brenda Dixon (née Witheridge), and her husband Ron Dixon. In front are their children, Richard Dixon and Sarah Chudley. **Right:** Caroline Fuller (in red), a great-granddaughter of William Witheridge, and Roy and Kim's bridesmaid, with her husband Nigel Fuller. Opposite is their daughter Lucy, granddaughter Joely, and Lucy's fiancé Vic.

Family News

Condolences

We were sorry to learn of the death, last August, of **Margaret Witheridge**, the mother of Jennifer Woolcott. Margaret (née Tarrant), was born on 18 September 1926 in Myong, NSW, Australia. At the end of WW2, while living in Bomaderry, Margaret went on a blind date and was introduced to William (Bill) Witheridge, who had returned from war service in Papua New Guinea. It was love at first sight, and they were married on 27 March 1948 in Paddington, Sydney.

Their first home was the house in which her parents had lived. They had two children, Jennifer and Geoffrey. At a time when married women weren't allowed to be employed, Margaret devoted her time to being the best wife, mother, and housekeeper, she knew how to be. She was involved with many local organisations, including school PandC, Boy Scouts, where she later received an award for serving as Treasurer for 20 years.



When Bill retired, he and Margaret enjoyed gardening, and caravanning around Australia, often cooking and eating the fish Bill caught. Margaret was extremely proud of her family's achievements, and derived much pleasure from the activities of her four grandchildren and the antics of her four great-grandchildren. She was also Nan to her extended family, including a further seven great-grandchildren.

Bill and Margaret were a devoted couple, separated only by Bill's death in 2011, after 63 years of marriage. Until 2016, Margaret continued to live in the house that had been her home for over 70 years, but then made the decision to move to Taree, close to where Jennifer and her husband Richard live.

In 2019, Margaret had a fall, breaking her hip and shoulder – an injury from which she did not recover. She died on 3 August 2019, a few months after Jennifer and Richard (our Australia representatives) had attended the WFHS Reunion.

We send our condolences to Jennifer and her family, to Geoffrey and his family, and to all Margaret's extended family.

Chairman's Report

Following last year's AGM and Reunion, your Committee has had to take a close look at two key elements of the Witheridge FHS.

Firstly, we needed to examine ways in which WFHS could adapt to make better use of modern technology, particularly in terms of 'virtual' meetings. Knowing this would necessitate some amendments to the Constitution, we undertook a close scrutiny of the current document and made some disconcerting discoveries.

We were unable to find any record of the amendments passed in 2016 being circulated to all members. Additionally, various amendments made across many years had introduced contradictions within the Constitution itself.

The initial scrutiny was conducted by me (as Chairman), Amy (our Hon Secretary), and Kim Cook (our Hon Life President) who has long-term knowledge of the compliance needed to retain our very valuable memberships of Family History Federation (FHF) and Guild of One Name Studies (GoONS). Once this review had been completed, the results were sent to all Committee Members and Overseas Representatives, and the result of all this work is the document you have before you today. I believe it addresses all the issues we need to resolve, and heartily recommend all the proposed amendments for your approval.

Also arising from the 2019 AGM and Reunion is the question of poor attendance, which makes hiring a venue a waste of money from our limited budget. We cannot commit to such expenditure this year, or in the foreseeable future.

Despite Kim's poor health, Roy and Kim have agreed, as an emergency alternative, to host this year's AGM and Reunion in their own home, on the understanding that the Society agrees to cover the arrangements for outside catering for lunch. This offer has been accepted and, on behalf of the Society, I would like to thank them for hosting us today.

Looking ahead, perhaps this may be the way forward in the future. In the past, various members have hosted meetings and Reunions in their own homes. In earlier days, the late Joyce and Graham Browne hosted many events at their home in Luton, Bedfordshire, Roy and Kim hosted at their home in West Wickham, Kent, and Philip Witheridge hosted at his home near Winchcombe, Gloucestershire. In this century, Roy and Kim hosted at their home in Tenterden in 2002 and 2009, and Brenda and Ron Dixon were our hosts in Orpington in 2003. The proposed Constitutional changes will make virtual meetings possible, leaving us free to enjoy social gatherings in areas where our members live.

This year I must again record our special thanks to the Officers of the Society. Firstly, I thank our Secretary, Amy Kennedy, whose administrative skills are, as always, invaluable. Thanks also to our Membership Secretary, Geoff Shingler who, despite a demanding full-time job, handles our renewals every year, updates members' addresses and contact details, and liaises with our Treasurer over membership income. Thanks also to our Treasurer Liz Davey, ably assisted by husband Chris, for keeping our accounts, and ensuring that our finances stay in good order. To make life easier for Geoff and Liz, we have now arranged for them to have access to Internet banking. We're also very grateful to our Webmaster Bill Dwyne, who updates and monitors our WFHS website. Bill also welcomes contributions – family stories, photos, memories and any other relevant information – to the website. Our heartfelt thanks to you all.

Our membership levels have changed little since last year, and we continue to pursue ways of encouraging new members. Social media contact can be very effective, so we urge members who are in contact with other Witheridge descendants, to encourage them to visit our website, and our soon-to-be-launched Facebook page for Witheridge and Wetheridge descendants.



Chairman's Report

I'm sure all our members will join me in thanking all our Officers, Committee Members and Overseas Representatives for their work during the year.

Finally, I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible as participants in our AGM and Reunion, whether by attending, or by contributing via absentee voting. Your input is valued, necessary if you are to have the kind of Society you need.

Jason Cook

Membership Secretary's Report

Our total membership for the year ending 31 December 2019 was 47. This was made up of 22 members who paid subscriptions, 21 additional family members, and 4 people awarded Honorary Membership for major contributions to the Society's past work. This type of Honorary Membership does not cover family members, and does not carry the right to vote

Although renewals are due on 1 January each year, members are not considered lapsed until the AGM. As at 29 February, I have received 19 renewals, covering a further 20 family members. We also have 2 new members (family of an existing member). With our 2 Honorary Members, this makes a total of 43 members. We have had 1 resignation in 2020. I have written again to those whose subscriptions are still outstanding, reminding them that they need to pay soon if they wish to vote at the AGM.

We need to attract new members in order for the society to continue. Please encourage your Witheridge relations in your wider family to join us.

Geoff Shingler

Research Co-Ordinator's Report

Over the years we've been able to trace most of our north Devon families to a common ancestral family in Berrynarbor in the 16th century. Sadly, it hasn't been possible to prove a similar common ancestral family for our south Devon families, particularly the many lines scattered across the South Hams area.

This is largely because there are fewer surviving registers from 1538, or even from 1599, when all surviving registers had to be copied using better quality materials. Many essential records are either missing, or so badly damaged as to be of little or no use. The situation is further complicated by the fact that members of the many branches in this area drifted in and out of the parishes inhabited by other branches. Same names, same parish, don't necessarily mean same ancestral family!

Recently, I've been paying particular attention to these families, trying to trace them across the region, using parochial and non-parochial records to untangle them. During this research, I've uncovered some surprising marital connections which link my own family (Wembury branch) with the South Hams ancestry of Maxine Neale and her cousin, former WFHS member Gina Couch. I've now completed a complex family tree showing these connections. This tree, with the relevant pedigree files, will be on display at our Reunion on 18 April.

Sadly, this has been another year of almost zero member participation. Have all our members completed their research into Witheridge/Wetheridge and associated lines? Or are some of you plodding on alone, probably covering ground that others have already covered?

This is a good time to remind you that we hold vast swathes of information, contributed by members since Day One in 1987, covering our Witheridge/Wetheridge ancestors and the associated lines of their spouses. So, even if you're researching your non-Witheridge/Wetheridge lines of spouses and their parents, we may already hold the information you seek.

Over the years I've built up a card index of some of the spouse families, and I'm now planning to convert this information into a database. It'll be a long job, to be done gradually, but if members can let me know the names they're researching now, I can prioritise these for entry into the database.

I'd also like to hear from any members who have taken DNA tests, and the sites their results are posted on. Have you been matched to any people with Witheridge/Wetheridge in their family tree? We're not asking for loads of personal information on relationships etc, just an idea of the ancestry of any Witheridge/Wetheridge descendants who share some of your DNA. This information could be key in overcoming the problems of missing documents (as mentioned above) and will help us to determine (or disprove) links that have not yet been made, or are merely suspected.

I'm still wading through thousands of my own DNA matches – surprisingly none so far with Witheridge or Wetheridge in their family tree! However, many have proved to be connected via spouse names. The people tested just haven't researched back that far or, if they have, haven't include the Witheridge/Wetheridge name in their tree list. I've just had to dig a little deeper to find the connection, and you may have to do likewise!

I look forward to hearing from you with your research queries, or your discoveries, during the coming year.

Kim Cook

Treasurer's Report

As of 21 February 2020 we have a balance of £323.53.

As always our income comes from our members subscriptions.

Our outgoings go on our annual membership of the Federation of Family History Societies, £30.00 per month to our Secretary, Amy Kennedy, plus expenditure relating to the AGM. We also pay to print our own Christmas cards and post them to members. We give thank you vouchers to our Auditor and to Hannah Shingler for designing the Christmas card.

We need to encourage more members, as our expenditure exceeds our income.

Audited accounts will be available from the date of the AGM.

Liz Davey

Webmaster's Report

There have been a few changes to the website, most are invisible and associated with the use of tablets/phones.

The photo viewing CMS has been upgraded to the latest version.

For those that interested in DNA and genealogy the book "A Brief History of Everyone Who Ever Lived" by Adam Rutherford is an interesting read.

Bill Dwyne

AGM and Reunion 2020

Saturday 18 April 2020

135 Kings Road, Biggin Hill, Kent TN16 3NH

AGM 10.45 am - 12.15 pm; Reunion 12.30 pm - 5.30 pm; Reunion Meal 6.15 pm for 6.30 pm

The Annual Reunion, at the same venue, will follow immediately after the AGM. It will be open to non-members, and we hope to welcome new faces. There will be plenty of opportunity to meet and mingle, and to examine the pedigrees, photos, and memorabilia on display. Please feel free to bring anything relevant to your own Witheridge family.

Please ensure that you notify Kim (email witheridge1987@gmail.com) at least 48 hours beforehand if you plan to attend.

We will regroup at 6.15 pm for the Reunion Meal, which will take place at 6.30 pm at (venue to be confirmed), and we hope as many as possible will join us. We look forward to seeing you there.

Timetable for the day

10.00 am	Arrival, registration and refreshments
10.30 am	AGM starts – with working lunch from about 12.00 noon
12.30 pm	AGM finishes
12.45 pm	Reunion starts
3.00 pm	Question Time – Ask the experts about your Witheridge ancestry, or FH in general.
4.00 pm	Refreshments and Birthday Cake
4.45 pm	Time to examine research files, photos etc.
6.00 pm	Adjourn for Reunion Meal (venue to be confirmed)
6.15 pm	(venue to be confirmed) for Reunion Meal at 6.30 pm

AGM 2020 Agenda

- 1 **Chairman's opening and welcome**
- 2 **Apologies for absence**
- 3 **Minutes of the 2019 AGM held at St Mark's Centre, Biggin Hill, Kent TN16 3LB**
- 4 **Matters arising from these Minutes**
- 5 **Matters arising from Officers' Reports**
- 6 **Election of Officers and Committee Members**

The following Officers and Committee Members have agreed to stand again.

Chairman	Jason Cook	Proposer	Chris Davey	Second	Ron Dixon
Vice Chairman	Chris Davey	Proposer	Geoff Shingler	Second	Roy Cook
Membership Secretary	Geoff Shingler	Proposer	Jason Cook	Second	Liz Davey
Treasurer	Liz Davey	Proposer	Catherine Shingler	Second	Ron Dixon
Assistant Treasurer	Chris Davey	Proposer	Roy Cook	Second	Brenda Dixon
Research Co-ordinator	Kim Cook	Proposer	Liz Davey	Second	Catherine Shingler
Facebook Moderators	Maxine Neale	Proposer	Chris Davey	Second	Jason Cook
	Bill Dwyne	Proposer	Kim Cook	Second	Geoff Shingler
	vacant	nominations welcome			
Webmaster	Bill Dwyne	Proposer	Ron Dixon	Second	Geoff Shingler
Secretary	Amy Kennedy	Proposer	Jason Cook	Second	Kim Cook
Newsletter Editor	vacant, currently secretary	nominations welcome			
Committee Members	Roy Cook	Proposer	Brenda Dixon	Second	Catherine Shingler
	vacant	nominations welcome			
	vacant	nominations welcome			

7 **Overseas Representatives**

Jennifer and Richard Woolcott have agreed to continue as the Society's Australian Representatives. Unfortunately, **Jim Witheridge** and **Annette Witheridge** will need to resign as the Society's North America representatives this year. We would like to record our thanks for all their sterling service, and send our best wishes to Jim from improved health in the coming year. We are welcoming nominations and/or volunteers to replace our North America representatives for the coming year.

8 **Appointment of Auditor**

We are very grateful to **Janice Cawsey** who has kindly agreed to act as our Auditor again for the current year. We have expressed our thanks for her work last year with the gift of a garden voucher.

9 **Discussion and Ratification of Revised Constitution**

All members will have received a copy of the Constitution as amended in 2016, although it appears that the revised document wasn't circulated at the time. Additionally, your Committee recognised the need to update certain sections in order use current technology more efficiently, and to comply with current GDPR laws. The recommended updates are clearly shown, and we trust that members will recognise the need to implement these changes.

AGM 2020 Agenda

10 'Virtual' meetings and separate Reunions

The proposed changes to the Constitution will enable us to hold 'virtual' meetings, where those involved participate from their individual locations. We currently hold virtual Committee Meetings which are open for a specified number of days (sometimes a week), with all comments seen by all Committee Members. Once the meeting is officially complete members then vote by email and all Committee Members are advised of the result. With a 'virtual AGM' (VAGM), we would need a tighter timescale to make it practicable for all members, but we would still need to take into account the various time zones in which members live. A list of key time zones can be found on page 31. One option would be to have a 48-hour Virtual AGM, followed by a further 24-hour voting window. During discussion we hope to set dates for the 2021 Virtual AGM (VAGM)

11 Facebook Pages

Following last year's AGM, we now have a new closed Facebook page, Witheridge Family History Society, which is for members only, and will not be visible to non-members. We welcome news, photos, queries and discussion starters from members. So far, only a few of our members have joined this page. It would be good to see a few more familiar faces greeting us on this page.

Set-up for the proposed open Facebook page, to be called 'Witheridge and Wetheridge Descendants', is not yet complete, but we hope to have it sorted in the next few weeks. On this open page, we plan to include a 'Did you know?' item each month, with a quirky snippet of information about a Witheridge/Wetheridge descendent (no longer living). Kim will provide this to one of the Admin team, and we hope this will encourage responses from non-members.

On both pages we plan to include regular greetings on appropriate days for Witheridge/Wetheridge families world-wide (eg St George's Day, ANZAC Day, Thanksgiving Day among others). Once these changes have been implemented, we will need additional admin/moderators to help us oversee the day to day running of these pages. If you have a few hours to spare each week, and would like to help us, please contact our Secretary Amy.

12 WFHS Christmas Card for 2020

Earlier compatibility problems were resolved last year, and the 2019 card came out exactly as Hannah designed it. As agreed, we sent Hannah a voucher, and received a thank-you card of her own design from Hannah. We plan to ask Hannah to design our WFHS card for 2020 and, as always, will send her a voucher.

13 Date and venue for 2021 Reunion

In line with our usual arrangements, the 2021 reunion could be held on either 9, 16, 23 May 2021, with Biggin Hill the default venue, if no-one suggests a workable alternative. However, members are invited to submit their comments and proposals for discussion at the AGM. If necessary, these will be further discussed by the Committee, with final proposals put to the membership by 1 July 2020, and the venue approved by 1 August 2020.

14 Any other business

15 Chairman closes meeting

AGM 2020 – Voting and Absentee Voting

All full members, and additional family members over the age of 16 who are covered by that membership, are entitled to vote, provided the membership is fully paid up at the date of the meeting.

Any voting member unable to attend may register an absentee vote by post or e-mail. **All absentee votes must be received at least four full days before the meeting, ie, by Tuesday 14 April 2020.** Postal votes must be sent to the Hon. Life President at 135 Kings Road, Biggin Hill, Westerham, Kent TN16 3NH in a sealed envelope clearly marked 'Postal Vote'. Votes registered via e-mail must be sent to amykennedy.ask@gmail.com, with 'Absentee Vote' in the subject box. Votes received by this mail box will be printed off and taken to the meeting, but neither these, nor the postal votes, will be counted until the votes of those present at the meeting have been cast. Should more than one vote be received from a member, only the last received for that member will be counted.

Any AGM motion concerning the Constitution requires a two-thirds majority of votes cast in order to be passed, but other motions can be passed by a simple majority. In the event of an equal number of votes being cast for and against a motion (except motions amending the Constitution) the Chairman of the meeting has a casting vote.

Constitution Revision

Important Notes on Constitution Revision

March 2020

Officers have for some time been considering how the Constitution needs to be amended to help WFHS make more effective use of recent advances in technology. In the process, we found that amendments voted for in 2016 had not been incorporated into the master text, and members had therefore not received the update.

Additionally, this close scrutiny revealed that various amendments made to certain sections over the years, had inadvertently created anomalies and/or contradictions to the terms of other sections.

To clarify how and why the recommended new changes are needed, Officers have based their scrutiny on the unpublished 2016 Constitution, so that members can see clearly why corrections are needed, and how the recommended amendments for 2020 fit into the changes voted for in 2016.

The 2016 version of the Constitution is therefore attached, marked up to show the changes needed now. These 2020 changes have been colour-coded, as shown below, to indicate the reason each particular change is necessary.

highlight: anomaly/contradiction that must be resolved

red italics: amendments made in 2016, but apparently not published

blue italics: essential amendments needed to help us use modern technology more effectively

Members should be aware that, as members of the Family History Federation (FHF), formerly Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS) we enjoy many benefits in areas of insurance, contacts and co-operation. To retain this valuable connection, we have to ensure that the basis of our Constitution complies with the basic FHF Constitution. As a result, the Officers have specifically avoided amendments which could jeopardise that.

Constitution Revision

The Witheridge Family History Society Constitution

1. Name

The name of the group is The Witheridge Family History Society.

2. Address

The recognised *email* address of the Society is that of the Secretary. If at any time the Society is without a Secretary, the recognised *email* address shall be that of the Honorary Life President, until such time as a Secretary is appointed. *To ensure efficient working, where appropriate, Officers may use additional email addresses for the purposes of conducting their official duties, provided that at all such emails are made available to the Committee promptly upon request.* The registered postal address of the Society is that of the Honorary Life Secretary.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the Society are:

- 3.1 To bring together families bearing the Witheridge and Wetheridge surnames and variants thereof, the descendants of these families, and others with strong links to these families.
- 3.2 To encourage the study of genealogy and family history of those families, the study of their occupations and places of residence, and to provide guidance in the procedures necessary to compile accurate genealogies.
- 3.3 To co-ordinate research into the Witheridge and Wetheridge families, to record the results of that research, and to make this information available to members.
- 3.4 To produce regularly an information bulletin or journal.
- 3.5 To seek out, transcribe, index, and whenever possible publish, or make available, material relevant to the interest of the Society.
- 3.6 To arrange meetings, lectures, visits and other activities relevant to the aims and interests of the Society.

4. Membership

Membership is, subject to the discretion of the Executive Committee, open to anyone bearing the name of Witheridge or Wetheridge, or a recognised variant thereof, to anyone descended from someone of that name, and their partners, and to those related by marriage to, or having strong ties with, any Witheridge or Wetheridge family. Members fall into three categories: full members, additional members and honorary members.

- 4.1 A full member is an individual who pays a membership subscription fee to the Society and to whom newsletters and other correspondence from the Society will be sent.
- 4.2 Additional members are other family members living at the same address as a full member and sharing access to the single copy of each notice or publication sent to that full member. The subscription paid by the full member automatically covers all additional members at the same address.
- 4.3 Honorary membership of the Society may be conferred at the discretion of the Executive Committee, in order to admit to the Society an individual who is not a Witheridge or a Witheridge descendant or partner, but has nevertheless rendered a significant service to the Society, or who currently assists the Society by fulfilling an administrative role, **subject to the proviso that only two Committee posts may be held at any one time by such honorary members.** Honorary members are not required to pay a membership subscription to the Society but will receive, gratis, copies of the Society's official journal *and other communications*.

Constitution Revision

An 'honorary membership' should not be confused with the titles of 'Honorary Life President' or 'Honorary Life Vice-President', which may be awarded, under rule 6.16 below, to members of the Society in recognition of outstanding past services to the Society. If any holder of such an Honorary title ceases to pay subscriptions, that person shall *remain a member, but shall* not be entitled to vote.

5. Subscriptions

- 5.1 Subscriptions are to be renewed on the first day of January each year. Membership shall be deemed to have lapsed if the subscription remains unpaid for five calendar months after the date of expiry. Note: This will allow for the payment of the current year's subscriptions up to and including the Witheridge Reunion each year. Any new member joining within the first eight months of the year will be deemed to have been a member for the full year and will pay subscription and receive all publications and other benefits accordingly. Those joining in the last four months of the year will receive all benefits from that date, but their subscriptions, which will be due immediately on joining, will be deemed to cover the full year from the next annual renewal date.
- 5.2 Advance payment of subscriptions will be allowed. Any number of individual yearly subscriptions may be paid by a single payment. Each yearly subscription is to be at the rate current at the time the payment is made. The payment will be deemed to consist of one current year's subscription, with the balance consisting of advance payments for succeeding years. The advance payments will be placed on the bank deposit until each year's subscription is due. The advance payments are not refundable in the event of the member leaving the Society or the dissolution of the Society, ***but any advance payment of one or more full years may, at the discretion of the Committee, be returned to the estate of a member who has died.***
- 5.3 The level of subscriptions can be set only at a General meeting of the Society, and shall remain in force until amended by resolution at another General meeting.
- 5.4 ~~There shall be two subscription rates:~~
There shall be one general subscription rate if there are no documents requiring overseas postage. Should there be documents requiring overseas postage, there shall be two subscription rates:
- 5.4.1 A UK Rate for those members with UK postal addresses (including members of the British Armed Forces serving overseas).
- 5.4.2 An Overseas Rate for those members with a non-UK postal address. This rate will take into account the higher cost of mailing newsletters and other correspondence to non-UK addresses.
- 5.5 In exceptional circumstances, the Executive Committee may reduce or waive the membership subscription for any full member. That member would continue to receive a copy of the Society's journal and, together with any additional family members, be welcome at the Society's meetings. However, if the subscription is completely waived, that membership shall no longer enjoy any voting rights. At the Committee's discretion, the journal may be provided to that member in electronic form.

6. Management

- 6.1 The Society will be administered by an Executive Committee consisting of no fewer than eight and no more than twelve elected members referred to hereinafter as 'Committee members'. Members of the Society who are not on the Executive Committee are referred to hereinafter as 'ordinary members'.
- 6.2 Any full or additional family member is entitled to stand in an election to any Committee post, provided that their subscription is fully paid up on the day of the election and their membership has not been suspended under rule 6.15 below. **Honorary members are not allowed to may, who hold that title by virtue of service to the Society, may be elected to Committee posts and, at the discretion of the Committee, be entitled to vote.**

Constitution Revision

- 6.3 The following nine officials will be elected for a term of one year at the Society's Annual General Meeting and will automatically be members of the Committee: Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Research Co-ordinator, Editor, Webmaster, *and Facebook Administrator*.
- 6.4 Additional 'without portfolio' Committee members may be elected for a term of one year at the Society's Annual General Meeting.
- 6.5 Where more than one official post, as defined in 6.3 above, is held by a single person, that individual may cast only a single vote on Committee decisions. Where necessary, additional 'without portfolio' Committee members will be elected at the Society's Annual General Meeting, or co-opted by a majority vote at a Committee meeting, in order to bring the number of voting Committee members up to eight or more. These additional members will also serve a term of one year.
- 6.6 If a holder of one of the official posts defined in 6.3 above resigns, is removed by the Committee under rule 6.15 below, or is otherwise unable to continue in office, the Committee **can may** appoint another member to perform that role until the next General Meeting of the Society. Unless the appointee is already a Committee member, he or she, being unelected, **may attend Committee meetings**, but does not become a **full** member of the Committee and may not vote on Committee decisions. The Committee seat will remain vacant until the next General Meeting.
- 6.7 If a Committee member 'without portfolio', as defined in 6.4 and 6.5 above, resigns, is removed by the Committee under rule 6.15 below, or is otherwise unable to continue as a Committee member, that Committee seat will remain vacant until the next General Meeting.
- 6.8 If the number of voting Committee members should fall below five, an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called to elect additional Committee members.
- 6.9 Taking into account the wide geographical spread of Society members, a Committee meeting may consist of one or more of the following: *a physical meeting of Committee members, a conference via telephone (including calls placed via the Internet) or an exchange of e-mails*. The Chairman will set a time limit for completion of any such meeting and the Secretary will be responsible for collecting the votes submitted by Committee members and submitting the results to the Chairman. After approval by the Chairman, the Secretary will then declare the results in writing to all Committee members.
- 6.10 A summary of the results of the Committee meeting will be published in the next available issue of the official journal of the Society and will be made available *via the members-only section of the Society's website and the closed Facebook page* as soon as is reasonably possible.
- 6.11 A Committee meeting will be deemed valid if a quorum of two-thirds of the voting members participate and submit their votes to the Secretary. A simple majority shall suffice to pass a motion. In the event of an equal number of votes being cast for and against the motion, the Chairman of the meeting shall have the casting vote.
- 6.12 Overseas Representatives are to be appointed at the Society's Annual General Meeting for a term of one year. They are an adjunct to the Committee and are to be advised, in advance, about matters to be brought up at each Committee meeting. The Secretary is responsible for ensuring that any input from the Overseas Representatives is presented to the Committee and that they are consulted about any decisions to be taken. However, they do not have a vote on Committee decisions unless they also stand for and are elected to a Committee position.

Constitution Revision

- 6.13 The Committee shall have full power to authorise expenditure, and all cheques shall be countersigned by two elected Committee members, normally the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. Should the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer share a membership, their co-signing authority shall first be recognised and approved by the Committee. No payments may be made from the Society's funds unless previously authorised by the Committee, either in the form of a budget set aside for a specified group of expenses, or the approval of an individual payment.
- 6.14 Any ordinary member may attend, *or participate in*, a Committee meeting, provided reasonable notice is given to the Secretary, and express opinions at the meeting, but will have no vote on Committee decisions.
- 6.15 The Executive Committee of the Society may suspend the membership and/or recommend the termination of the membership of any member, who, in the opinion of the Committee, is deemed culpable of any of the following:
- 6.15.1 behaving in a way likely to bring the Society into disrepute
 - 6.15.2 disclosing information of a personal or sensitive nature relating to any living member of the Society or their immediate family *or in any way breaching the terms of the current General Data Protection Regulations.*
 - 6.15.3 behaving in an unruly or unseemly way at any meeting or social gathering organised by the Society
 - 6.15.4 consistently failing to perform the duties of any Committee or Sub-Committee post to which the member has been elected
 - 6.15.5 behaving in any way to the detriment of the Society and/or its members
- Provided always:
- 6.15.6 that such member has been given the option of either appearing before the Committee with a friend, if the member so wishes, or of presenting a written defence to the Committee which shall have been read by all the Committee members entitled to vote
 - 6.15.7 that, in the case of an ordinary member, 75% of the Committee vote for the suspension, whether in person, by post or by e-mail
 - 6.15.8 that, in the case of a Committee member, 75% of the remaining members of the Committee vote for the suspension, whether in person, by post or e-mail
 - 6.15.9 that any suspension is considered and voted upon at the next Annual General Meeting, or the next Extraordinary General meeting, at which time the members may vote for the suspension to be ratified for a further year, to be set aside, or to be converted into a termination of membership and that any such motion requires a two thirds majority of the number casting votes
 - 6.15.10 that, in the event of an unclear decision, the Chairman (or acting Chairman) will have the casting vote
 - 6.15.11 that any member having been suspended or had their membership terminated will not be able to hold a Committee post in future. They may or not be re-admitted to membership at the discretion of the Committee.
- 6.16 The Executive Committee may award the title of 'Honorary Life President' or 'Honorary Life Vice-president' to a member of the Society in order to recognise extraordinary past services to the Society. These titles are intended only to honour the contribution made by the individual and shall confer no other privileges or obligations. Only one living member may be awarded the title of 'Honorary Life President'.

Constitution Revision

7. General Meetings

- 7.1 General Meetings of the Society may be convened at any time by the Executive Committee by giving notice of not less than twenty-eight days, either in writing or in the official journal of the Society.
- 7.2 A full membership of the Society entitles the full member, and any additional family members covered by that membership, to vote on matters brought before a General Meeting, always provided that the membership is fully paid-up on the day of the meeting and has not been suspended under rule 6.15 above. However, voting rights are limited to those aged sixteen or over on the day the vote is taken. **Honorary members are not eligible to vote, unless serving as an elected Officer of the Society.** Members who are eligible to vote are hereinafter referred to as 'voting members'.
- 7.3 Any voting member who is unable to attend a General Meeting may register an absentee vote by mail, e-mail, or (at the discretion of the Executive Committee) by a secure transaction via the Society's website. All absentee votes must be received no less than four days before the date of the meeting. Postal votes must be sent to the Secretary in a sealed envelope clearly marked 'Postal Vote', and not opened until the votes of those present at the meeting have been cast. Votes registered via email must be sent ~~to a designated mailbox address maintained only for this purpose~~ to the Secretary. Votes received by ~~this mailbox~~ *email* will be examined only after the votes of those present at the meeting have been cast. Absentee votes registered via the Society's website will also be counted only after those present at the meeting have cast their vote. All absentee votes must be accompanied by the membership number of the member whose voting right is being exercised, in order to eliminate any duplicate voting. Should more than one vote be received from a member, only the last received for that member will be counted. These membership numbers will not be disclosed to others by the Officer appointed to count the absentee votes.
- 7.4 A two-thirds majority of votes cast are necessary to pass any amendment to the constitution or any motion brought under rule 6.15.9 above, but other motions can be passed by a simple majority. In the event of an exactly equal number of votes being cast for and against any motion, with the exception of those amending the Constitution or brought under rule 6.15.9, the Chairman of the meeting has a casting vote.
- 7.5 A quorum of eight voting members is necessary to constitute a General Meeting, of whom a minimum of four voting members must be physically present, with the balance made up of absentee or distance voters.
- 7.6 An Annual General Meeting will be held once in every calendar year at which ~~a report~~ *reports* of the Society's activities since the previous Annual General Meeting shall be presented as well as an audited financial report. The Annual General Meeting shall be held within fourteen months of the previous one. The Society may choose to hold *a virtual Annual General Meeting (V-AGM) should the Committee feel it is in the best interests of the Society.*
- 7.6.1 The agenda for the Annual General meeting must be sent to all paid-up members of the Society in a timely fashion, such that they are able to review it and, if unable to attend the meeting in person, register absentee votes.
- 7.6.2 Officers and Committee members shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. Nominations should be received by the Secretary no less than six weeks before the announced date of the meeting and, if valid, be included on the agenda. A valid nomination is one that is proposed and seconded by voting members and has been accepted by the nominee who must be a fully paid-up member on the day of the election. A secret ballot shall be held if there is more than one nomination for any post.

Constitution Revision

- 7.6.3 In the event of no valid nomination being received for any given Committee position ~~six~~ **four** weeks before the date of the meeting, then, if a single valid nomination is subsequently received before or at the meeting, the person nominated shall be accepted as elected unopposed. However, if more than one valid nomination is received **at the meeting**, then a secret ballot shall be held at the meeting, but the results will not be disclosed for a further period of ~~twenty-eight~~ **fourteen** days, during which voting members who did not attend the meeting must be advised by e-mail and may register absentee votes by e-mail or via the website. Members who cannot be contacted by e-mail will be treated as abstaining. During this ~~twenty-eight~~ **fourteen**-day period, the Chairman ~~shall~~ **may** appoint someone to fulfil any official role left temporarily vacant.
- 7.6.4 Motions for an Annual General Meeting must be received by the Secretary, together with the names of the proposer and seconder, who must both be voting members, not less than ~~six~~ **five** weeks before the date of the meeting, and must appear on the agenda for the meeting.
- 7.6.5 Although a vote may be taken on matters not specified in the agenda, as an expression of opinion, such a vote will not have the force of a resolution, nor will it be binding on the Committee.
- 7.6.6 The minutes of an Annual General Meeting shall appear in the next issue of the Society's official journal to be published after the date of the meeting.
- 7.7 If an Extraordinary General Meeting is to be convened, the agenda for that meeting must be included with the notice of that meeting. No later motions or nominations will be allowed. Motions and nominations must be received by the Secretary no less than six weeks before the date of the meeting. Motions must be accompanied by the names of the proposer and seconder.

8. Indemnity to Officers

The Society shall indemnify the Committee of the Society from and against all claims, liabilities and demands, and in respect of all acts done or purported to be done in good faith on behalf of the Society.

9. Dissolution

In the event of a resolution by the members to dissolve the Society, the Treasurer shall realise all its assets and discharge all its liabilities. A General Meeting shall then be called, and the Treasurer shall submit his/**her** audited accounts. Any balance remaining shall then be distributed to such organisation or organisations having similar aims and objectives as the General Meeting may direct. The Treasurer shall then make such distributions as directed and submit the final accounts to the auditors. The Society shall then stand dissolved.

Grandparents' Day

Having seen the reference in Family News by Jennifer Woolcott to Grandparents' Day, I was intrigued to find out more. I've never been aware of it in the UK, and it's certainly never featured in the special dates listed in the front of any diary I've ever had. I wondered where and when the custom started, how many countries observe it, and whether they celebrate it on the same day.

Poland was among the earliest countries to celebrate grandparents. A Polish magazine promoted the idea in 1964, and it really took off in 1965. Here, grandparents are celebrated separately on two consecutive days. Grandma's Day is celebrated on 21 January, and Grandpa's Day on 22 January.

Grandparents' Day was initiated in the USA in 1979, although the first suggestion had come ten years earlier from a young lad. In 1969, Russell Capper (then aged 9) sent a letter to President Nixon suggesting a special day be set aside as Grandparents' Day. On 12 June 1969 he received a reply from President Nixon's Personal Secretary, saying that while his suggestion was appreciated, the President normally issued such proclamations only when authorised by a Congressional resolution. Later, Marian McQuade succeeded in promoting National Grandparents' Day. Its aims were to educate youngsters about the important contributions made by senior citizens, and to 'adopt' a grandparent, not just for the one day, but permanently. Initially, Marian McQuade failed with a Senate application to have the day proclaimed a national holiday, but after a three-year campaign she did succeed in persuading 43 states to observe the day. On 3 August 1978, following Congressional approval, President Jimmy Carter signed a proclamation designating the first Sunday of September after Labor Day of each year as National Grandparents' Day, 'to honor grandparents, to give grandparents an opportunity to show love for their children's children, and to help children become aware of strength, information, and guidance older people can offer'. In 2004, songwriter Johnny Prill, composed an official song called, unsurprisingly, 'A Song for Grandma and Grandpa'. In 2020, National Grandparents' Day in the USA will be observed on 13 September.

In 1987, an international food company (the Kraft, Jacobs, Suchard group) launched a brand of coffee in France, called Café Grand'mère. This triggered the celebration of Grandmother's Day, celebrated on the first Sunday in March – this year on 1 March. Grandfathers appear to have been ignored!

The Philippines also initiated their Grandparents' Day in 1987, celebrating on the second Sunday in September – this year 13 September. There are usually many special events, some of them free, designed to cater for families and the elderly. Grandparents can enjoy meal discounts, free flowers, free concerts, and even free medical check-ups!

In the UK, Age Concern (now Age UK) first introduced National Grandparents' Day in 1990. Since 2008 it has been celebrated on the first Sunday in October – this year on 4 October. However, it's no longer widely observed, partly because commercial interests have produced cards and gifts for grandparents to boost sales of Mothering Sunday and Father's Day cards and products.

In Canada, Grandparents' Day was introduced in 1995, to acknowledge the importance of grandparents 'to the structure of the family in the nurturing, upbringing and education of children'. It was observed on the second Sunday in September, but was officially discontinued in 2014.

In the Netherlands, Opa en Oma Dag (Granddad and Grandma Day) was established in 2004, and is celebrated on 4 June. It was originally planned as a day for grandparents and great-grandparents to spend time with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren to strengthen the bonds between the generations, and increase appreciation of senior citizens in general. The 'adoption' of an elderly person or couple without grandchildren, by children who don't have grandparents, was also suggested. However, the day isn't widely celebrated, and many people in the Netherlands are completely unaware of it.

Grandparents' Day

In Italy, the Festa Nazionale dei Nonni (National Grandparents' Feast Day) was first established in 2005, and is celebrated on 2 October, to coincide with the Roman Catholic festival of Guardian Angels' Day. In Spain 'Dia de los Abuelos y las abuelas' (Grandfathers' and Grandmothers' Day) is celebrated on 26 July. This coincides with the feast day of St Joachim and St Anne, said to be the maternal grandparents of Jesus.

The first Grandparents' Day in Australia was celebrated in Queensland in 2010, on the first Sunday in November. New South Wales followed in 2011, and Western Australia in 2012, both celebrating on the last Sunday in October. Queensland has now moved their celebrations forward a week, so that all three states now celebrate on the same day. This year that will be 25 October.

Other countries which introduced grandparent days in 2010 include Estonia (grandparents) and Germany (grandmothers only), both on the second Sunday in October – this year 11 October.

So the dates vary considerably, but October seems to be the favoured month (UK, Italy, Australia, Estonia, Germany) with September (USA, Philippines, Canada) a close second. However, I've not been able to find a reference to celebrating grandparents in Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, and other countries where we know Witheridge and Wetheridge families have settled.

Kim Cook

We'd love to know if, and how, Witheridge/Wetheridge families celebrate their grandparents. Please email me (witheridge1987@gmail.com) and let me know. Also, if there are any other special days that our families celebrate, we'd love to hear about them

Books for Researchers

Some of our members may not be aware that the Family History Federation (FHS), of which we are members, has its own publishing and distribution division, and has a wide selection of family history titles available on its website, at familyhistorybooksonline.co.uk. From time to time they also have special offers and, at the time of writing this, I notice that there are some special offers (while stocks last) as well as draws for free copies of selected books.

The latest draws are for two books on researching occupations. The first is *Tracing Your Railway Ancestors*, by **Di Drummond**, the second is *Tracing Your Police Ancestors*, by **Stephen Wade**. To enter, email competitions@familyhistoryfederation.com, making your subject line Railway or Police, according to which draw you wish to enter. The deadline for entries for both draws is 20 April 2020.

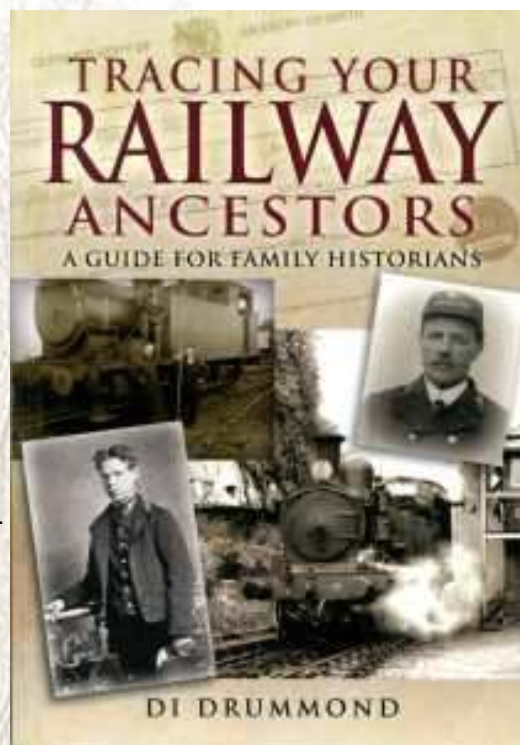
Over the years FHF has been producing a series of 'Basic Facts About...' Some of these booklets, priced at just £2.50 each, have been written by some of the most esteemed genealogists.

Current titles include:

- ***Using Education Records***, by **Colin R Chapman**, covers schools for all classes, providing background information and clues to contents of education records, and where to find them. A5, 16 pages, £2.50.
- ***Tracing Your Catholic Ancestry in England***, by **Michael Gandy**. Starting with a short history of Roman Catholicism in England from 16th-19th centuries, and the discrimination that existed, the contents also include sources for Catholic history in Anglican and family records, and details of baptism marriage and burial records maintained by the Catholic Church. Useful addresses and a substantial bibliography are also included. A5, 16 pages, £2.50.
- ***Lunatics in England and Wales*** by **Pamela Faithfull**, covers how to find more about any ancestor in an asylum or listed as lunatic in the census, together with explanations of how such people were treated, and how to find them in the records. A5, 16 pages, £2.50.

Another useful and inexpensive series is the FHF 'An Introduction to...' Current titles include:

- ***Occupations, A Preliminary List***, by **Joyce Culling**. Using the headings Occupation, Trade, Rank or Profession, found in GRO certificates, census returns and other documents, the author has compiled a list of those with which readers may not be familiar, and alternative names sometimes used for the same occupation, particularly where these are particular to a specific location. A5, 66 pages, £3.95.
- ***Friendly Society Records***, by **Roger Logan**. £3.95.

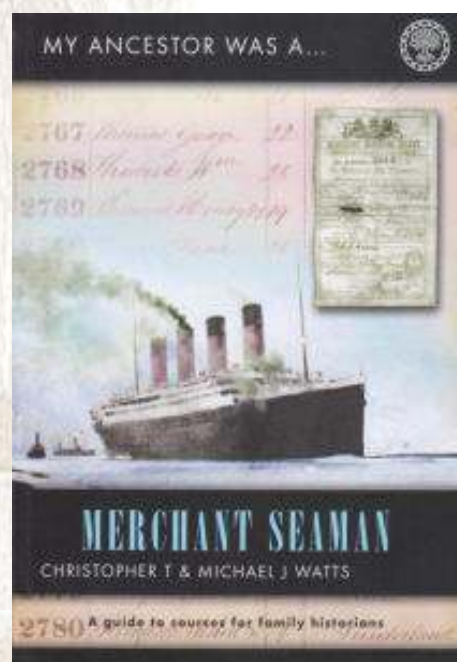
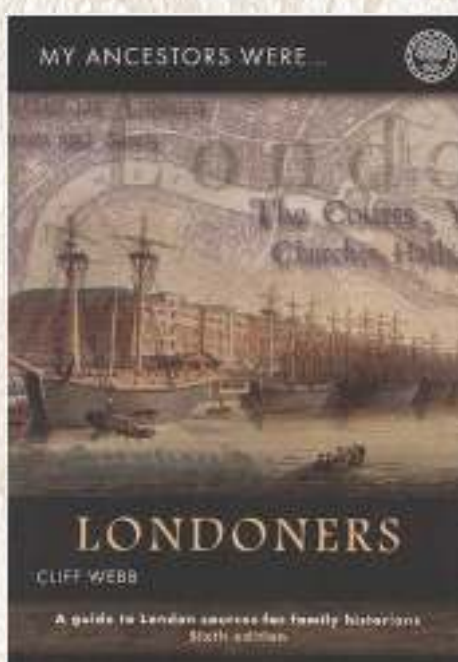
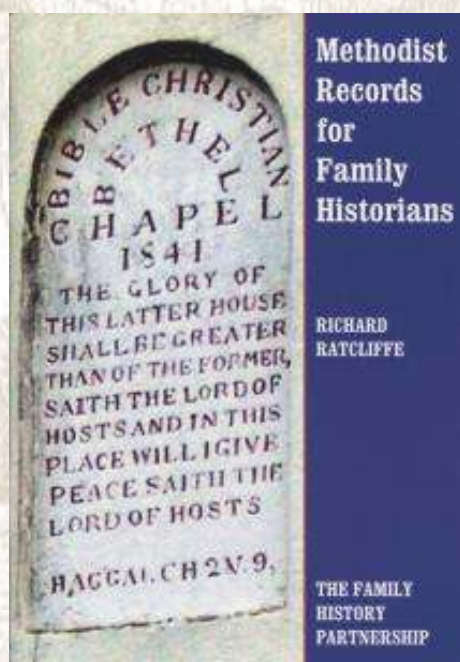


Books for Researchers

Other titles produced by FHF, which might be of particular interest to our members include:

- ***Methodist Records for Family Historians*** by **Richard Ratcliffe**. This describes the founding of the Methodist movement by John and Charles Wesley, and various developments, splits and divisions (including Bible Christians), from 1791 to 1932, when three main groups united to form the Methodist Church of today. It describes the organisation of Methodism, where to find baptism, marriage and burial, and records of an individual church, as well as those of the local Methodist Circuit, Methodist schools and colleges, and specialist heritage and archive sources. There is also a useful list of important printed sources, a select bibliography and a Methodist Calendar. A5, 32 pages, £4.95.
- ***My Ancestors Were Londoners***, by **Cliff Webb**. Although most of our ancestors came from Devon, some, particularly mariners plying the high seas, settled in London as far back as the 16th century, while a number of others moved there in the following three centuries. Given the dense population, high mobility within the area, and changing names of roads and alleys, tracing London ancestors poses particular problems. This book explores the techniques which can be useful in these specific circumstances. A5, 102 pages, £8.99.
- ***My Ancestor was a Merchant Seaman***, by **Christopher T and Michael J Watts**. Devon's extensive coastline led to our members having merchant seaman ancestors. This new and heavily revised edition, more than half as big again than the first edition, is packed full of places to search and the records that can be found in local record offices and archives. There's a full listing of these record offices and archives, with class and piece numbers, what to look for and where to find lesser-known records. A5, 214 pages, £9.99.

Kim Cook



Appendix: World Time Zones for Virtual Meetings

Aust NSW includes Sydney and New South Wales

Aust WA includes Perth and Western Australia

Greenwich MT includes London and all the UK

US Eastern Standard Time includes New York, Eastern USA, Quebec and most of Ontario.

US Central Time includes Illinois, Minnesota, etc, plus western Ontario, all Manitoba and Alberta

US Pacific Time includes Washington, Oregon, California, etc, British Columbia and Vancouver

<u>Aust NSW</u>	<u>Aust WA</u>	<u>Greenwich MT</u>	<u>US Eastern</u>	<u>US Central</u>	<u>US Pacific</u>
10.00 am	8.00 am	12.00 midnight	7.00 pm	6.00 pm	4.00 pm
11.00 am	9.00 am	1.00 am	8.00 pm	7.00 pm	5.00 pm
12.00 noon	10.00 am	2.00 am	9.00 pm	8.00 pm	6.00 pm
1.00 pm	11.00 am	3.00 am	10.00 pm	9.00 pm	7.00 pm
2.00 pm	12.00 noon	4.00 am	11.00 pm	10.00 pm	8.00 pm
3.00 pm	1.00 pm	5.00 am	12.00 midnight	11.00 pm	9.00 pm
4.00 pm	2.00 pm	6.00 am	1.00 am	12.00 midnight	10.00 pm
5.00 pm	3.00 pm	7.00 am	2.00 am	1.00 am	11.00 pm
5.00 pm	4.00 pm	8.00 am	3.00 am	2.00 am	12.00 midnight
7.00 pm	5.00 pm	9.00 am	4.00 am	3.00 am	1.00 am
8.00 pm	6.00 pm	10.00 am	5.00 am	4.00 am	2.00 am
9.00 pm	7.00 pm	11.00 am	6.00 am	5.00 am	3.00 am
10.00 pm	8.00 pm	12 noon	7.00 am	6.00 am	4.00 am
11.00 pm	9.00 pm	1.00 pm	8.00 am	7.00 am	5.00 am
12.00 midnight	10.00 pm	2.00 pm	9.00 am	8.00 am	6.00 am
1.00 am	11.00 pm	3.00 pm	10.00 am	9.00 am	7.00 am
2.00 am	12.00 midnight	4.00 pm	11.00 am	10.00 am	8.00 am
3.00 am	1.00 am	5.00 pm	12.00 noon	11.00 am	9.00 am
4.00 am	2.00 am	6.00 pm	1.00 pm	12.00 noon	10.00 am
5.00 am	3.00 am	7.00 pm	2.00 pm	1.00 pm	11.00 am
6.00 am	4.00 am	8.00 pm	3.00 pm	2.00 pm	12 noon
7.00 am	5.00 am	9.00 pm	4.00 pm	3.00 pm	1.00 pm
8.00 am	6.00 am	10.00 pm	5.00 pm	4.00 pm	2.00 pm
9.00 am	7.00 am	11.00 pm	6.00 pm	5.00 pm	3.00 pm
10.00 am	8.00 am	12.00 midnight	7.00 pm	6.00 pm	4.00 pm

Please note that none of these times takes account of any local Summer Time arrangements. I know that US Central moves to Summer Time at about the same time as GMT becomes BST (ie +1 hr), but I don't know what happens in other zones.