BLHN ♦ 2026

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY NETWORK Beaconsfield

CONFERENCE AND LOCAL HISTORY FAIR Saturday 26 September

This 'Peterloo jug' (left) commemorated the mass protest at St Peter's Fields in Manchester 1819, against the Corn Laws and for 'Universal Suffrage'. The peaceful protest was brutally suppressed by the local yeoman cavalry.

Political change in Buckinghamshire from the English Civil War to the Suffragettes

With political change the balance of power is altered. Whoever holds power loses it; others gain it.

In an island such as ours this change is usually on a national scale. Every region, county, town and community is affected – but often very differently. For some it comes easily; for others it is a struggle.

Buckinghamshire has seen many changes in the past two thousand years. Our county was affected by change from Iron Age settlements to domination by Rome, from Anglo-Saxon migrations to the Vikings, then came the Norman Conquest....

And nearly 600 years later, when Buckinghamshire's Wendover MP, John Hampden, refused to pay King Charles I's Ship-Money tax, this proved to be one of the sparks that lit the English Civil War.

When royal power was lost in 1649, many people who had little power in their own lives sought to gain it.

That is where this year's conference will start... with the parliamentary challenge to the monarchy which might be seen as one of the first steps on the road towards what we now call 'democracy'. There were pot-holes on this road – the vested interests of 'rotten boroughs' (including Wendover) and bribery of elections (including Aylesbury) were only two...

And our last talk will be on the biggest step so far: the winning of votes for women by women, when the campaign's 'Great Pilgrimage' came through Buckinghamshire.

▶ ▶ ▶ **FOR FULL PROGRAMME AND ALL DETAILS** see next page

TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY: Saturday 26 September

9.30am *Conference doors open – coffee/tea/juice/biscuits*

10.00 John Lovelock of Hedgerley Historical Society will introduce...

10.05 ***Welcome*** from Alex Dunlop, Mayor of Beaconsfield

10.10 Introduction: **Putting Buckinghamshire and political change in context**
Peter Marsden, of Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society

10.25 **Communities divided: Buckinghamshire and the Civil Wars**
Emeritus Professor Ian Beckett
How the coming of conflict divided a stable county community, allowing new groups outside the traditional élite to assume political power during the wars – before the re-emergence of traditional élites at the Restoration.

11.05 **Questions and Answers** – at the end of each talk there will be a short Q&A session

11.15 **COFFEE/TEA BREAK** and a first chance to see societies' displays and bookstalls

11.30 **Opposing the county's Rotten Boroughs**
Julian Hunt, of Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society
Before the 1832 Reform Act six Buckinghamshire towns each sent two MPs to Parliament. For the aristocracy and gentry having an MP in the family was highly prestigious, so to secure places at Westminster the landowners around these towns fought tooth and nail.

12.20 **LUNCH BREAK** – buffet lunch for those who have paid for this in advance. Others are welcome to bring their own food, and there are local shops and cafés nearby.
This is also an 80-minute opportunity to visit the Local History Fair, with displays, stands and bookstalls by our history and archaeology societies

2.00 **Bribery and corruption at Aylesbury's 1802 election**
Tony Sargeant, of Buckinghamshire Family History Society
The presence of Robert Bent as a third candidate for Aylesbury Borough in 1802 caused a flurry of election activity which led two years later to an Enquiry and court cases. So who was corrupt, and who lost everything?

2.50 **Hearts and minds:**
the untold story of the Great Pilgrimage and votes for women
Jane Robinson, social historian and author of the book with that title
If you think that 'Votes for Women' was all about the suffragettes, then think again!
This is the forgotten story of the non-militant suffragists and their six-week protest march through Britain to win the right to vote.

3.50 *Conclusions and thanks* – John Lovelock

▶ ▶ ▶ **DIRECTIONS TO THE CONFERENCE, PARKING AND TICKETS** see next page

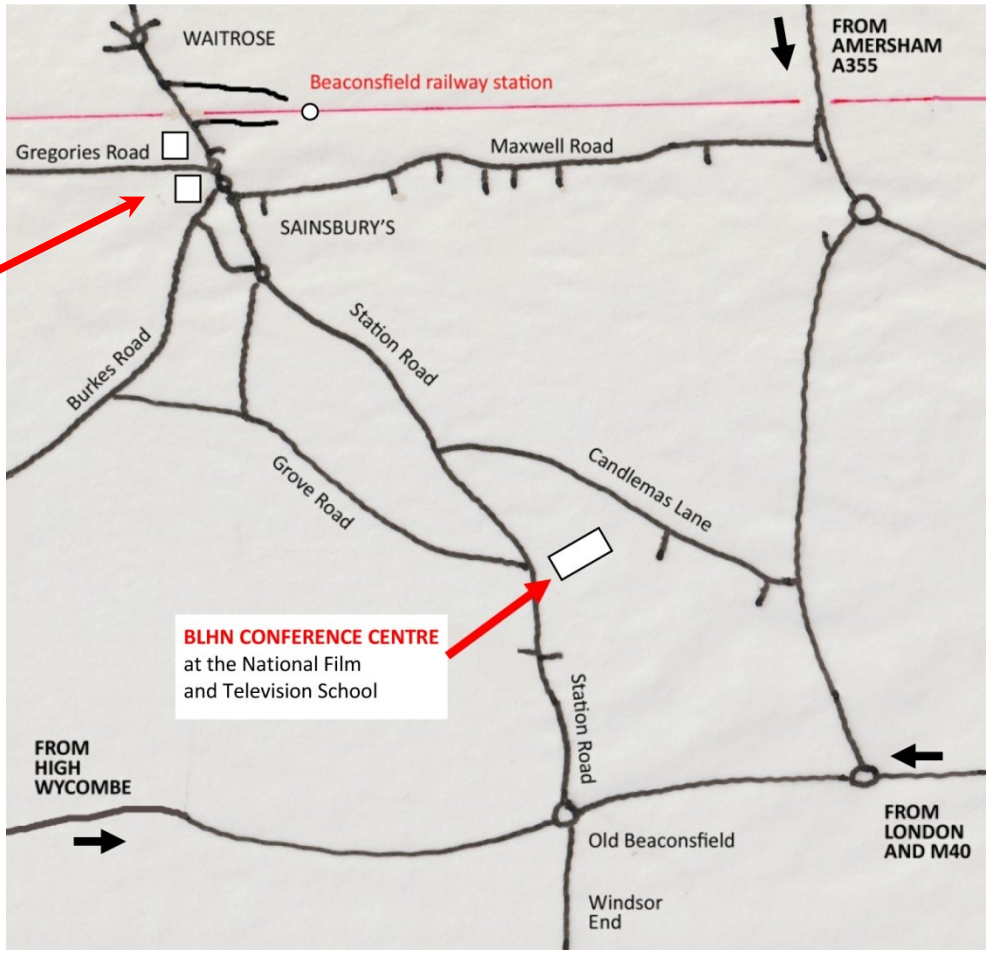
THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE IS IN BEACONSFIELD

- Last year's BLHN Conference was held in Buckingham; this year's will head to the south of the county at Beaconsfield, where the National Film and Television School has an auditorium for 180 people.
- The school also has plenty of space for the **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FAIR,** with stands and displays by the county's local history and archaeology societies and organisations.

GETTING THERE:

- **BY ROAD:** Beaconsfield is on the old A40 main road between London and High Wycombe, and just to the north of today's M40 motorway. From Aylesbury, the centre and north of the county head for Amersham, then continue south on the A355.
- The Film School is on Station Road, two minutes' drive north from the old town roundabout and on the right-hand side of the road ***(see our map below)***. Public car parking is three minutes' drive further on, on the left just before reaching the railway station.
- **BY RAIL:** Beaconsfield is on the Chiltern line between London Marylebone and Bicester, with regular trains calling at Gerrards Cross, Denham, High Wycombe, Princes Risborough and Haddenham. The Film School is a 15-minute walk from Beaconsfield Rail Station. There are also local buses.
- The Film School has only a small car park. So spaces there will be reserved for people with mobility problems – and for societies and organisations needing to offload stands and displays. However drivers can drop off passengers there before the 3-minute drive to the car parks.
- The nearest public car parks are just south of the railway line at the junction of Station Road with Burkes Road (postcode HP9 1PB). Penncroft car park has 98 spaces and Altons car park 165 spaces. An all-day parking ticket is £6.30. The Film School is a 12-minute walk down Station Road.

CAR PARKING FOR THE DAY:
Penncroft, to the north, has 98 spaces. **Altons** to the south has 165. An all-day parking ticket in either costs £6.30.



- NOTE: There is normally free car parking on Windsor End, south of Old Town roundabout, but Saturday 26 September is a Market Day and parking there will be very limited.

▶ ▶ ▶ **CATERING, LUNCHES AND TICKETS** see next page

CATERING ARRANGEMENTS AT THE CONFERENCE

- **Free tea, coffee, squash and water** for everyone on arrival, during the morning break and at lunchtime.
- **A buffet lunch** of sandwiches and cakes will be provided for those who have paid for 'Conference plus lunch' tickets in advance.
- **If your ticket is 'Conference only'** you are welcome to bring your own food for lunch and to eat this in the conference centre. Otherwise there are local town centre shops and cafés nearby.

CONFERENCE TICKETS IN ADVANCE

- **Conference AND lunch – £30 –** includes a buffet lunch of sandwiches, rolls, cakes and fruit.
- **Conference and Fair only – £24 –** You are welcome to bring your own food for lunch, and the conference is only 10-15 minutes' walk from cafés, pubs and food shops in Beaconsfield.
- **Full-time students under 25 – FREE**, but please apply in advance (the buffet lunch is £6 extra).

▶▶▶ TO GET YOUR TICKETS:

- **ONLINE:** Get your tickets at **https://bas1.org.uk/blhn-conference-tickets**, with online card payment via TicketSource (there is no extra charge for this).
- **BY POST:** Please write, specifying which ticket(s) you require, to BLHN Conference, BAS Library, Discover Bucks Museum, Church Street, Aylesbury HP20 2QP. Enclose a cheque made out to 'Bucks Archaeological Society', and please remember to include your name, postal address and email.
  Your payment will be acknowledged and your tickets will be sent to you by post.

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ANY QUERIES please phone 01296 696303 or email chair@bucksas.org.uk