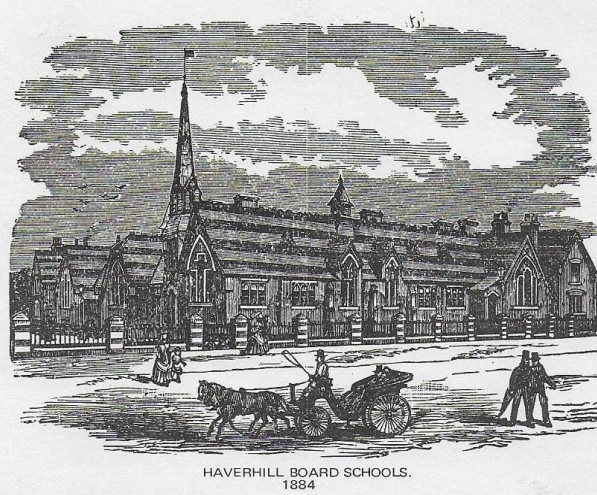




NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2025

SUFFOLK FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

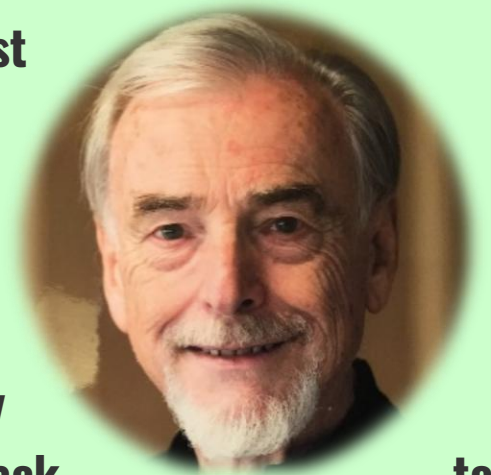
Registered Charity No 1087748

Next Meeting: Thursday 9th October 2025 at 7.30pm

Borley Rectory 'the most haunted house in England'

With Bryan Thurlow

Following a visit from a professional ghost hunter in 1929, a national newspaper declared in a bold headline, 'Borley Rectory, the most haunted house in England.' This brought a great deal of disruption to the quiet little north Essex village. To discover why the rectory was considered haunted Bryan will take us back to the 19th Century and tell us about two successive rectors, the latter one, together with his sisters, were rather obsessed with spiritualism and claimed to have seen the ghost of a nun on several occasions. You will get to meet the Reverend Smith who moved into the rectory in 1928, his wife, Mabel, and Mr Harry Price who was invited to investigate all the strange going on at the rectory



We were pleased to join the Kedington & District RBL remembering the war in the Far East. A great presentation by Kevin Betts set the scene in the Far East. Charmian Thompson followed, speaking about the local men who were involved.

Many thanks to Kirk, Kevin and the team for their warm welcome and everyone who attended.



Photos: Kirk Pearson

Following Edel's recent talk on art I could not resist including this which I found on social media. It did amuse me!

Family Tree of Vincent Van Gogh

His dizzy aunt - **Verti Gogh**

His brother who ate prunes - **Gotta Gogh**

His magician uncle - **Where-diddy Gogh**

His Mexican cousin - **A Mee Gogh**

The constipated uncle - **Can't Gogh**

The sister who loved disco - **Go Gogh**

The brother with low back pain - **Lum Bay Gogh**

I saw you smiling... - **there ya Gogh!**

2026 Programme

Yes, we are planning well ahead as usual and Rosemary our programme secretary has booked another exciting series of speakers for us to enjoy.

As usual we do not book an external speaker for our January meeting as we are concerned about traveling long distances during winter months and potentially poor weather. So, for **January 2026 we are going to have a members evening and invite members to give a 10-15min talk** on any subject of their choice although if it has some family history connection that would be great. If anyone is willing to take part, please let me know. You have four months to put together a presentation. Help will be given if required. **Why not have a go and volunteer?**



In August we joined forces with the Local History Museum and enjoyed a trip to Bulmer brick works. What a fascinating place! A small family business continuing the traditions of brickmaking dating back to the Middle Ages.

'Bulmer bricks are made from the finest London Clays, dug from our seams almost continually since Tudor times. Hand-made, using traditional methods of making, drying and are firing in a coal burning, down draught kiln, our facings and specials can be made with almost any texture, from coarse veined to smooth. This helps to give the distinctive finish that blends so well with the originals.'

They work on large projects for the National Trust, English Heritage, and Historic Royal Palaces etc., but are just as proud of some of their smaller works undertaken for individuals.

Open day

An open day was recently held at Haverhill Library which focused on those starting out or resuming their family history research. In the morning, Charmian gave an engaging talk about resources available for research. In the



afternoon, there was a practical session for attendees using the library's computers with the help of our more experienced members.

Many thanks to all those who assisted on the day, whether by demonstrating, meeting and greeting or using their expertise to help those with their research. It was truly appreciated.

Our latest project - Who wants to be involved?

This year has flown by so quickly but now all the summer events are out of the way we can concentrate on our major project for 2026.

Just as a reminder some years ago, Lee emailed us a file which contained images of a leather-bound book which was given to Rev. Robert Roberts to celebrate his remarkable achievement as Vicar of St Mary's Church, Haverhill from 1815 and serving his parishioners for 56 years.

Within this very special book were the signatures of many of the parishioners and other people of Haverhill not necessarily associated with St. Marys.

The project involves researching those individuals/families who signed the book, which will give us a tremendous insight into life during this period.

Some of you have already researched some of the names in the book but there are many more to research. If family history research is not your thing we are looking for people to research the following – fashion, transport, trades, utilities, social recreation, buildings, housing or industries between the period 1815-1875.

We hope to build a picture of life both nationally and locally during this period culminating in a large display at the Haverhill Arts Centre.

If you would like to help either by researching names or more general research into life during this period please do get in touch.

2025 Programme of Meetings & Events

9 Oct 2025	Borley Rectory the most haunted house in England	Bryan Thurlow
13 Nov 2025	CWGC	Paul White
11 Dec 2025	Christmas Quiz A light-hearted social evening with refreshments	Ourselves

Wednesday afternoons, help with your Research at Haverhill Library 2 - 4pm

Guided use of the Internet, especially for newcomers or those 'stuck'

telephone 01440 848095 to book your place