

Sarratt Local History Society - Curd Family Get-together

Local history literally came alive at the Village School on 19 July when nearly 50 descendants of the same Sarratt family came together for the first time.

John Hopkins, a member of the SLHS committee, had the brilliant idea of a 'living history' day. He had realised that with the aid of IT, the recent interest in genealogy and a very uncommon family surname, Curd, he could trace not merely the history of his Sarratt ancestry, but also many of their descendants.

So it was, that John and the Committee waited that Saturday morning (coffee, tea and cake at the ready [though not curd cake!]) to see if anyone would turn up. Turn up they certainly did – nearly 50 descendants of JOHN AND SUSANNAH CURD, married in Holy Cross Church, Sarratt, in 1769. They came from Los Angeles, Montana, Newcastle, the Isle of Wight and more immediately from London, Flaunden and Chipperfield. They learned how the sons of John and Susannah had been employed as 'papermakers' at Sarratt Mill and in later generations as journeymen, paperworkers, cabinet makers, labourers, farmers, and so on. But beyond the historical facts and the faded photographs, they had the moving experience of seeing their original 'home' village and of meeting each other not in a book or a lecture or film, but in real life. John Hopkins had turned dry history into a living emotional reality. What more could a local history society ask?

Next meeting: Tuesday 30 September 'The History of Chesham and Latimer' at the Village School.

Angela Colman

Peggy Harpley writes:

I would like to thank John Hopkins, Dawn Pitts and the Sarratt Local History Society for arranging such a wonderful Curd family gathering – also Head Teacher Christine Buck for the use of the lovely Hall at Sarratt JMI School and the ladies serving endless teas and refreshments. To meet so many relations from far and wide – what a day to remember!