

Surrey Family History Fair 2019

Not even inclement weather and a televised rugby match being played nearly 6,000 miles away could deter visitors to this year's event, which as was pointed out was the last major family history fair of 2019.



Visitors were able to browse a wide variety of stands and displays including visiting Family History Societies and commercial enterprises. Comments received on the day were that the event is an excellent opportunity to meet friends and colleagues in the world of genealogy.



Woking's Deputy Mayor Cllr Saj Hussain was escorted around the Fair by President Ray Anstis and Executive Committee member Maura Sellers as a memento of his visit Cllr Hussain was presented with a book on local history.

For many the visitors the Family History Fair gave them the opportunity to use the various resources the Society has available. Surrey Look Ups successfully found a marriage for a lady who's only evidence was a newspaper cutting, Census Detectives reported they were kept busy with queries, Members Interest desk was able to help members find other researchers tracing the same names.

Monumental Inscriptions transcribed by volunteers and held on a database by Tony Kelly and his team were available to help researchers with their ancestors final resting places. Bob Brock had a busy day helping visitors pinpoint their historical timelines through their old photographs. With DNA and Genealogy being a hot topic Dr Brian Swann was kept busy answering queries.

Ruth Mattewson took on an extra task and was happy to help visitors who had queries with their Irish and Scottish Research, a lady who'd she'd helped last year brought along a box of chocolates to say thank you for her help. Captain Graham Bandy brought with him some of his extension collection of Army memorabilia and was on hand to help with all things military.



The Society's Library also reported a good day with members taking an interest in the hard copy items available. The Society's bookstall reported a good number of sales and the membership secretary was pleased to sign up 12 new members and 3 renewing their membership.



A popular feature of the Family History fair was the free talks, Sharon Hintze (London Family Search Centre) gave two talks; England Wills and Probate and By the Sweat of Thy Brow, Dr Gill Draper (British Association for Local History) Research the history of Children's and Family Lives the finally Les Mitchinson (LMentary Family Research and Education) spoke on researching Naval Ancestors from Trafalgar to WW1.

Finally, many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make this event the success it was. Those who came out on Friday evening to help set up the hall, together with all the helpers on the West Surrey Family History desks and other tasks on Saturday.