



THE AKEHURST-ER

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AKEHURST FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

July 2010

ISSUE 8

An occasional publication of the
Akehurst Family History Society
for people researching the names of
Ackehurst, Ackhurst, Akehurst,
Akhurst, Akurst

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... to the Eighth issue of the Akehurst-er Newsletter !!

The more observant amongst you will have noticed a bit of a gap between issue seven and issue eight. The aim from here onwards is to get an issue out as often as we can, depending on available material: The more there is to tell, the more issues there will be but as a minimum one will be produced shortly after each GetTogether to bring news of that event to as many people as possible.

Several years have passed and several GetTogether(s) have occurred which some of you will have attended. For those of us who couldn't attend (and missed the email recollections many posted) can read all about what went on in the Catch-up section of this newsletter.

Finally, many thanks for all who have contributed to this issue of the Akehurst-ers Newsletter, keep the content coming please.

Steve



2010 GetTogether
will be held at The
Barbican, Lewes,
on the weekend of
17-20 September.

Full details on Page 2



2010 GETTOGETHER

The 2010 GetTogether will be held at The Barbican, Lewes, on the weekend of 17-20 September this year. This will continue our tradition of holding an Akehurst GetTogether in the United Kingdom every even-numbered year.

The weekend's events will include an interesting and varied program of speakers, displays of trees and memorabilia and the biennial meeting of the Akehurst Family History Society. There will be ample time to meet other Akehurst-ers, compare notes, and view Morwenna's 'forest of trees'. Bring along a copy of your family tree and compare it with the ones on the 'tree wall' and in our database to see if you can find anyone else who is researching your tree.

Lewes is a convenient location for our meeting as it has a good train service, a wide range of accommodation, plenty of places to eat, and is within easy walking distance of the East Sussex Records office.

The cost has not been finalised, but previous GetTogethers have cost about £15-£25 per person (plus food and accommodation).

This year's contact for the GetTogether is Alan Pett, Alan's contact details in the "Important Addresses" section. The email address for the event is: 2010GetTogether@akehurst.org

CATCH-UP ON PREVIOUS EVENTS



2009 ANTIPODEAN GETTOGETHER

The venue for the 2009 Antipodean Akehurst GetTogether was The Lodge at the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand, and the date was the weekend of Friday/Saturday/Sunday 23/24/25 January 2009. Fourteen attended the weekend, including four Australians (from 'across the ditch') and one from the UK. Our organiser was Ngaire Paterson and she chose the theme of "How They Came - And Why" to reflect that our Antipodean forebears chose to emigrate to the other side of the world.

Most of us came prepared for the 'show and tell' and we heard some interesting stories and got a good insight into the migration to this corner of the world. It was interesting that all of us knew the How (and the When) of our forebears' arrival, but

not many of us were certain of the Why. However, we collectively agreed that the reason was most likely 'to better ourselves and provide an opportunity for our children'.

New Zealand and Australia are nations of immigrants and we were treated to a talk by Wiremu Puke, the Ethnographic researcher at the Auckland Museum. The Maori have a strong oral history tradition and Wiremu knew his genealogy (or Whakapapa) off by heart - better than many European (Pakeha) genealogists could manage! Wiremu took us to the Te Parapara Maori Garden and explained the method and meaning of the way the plantings were done and the history of the enclosure and the carvings. This was followed by a delightful, informal, dinner at the Hamilton Gardens, where we spent more time learning about the Maori culture.

There were some odd coincidences. For example, Margaret Dunkley said the first time she encountered another Akehurst was when she visited Korowa School (in Melbourne) - which was started by an Akehurst in Liz Rushton's tree. Liz was sitting beside Margaret when that discovery was made. Margaret also mentioned she was born in China - and David realised he had been given a copy of the book her mother wrote and could now match that publication to a tree! In another coincidence, a month before the GetTogether, Colin Akehurst had given David a photocopy of a page from a book, source unknown, containing a photograph of three Akehurst girls in a migrant hostel. A week before the GetTogether, while in Auckland, David managed to track the source. During the 'show & tell' session, Diane Oldman told us about her solitary Akehurst ... and it is highly likely that said Akehurst is the sister of the three girls in the photograph!

The final coincidence for the weekend was when the AA man told us it would take 90 minutes for the serviceman to arrive to fix our car's ignition, and he turned up spot on 90 minutes. However, no-one told us it would take another three hours for the locksmith to arrive and make a new ignition key! So, instead of us taking Ngaire out to dinner, the six of us eventually admitted defeat and defaulted to burger and chips being brought to the motel room.

It was an excellent weekend - well organised, an entertaining and informative program, delightful surroundings and weather, and all conducted with typical Kiwi hospitality. The only 'down' side was that the weekend went too quickly!



2008 GETTOGETHER

Horam Village Hall was the venue for the 2008 GetTogether, which was held on the weekend of 20-22 September. If you have not heard of Horam, it is a small village between Heathfield and Hailsham and is almost in the middle of Akehurst territory. Morwenna Akehurst was our organiser and she did an amazing job, particularly as her family was in the midst of a bereavement and Morwenna was hospitalised on the Sunday evening!

Twenty-four Akehurst-ers attended across the two-day meeting and nine went on the Monday's 'excursion' to visit Akehurst Farm.

Speakers included Anne Matanle, who spoke about her Photographic Index; Ken Toll of the Guild of One-Name Studies, who described how participating in a DNA Study could help point to connections between previously unrelated Akehurst trees; and Else Churchill, from the Society of Genealogists, whose talk "I'm Stuck" took us through a number of well-known and not-so-well-known online resources which could be used to 'unstick' our research. In addition, there were presentations introducing the Akehurst Family History Society, the Akehurst One-Name Study, and resources available for Akehurst researchers.

The biennial meeting of the Akehurst FHS was held on the Sunday morning, with all office bearers being returned.

Lunch on both days was spent sitting and eating in the sun at a nearby garden café; Saturday's dinner was at the Horam Inn; and Sunday's dinner was at the Runt In Tun. Each provided an enjoyable opportunity to 'mingle & munch'.

There was ample time to spend exploring the resources, comparing trees, exchanging information and chatting informally. Many photographs were taken but unfortunately, we forgot to take a group photograph of the Sunday attendees (oops!).

It was a most enjoyable weekend with many old acquaintances renewed and new ones made. We all came away with a better understanding of how the Society works, and with renewed enthusiasm for pursuing our respective and collaborative researches.



VISIT TO AKEHURST FARM

As part of our 'additional day' at the 2008 GetTogether, Morwenna had arranged for us to visit 'Akehurst', one of the houses on the site of the original Akehurst Farm, which dates back to (at least) the 1600s.

Our gracious hosts, Simon and Jaki Oates, allowed us the run of the house and grounds and entertained us with their stories of stage, screen, and television. We were not sure when the current 'Akehurst' was built, as it has been extensively renovated on a number of occasions, but to my untrained eye the building was somewhere between 'old' and 'very old'.

The first Ordnance Survey map (1840s?) appeared to give a choice of two locations for Akehurst Farm so, after the visit, we met in an adjacent field and discussed further research that we could carry out into the history of the Farm. Janet Akehurst and Rita Hayes volunteered to progress the research at The National Archives and Alan Pett volunteered to follow up at the East Sussex Record Office. A good way to finish off a wonderful weekend.



2006 AKEHURST GETTOGETHER

The beautiful city of Lincoln was the location for the 2006 GetTogether. Gail Balfe arranged an excellent program which kept us informed and entertained for the Bank Holiday weekend of 26-28 August. Unfortunately, only seven Akehurst-ers could attend (including two from Australia), but we received a number of 'best-wishes' and apologies from Akehurst-ers who could not attend. We started off by viewing Morwenna's display of Victorian/Edwardian memorabilia (I couldn't figure out how one of her child's games worked ... the inner child in me must have been away on holiday at the time!) and Gale's quiz of agricultural-looking implements (I failed that, too ... the adult in me must have been on holidays also!). We also papered the walls with trees that Morwenna had prepared and that others had brought along. The first speaker on Saturday was Pearl Wheatley, of the Lincolnshire Historical Society, who took us on a journey through Lincoln from Roman times to the present. The second speaker was Jean Townsend, who spoke about the need for vigilance to ensure headstones are not flattened.



Jean's talk was peppered with funny sayings which have appeared on headstones.

In the evening, we climbed the steep hill (called, naturally enough, Steep Hill !) and scattered for dinner. I was with the group which dined in the basement of a pie shop, which set me to thinking of Sweeney Todd! To walk off the calories, we joined a "Ghost Walk" which took us on an interesting and entertaining tour of the Old City. Sunday's activities began with the Akehurst Family History Society meeting and concluded with a talk on the Duncalfe One-Name Study by Anne Cole. Anne's interesting talk was interrupted by flypast of a WW-II Lancaster bomber (no, not put on for us).

Monday was the Bank Holiday, so we were unable to visit the CRO or the Library [sigh!]. However, Rob and Morwenna invited us for a cruise in their narrowboat. It was most pleasant chugging along at a leisurely 3-4mph looking at the rural parts of Lincolnshire and then along the canal through the centre of the New Town. It made Pearl's talk come alive as we travelled along Fosse Dyke, which was constructed by the Romans. Then followed a leisurely barbecue at Gail and Andrew's home. Lots of laughing and eating and laughing and reminiscing and laughing ... followed by our departures. That concluded a most successful and enjoyable weekend.



JOIN THE AKEHURST E-MAIL LIST

The List's description on YahooGroups says our List is: "A mailing list for genealogists and family historians who are researching the Akehurst name. Includes variants such as Ackhurst, Ackehurst, Akhurst, Akurst." This email List is named the 'Akehurst' List only because the Akehurst spelling variant accounts for two-thirds of our 'catchment area'; however all variants are treated equally.

The Akehurst E-mail List is an electronic email list, of 110 members, which is maintained to keep all Akehurst (and variant) researchers in contact. The Akehurst List is maintained at Yahoo Groups and is a 'closed list', which means that approval has to be given for people to join. All Akehurst (and variant) researchers are welcome to join - simply contact the List Moderators (Colin and David) at <moderator@akehurst.org> for further information.

If you do not have email access at home, you can still join the Akehurst List by using the computers at your local public library. Ask the librarian to help you create a "Yahoo Email Account". Once you are up and running, send Colin or David an email to say "G'day", and they will do the rest. Then, when you want to find out what is happening Akehurst-wise, simply head off to your library and read your mail.

If you do not have any access to email, keep in touch with your Country Contact who will bring you up to date with the latest news; your Country Contact may even be kind enough to post messages from you to the List.

As our List membership increases, so does the chance that someone on the List will be researching your particular tree. There is a huge amount of collective wisdom on the List, so here is an excellent resource to help you with your research.



RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE AKEHURST FILES AREA

Associated with the Akehurst E-mail List is a Files Area where we store photographs and some data. It is only accessible to people who have joined the Akehurst E-mail List (see previous article).

Images placed in the Files Area in the past year include:

"Dead Man's Penny" presented to the family of Thomas J Akehurst

Horse brass, awarded by William Akehurst of Brighton (c1900)

Picture of Kay Lamb (entrant in Maree's "Rogues' Gallery")

Picture of Frederick Akhurst (1854-1937)

Picture of William Edward Akhurst (1892-1970)

Picture of William & Jane Akhurst's Golden Wedding anniversary (1891)

Photos of the 2009 Antipodean GetTogether

WW-I Medals awarded to Charles S Ackhurst

If you cannot get in to the Files Area, send an email to <moderator@akehurst.org> and he will guide you through the process.



IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN SPELLED THIS WAY

There are many cases in families where the spelling has changed over time. Indeed there are numerous cases where the same family has adopted different spellings within the same generation, as the example of Colin Akehurst's great grandfather clearly shows.

He is recorded in

1836 as George Akurst (baptismal register)

1841 as George Akehurst (census enumerator's return)

1851 as George Akhurst (census enumerator's return)

1855 as George Akehurst (marriage certificate)

1861 as George Akehurst (census enumerator's return)

To compound the changes, George's father signed his marriage certificate (in 1821) as John Ackhurst.

In any discussion on surnames, it is important not to fall into the trap of believing "we have always used this spelling" - and that is why the Akehurst One-Name Study researches the five main variants of the name - Akehurst, Ackhurst, Akehurst, Akhurst, and Akurst.

As all the variants are believed to be from the same derivation, the One-Name Study has decided to research all variants equally. Similarly, the Akehurst Family History Society represents the interest of the same five spelling variants. To make the terminology less cumbersome, whenever the name Akehurst is mentioned, it includes all five variants unless specifically noted.



SURNAME DISTRIBUTION

Using the 1881 census for England & Wales as a basis, the five variant names are distributed as follows:

Akehurst - 66.0% - mainly found in East Sussex

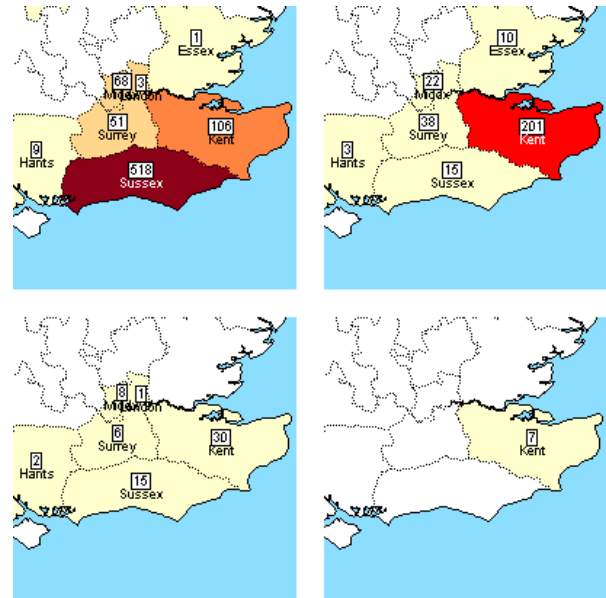
Akhurst - 26.4% - mainly found in southern and western Kent

Ackhurst - 5.4% - found almost equally Kent and Sussex

Akehurst - 0.8% - originated from one family in Etchingham

Akurst - 0.8% - mainly found in Kent

Over the span of the censuses from 1841-1901, the relative frequency of the Akehurst and Akhurst names have remained static, the Ackhurst and Akurst names are in slow decline, and the Akehurst name has appeared.



The image shows the distribution of the Akehurst, Akhurst, Achhurst and Akurst names as they appear in the 1881 census.



A VARIANT OR A 'DEVIANT'?

A variant is a spelling which is/was in common use, whereas the term 'deviant names' refers to names which are related to one of the main variant names but generally only appear temporarily.

The most common source of deviant spellings is a mistranscription of (sometimes poor) handwriting of census returns. Some of the 85 deviants found, so far, are the names Ahchurst, Akchuert, Akhunt, Aklimst, Okhurst and Skehurst. One of the strangest deviants we have discovered was in the 1871 census, where a transcriber misread the name George Akehurst and so the family of Mr. & Mrs. George A Kehurst and their three children appeared in the index! Whenever discovered, deviant names are added to the collection.

Whilst mistranscriptions in surnames can be very

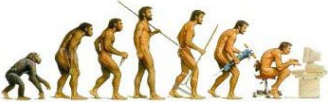


irritating, those in the occupations field are often quite amusing. For example, in Denise Lewry's tree one of her folk is a Caveman (instead of a Cowman); and one of my Welsh forebears was a Coral Miner (not much coral in Glamorgan!).



WHY NOT COLLECT AKERS?

The surname Akers is a genuine name in its own right. It is the subject of a separate One-Name Study and is also registered with the Guild of One-Name Studies. Occasionally we find references to an Akehurst whose name is written as Akers and that name is generally collected by both Studies. It is considered an Akehurst deviant, not an Akehurst variant.



THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME

There are a number of theories regarding the origin of the name, but all agree it is a topographical name -in other words, it derives from the name of a place, or places.

This is the version given in "Sussex Archeological Collections Relating to the History and Antiquities of the County" vol.4, page 207, which was published in 1851:

"In the first place, we see with what remarkable tenacity families of the humbler rank adhere to particular localities. Most of the names mentioned in the wills of the sixteenth century are the great staple names of the nineteenth. Many of those occurring in Herstmonceux wills, three hundred years old, still remain in this parish and its immediate vicinity. Indeed many of the families in middle and low life seem to have been all but earth-born, inhabiting almost the precise spots from which, in the days of the early and middle Plantagenets, their ancestors assumed their generic appellations. A remarkable instance may be cited from the adjacent parish of Hellingly. In that parish there is a small property called Akehurst, a purely Saxon word, signifying 'the wood of oaks.' From that little estate, in or prior to the 14th century, its proprietor borrowed his family name. Two hundred years later we find the will of a Thomas Akehurst, a resident in the same place, and at this day, three hundred years still later, we find the name a common one in the parish. In like manner, the Crowhursts, the Ticehursts, the Heathfields, the Hastingses, the Grinsteads, the Linsteads, the Bexhills, the Bredes, the Ryse, and a host of other plebeian races, still have their

principal habitats in the vicinity of the places from which they originally sprang, and from which they borrowed their patronymics."

Another, completely different, version comes from The Internet Surname Database:

"This habitational name is an excellent example of how surname and village name spelling has changed with dialect over the centuries. Akehurst almost certainly derives from the village of (now) Oakhurst, in the county of Hertfordshire. In the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles of the years 944 - 946 A.D. in the reign of King Edmund (939 - 946), the village is recorded as 'Aceresc', translating as 'the oak park'. By the year 1287 the spelling had become Okersh, with 'Oakhurst' being circa 1600. The surname as Akehurst appears to be particularly associated with Sussex, which may be accidental through a mass movement from the original village, or it may be that a now 'lost' site called 'Ac-hurst', or similar, also existed in the Sussex region. The name has a number of variant spellings, these include: Ackhurst, Akehurst, Akhurst and Akeherst. The first recorded spelling of the family name is shown to be that of Johan Akehurst, which was dated 1578, baptised at Wilmington Church, Sussex, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1, known as 'Good Queen Bess', 1558 - 1603. Surnames became necessary when governments introduced personal taxation. In England this was known as Poll Tax. Throughout the centuries, surnames in every country have continued to 'develop' often leading to astonishing variants of the original spelling."

There are some obvious problems with the second version, but it is not as fanciful as some produced by those in the business of selling 'family coats of arms'. One even suggests we are descended from a "Robert de Akehurst, 1273, County Yorkshire." The term 'County Yorkshire' should give a good indication of that organisation's level of scholarship!



AKEHURST DNA PROJECT

As noted earlier, the Akehurst/Akhurst names appear to derive from East Sussex and Kent and it has often been debated whether the family groupings have a common origin or if they developed independently. Up until now, we have been unable to test these hypotheses as the paper records do not extend back far enough to allow us to reach any reliable conclusion.

In recent years, the science of DNA testing has progressed to the stage where there is a real



possibility of finally resolving this issue. Therefore, an Akehurst DNA Project has begun and has the primary aim of proving (or disproving) a link between the variant names and in particular to see if the Kent group and the Sussex group share a common origin.

The test which our study uses, a Y-DNA-37 test, looks at segments of the Y chromosome known as genetic markers. The segments which are tested cannot be used to determine paternity, hair colour, or inherited diseases. The strength on this DNA testing lies not in the individual test report per se, but in comparing the test report with historic populations.

All you have to do is swab the inside of your cheek and send the swab to the laboratory. It is certainly not a test you have to study for!

You must be male to take this test, and you should have one of 'our' surnames. If you are female, you will need to find a direct line male in your family tree to participate and represent your tree.

Participating is an opportunity to uncover information not provided in the paper records and will help with your research into your tree. As the project progresses, the results for the various family trees will provide information on the evolution of the surname and enable us to link disparate trees.

So far, we have had one Ackehurst and one Akhurst tested and, somewhat surprisingly, the connection is not as strong as we had hoped. That was unexpected as the two families have been traced back, via paper records, to villages only a few miles apart. More participants are needed, from both the 'Kent group' (predominantly Akhurst) and the 'Sussex group' (predominantly Akehurst) before any conclusions can be drawn.

The cost of the test is usually \$US149, but there are regular promotional periods where the cost is reduced to \$119. If you would like to be a part of the project, contact David Evans (details are on the back page) who will advise when the \$30 discount is available.

If you would like to take part, but cannot afford the \$119, contact David and he will come to some arrangement.

Information about DNA testing for genealogy can be found at www.familytreedna.com. Typing any of the standard variants in the Surname Search box will give the details of our project.



AKEHURST.ORG
DOMAIN NAME

You will have noticed that the Akehurst Family History Society uses the domain name of akehurst.org to carry on much of its electronic business. For example, typing in www.akehurst.org will take you to our website, and this will happen no matter where the website is physically located.

We also use the domain for our email addresses, such as <chairman@akehurst.org>, <editor@akehurst.org> and <KeeperOfTheTrees@akehurst.org>. There is even <KotT@akehurst.org> for people who are in a hurry to contact our 'Keeper of the Trees'! These addresses save you having to remember long, complicated addresses.

You will find many of the addresses on the back page.



AKEHURST-ER
WEBSITE

The Akehurst-er Website, at www.akehurst.org, is our main public face. It is where you will find previous editions of this newsletter, information about various theories of the origin of the name, old family photographs (does Colin really look like his great-grandfather?), and the Guestbook. Our website is an excellent medium for you to make your research interests known to the 'outside world'. Of course, not everything we have available is on the website - partly due to privacy concerns and partly due to the limited time available to our webmaster (who has a life outside Akehurst-ing!).

Angela Hollands is our Webmaster and is responsible for managing the site's content. If you have any questions or comments about the website, you can contact Angela at <webmaster@akehurst.org>.



AKEHURST
ONE-NAME STUDY

The Akehurst One-Name Study (ONS) is responsible for collecting all references - worldwide and all times - relating to the surnames Ackehurst, Ackhurst, Akehurst, Akhurst, Akurst.



Some of the records collected include:

- over 100 family trees (some large, some small)
- full set of BMD indexes for England/Wales up to 2007
- full set of BMD indexes for Australia/NZ
- transcripts of 700 marriage certificates for England/Wales
- transcripts of many Sussex/Kent parish registers
- complete indexes to the England/Wales census (1841-1911)
- complete set of images for the England/Wales censuses (1841-1901)
- indexes and images of many military records
- transcript of many of the Australian electoral rolls 1901-1936
- transcripts of many Canadian/USA BMD records
- transcripts of many burial records and obituaries
- copies of many 19th century newspapers

The Akehurst BMD Index for the UK is virtually complete (a few Akehurst entries to find). This covers all civil registration in the UK from 1837-2006 and holds over 14,000 entries. In addition to the index, we have images or full transcriptions of over 700 certificates.

Work on the UK Akehurst Census database is almost finished. To date we have collected almost 10,000 individual references from the 1841-1911 censuses for the UK plus 2800 images of the relevant enumerator schedules from 1841-1901 censuses. Population studies suggest we should expect to find some 10,400 individuals and a task for this year is to identify the missing 400 individuals and then find their census entries. This will be the culmination of hundreds of hours of work!

As time permits, the civil registration and census data are being combined to generate unambiguous trees. As the parish register data sets become more complete, these trees will be extended backward into the 18th, and eventually 17th, Centuries.

If you have any material, such as BMD certificates or transcripts of parish registers from anywhere, David Evans, who runs the Akehurst ONS, would love to receive copies. Contact details are on the back page.

How is all this information relevant to you? Simply that they are available to help your research - all you have to do is ask.



FOREST OF TREES

For many years, we have been collecting family trees from many sources. Many are from submitted trees, some are constructed from documents such as Burke's Landed Gentry, whilst others are derived from combining census and BMD certificates and indexes.

As with real forests, some trees are still saplings, some have developed into mighty oaks, and some are gnarled and twisted (due to errors in grafting). The Akehurst trees are reviewed from time to time with the aim of weeding out the poor grafting.

Borrowing an expression from Judith Akhurst, we may have digressed from genealogy into horticulture but it is all branches and twigs in the end!

Morwenna Akehurst maintains both the submitted trees and a set of composite trees which have been created by grafting submitted trees to existing trees. As she is our primary focus for managing our 'forest of trees', she has been given the title of "Keeper of the Trees".

If you would like to know where you are growing in our 'virtual forest', contact Morwenna (details are on the back page).



COUSIN-MATCHING

We endeavour to put researchers in direct contact with each other whenever we believe they may be related. For this to work, we need a copy of the latest version of your tree and we also need permission to pass on your contact details to other researchers.

Copies of the Akehurst part of your tree, plus permission, should be sent to Morwenna, our 'Keeper of the Trees' (details are on the back page). We prefer the trees to be submitted in GEDCOM format, although we will accept trees made using pen & ink, or even using 'a thumbnail dipped in tar' (a evocative Australianism)!

As the list of researchers increases and the number of submitted trees increases, so are the chances of cousins being put in contact with each other. This is an enjoyable and satisfying part of the Akehurst-ing game.



GUILD OF ONE-NAME STUDIES

The Akehurst One-Name Study has been registered with the Guild of One-Name Studies, the world's leading organisation for one-name studies, since 1998. Membership of the Guild provides our One-Name Study with a range of benefits - one of which is the 'Marriage Challenge', which has been responsible for many of the transcripts we have collected.

For information about the Guild, go to their website at www.one-name.org While you are there, type in the surname(s) you are researching. If you get a match, then contact the Guild member and offer to exchange information as s/he will probably have a large (possibly even staggering!) amount of information about your name of interest.



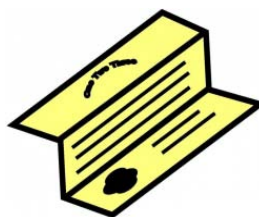
COUNTRY CONTACTS

We have developed a network of Country Contacts to assist members, particularly those for whom we have no email address. The Country Contacts print off, and mail, the newsletter and generally act as a local focal point.

If you have any questions about your Akehurst research, either contact the relevant person ('department') directly, or get in touch with your Country Contact who will either answer your question or pass it on to the appropriate person.

The Country Contacts perform these services at their own expense; so, if you received this newsletter in the post, why not send your Country Contact a few (unused!) postage stamps as a way of saying 'thank you'? This simple act goes a long way to keeping everything running.

Our Country Contacts are available to help you. They are: Gail Balfe (UK), David Beard (Canada), Bonnie-Lee Corban (USA), Judy Harvey (Aust), and Ngaire Patterson (NZ), and their contact details are listed on the last page of this newsletter.



**HATCHES
MATCHES
DESPATCHES**

As well as researching our ancestry, we try to keep our researchers up to date with more recent events. We therefore wish to record the following deaths of Akehursts or Akehurst researchers:

- Sir John Akehurst, in February 2007
 - Eileen Gott, in June 2007
 - Ann Akehurst's husband, Doug, in September 2007
 - Ngaire Patterson's brother, Barrie, in 7 December 2007
 - Jack Akehurst's brother, Reg, in 16 December 2007
 - Geoffrey Akehurst, in April 2008
 - Robin Akehurst, in May 2008
 - Ron Akehurst, also in May 2008
 - Morwenna's mother-in-law, Judy, in September 2008
 - Betty Hibbert's cousin, Betty, in October 2008
 - Maree Gordon's husband, Lindsay in December 2008
 - Bonnie Lee Corban's father, in February 2009.
 - Betty Hibbert's cousin, Edna, also in February 2009
 - Simon Oates, of Akehurst Farm, in May 2009
 - Judy Harvey's mother, Valma, in November 2009
 - Betty Hibbert's sister-in-law, Dorothy Akehurst, in December 2009
- Our sympathies are extended to the families.
- On the 'plus' side of the register, we were pleased to hear of the birth of Ruby Lee Bennett-Hibbert, a granddaughter for Betty Hibbert, in Reading in September 2008; and also of Gavin Ray Akehurst, son of Nathan & Candace Akehurst of Tulsa, Oklahoma, in March 2009.



Finally many congratulations to Betty and Tony Hibbert on reaching their Golden Wedding Anniversary on July 2nd.



YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

This newsletter is being sent to all 460 Akehurst-ers with whom we have had contact and who have not said "don't send anything". If you do not want to receive further newsletters, please contact the Editor or your Country Contact (addresses below).

As the newsletter is being sent out by volunteers at their own expense, we would very much prefer to distribute it electronically. If you have an email address, but receive this newsletter by post, it means we do not have your email address. You can help us by letting us know your email address. Simply send an email to <editor@akehurst.org>. While you're doing that, why not tell us what you think of the newsletter, and why not send us a summary of your brick-wall for us to place in the next edition?



PRIVACY

The Society is an international one and therefore struggles to keep up with, and comply with, various national privacy legislation. We (obviously!) have your contact details on our contact list. These details are only available to five members of the Society and specific details will not be passed on to any other researcher unless you give us permission. If you have any concerns about what information we have on file about you, please contact either your Country Contact or the Chairman of the Society (details on the back page).



LITTLE CHART FOCUS

Judith Akhurst's focus is the Akhurst descendants of Little Chart, Kent, and she is seeking to create a super-tree of all Akhursts who have passed through that village.

Many researchers have lines leading back there

so, if you have any interest in Little Chart, please contact Judith at 95 Sea Road, East Preston, West Sussex BN16 1LN. Email: Richard&Judith@akehurst.org



HELLINGLY FOCUS

As noted earlier, according to the surname dictionaries, Hellingly is 'Akehurst Central'. David Evans has a particular interest in the Hellingly group and has 'grown' a tree with over 1000 individuals. If you have Hellingly connections, David would be pleased to hear from you. His contact details are on the back page.



WILL THE DEAD DUCK BECOME A PHOENIX?

Many of you will remember the GRO's projects DOVE (Digitisation of Vital Events), MAGPIE (MultiAccess to GRO Public Index of Events), and EAGLE (Electronic Access to GRO Legacy Events). They were to be implemented by 2009 and would make the job of searching and purchasing BDM certificates more accurate and much simpler and faster. Unfortunately they turned out to be expensive failures, resulting in 'Questions in the House'. However, in a recent move, the Identity & Passport Services, the new 'owner' of the GRO, has resuscitated the projects, now called the Digitisation & Indexing (D&I) Project. Hopefully these birds will fly after all.



SALE OF ACKHURST HALL

In January last year, there was a mention on the Akehurst List about an item in "The Illustrated News" in 1868 headlined "Atrocious Murder Near Wigan - at Ackhurst Hall Farm". The farm, which is on the site of the (now) Ackhurst Technology Park near Chorley (a few kilometres north of Wigan in Lancashire) has been there for over 140 years. The event, and the distance from the Ackhurst 'home territory' of Sussex/Kent prompted



our interest. The peripatetic Morwenna visited Ackhurst Farm a few years ago and has supplied us with a photograph and Maree Gordon, in New Zealand, added that the Ackhurst Farm was recently for sale at only (only!?) £750,000.

A check of our census records failed to give us much of a clue as to the particular Ackhurst family. Do you know anything further about Ackhurst Hall Farm, or the Ackhursts, or about the murder?

It would make an interesting venue for an Akehurst GetTogether provided, of course, there were no further murders!



BRICK WALLS

To start off the Brick Walls section, we have included a list of the people we have researched during the past year. If you have any information about any of these people, please let us know.

Alan and Trish Akhurst, of the Candlebridge Carrying Company

Albert Ernest Akehurst (1864-1934)

Alexander Akehurst (b.1747, Ely)

Alexander Akehurst, in a conveyance dated 23/12/1802

Alfred Akehurst (b.1876, Whitesmith), who md. Charlotte Louisa Worwood

Amos Jenner Akehurst (b.1833, Burwash), who md. Naomi Russell (Campany connection)

Arthur Charles Akehurst appearing momentarily in Hong Kong in 1899

Arthur George Akehurst (1888-1914), the 'contaminated water' man

Arthur Pursell Akehurst and the Eureka Stockade

Arthur William Ackehurst, mentioned in the Dover War Memorial project

Clara Adeline Akhurst (b.1860), who md. Edward James Mulholland in Roma, Queensland

David & Grace Akehurst in China in the 1930s

Elizabeth Akehurst (b.1819-?), who md. Charles Hendley

Ellen Akehurst (b.1855), who md. Henry Hygate

Florence Ellen Akhurst (b.1874) dau of the elusive

Adrian Charles

Frederick Wm Akhurst (1866-1944) who md. Rachel Kirkstall

George Ackhurst, KiA at Ypres 4/10/1917

Harold Archdeacon [yep, his middle name] Akehurst (1878-1924)

Hazel & Jennah Akehurst, of Sussex, who climbed to the Everest Base Camp

Henry Akehurst (1816-1856), who md. Margaret Donnellan in Melbourne in 1856

Henry Akehurst (1825-1893), who md. Harriett Christmas

Henry Akhurst, who md. Sarah Hoy

Ivy Selina Akehurst (1906-1994), who md. Charles Clarke

Jane(t) Harriet Akhurst (d.Sydney, 1862)

John Carden Akehurst (b.1836), who md. Mary Ann Bennett

John Edward Akhurst, (b.1855, Thurnham) - his mother was one of the original Spice Girls

Johna [Joan or Joanna?] Akehurst (b.c1510), who md. John Harmer (at Heathfield, c.1525)

Len & Dorothy Akehurst, missionaries at Doomadgee in the 1930s

Letitia Marie Akehurst, who md. Thomas Apps

Louisa Akehurst (b.1871) who md. Hy Boniface and then Wm Jas Boniface

Mr(!) Akehurst, Vice-master of Trinity College, Cambridge, 1645

Ronald Douglas Akhurst (1938-2009), who md. Margery Williams

Samuel Cinderford Akehurst (1751-1833)

Sarah Akerst in the Teynham Tithe (c.1801) and Stephen Akerst in the Sturry Tithes

Stephen Akehurst (1806-1842), who md. Elizabeth Evers in Leeds in 1842

Victor Hugo Akhurst, who the census transcriber thought was Austrian!

William Akehurst, who md. Eliza Wratten (Hellingly, 8/4/1837)

William Henry Akehurst, 23rd Bn, Royal Fusiliers

William Vincent Akehurst, an auctioneer in Melbourne in the 1850s



Plus the following was sent in by Kay in Tennessee [kathleenlamb1@comcast.net]:

I would like to find information about John Akhurst and wife Mary Hardy and their children.

I have been told they died in Rodmersham, Sittingbourne, Kent County, England. I do not know anything much about this couple and I understand they are parents of my gr grandfather, William Ackhurst [Akhurst] who was born 1812 in Sittingbourne, Kent Co., England.

I have a picture of William, I have four children who may be the only ones they had. Were there others? They were: my William and John born 1814; Mary born 1816 and George [no date].



OBITS

From Kay Lamb in Tennessee

These are the obits about my great grandfather William Ackhurst

Halifax N.S. Acadian Recorder, July 2, 1887

" Sadley and unexpectedly this afternoon came the tidings that William Ackhurst was dead. There was no more familiar, no more respected man in Halifax. We cannot at this moment do justice to his memory. Mr. Ackhurst was a native of Kent [County] England, and came to this city 54 years ago, in his 21st year. He married a daughter of the late George Flowers and during the last half century in our midst has worn "the white flower of a blameless life" He has been connected with church and state, in many positions of honor and responsibility, and thousands of our citizens will miss his warm greetings and kindly handclasp of one of the best men. He leaves a widow, three sons, four daughters and twenty five grandchildren."

Also in this paper, July 4, 1887 : " In our issue of Saturday evening we alluded in a brief way to the loss that the community has sustained by the death of our esteemed citizen, the late William Ackhurst. The deceased is deserving of more than passing notice. Mr. Ackhurst was eminently a self-made man : not meaning by self-made a millionaire- for he was far from that- but a man who had made the most of himself in spite of many and great disadvantages. The deceased was born in England and spent the days of his boyhood on board of a collier, carrying coal to

London which was about as rough a beginning as any poor boy could have. Growing tired of this wretched life he joined the army and shortly afterwards, about the year 1832, came to Halifax as a member of the Bugle Corp [60 or 66th] Rifle Brigade. He was a Cornet player. By the aid of some friends in the Baptist Church, the present city treasurer among the number, he was soon enabled to leave the army, and entered the hardware establishment of his life long friend, Mr. E. G. W. Greenwood. The mental outfit of young Ackhurst was indeed, at this time, but slender, but he had good natural abilities, strict principles, and indomitable spirit of perseverance, bent on success. After serving a few years with Mr. Greenwood, the deceased engaged himself with the late firm of B. Wier and Co. as a clerk, a position which carefully improved, made him the excellent man of business he afterwards became. He was, in a short time, enabled to commence business for himself as an auctioneer and commission merchant, and for many years held a foremost position in that line. For the last twenty five years no man in Halifax was better known than William Ackhurst. He was several times an alderman for the city, holding as such at different periods important positions, such as Chairman of the Committee of Public Accounts, Chairman of the Board of Works, Chairman of the Garden Commissioners, Chairman of the Firewardens, Commissioner of the Schools and last but by no means least, Chairman of the School Board. In all these positions he served the City faithfully and well. The deceased had his failings like all other men, but his failings were not of the kind to which was attached any shame. He had sterling qualities, not the least of which was the punctual and conscientious discharge of every duty entrusted to him, public and private. By the music-loving part of the community, with the older portion of which he was in past times associated as a member of various musical organizations, he will be remembered as an enthusiastic cultivator of the divine art, and in the line of sacred music especially as one who did much to improve the public taste"

Article on his life Pages 111, 112,113 in "The Nova Scotia Genealogist" Summer 2009, XXVII/2

Extract from East Kent Gazette, issue dated 23 July 1887

[Source 4.1016]

SITTINGBOURNE AND MILTON

Death of A native of Milton. - We have received a copy of the Halifax Herald (Nova Scotia), of the 5th instant containing a notice of the death of one of the most prominent inhabitants of that city, Mr William Ackhurst, a native of Milton-next-



Sittingbourne. Our contemporary says:- The community was startled on Saturday by the announcement of the sudden death of William Ackhurst, one of our best known citizens. Mr. Ackhurst was born in Kent, England, seventy-five years ago. His father died, and the son was thrown upon the world at an early age, and began to fight his own way through a long, useful, and honourable life. For some years he served as an apprentice on a coal barge, a born musician, as soon as he had passed

through his apprenticeship, he entered the army as a bandsman in the Rifles, and as such came to Halifax with his regiment fifty-three years ago. Almost immediately after his arrival here he joined the Granville-street Baptist Church, and became the leader of its choir. For over half a century he has sustained his membership in that church; and under his leadership the choir has ever been famous for its efficiency and success. He sang with the spirit and with the understanding also; and was a member of the various musical organizations in Halifax since 1840. He had not been in Halifax long before his sterling qualities commended themselves to a number of friends, and they procured his discharge from the army. He had long been a friend, and then became a salesman for City Treasurer Greenwood, who then kept a ship chandlery at the head of Commercial wharf. The late James Sweet was book-keeper in the same establishment. Only a few weeks ago Messrs. Greenwood, Sweet, and Akhurst accidentally met and recounted their reminiscences of half a century previously. Very shortly after this gathering Mr. Sweet was called to his eternal reward; now Mr. Ackhurst suddenly follows his friend. Mr. Akhurst remained with Mr. Greenwood about eight years, and then became employed with the firm of B. Wier and Co. Subsequently he set up in business for himself as an auctioneer, and later as a commission merchant. He took a deep and intelligent interest in civic affairs, was for nine years an alderman, and twice was an unsuccessful candidate for the mayoralty. During the time he was in the council, he served on all its important committees, and was chairman of the board of works. He was also chairman of the board of fire wardens, and under his administration many improvements were made in the department. One of the founders of what is now the pride of Halifax - its public gardens - he ever evinced the most intelligent and practical interest in the development and beautification of that delightful spot. Mr. Ackhurst was a man of high principle and pronounced views. He was never known to make his principles subservient to expediency. Truth was truth, right was right always; wrong was always wrong. He never temporized with what he believed to be wrong

doing. He held advanced views on the temperance question and never hesitated to express them. As an evidence of his strict adherence to principle, the following may be cited: The firm of Wier and Co., for whom he did a large business, gave him a cargo from the Mediterranean to auction. Among the cargo were ten quarter casks of wine. He refused to sell the wine, even as part of the cargo. As a Christian, man he could not do so. As a consequence, he lost the sale of the cargo and a large amount of other business. But he preserved his consistency and his self-respect. The deceased was greatly interested in educational affairs, was for many years a member of the school board, and only relinquished the chairmanship of the board a few months ago. His last public appearance in connection with educational affairs was on the platform from which Governor Richey addressed the five thousand school children on the citadel on jubilee day. The writer met him at Mount St. Vincent Academy a few weeks ago, when he made a short address describing the genuine pleasure it afforded him to visit that institution and witness the efficiency of the pupils in all branches of study, especially in music. Mr. Ackhurst had a strong and well preserved frame. He had exceeded the allotted span of life by, five years, and for some months past had been complaining of increasing age. He was in his usual health and about his business up to Wednesday, when he was confined to the house. On Friday noon he became unconscious and remained so until his death, Saturday afternoon. He had invited the First Baptist choir to his home to a little social party, on the occasion of the summer vacation of the choir, for Saturday evening - a few hours after he died. City Treasurer Greenwood, who has been his intimate friend, says, "During the fifty years I have known him, there has never been a spot on his character." He never turned a hungry man, woman, or child away from his door. He gave according to his ability, and his charity was of a practical kind. Mr. Ackhurst married a daughter of the late George Flowers, by whom he leaves a large family. The loss sustained by the church and the community by his death was appropriately referred to by the pastor of the First Baptist church yesterday. At the North Baptist church an appropriate hymn in honour of the departed was sung by the choir to the funeral march from "Saul."



NEXT AKEHURST-ER

The next edition of 'The Akehurst-er' will be issued when there is sufficient material.

'The Akehurst-er' is read by over 400 researchers, at least one of whom is almost guaranteed to be researching your particular family, so here is your chance to break down your brick wall. All you have to do is write to the Editor (address below) and tell him where you are stuck.



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