



North West Kent Family History Society

(Covering N W Kent and ancient Kent parishes now S E London)



JOSEPHINE BIRCHENOUGH nee Redhead (1920 - 1994).

Josephine Birchenough Memorial Award.

Application Leaflet 2018.

JOSEPHINE BIRCHENOUGH nee Redhead (1920 - 1994).

Josephine Birchenough was a remarkable lady. A woman of many parts: deeply involved in local and family history, speaking French and excellent Polish, her smattering of Mandarin and Russian reflecting her travels in advanced years, travels that included visiting her birthplace Australia. She was caring and thoughtful, giving generously of herself to anyone who needed her help. Josephine made an indelible impression on everyone.

With husband, Edwin, she worked on archaeological digs and made an exhaustive study of Lee in Kent to become the expert on Lee history, her notes and indexes carefully preserved. Documentation of her families, some parts of the story written up, has been preserved for posterity.

A founder member of this Society, Josephine immediately volunteered writing copiously for the Journal and regularly recording monumental inscriptions. On the Publications Committee she was invaluable, particularly in preparation of '*West Kent Sources*', working prodigiously for the forthcoming publication on schools' records. Any Society activity involved Josephine in some capacity, described by a long-standing friend and member as "a jolly good soldier". Later, with the Society Committee, setting up Dartford Branch, chairing and training a group of willing volunteers new to family history and committee work.

By chance she learned and perfected a new skill, typesetting, one that enhanced our Journal (and others) for several years. It is fitting that Josephine had been made an honorary member of the Society.

The energy of the woman, even in later years, was remarkable, adding to her activities work such as indexing WO 97 army records for the Public Record Office project and taking groups to main repositories. So many will benefit in future from her work without ever knowing her; that would have pleased her. With considerable pride she accepted The Institute for Historical Research's honour for her work in local history and, at 70, was particularly happy at passing examinations for Licentiate of the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies.

Josephine could be exasperating (her words) whether determined to do things her own way or by refusing to curtail her activities after four serious throat operations, despite her 70 years. Generally philosophical, sustained by a strong Christian faith, Josephine was so independent but always genuinely grateful for help from others; always true to her own belief, fiercely defending whatever she felt to be right.

A real character, eccentric, Josephine arrived on her motor bike for most events until she was 70, a matronly figure in bright yellow waterproofs "her crash helmet framing those rosy cheeks", all removed to reveal her "Hell's Granny" T shirt, reflecting her modern and optimistic outlook. As an adult education tutor of family history Josephine "taught with such a great sense of humour and enthusiasm" inspiring students, recruiting members. She delighted in seeing fledgling family historians grow in confidence and expertise in their quest for ancestors. We shall remember Josephine for "her memory over a casual remark, producing pertinent references, within days: As friend, colleague or member we shall miss "this Wonderful lady, Josephine with her love of life", miss seeing her living it to the full.

From NWKFHS Journal Volume 6 No 10, July 1994

Josephine Birchenough Memorial Award.

For the new members who do not know 'Josephine Birchenough', she was a founder member and her obituary repeated above shows how well she was respected by our members. She willingly gave fellow family historians help and encouragement from her prodigious knowledge and experience. This is why the Award was set up originally as a bursary to encourage members to share their research knowledge and experiences and help other family historians.

The bursary was set up in 1995 and has undergone a number of changes in the way it was organised and awarded. This is the current criteria and is for the judging and award from 2014 and presentation at the 2015 Annual General Meeting of the Society.

The Award is to consist of three categories that are to be judged by the President's Panel, who will consist of the President, Vice-Presidents, Chair and Vice-Chair of the Society.

The three award categories being 'Family History Project', 'Articles in the Society Journal' and 'a general category, to recognise or support significant work that contributes to the Society's objects as outlined in clause 2 of the constitution.

Clause 2 Objects are:

2.1 The objects of the Society shall be to promote and encourage education in the study of family history and genealogy in relation to national and local history. In furtherance of the above mentioned objects the Society shall:-

2.1.1 arrange programmes of lectures, visits and other activities;

2.1.2 promote the preservation of relevant documents and records, locate, transcribe, index them and, wherever possible, publish the results;

2.1.3 provide guidance in family history research and studies;

2.1.4 do all lawful things necessary to advance the objects of the society.

The three award categories.

1. Project.

Awarded to a person or persons who wish to follow some form of research or carry out a specific family history project, which fulfils the objects of the Society.

Members wishing to be considered for this award need to complete an application form to be submitted to the President. Such applications to be made by the 1st of January of each year and any award will be made at the following AGM and must be used during that calendar year.

The Award is to be open to any Member of the Society; except the trustees and Presidents panel; who has paid the subscription for the year of application and the year of the Award.

2. Articles in the Society Journal.

President and Vice Presidents, with the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Society will judge what they consider to be the best articles from the previous year's journals based on some if not all of the following criteria or variations on these themes.

- a. An interesting read.
- b. Method: how research approached & steps taken to discover the information.
- c. Sources: exact references and where located.
- d. Confirmation: how the details were confirmed.
- e. Problems: how overcome; comment on pitfalls.
- f. Simple family tree; hand drawn or computer program.

Josephine Birchenough Memorial Award cont'd.

At each AGM the President will report to the Society and a copy of this report will appear in the Journal with the criteria used for this category.

No application by a Member is required for this category to be considered for the award, the Presidents Panel will choose articles from the four editions of the Society Journal published in the preceding 12 months. The award will be made annually at the following AGM. In addition to the monetary award, letters of commendation can be awarded.

3. To recognise or support significant work that contributes to the Society and its objects.

Recommendations for such an award can be made to the Society Committee or the Presidents Panel by any two members; a proposer and seconder. The Society Committee will refer the application to the President's panel for judging the application.

The President's Panel will consist of the President, Vice-Presidents, Chair and Vice-Chair of the Society. The Committee will be chaired by the President of the Society. If there should be an even number of votes for one or more award under any category the Vice-Chair of the Society shall have a deciding vote. In the absence of the Vice-Chair the President of the Society shall have the deciding vote. The quorum of the Presidents panel shall be any 3 of its members.

General:

- 1) No Society Committee member (Trustee) will be considered or eligible for or be given a financial award under any of the Memorial categories.
- 2) The Presidents panel members are not eligible for any of the awards.
- 3) These revised rules for the awards were agreed by the Trustees and are to be used by the 2015 Presidents panel for the Awards and thereafter.

Application for the Josephine Birchenough Memorial Award.

Applicants Name and Address

.....

..... Post Code

Membership No- Telephone No.

Please state the purpose for which the Award will be put

Please state why your "Family History Project" fulfils the objects of the Society,

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Please indicate the form of research you plan to undertake.....

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Please indicate if you are an amateur or professional researcher.

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Please confirm that you understand that if you are a successful applicant then you will be required to report on your project and that it may become an article in the Journal or as a talk to one of the Society meetings.

If you will require help with preparing the report on your Award project please indicate what form of support you will need.

Signature of: applicant Date.....

Please hand this application to any member of the President's Panel or Send to :- President, North West Kent Family History Society, C/O KCC Library, 80 Summerhouse Drive, Joydens Wood, Bexley, Kent DA5 2EE.