

The Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

Founded 1985

A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee

No. 5620267 incorporated the 11th November 2005 Registered Charity 1113765



(Original Society founded 1985 Registered Charity no 1047562)

Bulletin No 105

March 2015

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will take place at Eynsford Village Hall on Friday 22nd May (doors open 7.30pm)

The Agenda will be as follows

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| 1 Welcome | 5 Setting of the Subscription Level for 2015 |
| 2 Apologies for absence | 6 Election of Officers and Committee |
| 3 Minutes of last AGM/
Matters arising | 7 The Future of the Society |
| 4 Adoption of Accounts | 8 Any other business |

If you would like information about the History Society Committee please call Barbara Cannell for further information. Should you decide to put yourself forward for election nominations must be with the Chairman before the AGM commences on the 22nd May 2015.

Forthcoming Talks and Events

2015	Details	Where
13 th May	Trip to Firepower, The Royal Engineers Museum (See separate sheet for details)	
22 nd May	AGM with buffet and wine	EVH
18 th Sept	The Gentlemen at War – Roy Ingleton	EVH
23 rd Oct	Unexplained Mysteries and Cover-ups – Andy Thomas (Ticketed evening including buffet supper)	FVH
27 th Nov	Waterloo 200 – Steve Hookins	FVH

Unless otherwise stated all Meetings are held on a Friday evening from 730pm, talk commencing 8pm. (Note: front row seats can be reserved for members with hearing or eyesight difficulties and hearing loops are now available on request)

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Barbara Cannell 864253)

Isn't history fascinating, whether it be family history, local or world wide. A recent request for one of our publications from a lady who had once lived in Eynsford but now lives in Devon has uncovered the interesting fact that through marriage into a well-known Crockenhill family we are both 'related'.

This leads me on to say that one should never dispose of anything without giving the item/items a second thought. I have been looking at some old copies of Trident and through letters, marriages and obituaries I have found a whole new history on local people and buildings that many of us today may have forgotten about or may never have heard about that once had been a part of our everyday life. One should not take things for granted and if in doubt start asking questions. An obituary to my father revealed a war time memory that I had never been quite sure of, so my thanks to the unknown writer for solving that mystery.

Another interesting find were the many references to our history society including the formation, rules and aims and various activities undertaken by members. This reminds me that this year the society will have been running for 30 years, should we have a party I ask!!

So, please, please don't just dump the old family photographs, scrapbooks or even old notices of village events that you no longer feel that you need to keep, we would love to be able to record 'what used to be' and therefore preserve for future generations who was living in and what was happening in our local villages. There are people/families beyond our small communities that love to find their ancestors, where they lived and what they did.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2015 (Jan Wilkes)

Thank you to all those members who have paid their membership for 2015, this is a gentle nudge to those who still have to pay. Should you decide you no longer wish to belong to the Society please let me know and I will delete you from our list. I can be contacted on 01322 865122 or email hisarc@btinternet.com

RESEARCH REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923)(www.felhs.org.uk)

FELHS website

The use of this went up 8% last year, with 3216 hits. You will have noticed from Bulletins the variety of queries I am presented with. The time this takes and the service offered should not be undervalued.

'Discoveries and Excavations across Kent, 1970-2014' by Dr Brian Philp

Published by Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit, 2014, (£24 + £4 p&p)

This book includes 'Site 16: A major Anglo-Saxon site at Eynsford', which lies alongside The Plough car park, and which is classified in the report as a palace dating from the C6th-C8th. What makes the building highly exceptional is the application of a solid layer of plaster to the walls. The building would have been the focus of the Anglo-Saxon community, which in the C9th shifted to the Castle area.

Day Conference on Names

This was held in November by the Kent Archaeological Society. If you think this is a subject you might be interested in do look at the website - there are also various other conferences for the general public on subjects related to Kent. The main categories of surnames are locative (from places) - these tend to be the earliest surnames from the late C11th and given to elite Normans from land acquired at the Conquest, e.g. William de Eynsford; occupational (such as the common Smith, Taylor etc.), familial (such as son of Richard = Richardson); nicknames (the last to come in, but not to be taken at face value, as some have an element of irony or sarcasm to them) e.g. Wise. A common surname locally is Twort which was an expression of contempt. Surnames were adopted over a long period, especially from the C13th to C15th.

Journal of Natural Appearances & Occurrences in Farming at Farningham, 1808-1817 by Henry Cox

(See Acquisitions below)

4 January 1814 - The deepest snow that had been known for 40 years began - was some days falling - continued on the ground for 5 weeks - at places the drifts were 15 feet high - the frost continued 12 weeks to 20 March.

First butterfly seen - earliest 9 February 1815, latest 2 April 1814.

Cuckoo heard - earliest 20 April 1814, latest 4 May 1817.

Harvest finished - earliest 26 August 1808, 1811, 1815, latest 12 October 1816.

The Swing riots of 1830

I have mentioned before that an early incident was the burning of Mosyer's barn in Orpington, but apparently this incident of arson on 1 June was the first of the riots, so more significant than I had realised.

(p.126/7 'Swing unmasked' edited by Michael Holland, VI 'Down with machinery' by Vanessa Worship - Milton Keynes 2005)

Local Charities, 1836

(See also FELHS no.9 'The Charities of Farningham and Eynsford, with Crockenhill and Lullingstone' by Hilary and Wilfrid Harding, 1994, for an in-depth study)

Browsing at Kent History and Library Centre I came across 'Reports of the Commissioners to enquire concerning Charities in England and Wales' volume related to Kent published in 1836. I cannot see a reference to this in the FELHS publication, but most of the contents of the Commissioners Report are included through other sources in Hilary and Wilfrid's research. However, one or two curiosities are not.

Anthony Roper's Charity - there is great detail about an indenture of 1834 reviewing the history of the charity, checking the properties involved, and reorganising the distribution of funds.

Sir Thomas Dyke's Gift - this is not included in the FELHS publication. Sir Thomas Dyke in 1750 gave in trust to his son, John Dyke, the rent charge of named lands in Wrotham, Shoreham and Kemsing to fund the education of poor children in Tonbridge and Eynsford. In the 1836 Report it was found that Sir Thomas Dyke sent 9 children, 5 girls and 4 boys, to Eynsford village school, paying the master £9 a year. The children, recommended by the Minister, were to receive three years of education - the boys to read, write and cast accounts, and the girls to read, knit and sew plain work.

Thomas Palmer's Sunday School at Crockenhill - this is not included in the FELHS publication. In his life-time Thomas Palmer had been supporting a Sunday

School in Crockenhill, and in his will of 1809 he left money to support and maintain it. He wanted the village children to learn to read, to be instructed in the principles of the Church of England, and to attend Church services (then entailing travelling to Eynsford) regularly. He wanted Philadelphia Lash to continue keeping the Sunday School, which she was still doing in 1836, and receiving £10 from the Charity for her services. In 1836, 12 to 15 boys and girls were being taught to read, say the catechism, and were partially clothed (much of the income being consumed by this expense). Thomas Palmer's elaborate chest tomb with lion's feet supports can be seen in Eynsford churchyard towards the cross-path to Olive Seal Room, and on the left of the central path going from the Church.

Wills and probate website

All wills and probates from 1858 to the present are now available on line for £10 a copy - www.gov.uk/search-will-probate

(Thank you, Peter Jones, for this)

New website for information about those who fought in First World War

This has been set up by the Imperial War Museum at www.livesofthefirstworldwar.org

(Thank you, Brian Hussey, for this)

'Among the Hills and Hazels', by Barbara Benedict

Published by Row Dow Publications, 2014, (£16 + £3 p&p)

Barbara's parents, Greves and Winifred Mellor, built up Woodlands Holiday Camp in Knatts Valley from 1927 to 1968, and Barbara has compiled a fascinating record of this once popular holiday resort. There are sections showing the various brochures produced, memories of campers, and a map of the hamlet of Woodlands with descriptions and photographs of the church, golf course, houses and scenery. My family owned 'Broomycroft', a woodland area with wooden cabin, next to the Holiday Camp, hence I have a particular interest, remembering in the 1950s spending days at 'Broomycroft', and listening with envy to joyful children using the swimming pool.

Farningham Division of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade

(From Helen Goldsworthy - see Acquisitions below)

The increase of traffic and road accidents on the 13 miles of arterial road near Farningham led to three or four 'knights of the road' in 1926 to borrow an army bell tent from which to deal with the public peril. In 1927 a motor ambulance was hired and the road accident work was acknowledged by the Order of St. John by the gift of a road casualty station. Soon another hut was added by the group to accommodate members while waiting to do duty. In 1930 a new ambulance was acquired to deal with the increasing number of casualties. In 1935 an ambulance headquarters (formerly a Drill Hall) was purchased and redecorated by members. To that date 2,638 accident cases had been treated by 22 members putting in over 2,500 hours of voluntary service, and the ambulance mileage had reached 30,000.

Derrick Gigger, bomber pilot in Second World War

Brian Hussey has been researching his cousin, Derrick Gigger, who was killed in the Second World War. Brian's boyhood memories of Derrick are included in FELHS Publication 'An Eynsford Boyhood, 1931-1950', which he wrote in 2006. Derrick was the son of John Henry and Elsie Winifred (nee Hussey) Gigger, prior to call-up he worked in the Public Assistance Department of Kent County Council. Derrick became a Lancaster bomber pilot and was on his fifth mission when shot down in the

English Channel on 16 March 1944, at the age of 21. The plane was returning from a bombing raid on Stuttgart. Derrick's body was later recovered from the sea and was buried in Dannes Communal Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, which Brian visited recently, and has provided photographs for the Society.

Lullingstone Castle in the Second World War

(From the dissertation 'The Country House in World War Two: An investigation of wartime occupation in Kent and Sussex', by Sarah Bridger)

Sarah's research included Lullingstone Castle. It includes information from an interview with Guy Hart Dyke. From mid-1940 the family moved into a gardener's cottage on the estate for the duration of the war, in which an underground shelter was constructed, (now being used as a wine cellar). In 1940 the Great Hall was transformed into a canteen for the various troops stationed in the Castle. The Library became the Officers' Mess, and the rooms on the top floor were turned into recreation areas, including a makeshift cinema. In June 1940 with 300 troops around, much of the household furniture was stored in the stables. Before the removal someone drew a plane on the early C18th painting, which hangs over the fireplace in the Great Hall. This area was later cut out to restore the painting, but the trace of the patch is still visible.

Cyclists at Boyne Tea Rooms, Eynsford, 1949

I came across the following request in Eynsford Parish Council Minutes for 10 February 1949 - that a letter be sent to the proprietor of Boyne Tea Rooms to request his patrons not to park their cycles against the fence of the War Memorial. At least on one occasion 35 cycles had been seen leaning on the recently repaired fence. A few months later it was reported that there had been no further problems.

Graham Sutherland O.M. (1903-1980)

As reported in the last Bulletin I have been on the trail of Graham Sutherland, and have now exchanged information with Jolyon Drury. I took photographs of the White House, Farningham, from all aspects, and we were satisfied that the photos he had of Graham Sutherland and his father, Paul Drury, were not taken at Farningham. This was disappointing from the Farningham viewpoint, but Jolyon emphasised how formative Graham's stay in Farningham from c.1927-1931 had been. With his fellow students, Paul Drury, William Larkin, Edward Bouverie-Hoyton and Kathleen Barry (later to become Graham's wife), they would use Farningham as their base to go out into the countryside for inspiration. In late December 2014, I visited Trottescliffe and there found White House, which became Graham's home from 1937. Peering through the beech hedge into the garden, I could see that the photographs in Jolyon's collection were taken there. I also visited the church and took photographs of Graham Sutherland's headstone. He is buried with his 'devoted wife' Kathleen, 1905-1991. The owners of White House, Trottescliffe, were out, but I left them a note in the hope that they may contact me in due course.

Family history enquiries

Mace of Crockenhill - Enquiry about location of Wood's cottages and Mace Farm.

Elliott family - I had a response from Beryl of Farningham, who was an Elliott, but unfortunately not from the same family as Bob.

Gibson, Wellband, Wood of Eynsford - Tessa sent a copy of the Gibson family group c.1897, with initials under the names, and hoped that FELHS might be able to identify more people than she had managed. The Society has the same photo, but no more information as to the names.

Other enquiries

Frank Pankhurst - Paul's son picked Frank as focus for a school research project, and I gave guidance as to how to proceed.

Nuclear bunker at Eynsford Water Works - Martin from Thames Water visited the site and was told about a Cold War nuclear shelter marked 'Kent Civil Defence HQ', and wanted more information. I was unable to help him directly, but suggested he contacted Victor Smith and the Kent Defence Group, who are very knowledgeable on the subject. I have not heard back. Martin has offered to set up a group visit to the Water Works, if there is enough interest. (Let someone on the Committee know).

Cafe frequented by cyclists in the 1930s, Eynsford - David's father was a member of the Sydenham Wheelers in the 1930s, and used a tea room in a wood building in a garden, which David would like to show his wife. I told him about the tea room by the bridge, and looked at The Castle Hotel Visitors Book, but the Sydenham Wheelers did not make an entry. Perhaps it was the Boyne tearooms (see above) - any ideas welcome.

ARCHIVE REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923) (archives@felhs.org.uk)

FELHS Centre

During the winter I pop into the Centre to check all is well. We have dehumidifier blocks in each cupboard, which periodically need draining and refilling with crystals - hopefully this means they are at least partially effective. We now have a stock of sandbags to hand should flood threaten, but last year the Centre stood high enough above the raised water level to escape inundation.

When the weather is warmer, I would like to set up regular working parties to sort uncatalogued items into categories, so if you think you could spare an occasional morning, do get in touch. You don't need to make a regular commitment. If we can make a regular day and time, then it might be easier for some of you to drop in as and when.

Acquisitions

From Christine Bainbridge - 17 enlarged photographs from postcards of Farningham, 2 postcard sized, including the butcher's shop, which her husband ran.

From Diana Beamish - Sets of photographs for Lizzy Yarnold's Winter Olympic Gold Medal for skeleton ride (ride of honour, 27/3/14); St Martin's Church works including 20/9/14 for opening to see Alexander Pitcairn's vault; Our Villages in the Great War Exhibition at Eynsford 22/8/14.

From John Gee - 2 triangular ashtrays with wording round the side, 'The Plough' 'Eynsford' 'Fremlins'; mounted hand-drawn and written presentation 'envelope' 1907 addressed to Messrs White and Harris, Ryall Gee, sub postmaster (context unknown).

From Philip McGarvey - Rochester Link (October 2014) with Rochester Ordinations 2014, including Rev. Dorothy McGarvey.

From Helen Goldsworthy - Photo September 1940 bomb crater, Charton Manor garden; A Journal of Natural Appearances and Occurrences in Farming at Farningham 1808 until 1817 by Henry Cox (see above); two original maps of Darenth Valley Light Railways (showing the industrial sites along the river), and Dartford District (standard gauge) Light Railways, which might be the 1897 scheme, but which shows offshoots to Maplescombe and to Woodlands; 1815 extracts by Rev. W. Van Mildert from Farningham Church registers for the Cox family; exercise book for the Empire Fair, 9 December 1926, at Eynsford and Farningham Constitutional Association's

Eynsford Hall; notebook with a list of exhibitors for the 1934 Farningham Exhibition; various duplicate publications; 4 postcards of Farningham; booklet about William Bligh from 1982; Order of Service for the opening of the St. John Ambulance Divisional Headquarters at Farningham, 21 July 1935, and group photograph taken at the time; letter from Mrs Goldsworthy to Major Salt, 1936, about the 1934 Farningham Exhibition with synopsis of setting up of Farningham Division St John Ambulance Brigade (see above); 1951 Kentish Cavalcade calendar - pageant by West Kent Federation of Women's Institutes (Swanley & Polhill Districts featured in June, Sevenoaks in July); 1985 letter from Paul Parmenter about donation of a map; certificate to A.R. Goldsworthy from Parish of Farningham welcoming him back after the 1939-45 War and giving appreciation for his services to the defence of the country.

From St. Martin's Church, Eynsford - 2 Victorian photograph albums depicting visits to places in Kent by Kent Archaeological Society, some taken at Eynsford in one album, and of Lullingstone in the other; a large album with an assortment of photographs from 1912 to 1973, which has now been separated into 12 x A3 sheets each put into conservation pocket; album dating from the 1990s, also dismantled as the photos were on self-adhesive sheets, the chemicals in which can damage the photos - now put in sets e.g. covering Quiet Days, re-decorating the Church, 1991 events, the church clock and its mechanism; various loose photos; magnificent poster advertising housing on The Mount estate, Eynsford, style c.1930s, by Carter (M.A. Carter poster in London Transport Museum).

and finally

What beautiful weather we are having at the moment and quite a lot to look forward to in 2015. Firstly, in May (details enclosed) a trip to the Firepower, the Royal Artillery Museum. We are only taking a small coach with 24 places so if you are interested please get in touch as soon as possible to secure your seat. Later in October we have Andy Thomas coming to Farningham Village Hall with his fascinating take on Unexplained Mysteries and Cover-ups. Andy is no stranger to the history society, but it was a while ago he last visited us. The evening will cost £10.00 and that will include a glass of punch with you arrive and delicious buffet provide by Dee and Veronica (you are free to bring your own drinks). We are also looking into holding a few coffee mornings (venues to be confirmed) when it will be a chance to have a chat and look at items from the archive centre and of course our evening meetings and AGM.

Jan Wilkes Editor (865122 or hisarc@btinternet.com)



An Important Post Script from the Chairman.

Since writing my report the future of our Society has been foremost in my mind so I took another look at the 1985 July issue of Trident. For those of you who haven't squirrelled away your copies of Trident I would like to highlight some interesting facts from that report. On Thursday 16th May over 80 people attended that inaugural meeting held in Farningham Village Hall with many apologies for absence. Members would be welcome from anywhere; the area covered by the activities of the Society would be Farningham and Eynsford with possibly the addition of Crockenhill. The Objectives of the Society were in line with our current Objectives. The Proposed Organisation was to have a main committee consisting of a Chairman, a Secretary and a treasurer, together with a Chairman and Secretary of THREE subcommittees, namely Research, Archives and Publicity and Presentation. It was thought that such an Organisation would encourage interested members to share in the work and help to maintain an active Society.

Sadly the intervening years have seen a gradual fall in the numbers of members together with the loss of the sub committees and dwindling volunteers to support the main committee.

On the plus side we now have a very informative web site and lots of interesting data stored in our archives, what we are lacking are the interested members to share in the work and help to maintain an active Society. You don't have to be a committee member to be an interested and helpful member.

Our next meeting will be our AGM to be held on the 22nd May at Eynsford Village Hall and we really would like to fill the vacant positions of treasurer and secretary because without these two important people we cannot run your Society in a proper and efficient way.

For anyone with an enquiring mind there are many opportunities for research amongst the books and papers that have been given to the Society that record families, businesses and events plus many personal memories of village life from yesterday.

Anyone with a passion for old photographs and post cards could spend many a 'happy hour or two' amongst our large collection.

So please come to Eynsford on the 22nd May, talk to us about any ideas you might have, topics you would like us to include in our programme of events, even to holding a special meeting with an unusual theme not necessarily an evening meeting or one that would attract every member.

Remember that the future of this Society can only survive with a little help from you our members.

I look forward to seeing you all on the 22nd May.

Barbara Cannell – Chairman

7th March 2015

WHAT'S ON 2015

Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society

2015

11th May Rochester Then & Now and Kentish Villages – Colin Coe
8th June Along the River Cray – Denise Baldwin & Katherine Harding
2nd July Keep the Homes Fires Burning, Dartford 1914-1918 –
Chris Baker

14th September The Edith Cavell Story – Paul Rason

9th November AGM followed by a talk and Cheese and wine

All meetings are held on Monday at the Village Hall, South Darenth from 8pm. If you require further information contact Barbara Cannell (01322 864253) (Remember your membership card) NOTE: The July meeting will be on a Thursday

Shoreham & District Historical Society

2015

20th March AGM/Beasts Bishops & Bankers, The Pleasant town of
Sevenoaks – Jonathan Fenner

Meetings held in the Village Hall Shoreham from 8pm. Members who wish to attend these meetings are advised to contact the Secretary Lynda Alleeson (01959 525312) to check that no changes have been made to their programmes (Remember your membership card)

Hextable Heritage Society

2015

12th March Poets of the First World War – Bob Ogley

9th April Shops we used to know in Dartford – Keith Whitmore

14th May AGM with Halford Lorries of the First World War – Adrian
Herbert

11th June Waterloo 200 – Steve Hookins

9th July TBA (Evening visit)

13th August Military Medals – Glen Jones

10th September Dickens and Gads Hill – Anne Carter

8th October Edith Cavell – Paul Rason

12th November 5 Wents Hall and the Swanley & Hextable War Memorial Trust

December Christmas Party

All meetings are held at the Hextable Heritage Centre. Crawfords, Dawson Drive, College Road, Hextable 7.30pm start. If you require further information please contact Barbara Cannell (01322 864253) (Remember your membership card)

NOTE Details of the July visit will be announced later

