

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 114

June 2017

Forthcoming Talks and Events

Date	Details	Where
9 th September	Eynsford Shops Exhibition – display of photographs and memorabilia related to local shops over the years (11am – 4pm The Library, Castle Hotel, Eynsford)	
22 nd September	Charles Darwin – Toni Mount	EVH
30 th September	Eliott Downs Till Remembered – A display of photographs and information relating to the life of Eliott Downs Till who died 100 years ago, on 30 th September 1917 (11am – 4pm The Library, Castle Hotel, Eynford)	
17 th November	George Bernard Shaw, Playing the Clown – Brian Freeland	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)

Congratulations to Susan and her helpers for the excellent display at the recent Annual General Meeting when documents and artefacts relating to the many ways transport had been used in our local area were laid out for us to look at.

As you all know this small group meets in the archive centre and has been working with our collection of items that have mostly been donated to the Society. Sadly, this building is not as large as we would have wished but when we were desperately looking for somewhere to store our expanding collection of artefacts we were very grateful to Eynsford Parish Council for offering us the use of what had been the public toilets. The size and position of the building means that it is not suitable for meetings and opening to the public BUT as Susan has proved it is large enough for a small group of members to work together.

Thank you to Phil McGarvey for stepping in at the AGM in the place of our President Wilf Duncombe who unfortunately could not be at the meeting. Three members of the committee stood down, Dee Baker, Alison Bridgeman and Jan Wilkes (*although I have an idea that all three will still be involved with the Society one way or another*). I was once again very disappointed with the lack of response to all the pleas for assistance to help the remaining committee. I will not dwell upon this now apart from saying that we have two further evening meetings booked and Jan has decided to fulfil her commitment to them as she made the bookings. What happens in 2018 depends on whether someone comes forward to take on the position of arranging evening meetings.

At the Committee meeting following the AGM it was decided that we would try to book halls and find speakers up to November 2018 meeting. These things cannot wait until the last minute to be planned. There is some good news since the AGM Alison Marshall has confirmed that she will be Membership Secretary. Full details on how to get in touch with her will follow in the September bulletin.

Is there a part of the history of Farningham or Eynsford that you would like to explore or maybe you have a friend that might also have to same or similar interest? Perhaps you could form a small group and work together and when your research has reached its conclusion you could display the work you have done at a meeting, even be a speaker, or perhaps it would be a topic for a special event at a local venue.

I recently read about a society where a small group of their members met in a members' home. Would this be something we could do? It might bring together some of our older members who don't like dark nights but might welcome a morning or afternoon discussion or the opportunity to look at some of the scrap books. If you have any thoughts on this or any other 'thoughts' or ideas please contact me.

Lastly, many of the items in our archive collection need to be brought into today's digital world. Is this something that would interest you.

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

Apron making for the Farningham Church Garden Party, June 1956

Revd. G.M. Young urged parishioners to make 'these useful articles of apparel (for both sexes in these equalitarian days)' for sale to swell the profits - a prize was to be awarded to the most decorative.

'Never Such Innocence'

This book by Stephen de Winton and Sarah Lewis is about Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley in the Great War:

p.7. 3 August 1914 - Sir William Hart Dyke opened at new rifle range near Farningham Road Station. It provided for D Company of National Reserve men from Farningham, Horton Kirby, Sutton-at-Hone and Darenth. Sir William feared that war would come, but prayed that it would not.

p.66. 18 April 1917 Arthur Edward Crowhurst killed in action in France. In 1901, he lived with his parents, Edward and Laura Crowhurst, at 6 Station Road, Church Alley, Eynsford.

p.106. 23 January 1916 Arthur Alfred Robinson killed in action on the western front. By 1911 his parents Charles, a papermaker, and Emma had moved from Alton, Hampshire, for work in Eynsford Paper Mill.

p.126/7. 3 January 1918 Sapper Ernest George Wharton died of TB probably contracted while on service in Egypt. He was a member of Eynsford Brass Band.

p.131. 29 June 1916 Gunner Charles John Woodgate killed in action on the western front. His widowed mother had moved back to 3 Wested Lane, Farningham, before 1901.

Revd. John Barton in Eynsford

I mentioned in Bulletin 112 the large bound Book of Common Prayer published in 1896, with 'Eynsford Church' embossed on the cover, presented by the Rev. John Barton. Our Chairman, Barbara, has been trawling through old Church magazines and has come across references to Revd. Barton. The Church Monthly of March 1899 thanked him for the gift, saying he was in charge of the parish for six weeks the previous autumn during the absence of the Vicar, Revd. A.S. Hutchison, Apparently, the Vicar had taken a long break in the Kingstown area of Ireland. His Eynsford ministry stretched from 1888 to 1904.

Thomas Russell Crampton, engineer of Eynsford viaduct

Thomas Russell Crampton (1816-1888) was a versatile engineer from Broadstairs, where his memorial is the Crampton Tower Museum, part of the waterworks he designed for the town. He took out a patent for a new type of locomotive, which became the standard design for 40 years. He was also the leading engineer for the East Kent and London Railway connecting Strood to Dover, and he constructed the line between Sevenoaks and Swanley, which crossed the Darent Valley via the Eynsford viaduct.

(See Bygone Kent vol. 38 no.1, February 2017 pp.38-41)

From Dartford Workhouse Minutes, 1840-1846

Summary of accommodation: Total 146 men and 137 women

40 able men	40 able women
44 sick men	30 sick women
50 aged & infirm men	40 aged and infirm
6 harmless idiots	8 harmless idiots
6 hospital patients	6 hospital patients
Lunatic cells	17 women and illegitimate children
	4 lying-in

Proceedings against Thomas Simmons of Farningham for deserting his wife and family. It was later found that he was in full employment at Messrs White's Cement Works at Greenhithe.

Outdoor relief to John Wellard and 6 children refused and children moved to workhouse.

Enforce order to Edward Boyd to support Emma Price.

4 shillings and 4 loaves for 2 weeks to John Spooner of Eynsford as out relief with wife and 7 children under the age of 10 due to sudden and urgent necessity.

Later, John Spooner, aged 32 of Eynsford, wife aged 30, children aged 11, 10, 8, 7, 6, 4, 3, 1 to have relief discontinued. Sarah (10), William (8) Abraham (7) and Hannah (6) to be admitted into the workhouse.

12 April 1845 Officers of Eynsford request that Eynsford Workhouse be sold.

4 April 1846 No deed of gift could be found, so printed list of enquiries to be returned.

29 August 1846 Meeting of ratepayers in Eynsford to be convened to gain consent to sell workhouse.

19 September 1846 Order to proceed with sale of Eynsford Workhouse.

26 September 1846 Thomas Sarjent of Eynsford bought it for £200.

(NB Bower House, Bower Lane)

Proposal to stop Christmas dinner turned down.

(KHLG G/Da/AM3 & 4 Dartford Union Minutes)

Mass migration through Farningham

By 1834 Farningham with five miles of turnpike and a good stream was heavily burdened by vagrants since it had become a favourite resting place for the Irish on their way to the hop districts. Between 1,000 and 1,500 vagrants had passed through in one day occupying the outbuildings of roadside farms at night.

(Parliamentary Papers 1834(44) xxxiii Appendix.150: Religion and Society in Kent 1640-1914 by Yates, Hume and Hastings)

Valuation of timber at Petham Court Far and Church Farm, 1804

John Pawley and Henry Staples estimated that there were 2,891 ash, oak, elm, beech, and over 16 acres of coppice woodland on the land. The timber was sold to Sir John Dixon Dyke for £2032.10s.

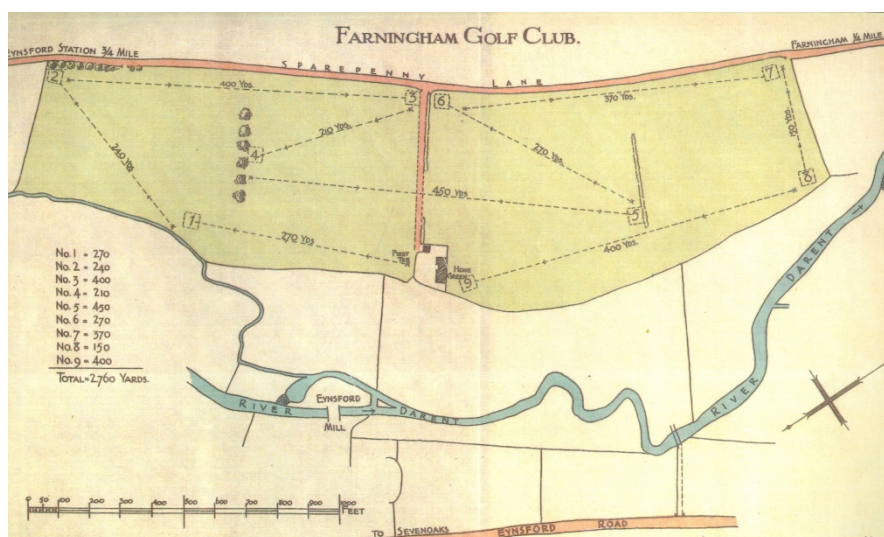
(KHLG U1644 E38 Romney papers)

Update on Sir Percival Hart's vervel

In Bulletin 206 of 2013 I reported Geoffrey Burr's metal detecting find of a silver vervel (nameplate attached to a bird of prey's leg in falconry). This dated back to Tudor times and was declared treasure. The Hart Dykes at Lullingstone Castle were keen to see the vervel returned to the family, but the British Museum preferred a local museum to acquire it. After persistence, and a study of the Treasure Act 1996, Geoffrey managed to reach a compromise whereby he and the landowner kept ownership of the vervel, for him then to donate it to the Hart Dykes.

(For full story by Geoff Burr see Kent Archaeological Society (KAS) Newsletter issue 105, Spring 2017)

Farningham Nine-hole Golf Course, 1912



Jan included a photo of the later Clubhouse. Here is the original layout of the course.

Family history enquiries

Challis/ Holt/ Sharp/ Sharwood of Farningham - Hilary requested advice on how to advance her family history in the C18th. I referred her to Colin who earlier had provided the Society with detailed information of the Sharp family. I was also able to look up the deeds to Holt Place which the owner had kindly copied for FELHS. They included a Statutory Declaration of 1873 with details of Mary Sharwood (nee Holt) and her descendants, which I have sent to Hilary.

Please note: *I have requested copies of deeds before, and this example shows how useful they can be. If you do have your deeds or copies of them do get in touch. It is so easy to make copies nowadays without the deeds leaving your possession.*

Larter family - Michelle requested details of the diary of her great-grandfather, Joseph Larter. FELHS holds extracts and not the original, but I send her a copy.

Mace family - I received a third-hand verbal request about information of this family, but was given no contact details to follow it up, which is a pity because I could have put the enquirer in touch with other family members.

Smith family of Crockenhill and Shoreham - Lorraine's line is from Frank Leonard Smith m. Louisa Maskell in 1910. She also asked to be put in touch with Christine, who made Smith enquiries in Bulletin 104 (December 2014). I gave Lorraine the contact details and also, I suggested she visit me because I have a vast collection related to this family.

Wood family of Farningham/ Horton Kirby - Ashley is trying to trace the family of her great grandmother, Elizabeth Wood, born in Farningham in 1879, whose father, William, walked to South Wales to find work, before being joined by his family. I was unable to trace the family in the parish registers or censuses in Farningham, but did find the baptism of Elizabeth and 2 siblings in Horton Kirby, and suggested that Ashley looked up the censuses for that parish.

Other enquiries

Watercolour of Eynsford signed F.W. Woledge - Roger left me with this with a view to finding a buyer. He has since picked it up, but allowed FELHS to make a digital copy. Frederick William Woledge (?1808-1887) was based in Brighton. In the 1840s, he published a series of prints of Brighton (now held at the Brighton Art Gallery). He exhibited a water colour of Snowdon from Capel Curig at the Royal Academy in 1846, and the National Gallery of Wales has examples of this work. The Victoria and Albert Museum has a painting entitled 'Landscape with figures: in a background, a high wall with a tower behind it.' Little seems to be known of his private life, but he had brothers and a great many children.

Eynsford & Farningham Guiding - Eynsford and Farningham Brownies and Guides are celebrating their 90th anniversary and requested photos for a display in the tearoom - FELHS only has 2 photos, so more to add to the collection would be welcome.

ARCHIVE REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923)

FELHS Centre

The Centre opened on Monday mornings in April and will continue to be open from 9.30 a.m. to noon until November. Our projects are to prepare for the transport display at the AGM and for the Shops in Eynsford exhibition in September.

Tracy Nelson has offered to help with cataloguing, and Martin Gee is now checking the Bulletin index.

Acquisitions

Anthony Roper School - Correspondence 1973-1976 re school log books and removal of school bell from Bower Lane site to the new school; 2 sheets with brief (undated but pre-1970s) background history of Eynsford British School and Eynsford National School and their amalgamation.

Mrs Peter Draper - 1930s Eynsford Village Mammoth jig-saw puzzle of bridge and Tudor buildings in C19th.

Helen Goldsworthy - Cutting from Daily Sketch July 1935 Dedication of new ambulance headquarters.

Jan Wilkes - Antony Roper School 2002 Queen's Golden Jubilee mug, St Peter & St Paul parish magazine, June 1956; framed reproduction of a postcard on Farningham High Street (? Victorian/Edwardian period); reproduction Kent Messenger newspapers 2 September 1939, 29 October 1943, and 15 September 1944; Welcome to Franks, 1983 Findlay Publications.

ST MARTIN OF TOURS, CHURCHYARD

Thank you to Jan for inviting me to write an article about what is going on in the churchyard which may be of interest to you.

Churchyards provide a rich record of the social heritage of an area, and the styles of memorials over the centuries, and St Martins is a wonderful example of this.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the care and upkeep of the church and churchyard as one of its functions – which includes any buildings, trees or paths within and walls, fences or hedges around the churchyard. If the PCC want to make any changes, the Rector must apply to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). This process takes a long time.

We are waiting for signage to be erected by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Two graves are easily visible near to the church and central paths. The third grave is hidden away next to a huge Western Red Cedar, close to the Olive Seal Hall.

I understand that the history society are marking the anniversary of Elliott Downs Till this September, he is buried in our churchyard. To this end the PCC would be interested to hear from any of you who have knowledge or research of famous/influential/notorious locals who are buried in St Martin's churchyard. One of the mooted longer-term plans is to produce a written and photographic guide to those buried in St Martin's.

Marion Bond – St Martin of Tours PCC Secretary (marionbond7@gmail.com)

NOTICE

Rob Shelton has now created a 1m sq. model of Eynsford Castle (c1150) which is now on display at the Kaleidoscope Sevenoaks Museum

**PRIVATE ALFRED GATES G/7533 Royal West Kent Regiment, D'Company,
8th Battalion.**

As you know I have been very involved with World War I and I especially like to have the chance to honour soldiers that lost their lives, as I believe they should not be forgotten. There was a suggestion from the Steward of the Rolls, Alan Regin that we should perhaps consider doing a special peal for Alfred Gates who was a bell ringer in St Martins. The Central Council Rolls of Honour commemorate those ringers who in the Great War 1914-18 and World War Two 1939-45. The Council commissioned a hand written Memorial Book for each war. These books can be viewed in a display case on the way up to the ringing chamber at St Paul's Cathedral.

So, on the 18th June 2017, the bells of St Martins rang out with a full peal to honour Alfred Gates. Thank you to David Hilling and the bell ringers who made this possible. Two of Alfred's grandchildren and two great grandchildren were there and with others who came along there was lots of reminiscing and laughter.

Alfred was a family man having moved to Eynsford in 1909 with his wife Annie and four children. Their youngest daughter Doris being born in Eynsford in 1914. Alfred worked at Eynsford Paper Mill and was a bell ringer in the church and in the football team (*there is a photograph of the team in 1910 and we are almost certain it is Alfred*) In 1914 he was called up and then in 1916 went to France. He came home early in 1917 on leave and on his return, was involved with the intense fighting at the height of the Battle of Messines Ridge. He and his fellow soldiers were withdrawn from the front line for four days rest on 13th June 1917 and returned on 17th June. At 2am on 18th June 1917 the German's attacked and eight men were killed and three wounded, Alfred Gates was one of the eight. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Menin Gate in Ypres and on Eynsford War Memorial.

Alfred's Poem

**In loving memory of my dead husband Alfred Gates
Killed in Action June 18th 1917
'Could I have raised his dying head
Could I have spoken just one word
If I could have kissed those dying lips
The grief would not have been so hard
For those who loved him well
But the hardest part is yet to come
When the Warriors all return
And I miss amongst the cheery crowd
The face of my dear one**



Alfred and Annie Gates

Jan Wilkes

and finally,

I decided a year ago that I would only serve one more year on the FELHS committee because I felt it was time for others to take over some of the things I did and come forward with different ideas, in other words move the Society forward. Alas no one came forward to serve on the current committee which leaves them in a very vulnerable position. I will of course give them my support and I am sure they will be fine and come through this. I love putting on the small displays and meeting people and discussing local history, I have not had a chance to do this over the last years as I have always been at the door. Now I will have a chance to chat with you all as I will just be an ordinary member.

Having said the above I will still organise the last two meetings this year as I booked them and for the time being I will continue to edit the bulletin, I enjoy it and will of course write something in Trident. So, I am not going away

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

CHANGE OF DATE

THE SHOPS EXHIBITION IS NOW ON SATURDAY 9TH
SEPTEMBER FROM 11AM TO 4PM AT THE CASTLE
HOTEL (This is due to essential works at the Castle Hotel)



What's On 2017

Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society

- 10th July Old Dartford and District – Terry Moyle
11th September Queens Victoria – Anne Carter
13th November AGM and short talk by Malcolm Scott followed by Cheese and Wine.

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)

Shoreham History Society

- July July Strawberry tea
15th September Rat Catching – David Cuffley
20th October A Schoolgirl's War – Mary Smith
17th November Changing life at Castle Farm – William Alexander

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

- 8th June Seaside Postcards – Alan Payne
13th July Evening Visit (tba)
10th August Sutton at Hone and District during WWI – Sarah Lewis
14th September Paddle Steamer Medway Queens – Mark Bathurst
12th October Kent in the age of Pocahontas 1580-1650 – Christoph Bull
9th November Wandering in Flanders Field – Melanie Gibson-Barton
December Members Christmas Party

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

