

Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

(Original Society founded 1985 Registered Charity no 1047562)

A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee

No. 5620267 incorporated 11th November 2005 Registered Charity 1113765



Bulletin No. 126

Spring 2021

7 May Friday - FELHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **(Virtual/ postal voting and Zoom meeting, 7.15pm for 7.30pm)**

We are proposing to hold a virtual AGM again this year. In April the annual reports and accounts will be sent round by e-mail (or by post for those not on e-mail) and a ballot paper for the election of Committee and Directors, administrative resolutions and any other resolution that has been received. The dead-line for return the ballot paper will be 6 May.

List of proposed Committee: Chairman - Veronica Sheppard, Vice-Chairman - Ann Cornwell, Company Secretary - John Mullen, Treasurer - Vikki Saunders, Minutes Secretary - Helen Smith, Membership Secretary - Alison Marshall, Archivist/Research, Bulletin editor - Susan Pittman, Programme Secretary - vacant.

List of proposed Directors: John Mullen (Company Secretary), Ann Cornwell, Susan Pittman, Vikki Saunders, Helen Smith.

On the evening of the AGM we will be showing on Zoom slides from James Alexander's collection, and will announce the result of the ballot 'live'.

For newer members, James Alexander of Home Farm, Eynsford, whose sons now run the farm, played an active part in the village, especially through Eynsford Village Society. His interest in the history of the area, but of Eynsford in particular, led him to seek out and copy old images of the village. These copies were in the form of slides which he used to give fascinating talks. His son, James, has scanned all the slides and allowed FELHS to have copies. The collection includes images from Elliott Downs Till glass plates. At the AGM images from four of the boxes, mainly from the Till plates, will be shown. The earliest images date from the 1880s and the latest in this selection to about 1920.

NEW - FELHS now on FACEBOOK @felhs.1985

From Vikki and Helen:

We have just set up a Facebook Page @felhs.1985. As we had to cancel our live events and talks in 2020 due to COVID-19 we still wanted to share with everyone items that are in our archive and other matters that relate to the local history of the area. In the coming weeks and months we hope to post photos and articles that will be of interest to our followers. Do search us out and give us a Like. If you have any suggestions of items that you would like to see on the page please email us at info@felhs.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (Alison Marshall 01322 862298)

We would like to thank all members for their loyal support. Your membership is vital to us. Although our meetings were disrupted in 2020, we have now adapted to sharing our interest in the history of our villages with Zoom meetings. FELHS also reaches out to you with the Bulletins and runs The Centre, a treasure-house of local information, images and artefacts. Such collections take years, decades even, to build up. The Centre is the envy of several villages, and its collections provide an on-going resource.

2021 - PROGRAMME

Adjustments have had to be made for the 2021 programme & others might have to be made according to restrictions in place at the time

Members with e-mail will receive a reminder of the meeting a week or so beforehand. The Zoom link will be sent in the week of the meeting. Guests who wish to join a Zoom meeting are asked to book via archives@felhs.org.uk - a suggested contribution of £3 would be appreciated.

16 April Friday On Zoom - 7.15 pm for 7.30 pm start

Fire Fighting in Kent

Howard Myers will give a general overview of firefighting in the county and how it evolved from local brigades (such as the one at Eynsford).

7 May (AGM) Friday Results of voting on line or by post & Zoom 7.15 pm for 7.30pm
Meeting on Zoom for a viewing of some of **James Alexander's slides.**

17 September (Friday) On Zoom

Lady Zoe Hart Dyke and the Lullingstone Silk Farm

Claire Weiss has written a fascinating book on this subject.

15 October Friday Farningham Village Hall or on Zoom

Local brickfields and brick making

David Cufley will cover two brickfield sites in Eynsford, Stevens' brickfield in Crockenhill and other local sites.

19 November Friday Eynsford Village Hall

Kent History from the Air

Rod LeGear has spent 25 years flying from Biggin Hill and will be illustrating the history and uses of aerial photography, with an opportunity for the audience to identify some Kent sites from the air. (This talk will not be on Zoom, but an alternative Zoom talk will be substituted if necessary)

COMMITTEE NEWS

The FELHS Facebook page has been set up (see box p.1).

Eynsford and Farningham Village Halls have sent round detailed Covid-19 policies for their users. The codes will keep everyone as safe as possible, but should we resume meetings in the Halls we would appreciate more volunteers at the beginning and end of meetings to ensure the strict hygiene regulations are met. Please get in touch if you would like to help.

Wayne Perkins talk on Church graffiti on Zoom in February, and Christoph Bull's talk on the delightful Darent valley were both fascinating and well received, and included a number of guests. Other speakers have offered to deliver their talks on Zoom. If you are not on Zoom and don't know how to download it, try to get someone to help you. It requires a device with a camera.

If you are on Zoom, but lack confidence in using it, do get in touch, because Vikki, who is hosting the meetings, can give you a dummy run on an individual basis.

We still need a new Meetings Secretary. We have now beginning to contact speakers to slot into a 2022 programme, so the task will not be onerous, and we would welcome a new Committee member.

FARNINGHAM & EYNSFORD LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE

WITH LIMITED ACCESS

(When Government restrictions are relaxed)

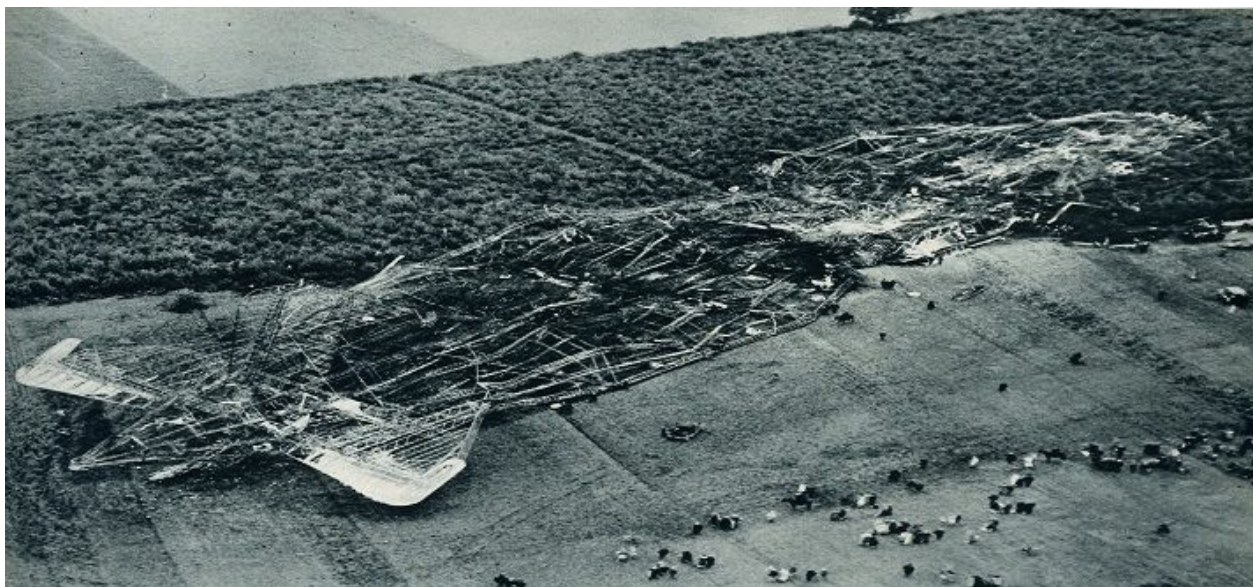
On application individual researchers could be given access, following social distancing and with masks and gloves, but permission would be dependent on what searches need to be made. Otherwise ...

ENQUIRIES CAN STILL BE MADE & ANSWERED

Enquiries via archives@felhs.org.uk website: www.felhs.org.uk Facebook: [@felhs.1985](https://www.facebook.com/felhs.1985)

Rex Brian Hussey (30/8/1931 - 6/12/2020)

We were saddened to learn of Brian's death. Brian was a long standing member and author of one of our publications *An Eynsford Boyhood 1931-1950*. He was also an accomplished speaker, giving a talk on the R101 airship crash on one occasion. His interest in airships was a great help when we were compiling the First World War Exhibition. Elsie Clements of Crockenhill recorded many Zeppelins flying overhead in her diary, and Brian was able to link these sightings with particular raids on London. His daughters, Sarah and Jane, have sent the funeral service programme and eulogy for FELHS archives. We send his wife, Jill, and family our condolences.



R101 after its crash on 5/10/1930 near Beauvais, France. It was on its maiden overseas voyage. 48 of the 54 people on board lost their lives.

RESEARCH REPORT

Susan Pittman, 01322 669923, archives@felhs.org.uk

FELHS website Publications Section updated

The introduction to the 'Publications' section of the website has been expanded to make it easier to place and pay for orders. Publications can now be purchased by BACS system, the details of which are in the introduction of the Publications page. Queries can be sent via the e-mail address above.

Inventories of the Churches 1552

Farningham - 3 bells in the steeple; silver and gilt chalice; copes and vestments, one with birds and beasts wrought on it; copper cross; bible and small books.

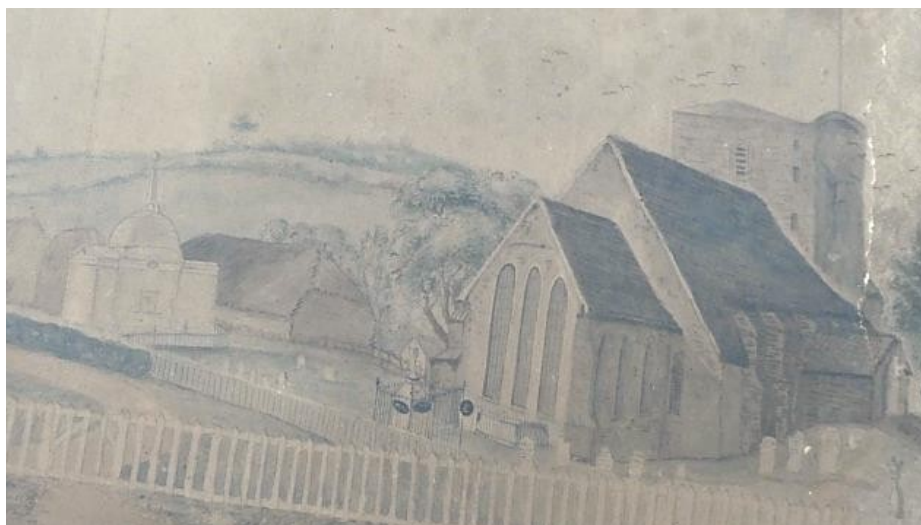
Lullingstone - one bell in the steeple; altar cloth and curtains for the altar; vestments, one with a green cross embroidered with roses; silver and gilt chalice; one bible; 10 candlesticks.

Eynsford - 3 bells in steeple; silver and gilt chalice; vestments and copes; bible; silver and wood cross, copper and gilt cross.

Slave Trade secrets of Revd. Benjamin Sandford (1785-1866) (aka Winston)

Benjamin used the name Sandford while he was vicar of Farningham from 1816-1846, but he had changed his name to Charles Winston to comply with his grandfather's wishes. His maternal grandfather, Charles Winston, was former attorney-general of Dominica, and owned two estates there. The inheritance went to his daughter (Benjamin's mother), but Benjamin was required to change his name to receive his inheritance. In 1823 the two family estates in Dominica had 179 slaves on them. The ownership of these slaves did not seem to cause him any moral dilemma. He remained in Farningham, but did not live an extravagant life-style. While vicar of Farningham he preached against gambling, raised money for families at Button Street whose homes had been gutted by fire, and organised a subscription to raise the tower of the parish church, St Peter and St Paul's. After retiring he moved to Rhyl in north Wales, but he is buried alongside his mother in Farningham churchyard.

(*Kent OnLine* 25/10/2020; FELHS website - 5 Communities: Farningham)

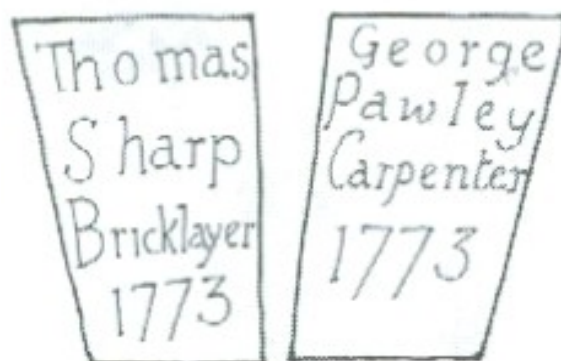


Farningham Church before the tower was heightened in the 1820s. The Nash mausoleum (c.1778) is prominent in the churchyard.

Stone tablet on Farningham Bridge

After the piece in the Winter Bulletin no.125, Colin contacted me with the information that his ancestor, Thomas Sharp, as bricklayer, and George Pawley, as carpenter, were mentioned on tablets dated 1773 incorporated into one of the arches on the water side of the bridge. The tablet on the road side has 1774 as the date, as recorded in 1911, when the inscription was re-cut. On re-checking Wilf Duncombe's publication, I found I had a faulty copy with p.11 missing! - the very page which gave the full inscription I was seeking:-

'Repaired by the County and widened 8 feet/ by Subscription 1833/ John Whichcord Arch'



(The Bridges of Eynsford and Farningham by Wilf Duncombe, FELHS reprint 2010; Farningham and its Mill by Hilary Harding (2005) p.171)

Model of Eynsford Castle

Rod Shelton has recently made a model of Eynsford Castle, which has been on display at Lullingstone Castle. It would appear that he is not the first to produce a model. One was made by Revd. Andrew Burnside, vicar of Farningham from 1848 to 1863. Revd. Burnside's model was exhibited at the Society of Antiquaries and was based on the existing remains and foundations exposed by the excavation eight or nine feet deep by Edward Cresy of South Darenth, a notable local historian of the time.

(Typed sheet, no author, found in Lullingstone archives, copy in FELHS collection)



Early ink drawing of Eynsford Castle, pre-1830s, when the house and stables were removed. (James Alexander's slide)

Hidden inscriptions behind plasterwork, Farningham Church, 1838



Victorian artwork found on the wall behind the altar, February 2017.

In February 2017 these images were uncovered behind the altar when the wall was being redecorated. They were found to be Victorian. However, in the Reformation many wall paintings were covered over because Protestant rulers felt they were too evocative of the Catholic Church. It transpires that in 1838 other hidden wall paintings were uncovered in Farningham Church. One with an inscription 'This is the house of Prayer' was recorded by Revd. Burnside. It was uncovered when a memorial to the Hanger family of Franks Hall was taken down. Revd. Burnside said that

fragments, perhaps of the original layer of plaster, were found behind the one he had recorded. There may well be other hidden works of art concealed behind plaster in St. Peter and St. Paul's Church.

Charles Dickens goes Spring Trouting in Kent 10 May 1869

Charles was playing host to Professor Dunkelwitz who, for a foreigner, (Dickens' aside), was an enthusiastic angler. They were staying in London and Charles Dickens thought that one of the most accessible places to try their luck was Farningham. They arrived at Farningham Road Station in blinding rain and were met by horse-drawn fly which took them to The Lion. Between the mill and the bridge was a stretch of river which was a sanctuary for fish which grew to gigantic size - comparative to these parts - 2 or 3 pounders, and a patriarch of 3 to 4 pounds.

Charles was given a room in the old part of The Lion. It had a low ceiling crossed by two enormous beams, queerly shaped windows and an outlook to three sides of the garden. The woodwork was painted pea-green, but there was a roaring fire to keep him warm. The Lion was full of other anglers, so he arranged with the Professor to get up at 6 a.m. to find the best spot on the bank before other anglers arrived. They found the bank already lined with men, some already having caught several fish. They settled down to fish, with moderate success until 9.00 a.m. when they felt ready to eat breakfast. The spread consisted of salmon, soles, home-cured ham, new-laid eggs, mutton chops, kidneys served in relays, flanked by joints of cold meat and great edifices of pie-crust, guarded by outworks of jam and marmalade. The consumption of the excellent fare of The Lion was swift and great. The Professor remarked that the English invariably eat as if the next meal were by no means to be counted upon with certainty.

After breakfast they walked downstream. After passing The Bull they crossed the meadows dotted with shy primroses and daisies. As accompaniment they had the perpetual chant of the rooks, the church-bells were ringing, and the sky-lark lavish with his sweet song. The fishing was curtailed by a sleet storm, so they returned for the evening meal of cod, lamb and an omelette aux fines herbes.

(*All the Year Round* by Charles Dickens, 10/5/1879, Spring trouting in Kent)

Sir William Hart Dyke

Sir William Hart Dyke is quoted in a couple of memoirs lapsing into mixed metaphors. On one occasion he created unintentional laughter in the House of Commons when he remarked, 'The Right Honourable gentleman, certainly gone to the top of the tree and has caught a very large fish.'

Cartoon by F. C. Gould based on Sir William Hart Dyke's mixed metaphor. Mr James Lowther M.P. fishing Lord Halsbury, Lord High Chancellor for most years from 1895-1904, from the top of the tree.
(*Later Peeps at Parliament* by H. W. Lucy 1905)



as

has

Historic Flow of the River Darent, from 1907 Perspective

An article by Alfred Jardine appeared in the *Fishing Gazette* of 23 March 1907. He described the lower river flows compared with forty or even twenty years before. The river near Lullingstone used to be 'trouty paradise', but now it was infested with pike of up to 10 pounds or over. The river downstream from Lullingstone was more shallow and narrower than in the past because of the tapping of streams in the watershed. The stretch of Eynsford meadows to Eynsford bridge used to be very fine trout waters. Back in the 1870s he and his brother once caught sixty-six trout along the stretch belonging to The Plough. At Farningham fishing was remarkably good, especially near

Charles Colyer's flour mill, but it was difficult to obtain permission to fish there. 'To anglers the chief attraction is the Lion Hotel as from its lawn and grounds some trout fishing may yet be had.'

Dartford Grammar School's Summer Camp 1918

The Officers Training Corps at the school was asked by the Ministry of National Service to help with fruit picking in Crockenhill. As the fruit to be picked on Lee's orchards lay towards Lullingstone Park, permission was sought to camp in the Park. The camp was set up on 29 July by three masters with thirty boys and lasted for three weeks. The camp was a success and as well as fruit being picked, the ground was hoed, and unprofitable trees and bushes removed from the land. On Sundays the group attended service at Lullingstone Church. Each boy received seven shillings for his labour.

(e-mail 2019 from Dave Barrett to Tom Hart Dyke)

Lady Emily Dyke Memorial

After Lady Emily Dyke's death in 1931 a memorial fund was set up under the umbrella of the Eynsford Village Hall Committee and Eynsford Village Community Council. 'The Hall for the Village - The Castle for the Nation' encapsulated the dual aims. The Village Hall needed refurbishment and the installation of electric light at an estimated cost of £250. Another £250 was required to transfer the Castle into public ownership. In 1933 a walnut tablet was unveiled by Sir Oliver and Lady Zoe Hart Dyke marking the renovation, re-decoration, and installation of electric lights, so this part of the Fund was successful, but in the event the Castle was not taken into state guardianship until 1948.

(*Eynsford Village Hall* by William Alexander, 2005; flyer about the Memorial Fund in FELHS collection)

Eynsford Village Hall soon after its construction in 1905



The Auction of The Eynsford Mount Estate, 1936

This was the sale of 251 acres of 'eligible building sites' with 'blocks of ripe building land'. The general remarks included one that roads (Eynsford Rise, St. Martin's Drive, Chequers Road, The Ridgeway) had already been laid out as approved by the Local Authority. Lots 1a-c had been zoned for shops and businesses, the rest for residential purposes with density not exceeding eight houses per acre. Eynsford afforded 'an ideal place of residence for the City Man desirous of enjoying a rural atmosphere within easy daily reach of the City and West end of London.' Some plots had been sold before the auction. A copy of the auctioneer's brochure at Lullingstone Castle had bid offers annotated, but many plots did not attract a bid. Five plots in Eynsford Rise sold for £540 and ten plots in Chequers Road for £1,300. The total raised at the auction was £14,000.

(See also FELHS publication no.32: Miscellany 5 - *Eynsford Mount Estate* by Diana Beamish)

The Farningham tank

265 tanks were distributed to communities after the First World War, of which twelve were allocated to Kent. Of the 265 only the one in Ashford, now restored, remains. A male tank carried three light machineguns and a six-pounder gun in each side gun platform. The female tank had two heavy Vickers machineguns in place of the six-pounders.

Ashford	Mk IV female	Still on display
Canterbury	Mk III female	Scrapped 1941
Chatham	Mk IV (?)	Scrapped 1940
Deal	Mk IV	Scrapped 1936
Farningham	Mk IV female	Scrapped 1940
Faversham	Mk IV female	Scrapped 1938-40
Folkestone	Mk IV female	Scrapped 1937
Hythe	Mk IV male	Scrapped 1937
Maidstone	Mk III female	Scrapped 1936
Rochester	Mk IV female	Scrapped 1939
Tonbridge	Mk IV female	Scrapped 1938
Tunbridge Wells	Mk IV male	Scrapped 1937

(*Bygone Kent* volume 41 no. 1, December 2020)



Tanks returning from the battlefields after the First World War on the newly built A20 by-passing Farningham.

Poem about Eynsford by Miss G Bryant, 1949

A picture haunting memory's dream
Of trees, green hills, and quiet stream
A winding street, a mill thought small
Where willing craftsmen give their all.
Let others wander where they may
Who comes to Eynsford comes to stay.

(*Spicer's Quarterly Journal*)

General Enquiries

Farningham Cricket Club - John has written a booklet of local interest and wanted to contact an old friend. Thanks to Helen we were able to oblige. He now would like contact with members of the Hodsoill family of Farningham. He sent a copy of his book, which I will use in the next Bulletin.

Swanley School for Little Boys - Jan's father and uncle, Richard and William Waddington were boarded there from 1915. The details of contact and how to acquire two books written about this school and its branch in Swanley (Hextable) are on the Noticeboard page of FELHS website.

48 & 50 High Street, Farningham - A new owner wanted background to the house, which was provided by Veronica, who had known previous owners. It was listed in 1944.

Constance Spry - This celebrity florist and flower arranger is to be the subject of an exhibition by the Garden Museum. Either side of the Second World War she lived at Park Gate House, Park Gate, and I was able to provide information and photos, particularly from the family of one of her employees, who lived in Crockenhill.

Lullingstone Water Supply - Andy, who now runs the Lullingstone Water Company, responded to my request for the date of the supply by telling me that he had been going through old correspondence and found a couple of survey reports back to the mid to late C19th. Eynsford Station's water was supplied from the system, which would suggest the supply was available as least as far back as 1862.

Bailey bridge, Lullingstone - I contacted Martin, who, back in 2012, had expressed an interest in the bridge which crosses the Darent at Lullingstone Roman Villa. This was because several documents about its acquisition and erection were among those I catalogued at Lullingstone Castle. The bridge replaced an old bridge swept away by the 1968 floods. Martin has tracked down one of the Royal Engineers' officers who supervised the building of the bridge - which was one that had been dismantled at Otford. He has written an article for the Friends of the Royal Engineers Museum newsletter and has sent FELHS a copy, which I will use in the next Bulletin. He has also offered to give a talk about this bridge and bailey bridges in general to FELHS in due course.

Market Meadow, Farningham - Mick has been going through old documents related to Farningham Village Hall, and wanted to know more of the history of Market Meadow and its archaeology. I told him what we had in FELHS collection and referred him to Geoffrey Burr, who oversaw some of the digs on site.

Family History

Caleb Best/ Turner - Mike asked for information about the family.

Thomas James Kemp - Dorothy asked for information, and promised more background, which has not yet been received, so I am unable to follow up the enquiry.

William Henry Knight - His grandson, Christopher, asked whether there was a photograph, because his family did not have one. Jan Wilkes deposited the original photographs from the composite photograph from the Village Hall when she had a digitised copy made, and it included a photograph of William Henry Knight, so Christopher now has a scanned copy. William was 38, with wife and children, when he died on 8 January 1919 in Turkey.

ARCHIVE REPORT

Susan Pittman - 01322 669923, www.felhs.org.uk

We have not been able to return as a group to the Centre, but do visit occasionally to check the building and to do research to answer queries. We have been asked by insurers to formulate a Health and Safety Policy, which has been done, and a Covid-19 policy by the Charity Commission, which has been done for the Centre.

Acquisitions

Stella Baggaley - A marvellous run of Farningham Church Magazines from 1894-1974, and of the United Benefice 1965-1981; 1838 copy of inscription hidden behind plasterwork in the church (see above); booklet 'The Record of Inspections by Archdeacons and Rural Deans' for Farningham, 1965-1980 - in 1968 new carpet was laid in the Chancel and Lady Chapel, in 1971 a pair of candlesticks was stolen - Mrs Lacy donated a pair of silver candlesticks in memory of her husband, the Roper memorial was cleaned; booklet 'Dry Rot in Wood'.

Wilf Duncombe - Charts of minimum/maximum temperatures taken at 19 Pollyhaugh 2015; 1552 inventories of parish church goods, Eynsford, Farningham, Lullingstone, from Archaeologia Cantiana VIII & IX.

Jo Easter- KCC Definitive Rights of Way maps 1987 - 3 maps with modifications in 1990 (Horton Kirby/ Fawkham/ Farningham)(Horton Kirby/ Fawkham/ north Farningham) (Swanley/ Crockenhill/ west Farningham); Farningham Parish boundaries 1999 scale 1:10000; OS Sheet TQ 56 NE scale 1:10000 Horton Kirby, Fawkham, part of Farningham.

Farningham Parish Council - Set of 24 typed mounted A4 sheets with the History of Farningham, produced for the 1973 Exhibition; ring booklet *History and Records of Farningham*; set of 50 larger than A4 mounted photographs, some of the 1936 Exhibition; framed copy of 1545 Muster Roll, lists men eligible for militia in Eynsford (39 names), Kingsdown with Maplescombe, Ash, Ridley, Longfield and Farningham (16 names); transcription of the 1545 Muster Roll; ring file 'History and Records of Farningham Village' transcribed by K. Goldsworthy (I will reserve a write-up until the next Bulletin); large photograph of naval scene with bullet hole, 'The picture formerly in the Manor House showing the bullet hole, alleged to have been made by Capt. Bligh of the 'Bounty', firing a pistol, when he lived at the Manor House from 1813 to 1817'; photocopies of various cuttings, documents found for the 1973 Exhibition; mounted copies in sections of 'All the Year Round' by Charles Dickens, 10/5/1879, Spring troutling in Kent, about visit to Farningham; original posters for 1973 Exhibition and Festival; Farningham bee-boles; photo early C19th of Farningham bridge.

David Hilling - Loan of album of 50 pages covering the restoration of Farningham Church Bells, 2008. The album has been scanned and a copy made on memory disk.

Beryl Saunders - Framed copy map of Farningham vicarage, gardens and lands, 1819; framed copy painting of Farningham Church, vicarage and Nash mausoleum pre-1820s (part reproduced p.4); 2 ink and wash paintings of the interior of the Church mounted on card, modern but not dated.

JOHN WOOD & FAMILY FARMERS OF THE MOUNT, CROCKENHILL, KENT

Susan Pittman Ph.D.

This is the third in a series of five. All are richly illustrated with old and new photographs. The families are used within context to tell the wider history of Crockenhill and its surround.

Already available from Crockenhill Parish Council Office (Stones Cross Road, Crockenhill BR8 8LT - 01322 614674) or via archives@felhs.org.uk:

- The Miller Family - Farmers at Wested Farm (once U.K.'s largest peppermint grower) (60 pages, £8 + postage)
- The Lee Family - Farmers at Crockenhill (early advocates of cold storage of fruit (132 pages, £12 + postage)

To save on postage books can be collected from the author (01322 669923)

To follow - The Clements of Gosenhill; Background to Farming in Crockenhill.

John Wood & Family: Farmers of The Mount, Crockenhill (248 pages, £15 + £4 postage)

The story of a leading fruit grower in the U.K., also reveals much of Crockenhill's history, and indeed the history of the area.

- John Wood in the forefront of growing strawberries and promoter of the use of dwarf rootstock for orchard trees.
- The scale of the industry led to the development of Crockenhill - housing and shops for the workforce, 1890-1910.
- The protest movement of Crockenhill farmers over paying tithes to the Church.
- The 2-month farm labourers' strike for better conditions in 1914.
- Links with the non-stop distance flight record attempt to India in 1927.
- The first V2 to fall in Kent and 4th to fall in this country.
- Crockenhill Village Hall built