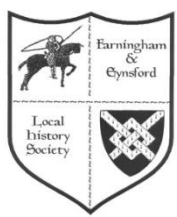


Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

(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. 129

Spring 2022

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

We thank members who have already renewed, and would much appreciate it if others renew now! If you are not sure of your membership status contact Alison below to check.

If you have completed a membership form in the past, you do not need to fill out a new one unless your contact details have changed - then please let us know.

£10 (individual) / £15 (family) membership

Life Membership: £100 (individual) / £150 (a couple)

You can pay

- ✦ by cheque payable to **Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society (do not use initials)**
- ✦ by BACS to sort code 20 25 42 account 13275752
- ✦ by standing order from 1 January 2022 (sort code 20 25 42 account 13275752)

THIS IS A NEW FACILITY

Please let **Mrs Alison Marshall**, Membership Secretary, 83 Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown, TN15 6HQ, Kent (alisondukes@btinternet.com) know that you have paid remotely or send her your cheque. **PLEASE NOTE THAT ALISON HAS MOVED SO DO NOT PUT THROUGH FORMER RIVERSIDE ADDRESS.**

QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS - 4 JUNE 2022

Help needed to create a display 'CELEBRATIONS'

FELHS is to take part and would like to put on a display 'CELEBRATIONS' showing images of past celebrations in Eynsford, Farningham and Lullingstone. We need to select images to scan, enlarge, encapsulate and caption. We also need to design the presentation. We only have a small team and would welcome some extra help, even for one morning session as a taster. You would discover how much fascinating material is held at the Centre and learn more about the community in which you live. Pre-pandemic we met on Monday mornings, but we can arrange times to suit.

Please contact: archives@felhs.org.uk : info@felhs.org.uk : Alison (details above) or Susan (details on p. 3)

2022 - PROGRAMME

We are going to try to go live for some of 2022, though speakers have agreed to give talks, whether live or Zoom. We are thinking having Zoom on the shorter days and live in Spring and Summer. All will be finalised according to the prevailing conditions. The programme can also be found on the Diary page of the website.

11 March Farningham VH Dr Anne Sassin Recent digs at Lullingstone

Anne is working for the Darent Valley Landscape Project as its resident archaeologist, and will report on community digs near Lullingstone Roman Villa.

8 April Eynsford VH Sophie Leathart Finding Constance Spry

Sophie is a professional florist and has been influenced by the innovative ideas of Constance Spry, the celebrity florist of the 1930s to 1950s, who lived at Park Gate House, Lullingstone, for part of this period.

13 May Farningham VH AGM

After the business of the meeting, it is hoped to show images of Fort Farningham and of Farningham past.

Separate AGM notice and agenda will be sent in mid-April

9 September Farningham VH Dr Anne Sassin LiDAR images of the Darent Valley

Anne will return to explain another aspect of her work for the Darent Valley Landscape Project, and reveal what has been learnt from the aerial imaging.

14 October Eynsford VH Rod Shelton From Cardboard to Castle

Rod, author of *Darent: The History and Stories of a River and its Communities*, is also an expert model maker, whose scale model of Eynsford Castle is currently on display at Lullingstone Castle. He will explain the skills of model making and the research into Eynsford Castle undertaken to achieve accuracy.

November to be arranged

COMMITTEE NEWS

By the time you receive this Bulletin the Spring talk series will be underway. The February talk on Zoom about the bailey bridge at Lullingstone Roman Villa gave an outline of the development of baileys bridges and then detailed how our one came to be installed. From March we are hoping that most meetings will be in the Village Halls again. We do hope you will make the effort to return to these live meetings. How we proceed later will depend on prevailing conditions and the willingness of speakers to come in person. Perhaps October and November will be on Zoom to avoid the colder weather. Do contact Facebook @felhs.1985 or website archives@felhs.org.uk or phone me (details on p.3) if you have opinions or ideas on the subject.

It was pleasant to be able to meet face-to-face (i.e. over one metre apart) for two Committee meetings, but we went back to Zoom in January after Omicron had arrived.

We still need a new Meetings Secretary. We have contacted speakers to slot into the programme for 2023, so the task will not be onerous, and we would welcome a new Committee member (or more than one come to that!)

Our website includes contact links with nearby Local History Societies, and we have been exchanging newsletters and information with them. Please note that Shoreham and District Historical Society has a new website (<https://shorehamkenthistory.weebly.com>) with a wealth of information about the history of Shoreham.

RESEARCH REPORT

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

New book: Archaeology on the Front Line by Brian Philp

Brian has given several talks to FELHS and has impressed us with his attention to detail and the ease with which he is able to convey information in an interesting and lively way. His new book covers seventy years of rescue archaeology from 1952-2022. The first section, though site based, reveals Brian's background and is largely biographical. The second part introduces fifty sites with brief survey and lavish illustrations. Sites in the Darent valley include Polhill, Otford, Farningham (manor house, Iron Age farmstead, Roman villa), Darenth, and Dartford. The third part contains a brief summary of projects and events (Saxon palace at Eynsford, Lullingstone Roman villa). The fourth part details preservation and protection of sites. The book concludes with acknowledgements and bibliography.

Order: £20 hardback + £4 postage, cheque drawn to KARU. Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit, 18 Highfield Avenue, Orpington BR6 6LF.

Tunnels at Fort Farningham

The question of possible tunnels was raised at Rod LeGear's Zoom presentation in November, so I approached Victor Smith, the expert on Kent defence archaeology. He took FELHS on a tour of the Fort in 1993. The local rumour was that military vehicles had been abandoned in the tunnels. Two tunnels run from the centre of the fort through its defensive mound. However, they were designed for foot soldiers to emerge from the fort in sally in case of siege. Victor said they were not wide enough for vehicles and that there was only rubbish debris in them. I could give some background history of the fort and show slides that I took during the visit at the AGM if there was interest, since the proceedings after the business are to focus on Farningham this time



The interior of Fort Farningham, built in the 1890s as a mobilisation centre along a 70-mile line of defence round London. In the photo - defensible casemates on building beyond the defence wall on the left. Archway under mound leading to ammunition store on its right, 5/6/1993.

FELHS FACEBOOK @felhs.1985

From Vikki and Helen:

We have set up a Facebook Page @felhs.1985 because we wanted to share with everyone items that are in our archive and other matters that relate to the local history of the area. We have posted photos and articles that are of interest to our followers, or that have arisen from queries. 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

Saddlers Hall, Eynsford

In 1865 and 1866 Dartford Highways Board for several months had issue with Mr Kemp of Saddlers Hall, Eynsford, after he had installed an entrance gate with a gate post in the highway. Perhaps the house was newly built at this time. Mr Kemp refused to remove the gate and the Board took proceedings against him for obstructing the highway. After prevaricating several months, and claiming that Sir Percival Hart Dyke had a property with a similar gate, which the surveyor had ignored, Mr Kemp did eventually alter the entrance gate to the satisfaction of the Board.

(KHLCD/Da/Am/1/1 - Minutes of Highways Board for the District of Dartford 1863-1869)



Saddlers Hall, from a photo recently donated by Wilf Duncombe. The Hall was demolished in 2000.

The bricks for Eynsford viaduct

Following David Cufley's fascinating talk on local brickfields, he was invited to visit the 'Brickfield' at Home Farm, by Robert Alexander. I do not yet know the outcome of the visit, except that David has offered to return to tell us more! In the 1861 census two brickfield workers and seven railway labourers were living in huts on site, but others were lodged in houses in the village. The brickfield site was owned by the Mandy family, important farmers in the village at the time



Class C steam train pulling goods wagons over Eynsford viaduct, pre-1935 electrification of the line.

Subscription Edition of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy

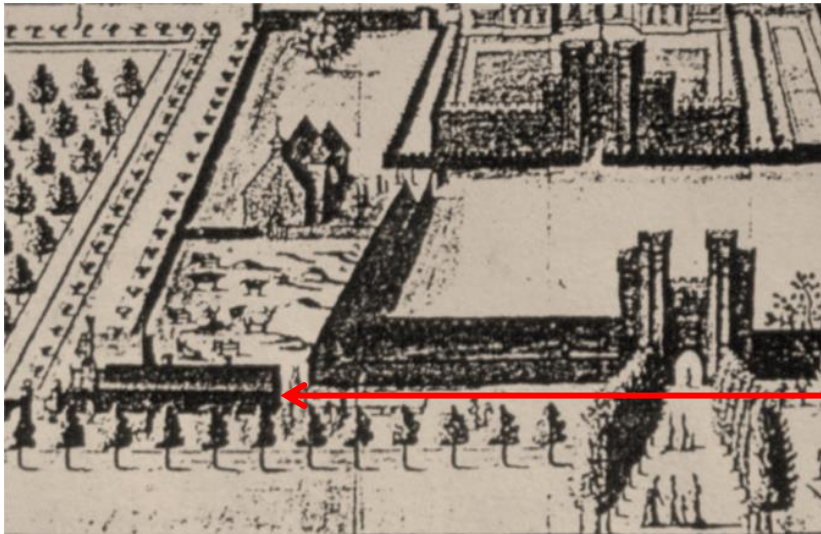
Mary Baker Eddy founded the Christian Science movement. The book was published in 1941 using handmade rag paper from Eynsford Paper Mill. Only a few presentation copies were made, and in this country are held by the Royal Library at Windsor, the British Library and the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The book was large and in a presentation case, and was offered to FELHS. At first we accepted the gift, but on consideration of its size and value, and the need to store it in the best archival environment, contact was made with Kent History and Library Centre, who gladly accepted the book. It will now be available especially to those who wish to study Eynsford handmade paper.



Jillie Webbe, Church Librarian of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, handing over the special edition (1941) of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy to Mark Ballard, Archives Service Officer, at Kent History and Library Centre, 30/11/2021.

Alms houses at Lullingstone

Under the will of Sir John Peche (died 1522) three alms houses were to be built at the west end of the Church by the wardens of the Grocers' Company. The three poor male occupants were to be paid a pension of eight pence a week, and after the death of his wife, Elizabeth, the Grocers' Company was to bear the cost of upkeep.



1670s - part of the earliest image of Lullingstone from Yale University Mellon collection - showing the alms houses to the west of the Church. They had been demolished by mid-eighteenth century.

Eynsford by W. W. Curnow - clarification

I recently noticed on p. 9 the following statement, 'The chief family in the neighbourhood in the fourteenth century was the Peche family who lived at Lullingstone Castle (Shoreham Castle Farm).'

This is incorrect. Shoreham Castle Farm was the site of an ancient castle called Lullingstone Castle, owned by the Poyntz family. The Peche family lived in the nearby manor house at Lullingstone, which the Dyke family took to calling Lullingstone Castle for aggrandisement in the eighteenth century. By that time the original castle at Castle Farm had fallen into disrepair and had largely disappeared. The Peche family did not own land in the area of Castle Farm, Shoreham, and never lived there.



Derrick John Gigger (1923-1944)

He died on his fifth mission as a bomber pilot, having gone to Canada to train at the outbreak of war. All seven crew in the Lancaster bomber sent on a raid to Stuttgart on 15/16 March 1944 were killed, and all were aged 20 or 21. Look at the website 'aircrewremembered' for the full story and to read about other air crew who lost their lives in combat.

Black People in Sevenoaks since 1600

Early references:

1613-1624 at Knole, John Morockoe, kitchen servant, and Grace Robinson, laundry maid, blackamoors (term used to indicate African origins).

1687 at Chipstead, baptism of 8-year old Ethiopian servant of Lady Catherine Strode.

1687 at Ightham baptism of 18-year old Thomas Pompey, blackamoor servant of William George of St. Clere.

1770 at Shoreham 16-year old from Guinea, Thomas Shoreham.

The article goes on to outline Sevenoaks' anti-slavery campaigns, press reports of black entertainers, sportsmen, black preachers and professionals.

Note: To look out for references in our area.

'Black People in Sevenoaks' by David Killingray in The Local Historian October 2021, pp.297-308

James Russell 1820-1880

He was the sixth of ten children and fourth of five sons of James and Letitia (Ray) Russell of Court Lodge, Horton Kirby. He was living at Broomfield Cottage (now east end of Swanley) in 1871, and was farmer of 600 acres, perhaps as tenant of Petham Court Farm and Charton Farm, Farningham. He died of alcoholic poisoning in 1880 aged 58. Two of his children, Florence, who married Dr Hugh Smith of Braeside, and son Robert Hamilton Russell (1860-1933) featured in Bulletin no.127 (Summer 2021) over the link with Percy Grainger, the Australian composer.* James Russell's wife, Ellen (Phillips), who died in 1877 aged 42, is buried in Farningham churchyard, and James Russell is commemorated there, but buried in the family vault in Horton Kirby churchyard. His will mentioned wife Mary, so it seems he remarried quite soon after Ellen's death, but this requires further investigation. She does not appear in any of the notes deposited by Margaret Stocker.

* A reminder that all Bulletins since March 2007 are on felhs website, reached from the Home Page 'Bulletins' on list in left hand margin. Scroll to the end for the index of issues up to 2016.



Broomfield in the 1930s, demolished for roadworks when M25 junction constructed in early 1980s. Until the mid-1950s Farningham parish extended to the Co-op petrol station in Swanley High Street.

Crockenhill: Past and Present

Susan Pittman

£10 plus £1.50 p&p

Paperback, 240x170mm, 88 pages

Crockenhill: Past and Present contains historical views of the parish of Crockenhill alongside their modern equivalents, taken where possible on the same spot, and with historical commentary highlighting both the change and the continuity in the view.

Now available from the author (01322 669923, 27 Old Chapel Road, BR8 8LL) or order online at **www.canterley.co.uk** or call **01580 766428** (9 am-5 pm, Mon-Fri) to discuss other payment options.



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS FARMHOUSE?

Mystery farmhouse where Bridget's mother worked as a Land Army recruit from 1942-1946. Bridget thought the farm was in Crockenhill, but there is nothing so grand there. Does anyone recognise the building?



General Enquiries

4 Elm Cottages (Railway Tavern), Eynsford - Sharon asked for background because her grandmother used to live there.

Guide to St. Martin's Church, Eynsford - Philip is updating the guide and we went round the church to help him decide what to include.

St. Martin's Church graveyard - Stephen has been making a photographic record of the memorials, using the reference numbers of the graves provided in the Monumental Inscriptions record made by Susan Pittman in 1989, and adding monuments put up since then.

Mayfield, Farningham - Pammie enquired about the house via our Facebook. Her mother-in-law and grandparents (O'Mara family) lived there in the Second World War.

Alms houses at Lullingstone Castle - Rod, who is making a model of Lullingstone Castle and its grounds, wanted to know the number of alms houses that were there. (see above)

7 South Terrace, Farningham - Sally was interested in the history because she was in the process of buying the property.

Photograph of a farmhouse - Bridget's mother worked at the farm from 1942-1946. It was not instantly recognisable so I suggested she contacted Kent Archaeological Society to see if a copy could be included in its newsletter, which gets county-wide coverage. (see above)

Tunnels at Fort Farningham - John asked Rod LeGear about these because although Rod gave a talk on 'Kent from the Air', he is the expert underground archaeologist for Kent. (see above)

Timpson's bus service for Crayford - Allan wrote that the coach garage once near to the former Town Hall housed Vicker's vehicles from 1915. Vicker's Munition Works required extra workers, but public transport was inadequate. Vicker's set up bus routes to outlying settlements for its workers and one route was Crockenhill via Swanley Junction, Birchwood Corner and Hextable Road. Allan wanted to know whether there were records of munition workers' hostels in the area. I did not know of any, but have come across Belgian refugees who found work there, and women farm labourers were also diverted to munitions factories.

Eynsford pottery (Facebook request) If you have a piece of Eynsford pottery please look at the maker's mark imprinted on the bottom and get in touch, because Roger would like to confirm that a piece he has marked 'Eynsford' is from that pottery.

Family History

Packman - Debra from Australia is hoping to visit the area soon to explore family links. Her great-great grandfather, Henry George Packman, a basket weaver, emigrated to Australia in 1873, and died in 1906. With permission I passed her details on to Neil, who is also researching the Packman family, but have not heard back from either of them.

Gigger - Researchers from Canada and Australia are compiling biographies of air crew killed in the Second World War, including Derrick Gigger. (<http://www.aircrewremembered.com/gigger-derrick-joh.html>). The request from Stefan and Jack was for a photograph of Derrick. Derrick Gigger was cousin to the late Brian Hussey, and I was able to contact Brian's daughters who provided a photograph. The website coverage contains a very detailed account of Derrick's flying career and his last mission.

Ingram / Baldwin - Sue's grandparents, Thomas Baldwin and Florence Ingram, were living at Hulberry in the 1911 census. She has traced the Baldwin family back to Humphrey Baldwin's marriage to Mary Ann Kipps in 1720. Both families were well known to me and feature in my books on Lullingstone Park and *The Lee Family - farmers of Crockenhill* (which she purchased). She also wanted to know where Church Row, Eynsford, was (now Church Walk).

Perretti of Crockenhill - Pat made contact over items he had from the Perretti family - his aunt Freda Collins married Charles Perretti in 1948. He sent photographs and documents for the Crockenhill Heritage Centre, but would like them to be passed over to a family member if any come forward.

ARCHIVE REPORT

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

We still have not met for working parties, but have been continued to be busy on various projects. The kissing gate and fence have been installed alongside the Centre, meaning that we no longer have unimpeded outside access from front to back of the building. A fascia board had been damaged, and rats have returned to the roof space. The hole has now been repaired and we hope rat poison will deal with that problem.

Acquisitions

Hugh Darlington - Copy of the Village of Eynsford book c.1910.

Margaret Stocker - A major acquisition related to her family history research into the Russell family, associated with Court Lodge (Horton Kirby), St. John's Jerusalem (Sutton-at-Hone), Charton Manor (Farningham), and with branches in Otford and Plumstead. Margaret and her father undertook meticulous research, and she has presented this in a well-ordered and clear way. James and Letitia (Ray) Russell had ten children and each line is represented in the research. There is a full family tree. There are many original photographs, both old family portraits and places visited in pursuit of research. There is also a Victorian album containing photographs and notes of families who married into the Russell family. Sadly, Margaret had been unable to find any family member to hand to collection down to, as most branches have died out. An interesting artefact was a memorial board with 'W Ray Octr. 12. 1796' painted on it. It was found in Reynolds Place and is thought to have come from Horton Kirby Church. Horton Kirby and South Darenth Parish Council has accepted the board, but has no facility to store the rest, so FELHS agreed to provide a permanent home for the collection, especially as one branch is associated with Farningham.



The memorial board, thought to have come from Horton Kirby Church. No W Ray can be identified from the family tree - a William Ray died in 1808. It might have been a memorial for an infant, not in the parish registers.

MARGARET STOCKER (1956-2021)

Sadly, Margaret died on 16 December, but knowing that her research had found a place where others could make use of it. She was born in Dartford, and her family lived in Fawkham before moving to Hartley, and later to East Kent. Her interest in local and family history was derived from her father. Fortunately for FELHS, her later career as a legal secretary meant that she was well organised and systematic, so her research legacy is beautifully presented. She would have urged others to think ahead to make plans for special research and family items.