

Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

(Original Society founded 1985 Registered Charity no 1047562)

A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee

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Summer 2022

2022- 2023 PROGRAMME

We are thinking perhaps 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.

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.

18 November Farningham VH

Dr Gerald Cramp Journey down the Thames

Gerald will be showing Victorian and Edwardian lantern slides of scenes down the Thames from Oxford to Gravesend.

2023

24 February Eynsford VH

David Cufley Eynsford viaduct and brickfield

David is returning to give a follow-up talk about his research into the Eynsford brickfield and the construction of the viaduct over the Darent valley.

24 March Farningham VH

Dr Gerald Cramp Farningham Roman Villa and its neighbours

FELHS FACEBOOK @felhs.1985 From Vikki and Helen:

FELHS Facebook Page @felhs.1985 where everyone can share items from the 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

COMMITTEE NEWS

We returned to the Village Halls in March and attendance numbers have hovered in the upper twenties, with a welcome buzz at the meetings. If all the members and guests we saw on Zoom also returned it would be even more gratifying. The 2023 Programme is complete and on the website. We are keeping our options open for live or Zoom for the shorter and colder days of the year, but any change from Village Hall to Zoom will be well publicised on website, Facebook and by e-mail to members.

The Platinum Jubilee certainly brought history to the forefront of most people's minds, and underlined the importance of the FELHS collection to Eynsford (with Lullingstone) and Farningham (with Maplescombe), because it held items from past celebrations which could be displayed. The collection is more than its sum total of items, because it contains the essence of the locality, which distils into local pride, local identity and community spirit. Our stand received many visitors, and could only have been set up with the help of several stalwarts and, pleasingly, new volunteers.

Gloria Gee 1932-2022

FELHS was saddened to learn of the death of its long-standing member, Gloria Gee, wife of Peter Gee. Their son, John, has written a fitting tribute to his mother in Trident (April 2022), but here we emphasise her contribution to FELHS. She served on the Committee for many years, and took over responsibility for the catalogue. A small working party would meet weekly at the Gee's home in Crockenhill Lane and work through the many uncatalogued items. Progress was slow because the Society had no permanent base, but later Gloria allowed us to move into the garage next to the Gee Stores, behind which Gloria was living at the time. She was always supportive of FELHS especially as she knew how much the Society meant to Peter. Her contribution was much valued and her encouragement will be missed.

RESEARCH REPORT

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

Recording monumental inscriptions at St. Martin's Church, Eynsford, and at St. Peter & St. Paul's Church, Farningham

By happy coincidence Philip McGarvey for Farningham and Stephen Archer for Eynsford have been studying extant memorials in the churchyards.

- Philip's task to produce an accurate plan of Farningham churchyard with its memorials is formidable, as the churchyard is extensive and has not been fully surveyed and recorded before.
- Stephen has been combining and updating two previous recordings. He has also been photographing each memorial. To see the results go to '[St Martin Churchyard in Eynsford, Kent - Find a Grave Cemetery](#)'. For a simple plan of the churchyard go to Photos (9) on the grey top ribbon, this plan matches the location (A-E) given in the location description of the graves. Go to the bottom of the main page and you can either use a name search or just click 'Search' and all the graves come up in alphabetical order. FELHS has a hardback copy of the inscriptions.



One of the more elaborate memorials at St. Martin's -
S.face: Beneath this tomb lies the body of/ Thomas Palmer/
a native of this parish/ late of Clements Inn/ in the City of
Westminster solicitor/ who died on the 16th day of March
1814/ aged 59 years.

N.face: in the vault beneath/ with the remains of his uncle
Thomas Palmer/ lies the body of/ James Baker Esqre
(Esquire)/ a native of this parish/ for many years resident in
the parish/ of Islington Middlesex/ who died on the 22nd
day of February 1855/ in the 83rd year of his age.

Thomas Palmer subscribed to the first Sunday School in Crockenhill. His maternal line was the Mosyer family, whose ancestors were in the village in Henry VIII's reign. In his will he made arrangements for the Sunday School to be funded. About fifteen children were to be taught to read and learn the principles of the Church of England. They were provided with suitable clothes to wear to Church each Sunday. The Sunday School predated the building of All Souls', Crockenhill, in 1850, so the children would have had to walk to Eynsford Church.

Archaeology found and lost under the M25

- A Roman cemetery at Wested Lane - four cremations from mid-second century.
- A medieval site by Horncross Shaw - Twelfth to thirteenth century pit and ditches with 85 pottery fragments, 13 bone fragments indicating the existence of a small settlement nearby.

Kent Archaeological Review Autumn & Winter 2006

Alexander Pitcairn (1768-1813) - a cricketer

He was a first-class cricketer playing for Hampshire, the M.C.C. (Marylebone Cricket Club) and for the Gentlemen of Kent and the Gentlemen of England during the one year he played, 1791-1792. However, his batting average was under ten runs per match!

Wikipedia - Alexander Pitcairn - the information is from the subscription website Cricket Archive

Fort Farningham facilities

I contacted Victor Smith again when preparing the PowerPoint presentation for the AGM. I was puzzled by the lack of facilities (toilets, catering, sleeping) at the Fort. Apparently, the forts were only ever meant to hold huge stores, usually with a self-defence capability. They were constructed at focal points along the defence line to the east and south of London. The main defences comprised the field batteries and infantry trenches between and behind the forts, to be established on mobilisation. Feeding would have been by field kitchens and field latrines established. A number of the centres had a water point, but during mobilisation, water pipes would have been laid up and down the defences. Looking on-line I was surprised to learn that Fort Farningham had been used by the Royal Observer Corps in the 1960s as one of UK's Warning and Monitoring posts during the Cold War.

(<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=MKe17347>)

Dummy airfields in Kent

A team from KAS Kent Defence Research Group has been reviewing sites to see if there were any remains of the control shelters or generators on the ground. Substantial remains of the decoy airfields for Manston and for Gravesend (at Luddesdown and Cliffe Marshes) have been found, but of Lullingstone it is stated that no feature survives. This made me think because in the 1980s I remembered derelict accommodation huts in scrubby woodland not far from the gatehouse at Lullingstone Castle. The huts were being used for nefarious purposes so it was decided to demolish them. I went to the spot to see what remained, and found, apart from the bases of the huts, huge chunks of concrete, which might have come from the former control centre. I have reported these findings so perhaps the record can be put straight, although an expert would need to interpret what remains on the ground.

KAS Newsletter no. 117 New Year 2022 - Discovering Kent's wartime airfields that never were by Paul Tritton pp. 16-20.



Blocks of concrete from buildings associated with Lullingsstone dummy airfield, 30/1/2022.

Windmill in a sketch of Eynsford drawn by Samuel Palmer

Julie has undertaken detailed research into Samuel Palmer's early sketchbook. She is specifically trying to ascertain whether he knew the area before he came to live in Shoreham. Unfortunately, I cannot reproduce the sketch for fear of breaching copyright. But it was a rough sketch, taken from Hulberry, and showed Eynsford church steeple with a windmill on the skyline to the right of the church. Eynsford records have not revealed a windmill, but Farningham had one, which was transferred to West Kingsdown. Because I would have expected West Kingsdown to be on the left hand side of the church it was a puzzle. However, with correct orientation we are convinced that the windmill on the skyline was at West Kingsdown - only visible because Samuel was on high ground and could see beyond Knatts valley to the higher ground at West Kingsdown. Further research revealed that in Samuel's time the windmill was near Chimhams and only later moved to its present site.



Greenwood's map of 1829 showing the windmill south of Chimhams' Farm on the A20. Knatts Valley with Maplescombe to the left.



c.1880 The smock windmill once at Chimhams, moved to Pell's Farm West Kingsdown

The Windmills of North West Kent and Kentish London by Rob Cumming pp.48-51.

Sergeant Alfred Edgar Hannam / Hannan (1874-1959)

Alfred enlisted in the Welch Regiment in 1894 and fought in the Boer Wars from 1899 to 1904, when he returned home with a bullet wound in his elbow. This did not end his army career, and he finally left the army in 1910, having served as Officers' Mess caterer for 13 years. By 1911 he had become licensee of The Bull, Farningham, though his army record showed him to be teetotal! His son Gerald Alfred James Hannam/ Hannan also became a professional soldier, enlisting in 1914, and serving in India, until transferred to the Army Reserve in 1924. Alfred threw himself into Farningham life and became a parish councillor. His name often crops up in the Minutes.



The Bull, Farningham, in 1907 - a few years before taken over by Alfred Hannam/ Hannan.

Head teachers of Farningham schools

Diana Beamish has sent me a list as far as she has got, so it is open to revision:

Charles Everest	pre-1823 - c.1849
William Gonian	c.1850 - presumably 1852
James Johnson	June 1852 - presumably 1865
James Ragge	1865 - 1875
Richard Lewis Edmonds	1875 - 1912
John Whitfield Hetherington	1912 - 1940
Eric Frederick James Edward Marshall	1940 - 1944 (sent to another school returned c.1950)
Miss Grace Regan	1944 (temporary) - 1949 (stayed as teacher into 1960s)
Miss E.M. Thomas	c.1970 - April 1973

Memories of Farningham Hill Primary School late 1940s

The school dated from the late Victorian times and had three classrooms with high windows. The largest room was partitioned to take two classes. The head teacher in the 1940s was Miss Fanny Watson, and the infant class taken by Mrs Rogers, then came the transition to Mrs Dawson' class. The school became too small for the rapidly rising Swanley population, so the hall of the Congregational Church was used. Marilyn Ball, who wrote her memories, found this annoying



because she lived near the Church, but had to walk to school (the site was near the present M25/M20 intersection), and then return the same route for assemblies. The Parent-Teacher Association was strong and held Christmas parties and coach outings. In 1949 the top class made dresses of hardwearing printed war-time utility material, which came in four colours.

Full version in *Swanley History Group Newsletter no.111*, April 2022

Marilyn Ball's son standing by Farningham Hill School on his first day, September 1965.

Schoolboys work at Lullingstone in the Second World War

Memories of a Beckenham Grammar schoolboy, Peter Duncan, born 1928:-

In 1941 we cycled down to a camp at Eynsford, staying in the local school. We worked at Upper and Lower Austin Lodge, and Home Farm. But I worked firstly at Maplescombe picking plums. We were allowed to eat as much of the fruit as we liked - though after one or two days eating lots of plums we lost all desire to eat any more!

Later I worked at Chimhams, gathering up sheaves of wheat or barley and setting them up in groups of six or eight as stooks to dry out. There were no combine harvesters then - just a reaper and binder cutting the corn. The wheat was fairly sharp, but the barley was horrid! It scratched our arms and legs and made them bleed. In 1942 when we were at Eynsford camp we heard of the Dieppe raid. Some people thought that it was an attempt at a second front or invasion of France, but of course it was only a practice run - and a disastrous one.

Beckenham Historical Association Newsletter April 2022 - kindly sent in by John King

The 21 bus route to Farningham

This route began in 1908 from Oxford Circus to the Black Horse, Sidcup. After a new bus station was opened at Footscray the route was extended to The Bull at Farningham in 1925. This destination became very popular with day-trippers as housing development extended to Eltham and Sidcup. In the Second World War route 21A was opened from Farningham and Sidcup to Woolwich. In 1956 the service to Farningham only ran on Sundays.

SEnine March 2021, article by John Kennett pp.18-19 - copy sent by Diana Beamish.

Cyril Munn Crowhurst (d.1918)

Arthur Edward Crowhurst (d. 1917)

William Henry Pocock (d.1917)

David Barrett's research into Dartford Grammar School boys who were killed in the First World War, has come up with three with local links.

Cyril's great uncle ran Munn's grocer's shop in Eynsford. His name is on the war memorial in St. Martin's Church, along with E. Crowhurst, which might be Arthur Edward Crowhurst, but whether he is the serviceman on the war memorial remains unproven. The two Crowhursts do not appear to have been closely related. Cyril was killed in 1918 and A. E. Crowhurst in 1917. Cyril Crowhurst also appears on the Horton Kirby war memorial, where he lived, but travelled to church in Eynsford. It often happens that the same name can occur on more than one war memorial. This can be because the serviceman had connections in more than one place, or it might be the choice of the particular relative, e.g. parents, spouse to siblings, who put forward the nomination.

The information David was able to give FELHS about W. H. Pocock was very welcome. Wilf



Duncombe looked for W. A. Pocock in vain, but the initial on the Eynsford war memorial may have become obscured and be 'H' - the two letters are easily confused if worn or filled with dirt.

William Henry Pocock (1895-1917) was the son of William Pocock, the Eynsford butcher whose shop is now occupied by Norman's. He was killed by a shell at the Battle of Arras on leaving a trench. He had served in the army for 16 months. David's biography covers two pages and includes a long poem written by William's father in his son's memory.

W. H. Pocock 1895-1917.

Our Peace was won by the Men who fell by Sarah Lewis, pp. 110-112.

General Enquiries

Mayfield, Farningham - Pammie contacted Facebook about this house, the home of Mr and Mrs O'Mara whose daughter met Ted Couchman volunteering for the St. John's Ambulance Brigade at Brand's Hatch.

Eynsford Primary School in the 1960s - Tony is collecting memories of the school he attended in the 1960s, and wants to go on to compare memories from later secondary school experiences with modern education. I told him about Diana Beamish's FELHS no. 29 publication and her current preparation of a fuller history of both Eynsford and Farningham Schools, and put them in touch with each other.

The Manse, Eynsford - John is researching the history of his house and the people who lived in it. He has spent time at the Centre seeing what resources we have. I found a map of 1864 showing the property being auctioned, and he subsequently tracked down the auction details to find the manse was bought for £330. A useful source for discovering the occupiers of more prominent houses in an area is to look in Street Directories.

Elm Tree Cottages, former Railway Tavern site, Eynsford - Mara has recently moved in to the house occupying the site and was interested in its history.

Farningham Parish Council's loss of area to Swanley Town - Mick wanted to know about this. We have 400 referendum returns from parishioners dated 1951 - they voted to remain in Farningham, but Swanley Town Council was created in 1955, and that part of Farningham West was absorbed into it.

Sketch by Samuel Palmer with Eynsford Church and a windmill on the horizon - Julie was curious to locate the windmill. (see above)

Family History

Booker - Jo is researching Frank Albert Booker, baptised 1888, son of Henry married Eliza Kingston 1885. Although there are several Booker family trees drawn up by different researchers I was unable to fit her line into them.

Fellows / Floyd - Samantha from Australia is researching her Fellows' ancestor, Revd. Walter Fellows, who emigrated to Australia. He was the son of solicitor Thomas Fellows and Mary Fellows (Howard) who married in 1822. Thomas' forbears were from the Eynsford Paper Mill family. Samantha gave details of the C18th family she had researched. She wanted to know what material we held about the families. I told her about Wilf Duncombe's publication and sent the relevant part of the catalogue about the Fellows and Floyd, which is quite lengthy, but I have not heard back from her.

Hannam / Hannan - Tim is researching the Welch Regiment soldiers of the Boer and First World Wars. A former professional soldier, Gerald Alfred James Hannan (as spelt locally), was running The Bull in Farningham in the 1910s. His son, Gerald, fought in the First World War, and it is this reference that Tim had picked up from our website. Tim sent a biography of Gerald A. J. (see above).

Pryor/ Pryer - Victoria is researching Ann Pryer (1810-1884) married (1831) William Peat. I sent her references at the Centre, including wills dating back to 1769, and details of the memorials in Eynsford churchyard. She worked out where Ann fitted into a family tree I sent her.

Turner - Steven has William Turner married Mary Evernden in his family tree. William's father John was a papermaker. He was trying to find the baptism of John. I looked up the various Turner family trees, but John was not a common name in the family and I could not find a match. I referred the query to Dr Jean Stirk, who is an expert on papermakers.

Payne / Pain(e) - Julie's ancestor was Jesse Payne (c.1820), son of Henry and Charlotte (Rampson). This tied in with the family of John Payne who had made enquiries in 2001.

Cyril Munn Crowhurst / Arthur Edward Crowhurst / William H. Pocock - Dave is researching former Dartford Grammar School boys who fought in the First World War. (see above)

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, and hope to be back for more regular sessions within the next few weeks. A backlog of tasks has built up so there will be plenty to do. It is pleasing to report that two more volunteers have offered to help.

Acquisitions

Ed Thompson - Road sign direction to Farningham.



1950/60s Road sign to Farningham when in situ pointing up Otford Road, Sevenoaks, at corner with Cramptons Road

Jan Wilkes - Warlock Society Newsletter 101, Autumn 2017, containing an article 'Warlock and Lullingstone' by John Mitchell.



A delightfully tinted postcard of Eynsford bridge and forge, perhaps 1900s. The figurehead on the bridge is more intact than now. There is no lych-gate into the churchyard. The lower brick building at the back of Ford House has since been demolished.