

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 112

December 2016

Forthcoming Talks and Events

Date	Details	Where
24 th February	Pocahontas – the non-Disney Story – Christoph Bull	FVH
19 th May	AGM	EVH
6 th September	Visit to Gravesend/Tilbury Fort (full details to follow)	
22 nd September	Charles Darwin – Toni Mount	EVH
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)

In September next year it will be 100 years since the death of Elliott Downs Till often referred to as 'Friend and Benefactor of Eynsford'. Many of the picturesque buildings in the village today owe their long life to the work done by EDT to save them from demolition. Sadly, some could not be saved but we can remember them because of existing photographs and postcards. Should you have any photographs of the village dating from 1880 until 1917 I would ask that you look closely at them. EDT did I think like to be photographed because whatever the occasion he can usually be found somewhere in the picture accompanied by his dog. He always seemed to be wearing a Derby hat, though sometimes he was bare headed, dark jacket and trousers often with a capped overcoat. If the weather was inclement then trousers would be tucked into heavy socks or gaiters over his boots. I'm not sure what he wore round his neck with his white shirt, it certainly wasn't a tie or a cravat. I have one picture of him in shirtsleeves and waistcoat, gaiters and boots but still wearing his hat. With his silver grey hair, moustache and goatee beard he was a very distinctive looking person.

Should you find him in any of your pictures of Eynsford or even Farningham I would love to know

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2017 – Rick Clayton (Treasurer)

At the AGM, Members voted for a modest increase in the level of subscription fees for the coming financial year. From the 1st December 2016 subscriptions are increased to.

Single Membership £10.00 (from £9.00)

Family Membership £15.00 (from £14.00)

Single Life Membership £100.00 (from, £90.00)

Joint Life Membership £150.00 (from £140.00)

The increases will apply when new members join the society and existing members renew their subscription. For example, someone joining in May 2016 would have paid £9.00 (single membership). When they (it is hoped) renew their membership in May 2017 the fee will be £10.00. The same principal of course applies to the existing members who renewed their membership between 1st December 2015 and 30th November 2016.

Your committee hopes that you will continue to support the Society and its aims and find the new fees continue to provide value for money in terms of the activities and benefits they cover.

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

The Journal of Kent History

This is produced by the Kent History Federation of which FELHS is a member. I collect £5 subscription for the two issues a year (March and September) and deliver to them to subscribers. The Journal gives contact details and lists the meetings/activities of the 100 local/family history society members in Kent. There are book reviews and details of various historical conferences and events in the county. Among the interesting articles in the September 2016 issue was one by Diana Beamish of Eynsford. She highlighted rationing in the Second World War as mentioned in letters between her father, serving away in the army, and her mother back home in Sidcup. Please do contact me if you would like to be added to the subscription list.

New book - Arthur Mee by Keith Crawford

I have now read Keith's book and it is fascinating. Having been brought up alongside 'The Children's Newspaper' and the King's England county series of guides, I had not regarded him as complex - how wrong I was. His non-conformist background gave him faith and a radical political and social outlook, while his schooling exposed him to conventional and patriotic conservatism - a dichotomy in his character which was never reconciled. The book is very readable and those interested in Mee would get a greater understanding of the depth of the man.

Arthur Mee - a biography - by Keith Crawford available at £20 - Lutterworth Press, PO Box 60, Cambridge, CB1 2NT (01223 350865)
(email sales@lutterworth.com) (www.lutterworth.com)

New book - Early Medieval Kent 800-1220

(Kent History Project 10 - available via KCC)

This is a scholarly book with each chapter being written by a specialist in the field. About the river Darent, Dr Gillian Draper points out that it was a more significant river that it now appears being navigable as far as Riverhead 'or 'rother hithe', a cattle

wharf, three miles to the west of Greatness - itself an important medieval place at the crossroads of two major estates.

Surviving ventilation shaft of the Darenth Valley main sewer, 1880s

I wrote in the last Bulletin of the stench which could come from the original 7-foot-high ventilation shafts along the Darenth Valley sewer. One of these shafts can still be seen at the Farningham end of Sparepenny Lane, outside the high front wall of Hampton Court Cottage. I would hope that it is not now functioning, but there are two oval man-hole covers in front of it, one grated!



Miscellany of Francis Andrus of Scadbury, Southfleet

Writing for November 1830 he mentions:

The Swing riots (though not then called that) -

'The fires continue almost all over the County, Mr Haysell at Eynsford had two stacks burnt, Mr George Rashleigh at Horton had a stack set on fire and many more at different places, we have escapaid yet, large bodies of labouring classes ... demand more pay, and seemed determined to have it, their aim seem to be agaisns the parsons more than any, they say to the farmers gives us more pay and we will stick to you against the clergy tax gathers.'

Farningham Steeple Chase -

On the 17th April 1835 we had a grand steeple chase from Farningham along the Marshes to the Dartford Powder Mills, Mr Sifferts Parasol won it, rode by Mason, seven started, the Marquess of Waterford rode Arab, got a fall and did not get in at all, all the other riders except Mason got falls but no mischief done - in the afternoon we had such a fall of snow as I never before witness this time of the year the ground was soon covered, and 4 Inches the next Morning, accompanied with a very severe frost.'

(Archaeologia Cantiana C, 1984, pp.376-377)

More about the Swing Riots - Farningham September/October 1830

22 July 1830 - A stack of straw belonging to Charles Colyer was set on fire and a threatening letter found near it.

Compared with Francis Andrus's rather relaxed attitude about the unrest among farm workers, Rev. Benjamin Sandford, Vicar of Farningham since 1816, was much more alarmed.

(Archaeologia Cantiana CVII, 1989, Swing: the years 1827-1830 as reflected in a West Kent newspaper by Shirley Burgoyne Black, p.100)

He noted that 'the Magistrates seem paralyzed', and urged the government to 'take the lead and sanction the arming of the Bourgeois classes.' He warned that otherwise 'the vacuum in authority would be filled with 'illegal' associations for the protection of property, especially with the example of the Continent* before their eyes.'

(Letters in The Times of 17/9/1830 and to John Irving M.P. of 8/10/1830,
quoted from 'The Rural War' by Carl J. Griffin, pp.79-80, Manchester
University Press, 2012)

* 1830 was a year of Revolutions in Europe. In France Charles X was overthrown by Louis Philippe; Belgium declared independence from the Netherlands; uprisings in Poland, Italy and Germany were unsuccessful.

From Dartford Workhouse Minutes, 1836

The Dartford Union first met in May 1836.

It combined 21 parishes which had previously made their own provision for the poor. The Union was run by Guardians - including Edward Coombes for Eynsford, John Pawley for Farningham and Henry Stiles/Styles for Lullingstone. Sir Percival Hart Dyke of Lullingstone was an ex-officio Guardian.

23 May 1836

Among the Union's first decisions was to inspect existing parish workhouses to see if they provided suitable accommodation for 400 paupers. The area was divided into 3 districts. The population of the parishes was given - Eynsford 1277 (with Crockenhill), Farningham 701, and Lullingstone 40.

4 June 1836

At its second meeting it was decided to use Bexley workhouse for children, Swanscombe for able-bodied women,

Dartford for old and infirm men and women, and able-bodied men.

The list of provisions included best flour, Dutch cheese, Irish butter, potatoes, good long tea, moist sugar, yellow soap, candles, clods and stickings of beer, mutton, Walls End coal, salt, oatmeal, rice, good ox beef, bone suet of mutton, ox heads, milk and bavins.

Clod and sticking = shoulder and towards the neck, among cheapest cuts

Walls End coal = from Newcastle (Wallsend) or generally better quality

domestic coal

bavins = bundles of fire wood

2 July 1836

Elizabeth Jeal (47), wife of James Jeal of Lullingstone who has absconded leaving 5 children (Elizabeth 9, Mary 7, James 5, Margaret 3 and baby of 6 months), is ordered into Swanscombe Workhouse with her 3 youngest children, Elizabeth and Mary to enter Bexley Workhouse.

24 September 1836

15 iron bedsteads at Eynsford Workhouse were purchased for Bexley Workhouse to use.

24 December 1836

Christmas dinner order - roasting beef, suet, raisins, currants, allspice, ginger, ale and lemon peel.

Highway matters in Eynsford

6 June 1865

Mr Kemp had just built Saddlers' Hall, but had placed the entrance post and gate within 10 feet of the centre of the road. He was required to remove these, but did not so it was decided to take proceedings against him.

2 January 1866

The highways surveyor had watched the gate which was opened for a few minutes on Sunday 17 December.

6 February 1866

Mr Kemp had altered the hinges of the gate so it did not open out onto the road. He pointed out to the Highways Board that Sir Percival Dyke had a gate against which there had been a similar complaint, and that there were two gates in Sparepenny Lane similarly.

3 April 1866

The Board accepted that Mr Kemp's gates had been altered properly and were now satisfactory.

5 November 1867

Mr Gibson was in the habit of allowing carts and other vehicles to stand in the road opposite his workshops which was very objectionable and dangerous the place being very narrow.

5 June 1877

The Rural Sanitary Authority complained of the smelly drain near Mr Gibson's show room, which was caused by non-surface water from Mr Pocock's slaughter house.

Result - a trap was placed at the opening of the drain at Pocock's (now Norman's Butcher Shop). (KHLC RD/Da/Am/1/1-3)

The eventful marriage of Mabel Jarvis and Charles Martin Hilder of Farningham

The couple married in Farningham on 20 November 1894 - she the daughter of an undertaker from Darent, he the son of a prosperous draper, Edward Martin Hilder, and Emily (nee Cant). Charles Hilder was 11 years older than his wife and had worked his way up to become a stock broker at the Stock Exchange. Their son, Edward Charles, was born in Farningham in 1895, after which the family moved to Sevenoaks. The marriage did not work out, and in 1904 the couple were divorced, Mabel having had an affair with Chester Silverlock.

Charles Hilder settled a sum of £250 on Mabel while she remained unmarried. However, she went on to live with Chester and to have his child, although before the birth the couple were unhappy and had agreed to separate. Chester sailed to Australia as a prospector, returning 6 years later to Mabel. The pair were again parted during the 1st World War when Chester served in France, but returned wounded to Mabel in 1919. They remained together until his death in 1953. Meantime, Charles Hilder remarried in 1905 and lived happily with his second wife, Kate Mary (Payne) until his death in 1946 at the age of 86.

(by Walter Eves, North West Family History Society Journal, September 2016, pp.105-108)

1930s Memories of Eynsford by Roy Warman

I have recently been listening to Roy's boyhood memories. Roy was born in 1929 and was brought up in Crockenhill. Most of his memories were of Crockenhill, but he had happy memories of walking to Eynsford to go swimming in the Darent. Apparently the river was swimmable at the bend to the north of the bridge near the Roman villa - a stretch known as The Rushes. On one occasion in the late 1930s, Roy noticed some men digging a small trench, 2-foot-wide and 6-foot-long, in the bank alongside Lullingstone Lane opposite the bridge. When he asked what the men were doing they

told him they were archaeologists. This must have been an exploratory dig for the Lullingstone Roman Villa, with further work interrupted by the declaration of war.

Lullingstone station - The one that never was and the one that was but never opened!

Gerry Nichols has written an article about the station built on the main line in the late 1930s, and the proposed one on a branch line off the station to serve a new London airport. The article contains some reproductions of the plans for the branch line, the Lullingstone station buildings and site plan. Things moved during the war - Heathrow was developed as the new London airport, and the expansion of London was halted by the Green Belt scheduled by the Greater London plan of 1947. Eventually it was decided to demolish the station at the cost of £3,670. Among the arguments for the station's removal was that 'For some time past damage and losses have occurred as a result of trespassing, and recently it has become more prevalent, a quantity of useful material having been stolen. The Police advise that it is practically impossible to keep people away and the station in its present condition has a great attraction for children.' Demolition of Lullingstone station began on Monday 14 February 1955, and there are three clear photos of the work in progress.

(by Gerry Nichols, 'The Southern Way' issue 34, 2016, pp.91-95)

The Battle of Britain

I found the visit to the Kent Battle of Britain Museum thought-provoking - depressing (all those blighted or lost lives), yet uplifting (thinking of the gallantry) - and much more. Not having studied the combat itself closely, I had not realised that the Battle of Britain comprised three phases:

10 July - 7 August 1940 The Channel War (attacks on shipping and convoys)

12 August - 7 September All-out assault on RAF Fighter Command (bombing airfields and aircraft factories)

7 - 30 September 1940 The Blitz on London (Fight for the Skies - The Battle of Britain by RPG Collinson)

Family history enquiries

Booker/Pinson families - Trevor got in touch to see if the Booker lines that he was researching for a friend linked in with the enquiry Francis Booker m. Sarah Boniface. I could not find a link, but Trevor has kindly sent family trees to add to our Booker records. I could not help with the Pinson family - Charles Henry Pinson was born at 1 Aston Lodge, Ensor, in 1841. He later became a customs inspector. In 1863 his father, Thomas Pinson, was charged with embezzling £7 2s. 6d. from his employers, Messrs J & G May, of the Model Farm, Farningham. (Dover Express 7/11/1863)

Does anyone know of this farm, or the location of Aston Lodge?

Elliott/Burkin families - Ronald enquired about Robert Elliott b.1849 married in 1874 Mary Ann Burkin b.1851. I looked up census material for him.

Other enquiries

Scotney Castle painting by Bill Burcham - Kevin has now sent an image of this. In Bulletin 107 (2015) he enquired about Bill, who had been very active on FELHS Publications Committee, and was a talented amateur artist.

Film/Video of Farningham - Jeanne is the second person to enquire about this. She remembers being taken to Farningham Village Hall from Farningham School in the mid-1950s to watch this. Among other Farningham events, it showed her aunt's wedding at which she was a

bridesmaid aged 5/6 years old. Jeanne used to live in Oliver Crescent with her mother and grandparents (though she has not named them). Jeanne was married in Farningham Church, but now lives in Australia where she still feels homesick even though she has returned several times to see 'my little village.'

Please contact me if you have information about this film/video. It would be lovely to track it down.

ARCHIVE REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923)

FELHS Centre

Alison, Ann, Helen, Veronica and Vikki have now completed the complicated, but interesting task of sorting the photographic collection. The photos have not been catalogued individually because we know so little about many of them. Instead they have been grouped into categories: general views, by road, by people (individuals, families, groups), miscellaneous and so on. Eynsford, Farningham, Lullingstone and other places have all been grouped in this way. Also we have postcard size photos, A4 and oversized (os) photos. Vikki has entered the catalogue onto the computer, noting which sizes of each group we have so anyone looking for, say Riverside, will know to look in three places for the different sizes. It might seem complicated, but for the first time the collection is searchable, thanks to great team work.

The Centre will now be closed on Monday mornings until about March 2017.

I am pleased to report that Barry Smith has replaced the ball-cock in the toilet, which now has an almost noiseless flush! Thames Water has realised that the leak under our forecourt mentioned a couple of years ago was not properly repaired. The forecourt has been dug up again, and (hopefully) a proper job done.

A big thank-you to Gary Mullins for keeping the Farningham Scrapbook for several years. He has made sticking in and annotating the cuttings into an art form. Lynda Jarrett has kindly agreed to take over where Gary left off - many thanks to her too. Diana Beamish does a superb job with the Eynsford Scrapbook, and has also stuck in stray cuttings which have been found while cataloguing.

I put in a request for more help at the Centre in the last two Bulletins, but without success.

There is now a handwritten index for the Bulletins, but I would like it transferred onto a computer -

Request 1 - Can one or more people (the task can be split up) put the handwritten index onto a computer?

Request 2 - Nos. 1 & 2 of the Bulletin are missing. Has anyone got these? They can be copied.

Acquisitions

St. Martin's Church - large bound Book of Common Prayer published in 1896, with 'Eynsford Church' embossed on cover, and inside 'Presented by the Rev. John Barton M.A.' I do not know what his connection with the church was, perhaps he was a curate there.

English Heritage Curator of the South East Region - Kathryn approached FELHS offering two plans dated 1948 of the Roman Villa site at Manor House, Farningham. The plans were large and one was on fragile tracing paper. As conditions at our Centre were not suitable to accept these, I suggested they be offered to Kent

Archaeological Society, but asked for images of them for our collection, which have been received.

John King - Railway journal 'The Southern Way' issue 34, 2016, with article about Lullingstone station, (see above).

And finally.....

We wish you all a
Very Merry Christmas and Happy
New Year
See you in 2017



What's On 2017

Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society

9th January

The Woman's Land Army – Dr Ann Kneif

13th March

To Wilhelm with Love – Commemorating 100th Anniversary of
the Battle of the Somme – Steve Hookins

8 th May	The Incredible Shrinking Parish of Stone – Christoph Bull
10 th July	Old Dartford and District – Steve Moyle
11 th September	Queens Victoria – Anne Carter
13 th 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

6 th January	Twelfth Night – Scandals with Chris McCooey
17 th February	Life of Douglas Macmillan – Katherine Harding and Denise Baldwin
17 th March	The Plague Doctors of Kent – Alex Ferris
21 st April	Lullingstone The Rise and Dramatic fall of a Roman Villa – Rod Shelton

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

12 th January	Quiz Night – Photographic and general questions about Hextable
9 th February	Crockenhill in Pictures – Keith Whitmore
9 th March	Meet Mr Warden – Steve Hookins
13 th April	Edwardian Dartford – Chris Baker
11 th May	AGM followed by Swanley Working Men's Club – Sharon Mitchell
8 th June	Seaside Postcards – Alan Payne
13 th July	Evening Visit (tba)
10 th August	Sutton at Hone and District during WWI – Sarah Lewis
14 th September	Paddle Steamer Medway Queens – Mark Bathurst
12 th October	Kent in the age of Pocahontas 1580-1650 – Christoph Bull
9 th 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)

