

The Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

Founded 1985

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(Original Society founded 1985 Registered Charity no 1047562)

Bulletin No 109

March 2016

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will take place at Farningham Village Hall on Friday 20th May (doors open 7.30pm)

The Agenda will be as follows

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| 1 Welcome | 5 Setting of Subscriptions Level for 2016 |
| 2 Apologies for absence | 6 Election of Officers and Committee |
| 3 Minutes of last AGM/
Matters arising | 7 The Future of the Society |
| 4 Adoption of Accounts | 8 Any other business |

If you would like information about the History Society Committee please call Barbara Cannell for further information. Should you decide to put yourself forward for election to the committee nominations must be with the Chairman before the AGM commences on 20th May 2016

FELHS Committee – Barbara Cannell

Members of the FELHS Committee to date and the positions they hold

President	Wilf Duncombe
Chairman/Publications	Barbara Cannell
Secretary/Minutes/Archivist/Research/Website	Susan Pittman
Treasurer	Rick Clayton
Membership/Evening Meetings/Bulletin	Jan Wilkes
Committee Members with no designated position	Dee Baker
“ “ “ “ “	Veronica Sheppard
“ “ “ “ “	Alison Bridgeman

Every members of the FELHS Committee is important to the running of the Society. As you can appreciate we all have different talents. Dee and Veronica always take care of refreshments at evening meetings and buffets for special events as well as being there to support the Society at any outside events we may take part in. Alison last October successfully put on a small exhibition at the Castle Hotel and is in the process of planning a further two exhibitions for 2016. As you can see we are in need of new committee members who would be willing to take over some of the positions ie Secretary, Minutes Secretary, Membership

Susan took on the position of Secretary and Minutes Secretary and Minutes Secretary in addition to all the work she does with enquiries via the website and general enquiries which sometimes include research either from our archives from other sources. With the help of Veronica, Alison and a few willing volunteers Susan has catalogues the documents and artifacts in the archive centre. She also represents FELHS at the Kent History Federation and Kent Archaeology Society Meetings.

Jan is also FELHS representative on the Eynsford Village Society committee and write our report for Trident each month.

I myself sometimes feel that my contribution is small compared to theirs, but at the end of the day we all work together to bring the villages the history society they deserve. FELHS celebrated 30 years in 2015, which is some great achievement but we do need help to continue.

Forthcoming Talks and Events

	Details	Where
2016		
20 th May	AGM	FVH
10/11 th June	Queen Elizabeth – A Celebration 11am to 4pm (Small Exhibition to be held in the Castle Hotel)	
1 st July	Somme 100 – A Concert to Remember from 5pm (Outdoor event at Lullingstone Castle, details will follow)	
7 th Sept	Trip to the Kent Battle of Britain Museum and Battle of Britain Monument at Capel le Ferne (full details of the day will follow)	
23 rd Sept	World War One poets – Bob and Fern Ogley	FVH
11 th Nov	The Crystal Palace Story 1854-1936	EVH

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)

(A Personal View)

Time waits for no man so the saying goes, but I'm sure sometimes we would all wish it might slow down just a little.

I cannot believe that I have been FELHS Chairman for 14 years. During those years the Society has celebrated local and world events, highlighting people and their achievements, whether good or bad, jubilees and disasters. I personally joined on behalf of FELHS other history societies to ring a little of our history to their displays and events. This I have enjoyed doing, often assisted by Jan, and would hope that this might continue but as I say, time marches on.

MEMBERSHIP

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

The Windmills of North West Kent and Kentish London

I bought this new book by Rob Cumming (Stenlake Publishing Ltd., £20) at a lecture he gave recently. Local interest lies in the windmill now owned by KCC at West Kingsdown (pp.48-51). This smock mill originally stood near the entrance to Chimhams Farm, close to the appropriately named 'Millfields'. It was shown on the 1819-1820 Ordnance Survey map, and was probably built earlier in the century. One owner, John Hodson, became bankrupt and was forced to sell the mill in 1831. It was then described as an excellent mill driving three sets of stone, with dressing and bolting machine, dwelling house, two cottages and 14 acres of land. The mill was taken down and moved to West Kingsdown in 1880. Today it is kept watertight and tarred by KCC, but its sweeps have been removed, leaving bare stocks.

Malting and Malthouses in Kent

This is another new book bought from the author, James Preston (Amberley Books, £14.99). It explains the malting process used to convert barley grain into malt for brewing ale and beer, now no longer practised in Kent. There were once hundreds of malthouses, but now those remaining have been converted into other uses. Half the book is taken up with coloured photographs with some text about each surviving malthouse that James has found in Kent. Both the malthouse in Eynsford (Riverside), an early malthouse dating from the C16th, and in Farningham are featured (pp.43, 45, 59, 60). There is no information about Eynsford malthouse, except reference to Kelly's Directory listing H. Bellingham as maltster in 1859 and 1867, but there is more detail about the C18th malthouse at Farningham, apparently making use of Jane Schoelkopf's article in FELHS publication no.32 (2002), but unfortunately without acknowledgement.

Eynsford Paper Mill one of the oldest

At the Kent Historic Buildings and Industrial Archaeology Conference held by KAS at Sheerness recently, Dr Maureen Green spoke about the history of Hayle Paper Mill, Maidstone. She mentioned 16 pre-1700 paper mills. An attempt was made by John Tate to set up a paper mill in the 1490s, but it failed after his death. Nearly a century was to pass before a German, Johann Spelman, was given licence to open a paper mill on the Darent at Dartford; in 1600 came a paper mill at Buckland near Dover; in 1648 Eynsford paper mill became the third viable paper mill to be set up in the county.

Bad fire at Button Street, 1825

The Rev. Benjamin Sandford (1785-1866) raised an immediate subscription for five labourers whose homes and belongings had been gutted by fire one Saturday. The vicar made no apology for sending out the appeal on the Sabbath as it was in the cause of charity and to help those in most urgent and pressing distress. The response was generous and Rev. Sandford wrote on the reverse side of the appeal, 'By 11 o'clock on Sunday morning the subscription amounted to £32.18.5!!! Well done, Farningham. Farningham for ever! Huzza!!

(KHLC P145/25/49)

Eynsford Parish Vestry Minutes 1850-1896

In the days before County and Parish Councils the Vestry ran not only the parish church but the local area. The book begins at about the time Crockenhill All Souls' Church was built, but the village still came under Eynsford Vestry for administrative purposes, and so it included representatives from both communities, who could be non-conformists as well as Anglicans. The Vestry appointed Poor Law Guardian, overseers, assessors (for money raised), and special constables (the following being eligible to serve in February 1851):

Eynsford

Peter Booker, carpenter
maker

Richard Miles, sawyer

Edward Barber, labourer

John Wellard, bricklayer
maker

Jasper Booker, labourer

William Childs, labourer

Robert Wellar(d), bricklayer

Crockenhill

Thomas Duffield, basket
maker

William Webb, grocer

William Bolton, labourer

Thomas Packman, basket
maker

William Staples, labourer

Thomas Bell, butcher

William Durling, labourer

27 July 1854

Resolved that a salary of £3.3.0d per annum be paid to Elvy Booker and also to C. Duffell of Crockenhill to perform the following duties viz to prevent all quarrelling and riotous conduct in the street, particularly on the Saturday and Sunday evenings to clear the roads and lanes of all tramps and trespassers, or any other duties required by law.

26 February 1857 - In consequence of the County Constabulary coming in force on 10 March 1857 The Vestry decided it was no longer necessary to pay constables.

18 April 1895 - Sidney Gibson said he had been church warden since 1886, but was a non-conformist, and that since Parish Councils (founded in 1894) had taken over most of the business he felt it only proper that a churchman be selected.

Bennett's Business Directory, 1921, Eynsford

Population 2,147

Dartford Parliamentary Division

Trade - The cultivation of fruit and hops

Arnold and Foster Paper Mills

Eynsford Iron Works

S.W. Gibson

Mrs Baker

General stores

Fred Barber

Boot maker & repairer

R.J. Bradshaw

Grocer

Ryall Gee

Grocer, draper, general & fancy dealer, Post
Office Tel. 29

Farningham

J.S. Holdich	Bread, biscuit maker, confectioner. Pure home-made bread
M. Jones	Draper & grocer
Stanley Munn	Grocer & draper, agent for the Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Co.
W. Pocock	Butcher, families waited upon for orders
L. Venton	Practical boot & shoe maker. Repairs promptly attended to
A.W. Harding	Castle Hotel, proprietor, wine and spirit merchant.
Good stabling and Inspection pit	cyclist accommodation. Garage.
H. Brice	Five Bells, proprietor, ales, wines and spirits of best quality.
Good	stabling. Established 1847
H. Millbourn	Malt Shovel Inn
-	Plough Inn, Waterside

Swanley in Farningham

It is now easily forgotten, or perhaps never known by newer residents, that the parish of Farningham once stretched further west as far as the Co-op petrol garage in Swanley, now well within the area of Swanley Town Council. In 1951 a referendum was held to ascertain the wishes of several hundred residents about whether or not to remain in Farningham. The individual papers show that most wanted to remain in Farningham, but the boundary was moved eastward anyway.

How Farningham fought suburbia in the 1950s

If Farningham residents had been less vocal or articulate developers might well have succeeded in overwhelming the parish with housing. A map of the late 1950s marked 24 sites of development proposals from 1951-1957. Five smaller sites were allowed, but the refusals included development off the High Street near South Hall; development along the east side of Sparepenny Lane from the village almost to opposite Eynsford Paper Mill; development beyond the Lion Hotel up to the roundabout; development on both sides of Eglantine Lane; development along the north side of the A20 past Charton Farm to Speedgate; and development along the east and west sides of the A225 to Calfstock Lane. Farningham Parish Council was robust in its defence of the parish and fought off all these proposals - how different the landscape would have looked otherwise.

Eynsford 2nd World War memorial

The old Church Guide mentioned the lectern with suitable plaque in St Martin's Church, which had been bought for a 2nd World War memorial. I was hoping to record this for the Imperial War Museum when the Church building works had been completed, but it is still inaccessible. However, I came across a letter of July 1946 from Mr Hillier to Eynsford Parish Council requesting, on behalf of Eynsford Toc H, that the memorial cross at the bottom of Bower Lane be so treated as to become a record also of the 2nd World War. He wrote that the Eynsford Branch of Toc H had

looked after the cross since 1931. The first work, with the approval of the Parish Council had been to remove the railings, enlarge and re-turf the plot, and install a new fence. The wych elm had been pollarded, the grass cut, flower beds looked after and the cross scrubbed from time to time, and during the 2nd World War Toc H had paid for armistice wreaths, Christmas garlands, and the general upkeep of the memorial.

Farningham 2nd World War memorial

It seems that it was not until 1956 that Farningham began to make arrangements for a memorial to those who had lost their lives in the war in Farningham. An appeal was made for friends and relatives to submit names. A decision was made to have a tablet in the church, rather than adding names to the 1914-1918 memorial cross in the churchyard. The inscription 'and 1939-1945' was, however, added to the plinth. An estimate for a brass tablet in the church came in at £30, but in the end a stone tablet was ordered from C. Vanston of Dartford for £18.10.0d, for which a faculty was obtained. It was at this time that the parochial church council resolved to vest the war memorial in the churchyard to Farningham Parish Council. The tablet in the church was unveiled on Sunday, 26 October 1957.

Thos.H. Saunders Paper Mill and the Millbourn family

I was contacted by Colin Cohen over FELHS samples of Thos. H. Saunders paper and found that they had been donated by Miriam Millbourn. Colin has been researching Thos. H. Saunders for 40 years so is a real expert. It transpired that the Millbourn family was closely linked to the company in managerial positions, going as far back as the C17th. I put Colin in touch with Carolyn in U.S.A. and all sorts of interesting information has been forthcoming, including notes on the History of the Malt Shovel dictated by Hillier Millbourn to his daughter, Miriam, in 1988. Carolyn has also been researching her Stockley / Millbourn roots and has recently sent some of the fruits of her research to add to FELHS archives. When I have looked closely at both Colin and Carolyn's research I will write more fully in the next Bulletin.

Enquiries

The website contact has recently been out of action and the contact link lost, so it is likely that some enquirers went away disappointed - for this I apologise. I have certainly had fewer queries to answer. The webmaster has now put in another contact on the Contact page so access should be restored.

St Botolph's Lullingstone - Elizabeth wanted to study the church for an M.A. in Historic Conservation. I put her in touch with the Rector so she might look at architectural reports and faculties, and with NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Society) whose members undertook a detailed study with report in 2002.

ARCHIVE REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923)

FELHS Centre

All the sorted material has been placed at the back of each catalogued folder in the filing cabinets, but the biographical material was so complicated that I have catalogued that section. We owe an immense thanks to the invaluable input of the working parties (comprising Helen, Vikki, Ann, and Alison), who have done a

splendid job sorting material at the Centre. They have also made a preliminary sort of the photographs, which will be continued after Easter. Hopefully, we will gain more volunteers and visitors then. The Society has bought a new electric fan fire so there are now two to heat the Centre up to a comfortable working temperature.

Other news

I have spent many hours sorting through the archives of three bodies - Crockenhill Parish Council, Farningham Parish Council and St. Martin's Church, Eynsford. This culminated in a visit to KHLC (Kent History and Library Centre) to deposit nine crates of documents for safe keeping. Documents of lesser importance have been added to FELHS collection, for which we are very grateful.

Acquisitions

From St Martin's Parochial Parish Council - Copies of Quinquennial and Building reports for the period 1961-2003; Visitors Book 1992-1998 for visitors to sign; Funeral service leaflets, 2008, for Margaret Hilling, Theresa Terry, Leonora Collins, Sheila Johnson; Visitors Book 2006, a photograph album of church activities, which includes about 20 large loose photos of knitted Nativity figures, Lights of Love Festival, Carol Singing at King's College Hospital; Set of bound Church magazines 1889-1899 with Church Monthly and Eynsford Church Monthly, and incomplete Eynsford Church Monthly 1900-1906.

From Farningham Parish Council - 1919 Tenancy agreement Mrs M.A.W. Howard and FPC plot of land for tank; 1921 Indenture Sir W. Hart Dyke to FPC, 2+acres of land off Wested Lane for allotments (map); 1929 Agreement FPC fidelity guarantee insurance policy to cover clerk, Charles Searle; 1934 Agreement South Suburban Gas Company and FPC public street lighting lamps; 1947 Agreement London Passenger Transport Board and FPC to erect noticeboard at Swanley Omnibus Garage at Swanley; 1950 Election poster as open letter from Miss Patricia Hornsby-Smith prospective Conservative candidate (no date, but in 1950 she won Chislehurst seat); 1951 About 400 referendum vote returns re west Farningham going into new Swanley parish (see above); 1952 Bound list of footpaths Part IV of Survey of Public Rights of Way - Dartford Rural District - includes Farningham, Eynsford and Lullingstone as well as other parishes; 1956 Letters re rumours of development at School Lane, rear of Horton Way; 1956 Letters re application TH/5/56/89 development off High Street near South Hall and large scale map showing site; 1957 Letters re application TH/5/56/284 development beyond Lion Hotel up to roundabout; Map with site marked and all other development proposals 1951-1957 (see above); 1956-1958 Folder (24 sheets) of correspondence re 2nd World War memorial (see above); 1958 Thick bundle of background notes, letters re organisation of 'This is Farningham' Exhibition; 1966 Footpath 171 diversion at Brands Hatch, West Kingsdown, with map; 1967 Booklet of items deposited in County Archives at Maidstone, catalogue revised 1977; 1977 5 duplicate photos of cattle screen and damage.

From Peter Jones - colour copy of a postcard showing the Plough from across the river.

From John Mullen - Arthur Mee's Letters to Boys, 1913.

From Jean Steggle - Original photo of builders in front of building, on back 'Erection of village school Eynsford about 1892'. In fact the date is more likely to be late 1894 when the new school at the bottom of Bower Lane was built - the opening date being

2 November 1894. (see 1998 FELHS publication no.26, A History of Eynsford's Elementary and Primary Schools, by Diana Beamish)

From Carolyn Parrish - Notes and photocopied photographs of the Stockley/ Millbourn families. Carolyn (nee Clarke) from California was brought up in Eynsford and would like anyone who knew her to make contact through the Society.

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

What's On 2016

Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society

14 th March	Creepy Kent – Neil Arnold
9 th May	Richard III – Toni Mount
13 th June	Our Thames from Dartford to Grain – Christoph Bull
11 th July	Restoring Reynolds Place – Laurence Hatfield
12 th September	Darent – Rod Shelton
14 th November	AGM

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

18 th March	Secrets of the East Bank Lighthouse – Doug Hilton
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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)

Hexstable

10 th March	Crystal Palace – Ian Bevan
14 th April	How Life Changed after 1914 – Anne Carter
12 th May	Victoria Cross – Glen Jones
9 th June	Rowhill Grange – Brian Wates
14 th July	Visit to Rowhill Grange
11 th August	Somme 100 to Wilhelm, with love – Steve Hookins
8 th September	A Sheltered Life – Mike Brownb
13 th October	Our Thames from Dartford to Grain – Christoph Bull

10th November Keming VAD Hospital a village's response to WWI – Janet
Easton
3rd December 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)