

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 111

September 2016

Forthcoming Talks and Events

Details	Where
2016	
7 th Sept Trip to the Kent Battle of Britain Museum and Battle of Britain Monument at Capel le Ferne	
23 rd Sept World War One poets – Bob and Fern Ogley	FVH
11 th Nov The Crystal Palace – Ian Bevan	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)

How time flies. Suddenly we are practically three quarters of the way through what was it seems just yesterday, the New Year.

Apart from the normal evening meetings, several interesting gatherings of members and friends have taken place. Both Jan and I have reported on some of these in previous bulletins.

Recently a personal enquiry gave me the task of looking through the bound copies of the Church Monthly which includes the Eynsford Parish Magazine (I was looking at magazines from 1889 to 1906) These are monthly reports from the current vicar, news of church groups and the notices of Baptisms, Marriages and Deaths. Finding names of families, I recognised was extremely interesting, but what was more interesting was the age at which some people had died. Some had lived to a great age whilst others sadly passed away having lived only a very short life, sometimes only days. In some instances, I could connect the date of the baptism to the date of death. It was also quite sad to see repeated tragedies occurring in certain families.

This made me realise how fortunate we are today in the medical care of women and very young babies and children that we all have. Reading several of these obituaries

for young children left we wondering if some were due to accidents or whether their deaths were related to a particular decease. There is certainly scope for a lot more research to find the answers to some of these questions.

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

New book - Arthur Mee by Keith Crawford

Keith, adjunct Professor of Education at Macquarie University, Sydney, has consulted our archives on several occasions in researching this biography of Arthur Mee, so I look forward to reading it.

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

Response to 'Letters from whom?'

Jill Hussey has replied to my request for information. I wonder whether her information jogs other memories:

February 1995 to Peter Gee from Susan and Philip, Red Pits Cottage, Wood Dalling, Norwich (Susan nee Groves from Eynsford Road when young, married Philip Philcox. Susan and Peter Gee were both Young Conservatives.)

Undated letter (13 pages of recollections of Eynsford) to Ethel Darby from Ruth and Doug?lunes, Kinlochbervie (Douglas and Ruth Andrews. Douglas played cricket for Eynsford, and Ruth worked at the Estate Agents. They moved to Scotland.)

Response to list of Fleet Marriages, 1736

Jean has been researching 3 families from Eynsford and Lullingstone from the late 1600s to the late 1800s. She did not name the families but sent a photocopy of a Fleet marriage of 1736 between John Booker and Elizabeth Darling, both from Eynsford.

Kelly's Directories

These trade directories followed The Post Office Directory which began in 1829 and was taken over by Frederic Kelly in about 1835, and were produced every year or so. The Directory listed all businesses and tradespeople in each city, town or village, as well as including the postal addresses of local gentry, landowners and prominent residents. Each place was described - its schools, facilities, population, places of worship and so on. Publication faded away after the 2nd World War. I have been photocopying the entries from various Directories for Crockenhill, Eynsford, Farningham and Lullingstone from volumes found in Bromley Local Studies and the Kent History and Library Centre, and they make fascinating reading. They are useful for finding out sequences of owners of certain shops, the rise and fall of businesses, and who lived in key properties, for example.

50th Anniversary of 1st Eynsford Scout Group, 1962

Among the cuttings that Carolyn sent was one from *The Reporter* of 2 November 1962 of the old Scouts reunion in Lullingstone Castle. Some of the original members of the troop were there - Sid Barber, George Eves, Harry Andrews. Tribute was paid to the memory of Hon. Sidney Hart Dyke who founded the troop. Her brother, Sir Oliver Hart Dyke, commented, 'My father, who was strictly Victorian in his outlook, thought the whole thing very irregular. But he ended by being secretly very proud of the result.'

Government Evacuation Scheme, April-August 1939

Eynsford Station Dispersal Point

The evacuation of London was planned to take place on 3 days.

It was compulsory for children and accompanying adults.

Number of evacuees allocated to Dartford Rural District 7,026

Number to be detained at Eynsford 2,598

Number of evacuees allocated to Parish -

Eynsford (village)	323	283 (unaccompanied children)	40
(teachers/helpers)			
(Crockenhill	145	112	38
Farningham	401	351	40
Lullingstone	29	27	2

Number of billets (houses)

Eynsford 146

Crockenhill 65

Farningham 184

Lullingstone 11

In the event this scheme was not activated.

(KHLC C/A9/2/8)

Flying bombs, Lullingstone, 1944

The ARP log books which we have in our collection record three flying bombs dropping on Lullingstone:

21 July 1944 - at .53 hours a flying bomb exploding in Lower Beechen Wood set trees on fire.

22 July 1944 - at 10.30 hours a flying bomb exploded in the air over Beechen Wood and struck a tree. It damaged buildings in the Shoreham area.

9 November 1944 - at 19.05 hours a flying bomb collided with a tree and exploded in Lullingstone Park. Communications were not affected, nor were there casualties, but damage was done to the castle, church, farm buildings and cottages.

(This would have been the flying bomb which badly damaged one side of the gatehouse.)

A mystery of the Second World War - German plane being brought down at Hulberry?

The reason I was looking at the ARP books was because, when interviewing a Crockenhill resident in his eighties, he recalled an incident for which I have found no substantiation. He told me that a German plane flew low over Hulberry and strafed a group of gypsies working in the fields there. The plane then crash landed and the gypsies, being first on the scene, took vengeance on the surviving Germans, so none were alive when the authorities arrived.

In every other way the resident's memories can be verified, so I do not want to dismiss this story out of hand, but am wondering whether it happened somewhere else and was transposed in his mind to Hulberry. Can anyone help?

The end of the West Kent Hunt, 1914, Farningham

The West Kent Hunt had died a natural death because of the difficulty of getting ground over which to hunt, but the West Kent Harriers were boarded at the Kennels,

Farningham. However, this presence too was to go because the Master, Captain Russell Johnstone, had decided to take the pack to Cornwall. The last event was the Puppy Walk Show - 3rd harrier was *Beatrice* walked by Mr Crowhurst (Farningham); 1st and 2nd beagles were walked by Mr Ellis and Mr Record of Farningham; and the special prize for condition was won by *Bloomer* walked by Mr Miller, Crockenhill. (St Mary Cray & Orpington District Times, 20 March 1914)

Elliott Terrace, Eynsford, in the 1890s

In sorting the photographs, we came across a photo of these four single storey cottages on a bank along Station Road. In 1895/96 the terrace was owned by H. Downard. At that time they were very old and dilapidated, timber built with two rooms. A lean-to had been added to the back making two additional small rooms and entirely of timber, laid on the ground without foundations, and with galvanised iron roofs. Some of the floor boards were just resting on the ground. The scullery floors were about ½ inch poor cement and sand spread on the ground and was breaking up. The owner was required to attend the next meeting of Dartford Rural District Council to show cause why the wooden erections should not be pulled down.

The terrace survived into the 1960s.

(Rural District Council of Dartford Minutes, KHLC RD/Da/Am/1/12)

Stench in Eynsford - and Stench and diphtheria in Farningham, 1896

The construction of the Darent Valley main sewer in the early 1880s, while supposedly a boon, brought stench to the villages and was linked by the Medical Officer of Health to a tragic outbreak of diphtheria in Farningham. When the sewer was constructed ventilation pipes were supposed to carry foul air up into the atmosphere to be dispersed. Unfortunately, these pipes were only 7-foot-high, and in some conditions the stench from them permeated through the villages. In 1896 Eynsford Parish Council complained of smells from foul air pipes near the Baptist Chapel, the National Schools, Mr Tidd's house, the Post Office, and the Plough Inn. In Farningham one located at the Wesleyan Chapel of Farningham Hill, and another at the Lion Hotel, gave off objectionable odours.

Much more serious was the outbreak of diphtheria in Farningham in the spring of 1896. Dr Smith, the Medical Officer of Health, observed that the large majority of cases occurred in the immediate neighbourhood of the Darent Valley sewer, and 'I am inclined to conclude there is some connection with regards the number and intensity of attacks in Farningham, Horton Kirby and Sutton-at-Hone.' The Inspector of Nuisances recommended that all the ventilation shafts should be 25 feet high and placed at greater distances from dwellings.

The death toll in Farningham was as follows, age was not always given: -

- Hugh Bates
- Maud Booker
- George Brett
- Carey Crowhurst (32)
- Grace Crowhurst
- Phillis Crowhurst (3)
- Thomas William Crowhurst
- Jeremiah Dunmall (40)
- Kathleen Dunmall (10)
- S. George Marchant (and two other unnamed family members)
- Stanley Mason (8)
- Clara Vaughan

(Rural District Council of Dartford Minutes, KHLC RD/Da/Am/1/2)

Charles Colyer of Farningham Mill gets the better of the Highways Board, 1864

The first meeting of the Highways Board for the District of Dartford was held in April 1863. A year later the Board received a complaint from Charles Colyer concerning the state of disrepair of the road from Ash and Fawkham to Beesfield (Donkey Lane). He said that it was a highway 'beyond the memory of any living person', but the Highways Board considered this to be insufficient evidence of it being a public highway, and therefore refused to repair it. Despite Charles Colyer saying that he could produce evidence to prove his point the Board did not 'deem it desirable to reopen the matter.' However, this attitude quickly changed when the clerk of the Highways Board received a summons to appear before the magistrates on 17 December to answer Charles Colyer's complaint. A hastily held meeting of the Board on 3 December acknowledged the statement of Farningham parish that the road was a highway, and it was ordered that it be repaired accordingly.

(Highways Board for the District of Dartford, KHLC RD/Da/Am/1/1)

A happy ending for Emma

Emma Cowland, aged about 3, had been put in Dartford Union Workhouse after the death of her mother, Tabitha Cowland, and a sibling in Eynsford Workhouse. Although wife of Samuel Cowland, Tabitha had for some time been living with James Cork(e), who was in fact Emma's father. In 1838 when Emma was about 11, her father James (in another document referred to as John) Cork(e) had his application to take her out of the Workhouse approved. By that time he had bettered himself and was no longer a labourer, but 'a decent man in appearance and represents himself to be a master shoemaker' residing at Plaxtol.

(Dartford Union Out Letter Book, KHLC RD/Da/C1/1)

Rights of way diversions at Lullingstone, 1784 & 1861

There were no details in a document of 1784 which was presented to the Quarter Sessions applying for the diversion of a footpath through Lullingstone courtyard. I wonder whether this was an extension of the track from Park Gate under the gatehouse and beyond, or a connection to the right of way which exists to access the church.

(KHLC Q/RH2/17)

A more complicated and controversial proposal of 1861 was to divert the road between Eynsford and Shoreham which passed Lullingstone Castle. The Eynsford end is Lullingstone Lane, and the Shoreham end exists from the entrance to Lullingstone Visitor Centre and past Castle Farm. To bypass Lullingstone Castle a new road was built from the entrance of the Visitors Centre up to the A225. There is a coloured map with the documents, which among other details shows the tollgate across Sparepenny Lane opposite the old toll house. The application was unsuccessfully opposed by seven business men, three from Farningham (T.G. Slaughter MA, George Bicknell, grocer, William Moore, miller) and four from Shoreham. They argued that the new highway would not be more convenient because it was longer, and much traffic currently free from tolls would have to pay because of the connection of the new road to the Dartford and Sevenoaks Turnpike Road. The expense of two new bridges would fall on the county ratepayers. Lastly, by closing the road through Lullingstone it would deny public access to Park Gate and beyond through the park.

(KHLC Q/RH2/388)

Family history enquiries

Owen / Prall families - Maureen was seeking help to locate her grandfather's Crockenhill home as in the 1911 Census. I gave her a little information on the family and told her that Newports Cottages had been demolished in the 1930s to make way for the present Newports.

Ballard / Mace - Martin was requesting information about William Ballard m. Mary Wells c.1732. I put him touch with two other family historians tracing the Ballard family, and with others tracing the Mace family.

Lawson - Dee's great grandfather George Lawson lived in a cabin, and then a shepherd's cottage, in Maplescombe in the 1880s and 1890s. She requested photos of Maplescombe Farm. She said that in the 1901 and 1911 censuses he was still living in one of the cottages, but was working as a stockman at West Yoke Farm not far from Fawkham.

Other enquiries

Lullingstone Roman Villa and Eynsford Castle - Rod has made a magnificent model of the former, and is now working on making a model for the latter. He has visited the Centre with his model of the villa and used information from the Centre for constructing both models.

Nuclear bunker at Eynsford Water Works - Keith came to the Centre to see what material we had on the Water Works and on Fort Farningham. When he had gone I found a photo showing the door into the 'food store' (as described when FELHS visited many year ago) - I guess that this door might have led into the bunker, although evidence that there was/is one there has not yet been forthcoming.

Woodlands, Knatts Valley - Martin is interested in this area because his grandfather, Rev. RR Milner, was vicar at Woodlands from 1929 to 1957. I referred him to FELHS Miscellany 2 with paper 'A boyhood in Knatts Valley in the 1940s' by Michael Oldfield, FELHS Miscellany 3 'Maplescombe Church' by Zena Bamping, and the book I mentioned recently 'Among Hills and Hazels' by Barbara Benedict, about Woodlands Holiday Camp.

ARCHIVE REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923)

FELHS Centre

Alison, Ann, Helen, Veronica and Vikki have been hard at work sorting the photographic collection and the results are beginning to show. I am grateful to them for continuing throughout April when I was in Alaska child-minding for my niece's children.

Water problems continue to crop up not externally this time, but water pressure to the toilet and basin. When the toilet is flushed the most awful wailing noise continues for minutes. Eynsford Cricket Club, beyond us and on the same pipe, is also experiencing difficulty when only a trickle comes out of the hose to water the cricket table. The Club is taking up the issue on its and our behalf with Thames Water.

I will repeat the plea which I wrote in the last Bulletin. Now the collections at the Centre have been better organised and items can be located I would like to form a team to help with the ongoing running of the Centre. Tasks which need not be too onerous or involve too much commitment might include cataloguing (computer skills required) but can be on an irregular basis, computer at Centre or could be done at home; filing; indexing the Bulletins; how we conserve the collection; regular opening up of the Centre any day, any time, at convenience of volunteer/s; finding relevant items for exhibitions/displays and copying/preparing material; checking the building and equipment.

THE CENTRE IS A VITAL RESOURCE AND HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED TO CONTINUE TO RUN IT.

Acquisitions

Helen Goldsworthy - Notes on Charton Chapel (authorship not given); Programme for 'Farningham Through the Ages Exhibition' for 1936 announcing the visit by the Duke of Kent.

Lee Mullins - Framed card 'Farningham Village Hall 2000 Celebrations'.

Carolyn Parrish - Photocopies and cuttings about the Stockley family.

Roy Warman - 2 books used by Court Lullingstone no.5582 Ancient Order of Foresters - Ceremonies for use at the funeral of a member, Sub-Chief Ranger's Duty in the Ceremony of Initiation.

and finally.....

As you all know World War I has featured strongly in the last couple of years, for me the culmination of this was the Somme 100 – A Concert to Remember. This was an amazing evening and I believe touched in some way everyone who attended. This was a community event in all senses of the word, with people giving their time and their talent to bring the audience a thought provoking and memorable evening.

Since restoring the photographs of the World War I servicemen in 2014, I have always wanted to put on a concert to honour, in particular the young men from our villages who died in the Battle of the Somme and we did it. My special thanks go to Michael Horwood who has supported FELHS in both projects, Gillian Gissing for helping me in so many ways and Barbara Cannell who helped me put together a relevant display for the occasion. All the profit from the concert went to the Royal British Legion and was an amazing £595.42.

We are continuing the World War I theme for our next evening meeting in September
The World War I poets presented by Bob and Fern Ogly.



Jan Wilkes (865122 email hisarc@btinternet.com)

What's On 2016

Horton Kirby & South Darent Local History Society

12th September Darent – Rod Shelton

14th November AGM

Meetings are held on Monday at the Village Hall, South Darent from 8pm. If you require further information, contact Barbara Cannell (01322 864253) (Remember your membership card)

Shoreham History Society

16th September Paper Making – Jean Stirk

21st October They dared to be Doctors – Toni Mount

18th November Woolwich Women at War – Steve Hookins

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

8th September A Sheltered Life – Mike Brown

13th 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)

AT LAST SUMMER IS HERE



