

# The Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

Founded 1985

*A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee*

No. 5620267 incorporated the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2005 Registered Charity 1113765



(Original Society founded 1985 Registered Charity no 1047562)

## Bulletin No 113

March 2017

### Annual General Meeting

The AGM will take place at Eynsford Village Hall on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May (doors open 7.30pm)

The Agenda will be as follows

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Welcome                                 | 5 Setting of subscriptions Level of 2017 |
| 2 Apologies for absence                   | 6 Election of Officers and Committee     |
| 3 Minutes of last AGM/<br>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 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017

### Forthcoming Talks and Events

Date	Details	Where
19 <sup>th</sup> May	AGM - Transportation in our villages, road, rail and air (display of items from the FELHS collection) EVH	EVH
8 <sup>th</sup> July	Eynsford Shops Exhibition – display of photographs and memorabilia related to local shops over the years (11am – 4pm The Library, Castle Hotel, Eynsford)	
6 <sup>th</sup> September	Visit to Gravesend/Tilbury Fort (full details to follow)	
22 <sup>nd</sup> September	Charles Darwin – Toni Mount	EVH
30 <sup>th</sup> September	Elliott Downs Till Remembered – A display of photographs and information relating to the life of Elliott Downs Till who died 100 years ago, on 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1917 (11am – 4pm The Library, Castle Hotel, Eynsford)	
17 <sup>th</sup> 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)**

Welcome to the first Bulletin for 2017 I'm sure there will be items of interest that might be new to you or some that you might have more information on that could be added to the subject. Please let us know.

Jan, editor of the Bulletin, keeps you informed with reports from myself and Susan plus events around the villages. If you have anything that you think might be of interest to members that could be included in a future Bulletin discuss it with her. She does a marvellous job and is to be congratulated.

Many of you will have found a colourful and informative flyer on your door mat or in your post box which I hope you have also found interesting.

These last few years have been difficult for the committee to function as efficiently as I would have liked due to falling numbers, not only of members but of members willing to become committee members.

A committee must have a chairman, a secretary and a treasurer but there are also positions within any club or society that need members to be responsible for other tasks. Membership secretary is a vital role, without one a group can't function, likewise someone to arrange evening meetings, speakers and venues, again another vital role. If you can't hold meetings that are open to the public because you haven't people to arrange then why have a club or society. Having committee members or even non-committee members (volunteers) with no designated task makes running a society more of a pleasure than the problem it can sometimes become.

Archivist, Susan Pittman, has now a team of helpers who have worked with her to catalogue what had been a large collection of items that had accumulated over the years. This means that any new donations or acquisitions can be more quickly catalogued and found 'homes' in cupboards and cabinets in the archive centre.

You will see elsewhere in the Bulletin notices of meetings and events already planned for this year. There is a lot more that could be organised **IF** we had those extra volunteers. Farningham, Eynsford and Crockenhill have so much history just waiting to be retold if only members would come forward to spend a little time to help us.

Please come along to our AGM and talk to us about any suggestions or ideas you might have and help us to make 2017 a year in which FELHS remembers people and events from yesteryear.

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL (Jan Wilkes 01322 865122 hisarc@btinternet.com)**

Thank you to those who have renewed their membership for 2017 and a gentle nudge to those who have not. If for any reason, you do not wish to be a member of the society in the future please let me know so I can adjust our records accordingly.

### **RESEARCH REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923)([www.felhs.org.uk](http://www.felhs.org.uk))**

#### **New book 'Internet Sites for Local Historians'**

This is published by the British Association for Local History (BALH) to which FELHS is affiliated, and costs £10. One section lists subject interests and refers the reader to the main section which lists sites in alphabetical order. To select at random - there are 12 sites of interest for the First World War, and four for public houses.

#### **Conference on Names - Kent Places and People**

This conference was jointly organised by the Kent Archaeological Society and Canterbury Christ Church University. As FELHS is affiliated to the KAS

anyone is entitled to attend its events. Robsacks is not an unusual name and refers to poor land - meaning Little Gain. The earliest surnames were adopted by the higher class to ensure correct inheritance. By 1350 most people had surnames in southern England. In the C14th Poll Tax returns 5039 surnames appeared, but by 1620 there were 11,708. Some surnames deriving from personal names are not obvious:

Coast, Coste, Costain are from Constantine  
Abnett from Abbe  
Philpott from Philip  
Tomkin from pet name for Thomas  
Rigden from Rick short for Richard and dun (hill)

#### **KAS Conference 'Villas in the Roman Landscape'**

Recent research has centred on building up an overview of villas in Kent from the piecemeal discoveries of the past. Very few sites have been properly analysed, some excavations are old, incomplete, or poorly recorded. Moreover, attributing date can be problematic if the whole site has not been excavated. Therefore, there is uncertainty about how many villas were operating at the same time. No one agrees about the number of villas along the river Darent, which has changed its course and contracted since Roman times, but which then was an important grain supply route. Some sites thought to be villas are now defined as buildings, some could be barns or bathhouses without relating to residences. Sites at which a villa has not been proven are at Horton Kirby (remains thought to be a granary), Eynsford (corn drying oven, no recognisable villa), Shoreham (bathhouse, no recognisable villa), and Kemsing (bathhouse, no villa yet found).

#### **Elizabethan Court of Star Chamber Project**

The Court of Star Chamber cases make for fascinating reading, but have been inadequately indexed. The University of Houston, U.S.A., is now indexing them under county and later under people and case type. To access the index so far go to: [www.uh.edu/waalt/index.php/Elizabethan\\_Star\\_Chamber\\_Project](http://www.uh.edu/waalt/index.php/Elizabethan_Star_Chamber_Project)

#### **Jane Austen used paper from Eynsford Paper Mill**

Peter Jones has referred me to various websites which mention Eynsford Paper Mill or its products. Particularly interesting was information from [www.themorgan.org](http://www.themorgan.org) - website of The Morgan Library and Museum, New York. It is thought that Jane Austen wrote over 3000 letters of which 51 of the 160 that have survived are to be found in the Morgan Library. Analysis of the paper and water marks show that Jane purchased some woven paper c.1796 from Floyd & Company of Eynsford Paper Mill.

#### **Francis Booker, early cricketer from Eynsford**

Bulletin 93 of 2012 mentioned the cricketer, Francis Booker, innkeeper of The Soho, Eynsford. George has picked this up and referred me to a book of 1862, 'Scores and Biographies' Volume 1, which mentioned that Francis Booker's nephew was still resident in Eynsford in 1860. George has a little more biographical information - mainly cricket related - which he is willing to pass on to anyone interested.

### **From Dartford Workhouse Minutes, 1837-1838**

6 yards for flannel for a suit for Thomas Jordan of Farningham.

The Medical Officer of Health reported that a wretched woman has long infested the neighbourhood of Farningham and was lying in a stable of Charton Farm and ought to be removed having received medical treatment.

The relief given to Emma Best, wife of George Best of Eynsford, imprisoned for poaching, should be regarded as a loan to her husband.

Roast beef and plum pudding was to be served on Coronation Day (Queen Victoria).

Desertions - Loft, husband of Jane, of Eynsford; Robert Cooper, husband of Mary, of Lullingstone; Jane Edlow of Farningham leaving her children.

Union Divisions reduced from 3 to 2: One Division covered Farningham (701 population) Eynsford (1277 with Crockenhill), Lullingstone (40), with Stone, Darent, Sutton-at-Hone, Swanscombe, Ash next Ridley, Fawkham, Hartley, Horton Kirby, Kingsdown, Longfield, Ridley, and Southfleet = 30840 acres with 8404 people. The other Division contained Dartford and parishes to its west, now SE London.

(KHLC G/Da/AM1 & 2 Dartford Union Minutes)

### **Farningham highway complaints 1870-1875**

Mr Everest was in the habit of leaving carts near his workshops by the side of the road, rendering it dangerous for passengers.

Mr Woolley was constantly in the habit of mixing mortar on the sides of the highways.

The steps to The Lion appeared to project too much upon the footpath.

Mr Mandy was to be asked to remove soil caused by ploughing from the highway.

(KHLC RD/Da/Am/1/2 Highways Board for Dartford District Minutes 1870-1875)

### **'The Australian Nightingale'**

William Crossley, the second son of John and Ann Crossley, born in Eynsford in 1778, had a granddaughter, Ada Jemima Crossley (1871-1929) who became a famous opera singer. Her biography can be found in the Australian Dictionary of Biography

([abd.anu.edu.au/biography/crossley-da-jemima-5829](http://abd.anu.edu.au/biography/crossley-da-jemima-5829)). Her parents had emigrated to Australia, but during a successful operatic career, she met and married in London Dr Francis Muecke and spent the rest of her life in England.

### **Memories of Peter Warlock and nudism**

Two items deposited by Brian Hussey (see below) refer to Peter Warlock's propensity to go around naked. Doris Edwards was playing 'tag' with friends in the street and heard loud piano music coming from the front room of Munn's Cottage. They peeped through the window to see Peter Warlock at the piano, stark naked and very drunk. Joe Munn related how Peter Warlock would ride on his Scott motorbike naked through the village streets. This motorbike was later taken by Joe's father in lieu of debt.

### **Question in Parliament about the closure of Eynsford Paper Mill, 1952**

Sir Waldron Smithers MP asked the Minister of Labour if he was aware that Messrs. Spicer's Paper Mill at Eynsford, which had been running for 300 years, was about to close putting many people out of work, so what steps was the

Minister taking to find alternative work for these people. Sir William Monckton replied that the unemployed could find assistance at the employment exchange.

### **Family history enquiries**

**Crossley family** - Charles requested help with tracking John Crossley (1741-1820). John was a miller married to Ann (nee Gardiner), who bore 13 children in Eynsford between 1776-1799. The couple were buried in St. Martin's churchyard and their gravestone survives. I explained what mills were around the area, and that in 1780 Crossley only had a joint tenancy, so it likely that he was employed by a master miller, rather than running a mill in his own right. This later appeared to be more likely to be the case because Charles found that in 1779 John and his wife, Ann, and 2-year-old son, John, were removed from Ensor to get poor relief from the parish of John's birth. (See The Australian Nightingale above.) I gave Charles the details of Jim Crossley, who had contacted FELHS as long ago as 1997. Charles would be grateful for any other Crossley contacts.

**Elliott/Burkin families** - Brian made contact after the last Bulletin as he also has Elliott/Burkin surnames in his family. I put Brian in touch with Ronald who lives only a few houses away from Brian in Swanley. It would appear that Brian's paternal grandmother, Esther Louisa Burkin, born 1879, also came from Cudham, where Ronald's ancestor Robert Elliott married Mary Ann Burkin in 1874.

**Roper family of Farningham** - Matt enquired after C19th Ropers, several of whom (William, Robert, Francis) were born in Farningham, yet whose parents (William and Eliza) were born and worked in Devon. I found a Roper family in the 1871 Census, all born in Suffolk! I was otherwise unable to explain why William and Eliza's children were born in Farningham. I asked for more information on Eliza's family or dates of birth of their children, but have had no reply.

### **Other enquiries**

**Lusitania Commemorative medal** - Iris brought this to the last meeting, but had no paperwork to explain its background. By coincidence I have a similar medal in its box with description so I was able to copy this information for her. The medallion is rather gruesome since it was issued by Germany to glorify the sinking by the German navy of the passenger liner, The Lusitania, on 5 May 1915, with the loss of 1,198 lives.

**German air raids on Britain in the 1st World War** - Manuel, a post graduate of the Universidad de Costa Rica, requested permission to quote figures in the section on air raid attacks on London which appears on FELHS website under the section 1WW, which contains copies of the displays of 'Our Villages in the First World War' Exhibition. I pointed him to the origin of the statistics in the official history 'The War in the Air' by HA Jones and Sir Walter Raleigh.

**Farningham Church of England School** - William was a pupil there, leaving in 1956, and he wanted information as background to his own biography. I sent him information about the Managers' Minutes, an article about the war years under Miss Regan (Trident 1998), and a short piece by Linda Bull (nee Scudder) as a pupil in the 1950s.

**Saddlers Hall** - Geoff wanted information about this. There is some information at the Centre, and a set of photos of its demolition.

**Eynsford Paper Mill records** - Some time ago I mentioned the visit of Peter Bower, an expert in hand-made paper, to the Centre. He had picked up from the Bulletin that the collection contained a notebook of paper recipes, which he said was one of the most important objects in the collection. He has now written an account of the visit in The Quarterly 96, September 2015, of the British Association of Paper Historians.

Unfortunately, he was unable to shed much light on the recipes, which he said were cryptic, with the meaning of some entries impossible to interpret.

## **ARCHIVE REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923)**

### **FELHS Centre**

The Centre is now closed on Monday mornings until the beginning of March. My optimism in the last Bulletin was premature concerning the water supply at the Centre. The supply again failed and Thames Water came to dig up the forecourt for the third time! The pipe to the Centre had rotted and was replaced. After further investigations at the river end of the track a faulty pressure gauge was discovered - now water supply and pressure have been restored.

Following my two requests re the Bulletin, I am pleased to report responses to both - Our chairman, Barbara Cannell, provided copies of Bulletins 1 and 2 to complete the run at the Centre.

Martin Gee has offered to help with the Bulletin index, which I have now digitised, but he will check. He will also digitise the handwritten index of Trident

### **Acquisitions**

**Diana Beamish** - Scrapbook of newspaper cuttings about Eynsford 2014.

**Brenda Burcham** - Fieldwork in Local History by WG Hoskins; postcard (Salmon) St Botolph's Church; funeral service, letter from Sevenoaks DC re Lt. Oliver Augustin, 2011; FELHS visit to Eynsford Water Works, 1998; Great Blitzing Day 1940 by Jim Dillon re Fl. Ltn. James Paterson; The Archaeology of the Bromley Area by Pat Crozier and Brian Philp; Notes on Eynsford Listed Buildings, dead servicemen of Eynsford 1939-1945; Dartford Gunpowder Mills by Brian Philp.

**Barbara Cannell** - Copies of Bulletins 1 & 2, in response to my appeal in last Bulletin.

**Brian Hussey** - Pamphlet 'Eynsford Baptist Church', early history pre-demolition of old chapel for present building; The Story of Hand Made Paper, 1924; programme Mr Woolley's Farewell Concert, Eynsford Council School, 1914; Invoice 1887 from H. Hearn for funeral of Mrs Mary Ann Stradwick; Arnold (Eynsford Paper Mill) sample book; pieces of Eynsford handmade paper; 3 large annotated photographs inside Eynsford Paper Mill c.1920; various photocopied articles - Eynsford (CPRE 1990) by Diane Morris, Munn's grocers (undated), Peter Warlock's death mystery, Peter Warlock's last revolt, Arbor Day 1905 from The Times, Kent Rail (Lullingstone Station); Leslie Hussey's notes about Eynsford; Doris Edward's notes about Peter Warlock.

**Marjorie Robinson** - Items related to Eynsfest June 2012.

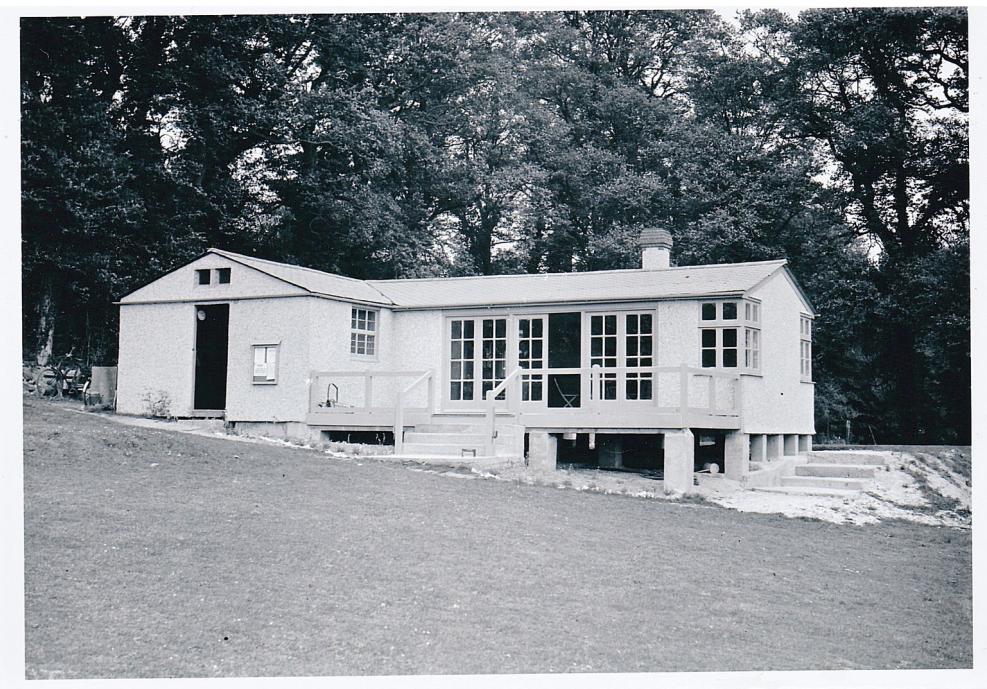
**Elaine Ruby** - A copy of The Austin Lodge Valley: An appreciation. One section which I found particularly interesting gave the field names and boundaries, 1842, 1967, and present.

**Vikki Sanderson** - Photocopies of deeds and maps related to The Croft, Farningham, including a sales brochure c.1937.

**Jan Wilkes** - The Tramways of Kent by GE Baddeley.

**and finally .....**

Our first evening meeting of the year was about Pocohontas (born about 1596 and named Amonute. Pocohontas was a nickname which means ‘playful one’ She died in Gravesend in March 1617) and I think even after the interesting talk given by Christoph Bull we are not a lot wiser about the life and death of this native American, her death is really shrouded in mystery and perhaps always will be. Having said that sometimes things come to light. I am not the biggest fan of social media, but for history information and photographs it can be brilliant. The other week someone posted about Nine Hole Wood, the golf course which was located at the Farningham end of Spare Penny Lane and was there a club house. This sent me on a mission and finally after much searching I found a photograph on Ebay which I purchased and then could post on the Farningham & Eynsford Massive Facebook. The club house was pulled down at the beginning of World War 2 to make way for a Barrage Balloon and the golf course turned over the agricultural land.



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



# What's On 2017

## Horton Kirby & South Darent Local History Society

8 <sup>th</sup> May	The Incredible Shrinking Parish of Stone – Christoph Bull
10 <sup>th</sup> July	Old Dartford and District – Terry Moyle
11 <sup>th</sup> September	Queens Victoria – Anne Carter
13 <sup>th</sup> November	AGM and short talk by Malcolm Scott followed by Cheese and Wine.

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

17 <sup>th</sup> March	The Plague Doctors of Kent – Alex Ferris
21 <sup>st</sup> 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

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

