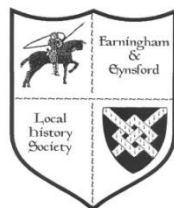


Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

(Original Society founded 1985 Registered Charity no 1047562)

A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee

No. 5620267 incorporated 11th November 2005 Registered Charity 1113765



Bulletin No. 135*

Spring 2024

* Apologies that the last couple of Bulletins were wrongly numbered. Above is correct, but before you might have ended up with two Bulletins of the same number, and one number not used at all!

Friday 17 May

Farningham VH

7.30 pm for 8.00 pm

FELHS AGM (formal notices will be sent round at least 21 days before the meeting)

After the AGM, we plan to show a film by FELHS of an exhibition it held in 1988. It also highlights a visit to Franks, and some of Farningham's historic buildings. As usual there will be light refreshments and a display of items from FELHS collection on hand.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL REMINDER

Current members do not need to fill out a form unless contact details have changed - then please let us know.

£10 (individual) / **£15** (family) membership

Life Membership: £100 (individual) / **£150** (a couple)

You can pay

- ✦ by cheque payable to **Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society** (do not use initials)
- ✦ by BACS (sort code 20 25 42 account 13275752)
- ✦ by standing order (sort code 20 25 42 account 13275752)

Please let **Mrs Alison Marshall**, Membership Secretary, 83 Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown, TN15 6HQ, Kent (alisondukes@btinternet.com) know that you have paid remotely or send her your cheque.

At the same time please let us know if you wish us to collect Gift Aid for this year and for future years.

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 on items that you would like to see on the page please email us at info@felhs.org.uk

FELHS WEBSITE www.felhs.org.uk -

Any queries to archives@felhs.org.uk

2024 PROGRAMME

**This programme can also be found on the Diary page of the website.
The dates are all Fridays. Doors open 7.30 pm for talks at 8.00 pm. The evening includes refreshments and a display of items from FELHS collection.**

22 March Eynsford VH

John Laidlow The Manse - A House through Time

Since moving into The Manse at Eynsford member John has been researching the house and its occupants. Built in 1844, The Manse was the Baptist school and minister's residence for Eynsford and Farningham. It later served as a showroom for farm equipment, experienced war tragedies and war heroes, hosted some of Britain's earliest diesel car tests and much more...

19 April Farningham VH

Dr Anne Sassin Archaeological Excavations in Lullingstone Castle garden

A return visit from Anne, who will give an update on the archaeological excavations in the garden at Lullingstone Castle. There have been some exciting finds dating occupation back to Norman times, as well as evidence which provides closer insight into the demolition of its moat.

17 May Farningham VH

FELHS AGM See box on first page

20 September Eynsford VH

Christoph Bull Dickens in Kent

Christoph's talk is about Charles Dickens in Kent, a county the author knew well from boyhood to old age.

18 October Farningham VH

Diana Beamish Education in Eynsford and Farningham in the past

Member Diana will talk about education in Farningham and Eynsford from its early roots to the first 50 years of Anthony Roper Primary School.

15 November Eynsford VH

Film of Eynsford - Special Event

We hope to show a film from our collection. This will be a ticketed event with refreshments to raise money for the new Village Hall at Eynsford.



SOCIETY NEWS

It is sad to report the deaths of two long-standing members, both from Farningham.

Stella Baggaley (c.1932-2023): Stella served on FELHS Committee for many years and was a valued Membership Secretary. She also helped to distribute the Bulletin in the years that it was printed to be delivered by hand. She was an experienced family historian and researched her own family history, as well as helping others with their family history queries. She edited the Journal of North West Kent Family History Society from 1996 to 2003. She moved with her husband, Philip, from Farningham into sheltered accommodation in Hextable. She was 91 at her death on 25 November, and Philip had predeceased her by a few months.

Hilary Harding (1929-2023): Hilary died on 15 December aged 94. In later years, she had moved from Farningham to Bath to live near her son, Giles. Hilary had an active mind and loved reading - both assets when she undertook extensive research into the history of Farningham, which resulted in the masterly book, *Farningham and its Mill*, published locally by Wadard Books in 2005. This has become the number-one reference book for the village.

MORE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE NEEDED FOR SUCCESSION. PLEASE COME FORWARD AND SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP.

Samuel Palmer: Visionary Landscapes Exhibition

An exhibition exploring the life and work of Samuel Palmer's Shoreham Years, with responses from artists living near Shoreham or influenced by Palmer's work, has been created by the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme, part of Kent Downs National Landscape.

The exhibition is being held at both the **Kaleidoscope Gallery in Sevenoaks from 12th January to 12th March 2024** and at the **Sir Peter Blake Gallery in Dartford from 16th March to 16th May 2024**.

RESEARCH REPORT

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

New website for entries from Births and Deaths Registers in England and Wales

The General Register Office has launched a new online view service giving instant access to images of historic entries from birth and death registers for England and Wales (births 1837-1922, deaths 1837-1887). Sites such as Ancestry or Find My Past are paid subscription sites. Go to www.gro.gov.uk

Websites - here today, gone tomorrow - Warning!

The Local Historian Journal of the British Association for Local History Volume 53 no. 4, November 2023, contains an important article by Peter Burnhill. He points out that websites are not always maintained, and can be altered by additions or amendments later. He advises:

- When citing a website note the date and time it was viewed.
- If you think you might want to refer back to it make sure to archive it.
- Include full link i.e. <https://> etc. so references can still be followed up.

Clactonian flints from Park House area, Bower Lane

These are crude, archaic flint tools dating from the interglacial period about 400,000 years ago. Between 1946-1948 a group of 14 was found near Park House and are now in the Kent Archaeological Society's collection. The flints were found on the high ground where the underlying geology is clay-with-flints, and are similar to those found in the famous Barnfield Pit at Swanscombe, and were used as chopping tools and scrapers. (KAS Newsletter Winter 2023)

Maplescombe Chapel

Sadly, this is on the 'at risk' register of Listed Buildings compiled by Historic England. This Grade II scheduled monument is 'generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems'. It is 'declining' being vulnerable to scrub and tree growth. It is in private ownership.



Ruins of Saxon Church at Maplescombe, 1807, watercolour by H. Petrie.
(KAS website)

The burial of strangers in Farningham 1825-1833

These years were particularly harsh with widespread destitution, which led to people travelling around the country in search of food and shelter. Farningham, being on a main road, experienced waves of such desperate people. The Burial Register recorded nine of them found dead or dying, eight of whom remained unidentified. After the Poor Law Act of 1834 a system of centralised workhouses was established, and all the poor who sought shelter were given it. Until then parishes had their own small workhouses, Dartford Workhouse being established in 1729. After 1836 Dartford workhouse was one of a few workhouses which was retained, while smaller workhouses, such as that in Eynsford in Bower Lane, were sold off. In 1868 a huge workhouse complex was built in Dartford to cover the needs of the whole Union district. This later became West Hill Hospital.

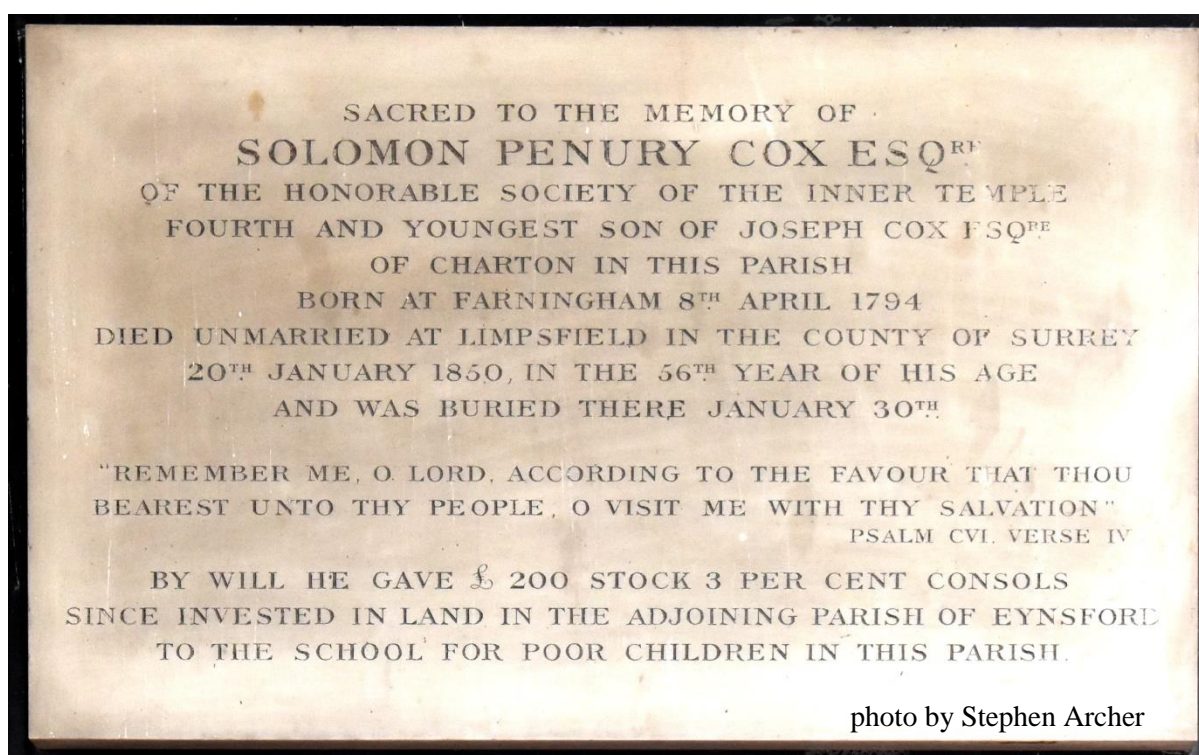
14 August 1825	- Male by visitation of God by Coroner's inquest
4 October 1826	- Stranger travelling through, suddenly of apoplexy, aged about 43 years (later found to be Samuel Gibbs a Chelsea out-pensioner*)
20 September 1827	- Stranger travelling through
24 February 1828	- Female stranger travelling through
30 September 1832	- Stranger travelling through
2 October 1832	- Stranger travelling through
3 October 1832	- Stranger travelling through
5 October 1832	- Stranger travelling through
3 September 1833	- Male stranger travelling through. Coroner's inquest

* Not an inmate in Chelsea Royal Hospital for army veterans, but receiving an army pension from that organisation.

(DVD P145-1-20 Burials 1813-1873 (DVD ORB 63 North West Kent Family History Society -available from its website. Copy in FELHS collection)

Memorial Tablet to Solomon Penury Cox in Farningham Church

Next time you glance at this tablet on the wall inside the church to the right of the porch entrance, spare a thought for Thomas Manning, the head of the stonemasons' Studio in York Terrace Road, Regents Park, who was contracted to provide the memorial. He was torn between his appointment on the Wednesday to erect the memorial at Limpsfield, where Solomon had lived and died, and the opportunity to meet Queen Victoria at the Great Exhibition, where he was an exhibitor. There seems to have been a mistake on the original tablet which had to be remedied. This delayed completion of the job, so that it missed the waggon by one hour. 'I am finding it difficult (sic) to send the tablet by Friday's waggon. Proposed sending it to Limpsfield by Mr Constables waggon on Tuesday night it will arrive on Wednesday of course but on that day I expect to attend with other exhibitors at the Exhibition to meet Her Majesty, and so I cannot meet you at Limpsfield 'till Thursday morning.' This might mean that the local stonemason who was going to help erect the tablet would not be there, so he would bring a man with him. The bill for both tablets came to £58 16s 6d, which included cartage and tolls to Farningham of £1 10s 0d, and the cost by train and gig to Limpsfield of the same amount.



(Further reading FELHS paper 9, The Charities of Farningham and Eynsford, with Crockenhill and Lullingstone, by Hilary and Wilfrid Harding, pp. 19)

Proposed Light Railway from Dartford to West Kingsdown

In 1896 General Goldsworthy of Yaldham Court, Ightham, received a letter informing him of the proposal to construct a cross country line from jetties and wharves on the Thames between Dartford and Greenhithe, via Farningham Road Station, through Farningham to Eynsford station, then up the Maplescombe valley to West Kingsdown, Stansted and Vigo. The aim was to offer cheap transit for agricultural produce and to bring manure to spread onto the land. The railway would also open up the 'beautiful country for residential purposes'. General Goldsworthy owned Charton, its land and other land towards Wrotham, which would be affected by the scheme, and writer G. A. Hubbard, civil engineer, was hoping for a meeting with him. The proposal led to the authorisation of the line in 1897, revised orders in 1899 and 1903, but the scheme failed to get started.

(Further reading FELHS Paper 6, Nineteenth Century Railway Schemes in the Middle Darent Valley by W.G. Duncombe, pp.28-31, which includes a map of the route)

School Carriage Association

This seems an old fashioned name for a service which was still running in 1987. Places were reserved on a school bus at the cost of £80 a term. William and Robert Gould went on the Dartford coach. There was also a Wilmington coach, and three to Sevenoaks (Boys', Girls' and Mixed). The newsletter and invoice which Caroline Gould has donated includes the names of the 300 children who used the service.

General Enquiries

Plane crash, 10 June 1920, near Swanley - Phillip makes local films based on Marden's history. De Havilland 16 G-EARU, a five-seater bi-plane, of Aircraft Transport & Travel Ltd., made a forced landing at Marden. The passengers journeyed on by train, but when the plane was repaired, the local farmer on whose field it had landed was offered a free flight (joy ride) to Croydon airport with his wife. Unfortunately, the plane developed another fault and crash landed a mile from Swanley. The farmer's wife was badly injured and died a year later from internal wounds. There are several websites which cover the story, of which I advised Philip, but he would still like to know the exact location of the crash.



De Havilland 16 G-EARU, which crashed near Swanley on 10 June 1920.

Hop tokens of W. N. Vinson - The Vinson family were substantial farmers in Orpington and around Swanley. Richard wanted to learn more about the family, having acquired some hop tokens issued to hop pickers on William Nash Vinson's farm in Wateringbury on the Medway. William, born 1885 in Swanley, was the son of William Vinson and Mary Nash. He died at the young age of 29 in 1914 in the Bromley area.



Eynsford Viaduct - Rod hopes to make a scale model of Eynsford Viaduct. There is a measured plan of the structure from 1991 when refuge balconies were added which suited his requirements perfectly.

Images of Eynsford - Mike wanted pictures of the forge and the school at Bower Lane. We hope that next year 'Eynsford - Past and Present' will be published which will contain over 80 images of Eynsford in the past, alongside present images from the same viewpoint.

Family History

Rev. John Rogers - He was Anne's 4 x great grandfather. He had nine children. Anne's family line is from Ebenezer Rogers, who she wanted to know more about. There are 14 Rogers with memorials in Eynsford Baptist burial ground, including Ebenezer Rogers who died 9 August 1849, aged 34, and two of his children Mary (died 1846 aged 3), Ebenezer (died 1849 aged 1). Anne was lucky enough to benefit from John Laidlow's research, and he kindly provided a wealth of details.

Gabriel Cox family of Farningham Lodge - Rhiannon is researching this family related to her branch of Snead-Cox, who had succeeded to an estate in Herefordshire. At present the location of Farningham Lodge is unknown, so please pass on any information. A note on the Pedigree of Cox in Clutterbuck's *History of Herefordshire* has the following:

Like his ancestors, conspicuous for his loyalty. On the flight of James II (1668), he accompanied that unfortunate monarch into exile, and advanced several sums of money to relieve his royal master's necessities. Ob. 1703 being killed by a fall from his horse, while hunting in the forest of St. Germain, near which place he was buried, and an elegy inscribed to his memory by his friend Sir Roger L'Estrange.



Farningham Mill from an unusual viewpoint. (Tyacke collection)

ARCHIVE REPORT

Susan Pittman - 01322 669923, www.felhs.org.uk

The Centre News

The Centre is back in action, with working parties reconvening on Monday mornings from March to the end of October. There is a huge backlog of cataloguing and sorting to be done, so you are welcome to join the team as an occasional or regular member. No particular skill or historic knowledge is required, there is always something going on where assistance is invaluable.

Acquisitions

Stella Baggaley - About six index card boxes of microfiche listing baptisms, marriages and funerals (IGI) for the whole country, and a microfiche reader. There is not enough storage for these, so if anyone is interested to have them, please make contact.

Richard Frankson / Eynsford Village Society - On behalf of the Alexander family, Richard has passed over the film collection of his father-in-law, James Alexander senior. James' films are several versions of Hynard's films of 1938-1940, and a film of Eynsford Jubilee of 1977. The films included several labelled Eynsford Village Society, which the Society has subsequently donated to FELHS. EVS films include Eynsford in 1961, 1965-1976 Eynsford for show in 1986, and a film by Gerry Davis, 1972-1977. All the films have been converted into digital form - a costly task, but it will enable them to be more easily screened, and help to preserve the originals from wear and tear.

Caroline Gould - Various items including Anthony Roper Charity minutes 1982-2005; copy poster 1883 Auction of farm stock from Hampton Court Farm 'under distress for rent and tithe rent charges'; School Carriage Association 1987 invoice/ newsletter for travel to and from school (see above); cutting March 1933 photo/review 'Murder on the Second Floor', play performed by the After-Dinner Players.

Helen Goldsworthy - Various items including Map of Diocese of Canterbury (pre-1918, late Victorian perhaps); Programme, planning letter for 1934 Farningham Exhibition; Service order induction of Rev. Young, 1949; undated letter re debts of Farningham Cricket Club; 1851 letters re tablet in church for Solomon Penury Cox (see above); 1896 letter re Proposed Light Railway (see above); Circular c.1940 'If the Invader comes - what to do - and how to do it'; Coronation Plan of Route 1902; Draft copy *Farningham Woods - an ancient woodland* by Jennifer Gough-Cooper, 2021; List of children with ages on sponsored walk, 1982 - what was walk in aid of?

Judy Hall - Invoices from 1901 Joe Mace's Stores Ltd., Hextable, found at the back of the old kitchen dresser of Farningham House when a new kitchen was fitted.

Brian Hussey's estate - Several books have been donated by Brian's daughters. Some duplicate copies will be distributed at meetings. One book for FELHS collection is *Arthur Mee's Dream of England* by Maisie Robson. The book is not strictly biographical, but examines the ideas and beliefs that Mee brought into his publications, and shows how each one came to be written.



Arthur Mee with chaffeur in car outside the front door (at the back of the house) of Hillside, Eynsford.

NEW TO THE COLLECTION - LOCAL HOP- PICKING



above: Victorian on thick card.

right: From an album page - an original photo labelled 'Local Hop Picking'.

below: The same photo brought back to life by digital technology.



Photos on the previous page dated 1929.

Donated by Helen Goldsworthy - likely to be from Farningham area.

