

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. 136 Summer 2024

*A TICKETED EVENT (£10) TO RAISE MONEY FOR
EYNSFORD VILLAGE HALL BUILDING FUND*

EYNSFORD JUBILEE film of 7 JULY 1977 with commentary

**Celebrating the events held in EYNSFORD for
the SILVER JUBILEE of QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

**From the collection of the late James Alexander,
donated to FELHS by the Alexander family**

Evening with GLASS of WINE / soft drinks & CHEESE

**EYNSFORD VILLAGE HALL, FRIDAY 15 NOVEMBER
door opens 7.30 pm for 8.00 pm**

**Members can book tickets (£10) early through this Bulletin or at the
September and October meetings**

Booking contacts:

**via BACS (Sort code 20-25-42 Account 13275752
for Farningham and Eynsford Local History Society)
email Vikki Saunders - treasurerfelhs@gmail.com for tickets**

**via cheque
(payable to Farningham and Eynsford Local History Society)
post to Mrs Alison Marshall -
83 Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown, TN15 6HQ**

**EYNSFORD: PAST AND PRESENT - New FELHS publication due in
October (ready for special Christmas present!) from Canterley
Publishing Ltd. Over 80 pages featuring images from the past
around Eynsford and Lullingstone alongside images as seen from the
same viewpoint today, with explanatory captions. Launch planned
for October or November meeting. More details to follow.**

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.

20 September 2024 **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 2024 **Farningham VH**

Diana Beamish **Education in Eynsford and Farningham in the past**

Member Diana, author of *Anthony Roper School: A History*, will cover education in Farningham and Eynsford from its early roots to the first 50 years of Anthony Roper Primary School.

If ready - launch of new book from FELHS - *EYNSFORD: PAST AND PRESENT* (see inset on p.1.)

15 November 2024 **Eynsford VH**

Film of Eynsford - Special Event (see p.1 for details)

Eynsford Jubilee film of events held in the village to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee. This will be a ticketed event with refreshments to raise money for the new Village Hall at Eynsford.

2025 PROGRAMME

Friday 21 February **Eynsford Village Hall**

Giles Wolfe **Percy Pilcher**

Giles will share his research into this pioneer of early flight, including his experimental flights at Upper Austin Lodge, Eynsford.

Friday 14 March **Farningham Village Hall**

Stuart Robinson **London 1666: Plague, Fire & War**

Stuart specialises in the history of London and leads historical walks round the city. This talk looks at the events, the people, and the contrasting fortunes of the city of London and the village of Eyam in Derbyshire at the time of the Great Plague of 1665/66, and how the communities were affected.

Friday 11 April **Eynsford Village Hall**

Rod Le Gear **Chalk mining in Kent**

Rod is a leading figure in the Kent Underground Research Group, and has vast experience of Kent chalk mines, of which there are some 1,184 cavities.

Friday 9 May **Eynsford Village Hall**

AGM

Friday 12 September **Farningham Village Hall**

James Holman, project manager and senior consultant for Canterbury Archaeological Trust, is going to discuss the archaeological discoveries made during the excavations in Harrow Meadow, and how they fit in with other local sites.

Friday 3 October **Eynsford Village Hall**

FELHS 40th Anniversary Evening - details to be announced

Friday 14 November **Farningham Village Hall**

Tom Hart Dyke **Growing up in Lullingstone Castle**

Tom has not decided on a title yet, but The World Garden will come into it somewhere.

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

NEWS

Notes from the 2023-2024 Report of Farningham and Eynsford Local History Society

The AGM on 17 May was chaired by our President, Philip McGarvey. The Committee and Directors were elected and remain the same as last year - Veronica Sheppard (Chair), Ann Cornwell (Vice Chair), Alison Marshall (Membership Secretary), Susan Pittman (Research/Archivist), Vikki Saunders (Treasurer), Helen Smith (Minutes Secretary). John Mullen is the Company Secretary as a legal requirement for a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee, and the Directors are Ann Cornwell, Susan Pittman, Vikki Saunders, and Helen Smith.

During 2023-2024 FELHS enjoyed a full programme of talks, some based on original research, e.g. Geoff Burr's metal detecting discoveries, John Laidlow's history of The Old Manse in Eynsford, Dr Anne Sassin's archaeological digs in the garden at Lullingstone Castle. Other talks were about the abortive plans for a London airport at Hulberry, doodlebugs in the Darent Valley, and plans for the conservation of the Archbishop's Palace at Otford.

The Bulletin was issued three times a year, with most members receiving it by e-mail. It now contains more photographs and colour. Both website and Facebook help the Society to reach more people, and the e-mail system enables it to update members and send round reminders of meetings.

One of the main aims of Farningham and Eynsford Local History Society is to research and preserve documents, images and artefacts related to the villages of Farningham and Eynsford, with Crockenhill, Lullingstone and Maplescombe. The collections in the Centre have been built up since the mid-1980s and are an invaluable resource for our communities. Volunteers meet at the Centre on Monday mornings from March to October. Items are displayed at all our meetings, and at local community events. The list of new acquisitions and their donors appear in the Bulletins. A significant donation this year was of James Alexander's film collection, which included films from Eynsford Village Society. These have been deposited in Screen Archive South East held by the University of Brighton, but digital copies of them have been made for the Society.

After the setback in January 2023 when the aftermath of a burst pipe in the roof space at the Centre led to a serious mould problem on walls and ceilings, Eynsford Parish Council made a successful insurance claim, and the Centre was redecorated in August.

RESEARCH REPORT

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

Painting of Farningham by Pouncy 1784

By chance I came across this on the internet. It is held by the Yale Centre for British Art in the Paul Mellon collection. It is an early depiction of Farningham bridge and cattle screen, but there seems to be some artistic licence in the background with the position of the church, for example. Benjamin Thomas Pouncy (c.1750-1799) became a Fellow of the Incorporated Society of Artists and specialised in topographical scenes such as this one of Farningham. His work appeared in several Royal Academy Annual Exhibitions.



Farningham, 8 June 1784, by Benjamin Thomas Pouncy.

Rat and Sparrow Clubs

These Clubs were formed to encourage members to kill rats and sparrows, both of which were regarded as pests. There is a photo (under copyright) of the Eynsford Rat and Sparrow Club meeting with piles of rat tails and sparrow heads being counted. The winner received a monetary prize or an award. The Eynsford club met at the Five Bells, Eynsford, and in 1937 Arthur Larter was awarded a silver tankard for a bag of 936. Anyone not meeting a minimum target was fined. In 1934 a Rat and Sparrow Club was founded in Chelsfield and met in the Five Bells there. The founder was a retired Scottish Colonel Lionel D. Henderson, who had moved from Eynsford where he had been a stalwart of the Eynsford Rat and Sparrow Club. Apparently by then the Eynsford Rat and Sparrow Club had been in existence for nearly fifty years. Other creatures to be exterminated were grey squirrels, stoats, weasels, rooks, pigeons, owls, jays, mice and moles. One wonders about this species depletion, but in an area of orchards and market gardens one can understand the concern over the depredation caused to crops. Another member of the Eynsford club involved at Chelsfield was James Ponton Stewart. He lived in Skeet Hill House and was managing director of a big shipping company,

which arranged for meat to be transported from Argentina in the 1st World War. The Rat and Sparrow Club continued in Chelsfield into the 2nd World War, but the Club in Eynsford is thought to have survived into the late 1940s.

Bromleag 69 March 2024 'How the exterminators went to war in Chelsfield' pp.23-25.

FELHS no. 27 Brief Histories of the Associations etc. of Eynsford and Farningham p.51



Members of Eynsford Rat and Sparrow Club after a group event to kill badgers - two unfortunate victims are hanging from the pole. Men pose with a selection of dogs to send into the setts or to pursue the creatures.

Eynsford and District Fur and Feather Association

This was set up to encourage people to keep rabbits and poultry to a high standard of welfare, ultimately with the intent to provide themselves with fresh meat. The Association was founded in 1905. The programme of its 3rd Exhibition showed a photograph of the interior of Eynsford Drill Hall which was 'far superior to tents, which are often blown down, become

over-heated or drenched with rain'. John Gee has two challenge cups which were awarded to his grandfather, which he has allowed FELHS to photograph.



Eynsford and District Fur and Poultry Challenge Club cup won by John Gee's grandfather.

Farningham Academy business card and John Constable painting update

The art conservator, Sarah Cove, sent a copy of the little Constable oil sketch which had been painted on the back of the business card, (See Bulletin no.134 - Autumn 2023). Very kindly, I have been allowed to include a reproduction of the painting. Copyright is with Sarah Cove ACR, Constable Research Project, and the original is in a Private Collection.



Shocking death at Eynsford Paper Mill, 1866



This item was posted on our Facebook page. Mary Ann Morgan, aged 53, worked at the mill. One day she grew thirsty and went to find a drink in a part of the mill forbidden to women. As she stooped to drink from a small cistern her crinoline dress was drawn into a revolving machine shaft which drew her down, breaking her neck in the process. The manager stopped the water wheel, but she had died instantly. The coroner questioned the wisdom of allowing women workers to wear crinolines, pointing out that such dresses were forbidden in Mr Joynson's paper mill at St. Mary Cray. The manager promised to take all necessary precautions to prevent a similar accident.

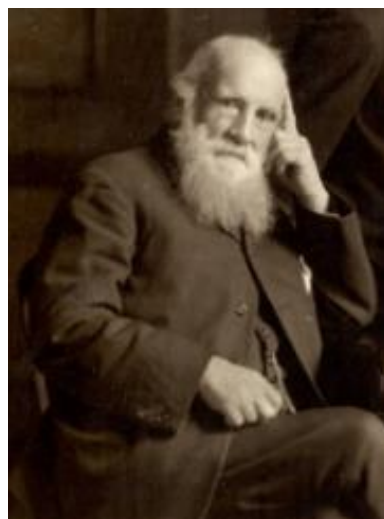
Kentish Mercury 26 January 1866

William Morris window in Farningham Church



Stephen Archer and Philip McGarvey have been researching the background of this Virgin and child window dedicated by her husband and children to Elizabeth Tudor (who died in 1901). She was the wife of Owen Scripps Tudor whose family lived in the Manor House at Farningham in the late 1890s. The family later moved to Paddington where Elizabeth died. She was buried in Kensal Green cemetery. The installation of the window was recorded in the 1903 Farningham Church magazine, which stated that it was created by the William Morris Works at Merton Abbey.

Owen Scripps Tudor (1836-1933) and Elizabeth's family (Punch) were in business together and in the 1860s he was running a mercantile business in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Later, from 1901-1902, he was Master of the Haberdashers Company - sadly the year in which his wife died. A son, Robert Edward Tudor, was killed in the Battle of the Somme.



More details can be found in Stephen's notes in the Centre.

Owen Scripps Tudor in the 1920s on the website for members of the Haberdashers Company who were killed in the 1st World War.

New Books

Oxford Heritage Village by Rod Shelton: Designed by Philip Clucas, with archive photos from Ed Thompson's collection. 207 pages, lavishly illustrated with fascinating text. £25 plus postage by arrangement. Contact: rodsshelton@gmail.com

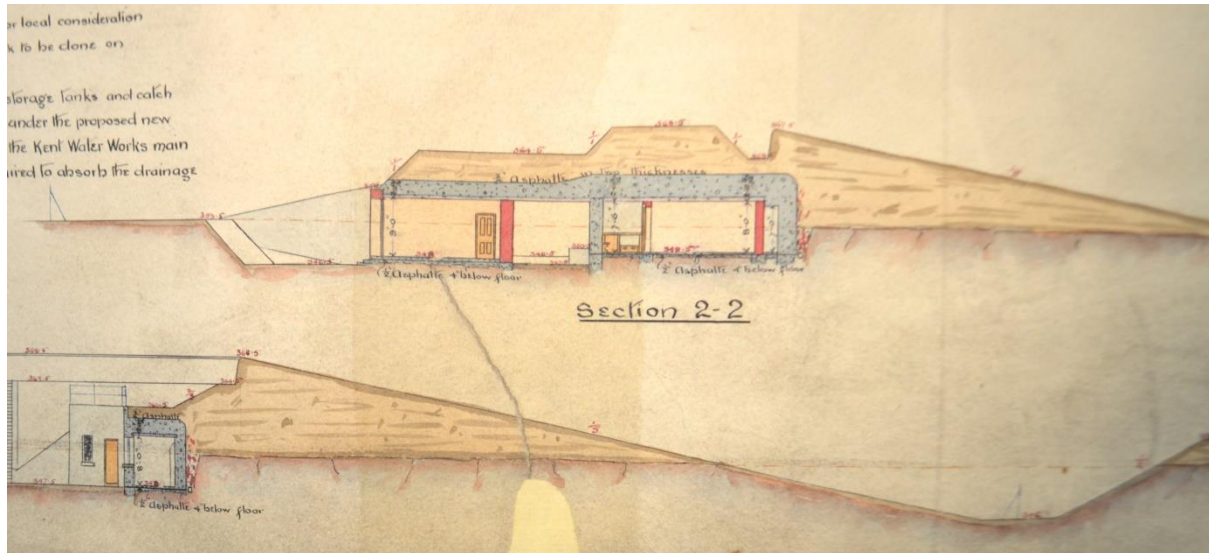
'Faithful Servant' Rev. John Hallett Hotham, vicar of Sutton-at-Hone 1836-1881 by Stephen de Winton via Swanley History Group.

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

General Enquiries

Archaeological excavations in The Orchard, Riverside - Stuart requested information about these so he was put in touch with Brian Philp.

Farningham Mobilisation Centre - (Fort Farningham) - Andrew is doing postgraduate research into fortifications, and asked how he might obtain access. He was put in touch with the owner, John Crocker. Andrew also provided copies of the 1899 site plans.



Cross section showing the inside of the protective mound round Fort Farningham, 1899.

Observation posts - 50 years ago Victor found three observation posts in the Farningham area, but he had lost the photos he took of them. FELHS does not hold any photos of official armed forces observation posts, but there was a Civil Defence one off Sparepenny Lane which was photographed. The Penwarden film of the 2nd World War in the FELHS collection has footage of it being constructed. See also FELHS no.13 'A Village at War: Eynsford 1939 - 1945' by D.G. (Bill) Burcham.



left: The Observation Post at Sparepenny Lane from James Alexander's collection. Can anyone name the men?

below: 2nd World War Observation Post seen by Victor Smith in 1974.



Farningham St. John's Ambulance Brigade memorabilia - Terry offered this collection to FELHS and the offer was accepted.

Nuclear bunker at the Waterworks in Eynsford - Nick edits *Subterranea Britannica* and requested photos of the Cold War underground nuclear bunker at the Waterworks.

Interestingly, he had found a description of it in a Thames Water Magazine of 2015. (Will use in next Bulletin). The only photo found was of the steps leading down to the entrance.

Tour round Eynsford - Penny is writing a children's book to bring history alive and requested a tour round the village to help her imagine what it might have been like in the 1700s. I gave her some guidance for a self-conducted tour and material in our collection which might be useful, but she has not followed the contact up

Family History

Leonard Stevens c.1899-1962 - Jane found that her grandfather was working as a blacksmith at the Hart Dyke Motor Works in the 1921 census. He was then aged 22. I sent her a photo of the works c.1914/5 with two lads - one Reg Blackgrove who sadly was killed a year later in the 1st World War. The name of the other lad is unknown.

FELHS no. 17 Miscellany 1 covers the history of the company.

Crowhurst - FELHS member Pat is distantly related to the local Crowhurst family and sent details of Richard Crowhurst born c.1501 in Shernfold, Sussex.

William Donnelly - Brenda requested photographs of William, uncle of Gerald Roome, who has sadly died recently. William Archibald Donnelly was Flying Officer in the RAF in the 2nd World war and was killed over the Netherlands. A Dutch man has adopted William's war grave and wanted to place a photo on the headstone. Gerald wrote some of his childhood memories down for the Society and included some copy photos, one of which showed William as a choirboy in Farningham Church choir. Subsequently, a photograph of William Donnelly was found in Gerald's effects.

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.

Corrections by Joscelyne Hynard of piece in Summer 2019 Bulletin no.121

I am so sorry that the piece I wrote about the Hynard family at Lower Austin Lodge farm in the Summer 2019 Bulletin contained inaccuracies. I had taken down notes from an interview with Mrs Jean Hynard, and these were obviously flawed. The Bulletin on the website now has a corrected version, but this piece is to cover the copies I sent round to members.

- the miniature Massey Ferguson was built in 1960
- Jonathan was born in 1955
- After Gordon Hynard's death the farm was rented to James and William Alexander, but Jean continued to work there. The family had wanted to continue working Lower Austin Lodge Farm, but were prevented by wider family and other reasons.
- They moved to an affordable, smaller house and garden in 1985.



Needlework map of Lower Austin Lodge Farm by Joscelyne Hynard for O level Art in 1967.

Crops:

yellow = barley

light green = hay

light brown = grazing

dark green = runner beans

grey = Savoy cabbages

pink = wheat

green = potatoes

Acquisitions

Stella Baggaley - Many volumes of Farningham Church Parish magazine from 1894-1904.

Helen Goldsworthy - 2nd World War Special Constable certificate; 1946 Welcome Home party letter, 1946; Official Programme of the Victory Celebration 8 June 1946; Map 1969 near Gabrielspring Wood gas pipeline Dartford to Snodland; items related to 1934 & 1936 Farningham Exhibitions.

Jo Whitworth (Hucker) - Mounted local press cuttings from 1960s; Build M25 badge; Kentish Times May 1973 'Eynsford - the protected village with chocolate box charm'; Local paper September 1958 local floods; M25 Alternative Proposals; Loose cuttings 1960s-1970s; Service for induction of Rev. Allan Tuffin 1957 (Eynsford); Service institution of Rev. Ian Hardaker 1966 (Eynsford and Lullingstone); Eynsford WI Golden Jubilee Dinner 1969; Register of electors 1961, Eynsford, Hulbury, Lullingstone Park, Park Gate.

By purchase - Hampton Court Estate sales details 1912 - 'Estate regulations will prevent freeholders having their property spoiled by unsightly or low-class building on adjoining sites.'