

Farningham & Eynsford

Local History Society

Founded 1985

Registered Charity No 1047562

Website: www.felhs.org.uk

Bulletin No 64

December 2004

FELHS' arranged programme is as follows: -

2005

- Feb 18th Talk on his Eynsford Childhood – Brian Hussey (EVH)
- March -- Film show of Farningham and Eynsford archives (FVH) *date tbc.*
- May 6th AGM (EVH)
- June 18th Society's 20th Anniversary Day (Launch of Junior History Society) (EVH)
- July 29th '1066 and all that continues...' Light-hearted History Quiz (EVH)
- Sept 16th Farningham Claviorgan – Malcolm Rose (FVH)
- Oct 7th Silent Auction (FVH)
- Nov 11th Buzz Bombs and Bicycles – Martin Lloyd (FVH)

"EVH" = Eynsford Village Hall*; "FVH" = Farningham Village Hall*

All Meetings are on Friday evenings from 7.30pm, with talk commencing 8pm, except for the Society's 20th Anniversary Day: all day Saturday, June 18th.

(* Note: Front row seats can be reserved for members with mobility, hearing or eyesight difficulties, and hearing loops are now available on request.)

Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society, 2005

- Jan 10th History of Hall Place – Janet Hearn-Gilham
- March 14th History of Shopping – Paul Clark
- May 9th The A25 is Interesting – Monty Parkin
- July 11th History of the Music Hall – Walter Williamson
- Sept 12th Great Castles, Houses & Gardens in Kent – Anthea Bryant
- Nov 14th AGM and 'Uver Fings Wot I've Dun'

All meetings are held in the Village Hall, South Darenth, from 8pm.

(Remember to take your FELHS membership card.)

Shoreham & District Historical Society, 2005

- Jan 14th Mac White Lecture – Return to Holly Place – David Rushton
- Mar 12th AGM and talk on the 'Mildmays' by Joy Saynor

Meetings are held in the Village Hall, Shoreham, commencing at 8pm.

Members who wish to attend these meetings are advised to contact their Secretary, Ed James, to check that no changes have been made to the programme. (Remember to take your FELHS Membership Card.)

Reports from the Committee

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Barbara Cannell)

Those members who came to the Quiz Night may remember that we were invited to the Quiz Night that was to be held by the British Legion at South Darenth. We were able to make two teams and enjoyed an entertaining evening with members from South Darenth and Horton Kirby. It was a very pleasing way to give our support.

One of the pleasures of being Chairman is meeting members from other associations and seeing how they manage their meetings and arrange their speakers. Things can be learnt from joining in with local groups.

On behalf of the Society I have been meeting with representatives from Shoreham and Otford Historical Societies who are hosting the Kent History Federation Conference which will be held at the Sevenoaks Community Centre on 13th May 2006. I know this seems a long way in the future but these events take time to arrange. Not only do we have to find speakers, we have to ensure there is ample car parking, seating within the hall, heating, microphones, tables for each society to display their artefacts and publications and last and by no means least supplying food and drinks throughout the whole day. Having dealt with the morning, the afternoon arrangements take a lot more time and thought to meet the requirements of up to 200 people who would like to visit Otford, Shoreham, Lullingstone, Eynsford and Farningham.

All of these people will need information about the day and will require booking forms and tickets; this involves a great amount of printing. I am pleased to say that most of these plans are nearing completion. We can now look forward to it being an enjoyable and rewarding day, but we cannot do it without support from members, especially with the afternoon visits. Ideally it would be great if we could get six members from each society. If you could assist us to make this day a success please contact me.

*I am worn out just typing this, but I for one will gladly give my time – it will be fun
- Editor*

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Elaine Ruby)

It has been a busy time for the Committee Members recently. As you can see, there are several forthcoming events that need a lot of organising and we are hard at work putting the arrangements in hand.

Next Spring, we are planning to hold a Film Night fundraising event. We will be showing a selection of films from our Archives, several of which have not been previously seen, featuring all the villages and accompanied by new commentary. More details will follow.

In particular, our exhibition on the 18th June 2005 is very much at the front of our minds. Don't forget we will be counting on as much support from our membership as possible to help make the day a real success. Please contact a Committee Member at the next evening meeting (or via telephone) if you would be willing to spend a couple of hours on the door, serving refreshments or helping behind a stand.

October 2005 is the month we have put aside for our Silent Auction. Not to be missed, a chance to bid for some real bargains.

It's that time of year again! No, not just Christmas but time to renew your Membership. You will find a renewal slip at the end of this bulletin - please complete and return it to Stella Baggaley or another Committee Member, as soon as you can. (Stella was hospitalised recently and will be taking it a little easier for the next 6/8 weeks or so, and I am sure you will join us in wishing her well.)

Next evening meeting is on 18th February 2005 at Eynsford Village Hall when Michael Hussey will be telling us all about his Eynsford Childhood.

RESEARCH REPORT (Susan Pittman)

New FELHS Publication, number 35 - All Souls' Church, Crockenhill, 1850-2002

This is a very detailed history from the conception and building of the new church to its running under its eleven incumbents. It also covers the church school and almshouses, and the village setting in which the church operated. The book by Susan Pittman is 200 pages with illustrations on almost every page and costs £11. Before Crockenhill had its own church, it lay within the parish of Eynsford and the reasons why this arrangement proved unsatisfactory in Victorian times are discussed. After the advent of the railway Crockenhill parish was extended to include part of the ancient parish of Sutton-at-Hone and so it became responsible for the growing settlement at Swanley Junction, thus Crockenhill church eventually became instrumental in setting up a new church for Swanley. This is a wide-ranging book and makes fascinating reading - an ideal Christmas present for those interested in the local history of the area.

RESEARCH REPORT (Susan Pittman)

- **Family history enquiries -**

Barber - Judy from Australia would like to contact descendants of either Fred Denis Barber or Frederick J. Barber. Her late grandmother Florence Rebecca Ottaway (Barber) emigrated to Australia.

Captain Bligh - Maureen has a missing generation of the Bligh family and wondered whether anyone knows about the sons and grandsons of Elizabeth and Richard Bligh - however, this is made more difficult since she gives no idea of dates or period. Elizabeth was the daughter of William Bligh who married her cousin Richard. Maureen believes that she is descended from the third son, Russell Wilson Bligh who later emigrated to Australia, but some of whose children remained in Kent.

Holdstock - Nicky from Australia wants more information on her great uncle, James Holdstock, son of Charles and Alice, who was gassed in the First World War and finally died from the long-term effects in King's College Hospital in 1921. He is listed on the war memorial but does not appear on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website (www.cwgc.org).

Palmer/ Flewin of Mussenden and Eglantine Farms 1890s-1920s.

Paylis(s)/ Day/ (C)Kamber - John has recently visited Eynsford with his 85 year-old mother and would like to present her with a detailed family history. His enquiry was wide ranging and although looking up indexes is relatively quick, writing up the entries then discovered is not. However, John is hoping to visit the archives to do this himself.

Stockley/ Millbourn - Carolyn would like more information about the birthplace and maiden name of Martha Stockley (1776-1842), wife of John Stockley. Carolyn's

grandmother was Frances Millbourn (1867-1943) who married William Stockley (1864-1924) and she has traced 6 or 7 generations of the Millbourn family.

- **Other enquiries -**

History of Laurel Cottage, London Road, Farningham

Place in Knatts Valley called 99 Steps - can anyone help with this?

- **Farningham's Church Pageant of 1984** - Grace Saxton has sent in the background of this event. Early in 1984 when carrying out brass cleaning or floral arrangements in Farningham Church she glanced at the board of incumbents and noticed that the first named was Roger, Chaplain of Otford, in 1284. She thought that a special 700 anniversary service might be appropriate, but Mrs Anne Lacy of The Croft suggested a Church Pageant. With Mrs Lacy's power of persuasion local organisations agreed to come together to stage a tableau depicting a period in history. The Farningham and District Horticultural Society was allocated the Victorian period and chose to depict a scene from 'The Great Flower Show of 1854 held on Market Meadow', which showed a group gathering for an early photograph. The Pageant was enacted around the front lawn of The Lion and the river and there were so many spectators that the High Street was virtually closed to traffic. Grace comments that some of the most amusing scenes took place during the rehearsals with Mrs Lacy correcting the many faults. There is a collection of about thirty photographs of this event.

Other celebrations mentioned by Grace are Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee on 2 June 1977 when there was a carnival, followed by a fete on the Cricket Ground. On 19 April 1985 when Gordon Guthrie was 100, he planted a metasequoia, the fossil tree, near the bridge, announcing that one old fossil was planting another! Afterwards there was a wonderful garden party at Hampton Court House, with practically the entire village present from every strata of life. There are photographs of both these occasions as well.

- **More on the Cossacks in Eynsford** - Anne Cremer, James and William Alexander remember the Cossacks performing on the field, which now sites Anthony Roper School. Apparently, William Banfield owned Upper Austin Lodge. He had a garage and motor business and bought Upper Austin Lodge before the 2nd World War as a country residence and as he was a hobby farmer the fields were ungrazed except by rabbits. It must therefore have been ideal for the Cossacks as there was no conflict with farming activities. When the war came James Alexander was asked to take over the land to plough it up to produce more food for the war effort. Incidentally, when William Banfield died Eynsford Village Hall trustees were delighted to find that he had left a legacy for the upkeep of the Hall. Saxmundham Museum has sent a copy of the 1939 Programme to add to the archives.
- **V2 Rocket cone above Lullingstone Roman Villa** - Recently English Heritage have asked for memories and memorabilia from those involved in digs at Lullingstone Roman Villa and two people have independently mentioned eating sandwiches during their break in 1957 on the cone of a rocket on the footpath above the Roman Villa. James Alexander has no recollection of such a war relic; can anyone else verify this story?
- **Kent Archaeological Society Kent Records vol.4 (2004) Part 2. Feet of Fines for Edward VI's reign** - these record property transfers:-

1553 Thomas Walter to Thomas Sybyll esq. 2 messuages called the Bull in Farningham - value £40

1553 Thomas Wotton esq. to William Wotton, gentleman, property in several parishes valued at £221, includes unspecified land in Eynsford.

1553 Richard Rawlyns to George and Agnes King and Percival and Agnes King, 5 messuages, 8 acres of land, 2 acres of meadow in Eynsford - value £80.

- **Diocese of Rochester Clergy Church of England database** - includes careers from the Reformation to Victorian times compiled from ordination records, Visitation returns and other record - www.kcl.ac.uk/humanities/cch/cce

ARCHIVES REPORT (Susan Pittman / Gloria Gee)

- **Local History Centre:**

Eynsford Parish Council has now officially agreed to support the project and to contribute £3,000 in the 2005 financial year towards the refurbishment. Farningham and Crockenhill Parish Councils have also been approached for possible grants. The Society and Eynsford Parish Council next need to agree on the detailed terms of the lease, but at the Parish Council's October meeting a resolution was passed to offer a lease of 25 years at £100 rent annually.

- **The Catalogue** - The catalogue, though incomplete, has been transferred to a database so the continuation can be in that format, which will be of great benefit for searches in the future.

Jessica Albery's architectural plans - The Society holds those relating to its area, but several are on tracing paper, which is becoming very brittle. As the documents need specialised archival conditions Jessica's sons have agreed that the Society pass the plans over to the Royal Institute of British Architects to join the rest of Jessica's work. As part of the transfer, some of the plans will be copied so that they can be displayed by the Society in the future.

Acquisitions from Gloria Gee: Sales brochures for new housing at Parsonage Bank. Household utility bills etc. from the late 1960s to the mid 1970s for Bower Cottage. Photograph of what might be a victory parade in Eynsford, but date, place and people unknown.

INTERESTED IN SHARING MEMORIES....

Ann Cremer has made a suggestion that it would be a wonderful idea for villagers to record their earliest memories of Eynsford/Farningham for the Society.

Her earliest memory was collecting marble stones from the stack yard next to the old Bower Lane School and playing 'five stones' with them. Peter Gee always maintained that Italians worked there but could never establish who or where they came from; it was certainly before there were Italian prisoners of war based at Lullingstone Castle.

We were talking to Kipps Baldwin and after all this time he had told us the answer – Funeral Directors Mackney, Levitt and Pitt had a yard between the school wall and the stack yard, so we presume that the Italians were working on the marble, making figures and tombstones. The small stones were of different colours and were placed on top of the graves.

Please contact me if you want to join in – Gloria Gee

And finally.....

Following on from Ann's suggestion, and bearing in mind I only have six years of memories in Eynsford, which is nothing compared to some of you, I would like to share a memory with all of you.

I had not been working at the Roman villa for very long and when there on my own I often looked out of the window towards Lullingstone Lane. Many a time a gentleman walked by past the field heading towards the bridge, he always waved to me. One day, and for many days after that, he came over to see me. He said he always went out for a daily walk, and as I looked lonely he thought he would come and talk to me. He told me stories of his childhood in Eynsford and his memories of people who had lived there. Occasionally I would bump into him in the village; we always exchanged a few words and a smile. Then one day I saw him no more. I eventually found out this lovely man had passed away, he was Gordon Crowhurst. To end my story, the other week as I was walking home from the villa, Phil Collins who lives in the village stopped me. He said he had been clearing his mother's house and found this book of poems and would we like it at the villa. It was 'Katerway' a collection of poems by Gordon G Crowhurst, one of his poems was called 'Roman Villa Lullingstone'. I for one will treasure it. I will always remember this gentleman who made me so welcome and want to be part of life in Eynsford.

It only leaves me now to thank every one of you for your support in 2004 and to look forward to 2005 and whatever that may bring...

**Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year
to you all**

1) FELHS 2005 SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL (Please give to a Committee member, or send to Mrs S. Baggaley, Saddlers House, High Street, Farningham, Dartford DA4 0DT)

Name(s): Phone:

Address:

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..... Postcode:

Email (optional)

Delete as appropriate: I enclose **£6** (individual) / **£9** (family) membership

Please make cheques payable to **Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society**

2) If you are a UK tax payer, you may wish to permit us to reclaim tax paid on your subscription(s) – **at no extra cost to you** – in which case please complete the following Gift Aid Declaration **as well**, then we can set about claiming a refund from Inland Revenue (currently at a rate of 28 pence on every £1 given by you as a UK taxpayer). **Please do not complete this section if you have already done so (eg last year) or if you are not currently a UK taxpayer.**

Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

Registered Charity No.1047562

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1. If your declaration covers donations/subscriptions which you intend to make in the future:
 - o Please notify the charity if you change your name or address while the declaration is in force.
 - o You can cancel the declaration at any time by notifying the charity.
2. You must pay an amount of income tax &/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donation(s) in the tax year (currently 28 pence for each £1 given).
3. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains equal to the tax that the charity reclaims, then you can cancel your declaration (see Note 1).
4. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self-Assessment tax return.