

The Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

Founded 1985

*A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee
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Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society established 1985. Registered Charity No. 1047562)

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Forthcoming Talks and Events

2007	Details	Where
30th June	Scout Fete (An exhibition of Scouting & Cricket with photographs and memorabilia)	Common Meadow 1pm - 4pm
6th July	'1066 and all that, Part 3' Quiz Night with Alan Cremer (Tickets £3 each, in tables of 6. Please bring your own refreshments) (Doors open 7pm) TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM JAN 9865122) OR CLIVE (863938)	Eynsford
28th Sept	Pipe Dreams - Phil Cole and Brian Boyden (a talk about clay pipes in English Society)	Farningham
16th Nov Eynsford	A Kent Christmas (details will follow at a later date)	
2008		
22nd Feb	Journey along the River Darent - Ed Thompson (A pictorial journey along the river)	Eynsford
9th May	AGM	Farningham
19th Sept	40 years of Axstane Players - Barrie Payne (A look back over the last 40 years of the Players)	Farningham
21st Nov	Puppets, Piers & Pantomimes - Alan Stockwell (Amusing stories from the life of a puppeteer)	Eynsford

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)

It is not often that I find it difficult to think of a topic for this report but the thought upper most in my mind at this moment in time was how sad it was to see so few members at the recent Annual General Meeting. Society membership stands at over 150 but there was less than 30 of you present on the 11th May. AGMs I know can be a little daunting but they are necessary so that as a Society we can bring together all the activities of the past year and present them to you the members. For those who attended I am sure they will join with me in thanking Sax Squad part of the Darent Valley Youth Orchestra who came and entertained us while we enjoyed the excellent buffet provided by Mary Turner. I know we all have busy lives and are juggling too many balls in the air, but it is so uplifting to see the village hall packed and makes all the committees hard work worth while.

PUBLICATION REPORT (Barbara Cannell)

The older I get the more I become aware of the way my life revolves around co-incidents. In my publications report for the recent AGM I put forward the idea for researching residents and tradespeople who had served the local community. That was Friday evening. Fourteen hours later I was in Bridge attending the Kent History Federations Conference Day looking at back copies of the Bygone Kent magazine. My glance fell upon two young girls riding donkeys on a beach. One of the articles inside this magazine had the title 'The Changing Face of a Village' written by Diana Bailey. In the article she takes readers for a walk down Farningham high Street describing shops and the people who owned them. A very informative recollection of times past which I would recommend to anyone new to the village or to anyone researching the history of Farningham. So part of my idea has already been done, it just needs to be brought up to date. But what of Eynsford, I'm certain there's many a tale to tell about people and buildings in the High Street. So put pen to paper or perhaps today I should say open up the computer and let's see what we can find on the untold history of Eynsford High Street.

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Elaine Ruby 862241)

It's always lovely to see members at our social fundraisers and the feedback received on these events has been really positive. We'd love to tempt even more of you to attend and with that in mind we distributed a questionnaire at the AGM to find out what sort of events/fundraising activities would be most popular with our membership.

The results, in terms of percentage, for the events you would most like us to arrange were as follows:

Film Night - 100%, guest speaker (not necessarily with an historical theme) and supper - 94%, selling donated items on Ebay - 82%, archive photograph evening (with an opportunity to purchase copies) - 65%, silent auction - 59%, themed evening - 53%, quiz night - 47%, treasure hunt 41%, visits to historic houses - 30%.

Of course, our original motivation is helping to raise funds for the Society although it is equally important that they are enjoyed as worthwhile events.

It is really helpful to receive this feedback and our thanks all the members who completed the questionnaire. In addition to the above we've also received some other great suggestions so if you have any ideas that we haven't thought of, do get in touch.

MYSTERIES & COVER UPS MADE A PROFIT OF OVER £500.00 (A big thank you to all those who were there)

**RESEARCH REPORT (Susan Pittman 669923) (website www.felhs.org.uk)
Tom Hart Dyke's new book - *An Englishman's Home: The adventures of an eccentric gardener***

This was published on 5 March 2007 and although I have not yet acquired a copy I am looking forward to doing so and including a review later here and on the website.

Even more about the Eynsford Cossacks

I was excited to receive a phone call from Julia whose aunt, Freda Pedder, married one of the Cossacks, Georges Doudine. Freda ran a riding school at Upper Austin Lodge so would have an immediate shared interest with the Cossacks. The marriage took place in Dartford Registry Office on 28 March 1940, the local newspaper head-line reading, 'Eynsford's Cossack Bridegroom - Romance of the Saddle.' Julia has numerous photographs, programmes and her aunts letters which she is willing to share with the Society. It would seem that the troupe did not have to leave the country during the war, but had to disband. After the war the troupe reformed but it was hard going, as Freda's letters describe. There were worries about money and accommodation and the Cossacks dreamed of returning to Upper Austin Lodge. Eventually, Freda and Georges set up a riding school in Selsey, West Sussex in 1947, but Georges died the following year. Julia is eager to hear from anyone who might remember her aunt (I have already suggested she contact James Alexander and Anne Cremer).

Further childhood memories of Eynsford

From Wilf Foley written 10 January 2005:-

The wonderful array of jars of boiled sweets in Mr Pinkstone's Castle Stores.

The smell of newly baked bread when walking past the bakery.

Going hop picking at Maplescombe with my mother.

Watching cricket in the Common Meadow.

Standing outside the butcher's shop, watching a bullock being led in for slaughter and waiting for the bang.

Watching horses being shod in the forge.

Buying my copy of the Children's Newspaper from Mrs Instone.

The wasps' nest over the entrance of Munn's shop,

My first days at school under a very kind Infants' teacher named Mrs Powell.

Having my first tooth taken out by the dentist who had a surgery at Pollyhaugh.

The drinking fountain built into the boundary wall of the Junior School complete with metal cup attached to a chain.

Mr Evans from Sutton-at-Hone, who came round regularly selling paraffin in the most dilapidated vehicle you have ever seen.

Milk being delivered by pony and two-wheeled carts by both Mr Bert Brice and Mr Alf Gaston. The milk was in churns.

The occasional purchase of milk at weekends, from the rear of the Brice family home at Elizabeth Cottages, where they had a small dairy.
Coal being delivered by Mr Jim Baldwin (Kipp's father) with his horse and cart.
Buying chocolate covered coconut ice from the sweet shop next to the Boyne Tea Rooms.
Squashing my finger in the Co-op Shop door soon after it opened. I still have a flat finger to prove it!
Having a haircut in Cecil Roberts' old wooden building next to the Co-op at the end of the path to Castle Field allotments.
The regular Saturday visit of the mobile fish and chip van. The aroma and taste were out of this world.

(I have counted 15 sources of goods and services here, most now gone. Can anyone roughly date this please?)

Kent Assizes 1587 - Unbrotherly love

John Alcherne of Farningham, husbandman, indicted for murder. By an inquisition held at Farningham 13 May 1587 before Thomas Tuttesham, coroner, on the body of William Alcherne of Farningham, the jury found that on 11 May William and John, his brother, were working together in 'Pycrofte' at Eynsford when John, without provocation, suddenly struck William on the head with a mattock (worth 16 pence) and killed John. Verdict: not guilty, William Death killed him.
Calendar of Kent Assizes 35/29/4/1534

N.B. A sympathetic local jury would sometimes use a fictional character on which to blame a murder, rather than see the accused condemned to death.

Kent Hundred Rolls 1274-1275 (from the Kent Archaeological Society's website)

Maplescombe

They say that William de Valoynges holds a moiety of Maplescombe manor of the Lord King in chief by such service that if the King shall come to Maplescombe to hear mass, then the same William shall provide one penny for him as an offering.

Farningham

They say Master Ralph de Farningham has free warren in Farningham from a grant of the last Lord King Henry.

Then they say Master Ralph de Farningham obstructed two common ways in Farningham village with a wall, built opposite the church, causing nuisance to the county, but they do not know by what warrant.

Eynsford

Then Warin de Chaucombe and Gregory de Ruxley took the custody of the barony of Eynsford and the other manors of Sir Nicholas Criol deceased, and held them in the Lord King's hands and still hold them, i.e. Walmer, Swalecliffe, Ostringhanger, Broomhill, Stockbury, Lesnes and a moiety of Wrotham and Eynsford manors.

Valuations of British money 1264 to 2002

If you have ever wondered what the equivalent value of say £100 today was one hundred, two hundred or however many years ago, then go to www.eh.net/hmit/ppowerbp/

Weather charts back to 1872

The national weather library provides a Daily Weather Factsheet of weather conditions,

including a weather map and summary for the United Kingdom for any date back to 1872. If you would like one contact the Library with the date of interest and your full postal address. The National Meteorological Library, Fitzroy Road, Exeter EX1 3PB

Farningham Road Station

If you have any photographs of the station or line or have any personal reminiscences about the station or anyone who worked on the railway there, please contact John Woodhead, 2 Riverside Cottages, Holmesdale Road, South Darenth DA4 9AQ, 866111 or john.woodhead4@btinternet.com

Family history

- **Sharp of Farningham in early C19th**- James Sharp was a builder and parish clerk of Farningham from 1810 to c.1850, when one of his sons took over.
- **Lucretia Wilcoxon in 1883** - Lucretia Wilcoxon, widow of Blackheath, who died in 1883, included as an executor in her will Edward Curteis Engleheart, gentleman of Eynsford (information from Peter Jones)
- **Holdstock/Miles of Eynsford** -
- **Stromeyer/Trimmer of Farningham** - from Chimhams in the 1840s
- **Hynard of Chalkhurst** - Anne's grandfather was Frederick Hynard who purchased Chalkhurst which remained in the family until 1994. Anne aged 8 in 1969 remembers a decorator called Peter whom she distracted by talking to him at the foot of his ladder. He mentioned he was one of a very large family of 19 brothers (or sisters) and 1 sister (or brother) - she can't recall which way round. Can any one identify this family please?
- **Best/Forrester of Crockenhill in the 1860s**
- **Pilcher of Crockenhill c.1804** - the enquirer Kim is from Adelaide, Australia
- **Holdaway of Farningham in the 1900s** - the enquirer Daniel is from Massachusetts, U.S.A. His grandfather, Walter Holdaway, born about 1871, emigrated after the 1st World War to Canada and from there to the U.S.A. The Holdaway family lived in Button Street and sisters Lilian aged 10 in 1901, Winifred aged 6 and Phyllis aged 2 stayed in this country. Daniel wonders if descendants are still living in the area so that he can try to arrange to meet them when he comes over here to trace his roots.

Archaeologia Cantiana 1858-1968 volumes on DVD

These volumes are the publications of the Kent Archaeological Society and have been put on DVD with user friendly automatic startup and contents file. Every volume is fully bookmarked and paginated for direct and quick access to articles. All illustrations and fold-out pages have been fully scanned in colour. Price £20.+ £1 postage and packaging. Cheques payable to the Kent Archaeological Society to Dr James M. Gibson, Secretary, KAS Publications Committee, 27 Pine Grove, Maidstone ME14 2AJ. (This seems excellent value since each hard copy volume costs about £10.)

ARCHIVE REPORT (Susan Pittman 669923) Eynsford Parish Council has arranged for essential roof repairs to be done. The vent-axia system for proper air circulation has

been fitted, but without its control box, so this has to be rectified before the more delicate items can be moved in. Such hiccups must be expected, but essentially we are making progress. Some of the furniture has been taken out of storage, and the rest will come when transport and time allow. The Society is very grateful to Gary Hawkins, who has allowed us to use his barn. The Environmental Centre at the Old School in Horton Kirby has given us notice to remove the filing cabinets we have had there for three years. This is unfortunate because we had hoped to move them at our own convenience, when things were more organised at the Centre. Space there is at a premium so careful planning at this stage is vital. Essentially, we hope that by the autumn, the Centre will be more organised and we are using the November meeting 'A Kent Christmas' as an celebration for the completion of the Centre for members and for those invited guests who have helped us see the project through to a successful conclusion.

Acquisitions

- **From Wilf Duncombe** - tape recording of interview with Reg Morgan of 16 February 1990; research notes for publication on Eynsford Mill; research notes for publication on Poor Relief in Eynsford and Farningham; updated list of earliest references to field and property names in Eynsford (including Crockenhill), Farningham and Lullingstone; print-out of Uridge/Euridge One-Name Study of the Eynsford branch from 1820s; 5 photographs Farningham service station, Eynsford corn mill, Eynsford bridge and Eynsford church.
- DVD Salute to the Few - Flight Lieutenant James Alfred Paterson M.B.E. who lost his life on 27 September 1940 - purchased from Shoreham Aircraft Museum. This is a record of the erection of the memorial to him in Sparepenny Lane and the service at his burial place in St. Mary Cray cemetery.

and finally..

In light of various anniversaries our theme at the Scout Fete on Saturday 30th June in Common Meadow is Cricket and Scouting, we will have some photographs and artefacts for you all to enjoy. With this in mind every year I search the files of Ebay to see if I can find some things of interest to enhance our displays. Well this year I bought a delightful postcard depicting two children playing cricket, this was addressed to Miss Joyce Rumney, Grimsditch Hall, Whitley, Warrington (I know collectors of postcards like them postally unused, but I don't, I feel the message gives us a little insight into peoples lives). I decided to look on the web to see if I would find anything out, my digging follows..

Miss Kathlene Joyce Rumney died on the 9th May 2004 at the age of 98. She had lived at Grimsditch Hall, Whitley all her life and was a voluntary worker with the Girl Guides for more than 60 years. In 1993 a sprightly Joyce aged 92 joined pilot Noel Aims, aged 68 to regain the record they had held for five years for the oldest combined age (160 years) of two persons in a microlight, they succeeded. At that time Joyce was then wondering how she would celebrate her 100th birthday, unfortunately she never made it...

Just goes to show that digging is not only confined to the garden, hope to see you at the Scout Fete

Jan Wilkes - Editor (865122)