

# The Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

Founded 1985

*A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee  
No. 5620267 incorporated the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2005*



Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society established 1985. Registered Charity No. 1047562)

## Bulletin No 75 September 2007

### Forthcoming Talks and Events

<b>2007</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Where</b>
28th Sept	Pipe Dreams - Phil Cole and Brian Boyden <i>(Conflict between smoker and non-smoker in the Western world is as old as the habit of smoking itself. James I described the loathsome custom of the vile use of taking tobacco whereas only 6 years later, William Barclay, in a book of medicines declared that all of tobacco was wholesome! But setting moral judgements and health issues aside, can the remnants of tobacco usage tell us anything about our past. This talk about clay pipes by two archaeology graduates intended to prove that the answer is much more than you would ever have dreamt.)</i>	Farningham
16th Nov	A Kent Christmas <i>(Come along for an entertaining evening and join us for a glass of mulled wine and tasty mince pies)</i>	Eynsford
<b>2008</b>		
22nd Feb	Harold H Camburn - Ed Thompson <i>(A photographers journey through Kent Villages between the wars)</i>	Eynsford
9th May	AGM	Farningham
19th Sept	40 years of Axstane Players - Barrie Payne <i>(A look back over the last 40 years of the Players)</i>	Farningham
21st Nov	Puppets, Piers & Pantomimes - Alan Stockwell <i>(Amusing stories from the life of a puppeteer)</i>	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**

It sometimes takes me several days to decide what I should write about in my report, but recent local events have made it easier for me to make a decision. When I go out it's not a handbag that I have slung over my shoulder but my camera case. I have become somewhat fanatical about recording the changes that are taking place in our towns and villages.

Apart from the loss of Miss Albery's house in Sparepenny Lane, Farningham remains much the same as it has been since the old school in Horton Way was demolished and there was the building of Tilmans Mead, Oliver Crescent and the small development at the top of the High Street. Eynsford lost the old school at the bottom of Bower Lane and the Coronation works on Parsonage Bank to provide extra housing within the village. The bungalows in Church Walk replace a row of elderly dwellings. The car park was once Ford Cottages, Elliott Terrace was demolished after a fire. Towercroft disappeared to make way for more houses and Hever Cottages were destroyed by enemy action during the war. After WWII houses in Eynsford Rise and St Martin's Drive were built and Saddlers Park and Pollyhagh followed. The village scene is about to change again. The village hall, Institute Cottage and the buildings on the site of Gibsons Iron Foundry are destined to become a memory. This part of Eynsford will I fear be much altered. Lullingstone is not escaping the march of progress as the roman villa is about to be 'updated' (*please note the outer building not the monument*)

I shall be recording these changes with my camera and storing the photographs for further inhabitants of our three parishes to look at and remember the way we were in the old days!

### **PUBLICATION REPORT (Barbara Cannell)**

I recently took copies of all the publications relating to Farningham to the Church Fete held in Market Meadow. This was I believe the first time that the Society had taken part in this event. It was a gloriously hot day and I was very grateful to be sharing a tent with the Axstane Players. The books, copies of the post cards and the 'where is it' display proved to be very popular and I was very surprised by the number of people requesting information about their homes especially young couples. The interest shown reflected in the sale of publications and I am pleased to report that I took over £68.00. Very rewarding. In contrast I cannot say the same about the Scouts Donkey Derby Day held in the Common Meadow. Clive, Jan and Elaine had put a lot of time and effort into their various displays and I had taken all the publications relating to Eynsford. The weather was against us and much of the day was spent dodging the showers of rain. Fetes are so weather dependent and although we are rallied and tried to make the best of it there was little enthusiasm for history and we sold not one publication. Perhaps next year will bring the sunshine.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

I should imagine that most of us have found the remains of a clay pipe or two whilst digging in our gardens. If you would like to know a little more about their history with particular emphasis on Kent then come along to Farningham Village Hall on the 28th September when Phil Cole and Brian Boyden will be exploring the story behind

these common finds. They will be bringing along some of their most interesting examples and would like to see any pipes that have been found by our members over the years.

Our November meeting this year is one not to be missed. We are organising a special evening of entertainment based on a Kentish Christmas and we will be serving mince pies and mulled wine to put us in the Christmas spirit. It promises to be an informative evening with a special focus and we hope to see you all there.

Lastly, I'd like to tell you about an event that the Society is involved with, hosted by Eagle Heights on Sunday 23rd September and organised in conjunction with Shorham Aircraft Museum 'Wings over the Darent'. In 2006 the museum embarked upon an ambitious project to erect permanent memorials to all the Battle of Britain pilots who lost their lives within a 10 mile radius of Shoreham. Two memorials have been completed to date, the first being dedicated to Flt Lt James Paterson and sited in Sparepenny Lane, Farningham. The third is due to be unveiled on the 27th September at Hesketh Park, Dartford. The event is hoping to raise much needed funds to help the museum meet the expense of erecting these important memorials. If you want more information about this event or would like to book tickets please call Eagle Heights on 01322 866577. Tickets are Adults £10, Concessions £9 and children £6 (10% discount for advanced booking)

## **RESEARCH REPORT**

### **An Englishman's Home – The adventures of an eccentric gardener, by Tom Hart Dyke**

I have now acquired and read a copy of this book which is available at Waterstones bookshops or at Lullingstone Castle for £18.99. I promised a review and here it is!

Written in conversational, informal style Tom's book soon captivates the reader. His enthusiasm is infectious and one is swept along by the sheer force of events from the concept of the world garden at Lullingstone while Tom was captive in the Darien gap jungle in 2000 to the opening of the garden several years later in 2005. 2006 and the second BBC2 TV series are also more briefly covered at the end of the book.

Yet, the book covers much more – cleverly interwoven are Tom's own life-moulding influences set against the backdrop of historic Lullingstone under centuries of Tom's Peche, Hart and Dyke ancestors. The deep sense of family and place is firmly embedded in Tom and was a key motivation behind his grand project.

Tom plays up the image of the eccentric gardener of the sub-title – eating a worm as a dare; turning his bedroom into a tropical nursery; and getting into all kinds of scrapes in pursuit of his passion for plants – but there is a more serious side. His frankness takes the reader through a roller-coaster of moods and emotions, thus revealing the many facets of his character; the serious plantsman; the reckless adventurer; the nightmare haunted ex-hostage; the affectionate friend and the humorous prankster to name just a few.

This book is attractively presented and Tom's natural gift of communication makes it a thoroughly good read.

### **Evidence of a chapel at Charton, Farningham, in 1300**

(from *Archaeologia Cantiana* XXIX, p.235)

On 12 March 1300-1 at Trottescliffe Father Henry de Sheneholte and Sir Richard de

Scoland settled a dispute about gifts and oblations with the Prior and monks of Christ Church, Canterbury.

### **The inventory of parish church goods for Maplescombe, 1552 – a sorry tale**

(from *Archaeologia Cantiana* X, p.282 – I have modernised spelling)

Chapel decayed, churchwarden Martyn Maye.

One chalice of silver weighing 5 ounces engraved with the picture of Our Lord

One corprax case with the cloth and two candlesticks of latten

One bell of brass broken with the falling down out of the said steeple decayed about two years last past.

All goods now remaining of the inventory taken in this inventory had been delivered to the churchwarden, and all the residue of goods in the former inventory were stolen

### **John Sybill of Eynsford will, 1574**

(from *Archaeologia Cantiana* XXVI p.88)

He was sick in body on 28 October when he made the will and was buried in Eynsford Church on 4 November. He left money to the poor of Eynsford and Farningham; for the repair of Eynsford Church; and to his servants. His wife, Joan, was to enjoy all his manors, lands and tenements for her life, and then they were to go to their daughter Elizabeth Bosvile. His 'base sons', Thomas and John Sybill, were to receive just under £4 annually from a tenement called the Rose and another occupied by Martyn May, both in Eynsford, being no part or parcel of the manor of Petham or his wife's jointure. John and Joan did have a son, William, who predeceased his father in July 1573.

### **Kentish charities 1594**

(from *Archaeologia Cantiana* XXXI p.197)

From a gift made by Sir John Peche to the Company of Grocers in London pensions of 33 shillings and fourpence each were paid to three inhabitants of the almshouses at Lullingstone castle. The names of the poor in 1594 were Thomas Hudson, Thomas Clyfford and Richard Kettle.

### **The Sackvilles of Knole visit Lullingstone, 1617**

Lady Anne Sackville kept a diary, published in 1923 by Victoria Sackville-West as *Lady Anne Clifford's diary*. She reports on 16 July 1617 that her husband stayed with Sir Percival Hart at Lullingstone overnight on his way down to Knole from London and hunted a deer as far as Otford. She herself stayed on 1 August 1617 when she rode with two lady attendants to Lullingstone where Sir Percival Hart sent a steward to London to Lady Worth so that she could be met on the route.

### **Update on the Cossacks**

Julia, the niece of Freda Pedder who married Cossack, Georges Doudine, has now met Anne Cremer and James Alexander and has donated several copy photographs and other documents to the Society. Following the publication of the last Bulletin, I have been contacted by the owner of 'Selsey Life' who is going to put out an appeal to see whether more information about Freda and Georges' life in Selsey, West Sussex, can be discovered.

### **Farningham cricket memories from the 1950s and 1960s**

Barty Hotchkiss has many wonderful memories of playing cricket for Farningham. He

remembers Horace Rogers, captain for many years, Bill Lowry, John Scott, David Page, Peter Pesterfield, the wicket keeper, Phil Smith, the umpire and 12th man, Geoff Bullock raconteur and originator of the motto in those days 'Arrogant in victory, sullen in defeat', John Pawson, Bill Chancellor, Arthur Page, who taught Mick Jagger and would regularly make a hundred at the crease and then beat everybody at the dart board in the pub afterwards, and so on.

### **Ross Parker and 'They'll always be an England'**

I felt ashamed not to know the composer of this famous song or that he had lived in Eynsford. Jan Wilkes has done research on him and put some information out at our AGM. If anyone knows more about him, especially of his time in Eynsford, do get in touch. He lived in the large house now called North Denes in Pollyhaugh for about 17 years and wrote 'They'll always be an England' with Hughie Charles. He also wrote 'We'll meet again'. It is rumoured that some of the lines of 'They'll always be an England' were based on Eynsford. He was also a support actor and Jan thinks he was a writer for programmes such as 'That was the week that was'. He died in 1974.

### **Memories of long-standing Farningham residents**

Delia Jermain and Jane Schoelkopf are hoping to begin this project shortly.

### **Memories of Eynsford from John Rogers**

He wrote to Gloria Gee in 2004 as follows:-

Most of my memories relate to the war years as I only lived in Eynsford from 1939 to 1947 from the age of 10 to 18.

I remember the Italians who worked on the farm, mainly hoeing in the fields and who seemed to be rather a lazy lot and had to be watched all the time by their guard. Then later in the war we had German prisoners who were really industrious and all behaved like gentlemen, (the guard used to sit under a haystack and go to sleep). Most of them were young flyers I believe. I also remember that they made a lot of toys, many of them working models to give to the children at Christmas, probably either 1944 or 1945.

Next I remember the incendiary bombs that I had on a ledge in our outside toilet, probably about 20 or more and we used to put a couple in our pockets, go round to the viaduct and drop them on to the road. Until one day we had a rather large one that when we dropped not only burnt, but exploded. So we hurriedly took the rest of them and buried them in a field up where the new estate has been built. I wonder if they found them when digging, or are they still there?

Most of all I remember the old forge that was opposite where I lived, with the very large conker tree outside. I remember sitting in our front room watching the glow from the fire being blown by the bellows and the old shire horses going in to be shod and the smell of the burnt hooves. Then later at the end of the war the vegetable shop that opened in the wooden barn at the end of the forge.

### **Enquiries**

- **Maplescombe Tea Rooms, Maplescombe Lane** – apparently, these used to be run from the property now called Fairlawn. Does anyone remember these tea rooms, when did they run and on what basis, e.g. was it a weekend summer business to serve day trippers or did they open more regularly?
- **Ex-farm cottages in Maplescombe Lane** - old photographs wanted
- **Black or Bower cottage, Bower Lane** – this cottage was marked on old OS maps

opposite Park House farm, but the enquirer has lived in the village since 1975 and cannot recall a house being there. Can anyone help, please?

- **Sims family of Farningham/Horton Kirby area**
- **Holdstock family graves in Eynsford**
- **Alice Cheeseman** – Alice was born in Shoreham but worked in the ammunition factory at Lullingstone. When Malcolm White and Joy Saynor wrote the history of Shoreham in 1989 she was aged 100 and the oldest person in the village, but died in Cornwall.
- **Maley family of Crockenhill** – this query rang a bell in my head and from a query I had received in 2002 I was able to put an uncle and niece, who were unaware of each other, in contact.
- **Hills family of Well Hill** – Shaun from Australia hit gold when he contacted me, because I had already interviewed a member of the family, who had supplied me with numerous photographs including one of his great grandmother. Also, I put him in touch with Geoffrey Copus, who has an encyclopaedic knowledge of Chelsfield including Well Hill, and he has helped take the family back to the C18th. It then transpired that the Hills married into the Baldwins – another huge family. As a short ten minute enquiry was leading to a much more complicated search which I couldn't commit myself to, I am hoping that when Shaun visits the area in October he can look at my records himself.
- **Floyd water mark** – thanks to Wilf Duncombe's publication which contained a reproduction of such a water mark from Eynsford Paper Mill, this was an easy enquiry to deal with.
- **Sharp family of Farningham** – After his initial enquiry and help from me, Stella Baggaley and Hilary Harding, Colin has made good progress on his family and has found four family wills going back to the 1670s.

## ARCHIVE REPORT

The Centre is looking rather cluttered because furniture and archives are gradually being moved in rather haphazardly as circumstance dictates. Veronica Sheppard and I have cleared my eave cupboard of artefacts and put them in storage boxes ready to transport to the Centre. The operation proved more risky than anticipated when we disturbed a wasps nest, but luckily, the pest control officer was on his way to sort out rats in my compost bin, so he dealt with the wasps during the same visit. A good piece of news is that because FELHS is a charity it has been given an 80% discount on the business rate.

## Acquisitions

- **Lambournes of Farningham album** – this was compiled in 1992 by Mervyn Lambourne and has photographs back to the 1930s, when James Richard Lambourne, the founder, was running the business at White Post Hill off Gorse Hill (a site the family business has occupied since 1914). All the photographs are captioned (please note the importance of this to future generations in your own photographs) making the album even more invaluable. The Society is extremely grateful to Mrs Audrey Lambourne, whose husband, Mervyn, joined his uncle James Richard, and took over the firm in 1960. He was a reluctant retiree, but eventually allowed his son, Peter, to take over in the early 1980s. For a fuller history of the firm see FELHS publication no. 7 by Mervyn Lambourne and Wilf Duncombe published in 1993.
- **Cardboard model of Lullingstone station down side building of 1939**

- **Eynsford Play Group photographs of 1969** – these six photographs come from Gloria Gee with several children named.
- **Will of Maurice Cavey of farmer of Eynsford, 1815** – from Peter Jones researching the Morgan family of Eynsford. I could not recall having heard of the Cavey family, but Peter has found that they was maltsters in Eynsford in the 1840s. In his will Maurice wanted to be buried in Shoreham with his first wife, but calls his second wife, Sarah, dear all the time. He married Sarah, William Morgan's widow, in 1805. Unfortunately he does not specify which properties he owned in Eynsford.

### **IN MEMORY OF GEORGE MACKNELLY**

The Society has lost one of its founder members in the recent death of George Macknelly. He was an enthusiastic member from the start in 1985, and later, when the Society's series of publications was in full swing, researched and wrote histories of the three parish churches in the Benefice.

He was Honorary Secretary of the Society from 1997 to 2000, when he took over the Chairmanship from Ron Halford, who had left Eynsford, and in 2002 he handed over this office to our present Chairman, Barbara Cannell.

On a more personal note I remember another activity that George and Valerie were involved in, helping with Searchlight, a youth group in Eynsford, and taking members on expeditions to the Lake District. And, even more down to earth, toiling on the allotments that the Macknelly and Duncome families had on the site that is now Walnut close.

**Wilfrid Duncombe (President FELHS)**

**and finally.....**

As Barbara has already mentioned Lullingstone Roman Villa has now closed for renovation and as some of you probably know I work there. It was a sad day for us, but as this chapter closed, a new chapter is about to begin for this very special 2000 year old building and we will all return at the end of MAY 2008.

**Jan Wilkes - Editor**

**DON'T MISS 'WINGS OVER THE DARENT'**

**SUNDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2007**

**1030AM TO 6PM**

**AT**

**EAGLE HEIGHTS BIRD OF PREY CENTRE**

**EYNSFORD**

**Come and see, The Jive Aces, Darent Valley Youth Orchestra, Axstane Players, Punch & Judy, Historic Displays, Spitfire Flypast and much, much more....**

## WHAT'S ON 2007/2008

### Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society

10th Sept Blondes, Bullets & Fast Cars - Ron Walford  
12th Nov 'The Suburb that Never Was' Lullingstone - James Connor  
All meetings are held in the Village Hall, South Darenth from 8pm. If you require further information contact Keith Sanderson (01322 862056) (Remember your membership card)

### Shoreham & District Historical Society

5th Oct Mills on the Darent - Trevor Carman  
9th Nov History of Seal - David Williams & Peter Mountfield  
7th Dec Members Christmas Social & Entertainment

### 2008

11th Jan Mac White Lecture - Ken Wilson  
8th Feb History of Shoreham School - Joy Saynor  
7th March Annual General Meeting with talk on Lullingstone Airport -John King

Meetings held in the Village Hall Shoreham from 8pm. Members who wish to attend these meetings are advised to contact the Secretary, Ed James (01959 522835) to check that no changes have been made to their programmes (Remember your membership card)

### Hextable Heritage Society

27th Sept Old Film of Farningham & Eynsford - Clive Curtis  
25th Oct 'How well do you know Hextable' - a test of the memory  
22nd Nov Frosts, Freezes & Fairs - Ian Currie (of weather man fame)  
6th Dec Christmas Special plus 'My Most Treasured Possession'

All meetings are held at the Hextable Heritage Centre off College Road. 7.15pm for 7.30pm start. If you require further information please contact Barbara Cannell (01322 864253)