

The Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

Founded 1985

A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee

No. 5620267 incorporated the 11th November 2005 Registered Charity 1113765



(Original Society founded 1985 Registered Charity no 1047562)

Bulletin No 94

June 2012

Forthcoming Talks and Events

2012	Details	Where
1 st July	The Reading Room 2pm to 5pm	Olive Seal Hall
15 th July	The Reading Room 2pm to 5pm	Olive Seal Hall
21 st July	Eynsford Walking Quiz	Eynsford Club
15 th Sept	Trip to Whitstable tickets £12.00 including entrance to Whitstable Museum	
21 st Sept	The Architecture of Eynsford and Farningham Jonathan Fenner (Architect and Blue Badge Guide)	Farningham
12 th Oct	Titanic Evening – Rob Goldsmith Talk and Buffet tickets £10.00	Farningham
16 th Nov	What is it? A collection of Intriguing objects to identify – Chris Baker formerly of Dartford Museum	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)

As I have nothing of importance to report on publications in this Bulletin I have decided to give a report on our recent Annual General Meeting.

This was held at Farningham Village Hall and attended by about 24 members. It would have been nice to see a few more of you. Sadly despite all our efforts membership is falling and volunteers to join the committee are non-existent. We now have only seven committee members including myself as Chairman, a treasurer, an archivist and an editor for the bulletin. We desperately need a secretary or at least a

minute secretary, someone who would be willing to arrange speakers for three evening meetings a year and the AGM. Also needed is someone to take control of the memberships, keeping the list up to date and processing payments and new members. It would also be an added bonus if we could have a list of non-committee members who we could call upon to assist us with events such as the Farningham Church Fete (*which has now been postponed to the 8th September due to the bad weather*) and the occasional requests to take a display to other local societies. I would like to thank the two ladies who have offered to give assistance, one at the AGM (I would be most grateful if this lady could call me with her contact details) and one at the open day at the Olive Seal Hall. The more members we have the more we can do to entertain not only our society members but the local residents.

Whilst talking with Susan Pittman recently about a communication I had received from the Kent Archaeology Society we realised that perhaps members might not be aware of the opportunities available to attend meetings held by other societies.

FELHS is affiliated to KAS and one member can attend their AGM and is given a personal voting number. They also produce a quarterly newsletter which gives interesting articles on new archaeological excavations, reviews on past excavations and information on future meetings. A yearly publication is also produced which includes the research on a variety of interesting subjects undertaken by members. Please seek out the newsletter and the yearly book which are on the publications table at our meetings for anyone to browse through.

We are also affiliated to the Kent History Federation which produces a newsletter twice a year that includes interesting historical articles, book reviews, and gives listings of meetings for other societies, useful websites and information on their annual conference day. This conference day is hosted by a chosen society to give the visitor an interesting educational view of their local area. FELHS together with Shoreham and Otford hosted the conference day in 2006.

Our own bulletin lists future meetings for Horton Kirby and South Darenth Local History Society, Shoreham & District Historical Society and Hextable Heritage Society. FELHS members are always welcome to attend any of these meetings. There is so much history around us just waiting to be enjoyed.

Monty Parkin

I received the very sad news this week about the death of Monty Parkin, a writer and speaker of such delights as *On East Hill* (Memories of life on the North Downs by Jack Hollands) and more recently, *Surviving by Magic* the remarkable story of Fergus Anckorn, magician and survivor of the Thai-Burma death Railway. I am sure some of you will remember Monty, he came to Eynsford and presented *The Seal Chart Murder, 1908* in which he tried to unravel the death of Mrs Caroline Luard and more recently his talk, *Art is Long*, discovering the sometimes scandalous but fascinating lives of well-known people from the inscriptions on their tomb stones.

Monty Parkin will be remembered not only as a writer and speaker but also as an accomplished artist. A gentleman of outstanding talent who will be greatly missed, who would willingly stop and talk no matter where we met, and who, through his books recording the lives of country people and his delightful paintings of villages and landscapes, left for us to enjoy, a history of a corner of Kent that he loved.

Barbara Cannell

RESEARCH REPORT (Susan Pittman 669923) website www.felhs.org.uk

The New 'Kent History and Library Centre'

The opening of the new Centre was planned for 23 April, and I have been invited. I will report back in the next Bulletin. The new Centre is about a five minutes' walk away from the old Centre, so is still very convenient for Maidstone East station.

Scrapbooks in the Kent Archaeological Society Library, Maidstone Museum

While the old Centre for Kentish Studies was closed I decided to browse in the above Library and came across some huge leather bound scrapbooks, with some interesting items for Eynsford, Farningham and Lullingstone. As most items in this report seem to feature Eynsford I thought I would tell you about the Farningham items here, and save the Eynsford items for the next Bulletin.

- An original list of subscribers for raising the church tower c.1820s. There were 31 names on the list, headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Durham, who both donated £20 (double the higher of the other donations). 13 vicars and rectors contributed. James Colyer, Miss Colyer, W. Jessup and F. Burnside were the only Farningham residents. Three members of the Dyke family of Lullingstone were benefactors. The list ended with a sketch of the church as it was with lower tower, and another of how it would look with the tower raised.
- Building plans and exterior sketch of the new farmhouse at Chimhams, designed by St. Pierre Harris in 1886.
- 'Hovels at Farningham Not Fit for Human Habitations', undated press cutting about Nightingale Place, Button Street, condemned by the rural sanitary authority of Dartford. 'The tenants are a decent, uncomplaining lot', but the cottages 'are dreadfully unhealthy'. One man's child had died, and the woman next door had also lost a child through 'round worm', and her husband had been suffering for seven months from fever and ague. The well had not been cleaned out for more than three years, and sewage was percolating into it.
- Headed notepaper from Lion Hotel, 19 September, 1880, with block print of the hotel. Written by T.E. Dunn proprietor 'We will keep Bed and Sitting Rooms as requested and send Fly to meet 11.27 at Eynsford tomorrow Saturday.'

Obit and Lamp rents, Lullingstone

Sir John Peche paid £500 to the wardens of the Grocers Company, London, for them to arrange prayers for his soul, and to distribute 8 pence weekly to the poor men of the parish, and to pray for the Bishop of Rochester in January and to distribute £1 to the poor afterwards.

(TNA E303/184, Augmentation Office, 20 June 1533 in KAS Kent Records, 1936) pp.75-76

Francis Booker, a C18th cricketer, from 'Soho Inn', Eynsford

It is always pleasing to receive a response to the queries I pose in the Bulletin from time to time. David tells me that the present 'Ford House', previously Eynsford Post Office, is reputed to have been the 'Soho Inn'. David has not seen documentary evidence to support the claim, but believes there are definite signs that Ford House

was once an inn. The word 'soho' dates from 1307, and was the call used by huntsmen to direct the attention of dogs or other hunters to their quarry.

Henry Cox Eleemosynary Charity, Eynsford

Henry Cox, an Eynsford butcher, who lived at Charton Manor, Farningham, in the 1800s, set up a charity in 1850 whereby Pollyhaugh field was settled in trust and its rent paid to the Minister of Eynsford to provide blankets at Christmas for poor elderly women in Eynsford. The original trustees were the owner of Charton Manor, the owner of Lullingstone Castle, the owner of Eynsford Mill and the Minister of Farningham. In 1955 the Charity Commissioners ordered Pollyhaugh field to be sold and the money raised was invested in the name of the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds. Unfortunately, since then the revised constitution of the charity has been lost, the Charity Commission, thinking the Charity had ceased, destroying its records. FELHS has been asked whether it can supply any information, but has been unable to, except using Hilary and Wilfrid Harding's FELHS publication 'The Charities of Farningham and Eynsford' from which pages 12-16 have been used above.

Eynsford Station, 150 years old

The Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Tunbridge railway opened Eynsford (how it was then spelt) station on 1 July 1862. The company was absorbed into the London, Chatham and Dover Railway Company in 1879. The line was electrified in 1935. The original footbridge over the rails was a lattice structure, later replaced by the concrete footbridge due to be replaced this year. Originally there were two sidings and a turntable, but another siding was added in 1904 (see below). The goods yard closed in 1962. When under the control of the South Eastern and Chatham Railways, there was a strike in 1919, which was most effective on 27 September when only 17 passenger and one goods train ran (as the strike weakened there were 307 trains with 101 locos running). There were various acts of sabotage during the strike, including the cutting of signal wires at Eynsford.

More about tennis and Sir William Hart Dyke

In the KAS scrapbooks mentioned above there was a newspaper cutting from *The Daily Express*, 12 August 1929, in which an interview with Sir William Hart Dyke about his involvement in the early game of lawn tennis was related. In the interview Sir William, then aged 93, claimed to have drawn up the draft rules with Julian Marshall and J.M. Heathcote in 1873. The formal rules were written down in 1875 by an MCC committee of 5, which included Mr Heathcote and Sir William. Lady Emily Hart Dyke, during the interview, looked at a picture of crinolined ladies playing tennis and said that that was how she used to play. 'I was one of the first girl players. I played with my sister in the garden of my father (the 7th Earl of Sandwich) at Huntingdon... We used to tuck up our skirts.'

The Village of Eynsford by H.H.B. c.1909

I notice that this was priced at £60 recently, so if you have a copy be aware of its value.

1920s/1930s Eynsford Memories by Geoffrey Arthur Meakin of Willow Cottage (1915-2006)

Geoffrey was born at Willow Cottage and lived there with his brother, James, and their parents, Frederick Meakin, an architect and surveyor with an office in London, and Jean (formerly Southern). The Meakins bought Willow Cottage in 1913, but during the First World War it was rented to Lady Mary Thyne, associated with the Hart Dykes, and sometime later to the artist, Graham Sutherland. The Meakins lived

in Willow Cottage until about 1931. Geoffrey mentioned several colourful village characters including prominent figures as well as the postman, milkman, policeman and road sweeper. (See below for Geoffrey Meakin's recollections of Mr Hynard)

Local railway sidings

The SECR was the largest carrier of manure in the country, transporting it from London into Kent. In Swanley manure was still unloaded close to the station in 1903, which caused annoyance to the residents and to the nearby Kent Jam Factory. In March 1904 SECR bought land at Bournemouth Crossing to the west of Swanley and by 1911 the siding was being used for general refuse traffic and a tramway was even considered for it by the contractor working there. In 1904 a new manure siding was provided at Eynsford.

(South Eastern and Chatham Railways by Adrian Grey (Middleton Press, 1998) p.123.)

Geoffrey Meakin remembered the Eynsford siding, locally known as 'Hynard's Dump'. The manure was fermented and composted down, with the aid of chemicals and water, to be spread over the vegetable fields. 'The villagers were tolerant – because this business of Mr Hynard's was most profitable and he was quite liberal with his cheque book when approached by the vicar, for instance, or the Village Hall Committee when they wanted a new roof, or the Pageant Committee when they required a maypole or such other things. He contributed very generously to repairs to the bridge and certain renovations to the much-love Tudor House – Oh and a new pavilion for the Cricket Club. After all, what was the suffering of a few noxious smells wafting over the village in high summer against all these pecuniary benefits bestowed very quietly, but most effectively on the community as a whole? Silence was the only price and for the most part it was willingly paid.'

Glass bottle found in the riverbed at Common Meadow

Veronica Sheppard and I are going through the artefacts and came across this bottle, which had been dug up from the riverbed undamaged. It was of a mineral bottle from D.T.J. Lyle and Son. It probably dates from the 1920s. Daniel Thomas Lyle was born in Cardiff in 1852 and died in 1924. His business was at 91 King Street, Maidstone in the 1910s. The business, then D.T.J. Lyle and Sons, ended very recently, in September 2011.

Family history enquiries

Booker of Eynsford – Margaret was trying to trace the family line of Francis Booker m. Sarah Boniface in Worthing, but although I put her in touch with others tracing the Booker family tree in Eynsford, the query was not sorted out.

Freda Pedder – Freda was the Eynsford inhabitant who married one of the Cossack troupe. Her second cousin, Richard, found a reference to Freda in our Bulletin in a Google search, and wanted to be put in contact with Julia, Freda's niece, who had previously contacted the Society. The two are now in touch with each other.

Herbert Roberts, blacksmith of Eynsford, 1890s to 1911 - As Herbert's family lived in Gibson's cottages in the 1901 census I suggested Caroline purchase Wilf Duncombe's publication 'The Gibson Family of Eynsford and Farningham', and also sent her a copy of a picture of the village forge, in case her ancestor worked there.

Smith family of Eynsford – Christine was enquiring about Thomas Smith (1731-1798) born Shoreham m. Dorcas Stone. Other surnames were Wood, Dartnell, Perkins, Pryer. Unfortunately, although there is plenty known of the Smith family of Crockenhill, I was unable to make any connection, and was unable to help.

Spice of Crockenhill – I forwarded Fran's queries to Roger who has researched the Spice family and was able to link his and Fran's branches.

Other enquiries

Henry Cox Eleemosynary Charity – information sought, see above

Farningham Home Guard – Janet wanted information about the Wright brothers of Farningham in the Second World War.

Institute Cottage, Eynsford – Rod was interested as a prospective buyer of the property.

Cherry Cottage, Farningham – Richard was interested as a prospective buyer of the property.

Farningham Hobby Horse photos – Franny offered a digital photographic record of these, which I accepted, but have not yet received. I did go to see the Hobby Horse exhibition at Sevenoaks, and thought the beasts very ingenious and beautifully made.

ARCHIVE REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923) (archives@felhs.org.uk)

FELHS Centre

KCC offered local history societies unwanted equipment, set aside during the move to new premises. I thank John Mullen, who helped me collect a six-panel display board, several large archive storage boxes and plastic magazine holders, and some poster sized maps of Kent.

FELHS books are now housed in a new cupboard and I am grateful to Diana Beamish, who helped me to move and arrange the collection. In doing so we came across a copy of Shirley Burgoyne Black's 'Local Government, law and order in a pre-reform English parish, Farningham 1790-1834', a copy of which I had appealed for in the last Bulletin.

Dr Geoffrey Cramp has very kindly copied all the slides into digital format. He has also copied 200 glass negatives of Eynsford, taken from about 1900 to 1914, and 13 of Farningham, taken in the 1920s, which he is turning into positives in digital format for the Society.

Acquisitions

Funeral service for Delia Jermain

2010 Welcome to Eynsford pack

From Maggie Glenister – Case of papers relating to Eynsford Friendship Guild, 1979 - 1997

From John Drew – 'Raid stopped Play', a booklet account of the Farningham v. Shoreham team game in 1940

From Kent County Council – 1646 Jansson map of Kent, a map of Kent parishes

From Mike Meakin – Memories written by his father, Geoffrey Arthur Meakin (see above)

From Mary Turner – Eynsford, Farningham and Lullingstone Millennium calendar

And finally....

I hope everyone enjoyed the Eynsfest weekend, what a treat for us all with so much to do. Thank you to everyone who popped up to see Dee, Barbara and myself at the Olive Seal Hall, we had two very tiring but brilliant days.

But that now being over it is onward and upward. Firstly, there is Mick Martin's Eynsford Walking Quiz. We will be at the Riverside Club from 12noon on Saturday 21st July. Come and join us, there will be a small exhibition put together by Barbara with a few questions and then after purchasing your quiz sheet for £1.00, off you go for a gentle stroll around the village.

Next the Whitstable trip on the 15th September, there are still about 20 places left on the coach, so please give me a ring if you would like to come along. The pickups are 8.30am Eynsford Castle bus stop, 8.35am Farningham Village Hall and a pickup can be arranged at Old Mill Close if necessary. The cost of the trip is £12.00 and included in the price is entrance to Whitstable Museum. We will also supply you with maps of the town and details of places of interest.

Finally apart from two evening meetings as detailed above, we have a special evening with a buffet and a talk from Rob Goldsmith about the fated White Star Liner the Titanic, including film of the wreck as she rests on the sea bed. The buffet will include dishes from the ship's menus (first class of course) Tickets are £10.00 and the evening is at Farningham Village Hall on the 12th October from 7pm

Enough from me for now as usual please call me on 01322 865122 or email me at Jan51@btinternet if you want any further details or would like to book tickets.

Enjoy the summer whatever you do and whatever the weather....

Jan Wilkes – Editor

WHAT'S ON 2012

Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society

2012

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| 9th July | Kent Village Life in Victorian Times - Helen Allinson |
| 10th Sept | Bexley Village - Roy Hopper |
| 12th Nov | Historical and Interesting Sites in Dartford - John Rank |

All meetings are held at the Village Hall, South Darenth from 8pm. If you require further information contact Keith Saunderson (01322 862056) (Remember your membership card)

Shoreham & District Historical Society

2012

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| 15 th July | Members cream tea |
| 12 th Sept | Visit to Walmer and Deal Castles |
| 19 th Oct | Traditional Kentish Building Materials – Richard Filmer |
| 16 th Nov | The History of the RAF at Biggin Hill – Bob Ogle |
| 7 th Dec | Christmas Social Celebrating St Nicholas |

Meetings held in the Village Hall Shoreham from 8pm. Members who wish to attend these meetings are advised to contact the Secretary Lynda Alleeson (01959 534501) to check that no changes have been made to their programmes (Remember your membership card)

Hextable Heritage Society

2012

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| 12 th July | Visit – Home of the Little Boys, South Darenth |
| 9 th Aug | Local Views from the 1960s – Gerald Cramp |
| 13 th Sept | Joyce Green Hospitals & the River Hospitals – Francine Payne |
| 11 th Oct | What is it? Objects from Dartford Museum to identify – Chris Baker |
| 8 th Nov | The River Thames – a working river – Jerry McCarthy |
| December | Members Christmas Party |

All meetings are held at the Hextable Heritage Centre. Crawfords, Dawson Drive, College Road, Hextable 7.30pm start. If you require further information please contact Barbara Cannell (01322 864253) (Remember your membership card)

