

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 97

March 2013

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will take place at Eynsford Village Hall on Friday 24th May at 8pm (doors open 7.30pm)

The Agenda will be as follows

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of last AGM/matters arising
4. Adoption of Accounts
5. Setting of the Subscription level for 2013
6. Election of Officers and Committee
7. Any other business

The history society committee works very much as a team, if anyone is interested or would like information about becoming part of our committee please call the Chairman Barbara Cannell for further information or to express an interest in putting your name forward for election. Any nominations must be with the Chairman before the AGM commences on the 24th May 2013.

Forthcoming Talks and Events

2013	Details	Where
24 th May	AGM – Back to School, display of photographs and a brief talk by Jill Hussey about her days in an Eynsford school. Followed by a buffet	EVH
14 th Sept	Trip to the Isle of Sheppey £15.00 (included entrance to Blue Town Heritage Centre and guided tour)	EVH
27 th Sept	Hop and hop picking – Richard Filmer	FVH
29 th Nov	A Dickens of a Christmas – Tonbridge Mummers	FVH

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)

With this first Bulletin for 2013 I am wondering what the year ahead has in store for the Society. Certainly based on last years events there should be numerous opportunities when we can promote the many interesting and historic stories connected to our area. Several developments in Farningham must make us recall bygone days. The proposed rebuilding of the Eynsford Village Hall and an additional building for St. Martin's Church will bring modern facilities to these establishments. We must not forget how our villages used to look and the people who lived in them. New stories can and should be written recording the daily routines of local shop keepers, trades people and families, many of whom lived through very difficult times. If your family owned a shop or a member of your family worked in a shop or worked on a farm or in a manufacturing trade perhaps you would like to share those memories with us.

PUBLICATION REPORT (Barbara Cannell 864253)

No, sadly, at the moment FELHS does not have a new publication. I am going to do something I have never done before and that is to promote another Society's work because it tells the story of one villages fight to keep modern day transport from tearing their village apart. Also because some of our senior members may remember their struggle to survive, and may have taken part in some of the demonstrations. SINK THE LINK researched and written by John Woodhead from the Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society tells of a villages campaign against the Channel Tunnel Rail Link when in 1988 South Darenth became the focal point for British Rails proposed construction of the first major railway project in this country for more than a hundred years. Easy to read, full of photographs, newspaper reports and personal stories the price of £5.00 is very reasonable. If you would like a copy please contact me on 01322 864253.

MEMBERSHIP OF FELHS 2013

Thank you to all members who have renewed their membership.

To people who have not renewed so far, this is a reminder that if your subscriptions are not received this will be the last bulletin you will receive and your details will be removed from the membership list. If you no longer wish to be a member of the society or have a query about your membership please contact me, drop me a line at 2 Fountain Cottages, Bower Lane, Eynsford, DA4 0AL, email me Jan51@btinternet.com or call me 865122.

Jan Wilkes

Temporary Membership Secretary

RESEARCH REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923) (www.felhs.org.uk)

Sifting through Tridents

I have recently organised the Tridents in the new tambour cupboard so that the Society has one complete set (**minus 'Trident' for JANUARY AND NOVEMBER 1982, copies for which I make another appeal**). I have now indexed by surname the run from 1982 to the present for births, baptisms, engagements, marriages, blessings, deaths, funerals and anniversaries. This was a fascinating task undertaken during evenings in front of watching TV programmes that did not catch my full attention! I have retrospectively seen some of you born, married, and producing offspring, and losing some of the older generation! I feel I know many of you more

intimately than before! One thing that struck me, especially through the obituaries, was the number of families who have moved into Eynsford since the 1930s. There were few surnames that I could trace back to the C19th, although many female lines might have been derived from villagers back then. I am open to contradiction on this observation, but it seems to be in contrast to Crockenhill where there is still a core of village families traceable back to the 1851 census. You might have theories as to why this might be – one of mine is that from the 1930s into the 1950s several Council housing estates were built in Crockenhill, providing affordable rented accommodation for the many families previously employed on the land. This does not seem to have been the case in Eynsford. I am less familiar with traditional Farningham surnames, but from the obituaries it would seem that the pattern was similar to Eynsford.

As I trawled through duplicate Tridents I extracted articles with local historical interest and have catalogued these – once again during evening TV watching!

Excavation reports for Roman Villas at Eynsford and Farningham

These reports have recently been purchased for FELHS archives

Eynsford Roman Villa – Excavations, 1990

The Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit found a fine Roman corn-drying oven with stoke-hole, and a large water channel in the garden of 'Pagecot' (now 1-3 Page Cottages). Nearly 2000 artefacts, mostly pottery, were found including 420 Roman items, 6 Anglo-Saxon, 190 medieval and 140 post-medieval.

(Kent Excavation Report – January 2007, no.4, Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit)

Excavations at the Farningham Roman Villa (The Ornamental Ponds, 1985)

The site lies on the river behind The Manor House, where a substantial Roman villa was discovered in 1948, and trial-trenched in 1982. In 1985 excavation revealed 29 Roman features, including three small ditches and two very large rectangular ponds. An access causeway between the ponds corresponded almost exactly with the centre of the main villa house. Early Pottery finds dated from AD 70 - AD 160, with the likelihood that the ponds were formed in the second half of the C2nd and went out of use in the late C2nd / early C3rd. Amongst the small finds were an iron knife, a bead, bone pins and fragments of glass.

(Kent Excavation Report – April 2003, no.2, Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit)

Discovery of a possible Anglo-Saxon Great Hall, Eynsford – Award to James Alexander

The Council for Kent Archaeology has awarded James Alexander a 'Certificate for Industry' for allowing archaeological excavation of sites on his land for over 20 years. The presentation was announced during a day's lectures on Anglo-Saxon Kent held in Canterbury. During the day Brian Philp gave an illustrated lecture on the latest excavation near a Roman building at Riverside. Anglo-Saxon loom weights, a bone needle and spindle were found in test boreholes, and now a one-acre site is being investigated. The dig will be undertaken over more than one season, but signs are that a C6th building of great hall size is being unearthed. Incidentally, Brian is to be congratulated on receipt of an Honorary Doctorate of Letters awarded for his services to archaeology in Kent and S.E. London by the University of Kent in July 2012.

The surname 'Dunmall' and variants

In November I attended a Place-Names conference organised by Kent Archaeological Society. Dr Paul Cullen spoke about Kentish surnames derived from place-names, and gave as one illustration, the Dunmalls centred in Eynsford. The first person he found with that surname or similar (from Dunmowe, Essex) was Thomas Dunmowe in 1466 in Sundridge. He then followed that name through to Thomas Dunmall in

Eynsford in the 1570s - so one enterprising individual made the journey south across the Thames and spawned what was to become a locally common name in West Kent.

Incidentally, Paul also spoke about boundary references in place-names and mentioned Sutton-at-Hone. 'Hone' means a boundary stone, but Paul does not know what boundary is meant at Sutton-at-Hone, suggestions would be welcome and would be passed on to Paul.

Petham Court

This is an isolated property lying in a hollow (pet = pit = hollow) in fields between Swanley and Wested, Crockenhill. In 1664 it was purchased from Edwin Wyatt, for one peppercorn, by Elizabeth Bosvile, widow of Thomas Bosvile of Little Mote, Eynsford. The estate covered 400 acres tenanted by William Ebbott, and included Comforts Farm, a watermill in Eynsford occupied by John Banks, Mabdens Farm, a malthouse with 7 acres in Eynsford tenanted by Thomas Durling, and several named fields. The token purchase price was due to Thomas Bosvile's early death, before he could settle a jointure of £270 a year on his wife. In that case he had arranged for the property mentioned above to be transferred to her by his executors.

(Kent Library and History Centre U1255 T44)

Paid for not attending funeral!

Christopher Hayward the elder, yeoman of Eynsford, kindly arranged for all poor families in Eynsford, who were not invited to his funeral, to receive half a crown each (25p) on the day of his funeral or as soon as possible after. I would think that most poor families would have preferred the money, which was a considerable amount in those days.

(PRO PROB 11/778 – see www.hartley-kent.org.uk)

The Vanity Box, Farningham

Hilary Harding is not alone in deploring the partial demolition and repositioning of the Vanity Box in Farningham. It had failed to get listed, partly because there was insufficient evidence of its history, but she was convinced that it was probably built in the C17th/C18th, perhaps the 'brewhouse with furnace' listed in Matthew Sweetapple's inventory of 1684.

Early registration of motor vehicles in Kent

Our chairman has referred me to Hilary Harding's 'Farningham and its Mill' pp.289-290 on which are photographs of early cars owned by the Ward family, including the 1903 red Wolseley of 7½ horse power with registration D354 that I mentioned in the last Bulletin. She also mentioned 'Pioneering Buses of North West Kent' by Richard Rosa, in which there is view of three early buses in the Bull yard, Farningham.

'The Orpington Car', the brainchild of a Crockenhill man

Frank Smith was one of a large family, whose father, John Inkerman Smith, had, since the 1890s, been manager of the local Cooperative shop, the building still sited at the corner of Cray Road and Tylers Green, Crockenhill. In 1903 Frank went into partnership with John Milroy, his cousin from Scotland, building and repairing bicycles in the village. In 1907 they decided to produce a reliable and comfortable car locally, for which they took premises in Wellington Road, Orpington – hence 'The Orpington car' – it could so nearly have been named after Crockenhill! The business developed steadily until the First World War, when the works were adapted for the war effort. After the war car production resumed, and between 1920 and 1924 about 20 to 24 cars were built, but competition from larger manufacturers forced Frank and

John out of business in 1927.

('Rediscovering The Orpington Car – the definitive guide', by Trevor Mulligan, Timeline Books, 2012, £6.99)

1911 Census free on-line

All 1911 transcriptions are now free from your own computer on Genes Reunited and findmypast.co.uk websites.

Family history enquiries

- ◆ **Freda Pedder** - Freda was the Eynsford inhabitant who married one of the Cossack troupe. Julia, Freda's niece, has thanked me for putting her in touch with an enquirer, Richard, who turned out to be her second cousin.
- ◆ **Mary Ann b. 1865 in Farningham married William John Hobbs c.1880-1890** - Maureen enquired about the parish registers. Copies can be purchased via the NWKFHS website, and Stella Baggaley will look up copies which she holds for FELHS – see our Noticeboard page on the website for details.
- ◆ **Larter** - I was able to tell Karen that the Larter diary recorded several family dates, such as the arrival in Kent from Mulbarton, Norfolk, of Joseph and Fanny Larter in 1887.
- ◆ **John Thomas** - Brian's ancestor was postmaster at Farningham for 48 years from 1865 to 1914. Brian has sent an illustrated family history, which I will use in the next Bulletin
- ◆ **Hever** - Philip is related to the Hever family of Eynsford. I supplied some parish register details and helped him locate possible residences of the family in the C19th.

Other enquiries

- ◆ **Ingram photographs** - Maurice's ancestor, Stanley Ingram, was blacksmith at the forge opposite Malt Shovel Cottages, Eynsford, and has offered photographs of his grandfather at the forge, together with details of the Ingram family history. I intimated that FELHS would love to have copies of the photographs and family background, and hope to receive them after Maurice has settled down into a new home.
- ◆ **Site of medieval mill, Farningham** - Giles was concerned that an application for a new water borehole was alongside a medieval mill excavated in 1976. (Report - Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit, September 2009, by Brian Philp)
- ◆ **Brenda Gleave** - I have put Barrie Payne in touch with Gaynor because he had information about her.
- ◆ **Metal detecting in the Society area** - Brian asked for contacts to gain permission to use his metal detector. I referred him to Geoffrey Burr.
- ◆ **Bailey bridge near Lullingstone Roman Villa** - Martin is chairman of Friends of the Royal Engineers Museum and an expert on bailey bridges. He enquired about the origin of the one over the Darent at Lullingstone Roman Villa. I supplied him with a copy of a chapter 'The Battle of the Bridges' from Mildred Hart Dyke's book 'Chance Encounters', in which she explains how the bridge came to be built in 1972 after the old bridge had been swept away in floods.
- ◆ **Arthur Mee's garden at Eynsford Hill** - Kent Gardens Trust is recording the garden and its history as part of its District-wide survey of gardens, not registered as historic gardens, but worthy of note. I was able to provide Elizabeth with background history of the house and garden.

- ♦ **Seal Chart murder** - Philip had seen references in an old Bulletin to this after Monty Parkin's talk to the Society. Sadly, I had to inform him of Monty's untimely death.
- ♦ **Hop Pole, Farningham / Middle Farm, Crockenhill** – I referred Keith to Wilfrid and Hilary Harding's FELHS publication on Farningham Pubs. The enquiry about Middle Farm was for a third party to whom I provided information and photographs.

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

FELHS Centre

Acquisitions

From Eric Syddique - an article by Geoffrey Skelsey, 'Where Trains Meet Planes' (BackTrack October 2012), which mentions the proposed Lullingstone airport. Apparently, the dismantled platform canopies of the short-lived Lullingstone station were later installed at Canterbury East Station.

From Geoffrey Copus - a copy of an etching in his possession of Eynsford bridge and The Plough c.1910 by Richard Cope of Stanley Road, Orpington.

From Jan Wilkes - a letter from Buckingham Palace on behalf of the Queen, with card of grateful thanks, for the letters received from Anthony Roper Primary School about the Golden Jubilee.

And finally.....

I am so sorry I missed the February evening meeting, from what I hear it was a thoroughly enjoyable time. I was knee deep in jumble at Eynsford Village Hall and freezing myself to death into the bargain. Having said all that the jumble sale was a success and there is now a bit more in the coffers of the rebuilding fund. Talking of village halls Farningham has a celebration this year, 75 years since the hall was built. They are holding an exhibition of Saturday 27th April and we will be there with information about the history of the hall and a display of our various meetings over the past few years with photographs of some of our events. Please come along and reminisce with us all.

Talking about anniversaries it is 100 years since the commencement of World War I in 2014. We are working on putting on evening meetings and an exhibition which will reflect this historical occasion, details will be finalised very soon. I myself would like to gather information, anecdotes or photographs that reflect life in the villages during that time. I appreciate that none of us are old enough to have been around, but if you have any family stories you would like to impart I would be pleased to hear from you. You can drop me a line by post, email Jan51@btinternet.com or call me on 01322 865122.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM in May, we have a scholastic flavour this year and as well as the usual buffet we will have some fun food to make us remember our childhood. Jill Hussey has agreed to come and give us a brief talk about her school life and there will be photographs of pupils gone by. This will of course be after the formal business of the evening.

MAKE A NOTE OF THIS YEARS COACH TRIP TO BLUE TOWN, ISLE OF SHEPPEY ON SATURDAY 14th SEPTEMBER, I AM TAKING BOOKINGS ALREADY.

Jan Wilkes – Editor

Telephone 865122 email [Jan51@btinternet](mailto:Jan51@btinternet.com)

WHAT'S ON 2013

Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society 2013

11 th March	Royal Visit to Kent (Series 11) – Colin Breed
13 th May	Village History – Medway Valley and Wrotham – Avis Harms
8 th July	Change to National Trust in SE – Pat Mortlock
9 th Sept	The Hall houses of Southfleet – Dr Ann Kneif
11 th Nov	Customs & Excise – Gerald Fiddler

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 2012/2013

15 th March	AGM followed by The History of the RAF at Biggin Hill – Bob Ogley
19 th April	Scadbury Manor and Park – Roy Hopper

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 2012/2013

14 th March	Port Sunlight and the soap makers – David Williams
11 th April	Ancient Parishes of Gravesham – Chris Bull
9 th May	AGM followed by a short talk about Ightham Mote by Tim Jacobs
13 th June	Crime in Victorian Kent – Helen Allinson
11 th July	Evening Visit – Historic Buildings of Dartford High Street – Sharon Mitchell (details of time to follow)
8 th Aug	The Bevin Boys – Dr Ann Kneif
12 th Sept	A Dartford Miscellany – Adrian Herbert
10 th Oct	Hextable from old photographs – Dennis Molyneux
14 th Nov	Christmas on the Home Front – Mike Brown
5 th Dec	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)

