

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 98

June 2013

Forthcoming Talks and Events

2013	Details	Where
14 th Sept*	Trip to the Isle of Sheppey £15.00 (included entrance to Blue Town Heritage Centre and guided tour)	
27 th Sept	Hop and hop picking – Richard Filmer	EVH
29 th Nov	A Dickens of a Christmas – Tonbridge Mummers	FVH
2014		
14 th Feb	The Kentish Seaside Resorts until WW1 – Ann Kneif	EVH
23 rd May	AGM	FVH
28 th June*	Elizabethan Pageant (various venues throughout the village of Eynsford)	
9 th Aug*	World War I Exhibition	FVH
16 th Aug*	World War I Exhibition	CVH
23 rd Aug*	World War I Exhibition	EBC
13 th Sept*	Trip to Faversham (tbc)	
26 th Sept	Keep the Home Fires Burning Dartford 1914 to 1918 Chris Baker	FVH
21 st Nov	Edith Cavell – Paul Rason	EVH

Please note * Saturday

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)

Was it the opportunity to look at old school photographs and reminisce about our school days, highlighted by the personal experiences Jill Hussey shared with us in her talk about Eynsford village school that drew members to the AGM on the 24th May. I really cannot say, but thank you all for attending. Thanks also to Veronica and Dee

for arranging the buffet which also had reminders of times gone by as we feasted on among other things spam, cheese and pineapple on sticks and of course waggon wheels.

As we have no more meetings until September please don't forget us during the 'SUMMER' months. Any little snippet of local events that you find looking through newspapers or family albums that are passed on to us will add a little more history to the folders stored in the archives. We might even find a new subject to research, who knows. Which makes me ask, what did you do on Coronation Day? I can remember what I did as I was living in Eynsford on that day. Were there any street parties or village events to mark this important day or were you, like me sitting in front of that new device in the corner of the sitting room called a television set. My parents didn't own one so as a family we walked to Birchwood Road to visit my aunt and uncle who did. Just a reminder it doesn't have to be old to be recorded, there isn't a cut-off date for history. We are adding information for future generations.

PUBLICATION REPORT (Barbara Cannell 864253)

From the archives at Sevenoaks Library and the Kent History & Library Centre at Maidstone, Wilfred Duncombe and Geoffrey Copus have written about the proceedings of two types of manorial court taken from some 15th and 17th century court rolls of the Manors of Eynsford Castle, Southcourt and Lullingstone. Some of the work has been translated from Latin. A Manor was once the main unit for local government and court rolls tell us how the activities and conduct of those living within the manor were ruled. It is interesting to find many familiar family names and to be able to identify properties and surrounding fields and to follow the disputes that arose from non-payment of rents and other misdemeanours. Although sometimes difficult to follow the wording, I didn't realise how much one could learn about the history of a manor (village) from court rolls.

TREASURER'S REPORT (Philip McGarvey)

Printed copies of the audited accounts (kindly audited by Peter Doye again) had been placed on tables at the AGM, in 2 versions: one (small print) comparing the 2011/12 figures to the previous three years, and a larger print edition showing just the one year.

If you add together the prime expenses of printing publications including bulletins (£304); gross expenditure on meetings including hall hire & speakers (£393); premises including council tax, water & electricity (£581) the total of these basic fundamentals comes to £1,278, which divided by 89 members costs each member about £14.40 per head, I said (actually £14.36).

This is substantially more than the £9 individual subscription, but these costs are partially offset by income, significantly donations totalling of £313 – mostly from Farningham, Eynsford & Crockenhill Parish Councils and the annual Fireworks (and thank you for all of those) and sales of publications (£146) – a total of £459, reducing the next expenditure for members to £829, or £9.31 each.

Thanks to Jan Wilkes' wonderful fundraising events and trips, there is further net income of £449 – which covers this year's expenditure of £399 on archive materials and some furniture. (From the floor John Mesnard did ask about net income from each of the separate events – the Treasurer does have these figures, but, for the sake of brevity had lumped them together)

On adding in the other smaller expenditures, including insurance via membership of Kent History Federation, stationery etc, the overall net shortfall amounted to £483.70 for the year.

(Note that this year, since March 2013, we are now insured via a group scheme with

BALH – much cheaper than going direct to any insurance company – and fully insured for the first time.)

As I have now been Treasurer for longer than I can remember (though I did computerise the accounts eleven years ago, in May 2002) it is time someone else had a go. While I had already said that much previously, I really must ask for a replacement now, please. Although I have promised that I will not just walk away from this, I cannot be still doing this in two years from now. So, thinking caps on please, as I would like to be able to do an orderly handover.

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

National Wills Index

This is the largest online resource for pre-1858 probate material, going back to the C14th. <http://www.nationalwillsindex.com> will get into this resource which covers names of all people mentioned in the will, their relationship to the testator, details of bequests, and places associated with the testator. The documents online include administrations, inventories and accounts.

Ladybird book 'Understanding Maps'

Following Caroline Alexander's fascinating talk about her father's major role in producing these, I found our collection has one Ladybird book, 'Understanding Maps'. Caroline told us that the number under the ladybird logo inside the back cover, gave the date and series no. 'Understanding Map' is Series 671, which means that it was published in 1967.

The Ingram family in the C20th

Maurice Ingram from Cambridgeshire has sent items of family history detailed in 'Acquisitions' below. His covering letter outlined his connection with Eynsford, where his grandfather, Stanley Oliver Albert Ingram, lived his married life with Elizabeth, bringing up their son, Ronald, Maurice's father, at 6 Malt Shovel Cottages. Stanley served in Egypt in the First World War, and on his return worked at the forge opposite until its closure. After that he worked at the pumping station near the viaduct, dying of a heart attack at the station. He was a member of the Working Men's Club and a bell ringer at St. Martin's Church. Stanley's sister, Viola, lived above a shop opposite the school. Stanley's neighbours were Ruth ?Boakes/Bokes in no.7, a small shop selling bikes and spare bit and pieces in no.8, while Mr and Mrs Groombridge lived in no.5. There are photographs of these neighbours. Stanley's good friend was Graham Robson, who lived in a big house in Eynsford. He married a Singaporean girl in 1947, and Maurice and his wife attended the wedding in Singapore. Maurice would be interested to know what became of the Robsons. Please let me know if you have any information of the family or where they lived in Eynsford.

Arthur Mee

Keith, a professor at Macquarie University, in Sydney, has made enquiries about what material we hold on Arthur Mee. I was able to scan 5 items of interest. One was a copy of a letter sent by Arthur Mee, 'Daddie', to his daughter, Marjorie, 'Marsie' in 1938. 'IOU ONE LITTLE HOUSE AND ALL THAT IS IN IT ON THE FIRST OF JUNE 1938.' Keith thinks this is the house Arthur Mee bought for Marjorie in Crockenhill Lane – the telephone directory of 1938 listing Marjorie Mee as living in Little House there. He writes that Marjorie was very close to her parents and Arthur doted on her. She had more toys than you would find at Hamley's, and a Shetland pony. Marjorie liked to drive, and as an adult often drove her parents around, although the Mees did have a chauffeur. Marjorie died, unmarried on 17 February 1983, aged 81, leaving over

£250,000 in her will.

Wellard surname

I read in the Journal of the North West Family History Society that Colin Willeard has been collecting information of members of the Willard/Wellard (and variants) family for 35 years and has amassed a vast database. The surname dates back to pre-C7th 'Wilheard' = wil (desire) + hard (brave and strong). I know I have come across Wellard members in Eynsford's past. Currently, Colin is compiling, with other volunteers, a database on female convicts to Australia.

Contact: editor@nwkhfs.org.uk

Eynsford and Farningham Parish Council Minutes, 1914-1918

Bearing in mind the centenary in 2014 of the outbreak of the First World War, I have been reading the Parish Councils' Minutes to see what they reveal about village life during the War, so far I have only taken notes on the Eynsford minutes. It is likely that FELHS will mount an exhibition on how the War affected the locality next year, but I will give a few excerpts here and in later Bulletins, as space allows.

9 February 1915

It was reported that 60 or 70 men from Eynsford and a similar number from Crockenhill had joined the army or navy.

13 April 1915

Mr Bowers drew attention to the excessive speed of motor vehicles through the village of Eynsford particularly on Sundays and holidays. Resolved: That the attention of KCC be drawn to the matter.*

(* Not a war issue, but perhaps the earliest complaint of this sort, which 100 years on could be repeated!)

10 October 1916

Councillor SJ Hussey desired to know the condition of the Fire Brigade in case of the outbreak of fire from enemy aircraft. Mr F Hussey, Vice Captain of the Fire Brigade, who was present, stated that owing to the war the Fire Brigade had been very considerably depleted of members, but it was very necessary to obtain more hose to put the Fire Brigade in a better position to cope with any outbreak of fire.

12 December 1916

300 feet of hose had been ordered from Messrs Shand Mason and Co. of London @ £4 13s 6d per 500-foot length.

10 April 1917

Letter from the County War Agricultural Committee asking for suggestions for the destruction of rooks. It was pointed out that there was only one rookery in the parish, belonging to Sir William Hart Dyke and Councillor Lee promised to mention the matter to him.

(KHLC PC271/A/1/2)

John Thomas, Postmaster of Farningham

Brian is John Thomas's great grandson and he has provided detailed family information. John was postmaster at Farningham for 48 years. John Thomas (1843-1926) came from Cornwall and boarded with Mr Hearn (Marianne Farningham's father) on his arrival in Farningham. He took over as postmaster in 1879 on Mr Hearn's retirement, and remained as postmaster until 1926. In that year he was held up in the Post Office at the point of a revolver by a robber, who demanded money from the till. Luckily, his wife had been able to run out into the road and called over two workmen, who scared off the robber. It was estimated that John Thomas had walked 273,750 miles delivering mail over the 50 years he was at Farningham, i.e. 12 miles a day covering the whole of Farningham parish. At the arrival of the telephone,

a switchboard was installed in the Post Office in 1904, with 12 subscribers.

Even more information about the Soho Pub

When cataloguing the public houses section of the archives I came across a sale poster of 1818, advertising a 'desirable freehold property' to be sold by auction. It boasts of a substantial lofty brick dwelling house, which was built for a public house, lying near the church. The Soho is not named, but all the particulars point to the property being the present Ford House, the land to the river and the car park at the side.

John Walter of Farningham

John had tracked down John Walter, his 4x great grandfather, to 3 entries in the 1798 Land Tax Redemption. One property was in Eynsford with owner, Mrs Nash, and two in Farningham, one owned by Susannah Nash. Looking in Shirley Burgoyne Black's 'Local Government, Law and Order in a pre-reform English Parish, 1790-1834', p.123, I found John Walter listed as High Constable of the Lower Half Hundred of Axtane, 1797-1798, being a maltster of Farningham. This rang a bell, and I went to FELHS Miscellany no 5, with a paper by Jane Schoelkopf on 'The Limes, Farningham – The Story of an Eynsford Malthouse'. Sure enough the Nash family owned this malthouse, which straddled the border of Eynsford and Farningham. The third property tenanted by John Walter was owned by Edward Homewood, who was mentioned on several pages of Shirley's book. On p.312 Shirley described how, in 1797, Edward Homewood was summoned to answer a complaint made against him by Robert Jackson, gatekeeper of Farningham, for having avoided the tolls at the gate. He was a young man at the time, and of mercurial character. He appears to have been a person of some fortune, at one time a captain of the dragoons, and later in life a J.P. However, he died bankrupt in Boulogne in 1827, having indulged in a period of lavish spending. For avoiding the toll, he was fined 40 shillings (£2), plus 1/9d (8p), which was the amount of the toll he had tried to avoid paying.

Thomas Wright of Chelsfield v. stepmother Alice Smith, 1659

Thomas Wright inherited his father's estate, which included over 30 acres of land, now in Crockenhill, namely Westfield, Hempstalls, Darns hill and Darns hill wood and Riddens spring wood. This land now lies in Willow Farm, Tylers Green Road. Unfortunately for Thomas his stepmother, Alice Smith of Chelsfield, had taken possession of all his father's 'trunks, chests and boxes remaining in his house at Chelsfield at the time of his death wherein all his evidences, writings, deeds and conveyances were stored', and, 'she will not deliver them up, although I have often in a friendly manner asked her to do so.' She was now threatening to fell the timber, and Thomas did not know how to stop her. This document was his petition to the Speaker of Parliament asking for a subpoena compelling his stepmother to hand over the deeds to him.

(The National Archives C6/18/189)

Family history enquiries

- **Gibson** – Alistair has information of the family back to a farrier, William Gibson, born c.1805. He thought also that William had been the innkeeper of the Lion Inn, Farningham, but I found no reference to Gibson in Hilary and Wilfrid's FELHS publication on the Pubs of Farningham. I suggested he purchase Wilf Duncombe's FELHS publication no.39 'The Gibson Family of Farningham and Eynsford.'

Other enquiries

- **Farningham Boys Home** – I pointed John to the Noticeboard page of our website which gives details of the whereabouts of the records of the Home. John's grandfather was in the Home and went to sea on leaving.
- **Book on the Darent Valley** – Rod is writing a book on this and has sent in numerous enquiries.
- **Lullingstone dummy airfield / proposed airport** – For the first I suggested Peter purchase Miscellany 2 containing Wilf Duncombe's article on the subject. For the latter I put him in touch with John King, whose long awaited publication on the subject has still not been finalised.
- **Butcher's Lane, Eynsford** – I was asked for pictures and information on this footpath. I could not find any pictures or early reference to the name. There was, however, a track on this route on the 1802 Lullingstone Estate Map, leading to a field called 'Lower Chequer Hills'. The word 'Chequer' often referred to the wild service tree (*sorbus torminalis*), the fruit of which was used to make an alcoholic brew – hence the many pubs called 'Chequers' you see around.
- **Goodwin's Yard, Eynsford** – I was asked its location. The tithe map of the 1840s lists plots nos.546-548 as belonging to Thomas Goodwin, no.546 being the corn mill by the bridge. I suggested the enquirer purchased Miscellany no.6 with Wilf Duncombe's article on the corn mill, which mentions Goodwin, and has an excerpt of the tithe map.

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

FELHS Centre

I have been steadily working through cataloguing, a task made much easier by the initial sorting by Anne Cremer and Jackie Clark, who also put items in conservation pockets. I am taking the opportunity of rationalising the catalogue to make searching for an item easier in the future. Stupidly, in picking up one of the boxes of folders to bring back home to catalogue I strained my back, so further progress has been halted. I have also been making more space in the filing cabinets to accommodate the extra material. As we were running out of conservation pockets more have been ordered. Unfortunately, Anne will have to give up the sorting this year, although Jackie is prepared to go on alone. It is great fun looking at all the items, so please if you can spare an hour or two to join Jackie, or to do some sorting separately or with others, do let me know.

During the sorting I came across three folders of newspaper cuttings, some dating back to the 1970s not put into the scrapbooks. I am very grateful to Diana Beamish, who undertook the fiddly, time-consuming task, of sorting out and adding the scraps into the relevant scrapbooks.

Acquisitions

From Geoffrey Copus – His handwritten copy of the will of Paul Colomies, rector of Eynsford, from Vol. III p.238 of a book of wills in Lambeth Palace Library. It mentions no possessions; abstract of equity proceedings 1659 re Thomas Wright of Chelsfield. (see above)

From John Gee – Bound cash book of Eynsford Horticultural Society, 1905-1910; photocopies 1903 programme of Eynsford and District Horticultural and Cottage Garden Society Poultry and Rabbit Show and entry form, 1904 programme of Eynsford Horticultural Society.

From Maurice Ingram – Maurice's grandfather was Stanley Ingram, blacksmith at

the forge nearly opposite The Malt Shovel. He has donated a collection of family photographs, including his grandfather at the forge. He also sent the marriage certificate by special licence of Stanley Ingram to Elizabeth Richardson in 1915; a Christmas card, 1916, from John H. Brier of the West Kent Yeomanry in Egypt; wedding invitation of Tinika Augustijn to Graham Robson, Singapore, 1947; letter, 1937, headed 'Arnold and Foster' with details of Ronald Ingram's carpenter's apprenticeship at the paper mill; 1941 certificate on completion of 4-years' apprenticeship; reference letter, 1920, headed 'The Garage, Ightham', recommending Stanley Ingram for new job; two-sided hand written list of family births and deaths, 1866-1930; Holy Communion book, 1938, from Bishop of Rochester presented to Ronald Ingram on confirmation. (see above)

From Martyn Miles – bound copy of Arthur Mee's 'My Magazine' volume 10, which contains articles such as the building of Arthur Mee's house, which were later compiled into the Children's Encyclopedia.

From Stan and Esme Rivett's daughter – Various newspaper cuttings 1987-1991.

From Brian Thomas – information with scanned photographs about John Thomas (1843-1926), postmaster at Farningham, married to Harriet nee Ashenden, Arthur Stanley Thomas (1880-1953) married to Gertrude nee Frost. (see above)

and finally.....

Attached is a renewal form for membership, please accept my apologies if you receive one and you have already paid for 2013. For those members who have not paid, this is your last chance before you are removed from our membership list. If you still wish to remain a member please return the form to me with your subscription, if I don't hear from you by the end of July I will assume you no longer wish to be a member. If this is the case thank you for your support in the past and perhaps one day you will re-join the society.

As you can see we have a very busy year in 2014. Full details of the World War I Exhibitions and the Elizabethan Pageant will follow as soon as plans are finalised.

Back to 2013, there are still places on the coach for the Isle of Sheppey trip, a form is attached and our next meeting is about hop picking, come along and try hop picker's cake. If anyone has photographs and memories of hop picking locally please bring them along to the meeting.

Jan Wilkes – Editor (865122)

**PLEASE AIR YOUR VIEWS BY COMPLETING
THE ATTACHED QUESTIONNAIRE AND
RETURNING TO JAN by email to
Jan51@btinternet.com or to 2 Fountain Cottages,
Bower Lane, Eynsford, Kent DA4 0AL**

WHAT'S ON 2013

Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society 2013

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 2013

21 st June	The Renaissance Garden – Kent – Sally Berkeley
14 th July	Strawberry Tea at Oaklea, home of Dr Mary Bliss
20 th Sept	History of Chatham Dockyard – Nick Fothergill
2 nd Oct	Visit to Chatham Dockyard
18 th Oct	Samual Palmer, joint meeting with the Shoreham Society
15 th Nov	Some Aspects of the Western Front – Paul Rasan

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 2013

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)

