

**OUR TALK TODAY****LOST EMPIRES - THE LAST DAYS OF MUSIC HALL & VARIETY  
WILF LOWER**

Wilf's early life was surrounded by Music Hall and variety performers as the family home provided digs for pros appearing at local theatres. Growing up with the 'stars', 'rising stars', and a few 'fading stars', it was hardly surprising that he acquired an intimate knowledge of 'the business'. However, he opted for a more respectable profession, becoming a chartered engineer that developed into general management. Such managerial skills, combined with a wide background knowledge of the entertainment industry, resulted in his joining BBC Television where for many years, including the so-called 'golden' period of the seventies and eighties, he was responsible for Scenic Operations - the scenery, props, 'working' the shows, essentially everything seen on screen except the performers, their costumes and make-up!

Wilf subsequently set up a consultancy serving the television, film and theatre industries, which included several years as Technical Administrator for the National Theatre on London's South Bank.

In addition to his regard for show business, Wilf has had a life-long love of ships, sailing and all matters maritime & was only six years old when local watermen taught him how to scull a dinghy! In the nineties he established a new career organising maritime festivals and tallship events throughout Europe and the UK and is a popular champion of Britain's marine heritage.

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY****SEVENOAKS BRANCH**

THERE IS NO MEETING IN JANUARY

**BROMLEY BRANCH****Eltham Palace & the Courtauld Family**

David Sleep: 21st January 2017

**DARTFORD BRANCH****Dirty Dartford**

Chris Bull: 4th February 2017

**NWKFHS WORKSHOPS****Recording Keeping for Family Historians**

David Cufley: 18th January 2017

**Society Quarterly Discussion Group**

25th January 2017

**Beginner Session**

Fran Rogers: 15th February 2017

**An Introduction to Family historian**

Brian Kirk: 22nd February 2017

**For further details please see the website****2017 SOCIETY SUBSCRIPTIONS LAST REMINDER**

If you have yet to renew your society membership & have forgotten to bring your chequebook with you today please see Maureen Griffiths today to arrange payment.

**WANTED**

Now the festive seasons over, the last of the turkey either in the bin or in the dog & your Christmas cards put out for recycling, hopefully you will have saved all the postage stamps for Janet. If you haven't got them with you today please bring them with you to either February's meeting or drop them in into the Summerhouse Drive Library on any Wednesday between 10am & 4pm. Also, have you saved all your milk bottle tops? These can left at the library along with the stamps but please wash them first.

*From the Editor*

*I hope everyone of you had a very Happy Christmas with family & friends & now I want to take the opportunity to wish you all a peaceful, healthy & prosperous 2017.*

*Hilary*

## BRANCH NEWSLETTERS

As you are aware paper copies of the Dartboard are available at each meeting but I don't think many of you know that copies of the previous month's edition are also available, so PLEASE BE CAREFUL WHICH ONE YOU PICK UP, unless of course you want a copy of the previous month's.

The Dartboard, along with the newsletters of Bromley & Sevenoaks branch meetings, are also available on the Society's website & should be available for viewing a few days prior to their respective meeting. Back editions, some back as far as 2012, are on the site, [www.nwkhfs/newsletters.hmt](http://www.nwkhfs/newsletters.hmt) along with the monthly Society newsletter. Each newsletter is in a unique format & takes a different approach to items of interest so just because you live in the Dartford area does not mean there is nothing for you in the other branch newsletters.

## YOUR HELP NEEDED

When preparing an edition of the Dartboard I find myself spending a couple of hours, much of it fruitless, surfing various web sites for articles to include in 'Other Sources & Societies' & 'Other Events of Interest' sections. Most of the time I find myself coming up with events on websites that anyone can access like The National Trust & English Heritage. So are you a member of another small local society/club/organisation which fellow NWKFHS members may find interesting & would like to advertise or publicise it's events? Even if you are not a member but know of one I would be very interested to hear from you. If it is one-off or an annual event I would need plenty notice as each Dartboard edition is prepared 7 - 10 days prior the meeting & ideally the event to be publicised should be at least 1 week after our meeting.

If you can help please email me at [hilarywaters@me.com](mailto:hilarywaters@me.com) with the name of the society, name of website if it has one, or a contact name & phone number if it doesn't, a brief description of it's aims & activities & any other information you may think relevant. Alternately please see me on the Branch Library stall at the meetings.

## MEMBERS INTERESTS BOX

Please do not forget this box which is at the back of the hall & is where you can publicise the surnames of the branches of your family which you are researching. The objective of this is to put in touch members who are researching the same people/families & who may be able to help each other. This is a Branch based 'members list' & is an extension to the Society's 'members interest list'. For more information see the internal link 'Surname & Other Interests' on the front page of the website & who knows, you may find living relatives you never knew existed.

## UNWANTED BOOKS?

The Society accepts all donated books that are useful to family historians. This is not just indexes & 'how to research family history' books as we also accept social & local histories, trade & occupation sources to name but a few. Books donated that are duplicates to the current Society & Branch library collections are used to replace damaged editions or sold to members for the benefit of the Society. More information can be found by following the link 'Library & Resource Centre', again on the front page of the website. Please see Janet if you have other types of books as she may accept them as raffle prizes.

## NORTH WEST KENT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY, DARTFORD BRANCH

Meetings are held at the Dartford Science & Technology College, Heath Lane, Dartford on the 1st Saturday of the month from 9.45am to 12.30pm.

<b>Master of Ceremonies:</b> Janet Rose	<b>Exchange journals:</b> Stella Nicholls
<b>Branch Secretary:</b> Sheila Elisak	<b>Bookstall:</b> Gillian Seager & Tim Jacobs
<b>Reception:</b> Sheila Elisak & Pauline Heathcote	<b>Notice board &amp; members Interests:</b> Sylvia Hammond
<b>Old magazines &amp; journals:</b> Joyce Bullard	<b>Transport, events &amp; outings:</b> Hilary Waters
<b>Refreshments</b> (tea, coffee, squash, biscuits): Sandra & Bob Shepherd	<b>Reference book library:</b> Hilary Waters (reference books may be borrowed at no charge)
<b>Computer help desk:</b> Allan Stapleton	<b>Raffle:</b> Pat Cornelius
<b>Genealogical problems table:</b> Experienced family history researchers to help you when you are stuck	<b>Information &amp; miscellaneous:</b> Various information lists & borrowing of fiche
<b>Logistics Manager:</b> Lorraine King	<b>Sound Technicians:</b> John Muskett & Ian West
<b>Branch Finance Officer:</b> Maureen Griffiths	<b>Pastoral Care:</b> Raymer Lofts

**Dartboard editor:** Hilary Waters

All details in this newsletter are checked before going to press. The Editor is not responsible for subsequent changes.