



THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE DARTFORD BRANCH OF THE
NORTH WEST KENT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

www.nwkhfs.org.uk

4TH NOVEMBER 2017 (DOORS OPEN 9.45, STARTS 10.30)

**OUR TALK TODAY
THE MASONS & 300 YEARS OF THE GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND
PETER JONES**

Peter was born & brought up in Norfolk. After 2 years National Service in the RAF he moved to London where in 1959 he joined the Metropolitan Police as a trainee Fingerprint Expert & where he worked for 38 years., attaining a senior management role before retiring in 1997. In retirement Peter became a volunteer for the National Trust where he was a room steward at Chartwell. He soon put his new found knowledge of the National Trust & some of it's local properties into practice by giving talks to various groups & clubs on the work of the Trust & some of it's treasures. Peter has been a member of the Masons for 50 years & has held various offices including Master of the same lodge twice & is currently it's Treasurer.

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
SEVENOAKS BRANCH**

Spooky Tales. The History of Halloween
Geoff Hutchinson: 9th November 2017

BROMLEY BRANCH

The Goose is Getting Fat! The History of Christmas Tradition
Inogen Corrigan: 18th November 2017

DARTFORD BRANCH

The Biography of Father Christmas
Rupert Matthews: 2nd December 2017

NWKFHS WORKSHOPS

Open Meeting - Support Your Society - Become a Volunteer

Victor Nutt: 15th November 2017

Society Quarterly Writing Group No. 1

Pauline Heathcote: 22nd November 2017

Society Writing Group No. 2

Pauline Heathcote: 29th November 2017

THERE ARE NO WORKSHOPS IN DECEMBER

For further details please see the website

2018 SUSCRIPTIONS

Next year's subscriptions will start being collected by Maureen Griffiths at the next meeting in December & in January 2018's meeting. Yet another year without any increases so it is still £10 per individual or £12 for 2 people at the same address. What a bargain! Please consider setting up a standing order, not only is it easier for Maureen & Pat our Treasurer but also for you too. Maureen often has to carry large amounts of cash around & we wouldn't want her to get mugged would we!

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

In the last edition of the Dartboard I warned you that Christmas was only 3 months away but now it is less than 2, 51 day to be precise. So here is the second mention & reminder of what is happening over the next 3 months in the Dartford Branch.

Our regular Christmas Lunch will be after the Branch meeting on the 2nd December & will cost £13.50p per person. Tickets are now on sale from either Raymer Lofts on the Secretary's table at the meeting or from the Society Library every Wednesday. The meal consists of a traditional turkey main course, a choice of deserts & soft drinks. Vegetarian & celiac options are available but **MUST** be pre-booked when purchasing your tickets. For advice on any other dietary requirements please contact Janet Rose on 01322 384836 or at the Society's Library on a Wednesday.

Janet is now also asking for donations for the Christmas hampers which are the main prizes in the Christmas raffle drawn on the same day. No fresh food & please ensure that all tins/packages etc. are well within their best before date & not damaged.

As usual there will be a collection box for donations in lieu of sending cards to other society members. This year the the money will go to 'Headway', a national head injuries charity, but it will be requested that our donation will be ring fenced for the Kent Branch.

Last year I bought a small selection of handmade (by myself) Christmas cards for sale at the meetings with all proceeds going to the Society's coffers. I will be doing the same again this year so please come to the Branch Library stall for a browse through some unique, not to be seen anywhere else, cards.

BRITISH NEWSPAPER ARCHIVE

Newspapers are an invaluable source of information for both family & local historians or those who just want to know what was happening in the past. Many publications, both national & local, have started & then closed down but many are still going. These days many past editions of them have been photographed to microfilm & are easily accessible to view at libraries & local archives. Often once this is done the originals have been transferred to The British Library in London which has taken over the collection previously held at Colindale, North London. It is possible to visit the Library & see the originals or many can be viewed on-line from your armchair at www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk, please note that not all papers they have acquired have yet been digitalised.

Are any of you interested in the theatre & films? Want to know more about the history of these arts & the performers who have entertained generations? Or do you have a thespian* or two in the family who you would like to know more about? If so the British Newspaper Archive now have the complete run of The Stage from 1880 to 2007, over 170,600 pages.

* - The word thespian comes from an Ancient Greek, Thespis of Icaria (present day Dionysos), who according to legend was the 1st person to ever appear on stage as an actor playing a character other than himself.

NEWSPAPERS IN PRACTICAL USE

Continuing on with the theme of newspapers my recent newspaper research will demonstrate how easy & productive newspapers can be in family history. At a recent family funeral I learnt of a confused story of the tragic death of my grandmother's sister in a road traffic accident in Maidstone. Some time ago I had completed a quick search for her on Ancestry & came up with the GRO Index references for her birth, marriage & death in 1930 but had not gone any further so the 1st thing I did was update the search. Looking further into her marriage I established her husband's name which in turn lead me to the censuses. The 1911 census showed a family of husband & wife & 4 daughters, the youngest being only 1 month old. The search also turned up a reference for her in the England & Wales National Probate Calendar 1861-1941 which was most valuable as it gave the exact date of death, & so saved on buying a certificate! I now had enough information to go to the archives at the Kent History & Library Centre & see what the local paper said. With help from the staff & The Kent Messenger on microfilm I soon found a lengthy article which not only gave details of the accident but also the inquest which was held the following day. From the article I also learnt that she had another son & daughter born after WW1 who were both present at the accident & their address in 1930. I have now got the full story & put the family straight on the details. Confusion resolved.

WORKSHOP WITH A DIFFERENCE

On Wednesday the 15th November there will be an 'Open Meeting' instead of the usual workshop. But what is an 'Open Meeting'? This is your opportunity to come along to the Joydens Wood Library, meet some current volunteers, see the range of tasks they do, ask questions & find out how you could join them. Even if you can only spare an hour a month, more would be appreciated though, there will always be something you can do. And no special knowledge or skills are required for many openings, in fact you may find new friends & maybe new skills too!

The current volunteers are struggling at present to find time to fit everything in & as the Society runs on volunteers without them there would be no society so please come along & find out how you can help your society & improve it's services to its members & keep it going. As this is a workshop with a difference normal donations for attending are not expected.

ALL WELCOME, BUT PLEASE BOOK YOUR PLACE

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.

Master of Ceremonies: Janet Rose	Exchange journals: Stella Nicholls
Branch Secretary: Sheila Elisak	Bookstall: Gillian Seager & Tim Jacobs
Reception: Sheila Elisak & Pauline Heathcote	Notice board & members Interests: Sylvia Hammond
Old magazines & journals: Joyce Bullard	Trips & outings: Hilary Waters
Light refreshments: Sandra & Bob Shepherd	Free reference book library: Hilary Waters
Computer help desk: Allan Stapleton	Raffle: Pat Cornelius
Logistics Manager: Lorraine King	Sound Technicians: John Muskett & Ian West
Branch Finance Officer: Maureen Griffiths	Pastoral Care: Raymer Lofts
Programme Secretary: Barbara Phillips	Events Manager: Barbara Attwaters
Genealogical problems table: Experienced family history researchers to help you when you are stuck	
Dartboard editor: Hilary Waters (email: hilarywaters@me.com)	