



9 JUNE 2016

ISSUE NUMBER 40

Sevenoaks Newsletter

THE NORTH WEST KENT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY, SEVENOAKS, KENT
www.nwkfhs.org.uk



NEXT BRANCH MEETING

14TH JULY

Well I never knew that!

A light hearted tour through the villages of the Darenth

Speaker: ROD SHELTON

OTHER BRANCH MEETINGS

BROMLEY

18TH JUNE French Street Burial Ground

Speakers CHRISTINA BARNETT & KARINA JACKSON

DARTFORD

2ND JULY - RAF Bomber Command

Speaker RUPERT MATTHEWS

Welcome to NWKFHS Sevenoaks Branch. In addition to the talks, we have a number of interesting tables for you to browse. These include a bookstall, old magazines and journals, exchange journals and a reference book library. Plus don't forget to take a look at our notice board.

The books from our library may be borrowed at no charge and the magazines are a snip at 20 pence each. You might just find the publication or book you are looking for.

Do visit our computer help desk where Karina will make every effort to assist with your family history brick wall.

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at Sevenoaks Community Centre, Otford Road Sevenoaks, TN14 5DN. Doors open at 7.15pm, meeting starts at 8pm. There is free car parking - and refreshments are available.

We welcome visitors and new members, and we hope to offer all the helpful advice that you might need, we hope you enjoy your visit.

Guests we appreciate a £1.00 donation to the society's funds.

THIS EVENING'S TALK - "Life on Board Henry VIII's warship - Mary Rose" - Speaker Trevor Sapey, the Community Engagement Officer at the Mary Rose Trust and is therefore most knowledgeable on this subject. I for one cannot wait to know what life in the 1500's was like on this famous ship.

NEWS ITEM

Findmypast have added an extra 1.4 million parish records for the City of Westminster (the West End of London) - amongst them there are more than 300,000 new baptisms, 409,000 marriages and 517,000 burials. This is the third phase of the project, so still more to come. Visit www.findmypast.co.uk

New Records Online for County Westmeath - Westmeath Genealogy has added 36,000 new records to its online database at www.westmeath.rootsireland.ie. The new records include Mullingar death records, Westmeath Gravestone inscriptions and various baptisms and marriages between the years 1900 to 1920. The full list of available sources for the Westmeath Genealogy Centre can be viewed at: www.westmeath.rootsireland.ie/generic.php?filename=sources.tpl&selectedMenu=sources

EVENTS

13TH June - Researching Ancestors in the Army in India -

Families in British India Society held at The British Library, 96 Euston Rd, London NW1 2DB

Researching Ancestors in the Army in India is a FREE workshop looking at biographical sources for military personnel in India. No previous knowledge of the subject is expected or required. If, therefore, you believe you have European ancestors who served in the Indian sub-continent, whether as officers or private soldiers, please book your free place. Time 14.00-17.00. Contact APAC Reference Services Telephone no. 020 7412 7873 - Email: hrrs-training@bl.uk

7th July - Breaking Down Brickwalls Workshop: What's Been Done Before? - Society of Genealogists, 14 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Rd. EC1M 7BA - This workshop session will be an opportunity to tackle genealogical brick walls and conundrums in a group environment. After all two heads (or more) are usually better than one! Facilitated by a tutor the introduction will look at a topic or problem that commonly arises during the Society's regular consultations or advice sessions and make sure you know what you need to know to tackle the problem. After the initial presentation the tutor will open up the session to group questions and discussions about your genealogical queries that may (but not exclusively) be related to the topic under discussion. In this workshop session, the society's genealogist will present a step by step guide for identifying manuscript and printed genealogical research material in the Library of the SoG. Lecturer Else Churchill - Time 1800 - 1945 - Price £20.00 - Website: www.sog.org.uk

13th July Researching Brewery & Publican Ancestors - Society of Genealogists, 14 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Rd. EC1M 7BA - Until fairly recently the public house in its various guises was a centre of the community and innkeepers were often respected figures locally. In addition most towns and villages had a brewery or two providing beer to slake the throats of everybody from princes to paupers. This lecture will discuss the major sources you will need to use if you have a publican or brewer on your family tree. It also looks at the changing nature of the tavern from the simple beer house to gaudy gin palace. Unfortunately, there will be no free samples! Speaker Simon Fowler - Time 1400 Duration 1 hour - Price £8.00 - Website: www.sog.org.uk

Kent Events

16th JUNE - 'Whatever Happened to Christopher Robin?' - **Sevenoaks Historical Society, the Undercroft, St Nicholas Church, Sevenoaks TN13 1JA**. Speaker Gilly Halcrow - Time 8pm - non-members £3.00

24TH JUNE - **Potholes, Pigs and Paradise - Kemsing Heritage Centre, St Edith Hall, High Street, Kemsing, Kent TN15 6NA**
Speaker Penny Harris - Time 7.30pm, non-members £2.50

28th JUNE - **Victorian Street Life - Tunbridge Wells Family History Society, Groombridge Village Hall, Station Rd, Tunbridge Wells TN3 9QX** - by Delia Taylor. Time 7.30pm for 8pm start.

5th JULY - **The Kings Supporters: - Crowborough & District Historical Society, Pine Grove, Crowborough TN6 1FE** - Tales of the ladies of the Early Tudor Court - how important were they? By Pat Mortlock - 8pm start, non-members £4.00

20th JULY - **Women - Famous, infamous and unsung - Kent Family History Society, The Birchington Village Centre, Alpha Road, Birchington, Kent CT7 9EG** - Speaker by Chris Mc Cooley - Time 7.30 pm



Anne Seymour Damer nee Conway

Anne Seymour Conway was born 8 November 1749, in Sevenoaks into an aristocratic Whig family; she was the only daughter of Field-Marshal Henry Seymour Conway (1721–1795) and his wife Caroline Bruce, born Campbell, Lady Ailesbury (1721–1803), and was brought up at the family home at Park

Place, Remenham, Berkshire. Anne was to become became the first recognised female sculptor in Britain and an author, who led a fascinating life.

Ambitious female artist's found it difficult to establish careers as painters but it was not impossible – one endeavour however that was considered male dominated and off limits to women was sculpture. This was an artistic area where women were considered neither to be physically strong enough for the profession nor to have the intellectually strength; attributes essential for a successful sculpture! Women of the 18th century faced many obstacles to becoming artists, and the art of sculpture was the most difficult to get in to. Women were not allowed to study the male form in detail as it was thought not proper and immoral. However, Anne was fortunate enough to have been born to enlightened parents. As their only child she was given much attention and a cosmopolitan education. When she showed an interest in sculpture her parents indulged and encouraged her unusual pursuit. They supported her by paying for specialist tuition from practising sculpture's and crucially an eminent surgeon and anatomist; this provided her with the training a workshop or academy would not offer her.

In 1767 at the age of 17 she was married off to John Damer, the son of Lord Milton, later the 1st Earl of Dorchester. The couple received an income of £5,000 from Lord Milton, and were left large fortunes by Milton and Henry Conway. It was a loveless marriage Damer was a drunk and a gambler, a man of gross extravagances, including a love of clothes; they separated after seven years which would have been a scandal of its time. However the worst was to come as two years later after a night of gambling and *entertainment* in Covent Garden, Damer committed suicide by shooting himself, at the Bedford Arms, Covent Garden on 15 August 1776. He left his widow childless and with considerable debts, but also the proprietor of a wardrobe which fetched no more than £15,000 at auction. Yet, this could be argued to have been the best thing to have happened to her as it allowed her the freedom to develop her artistic career.

Her skill and drive to be a sculpture put her in the firing line –

gossips talked and wrote about her butch qualities, likening her to a man by the way she dressed. Her partiality for male clothing and demonstrative friendships with other women were publicly noted and satirised by hostile commentators such as Hester Thrale and in the anonymous pamphlet *A Sapphick Epistle from Jack Cavendish to the Honourable and most Beautiful, Mrs D—* (c.1770). Despite the mockery and gossip she did not back down and went on with self confidence to risk her reputation for her art. She exhibited 32 works as an honorary exhibitor at the Royal Academy from 1784 to 1818.

Anne's friends included a number of influential Whigs and aristocrats. Her father's cousin Horace Walpole who was her guardian and friend, was a significant figure, who helped foster her career and who admitted to his friend Horace Mann: "I love her as my own child." On his death left her his London villa, Strawberry Hill. She also moved in literary and theatrical circles, where her friends included the poet and dramatist Joanna Baillie, the author Mary Berry, and the actors Sarah Siddons and Elizabeth Farren. She frequently took part in masques at the Pantheon and amateur theatricals at the London residence of the Duke of Richmond.

Anne was a frequent visitor to Europe. During one voyage she was captured by a privateer, but released unharmed in Jersey. She visited Sir Horace Mann in Florence, and Sir William Hamilton, ambassador of Naples, (and of Emma fame) where she was introduced to Lord Nelson. In 1802, while the Treaty of Amiens was in effect, she visited Paris with the author and good friend Mary Berry, whom it is thought she had a romantic involvement with, and was granted an audience with Napoleon.

Her work primarily busts in Neoclassical style, range from early wax sculptures to works in terracotta, bronze and marble. Her subjects included Lady Melbourne, a leading Whig hostess, Horatio Nelson, Joseph Banks, a British naturalist and botanist who took part in Captain Cook's first great voyage, George III, Mary Berry, Charles James Fox, a Whig MP and leader of the Opposition to William Pitt the Younger's Tory government, he was a lifelong friend (it was he who told her of her husband's demise), and sculptures of herself. She was also a writer, with one published novel, *Belmour* (first published on 1801).

From 1818, Anne Damer lived at York House, Twickenham. She died, aged 79, in 1828 at her London house in Grosvenor Square, and is buried in the church at Sundridge, Kent, along with her sculptor's tools and apron and the ashes of her favourite dog.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne_Seymour_Damer
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0206s38>

07.06.2016

ON THIS DAY

JUNE 9TH is the 161ST day of the year in the Gregorian calendar; 205 days remain until the end of the year.

68 The Roman emperor Nero commits suicide, after quoting Homer's *Iliad*, thus ending the Julio-Claudian dynasty and starting the civil war known as the Year of the Four Emperors.

1456 23rd recorded perihelion passage of Halley's Comet

1588 Spanish Armada sails from Lisbon to England

1672 Peter the Great, Russian emperor is born (d. 1725)

1822 Charles Graham patents false teeth

1870 Charles Dickens, English novelist and critic dies (b. 1812)

1873 Alexandra Palace in London burns down after being open for only 16 days

1936 Novelist and journalist George Orwell (33) weds Eileen Maud O'Shaugnessy (30) at St. Mary's Church

1977 Silver jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain celebrated

1983 Margaret Thatcher leads the Conservatives to a landslide second term election victory

Last reminder for our Photographic Competition

Photographic Competition for the 2017 NWKFHS Calendar Entries needed from you for the second NWKFHS calendar (2017). Whilst full details are in the March journal you might like to start thinking about your entries, which must be loosely connected with Family History and the areas covered by the NWKFHS. (See our notice board for more information)

Details: *It should be your own work, a digital image (preferred) minimum 300 dpi, and colour or black and white prints should be 8 by 5 inches. Closing date for entries will be 30th June 2016. (Copyright statement in March Journal)*

Winners will get a free copy of the calendar and will be featured in the Journal – **Good Luck!**

NWKFHS WORKSHOPS - The two hour workshops are limited to 10 people, but are repeated if there is demand. Let us know if there is one you missed and would like it repeated. Workshops are held at the Library, Summerhouse Drive, Joydens Wood, Bexley Contact Janet Rose (01322-384836). Bookings and enquiries please email workshops@nwkfhs.org. Also see our notice board or please ask a member at one of our meetings.

The Sevenoaks Committee – Branch Chair Barbara Attwaters

Committee Members: Christina Barnett, Karina Jackson, Norma Holmden, Robert Barnett, Bernie Wilkins, Barbara Stead, Sandra Marchant