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ISSUE NUMBER 9

Sevenoaks Newsletter

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



NEXT BRANCH MEETING

13TH JUNE AT SEVENOAKS
Digital Access to Newspapers
JEANNE BUNTING

OTHER BRANCH MEETINGS

BROMLEY

18TH MAY - The National Archives - further resources identified

JERRY TOOP

DARTFORD

1ST JUNE - Royal Regiment of Artillery
PAUL EVANS

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.

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at Sevenoaks Community Centre, Otford Road Sevenoaks, TN13 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 aspire 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 IS 'PROTESTANT NONCONFORMITY' BY MARI ALDERMAN

Mari Alderman is an skilled Genealogist & it's always a pleasure to listen to one of her lectures; I know I will learn something this evening.

News Items

Findmypast-have added new Kent parish records to their collection in partnership with Kent Family History Society, making it even easier to find your local ancestors. The records cover a wide period of 1538-2006 and provide rich details for family historians. Records include: Baptisms: 498,176 records /Banns: 10,121 records / Marriages: 172,371 records / Burials: 354,749 records. For further details visit their website findmypast.co.uk

London Gardens Online - The London Parks and Gardens Trust provides public access to a wealth of information on over 2,500 parks, gardens, squares, churchyards, cemeteries and other sites of historic interest across the whole of London. The sites are all on the London Parks & Gardens Trust's Inventory of Historic Spaces, a resource that has been growing since the Trust's formation in 1994, and which continues to be updated. Visit their website www.londongardensonline.org.uk

Origins - Great London Burials 1545-1909. These indexes cover the City of London, Middlesex and South London (metropolitan Surrey) parishes, and include well over half a million burials. The indexes are covered by two searches: Middlesex & City of London Burials Index 1560-1909 and South London Burials Index 1545-1905. The collection can help locate individuals who were living in Greater London at a particular time, i.e. before the date of their death. It is also likely (though you cannot be 100% sure) that they had been living in the area where they were buried. So if you suspect an ancestor might have been living in Greater London, searching these records may help confirm this.

Oxford Wills 1516-1857 - In addition Origins have now available over 30,000 Oxfordshire wills from the 16th century up to 1858. Indexes can be searched free. Visit their website www.origins.net.

Imperial War Museum - Online archives of the Imperial War Museum has over 33,000 audio recordings related to combat since 1914, almost half of them related to the First World War. Furthermore, there are thousands of images, such as World War 2 identity cards and the World War 1 army manuals that belonged to Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII). There are wartime posters, photographs of escape equipment used by prisoners of war. Additionally, there are currently 28 podcasts at the First World War Centenary site that is run by the Imperial War Museum, and the same podcasts are available free from iTunes. Visit websites <http://www.1914.org> and www.iwm.org.uk.

Events

Sunday 19th May - The Kent Fair-Lockmeadow Market Hall, Hart Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8LW

Kent's Largest Fair with up to 100 stalls. The Market hall is behind the Odeon & David Lloyd Leisure. The nearest railway station Maidstone West. There is easy parking with a large free car park next to Hall, and a cafeteria. Stalls include Family History Societies, Specialist Groups, Postcards, Books, Computer Software, Directories, Maps and Charts. Entrance £2.00 and children under 16 accompanied by an adult free- open 10am - 4 pm - no booking required.

Wednesday 22nd May-Focus on Family History at LMA-LMA, 40 Northampton Rd, Clerkenwell, London EC1R 0HB

A workshop at the London Metropolitan Archives for the beginner, learn how to get the most out of digitised family history sources, including LMA records on Ancestry.co.uk.

Cost: Free - booking required. Time: 2pm - 3pm. Contact by phone 020 7332 3851 or visit www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

Friday 24th May - Industrial Clerkenwell- LMA, 40 Northampton Rd, Clerkenwell, London EC1R 0HB

This walk explores Clerkenwell's industrial past which includes, clock making, printing, brewing and distilling.

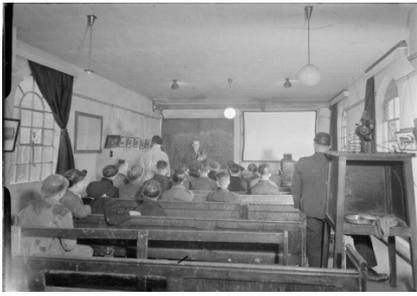
Cost: £10.00 (take a picnic) - booking required. Time: 10am - 4pm. Contact by phone 020 7332 3851 or visit www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

Saturday 1st June - Care & Conservation of your Family History Collection - SOG, 14 Charterhouse Buildings Goswell Road, London EC1M 7BA

Learn the best methods of preserving your documents and photographs. There will be examples for you to view and a question and answer session for queries about specific items.

Cost: £17.50 - Booking required. Time 2pm - 5pm. Contact by phone 020 7553 3290 or visit www.sog.org.uk

Historical Figures—Bevin Boys



Bevin Boys were young men conscripted to work in the coal mines of the UK from December 1943 – 1948. They were chosen at random from conscripts, but also included volunteers. 48,000 Bevin Boys performed vital, but for the most part, unrecognised service in the mines, and many of them were not released from service until sometime after the end of WW2. Ten percent of men conscripted were selected for this service.

During WW 2 Britain could not import coal and production of coal was increased for the manufacturing of warprovisions. Owing to this requirement and due to many experienced miners having been conscripted it was recognised that there was a serious labour shortage. To address the issue Ernest Bevin, the Minister for Labour and National Service, introduced a scheme which became known as The Bevin Boys. This involved recruiting men aged between 18 and 25 years to work in the coal mines.

This scheme caused much upset as many of the young men wanted to join the fighting forces and felt they were not valued. They suffered taunts as it was wrongly assumed that they were avoiding serving in the armed forces. A ballot scheme was used whereby upon registering for National Service, these young men would be selected according to the last digit of his registration number, drawn on a fortnightly basis. Any refusal to comply with the Direction Order would certainly result in a heavy fine or possible imprisonment under the Emergency Powers Act in force at the time.

Not all Bevin Boys were balloted; many had the opportunity at the time of call-up of choosing this form of employment in lieu of service in the Armed Forces and were so classified as Optants or Volunteers. However, it should be clearly stated that Bevin Boys were not Conscientious Objectors because of this decision, an unfortunate stigma that became a bone of contention which continued for many years after the war.

They undertook 4 weeks training in the form of classroom

lectures, surface and underground training and physical training. Once completed allocation would be made to a colliery, where accommodation was provided. This was either a purpose built Miners Hostel similar to an army camp or billeted out to a private home. This cost 25 shillings per week deducted from an average wage of three pounds, ten shillings.

Perhaps understandably, the Bevin Boy was looked upon with suspicion by the regular miners suddenly faced with an invasion of young inexperienced men, many who had never got their hands dirty in their lives and forced into an industry they had no wish to be. Miners relied on bonuses and would not relish working alongside a Bevin Boy who did not pull his weight. Fortunately these fears and suspicions were soon dispelled.

The work was hard in appalling conditions with no toilet facilities, working in areas that were hot, cold, wet, draughty, dusty, dirty and smelly. The constant noise of machinery was deafening with daily hazards of endured. Dangers and risks were numerous, with always the fear that there might be an explosion resulting in fire or even a rock fall. At the end of a shift a rush would be made back to the pit bottom to join an awaiting queue to get back into the fresh air & civilisation. Some of the larger collieries had pit head baths in order to shower and change into clean clothes, but where facilities were not provided it would mean going back to the hostel or billets.

The Bevin Boys received no medals, nor the right to return to the jobs they had held previously, unlike armed forces personnel. Bevin Boys were not fully recognised as contributors to the war effort until 1995, 50 years after VE Day, in a speech by Queen Elizabeth II.

On 20 June 2007 Tony Blair informed the House of Commons, that thousands of conscripts who worked down mines during the Second World War would receive an honour. He told the Commons the Bevin Boys would be rewarded with a Veterans Badge, similar to the HM Armed Forces Badge awarded by the Ministry of Defence. The first badges were awarded on 25 March 2008 by the then Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, at a reception in 10 Downing Street, marking the 60th anniversary of discharge of the last Bevin Boys.

Just this week a memorial dedicated to the thousands of young men who worked in British coal mines during WWII, was uncovered. Former miners were at The National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffordshire for the unveiling.

The Bevin Boys Association is trying to trace all 48,000 Bevin Boy conscripts, optants or volunteers who served in Britain's coal mines during and after World War Two - 1942 to 1948.

Sources - <http://www.seniornetwork.co.uk/bevinboys/> 07.05.13
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bevin_Boys 07.05.13

ON THIS DAY –9TH MAY

1012 BC Solar Eclipse seen at Ugarit, 6.09 – 6.39 PM

1092 Lincoln Cathedral is consecrated

1386 Treaty of Windsor between Portugal and England

1502 Columbus left Spain on his 4th and last trip to the New World

1671 Thomas Blood, Disguised as a clergyman, attempts to steal England's Crown Jewels from the Tower of London

1726 Five men arrested during a raid on Mother Clap's molly house are executed at Tyburn

1873 Der Krach: Vienna stock market crash heralds the Long Depression

1901 Australia opens its first parliament in Melbourne

1949 Rainier III of Monaco becomes Prince of Monaco

1978 Former Italian prime minister is found executed by Red Brigade terrorists, he is shot and left in a car in the centre of Rome

This month's tip to tracing your Family History -

What is the IGI

The IGI, or International Genealogical Index, is an index of around 800 million births, baptisms & marriages from around the world. The index is produced by the LDS and is available in many libraries and record offices, as well as in the Church's own Family History Centres. It can also be found online at www.familysearch.org.

However, note its limitations, the IGI is a finding aid and you should always check original sources. Entries often do not contain all the information in the original records, such as death dates or names of additional relatives. Sometimes only portions of parish records or other sources were indexed.

The Sevenoaks Committee

Branch Chair

Barbara Attwaters

Committee members

Christina Barnett, Debbie Hill, Karina Jackson, Norma Holmden, Robert Barnett, Geoff Webb, Bernie Wilkins

NWKFHS Family History Workshops - Held at the Library, Joydens Wood, Bexley, Kent, DA5 2EE

- 15th May - Mapping family distributions and movements - David Cufley
- 18th Sept. - PC File Management (Housekeeping) - Dr Allan Stapleton

Each workshop lasts for two hours - 10 members per workshop. Cost £5.00 donation, including refreshments.

Book by sending an email to: workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk to request a form, or by completing the form at our branch meeting.