14 NOVEMBER 2013 ISSUE NUMBER 14

Sevenoaks Newsletter

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

NEXT BRANCH MEETING

12TH DECEMBER AT SEVENOAKS

"Do These Stairs Go Up?"

PHIL TUCKER

OTHER BRANCH MEETINGS

BROMLEY

16th November – A look at crime in Victorian Kent

HELEN ALLINSON

DARTFORD

7th December – The History of the Christmas Card

ANNA FLOOD

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 'THE FOUNDLING MUSEUM' by Jane King.
The Foundling Museum tells the story of the Foundling Hospital, London's first home for abandoned children, and of three major figures in British history: its campaigning founder the philanthropist Thomas Coram, the artist William Hogarth and the composer George Frideric Handel. Jane is a volunteer with the Foundling Museum and is sure to bring us a fascinating talk.

NEWS ITEMS

WW1 Aerodrome saved – The future of Stow Maries, Europe's last surviving unaltered First World War aerodrome, has been secured. This important piece of aviation history, located at Purleigh, near Maldon in Essex, has been saved for the nation thanks to the work of the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome Trust and the award of a £1.5 million National Heritage Memorial Fund, along with the support of Essex County Council, Maldon District Council and English Heritage. Stow Maries was built in 1916 as a direct response to increased attacks by German Zeppelin airships and was an integral part of the UK's Home Front defence. It was home to the newly formed 37 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, led by the 19-year-old Captain Ridley. It witnessed a number of historic events during its history including being the site where the last Zeppelin was shot down during the war in June 1917.

Cambridge University – Over 4,000 Court Records from the 16th century have been translated
Cambridge University has recently translated more than 4,000 cases from Cambridge Court Records from the sixteenth century, originally recorded in Latin. Archivist Jacky Cox worked for a year summarizing a selection of the papers as part of an online project. 'Lots of salacious details' have been revealed in some of the cases tried in the city by Cambridge University's Chancellor's Court. The records are now available at the university library. A variety of cases, both major and minor misdemeanours, passed through Cambridge Court. For more information visit their website www.lib.cam.ac.uk

The Genealogist – War Service Lists
The Genealogist have added the National Union of Teachers War Records 1914-1919 to their Diamond subscription. These records contain information on National Union of Teachers members who served in the Great War. This includes a list of teachers who joined the forces, those who received honours, and a record of those who were killed plus other information relating to the National Union of Teachers during the war. Visit their website at www.thegenealogist.co.uk

Events

The Museum of London Walks – 150 London Wall, London, EC2Y 5HN

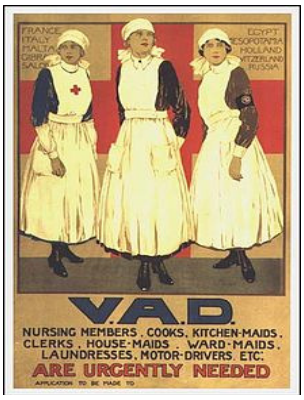
16th & 23rd November – Tracing trade through the City
Take a stroll through the City and hear about the growth of commerce and trade in Jacobean and Elizabethan London; a time of great merchants including goldsmiths, stonecutters and jewellers.

14th & 15th December – A Victorian Christmas
From turkey to Christmas cards and crackers, the Victorians have shaped the way we celebrate Christmas more than anyone else. Find out more on this festive walk.

Experts from the Museum of London and professional guides lead all kinds of special walks and visits with something in the programme for everyone. Visit their website www.museumoflondon.org.uk/london-wall/whats-on/adult-events/walks-programme/#sthash.eLlpDN9Z.dpuf or phone on 020 7001 9844 - Once tickets are booked their Box Office will advise you on where the walk will start from.

23rd & 24th November – Origin Weekend – Down House, Luxted Road, Downe, Kent, BR6 7JT
Visit Down House, in the village of Downe in Kent, once the home of Charles Darwin, for the anniversary of 'Origin Day'. A variety of specialist talks and tours will be held over the weekend between 11.00 am-4.00 pm.
Admission to the house and grounds includes entry to the event: £10.20 adult; £6.10 child 5-15; £9.20 concessions; £26.50 family. English Heritage Members go free. Call 01689 859119 or visit www.english-heritage.org.uk

WW1 Voluntary Aid Detachment



First World War VAD poster by Joyce Dennys

The Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) was a voluntary organisation providing field nursing services, mainly in hospitals, in the United Kingdom and various other countries in the British Empire. The organisations most important periods of operation were during World War I and World War II.

The organisation was founded in 1909 with the help of the Red Cross and Order of St. John. By the summer of 1914 there were over 2,500 Voluntary Aid Detachments in Britain. Each individual volunteer was called a detachment, or simply a VAD. Of the 74,000 VADs in 1914, two-thirds were women and girls.

At the outbreak of the First World War VADs eagerly offered their service to the war effort. The British Red Cross was reluctant to allow civilian women a role in overseas hospitals: most VADs were of the middle and upper classes and unaccustomed to hardship and traditional hospital discipline. Military authorities would not accept VADs at the front line.

Katharine Furse took two VADs to France in October 1914, restricting them to serve as canteen workers and cooks. Caught under fire in a sudden battle the VADs were pressed into emergency hospital service and acquitted themselves well. The growing shortage of trained nurses opened the door for VADs in overseas military hospitals. Furse was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the VAD and restrictions were removed. Female volunteers over the age of twenty-three and with more than three months' hospital experience were accepted for overseas service.

VADs were an uneasy addition to military hospitals' rank and order. They lacked the advanced skill and discipline of professional trained nurses and were often critical of the nursing profession. Relations improved as the war stretched on. VADs increased their skill and efficiency and trained nurses were more accepting of the VADs' contributions. During four years of war 38,000 VADs worked in hospitals and served as ambulance drivers and cooks. VADs served near the Western Front and in Mesopotamia and Gallipoli.

VAD hospitals were also opened in most large towns in Britain.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voluntary_Aid_Detachment - cite_note-Spartacus-2Later, VADs were also sent to the Eastern Front. They provided an invaluable source of bedside aid in the war effort & many were decorated for distinguished service.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voluntary_Aid_Detachment 10.11.2013

War-time volunteers and personnel records –

The British Red Cross museum and archives hold personnel indexes from both world wars. They hold a series of indexes recording the service details of personnel working during both world wars. These indexes are very extensive but they are known to be incomplete - there is no guarantee that the person you are looking for will be in the indexes.

Record cards may include the dates of service, the nature of the duties performed, the detachment the individual belonged to, the institutions and places where the individual served, and any honours that may have been awarded. In addition, there are indexes for personnel who served in military hospitals, who were trained nurses, and who received the war medal.

They also have index cards for recipients of the voluntary medical service awards for the period between the 1930s and the 1960s. They don't have records of VADs during the interwar years or the period before the First World War. They have a very limited record of VADs from after the Second World War. An individual's service record cannot be traced by a medal recipient number, as these records have not survived.

For conservation and security reasons, these records are not directly accessible to the public, but the staff are willing to search these records on request. An application should be made in writing, to the museum and archives department, containing as much relevant information about the individual concerned as possible. In particular it is useful to include: DOB, any known addresses, date of marriage, any known service details, middle names, maiden or married names. There is no formal charge for this service. However, the time taken to carry out a simple search of the records costs the Red Cross at least £10. In view of this, you may wish to make a donation towards the expenses incurred.

British Red Cross UK Office, 44 Moorfields, London EC2Y 9AL

Source: http://www.redcross.org.uk/About-us/Who-we-are/Museum-and-archives/Resources-for-researchers/Volunteers-and-personnel-records 10.11.13

ON THIS DAY – 14TH NOVEMBER

November 14TH is the 318th day of the year in the Gregorian calendar, 47 days remain until the end of the year.

1380 King Charles VI of France crowned at age 12
1533 Conquistadors from Spain under the leadership of Francisco Pizarro arrive in Cajamarca, Inca Empire
1666 Samuel Pepys reports on 1st blood transfusion (between dogs)
1719 Leopold Mozart, Austrian composer, conductor, and violinist is born (d. 1787)
1740 Johann van Beethoven, German singer and educator (d. 1792)
1851 Moby-Dick, a novel by Herman Melville about the voyage of the whaling ship Pequod, is published by Harper & Brothers in New York
1889 Pioneering female journalist Nellie Bly (aka Elizabeth Cochrane) begins a successful attempt to travel around the world in less than 80 days. She completes the trip in seventy-two days.
1916 World War I - The Battle of the Somme ends.
1922 The BBC begins radio service in the United Kingdom
1969 NASA launches Apollo 12, the second crewed mission to the surface of the moon
1973 Princess Anne marries Captain Mark Phillips in Westminster Abbey

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The Move of Bexley Local Archives to Bromley

Bexley Council is proposing to move the Bexley Local Studies & Archive Centre from its current location in Bexleyheath to outside the borough at Central Library Bromley. The Centre is a much used & treasured collection that opens up local & family history to all Bexley residents. An online petition has been setup by Alex Csicsek (a Bexley Historical Society member) - Please consider signing it. It can be found at www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/bexley-council-don-t-move-bexley-

The Sevenoaks Committee

Branch Chair - Barbara Attwaters

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