



13TH OCTOBER 2016

ISSUE NUMBER 43

Sevenoaks Newsletter

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



NEXT BRANCH MEETING

10TH NOVEMBER

For the High Jump

The story of capital punishment in Britain

Speaker: JOHN MILLS

OTHER BRANCH MEETINGS

BROMLEY

15TH OCTOBER -

Bromley's Conscientious Objectors

Speaker - Janet Digby

DARTFORD

5TH NOVEMBER - Third Afghan War 1919 - 94 days of
unwanted conflict

Speaker Gillian Rickard

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 - "WW2 Escape Lines"

Speaker Geoff Cowling, a member of the WW2 Escape Lines Memorial Society. This evening's talk is about the escape routes that criss-crossed Europe.

NEWS ITEMS

Ancestry: New Oxfordshire parish records covering the entire county right back to Tudor times. There are two million baptisms, marriages and burials up to the mid-20th Century. See website ancestry.co.uk

Findmypast: New Cheshire vital records 1500-1991 - over 584,000 records, search by parish, event or record type to browse through original bishop's transcripts, non-conformist registers and parish registers from churches across the County of Cheshire - Further new records include School and University register books. A new 5148 records covering thousands of schools across 41 counties in England and Wales. They include school records, birth dates, admission years and the schools they attended. Website Findmypast.co.uk

Irishgenealogy.ie: There's big news in the world of Irish genealogy, more than 2.5 million birth, marriage and death record images for Ireland are now available online to anyone, **and they're free**. These important civil documents are the official state vital records of Ireland and are maintained by the General Register Office. Records date as far back as 1864. The records are hosted at IrishGenealogy.ie, the family history site of the Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in Ireland. To begin searching these records for your ancestors start by visiting www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/civil-records/help/what-years-are-covered-by-the-historic-records-of-births-marriages-and-deaths. You can read more about this free collection and what is offered by visiting the information page from Irish Genealogy: www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/civil-records/help/what-years-are-covered-by-the-historic-records-of-births-marriages-and-deaths. The site also offers a wide variety of other important Irish records and educational materials, including church records. If you have Irish ancestors you'll *certainly* want to take some time to get to know this great free resource.

EVENTS

22nd October My Ancestor was Scottish - The Society of Genealogists, 14 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Rd. EC1M 7BA
A look at Birth, Marriage and Death records in Scotland, and how to locate them, as well as church records, census and what is available on the internet. Speaker is Alan Stewart; author of the Society's book of the same title.

- Time 1030-1300 - Price £20.00 - Website: www.sog.org.uk

26th October - Making the most of Family Photographs - London Metropolitan Archives -40 Northampton Rd, EC1R

This session explores what we can discover from the typical family photographs we all have at home. What do the photographs tell us about individuals? Why were the pictures taken? What's in the background?

- Booking essential - Time 14:30pm to 16:30pm - Cost £10.00 - visit www.eventbrite.co.uk

Kent Events

19th October -Battlefields to Bromley - care of injured Tommy in WW1Kent - Otford and District Historical Society, Otford Village Memorial Hall, High Street, TN14 5PQ - Speaker Ciaran Duke- Time 8 pm - Visitors £3.00

25TH October - Special Operations Executive, Churchill's Secret Army - Tunbridge Wells Family History Society, Groombridge Village Hall, Station Rd, Tunbridge Wells, TN3 9QX - Speaker Gilly Halcrow - Time 8pm

27th October - I've lost my ancestors before 1837' - Kent Family History Society, All Saints Parish Hall, Church Green, Frindsbury, ME2 4HY - Speaker Celia Heritage - Time 1430-1630 - Visitors £2.00

28th October - The Hidden Cathedral - Kemsing Heritage Centre, St Edith Hall, High Street, Kemsing, Kent TN15 6NA - Speaker Douglas Chapman. Time 7.30pm, non-members £2.50

1st November - A View from the Tower: Edward Sackville-West at Knole: - Crowborough & District Historical Society, Pine Grove, Crowborough TN6 1FE - A talk about one of the projects the speaker is responsible for, as a Curator at the NT, based at Scotney Castle - Speaker Emma Slocombe - 8pm start, non-members £4.00

11th November - The Crystal Palace - Farningham and Eynsford Local History Society, Eynsford Village Hall, High Street, Eynsford, Kent DA4 0AA - Speaker Ian Bevan - Time 7.30pm for 8pm start - Contact Jan Wilkes 01322 865122

Fleet Marriages - In the 1740s, over half of all London weddings were held at the Fleet (over 6500 per year) with a further thousand conducted at the May Fair Chapel. By the late 17th century, provided that a couple exchanged vows and had some proof of this, then a marriage would be considered valid under English Common Law. Marriages by a form of ceremony conducted by an ordained clergyman, but without banns or licence, and generally not in a church or chapel, usually away from the parish of the bride or groom were termed clandestine marriages. Such ceremonies were often shrouded in secrecy as there were a variety of motives for requiring a clandestine marriage, the primary appeal being reasons of cost; other reasons included the avoidance of the need to obtain parental consent, requiring a back dated ceremony to legitimise offspring or endeavours to validate claims upon an inheritance or a Will.

Clandestine marriages grow in numbers from the middle of the seventeenth century. There was an attempt to quash this growth with the introduction of three parliamentary acts between 1694 and 1696 which collectively regulated marriages, introduced marriage taxes and censured and suspended clergy found to be involved. However, these only applied to marriage centres which came under the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese. These acts unintentionally gave a near monopoly to private marriage centres outside the bishop's visitation (e.g. prisons) and to clergymen (many of whom were prisoners) who had been dismissed or were in debt and who had nothing to lose by conducting clandestine, fee-paying marriages. In 1711, Parliament passed legislation which included an attempt to deal with the problem of clandestine marriages being conducted in prisons. A clause was included in the act to counter the loss of revenue (from non-payment of stamp duties) caused by clandestine marriages. The clause continued the imposition of fines for any person in 'holy orders' conducting a marriage but also introduced the same fine for any prison keeper who allowed such a marriage at his prison. While this prevented the marriages being performed inside the prisons, it did not prevent them being conducted in other locations in the vicinity of the prisons: e.g. the Liberties (or Rules) of the Fleet, or the Mint (for King's Bench Prison). On 25 March 1754, all clandestine marriages were made illegal by Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act; although couples were still able to travel to other areas of the United Kingdom where the act did not apply: i.e.

across the border into Scotland (e.g. Gretna Green), the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

Fleet Prison was principally a debtors prison and it stood on the east bank of the Fleet River, in what is now Farringdon Street, London. Marriages performed at the Fleet involved all classes from London and the surrounding counties, but mainly catered for artisans, farmers, labourers and craftsmen from the poorer parishes of London, soldiers (including Chelsea Pensioners), and particularly sailors. King's Bench Prison was located on the east side of Borough High Street in Southwark. As with the Fleet, the majority of prisoners were debtors. Relatively few marriages were performed in the Prison itself, and by the 1740s, those marriages which had been performed in the Mint began to be held at the Fleet. The King's Bench and the Mint, because of their locality, tended to draw a high proportion of couples from Kent and Surrey. From the late 1720s, clandestine marriages commenced at May Fair, which eventually became only second to the Fleet in terms of notoriety for such marriages. At first, May Fair marriages were performed at St George's Chapel, Curzon Street, Mayfair, near Hyde Park Corner then, from 1744, at a private dwelling house (the 'New' or 'Little Chapel') situated ten yards away from St George's Chapel. Whereas clandestine marriages performed at the Fleet and King's Bench prisons and surrounding areas tended to draw the working classes, the May Fair Chapel was used by professional classes and the aristocracy for marriages, including the Dukes of Cleveland and Hamilton, Lord Stanley, and Lord George Bentinck. The need for a public record of the marriages meant that they were recorded in registers and some were even produced as evidence in court cases.

It must be stressed that the information in the Fleet documents (particularly those before 1714) should be treated with extreme caution as dates given can be unreliable in addition people would request not to record their surnames, or would give false names to protect their real identity from a fear of detection.

It should also be noted that Julian style calendar was in use in England until 1752, when the Gregorian calendar that we are familiar with today came into use instead. According to the 'Old Style' the New Year began on March 25th (Ladies Day), and dates between January 1st and March 24th would be written as 1715/16 Feb 5th to indicate this.

Source: <http://www.bmdregisters.co.uk/help/aboutRG7.htm>

12.10.2016

Did you know a one-legged man reassured London's first escalator users..!

The first escalator on the London Underground system went into operation at Earl's Court in 1911. On its first day of operation, passengers who had never seen such a thing before were naturally apprehensive. To calm their fears, it is said that a one-legged Underground employee, William 'Bumper' Harris, rode up and down to demonstrate its safety – although there are suspicions that this story may be a myth...

Harris was later clerk of works on the project to install escalators at Charing Cross when the remains of an ancient oak tree were discovered during the excavations. This was used to make furniture for the admiralty, but also an ornamental walking stick for Harris, which was presented to him in 1913. The stick and Harris's pocket watch are now housed in the London Transport Museum. Source <http://www.historyextra.com/article/culture/13-weird-historical-facts>

ON THIS DAY

OCTOBER 13th is the 287th day of the year in the Gregorian calendar; 79 days remain until the end of the year.

54 Nero Succeeds Claudius as Roman Emperor

1537 Jane Grey is born, she was Queen of England for 9 days

1582 Because of the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, this day does not exist in this year in Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain

1792 In Washington, D.C., the cornerstone of the United States Executive Mansion (known as the White House since 1818) is laid

1860 1st aerial photo taken in US (from a balloon), Boston

1884 Greenwich in London established as the universal time meridian of longitude

1925 Margaret Thatcher born in Grantham, Lincolnshire (died 2013)

1958 Paddington Bear, a character from English children's literature, makes his debut

1969 1st time 7 people in space

2010 The mining accident in Copiapó, Chile comes to an end as all 33 miners arrive at the surface after surviving 69 days underground

Society Calendar -

Don't forget to buy your 2017 Society wall calendar. Our improved calendar has a page for each month, which is illustrated with a photograph of beautiful Kent, taken by a Society member. Each calendar is supplied in an envelope, ideal for posting as a Christmas present. It can be purchased at Branch Meetings, the Society Library and other Society events for £4.50. All contributions after costs will be added to Society funds. For postal sales UK, P&P is an extra £2.85 for second class or £3.35 first class. Overseas postage costs on request. To order by post, email emailinfoservice@nwkfhs.org.uk *so don't miss out and order yours now...*

The Sevenoaks Committee – Branch Chair Barbara Attwaters

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