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Sevenoaks Newsletter

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



NEXT BRANCH MEETING

8TH OCTOBER
The Parish Chest
CELIA HERITAGE

OTHER BRANCH MEETINGS

BROMLEY
19TH SEPTEMBER - The Titanic
Speaker IAN PORER

DARTFORD
3RD OCTOBER - A history of Crayford's famous textile printers
Speaker PETER DANIEL

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 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 – "Coroner's Inquests" by Cathy Chater
– Who is the Coroner? What do they do? Why and when does the coroner need to hold an inquest? Where do we go to locate documents? Tonight we will discover the answers....

NEWS ITEMS

Findmypast - WWII Prisoners of War Records published online for the 1st time on 70th Anniversary. This week Findmypast marks the release of one million records of service men, women and civilians who were taken captive during World War II. Visit their website at www.findmypast.co.uk for more information.

Ancestry – New Release Merchant Navy Apprentices – This is the newest addition to Ancestry Occupation records, the Merchant Navy Apprentices, 1824-1910. You can discover the ports they sailed from and the ships they were on, as well as their physical descriptions and reasons for discharge. Or maybe your ancestors preferred to have their feet on the ground. If you come from a long line of doctors or lawyers, for example, try searching Ancestry other Occupation records, such as UK Medical Registers, 1859-1959, or England and Wales, Law List, 1843. These records may provide insight into your ancestors' careers and what kind of mark they left on society.

The London Family Search Centre (On the 1st Floor of The National Archives, Kew) The Centre's recently upgraded website now includes a series of interactive maps showing the boundaries of a range of key jurisdictions in England as at 1851. The separate layers available include: Counties, Civil registration districts, Dioceses, Poor Law Unions and Hundreds. For each layer, you can zoom in to parish level and confirm the relevant jurisdiction. Readers can choose from three different background options: Map: A simple map /Satellite: Modern aerial view or Ordnance Survey: 19th-century Ordnance Survey map. When you find a locality of interest, you can home in on "street view" or follow up a range of options such as compiling a list of parishes within a particular district. Your search can also move on to discover associated material in the Library catalogue and Research Wiki. This facility is a boost for anyone with English ancestry & particularly helpful if you do not live in the same area as your forebears and are unfamiliar with the record-keeping organisations that operated there in the past. Visit <http://londonfamilyhistory.org.uk/jurisdiction-maps/>

EVENTS

Now until 17th April 2017 – Fire! Fire! – Museum of London, 150 London Wall, London, EC2Y 5HN

49 years ago one of the most infamous disasters struck London – the Great Fire of 1666. This exhibition illustrates London before, during and after the blaze. It explores the evidence to find out how the fire started and spread, and discover the personal stories of the people who were there at the time. You can see rarely seen artefacts from 1666, compare modern and contemporary fire fighting techniques and learn how the city we know today rose from the ashes. – Open Mon-Sun 10am-6pm - Cost Adult from £8 online, Concession from £6.40 online, Child (under 16) from £5 online Tel: 020 7001 9844 - Website: www.museumoflondon.org.uk

12th September & 7th October - Reading Old Handwriting - LMA, 40 Northampton Rd, Clerkenwell, EC1R 0HB

This practical session gives expert help in reading different types of handwriting from the 18th to early 20th centuries. You will practise with copy documents from LMA's collections and get tips for deciphering all kinds of writing; suitable for beginners. Cost £8.00 – Time 1000 to 1100 – Booking essential - Contact by phone 020 7332 3851 - Website www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

16th September & 6th October – Use LMA: Getting Started- LMA, 40 Northampton Rd, Clerkenwell, EC1R 0HB

This event is a tour of the Information Area to find out how to get the best out of the LMA research facilities. Meet at the Information Area desk.

Free Event – Time 1100 to 1145 – Booking essential - Contact by phone 020 7332 3851 - Website www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

22nd September – Use LMA: Using the Catalogue - LMA, 40 Northampton Rd, Clerkenwell, EC1R 0HB

There are 3.5 million record descriptions in the LMA online catalogue! This talk will help you find your way around with advice and guidance for searching the LMA OPAC.

Free Event – Time 1100 to 1130 – Booking essential - Contact by phone 020 7332 3851 - Website www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

Local Kent Events

Saturday 26th September - 10am - 1pm - Southborough Library WWI Drop-in Session at Southborough Lane, Bromley, BR2 8AP

Saturday 10th October - 10am - 1pm - Bromley Central Library 1WW Drop-in Session at High Street, Bromley, BR1 1EX

Saturday 24th October - 10am - 1pm - Bexley Local Studies - WWI Drop-in session at Townley Rd Library, Bexleyheath, DA6 7HJ



Elizabeth Fry

She was born Elizabeth Gurney on 21st May 1780 at Earlham in Norfolk. She was an English prison and social reformer and as a Quaker, a Christian Philanthropist. She has sometimes been referred to as the "angel of prisons". Fry was a major driving force behind new legislation to make the treatment of prisoners more humane. In 2002 she was been depicted on the Bank of England £5 note.

Elizabeth Fry was born into a highly prominent Quaker family. Her father, John Gurney (1749-1809), was a partner in Gurney's Bank. Her mother, Catherine, was a member of the Barclay family who were among the founders of Barclays Bank. Her mother died when Elizabeth was 12 years old and as one of the oldest girls in the family, Elizabeth was partially responsible for the care and training of the younger children, including her brother Joseph John Gurney, a philanthropist. One of her sisters was Louisa Gurney Hoare, a writer on education. At the age of 20 she married banker Joseph Fry and they had a family of 11 children; her husband was the nephew of the founder of the chocolate and confectionery company known as J.S.Fry.

Some of her earliest philanthropic work had started before her marriage, when she had begun to visit the poor of Earlham, relieving the sick, and forming a class for the education of children. From the age of fifteen she visited the house of correction at Norwich.

A fellow-Quaker showed to her the conditions in which women prisoners were kept in Newgate prison, which held both men and women awaiting trial, sentencing, execution, and transportation. Elizabeth found women and children living and dying in conditions of horror, filth, and cruelty. She resolved to do something about it. She visited the prisons and encouraged other middle class women to do so too. The initial concerns of Elizabeth centred on the children and not the women prisoners. She, unlike other early visitors, tended to concentrate on the behaviour of women rather than their moral corruptness. Whatever her initial conceptions of the women were she soon began to see them in a different light. In 1817, she wrote, "Already, from being like wild beasts, they appear harmless and kind." From the initial focus on convict children, Elizabeth quickly sought to improve the physical conditions for the women, she was also involved in setting up education classes for women. She was ahead of her time in the way she treated the prisoners as human beings. Elizabeth did not impose discipline on them but instead proposed rules and invited the prisoners to vote on them, and she put an educated prisoner in charge. When Elizabeth started her work she frightened many people with her frankness about a subject most would rather have left un-discovered, however as she progressed, the opposition to her dwindled.

Her success attracted the attention of society as a whole, including royalty. She used her connections in high places to good effect, to tell people in the outside world about prisons, (despite her religious principles she enjoyed high society). Both Florence Nightingale and the young Queen Victoria admired Elizabeth for her compassionate exercise outside the home. In 1835, she testified before the House of Commons Parliamentary committee, established to investigate "The State of Gaols in England and Wales." Elizabeth also spoke before a House of Lords Select Committee in the same year.

Elizabeth was the first penal reformer to devote her attention solely to the plight of imprisoned women. Her ideals for penal reform were based on the precepts of the Society of Friends (Quakers). Quakers emphasised personal, paternalistic means of correction, and their main instrument of reform was religion. Although nineteenth century Quaker doctrine and practice did not allow women a complete role in religious activities, the doctrine of direct inspiration made it possible for women to become ministers. Long before her work in prisons, Elizabeth had become a minister of considerable renown, noted for her "peculiar gift of exhortation." In 1797, Elizabeth wrote, "I love to feel for the sorrows of others."

She was instrumental in the formation of the Association for the Improvement of the Females at Newgate. The Association comprised Elizabeth, a clergyman's wife, and eleven members of the Society of Friends. The General Aims of the Association were, "to provide for the clothing, the instruction, and the employment of these females, to introduce them to knowledge of the holy scriptures, and to form in them as much as lies in our power, those habits of order, sobriety, and industry which may render them docile and perceptible whilst in prison, and respectable when they leave it." Newgate was transformed through the changes introduced by the Association.

In 1818 Elizabeth set out to tour gaols in England and Scotland to establish other Ladies' Associations. In 1825, Elizabeth published her short but influential book, "Observations of the Siting, Superintendence and Government of Female Prisoners." Unlike other early reformers, Elizabeth provided the concrete, explicit detail for operating penal regimes.

Although prison reform was her main work, she was deeply interested in helping relieve other aspects of human suffering. For the many criminals transported to New South Wales without any arrangements in place for proper care during the journey or employment on arrival in Australia. Elizabeth Fry made great efforts to induce the government to correct matters and ensure the prisoners were properly cared for during the voyage and that suitable shelter and employment were available to them on arrival. The homeless in London received her attention when she was instrumental in establishing a 'night shelter' having seen the body of a young boy who had frozen to death in the winter of 1819/20. The scheme prospered as, a committee of ladies headed by Elizabeth Fry, lent their support by trying to find employment for those without a job. This work was extended beyond the boundaries of London to places such as Brighton.

In 1840 Fry opened a training school for nurses. Her programme inspired Florence Nightingale who took a team of Fry's nurses to assist wounded soldiers in the Crimean War. In 1842, Frederick William IV of Prussia went to see Fry in Newgate Prison during an official visit to Great Britain. The King of Prussia, who had met the social reformer during her previous tours of the continent promoting welfare change and humanitarianism, was so impressed by her work that he told his reluctant courtiers that he would personally visit the gaol when he was in London.

Elizabeth Fry died from a stroke in Ramsgate, on 12 Oct 1845. She was buried in the Friends' burial ground at Barking. Seamen of the Ramsgate Coast Guard flew their flag at half mast in respect of Mrs Fry; a practice that until this occasion had been officially reserved for the death of a ruling monarch.

Sources: <http://www.howardleague.org/elizabethfry/>
<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/banknotes/Pages/current/fry.aspx>

08/09/2015

ON THIS DAY

SEPTEMBER 10TH is the 253RD day of the year in the Gregorian calendar; 112 days remain until the end of the year.

- 210** Qin Shi Huang, first emperor of China dies
- 1509** An earthquake known as "The Lesser Judgment Day" hits Constantinople
- 1515** Thomas Wolsey is invested as a Cardinal
- 1547** English demand Edward VI, 10, wed Mary Queen of Scots, 5
- 1894** London taxi driver George Smith is first fined for drunk driving
- 1940** Buckingham Palace hit by German bomb
- 1946** While riding a train to Darjeeling, Sister Teresa Bojaxhiu of the Loreto Sisters' Convent claimed to have heard the call of God, directing her "to leave the convent and help the poor while living among them". She would become known as Mother Teresa
- 1960** Colin Firth, English actor is born in Grayshott Hampshire
- 1973** Bomb blasts at Kings Cross & Euston Station, London; 2 bombs explode injuring 13 people
- 1990** Ellis Island reopens as a museum

The Sevenoaks Committee
Branch Chair - Barbara Attwaters
Committee Members
 Christina Barnett, Debbie Hill, Karina Jackson,
 Norma Holmden, Robert Barnett, Bernie Wilkins,
 Barbara Stead