

Membership Options

Individual



£ 10.00 *per year*

Family (Couple)



£ 12.00 *per year*

Welcome to the mid November 2019 emailinfoservice, the NWKFHS fortnightly information service, comprising the latest information about the Society and its events, and other items of interest for family historians.

If you are not already a member, now is a great time to join. Membership lasts until 31 December 2020.

If you know someone who does not want more 'stuff' for Christmas, why not buy membership to North West Kent FHS? We have a continuous programme of meetings with speakers and workshops. Our library at Joyden's Wood, Bexley is open every Wednesday for members' research and with willing, friendly volunteers to help you.

Our new workshop coordinator has 32 workshops organised for 2020 and 16 discussion groups, a fantastic effort by Pam Goddard who is taking over the organisation of our successful workshop programme from Victor Nutt.

Even if you don't live in the North West Kent area, as a member you will receive the Society's journal posted quarterly. It's a great read of interesting articles about developments in family history and members' accounts of their researches. I read it cover to cover. If you don't live in our area it will help to keep you in touch.

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/about/our-membership>

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/community/meetings-house-groups/branch-meetings>

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/community/workshops>

I (Stella Eames) welcome photos of people or places (specially historical or family history) in the North West Kent area with a story about them as I like to start each newsletter with a photo and story. Please email me at emailinfoservice@nwkfhs.org.uk with your contributions. Any photos must be your own copyright.

If I don't receive any I will have to use my own which may not be as interesting.

Not joined yet? - don't dine in for £10 - join the Society for £10 instead.

Those who join now get over 2 months free as your membership will last til 31 December 2020. SO ITS A GREAT TIME TO JOIN.

Those of you who are not members are missing a treat as the Society's Journal is packed with interesting stories thanks to its Editor Pauline Heathcote. The Journal, posted quarterly, is only available to members.

Journal Editor Pauline Heathcote writes:

At a recent Dartford Branch meeting I appealed for articles for the 2020 Journals.

The talk that morning, The Real Downton Abbey, was about being in service in the early 1900s and drew vivid contrasts between the liberties that authors of TV series had to take with the reality and drudgery of staff at large houses and estates.

So I was delighted when, at the end of the meeting, a member offered to write about family members who had been in service.

To produce an interesting Journal each quarter we need a stream of varied articles, long and short. If you would like to chat about making a contribution please contact me on editor@nwkfhs.org.uk

To join NWKFHS and receive the Journal and come to the library, all our meetings, house groups and workshops please just click [here](#) or email Membership Secretary Mrs Christina Barnett,

on membership@nwkfhs.org.uk **Membership is only £10 per year or £12 for two people at the same address. Value of family history news and help you can receive priceless.**

Membership benefits: members get free access to all our meetings with speakers PLUS a quarterly journal packed full of articles and useful information, monthly workshops on topics requested by members and the benefits of our library and research centre, open Wednesdays. The website has a members - only area with back journals and other data.

The Library at 80 Summerhouse Drive, Joyden's Wood, Bexley DA5 2EE is open to members and visitors every Wednesday from 10am to 4pm. Our volunteers can help you with your research and you can use the library computers with free Find My Past and Ancestry access.

We welcome all new members whether experienced at family history or novices. Our library volunteers can help you get started or possibly overcome a brick wall. Come to the library on a Wednesday between 10am and 4pm, 80 Summerhouse Drive, Joyden's Wood, DA5 2EE. You can join the Society at the library.

Easyfundraising

You can raise money for NWKFHS while doing your usual online shopping.

It's completely painless.

All you have to do is **sign up** to support North West Kent Family History Society - Bexley on **easyfundraising**.

Then online shops and sites - many of them also High Street retailers like Sainsburys - will donate a % of your spend every time you shop with them. And it costs you nothing, you still pay the same price.

So what is stopping you?

Plus, if you sign up with the following link, easyfundraising will match the first £5 you

raise. Visit: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/nwkhfs/?invite=WYSGS7&referral-campaign=s2s>

[The latest branch newsletters and back issues of this e-newsletter can be found HERE. You will be taken to a screen where you can then click on the newsletter you want to read.](#)

Click on our other links [Blog](#) [Facebook](#) [Flickr](#)

What's On - A reminder of NWKFHS Events during the next few weeks

[\(Click here to see the entire Talks, Workshops and Events programme so you can book your diaries well ahead\)](#)

Our meetings are interesting mix of speakers and workshops. The Branch meetings with speakers are held at venues in Bromley, Dartford and Sevenoaks and the workshops are in the Society Library in Joyden's Wood, which we have sole use of on Wednesdays. **Branch meetings are free to NWKFHS members and no booking is required.** *Visitors are welcome and are invited to make a contribution towards costs of hall hire and the speaker. Returning visitors are invited to join the Society only £10 a year or £12 total for two members at the same address.* <https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/about/our-membership>

The 2-hour workshops are limited to 10 members and are very popular. Even if full, reserve lists are kept and a second workshop on the same topic is arranged if there is demand. Sometimes reserves are invited to join the workshop at short notice. Please note that **booking is essential for workshops** and we invite a donation eg £5 towards the costs of maintaining the library.

2020 dates are already on our website for workshops <https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/community/workshops>

If you've got your 2020 diary, why not browse the online calendar and see if any of the topics interest you? Booking is open but workshops are for the benefit of for NWKFHS members only.

TONIGHT Thursday 14 November Speaker at Sevenoaks 8pm

Alan Williams will talk about 'cradle to grave - creating the welfare state in Forties Britain'

Much of what we think of as the modern welfare state, for example the National Health Service, Social Security and a commitment to full employment, has its recent origins in World War Two and was created in the late 1940s.

In this talk Alan will explore the background to the creation of the welfare state and why the war acted as an agent of such significant policy change.

Doors open 7.30pm meeting starts 8pm. The new venue, Main Hall, Otford Village Memorial Hall, 28a High Street Otford TN14 5PQ is adjacent to a car park which is free after 6.30pm.

Visitors are welcome and are invited to make a donation towards the hall and speaker costs. Returning visitors attending more than one meeting are asked to join the Society (£10 per calendar year)

Friday 15 November 2pm - 4pm DNA Group at the Library

Meets every third Friday of the month. Self help.

Booking essential due to space limitations - please contact workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk

There is no charge for workshops but they are only open to Society members. Attendees are invited to make a contribution, suggested £5, towards costs.

Held at the Library, 80 Summerhouse Drive, Joydens Wood, Bexley DA5 2EE

Park in nearby side roads. Doors open 10am.

Saturday 16 November Speaker at Bromley 10.30am

Dean Caston will speak about the History of the Royal Variety Performance

Dean will talk to us about the first Royal Command performance in 1912 through to the current day.

The first Royal Variety Show was instigated by Sir Edward Moss through correspondence with George V and was to be a royal variety show at the Empire theatre, Edinburgh, in 1911 to celebrate the King's coronation.

Unfortunately, before this could happen the theatre caught fire and Sir Moss died.

Sir Alfred Butt took over and the show took place at the Palace theatre in London during 1912. This was known as the Royal Command Performance and monies raised went to the Royal Variety charity. The charity still benefits from the show. George V became its patron – as has every subsequent monarch, although our present Queen hasn't attended since 2014, leaving it to other high-ranking members of the Royal family to stand in for her.

During the 107-year history of the Royal Variety Performance it has been held in seven cities, with the London Palladium hosting the event 42 times. There were several years when the show did not take place, mainly due to the World Wars. The show was first televised in 1960 with many watching it during those early years of its broadcast.

Doors open 9.45am, meeting starts 10.30am. The venue, Bromley Methodist Church, College Road, Bromley BR1 3NS has a free car park (although this can fill up) and is close to Bromley North Station and is on or near many bus routes.

Visitors are welcome and are invited to make a donation towards the hall and speaker costs. Returning visitors attending more than one meeting are asked to join the Society (£10 per calendar year)

Please note that Bromley Branch does not hold a meeting in December as the hall is not available.

Lynne Overton has, as yet, had no enquiries from people wanting to discuss what would be involved in taking over her role, nor from volunteers who would like to take it on. Accordingly, she is asking once again for any interested parties to get in touch with her, so that she can outline exactly what is involved.

She has been asked if someone who is not a regular Bromley attendee could organise the programme, and the answer to that is, "of course", as the Bromley Committee would undertake to help set up equipment, greet the speaker, offer the introduction, and give the vote of thanks.

Another approach would be that two friends could work together on the programme, talking over likely speakers, and co-ordinating their efforts so that the onus of sourcing, contacting, confirming etc would be shared between them.

Lynne has built up a file of contacts, lists of sources for discovering likely speakers, spreadsheets of past speakers to Bromley Branch, and blank spreadsheets to be filled in for the Executive Committee and the Journal, and all this information, including a file of past correspondence will be handed over to the new incumbent(s). If you know Lynne, you will know that she is always willing to support anyone who needs it, and will make herself available for assistance and advice if required.

Please contact her, either at a Bromley meeting, or by e-mail: programme.nwkfhsbromley@virginmedia.com

Wednesday 20 November 10.30am - 12.30 Workshop at the Library
Some online medieval records and records after 1485 led by David Cufley

A look at some online sites with medieval records and information. Followed by the use of early Manorial records to overlap the start of the parish registers post 1538, a case study of methodology.

Please note this is a late change to the advertised programme

Booking essential due to space limitations - please contact workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk

There is no charge for workshops but they are only open to Society members. Attendees are invited to make a contribution, suggested £5, towards costs.

Wednesday 27 November 10.30am - 12.30 Writing Group at the Library
Led by Pauline Heathcote

Booking essential due to space limitations - please contact workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk

There is no charge for workshops but they are only open to Society members. Attendees are invited to make a contribution, suggested £5, towards costs.

Held at the Library, 80 Summerhouse Drive, Joydens Wood, Bexley DA5 2EE

Park in nearby side roads. Doors open 10am.

Saturday 7 December Speaker at Dartford 10.30am
Guest speaker Mike Brown will talk about Christmas on the Home Front 1939 - 45

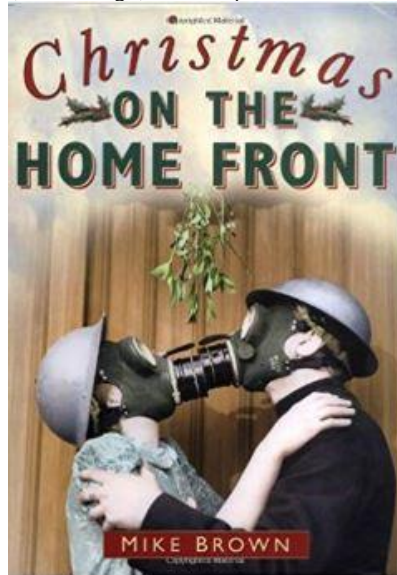
The outbreak of war in 1939 saw the disappearance of many traditional British celebrations. Guy Fawkes' Night went immediately – gunpowder production was needed for the war effort and bonfires contravened the blackout. Summer holidays became a thing of the past and Easter all but disappeared as chocolate – and even real eggs – went 'on the ration'.

In spite of this the nation remained determined to celebrate Christmas as a time of family and community; a time when war could be set aside, if only for a day.

Drawing upon personal recollections, contemporary Mass Observation reports, newspaper articles, advertisements, and personal and archive photographs, Mike Brown looks at each wartime Christmas on the British Home Front, from 1939 to 1944. He explores how people celebrated Christmas despite the problems of shortages, rationing, the blackout, Luftwaffe raids and the absence of family members who had been called up or evacuated.

Life in Britain changed dramatically as the war progressed; the annual celebration of Christmas provides fascinating yearly 'snapshots', illuminating the changes over six years of conflict.

Doors open 9.45am, meeting starts 10.30am. The venue, Dartford Science and Technology College, Heath Lane, Dartford DA1 2LY, has a large, free car park via the Heath Lane entrance.



Whilst researching Mike's talk to write something about it here, I found that he has written a book on the subject which might make an excellent Christmas present. Perhaps an interesting contrast to today's excesses. In fact, especially as I cannot get to the Dartford meeting, I am thinking of buying the book anyway.

Visitors are welcome and are invited to make a donation towards the hall and speaker costs. Returning visitors attending more than one meeting are asked to join the Society (£10 per calendar year).

Dartford Science and Technology College asks: *due to having a pupil with a severe allergic reaction to nuts and aerosols, we have had to ban these two items to ensure the pupil's safety. Please do not bring any products that are aerosol based, or foods which may contain nuts, onto site. I do hope that you all will understand the importance of this request, and we thank you for your understanding.*

Thursday 12 December Speaker at Sevenoaks 8pm
Andy Thomas will talk about Christmas - a celebratory occasion

From mid-December (or much earlier!) each year, normality ceases and everything starts to orbit around the colourful, joyous and magical festival we know as Christmas. We decorate homes and shops with beautiful decorations, plan elaborate meals and find gifts for loved ones in a spirit of goodwill. But why, and where did all this come from?

In an intriguing and entertaining journey, Andy Thomas uncovers the fascinating background to the festive season. From the ancient ceremonies of light in the darkness, to the marking of the birth of a messiah: from medieval 'misrule' to Santas and sleighs, the time around the winter solstice has long been an occasion for rejoicing. Yet Christmas traditions have splintered into many guises and seasonal celebration was even banned in Puritan times. Behind the sparkle and merriment and despite all the modern commercialism, Christmas has survived and still has meaning for us today.

Doors open 7.30pm meeting starts 8pm. The new venue, Main Hall, Otford Village Memorial Hall, 28a High Street Otford TN14 5PQ is adjacent to a car park which is free after 6.30pm.

Visitors are welcome and are invited to make a donation towards the hall and speaker costs. Returning visitors attending more than one meeting are asked to join the Society (£10 per calendar year)

AGM and Family History Day Thursday 9 April 2020

<https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/community/meetings-house-groups/family-history-day-agm-2020>

Venue: West Heath School, Ashgrove Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1SR (same venue as 2017)

Anyone can attend a talk at the locations in Bromley, Dartford and Sevenoaks; but if you are a non member a donation is requested towards the cost of the hall and speaker. £1- £2 suggested. Non members asked to join if attending more than one meeting.

For NWKFHS events further ahead just look at the website, events are listed til March 2020.

NWKFHS Membership is just £10 and lasts til 31 December 2020.

<https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/community/events>

Stricklands in Farningham, Kent?

Member Barbara Cannell writes:

I have become interested in a local family (Farningham and Dartford area) by the name of Strickland. I know they had a corn and seed merchants business in Dartford dating back to at least 1851 but would like to find more information about the family.

If you have any info for Barbara please email her on barbarachurchcottage@gmail.com

If readers are intrigued and you want a bit more info about the background of the family, there is an interesting article here:

<https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/Samuel-Strickland-and-his-windmills-local-history-article.pdf>

Are you a DNA Ditherer?

That was the name we gave ourselves back in January 2018 when a handful of NWKFHS members wanting to know more about DNA met at my home for the inaugural session of what is still running as a regular monthly shared help house group. Since then another group has started on a Friday monthly at the Joyden's Wood library.

Some of us had tested, others hadn't, weren't sure of the benefits and didn't know which test to have and with which company.

It is impossible for me to tell you in one article what the group has learned after months of discussion, three speakers and some of us attending external talks.

There are various reasons for doing a DNA test. For me it was noting to do with ethnicity or brick walls, it was to find living people with whom to share family memories and, hopefully, photos I had not seen before.

I have now 'met' online and in one case, in person, people who are linked to me, who are my 2nd and 3rd cousins, but only found through DNA. We have shared old photos and family memories.

DNA does not bypass the need for thorough research and creating a family tree; because when you have tested and been compared to others who have tested, you are sent a link to a database of your matches. Without your family tree you won't know who they are unless they share an obvious ancestral surname.

I was recently able to meet in person a third cousin who only lives a few miles away in Biggin Hill. His great grandfather Sidney THOMPSON was born in the Lewisham Union Workhouse in 1876, and Sidney's sister, my great grandmother Maggie THOMPSON, was born there two years later. Most of their siblings were born there too. In fact there will be few people reading this whose ancestors were in the UK in the 1800s and managed to

avoid the workhouse at some stage of their lives. Poverty was unfortunately the norm.

But in the case of our great grandparents, they went on to have happy lives.



Sidney THOMPSON born 15 October 1878 with his wife Jessie Isabella THOMAS (nee CUMMING, widow). They married at St Mary's Lewisham on 12 December 1917.

Sadly Sidney's late wife Lilian Rebecca nee LOWE had died less than a year after their baby son Norman Douglas Haig Thompson was born on 28 September 1916. As was not uncommon for the period, Sidney remarried quickly, possibly, to have a mother and housekeeper for his tiny baby. However, Sidney and Jessie went on to have many happy years together and the baby Norman lived to over 100 and only died in 1917.

All of this interesting information (and many other photos) would not have been known to me if I had not met Sidney's great grandson through my DNA test.

If you are considering a DNA test, don't be a ditherer, as Ancestry have a good offer for autosomal DNA testing, which would be the recommendation of most people who have tested.

https://www.ancestry.co.uk/checkout/MLI?rtype=85&flow=3&o_iid=102993&o_lid=102993&o_sch=Web%20Proper%20ty

This mention of workhouses ties in nicely with tonight's talk at Sevenoaks about the creation of the welfare state.

PS I am a volunteer creating this e-newsletter in my 'spare time' but, if you do notice any errors, please tell me, so that they are not carried forward to the next emailinfo.

I often get asked to publicise family history fairs, new books on genealogy and small genealogy businesses. I use my discretion in including ones which are local to our area or which I think may interest readers. It does not mean that I or NWKFHS has any personal knowledge, or makes any recommendation, about the event or business.

If there is anything else I should be aware of, to give you maximum benefit from this emailinfoservice, please let me know. I do receive many suggestions and requests for external events to be included, but there is only room for so much and I am conscious that the longer this email is, the less likely it is to be read. Some external events I publish on our Facebook page instead. But I'd welcome your opinions on the length and content and whether there is anything additional you'd like included.

Please mention it to others and encourage them to sign up so that we can keep society members and anyone interested in family history informed of NWKFHS activities.

Stella Eames, Editor

emailinfoservice@nwkfhs.org.uk

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