



8 OCTOBER 2022

ISSUE NUMBER 86

# Sevenoaks Newsletter

THE NORTH WEST KENT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY, SEVENOAKS, KENT  
[www.nwKFHS.org.uk](http://www.nwKFHS.org.uk)



**Welcome to NWKFHS Sevenoaks Branch**

**Our meetings are held at**

**Otford Memorial Hall, 28A High Street, Otford, TN14 5PQ**

**Doors open at 1045 am, meeting starts at 11am - Nominal parking fee**

**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 - £2.00 donation to the society's funds.**

## Today's talk

**8 OCTOBER 2022**

**Lullingstone's 20th Century Secrets with Nick Fothergill**

Our speaker this morning our speaker is Nick Fothergill, and he will reveal how the plans to build a large housing estate

and another London Airport in the Lullingstone and Farningham area in the 1930s arose and how the airport very nearly came to fruition.

He will also describe the building of a dummy airfield during the war to deflect enemy aircraft from Biggin Hill.

**Speaker NICK FOTHERGILL**

## Sevenoaks Branch Meetings - Reminder Notice - Change of day and time

**With effect from 10 September 2022 and thereafter, meetings will take place from 10.45am (Doors Open) to 1.00pm on the second Saturday Morning of each month.**

The venue remains the same: Otford Memorial Hall, 28A High Street, Otford, TN14 5PQ

It is hoped the change to Saturday mornings will make it easier to attend, especially during the winter months.

Meeting format remains the same with a speaker, raffle, bookstall and, of course, refreshments.

**Sanitiser and masks available and chairs placed at a friendly distance for those of you concerned about Covid**

The committee look forward to seeing you all.

### NEXT SEVENOAKS BRANCH MEETING

**12 NOVEMBER 2022**

**The Normandy D-Day Landings**

The Normandy landings took place on 6 June 1944, they were the landing operations and associated airborne operations of the Allied invasion of Normandy in Operation Overlord during World War II. Codenamed Operation Neptune and regularly referred to as D-Day, it was the largest seaborne invasion in history.

This morning's speaker will reveal the intelligence war, how the allies fooled the Germans.

**Speaker IAN THOMPSON**

### DARTFORD BRANCH MEETING

**5 NOVEMBER 2022**

**Towers of Strength - The Martello Towers of England**

David will explain how the Martello Towers were part of a revolution in English defence against the French. They were part of the fortifications built in the early 1800s to prevent an invasion by Napoleon. They stand up to 40 feet (12 m) high (with two floors) and typically had a garrison of one officer and 15–25 men. Their round structure and thick walls of solid masonry made them resistant to cannon fire, while their height made them an ideal platform for a single heavy artillery, mounted on the flat roof and able to fire, over a complete 360° circle. A few towers had moats or other batteries and works attached for extra defence. The Martello towers eventually became obsolete, but many have survived to the present day, often preserved as historic monuments.

**Speaker DAVID SLEEP**

At the Sevenoaks Branch meeting in September Barbara Attwatters stepped down after 10 years as our Branch Chair.

Barbara joined the society in the autumn of 1993, and it was not long before she was involved in organising events. The first big one was the SOG event (1995) at Royal Horticultural Hall in London. These were often 2-day events and ran to 2006 when it was overtaken by WDYTYA held at Olympia which Barbara did between 2007 to 2014, plus all other events. These were usually 3-day events, she travelled far and wide, sometimes staying overnight, as well as those in the local area. These trips usually consisted of two cars Barbara Attwaters in one and Barbara Phillips in another. Barbara A took the publications, books, fiche and then discs, plus other members of the society manning the stand with her. Barbara P took the books, stands and other equipment plus one passenger. It was all good fun, and they have many stories about their adventures.

The Society's Annual General Meetings also came under the umbrella of Events and Barbara gradually came to head the team that organised this. She also helped with publications, making many visits to the LMA writing out amendments to poorly filmed or missing parish records. She was further involved in editing for Bob Woodward who was Projects Co-ordinator at the time. Additionally, she was part of the team transcribing headstones at Bessels Green Unitarian Church. Barbara took over the postal publications about 25 years ago. When the e-shop was introduced, she did both aspects of the work and continues to do so. Barbara became the Chair of Sevenoaks over ten years ago, many changes have undergone since then, including the enforced move from the Sevenoaks Community Centre near the Bat & Ball Station to the now Otford Village Memorial Hall. The day and time have been changed and it is hoped that the branch will flourish under the new move to day light hours.

As Chair Barbara sat on the Society's Executive Committee and will continue to do so as the Sevenoaks Representative. The committee would like to thank Barbara for her dedication as Chair at Sevenoaks, we are delighted to have worked alongside her. You will still see Barbara around; we are thrilled that she will continue to be an active part of the Sevenoaks Branch.

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I am sure you will join us in welcoming our new Chair from the October Branch Meeting, Bill Chopping, AKA Wills.

Wills joined NWKFHS about 10 years ago, he is a graduate in Economic and Social History, and he joined the society to hear the great variety of talks the society promotes, being especially keen on those with an emphasis on Social History.

Wills father was much more of a family historian than himself and worked extensively on the history of the Chopping family in High Roothing, Essex going all the way back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This was pre-Internet days and Wills recalls his Mum would follow him all over Essex on their searches. Ultimately, he published a book on the family's story within the village of High Roothing, the purpose of which was to raise funds for the 'Choppin Charity' (not a spelling mistake) which dispensed grants to the poor of the village and had done so for hundreds of years. Wills contributed to the work by providing photographs for the book and furthermore revised and republished the book for the family in 2020.

Since retiring, Wills has worked extensively on documenting the history of Brasted, Kent as a member of the Brasted Society. Both on his own and with several authors, he has edited and published several books on Brasted, collaborating on books such as 'Brasted Memories', 'Brasted Place – It's Owners and Residents - A History' and 'Brasted – The Past in Pictures'. The funds raised by this activity are used by the Brasted Society to purchase historic village artefacts. Working with Karina Jackson, they have renovated the Heritage Room in the Brasted Village Hall and they will open this to the public to display all the artefacts that have been gathered over many years. Much of the Brasted work has involved the extensive renovation and enhancement of old damaged photographs, much of Wills time today being spent on that activity. You may have notice that Wills regularly contributes photographs to the NWKFHS Society Calendar competition.

We welcome Wills to the position of Chair, and we look forward to working alongside him, the Branch is in safe hands.

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At the Sevenoaks Branch meeting in September a 'Certificate of Thanks' was presented to Christina Barnett by our chairman, Victor Nutt.

Many of you will know Christina Barnett. As our membership Secretary from 2008, she was often the first point of contact to many of our members.

She joined the Society in 2004 and it was not long before she became a trustee and a task holder. With her husband Bob, who was also trustee and task holder being the representative for Sevenoaks Branch at the time, they served both on the Sevenoaks Branch Committee and the Society's Executive Committee. Together they took on photography for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Photograph Project during 2013-2017 taking on a huge number of cemeteries and burial grounds. In the preceding years they took on many tasks for the Society, among which was the transcription of parish registers for the Publications and Projects team.



I am sure she would agree that over the years there have been many challenging, happy, and enjoyable times with colleagues. We would like to acknowledge her efforts with a Certificate of Thanks for all the time and effort she has given to the Society.

We wish Christina a very happy retirement – she has earned it!

## **20 OCTOBER - ZOOM TALK – VIKING LIFE AND LEGEND WITH IMOGEN CORRIGAN**

Warriors at heart, the popular and not inaccurate view of the Vikings is of thuggish invaders and ferocious fighters. Whilst it's always acknowledged that they were also masters of navigation and seafaring and were great traders, not much attention is paid to their culture and how some of it influenced later church art in Britain.

Their religious beliefs worked seamlessly with their legends so sometimes the two are hard to separate. Sagas tell of heroic deeds by both man and monster, whilst others unintentionally show the nuts and bolts of Scandinavian society. Skaldic poetry with its strange metaphors is more specific – deliberately so – composed so that it couldn't be altered by future generations and so the story couldn't be lost.

A link to the zoom meeting will be placed on the website [www.nwkhfs.org.uk](http://www.nwkhfs.org.uk) a few days before the meeting,

Time 7.30 pm - Capacity 100

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## **SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS**

**26<sup>th</sup> October @ 10.30am DNA Family History Research Discussion Group Leader Laura Lincoln**

**19<sup>TH</sup> October @ 10.30 am Library Discussion Group: A members-only DNA Discussion Group. Leader to be confirmed**

**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR DETAILS OF FURTHER WORKSHOPS AND UPDATES**

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## **Events online**

There are many talks, podcasts, and exhibitions available to us online, do take a look at some of the following sites:

<https://www.kfhs.org.uk/>

<https://www.esfh.org.uk/>

<http://folkfhs.org.uk/program.htm>

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

<https://www.ihgs.ac.uk/>

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/family-history/>

This site is certainly worth a visit, there is a great deal of choice and variety, many free events, or AT a low cost.

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## **ON THIS DAY: OCTOBER 8 is the 281<sup>ST</sup> day of the year in the Gregorian calendar; 84 days left until the end of the year**

**314** Constantine I defeats Roman Emperor Licinius, who loses his European territories

**1200** Isabella of Angoulême, second wife of King John, is crowned Queen consort of England

**1764** Henry Fielding dies, English novelist and playwright (b. 1707)

**1829** Stephenson's Rocket wins the Rainhill Trials

**1929** Born today Betty Boothroyd, English academic and politician, British Speaker of the House of Commons

**1939** World War II: Germany annexes western Poland

**1982** After its London premiere, Cats opens on Broadway and runs for nearly 18 years before closing on September 10, 2000

**2005** The 7.6 Mw Kashmir earthquake leaves 86,000–87,351 people dead, 69,000–75,266 injured, and 2.8 million homeless

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## **A message from Hilary Waters:**

### **Society Library: now back to pre-pandemic opening hours**

I am delighted to tell you that the library is now open and staffed by library volunteers  
on Wednesdays from 10am to 4pm and there is no need for booking.

Our new Librarian is Hilary Waters, who is taking over from Janet Rose who served as Society Librarian and did a fantastic job for many years.

There is a proviso that, if as at 2pm there is no one there, the volunteers will close up, but they are very happy to stay if the library is in use.

There are three PCs for any NWK member to use for research; or you can use your own device - but if using your own device you need to join Kent Libraries (via any library in Kent) to be able to log in to the library

edition of Ancestry, FindmyPast and other resources.

Library at: 80 Summerhouse Drive, Joydens Wood, Kent DA5 2EE (On the corner of Summerhouse Drive and Eden Road) Parking in Eden Road or other nearby roads.



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**Friday 11 November 6:00pm - 10:00pm GMT and Saturday 12 November 10:00am - 6:00pm GMT**

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**The Sevenoaks Committee: Branch Chair - Bill Chopping**

**Committee Members - Karina Jackson, Norma Holmden, Bernie Wilkins, Sandra Marchant, Barbara Attwaters**

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