



12 NOVEMBER 2022

ISSUE NUMBER 87

Sevenoaks Newsletter

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

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

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

NEXT SEVENOAKS BRANCH MEETING

10 DECEMBER 2022 - The Normandy D-Day Landings

What's behind the Wassail and why do we kiss under mistletoe and let loose women into York at Christmas? Every family hones its own traditions, but mainly they are based on a central theme: filling our houses with greenery and bling, sending cards, eating too much, wearing a silly hat, singing songs and playing games that we don't bother with for the rest of the year. How has all this come about? Some are based on pagan festivities that either honoured spirits or simply helped to break up the winter. Others, such as advent calendars and crackers, are much more recent.

This talk cannot possibly cover all of our traditions, but it gives a glimpse behind the scenes to see our ancestors preparing for the day, stirring-up puddings and dragging Yule logs into the house on Christmas Eve and the rituals that went with it. We see Lords of Misrule lording it over rowdy parties, how pantomime developed and how a few carollers sent out a coded message.

Speaker

IMOGEN

CORBICAN

DARTFORD BRANCH MEETING

3 DECEMBER 2022 - Christmas on the Home Front 1939 - 1945

Mike Brown is an experienced speaker whose TV credits include Time Team and Timewatch. His entertaining, seasonal talk will be enhanced by a collection of artefacts such as ration books, uniforms and toys.

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 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.

Speaker MIKE BROWN

19 NOVEMBER - ZOOM TALK – LOSTCOUSINS.COM WITH PETER CALVE

Peter Calver's unique website LostCousins.com which enables living relatives to find each other, has over 90,000 registered members. Standard membership is free and includes the opportunity to receive Peter's free LostCousins informative e newsletter distributed 2-3 times a month.

Members add ancestors onto their LostCousins *My Ancestors* page using Census entries as their source. (When getting started it's recommended that you use the freely available 1881 Census.) Then press the Search button and LostCousins automated matching will flag up if another member has entered the same ancestor (in which case you're related, you are each others' 'lost cousins'). Cousins can contact each other via the website - although you can of course subsequently exchange email addresses.

Peter has agreed that the talk can be recorded, and so it will be uploaded to the members-only area of nwkfhs.org.uk within a few days of the live Zoom talk. Peter is kindly making no charge for his talk but North West Kent FHS is a charity and membership fees and donations are an important part of our income. So, if you are not a North West Kent or East Surrey FHS member, please consider making a donation via our [web shop](#) towards the cost of our Zoom licence.

A link to the zoom meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2799524396?pwd=ZTM4V0E4R2ZqbTZubXpXZ1dDZGdRQT09>

Meeting ID: 279 952 4396

Passcode: 533032

Time 10:00 for 10:30 start - Capacity 100

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

30TH November @ 10.30am DNA Family History Research Discussion Group Leader Laura Lincoln

Please visit our website for details of further workshops and updates *and sign up for our free twice monthly Society eNewsletter*

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.

ON THIS DAY: November 12 is the 316th day of the year in the Gregorian calendar; 49 days left until the end of the year

1439 Plymouth becomes the first town incorporated by the English Parliament.

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

1912 First Balkan War: King George I of Greece makes a triumphal entry into Thessaloniki after its liberation from 482 years of Ottoman rule

1912 The frozen bodies of Robert Scott and his men are found on the Ross Ice Shelf in Antarctica

1918 Dissolution of Austria-Hungary: Austria becomes a republic

1927 Leon Trotsky is expelled from the Soviet Communist Party, leaving Joseph Stalin in undisputed control of the Soviet Union

1929 Grace Kelly born, American actress, later Princess Grace of Monaco (d. 1982)

1954 Ellis Island ceases operations

2018 Stan Lee died, American comic book writer, editor, and publisher (b. 1922)

A reminder

Society Library: now back to pre-pandemic opening hours

The library is now open on Wednesdays from 10am to 4pm and there is no need for booking.

There is a proviso that, if as at 2pm there is no one there, the volunteers will close, 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.

Prisoners Of War Sound Recordings 1916-1918

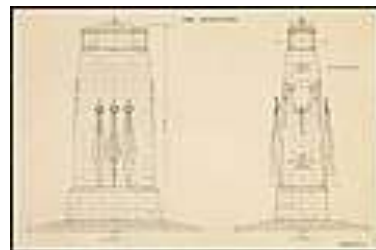
Findmypast have released 56 sound recordings of servicemen in German prison camps in the First World War, in partnership with the British Library. These men all recite the Parable of the Prodigal Son. This was an attempt by the Germans to understand and record regional dialects, so the men are from across the country and are of all different backgrounds. The

oldest man in the collection is 59 and served with the Merchant navy - the youngest, a private with the 1st Gordon Highlanders, was only 20 years of age. You can find further detail on the website, link <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/blog/new/pow-audio-recordings>

History of The Cenotaph

The Cenotaph that stands in Whitehall, London has become the central focus for the remembrance and commemoration events in Britain since the First World War. It was first built with wood and plaster and intended only as a temporary structure for the Peace Day Parade on 19th July 1919. The Parade was one of the most impressive spectacles ever witnessed by Londoners and the world. Nearly 15,000 troops took part in the march, led by the victorious Allied commanders.

Cenotaph sketch by Lutyens



The Cenotaph was built at the request of the then Prime Minister Lloyd George (1863-1945), it was designed and built by Sir Edwin Lutyens, who had provided many of the designs for the cemeteries being created by the Imperial War Graves Commission. Cenotaph, which means 'empty tomb' in Greek, provided an immediate focus for public grief following the Great War of 1914 – 1918, symbolising the unprecedented losses suffered. There are no names inscribed on the Cenotaph, which allowed individuals to assign their own meaning to the memorial. It is dedicated to 'The Glorious Dead' which gave a place of mourning for those whose relations, friends, husbands, brothers, and sons died in the war without a known grave. This symbolism further resonates through the introduction of the two minutes silence on Armistice Day and the interment of the Unknown Warrior.

The Cenotaph proved so popular that a permanent replacement was commissioned. Designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, the permanent structure was built from Portland stone by Holland, Hannen & Cubitts, replacing Sir Edwin Lutyens' earlier wood-and-plaster cenotaph in the same location. It was unveiled by King George V (1865-1936) on Armistice Day - 11th November 1920. The unveiling ceremony was part of a larger procession which saw the procession of the Unknown Warrior on his final journey to burial at Westminster Abbey. Originally, it was intended to commemorate the victims of the First World War but is now used to commemorate all the dead in all wars in which British servicemen and women have fought. The Cenotaph was designated a Grade I listed building on 5th February 1970.

After the original Cenotaph was removed, the wooden top was displayed by the Imperial War Museum, then located in Crystal Palace. It became a focus for remembrance activities at the museum during the 1920s.

Sources <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/remembrance-day/The%20history%20of%20The%20Cenotaph>
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/what-is-the-cenotaph>

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE AT VINE WAR MEMORIAL 11.00AM ON SUNDAY 14 NOVEMBER

This year's Remembrance Sunday Service and Parade in Sevenoaks will be held on Sunday 14 November at 11.00am at the Vine War Memorial. (Service commences at 10.50 am). The Service will be led by Revd Canon Angus MacLeay of St Nicholas Church, who will be assisted by Father David Gibbons of St Thomas Church and Revd Dermot Thornberry.

The Eynsford Concert Band will play at the Service and render the Last Post.

My ancestor died on active service; how do I find out more?

- Provided you know approximately when a man dies on active service and he was in the Army after 1914, he will appear in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's debt of Honour Register (www.cwgc.org), which will give you his regimental number and, or course, when he died and where he is buried.
- This facility is not available before 1914, although if you know in which campaign, he died during the nineteenth century then the casualty rolls may help.
- If the soldier died in service, another possibility would be to check the records of soldiers; effects, which survive between 1810-1822, 1830-1844 and 1862-1881. They are in WO 25, arranged by initial letter of surname, and they give the regiment. However, these records are unlikely to be of use if the soldier died owing money to the Army. Later records are with the National Army Museum.

His First World War service record does not survive, what alternative are there?

- You can find very brief details from his Medal Index Card. They are at Kew or you can check them online at www.documentsonline.nationalarchives.gov.uk
- War diaries for his unit will give you an idea of what he did day by day. However, it is unusual for other ranks to be named
- If he was killed then you need to check the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website (www.cwgc.org) and the Soldiers Died in the Great War database (www.military-genealogy.co.uk)
- If he served after 1920 or during the Second World War his record will still be with the Ministry of Defence.

Source: Tracing Your Army Ancestors by Simon Fowler reprinted 2009 pages 181 & 182

The Sevenoaks Committee: Branch Chair - Bill Chopping
Committee Members - Karina Jackson, Norma Holmden, Bernie Wilkins, Sandra Marchant, Barbara Attwaters