

1ST MARCH 2025

# Dartford Newsletter

THE NORTH WEST KENT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY, DARTFORD, KENT

[www.nwkhfs.org.uk](http://www.nwkhfs.org.uk)

**Welcome to NWKFHS Dartford Branch**

**Our meetings are held at Heath Ln, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2LY**

**10:30 till 12:30**

***We welcome visitors and new members, and we aspire to offer all the helpful advice that you might need.***

***If you are a guest we appreciate a donation to the society's funds.***

***We hope you enjoy your visit.***

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## **TODAYS TALK : A Family at War**

Peter is a Yorkshireman who worked for the NHS for 35 years as a medical physicist but has now retired and become a "man of Kent".

His talk is part war story and part love story about his grandfather who was a reluctant soldier who went missing in March 1918 and suddenly reappeared in late 1918. The talk includes the difficulties of creating a true historical account when photographs are faked and documents created to deceive.

**Speaker : Dr Peter Rudd**

## **SEVENOAKS BRANCH MEETING**

### **15 March 2025: The Tidal Thames: It's Folklore & Traditions**

Mark is a freelance artist, designer-silversmith, semi-retired university lecturer and public speaker. He is also a folklorist and has been a member of the Folklore Society since 1987, speaking regularly at their conferences around the UK. He has a particular interest in unusual local customs and rituals and in 2013 he published a book on the folklore and popular customs of the church. Furthermore, Mark is passionate about lighthouses, being an active member of the Association of Lighthouse Keepers and is currently their Education Officer. This talk explores the rich tradition of lore and legend around the tidal reaches of London's River, including pagan gods, riverside taverns, secret tunnels, ghosts, ceremonials, frost fairs, tales of smuggling and pirates.

**Speaker : Mark Lewis**

## **NEXT DARTFORD BRANCH MEETING**

### **5th April 2025: My Ancestor: Victorian Shipbuilder & Lothario**

Rebecca's talk is about a great-great uncle, Sir William Pearce, a Victorian shipbuilder and rake who tried his hardest to hide all his shady relationships only to have them unearthed by Rebecca over 100 years later. She will explain her research methods and how she contacted distant family members.

Rebecca is an Australian teacher who now lives in West London. She is an author, researcher and volunteer with interests in music and history. The inspiration for her research has been an extensive archive of material kept by her husband's family.

**Speaker : Rebecca Clarke**

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## UP AND COMING LIBRARY WORKSHOPS

DNA & General Family History Discussion Group with Pam Goddard 09-04-2025 10:30 am

## ZOOM DISCUSSION GROUPS

Zoom DNA Discussion Group with Laura Lincoln 19-03-2025 10:30 am

Zoom Workshop: Record Keeping with David Cufley 26-03-2025 7:30 pm

Zoom Discussion Group: Education in your family – was it as expected? with Ann Clarke 02-04-2025 10:30 am

Zoom Discussion Group: Let's Talk Family History with David Cufley 09-04-2025 10:30 am

Zoom Talk: The Hidden Secrets of the 1939 Register with Linda Hammond 10-04-2025 7:30 pm

**Please log in 15 minutes before each online event and enjoy chatting amongst participants before it starts.**

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### **How to get the Zoom Link - Booking is no longer required for individual Zoom Workshops and Discussion Groups.**

A Zoom Register has been created to cover all attendance to any of the zoom groups. Any society member who would like to be added to the register needs to submit their name, email address and membership number to [workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk](mailto:workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk). You only need to register once. Once a month the zoom links for the discussion groups and workshops will be sent by email to those members on the register. Members who have registered can then attend as many of the Zoom groups as they wish with no need to make a specific booking for each one.

#### **All Zoom Workshops and Discussion Groups are members only-events.**

Workshop leaders freely give their time, but a donation via the web shop is appreciated:

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/shop/nwkfhs-shop/services/society-donation>

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Participating in a North West Kent Family History workshop or discussion offers numerous benefits. It provides valuable skills for research, enhances your understanding of historical contexts, and fosters a sense of connection with your ancestry. We warmly welcome both familiar faces and new friends.

***Calling all volunteers with fresh ideas!*** *If you have a new topic of interest you'd like to see covered in our workshops, or you wish to be involved with our workshops, we want to hear from you.*

Contact us through bookings and enquiries by e-mail [workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk](mailto:workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk)

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### **An Invitation from the Editor**

As a member of our esteemed Family History Society, we invite you to contribute to our upcoming journals in the next few months. At NWKFHS, we value the rich tapestry of family narratives and historical insights that our members bring to the table. Your unique perspective and expertise would undoubtedly enrich our journal.

Whether you have a captivating family story, compelling research, or an enlightening exploration of historical records, we warmly welcome your submissions. This is a terrific opportunity to share your knowledge and passion with fellow members. If you are interested in contributing, please feel free to reach out to us with your proposed topic or submission. Our editor Pauline will be delighted to hear from you and will respond to every proposal. Please email [theeditor@nwkfhs.org.uk](mailto:theeditor@nwkfhs.org.uk) – word files or simply text in the body of an email is fine. We look forward to hearing from you.

## ON THIS DAY

### March 1 is the 60th day of the year

1628 – Writs issued in February by Charles I of England mandate that every county in England (not just seaport towns) pay ship tax by this date.

1921 – The Australian cricket team captained by Warwick Armstrong becomes the first team to complete a whitewash of The Ashes, something that would not be repeated for 86 years.

1946 – The Bank of England is nationalised.

1981 – Provisional Irish Republican Army member Bobby Sands begins his hunger strike in HM Prison Maze.

1888 – Fanny Walden, English cricketer and umpire, international footballer (d. 1949)<sup>[21]</sup>

1910 – David Niven, English soldier and actor (d. 1983)

## OLD OCCUPATIONS

**GABELER** : Tax collector. A collector of gabels or taxes.

**GAGER** : An exciseman. Collector of liquor taxes. One who gages (gauges); specifically, an officer whose business is to ascertain the contents of casks and other hollow vessels.

**GARTHMAN** : The proprietor of an open weir for taking fish. Owner or worker of a fish trap.

**GATHERER** : Glassworker who inserted the blow iron into the molten glass ready for the blower

**GAUGER** : Customs duty officer who measured the capacity of imported barrels of liquor in order to calculate the payable duty

**GORZEMAN** : A seller of gorse or broom

**GRACE-WIFE** : Midwife - nurse who delivers babies

**GRANGER** : Farmer

**GRIMBRIBBER** : Lawyer

**GROOVER** : A miner

**GUINEA PIG** : (Slang) A person rendering services more or less for a nominal fee of a guinea e.g. company director, juryman, deputy clergyman, officer on special duty

## KENT PLACE NAMES

**Bapchild** : a name meaning something like 'Bacca's spring'.

**Bearsted** : does not, sadly, commemorate a time when bears wandered the Kentish woodlands. The general meaning is therefore of a 'village or homestead on a hill'.

**Benenden** : looks back to an Old English personal name, and denotes a denn or woodland pasture belonging to a man called Bionna.

**Bicknor** : probably signifies a 'slope below the pointed hill'.

**Bidborough** : The 'borough' of Bidborough is not Old English burh, a fort or stronghold, but rather beorg, a hill.

**Biddenden** : is an eponym describing an Old English denn or woodland pasture.

**Borden** : is either a 'valley near a hill' or a 'woodland pasture near a hill'.

**Boxley** : takes its name from the box-tree, unchanged from the Old English box.

**Bredgar** : literally a 'broad triangular plot'.

**Brenchley** : It describes an Old English leah or woodland clearing,

**Burham** : is a typical Old English place-name meaning 'homestead by the fortified place'.

## SOCIETY VACANCIES

Many hands make light work. That is certainly true when it comes to sharing the tasks that keep our Society operating smoothly. Please review these volunteer opportunities. This list will be updated monthly on the Society website. If you can help, please email <https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/?location=1#Contact> marked for the attention of the Society secretary.

### **Chair - Sevenoaks Branch Meetings**

Barbara Phillips is currently acting Chair but would like to relinquish this post as she is also programme secretary for the branch and has other responsibilities within the Society. The chair does not have as many responsibilities as previously as others have taken on some of the tasks. If the Branch Chair is away for a meeting, this can be managed. The job is not onerous, but needs commitment.

### **Bought-in-Books Transporter - Dartford & Sevenoaks Branch Meetings**

Dartford & Sevenoaks need someone to bring the Bought -in-Books to the meetings. When not required they can be housed in the Society's lock-up off of Thames Road, Dartford. One does not need a big car boot. Any monies involved are the responsibility of the individual branch and do not concern the person who brings them. The job is not onerous, but does need commitment.

### **Librarian Assistant**

The Society Librarian urgently needs volunteers to help with running the Library in Joyden's Wood and to help fellow members with their research. The situation is about to become worse, as one of the current volunteers is moving away soon. We must have at least two volunteers on site for the Library to be able to open on Wednesdays. Good IT skills and knowledge of Microsoft Windows would be helpful, but are not essential. Are you free on Wednesdays and could offer help on one or more Wednesdays a month?

If you can help with any of these please email via <https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/?location=1#Contact> marked for the attention of the Society Secretary.

### **Society Library**

The Society Library is open every Wednesday for members to do their own research, socialise, participate in library based workshops and discussion groups and receive help from the library volunteers. The library address is 80 Summerhouse Drive, Joydens Wood, Bexley Kent DA5 2EE. Free parking in nearby side roads.

You can use the library's PCs to access Ancestry - and FindMyPast (which currently does NOT include access to the 1921 census, something we are investigating with the library). We suggest joining Kent Libraries as you can then access these websites from your own device whilst in the library which eases pressure on the demand for library PCs.

The library is open from 10am to 4pm but it greatly helps the volunteers if visitors with research queries call in earlier in the day rather than later. Please also bring as much information as you already have about the ancestor you are researching.

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**The Dartford Committee: Branch Chair Janet Rose  
Members: Lorraine King, Christine Hills, Barbara Phillips, Barbara Attwaters,  
Maureen Griffiths, Maureen Berry & Pat Cornelius**

**Thanks to Jon Henderson for this issue of Dartford News in Hilary Waters absence**