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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 10:45 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.

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

We hope you enjoy your visit.

Sanitiser and masks available and chairs placed at a friendly distance for those concerned about Covid. We are pleased to inform you that we now have a hearing system at this event to enhance the audio experience for attendees who may need it.

TODAYS TALK : 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 SEVENOAKS BRANCH MEETING

12 April 2025: Kevin Bacon Family History Laboratory

This is an interactive exploration of 'Six Degrees of Separation' - an interactive experiment to find family history links between members and to verify if the 'six degrees of separation' has any relationship to Family History Research.

It will explore the connections members have to each other and how they may be related by genes, place or event. The Laboratory may stimulate members' research and breakdown those brick walls to that elusive ancestor. Serendipity and Kismet are important research tools of family historians and are little used and explored, this laboratory will try to highlight their use.

Please can you refresh your memories of your families especially in regard their research surnames, places of birth and residence and occupations.

Speaker : David Cufley

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

Bring Your Own Mug



Let's make our meetings a little eco-friendly! Please where possible BYOM to help us to save a little cost, reduce waste and make a positive impact on the environment. If this is difficult or you forget don't worry, we do have a small supply of mugs to ensure you can enjoy a drink. We thank you for your cooperation.

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.

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. 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>

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

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 – word files or simply text in the body of an email is fine. We look forward to hearing from you.

ON THIS DAY

March 15 is the 74th day of the year.

1672 – King Charles II of England issues the Royal Declaration of Indulgence, granting limited religious freedom to all Christians.

1877 – First ever official cricket test match is played: Australia vs England at the MCG Stadium, in Melbourne, Australia.

1927 – The first Women's Boat Race between the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge takes place on The Isis in Oxford.

1961 – At the 1961 Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, South Africa announces that it will withdraw from the Commonwealth when the South African Constitution of 1961 comes into effect.

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.

The Sevenoaks Committee: Branch Chair – Vacant
Members: Barbara Phillips, Norma Holmden, Bernie Wilkins, Sandra Marchant, Barbara Attwaters,
Maureen Berry, Jon Henderson, Janet Rose, Christine Hills