

Welcome to the North West Kent FHS mid-March enews

Thank you for reading our enews.

If you are receiving this for the first time - welcome.

The enews is usually circulated fortnightly so you won't be bombarded. And you can unsubscribe at any time either by replying or by clicking on Unsubscribe at the foot of the email.

If you are thinking of attending the Society Library between 19 March - 2 April please scroll down to read about some restricted access and a new closure date.

Also scroll down for another photographic mystery.

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Do take a look at our amazing events programme which has events planned throughout 2025. <https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings>

And you have access to all this for just £10 a year (£12 joint members).

Many, many thanks to all the volunteers who arranged and hosted these events. The Zooms are especially welcomed by our members in other parts of the UK and abroad and those who find it harder to travel.

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New for 2025: Zoom Talks on the 2nd Thursday evening of each month.

Speakers and topics on different aspects of family history are already booked for the first half of the year. These talks will be for paid up members only but your £10 annual membership (£12 joint members) lasts until 31 December 2025.

The Zoom talks will start at 7.30 p.m. promptly. Members will be able to join from 7.15 to chat before the talks start.

To get the zoom links use the contact form on the website <https://nwkhfs.org.uk/?location=1#Contact> and send a message with your name, email address and membership number, asking to be sent the Zoom codes. The Zoom codes will then be emailed to you each month.

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Dartford Branch April Talk: *Sir William Pearce - Victorian Shipbuilder and Lothario* with guest speaker Rebecca Clarke

Saturday 5 April: Doors Open 9.45am Meeting starts 10.30am

Dartford Science and Technology College, Heath Lane, Dartford Kent DA1 2LY

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.

Doors open 9.45am. The meeting / talk will start at 10.30am and end by 12.30pm.

The Talk venue has a large, free car park but it is shared with other users and can be busy at times.

No booking, just turn up.

The talk is free to members but all attendees are requested to make donation towards the Society's running costs.

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/dartford-branch-meetings/dartford-branch-talk-sir-william-pearce-victorian-shipbuilder-and-lothario-by-rebecca-clarke>

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Sevenoaks Branch April Talk: *The Kevin Bacon Family History Laboratory: An Interactive Exploration of 'Six Degrees of Separation'* with David Cufley

Saturday 12 April Doors open 10.45am meeting starts 11am

Otford Village Memorial Hall 28A High Street, Otford, Kent TN14 5PQ

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.

The chairs in the hall will be arranged in a horseshow shape with David in the centre.

About the Speaker:

David is former President of North West Kent Family History Society. He is a member of a number of family history societies and the British Brick Society.

His main interests include building history and he compiles a Brickmakers' Index. This index of brickfield workers started life to help family historians to trace their itinerant brickmaking ancestors but has expanded to provide local and industrial history information.

David has spoken to family history societies and other organisations on family, building and industrial history subjects. He is an advocate of communicating and connecting family historians with their family's history and place.

David is a retired Chartered Structural Engineer and has a BA (Hons) Open degree and an MSc degree in building conservation.

Doors open 10.45am, meeting starts 11am. No booking, just turn up.

The talk is free to members but all attendees are requested to make donation towards the Society's running costs.

There is a large public car park (payment required, 50p for 2 hours, £1 for 3 hours) adjacent to the hall but it can be busy.

<https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/sevenoaks-branch-meetings/sevenoaks-branch-talk-kevin-bacon-family-history-laboratory-an-interactive-exploration-of-six-degrees-of-separation-with-david-cufley>

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Zoom Talks in April

Thursday 10 April 7.30pm The Hidden Secrets of the 1939 Register with Linda Hammond

The 1939 Register is often compared to an extra census for England and Wales, but it's much more.

Although assembled in 1939, the Government continuously updated it with changes in names, deaths, and other key details until about 1990. Some updates are visible, while others are hidden in annotations and codes next to entries. This presentation will show how to decode these markings, offering deeper insights.

Learn how to search the register and uncover its hidden secrets to enhance your family history research.

Linda Hammond is a professional genealogist who has been active in genealogy for over 35 years as both a researcher and a lecturer. She is a tutor at the University of Strathclyde and, in addition to her teaching role, Linda frequently speaks at conferences and family history fairs, where she shares her knowledge and expertise.

Please log in from 7.15pm and enjoy chat with other participants before the talk starts.

Any society member who would like to receive the Zoom link for this talk needs to submit their name, email address and membership number via <https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/?location=1#Contact> stating "Please send me the Zoom links" .

The talk will be recorded for the benefit of members not available that evening or in different time zones and will be available in the Members Only Area of the website for 2 weeks only. You need to log in and then go to this screen <https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/resources/all-other/zoom-talk-videos>
<https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/zoom-talks/zoom-talk-the-hidden-secrets-of-the-1939-register-with-linda-hammond>

Wednesday 23 April 7.30pm Hextable Manor House with David Cufley

A talk to explore who built and altered Hextable House from its Tudor beginnings to its demise from damage by a V2 in WW2.

The history and details are based on the excavations by E O Thomas in 1982 and other research by local historians.

Log in from 7.15pm and enjoy chat with other attendees before the talk starts.

Any society member who would like to receive the Zoom link for this talk needs to submit their name,

email address and membership number via <https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/?location=1#Contact> stating "Please send me the Zoom links" .

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/zoom-talks/zoom-talk-hex-table-manor-house-with-david-cufley>

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Workshops, Special Interest and Discussion Groups - for Members Only

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings>

There are dozens of Workshops and Discussion Groups via Zoom to cater for members who cannot get to our Library - which is the venue, on Wednesdays, for our in person workshops.

The wealth of expertise amongst the Society members who volunteer to lead these groups is amazing. I wonder if other Societies put on this number of training sessions for their members.

Membership of our Society is only £10 a year and lasts until 31

December 2025. <https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/about/membership/our-membership/#options>

If any Society members missed a workshop which they would have liked to attend, or it filled up, see here for videos of some past workshops: <https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/workshops/past-zoom-workshop-videos>

Note the above link will only work for Society members logged into the website.

Attending Workshops and Discussion Groups

Groups meeting at the Library

These must be booked individually - the website link explains how to reserve your place. This is essential as numbers have to be kept to ten due to space restrictions.

Zoom talks, discussion group and workshops

These do not have to be booked individually, but you do need to register in order to be sent the Zoom links. The website link for each Zoom group explains how you register.

Many, many thanks to our volunteer workshop coordinators for arranging our exciting programme of workshops, and to the workshop leaders who all give their time freely.

Society Members, click on the workshop website links below which will explain how to join the workshop or discussion group.

19 March 10.30am Zoom Discussion group with Laura Lincoln

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/zoom-discussion-group/zoom-dna-discussion-group-with-laura-lincoln-26>

26 March 7.30pm Zoom Workshop: Record keeping with David Cufley

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/zoom-discussion-group/zoom-workshop-record-keeping-with-david-cufley>

2 April 10.30am Zoom Discussion group with Ann Clarke - Education in your family - was it as expected?

<https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/zoom-discussion-group/zoom-discussion-group-with-ann-clarke-education-in-your-family-was-it-as-expected>

9 April 10.30am Library DNA and General Family History with Pam Goddard

<https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/discussion-group/library-dna-general-family-history-discussion-group-with-pam-goddard-4>

9 April 10.30am Zoom Discussion Group : Lets talk Family History with David Cufley

<https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/zoom-discussion-group/zoom-discussion-group-lets-talk-family-history-with-david-cufley-3>

16 April 10.30am Zoom Discussion Group with Laura Lincoln

<https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/zoom-discussion-group/zoom-dna-discussion-group-with-laura-lincoln-27>

30 April 10.30am Zoom Workshop: Scottish Interests Discussion Group with Pam Goddard Today the group will look at resources found abroad

<https://www.nwkhfs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings/zoom-workshop/zoom-workshop-scottish-interest-group-with-pam-goddard>

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Our Library at Summerhouse Drive

Important: (this has changed from the info in the 1 March enews because Kent County Council had to change the date of its renovation work)

On 19 and 26 March meetings will be taking place at 10am in the room used to store our book collection. Therefore it will not be possible to access the books until the meetings finish between 1pm - 2pm. It will still be possible to use the main library room and computers for research.

On 2 April the library will be closed (in fact closed all week) because Kent County Council contractors will be carrying out renovation work.

The Society Library is normally open on Wednesdays for members to do their own research, socialise, participate in library based workshops and discussion groups and share a cuppa and receive help from the library volunteers.

You can use the library's PCs and WiFi to access Ancestry and FindMyPast which both now include the 1921 census. 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.

Non members, on Wednesdays you can join the Society at the library.

80 Summerhouse Drive, Joydens Wood, Bexley Kent DA5 2EE Free parking in nearby side roads.

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.

Photographic Mystery 1 - Solved

In the 1 February enews I appealed for help in respect of the following photo, taken in Bromley (then in Kent) in 1955 of three children stating their forenames and ages only. It had been found by Elaine being used as a bookmark in Stuttgart, Germany.



Thanks to sleuthing by North West Kent FHS members we were able to make contact with the little boy, now living in Canada, and pass his contact details to Elaine. He was delighted to be 'found' and is looking forward to receiving the original photo.

A lesson for us all about writing names and dates on the back of photos, especially if sending them to friends or relatives abroad!

Photographic Mystery 2

Mike Colyer of Australia posted the following enquiry in our Facebook Group and, although there were lots of ideas, no one was able to completely resolve the question of *Where were Maryann and co in 1903?* so I thought I would try the power of enews readers regarding the location.

I thought Mike's family background was so interesting that I am publishing his message in full. Imagine emigrating to Australia and then discovering that your great grandparents had done so too.

I have Mike's permission to publish this in enews and no one else mentioned by name is living.

(There was a suggestion that **Congleton** is actually **Cougleton** but Mike does have other items in his possession which show the writer always wrote 'n's like 'u's.)

Congleton is in Cheshire and there is no known family connection there.

If you have any ideas at all please reply to this enews and I will forward your email to Mike so you can be in direct contact. Or if you are a member of our Facebook

Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/767236786758351/> you can reply to Mike via Facebook.



*Maryann at Congleton
Farm, about 1903*



in the hop fields, in Kent

Hello

I am following up my exchange of correspondence with Stella, primarily about the location of a "Congleton Farm".

("Maryann" is Mary Ann **EASTERBY** (born 25 Jan 1834 Erith, died 17 Dec 1918 Belleville, Essex, New Jersey, USA)

The photo was one of several that came into my brother A's possession early in 2023 from an American "cousin". There were frequent spelling alterations to the name Easterby e.g. Esterby and Maryann e.g. Mary, Mary E. Incidentally, **COLYER** was often Collier in our family as you can imagine.

Family Names

Elizabeth is Maryann's daughter and Sally and Effie are Elizabeth's stepdaughters.

Jack Colyer is John Arthur Colyer, Maryann's son.

If I may, I'll just introduce you to my Family History story.

My wife and I and two young children left England to live in Cape Town, South Africa in 1982 and stayed there for four years. In 1986 we had to make a decision either to go back to England or try and emigrate to Australia. We chose Australia and headed to Perth, Western Australia, primarily because of the climate and economics (more affordable than the Eastern States). We had no family connection to Perth...or so we thought. My wife and I are now in our 70s and have four Aussie grandchildren.

My parents then in their 60s and retired joined us in Perth in 1989 and my only sibling, A and his family followed shortly after. Moving on to 2016, my father passed away in Perth at the age of 92. We lost Mum last year aged 93.

It was only a month or so after Dad passed away that A first tried to trace our Family Tree. At that stage I had no particular interest in family history. The short story is that A discovered that our Dad's grandfather and grandmother (Henry Charles Colyer and Eliza Jane **THORNDYCRAFT**) are buried in Perth's primary cemetery, Karrakatta. Our Dad had no idea that his grandparents had moved from Portsmouth (Dad's birthplace) in 1912 to settle in Perth. You may recognise Thorndycraft as a "Kent" name and Eliza was born in Tonbridge. Dad's father Edward (born in Sydney, a whole other story) remained in Portsmouth until his death in 1941 when he was blown up in the Solent on a minesweeper.

Several of Henry Charles and Eliza's other children also moved to Perth, so there is a whole gang of related Colyers in and around Perth.

Since my Dad's passing both A and I have become avid family historians and research in one way or another most days. We were both born in Bradford, West Yorkshire, as were our wives. Mum came from Bradford.

I hope that the latter paragraphs of my mail are of some interest.

Many regards

Michael (Mike) Colyer

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The next enews will be 1 April and items should please reach me as soon as possible, and by 28 March latest. Please just reply to this enews email.

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Click on our other links <https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/community/news-journals/blog> [Facebook](#) [Flickr](#) <https://bsky.app/profile/nwkfhs.bsky.social>

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

Please contact me if there's anything you want to say about enews. Use the contact form here: <https://nwkfhs.org.uk/?location=1#Contact>

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

<https://nwkfhs.org.uk/?location=1#Contact>

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