

## North West Kent FHS February 2026 e-news

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

A warm welcome to everyone who has recently signed up to this e-news.

Did you know you can join the North West Kent Family History Society for as little as £10 a year? Membership offers a wide range of benefits, including online and in-person talks and meetings, a quarterly journal, access to the Society library on Wednesdays and the society's databases of members' interests. The membership year runs to 31 December 2026 so now is a great time to join.

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/about/membership/our-membership>

Take a look at our website to see our extensive programme of events - dozens of in-person and Zoom talks, discussion groups, and workshops running through to the end of 2026. <https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/overview/all-upcoming-meetings>

### **Zoom Talk: 12 February 7.30pm Sin, Sex and Probate with Colin Chapman**

After his well-received presentation last year on early Censuses, Dr Chapman returns to talk about Sin, Sex and Probate. a fascinating and accessible guide to the workings of England's ecclesiastical courts.

Until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century in Britain, the Church Courts locally and nationally granted permission to marry, proved wills and testaments, and issued licences to curates, school-teachers, midwives, physicians and surgeons.

These courts additionally dealt with law and order, including sexual misdemeanours of laity and clergy. In this revealing lecture Dr Chapman explains how the courts operated and where their records, valuable to all family historians, may be located today.

Colin is a retired engineer and scientist who began family history research at the age of seven, encouraged by his grandparents. He went on to found or co-found six county-based family history societies, three of which he is currently their President and of a fourth is their Patron.

He originated the three-letter code for county names, forming the basis for the British and International Standard ISO-3166. He has written fourteen genealogically-related books, including, *Sin, Sex and Probate: Ecclesiastical Courts, Officials & Records*. He is a Vice President of both the Family History Federation and of the Society of Genealogists.

This Talk will not be recorded.

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

Please ensure you use your real name when joining our Zoom events. Participants appearing as 'Zoom User' or similar will not be admitted, as this helps us prevent scammers from joining.

### **To Get the Zoom Link**

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/workshops/upcoming-zoom-workshops/zoom-talk-sex-sin-and-probate-with-colin-chapman>

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### **Dartford Branch Talk 7 February Family History Research at the Metropolitan Police Museum with Clare Smith Doors open 9.45am meeting starts at 10.30am**

The Metropolitan Police Museum is in Sidcup and holds archives, books, photographs, equipment, uniforms and other artefacts relating to the history of the Metropolitan Police since its inception in 1829.

If you have a police officer on your family tree the Museum has Police Orders (day-to-day updates) on joiners and leavers, promotions and dismissals and rewards and punishments.

<https://www.met.police.uk/police-forces/metropolitan-police/areas/about-us/about-the-met/met-museums-archives/>

The Curator and Archivist, Clare Smith, will explain how the museum collection can be used in your research.

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.

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/branch-meetings/branch-meetings/dartford-branch-meetings/dartford-branch-talk-family-history-research-at-the-metropolitan-police-museum-with-clare-smith>

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### **Sevenoaks Branch Talk 14 February Speaker Ed Thompson on Shops of Otford 1960-2000 Doors open 10.45am meeting starts 11am**

The talk looks at the buildings and scenes of Sevenoaks that are lost to time but were captured in over 80 evocative photographs.

Ed was brought up in Otford and from an early age developed an interest in railways, spending much time watching steam trains at the local station.

He began to collect railway memorabilia as much of the railway was being modernised in the 1960s but it wasn't until 1980s when the canopy at Otford Station was being taken down that he felt the need to preserve the memory of the old station for future generations. At that time he only possessed one old photograph of the building, but over time his collection grew to over 200 pictures. Next he started amassing pictures of Otford Village and then of Sevenoaks and the surrounding villages, eventually widening out to cover West Kent and East Sussex.

His collection continues to grow and many of his photographs have been used in local history books.

**Doors open 10.45am, meeting starts 11am.**

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.

No booking, just turn up.

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/branch-meetings/branch-meetings/sevenoaks-branch-meetings/sevenoaks-branch-talk-ed-thompson-shops-of-otford-1960-2000>

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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 2026.** <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://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.

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**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.**

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## **February Workshops and Discussion Groups**

4 February 10.30am Zoom Discussion Group with Ann Clarke: Have you found an interesting property that your family has lived in? Have you researched the property?

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/branch-meetings/branch-meetings/zoom-discussion-group/zoom-discussion-group-with-ann-clarke-discussion-group-have-you-found-an-interesting-property-that-your-family-has-lived-in-have-you-researched-the-property>

11 February 10.30am Library DNA & General Family History Discussion Group with Pam Goddard

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/branch-meetings/branch-meetings/discussion-group/library-dna-and-general-family-history-discussion-group-with-pam-goddard-2>

11 February 10.30am Zoom Discussion Group with Laura Lincoln: Let's talk about family history.

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/branch-meetings/branch-meetings/zoom-discussion-group/zoom-dna-and-family-history-discussion-group-with-laura-lincoln-lets-talk-about-family-history>

18 February 10.30am Zoom DNA Discussion Group with Laura Lincoln

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/branch-meetings/branch-meetings/zoom-discussion-group/zoom-dna-discussion-group-with-laura-lincoln-33>

25 February 10.30am Library Writing Group

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/branch-meetings/branch-meetings/future-workshops/library-writing-group-with-pauline-heathcote-12>

25 February 7.30pm Zoom Discussion Group: Breaking Down Ancestral Brickwalls with David Cufley

<https://www.nwkfhs.org.uk/events/branch-meetings/branch-meetings/zoom-discussion-group/zoom-discussion-group-breaking-down-ancestral-brick-walls-with-david-cufley>

See the above link for details of how to submit your ancestral brickwall to David by **11 February latest.**

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### **Society Library – Wednesday Open Days 10am - 4pm**

The Society Library is usually open every Wednesday for members to carry out their own research, enjoy a cuppa, socialise, and take part in workshops and discussion groups held at the library. Our team of volunteers is also on hand to offer help and guidance.

Members are welcome to use the library's PCs and WiFi to access both *Ancestry* and *FindMyPast*, which now include the 1921 census. We recommend joining **Kent Libraries**, as this allows you to access these websites on your own device while at the library—helping to reduce demand for the library's PCs.

**Not yet a member?** You're welcome to join the Society in person at the library on any Wednesday.

⌚ **Address:** 80 Summerhouse Drive, Joydens Wood, Bexley, Kent DA5 2EE

🚗 **Parking:** Free in nearby side roads

⌚ **Opening hours:** 10am to 4pm

To assist our volunteers, we kindly ask that visitors with research queries aim to arrive earlier in the day if possible. Please bring along any existing information you have about the ancestor you're researching, and consider bringing a **USB memory stick** to save any discoveries you make during your visit.

**Advance Notice** on 25 March a Trustees Meeting is being held in the room where all our books and some maps are stored. So unfortunately the room will not be accessible until the meeting ends, probably about 1pm/1.30pm.

**Note: a member has sent me this information about roadworks:** access to roads leading to library is restricted. The lower bottom access via Baldwin park and summerhouse drive is blocked due to urgent power networks work Best access is via Birchwood Road then down Summerhouse Drive.

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<https://www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/52-ancestors-in-52-weeks-new/>

This is a free challenge to help prompt you to write about one of your ancestors each week.

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**Next Enews – Submissions Welcome**

The next enews will be sent out on **1 March** If you have any items you'd like included, please send them to me **as soon as possible**, and no later than 25 February Simply reply to this email to submit your content.

Going forward, the enews is circulated **monthly at the beginning of each month**. I may occasionally send a mid-month update as a reminder about an upcoming Zoom talk, as some other societies do.

There is no need to reply this email unless you have noticed an error.

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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>

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*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. Just reply to this enews.*

*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  
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