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ISSUE NUMBER 96



# Sevenoaks Newsletter

THE NORTH WEST KENT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY, SEVENOAKS, KENT  
[www.nwkhfs.org.uk](http://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.

Guests we appreciate a £1.00 - £2.00 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.**

## Today's talk

### The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood were a group of young artists who studied at the Royal Academy in the 19th century under Sir Joshua Reynolds and who wanted painting to be expansive, depicting nature with its beautiful colours and detailed orientation. The formation of the brotherhood and the paintings that made them famous led to the Arts and Craft Movement in which William Morris, a great friend of the members, embraced their art through textiles and wallpaper which evolved into the style known as Art Nouveau.

**Speaker DELIA TAYLOR**

## NEXT SEVENOAKS BRANCH MEETING

### 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023 – A Heroine of Dunkirk, the Paddle Steamer 'Medway Queen'

The Medway Queen was ordered in 1923 and entered service on the Strood-Chatham-Southend-Herne Bay route the following year. With occasional excursions elsewhere she served on the same route until the beginning of the II World War. Chatham Navy week was an annual highlight and in 1937 the ship ran an excursion at the Coronation Naval Review at Spithead.

Medway Queen was requisitioned for the Royal Navy in 1939 and converted for minesweeping. In 1940 HMS Medway Queen joined the 10th Mine-sweeping Flotilla based in Dover and remained an active minesweeper until late 1943 when she became an accommodation ship for a few months.

The 10th Flotilla played a key part in 'Operation Dynamo' in May-June 1940. Medway Queen and her crew made seven return trips across the channel to bring the men home. The ship's crew estimated that they evacuated 7,000 men while shooting down three Axis aircraft.

In 1946/7 she was refitted and returned to civilian use. The famous Invicta motif was placed on the ship's funnel and in 1954 there was the addition of a bracket on the funnel for navigation lights. In the early 1960s paddle steamers were struggling to compete with newer-type vessels and the Medway Queen made her last voyage to Southend on 9th September 1963. In 1953 Medway Queen was included in the Coronation Naval Review at Spithead. She carried a load of pre-booked passengers and was part of the formal fleet review.

After several attempts at preservation had failed, the ship was purchased by three businessmen, Alan Ridett, Colin Ridett and Robert Trapp in August 1965. She was towed by the tug Dhulia to the Isle of Wight and became a restaurant & nightclub. The Medway Queen Club was popular for wedding receptions and the on-board restaurant was a favourite with locals and holiday makers alike. In the evenings it became a night club with disco and live music. Following the closure of the Medway Queen Club, the ship suffered hull damage and became semi-submerged in the river Medina. In 1984 she was moved back to the River Medway. The current Medway Queen Preservation Society was formed in 1985 to support this endeavour and later became owners of this historic vessel.

After many years of frustration and hard work the society secured the backing of the Heritage Lottery Fund and, later, the European Regional Development Fund to rebuild the ship's hull and establish a base and workshop at Gillingham Pier. The hull rebuild was completed in Bristol in late 2013, and she is now moored at Gillingham Pier where she can be visited.

**Speakers PAM AND MARK BATHURST**

## DARTFORD BRANCH MEETING

### 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023 - Conserving Your Family Archive

Sue Gibbons is a Fellow of The Society of Genealogists and was Librarian there for almost 20 years. During this time she was responsible for managing a major Lottery funded project to convert the massive old card catalogue into computer form and make it available on the Internet.

She is the author of several family history guides and an experienced lecturer. Sue will advise us on conserving our family archives from paper and photographs to domestic objects and digital media.

**Speaker SUE GIBBONS**

## UP AND COMING LIBRARY WORKSHOPS

New to Writing Up your Family History? With Pauline Heathcote	16 August 10:30
New to Writing Up your Family History? With Pauline Heathcote	25 October 10:30
Family History Writing Group with Pauline Heathcote	29 November 10:30

The beginner's workshop will cover Birth, Marriages and Death Certificates, Census Records, Parish Registers, Wills and Directories as well as Family Charts and Trees.

## UP AND COMING ZOOM WORKSHOPS

The Rat Catchers with David Cufley	11 October 19:30
Breaking Down Family History Brick Walls with David Cufley	8 November 19:30
My Ancestor was a Liar with Dave Annal	17 November 19:30

## DISCUSSION GROUPS AT THE LIBRARY

**DNA Discussion Group for those who are either new to DNA or want to discuss particular aspects of DNA** Sep 13th.

**Library Scottish Interests Discussion Group with Pam Goddard and Carolyn Barclay** September 6th

## MONTHLY ZOOM DISCUSSION GROUPS

**Zoom DNA Discussion Group with Laura Lincoln**

The topic for each meeting is agreed by the members by notifying the leader through [workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk](mailto:workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk).

## ZOOM FAMILY HISTORY DISCUSSION GROUP

*Come and enjoy lively discussions on different aspects of Family History*

Each meeting the topic is agreed by the members at the previous group meeting. It can range from 'how do I do...?' to: 'sources for finding family information.' Because this is an open discussion the subjects can lead to topics that the participants want to discuss or expand upon points raised during the session. The structure is very flexible.

**Please visit our website for further details, dates and times** [www.nwkfhs.org.uk](http://www.nwkfhs.org.uk)

**Changes and up-to-date details will be on the website and in the e-mail information service newsletter.**

*Since re-opening the library post Covid the number of attendees is noticeably down. There are many reasons for this but if it is safety fears, we would like to reassure you that we will do all we can to make you feel and be safe. The tables can be spaced further apart to usual, furthermore, we can seat you on your own table and nobody will object to you wearing a face covering.*

We would be pleased to hear from any volunteers who would like to be involved with any workshops, along with any new topics that interest 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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## 9TH AUGUST – ZOOM DISCUSSION GROUP – LET'S TALK ABOUT FAMILY HISTORY WITH DAVID CUFLEY



**A members-only event.**

In this session we'll talk about family history in a similar manner to the coffee breaks at the library.

It's a chance to ask about terms and words seen in documents or used by other historians and what they mean and how they influence your research.

This session can also be used to ask, 'how do I do that?' and get tips from other members who have perhaps done similar research before.

It's a totally unscripted session, and all participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and contribute to helping each other. It's a free-flowing wander through aspects of family history research, so we have no idea where the discussions will lead.

As its on zoom you have to bring your own coffee and biscuits!  

Please log in from 2.15pm and enjoy chat amongst participants before the workshop starts.

Numbers are restricted to enable all participants to ask questions, share knowledge and engage with other members.

Please reserve a place with [workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk](mailto:workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk) including the event, title and date together with your name and membership number.

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>

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

**NWKFHS members** who missed a ZOOM talk: some speakers have allowed their talks to be recorded and recorded talks are saved here - <https://nwkfhs.org.uk/resources/all-other/zoom-talk-videos> note this link only works for paid up members logged into the website. Sometimes speakers have given permission for their talks only to be recorded for a specified amount of time, so members please do check the link.

## NWKFHS 45th AGM 2023

The NWKFHS 45th Annual General Meeting will be held at the commencement of the Dartford Branch Meeting on Saturday 4 November 2023 at 10.30 hours.

Information on speakers to follow – keep watching for updates.

**Venue:** The Dartford Science & Technology College, Heath Lane, Dartford, DA1 2LY

The venue has a large, free car park but it is shared with other users and can be busy at times. It is suggested you come early if possible.

No booking, just turn up and enjoy the day.

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**ON THIS DAY:** August 12<sup>th</sup> is the 224<sup>th</sup> day of the year in the Gregorian calendar; 141 days remain to the end of the year.  
August is the eight month of the year and the sixth month of the Roman calendar, and is named after the Roman Emperor Augustus (63 BC-AD14)

**30 BC** Cleopatra, Egyptian queen dies (b. 69 BC)

**1099** First Crusade: Battle of Ascalon Crusaders under the command of Godfrey of Bouillon defeat Fatimid forces led by Al-Afdal Shahanshah. This is considered the last engagement of the First Crusade

**1492** Christopher Columbus arrives in the Canary Islands on his first voyage to the New World

**1827** William Blake, English poet and painter dies (b. 1757)

**1851** Isaac Singer is granted a patent for his sewing machine

**1865** Joseph Lister, British surgeon and scientist, performs 1st antiseptic surgery

**1881** Cecil B. DeMille is born, American director and producer (d. 1959)

**1898** The Hawaiian flag is lowered from 'Iolani Palace in an elaborate annexation ceremony and replaced with the flag of the United States to signify the transfer of sovereignty from the Republic of Hawaii to the United States

**1914** World War I: The United Kingdom and the British Empire declare war on Austria-Hungary.

**1952** The Night of the Murdered Poets: Thirteen prominent Jewish intellectuals are murdered in Moscow, Russia, Soviet Union

**1953** First thermonuclear bomb test: The Soviet atomic bomb project continues with the detonation of "RDS-6s"

**1960** Echo 1A, NASA's first successful communications satellite, is launched

**1964** South Africa is banned from the Olympic Games due to the country's racist policies

**1990** The largest and most complete Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton found to date, is found by Sue Hendrickson in South Dakota

**2014** Lauren Bacall, American model, actress, and singer dies (b. 1924)

**2021** Una Stubbs, English actress, TV personality, and dancer dies (b. 1937)

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**Findmypast new records:** new parish records from across the county of Derbyshire including updated newspapers from England, Wales, and Ireland. They have added 450,00 new parish records spanning almost 500 years and furthermore added over 150,000 new pages to the newspaper collection, with updated titles from Liverpool to South Wales and beyond.

- 231,270 new baptism records from across the county of Derbyshire, which cover the years 1524 to 1991.
- 114,294 new records to our existing collection of Derbyshire Marriages. These also cover parishes from across the county, from 1510-2004, taking you back to the Tudor era.
- 108,015 new Derbyshire burial records, spanning from 1539 to 1997 also covering a selection of parishes up and down the county.
- 155,862 brand-new pages added to eight newspaper titles.

### Updated titles:

- *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 1780, 1794
- *Croydon Express*, 1912
- *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, 1970, 1972, 1977-1979
- *Lichfield Post*, 1991
- *Liverpool Echo*, 1968
- *London Daily Chronicle*, 1886, 1889, 1923, 1926, 1929
- *South Wales Echo*, 1912
- *Wexford and Kilkenny Express*, 1900

Link for more information: [www.findmypast.co.uk/blog/new/derbyshire-baptism-marriage-burials](http://www.findmypast.co.uk/blog/new/derbyshire-baptism-marriage-burials)

## The Oldest Profession

There is the chance you will come across a prostitute amongst your female ancestors. The Lancet in 1857, declared that 'one house in sixty in London is a brothel and one in every sixteen females, of all ages, is a prostitute'. In villages, you may well be suspicious of the woman who has not one illegitimate child, but two, three or even more. You may also come across a census enumerator, who not only knew his area well, but was unafraid to call a spade a spade, as in Woodbridge, Suffolk, in 1851, when the occupation of Emma Button, Lucy Turner, and Sarah, Ann Pines, amongst others, was recorded badly as 'prostitute'.

Prostitution itself, of course, was not a crime, but most of the Victorian female prison population was reckoned to be engaged in the oldest profession. In 1890, Reverend G.P. Merrick, chaplain at Millbank prison, conducted a survey of 16,000 such fallen women: 'Almost 6000 of the women he surveyed had worked as domestic servants, 779 had been barmaids and waitresses and 191 claimed to have been ballet dancers!

It was always the woman who got the blame and rather unfairly prostitutes were blamed for some of the army's failures in the Crimean war. A government commission was appointed in 1857 'to enquire into the sanitary condition of the British Army', and growing concern about the spread of sexually transmitted disease among soldiers and sailors led eventually to the contagious disease act in 1864. If you have family connections with garrison and naval towns, such as Portsmouth, Plymouth, Woolwich, Chatham, Sheerness, Aldershot or Colchester, this act may have affected even your completely respectable female ancestors.

The act provided for the compulsory registration, medical examination and treatment of all prostitutes, and cases soon began to be reported in the newspaper of ordinary women in those towns being mistaken for prostitutes by the authorities and subjected to manhandling. The unfairness of the act, which left the male customers unmolested, and the degrading forced treatment that the act sanctioned produced one of the fiercest battles of the sexes of the Victorian era.

Mrs Josephine Butler rose to prominence as the leader of a campaign to have the act repealed. In 1883, compulsory medical examination was ended and three years later, the act was repealed. Meanwhile, Josephine Butler, and her campaigners brought other evils into the public eye, including the 'white slave' scandal of British women kept against their will in Continental brothels and child prostitution.

*Trevor Fisher's, Prostitution, and the Victorians (Sutton 1997), gives a good overview of the subject with much contemporary evidence.*

Source: Book 'The Female Line' by Margaret Ward, pages 64, 65 and 67

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## William Hogarth's Gin Lane, 1751

Gin from the French, genièvre, meaning Juniper, was initially lauded by all and sundry since it distilled down the nation's corn supplies. So cheap did gin become that sellers could boast of it 'Drunk for a Penny, dead drunk for two pence'. By the mid-1700s, London was gripped by a gin drinking plague; every 11th house in the capital was retailing the spirit.

William Hogarth's famous illustration, *Gin Lane*, scarcely exaggerates the dangers of the gin craze: whilst offering the poor temporary oblivion from realities of urban life, it also caused them to be feckless and violent. A campaign by the college of physicians, London magistrates and concerned citizens to curb spirit-drinking resulted in the Gin Act of 1751, which increased duties on spirits. The gin-craze gradually subsided, and London returned to being a city of ale and wine drinkers.

Source: Book 'The Autobiography', (2000 years of the Capital's History by those who saw it happen) by Jon E. Lewis, Page 170

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**Did you know that:** Rupert Bear was born in Canterbury, or rather his creator, Mary Tourtel, was, in 1874.

Rupert first appeared in the *Daily Express* on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November in 1920. Mary's husband was night editor on the paper, and he asked Mary to invent a cartoon character to rival those in other newspapers. The little bear called Rupert became an instant hit and has appeared in the *Daily Express* ever since. Mary Tourtel retired in 1935. There have been several writers and illustrators since then, the present illustrator and writer being Stuart Trotter.

Source: Book 'I Never Knew that About England' by Christopher Winn, page 129

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