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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.

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.

TODAYS TALK:

Postman's Park: The Army Postal Service in WW1

Postman's Park. On the eve of war, the Post Office not only handled a yearly total 5.9 billion items of post but was responsible for the nation's telegraph and telephone systems, as well as providing savings bank and other municipal facilities at thousands of branch post offices. Many of these services changed because of the First World War and the Post Office was crucial to both Britain's communications and war effort during this great conflict.

When war was declared in 1914 an outbreak of national fervour saw huge numbers of men clamour to enlist with the armed forces, including 11,000 Post Office staff. By the end of the war the Post Office had released 75,000 staff for war services.

The Army Postal Service (APS) was set up responsible for army mails in all theatres of war, the APS not only handled mails between Britain and the forces abroad but coordinated communications between units at the front. With the onset of trench warfare, all mails bound for troops on the Western Front were sorted at the London Home Depot by the end of 1914. Covering five acres of Regents Park, this was said to be the largest wooden structure in the world employing over 2,500 mostly female staff by 1918. During the war the Home Depot handled a staggering 2 billion letters and 114 million parcels.

Speaker JOHN PRICE

NEXT SEVENOAKS BRANCH MEETING

8th July - Bailey: the Bridge and the Man

The eponymous bridge, from its development at the start of World War 2, earlier military bridges, its successors and its current military and civilian use. The story of the Bailey bridge and the man responsible for a wartime design that helped the allied armies surge through Europe - "the original flatpack".

Martin Stoneham is a military historian specialising in the work of the Corps of Royal Engineers and its predecessor Corps. He served in the Corps of Royal Engineers from 1963 until 1970. His interest in military history was sparked by one of his GCE English Literature examination texts: Winston Churchill: *My Early Life*. On joining the Junior Leaders Regiment, Royal Engineers he was immersed in the history of the Corps.

On completion of his regular service engagement, he joined the National Health Service taking early retirement from a senior management position in 1995. He then established his own business as a computer specialist working from his home. He is now working solely on researching, writing, and speaking about military history.

Martin is Chairman of the Friends of the Royal Engineers Museum and on the committees of the Royal Engineers Museum and the Royal Engineers Historical Society. He is a member and Honorary Fellow of the Institution of Royal Engineers, a member of various military history associations and the Cuneo Society. Until recently he was a Member of the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply, a Member of the Chartered Management Institute and a Companion of the Institute of Healthcare Management. Martin is a regular visitor to the Western Front and the Normandy beaches; he has also visited almost all of the major Peninsular War battlefield sites. He is actively involved with the Cuneo Society, ABF: The Soldiers' Charity and the Royal British Legion. In addition to writing for journals he gives illustrated talks on various topics.

Speaker Martin Stoneham

DARTFORD BRANCH MEETING
6TH July - Who are the Travellers?

Carol trained as a teacher and for 20 years was responsible for Traveller Education in West Kent.

She advised schools on the inclusion of Roma children newly arrived from Eastern Europe. With her team she set up projects to link English Gypsies with their Roma cousins and trained Police, NHS and Social Service personnel in how to liaise with these communities.

Her talk will include the background of travellers and how to identify and research them. She will also cover New Age and Irish Travellers, Circus and Fairground folk who are separate ethnic groups.

Speaker Carol Mellors

UP AND COMING LIBRARY WORKSHOPS

DNA and General Family History Discussion Group with Jacki Ellis and Pam Goddard **10 July 10:30**

The group will discuss topics relating to family history as well as aspects relating to DNA.

Booking essential - please email workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk to reserve your place.

MONTHLY ZOOM DISCUSSION GROUPS

ZOOM We're in a multitude of records but will our descendants be able to trace us? with Ann Clarke **3 July 10:30**

ZOOM DNA discussion group with Laura Lincoln **17 July 10:30**

ZOOM Scottish interests discussion group with Pam Goddard **31 July 10:30**

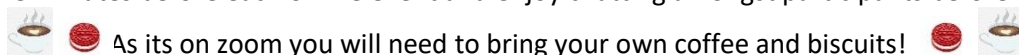
ZOOM WORKSHOP

Breaking Down Ancestral Brick Walls with David Cufley **10 July 19:30**

(Please submit your brick walls by 26 June to David Cufley via workshop.booking@nwkfhs.org.uk)

Using rate book & census enumerator perambulations to find buildings & people with David Cufley **24 July 19:30**

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.

For 2024 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



Bring Your Own Mug (BYOM)

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.

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 NWKFS, 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

June 8th is the 160th day of the year in the Gregorian calendar; 206 days remain to the end of the year.

June is named after the Roman goddess Juno – the god of marriage and childbirth, and the wife of Jupiter, king of the gods. An alternative possibility is that June is a translation of the Latin word *Juvenis*, which means young people.

Another theory is that June was named for the founder of the Roman Republic, Lucius Junius Brutus.

452 Attila leads a Hun army in the invasion of Italy, devastating the northern provinces as he heads for Rome

632 Muhammad, the central figure of Islam died. (b. 570/571)

793 Vikings raid the abbey at Lindisfarne in Northumbria, commonly accepted as the beginning of Norse activity in the British Isles

1042 Edward the Confessor becomes King of England – the country's penultimate Anglo-Saxon king

1191 Richard I arrives in Acre, beginning the Third Crusade

1376 Edward the Black Prince died from dysentery. (b.1330)

1492 Elizabeth Woodville, Queen consort, to King Edward IV, of England died. (b. 1437)

1783 Laki, a volcano in Iceland, begins an 8 month eruption which kills over 9,000 people and starts a seven-year famine

1789 James Madison introduces a proposed Bill of Rights in the US House of Representatives

1869 Ives W. McGaffey of Chicago patents the 1st vacuum cleaner, calls it a "sweeping machine"

1913 Emily Davison, English suffragette died. (b. 1872)

1924 British Mount Everest expedition: Andrew Irvine, English mountaineer and explorer, died (b. 1902)

1929 Margaret Bondfield is appointed Minister of Labour. She is the first woman appointed to the Cabinet of the UK

1945 Derek Underwood is born, English cricketer (d. 2024)

1952 American singer and actress Judy Garland (29) weds American producer Sidney Luft (36) in Hollister, California; divorce in 1965

1961 Marriage of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent to Katharine Worsley at York Minster

1968 James Earl Ray, the man who assassinated Martin Luther King Jr. is arrested at London Heathrow Airport

1992 The first World Oceans Day is celebrated, coinciding with the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

2023 Former US President Donald Trump is indicted on federal charges of misusing classified information

Old Occupations:

- ❖ BRUSHER A miner employed to widen passages
- ❖ BUCKLE TONGUE MAKER Made the metal pointed (tongue) part of belt buckles
- ❖ BUDDLER or BUDDLEBOY Employed to use & maintain the vats used in the lead & tin mines - washes the ore
- ❖ BULLOCKY A term for the driver of a bullock team (Australian)
- ❖ BUMBOAT MAN or BUMBARGE MAN or SCAVENGERBOAT MAN A man who used a bumboat and meet ships at anchor (in port or offshore) with goods / provisions for passengers and crew to purchase
- ❖ BUMMAREE A Middle-man between the wholesaler and the retailer at the fish markets (e.g. Billingsgate, London)

Did you know?

A bumboat is a small boat used to ferry supplies to ships moored away from the shore. The name comes from the combination of the Dutch word for a canoe—"*boomschuit*" ("*boom*" meaning "tree"), and "boat".

In Singapore, the term "bumboat" is applied to small water taxis and boats that take tourists on short tours.

D-Day Landings – 80 Years Anniversary

D-Day, June 6, 1944, was a landmark military operation during World War II, known as Operation Overlord. It was the largest amphibious invasion in history, involving the coordinated efforts of Allied forces to land on the beaches of Normandy, France. This operation was crucial for the liberation of Western Europe from Nazi control and marked a significant turning point in the war.

The planning of D-Day was extensive and intricate, involving deception strategies such as Operation Bodyguard to mislead the Germans about the invasion location and timing. The Allies meticulously prepared for the invasion, gathering intelligence, conducting reconnaissance, and amassing a vast array of troops and equipment. The operation was spearheaded by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Allied Commander. On the morning of June 6, over 156,000 American, British, and Canadian forces landed across five designated beachheads: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword. The invasion was supported by nearly 7,000 naval vessels, including battleships, destroyers, and landing craft, as well as extensive air support. Paratroopers were also dropped behind enemy lines to secure key positions and disrupt German defences.

The landings faced fierce resistance, particularly at Omaha Beach, where American forces encountered heavily fortified German positions and suffered significant casualties. Despite these challenges, the sheer numbers and determination of the Allied forces eventually overwhelmed the German defences. The establishment of a beachhead allowed for the continuous flow of troops, vehicles, and supplies, reinforcing the initial landings.

Strategic Importance D-Day was strategically vital for several reasons:

- **Opening the Western Front:** Prior to D-Day, most of the fighting against Nazi Germany was on the Eastern Front, where Soviet forces were engaged in brutal combat. The invasion of Normandy created a crucial second front, forcing the Germans to divert troops and resources away from the Eastern Front, thus relieving pressure on Soviet forces.
- **Breaking the Atlantic Wall:** The successful breach of Hitler's "Atlantic Wall," a formidable system of coastal defences, demonstrated the Allies' ability to conduct complex operations and penetrate Nazi fortifications. This success was pivotal in boosting Allied morale and demonstrating their military might.
- **Liberation of France:** D-Day marked the beginning of the liberation of Nazi-occupied France. Within months, Allied forces had advanced through Normandy, liberated Paris by August 1944, and continued pushing German forces back. This momentum was essential for the subsequent liberation of Western Europe.
- **Strategic Foothold:** Establishing a strong foothold in Normandy allowed the Allies to build up their forces in continental Europe. This facilitated subsequent operations, including the Battle of the Bulge and the advance into Germany itself. The logistical and strategic advantage gained through the Normandy landings was instrumental in the overall success of the Allied campaign.

The success of D-Day had far-reaching implications for the outcome of World War II. It symbolized the beginning of the end for Nazi Germany, as the Allies continued to advance, leading to Germany's unconditional surrender in May 1945. The operation underscored the importance of Allied cooperation and the effective use of combined arms in modern warfare.

D-Day was not just a remarkable military feat but a decisive moment that shaped the trajectory of World War II. Its success accelerated the collapse of Nazi Germany, contributing significantly to the eventual Allied victory and the restoration of peace in Europe.



You might not know:

The news of D-Day reached Anne Frank. Listening on a secret radio, Anne Frank recounts there was "great commotion in the Secret Annex!" upon their hearing about the attack. "Hope is revived within us", she wrote, "It gives us fresh courage, and makes us strong again". Sadly, Anne's hiding place would be found by the Nazis before that liberation she dreamed of could take place.

Source [10 Facts About D-Day | WW2 | Royal British Legion](#)

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

Please visit our website for details of more workshops and updates and don't forget to sign up for our free twice monthly Society eNewsletter.