



13th JULY 2024

ISSUE NUMBER 107

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:

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

NEXT SEVENOAKS BRANCH MEETING

10TH August - Luddesdown Parish: The Secrets of a Remote Parish

Luddesdown is as remote as it is beautiful with a secret history that will surprise you. Christoph lived in Chalk most of his life and founded Chalk Parish History Group in 1973 whilst still at school.

In 2012 he was District Manager of Gravesham and Dartford and Swale Libraries. Has been President of Gravesend Historical Society and was President of Dartford Historical and Antiquarian Society for three years. He is also Municipal Mace Bearer for Gravesham Borough Council, Official Cobham Hall House & Garden guide, and historical advisor to Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council. He says he is a librarian by profession and a local historian by inclination.

Christoph is a local guide and speaker with over 35 years' experience who has entertained us many times with his light-hearted but informative talks on North West Kent.

Speaker Christoph Bull

DARTFORD BRANCH MEETING

3rd August - Using Funeral Directors' & Burial Records for Research

Brian Parsons has worked in the funeral industry since 1982 with a particular interest in education. He is an accredited tutor and has lectured at Bath University. He has written several books including his latest revised version of "London Cemeteries".

Brian will demonstrate how best to use funeral and burial records for genealogical research.

These documents contain a wealth of information on the deceased, their families and the funeral customs of the era and area where they lived. The presentation will include some rarely seen images. **Speaker Brian Parsons**

UP AND COMING LIBRARY WORKSHOPS

DNA and General Family History Discussion Group with Jacki Ellis and Pam Goddard **14 August 10:30**

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

Library Writing Group with Pauline Heathcote **28 August 10:30**

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

MONTHLY ZOOM DISCUSSION GROUPS

ZOOM Heroes and Villains - have you found them in your family? with Ann Clarke **7 August 10:30**

ZOOM Let's talk Family History with David Cufley **14 August 14:30**

ZOOM DNA Discussion Group with Laura Lincoln **24 August 10:30**

ZOOM WORKSHOP

One Name Studies, what's involved and how can they help? with David Cufley **28 August 19:30**

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

Please log in 15 minutes before each online event and enjoy chatting amongst participants before it starts.



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



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

July 13th is the 190th day of the year in the Gregorian calendar; 176 days remain to the end of the year.

July was named by the Roman Senate in honour of Roman general Julius Caesar in 44 B.C., being the month of his birth. Before then it was called Quintilis, being the fifth month of the calendar that started with March.

1174 William I of Scotland, a key rebel in the Revolt of 1173–74, is captured at Alnwick by forces loyal to Henry II of England.

1249 Coronation of Alexander III as King of Scots

1402 Nanjing surrenders to Zhu Di without a fight, ending the Jingnan campaign. The Jianwen Emperor disappears and his family is incarcerated

1573 Eighty Years' War: The Siege of Haarlem ends after seven months.

1586 Anglo–Spanish War: A convoy of English ships from the Levant Company manage to repel a fleet of eleven Spanish and Maltese galleys off the Mediterranean island of Pantelleria.

1643 English Civil War: Battle of Roundway Down: In England, Henry Wilmot, 1st Earl of Rochester, commanding the Royalist forces, heavily defeats the Parliamentarian forces led by Sir William Waller.

1793 Journalist and French revolutionary Jean-Paul Marat is assassinated in his bathtub by Charlotte Corday, a member of the opposing political faction.

1878 Treaty of Berlin: The European powers redraw the map of the Balkans. Serbia, Montenegro and Romania become completely independent of the Ottoman Empire

1919 The British airship R34 lands in Norfolk, England, completing the first airship return journey across the Atlantic in 182 hours of flight.

1941 The inaugural FIFA World Cup begins in Uruguay.

1951 Vuoristorata, one of the oldest still-operating wooden roller coasters in Europe, is opened at the Linnanmäki amusement park in Helsinki, Finland.

1956 The Dartmouth workshop is the first conference on artificial intelligence.

1962 In an unprecedented action, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan dismisses seven members of his Cabinet, marking the effective end of the National Liberals as a distinct force within British politics

1977 New York City: Amidst a period of financial and social turmoil experiences an electrical blackout lasting nearly 24 hours that leads to widespread fires and looting.

1985 The Live Aid benefit concert takes place in London and Philadelphia, as well as other venues such as Moscow and Sydney.

Old Occupations:

- ❖ BUNTER Female rag & bone collector
- ❖ BURGESS Represented a borough at official levels
- ❖ BURGOMASTER Magistrate or one employed in the government of a city e.g. mayor
- ❖ BURLER A dresser of cloth. Removes small knots or lumps in cloth or thread. In the process of fulling.
- ❖ BURMAIDEN or BOWERMAIDEN A Chambermaid or lady-in-waiting
- ❖ BURNISHER A person who polishes or makes glossy
- ❖ BURYE MAN Grave digger
- ❖ BUSHELMAN or BUSHELWOMAN Tailor's assistant who repaired or altered clothes
- ❖ BUTTER CARVER Made imprints in butter pats

Family History tips:

When researching your family in other countries, you must pay attention to name changes and borders. For example, middle European countries like Poland had their boundaries changed between Germany and Russia due to wartime events.

Ship passenger lists for immigrants coming into America can give you a wealth of information about your ancestors, including their height, hair colour, occupation, general health, and how much money they had on them when they came to the U.S. But the records can sometimes give your research an extra kick by telling you the name of their nearest living relative in their home country, as well as the town from which your relative travelled to sail to the United States.

Did you Know:

Evidence suggests that the institution of marriage is about 4,350 years old. For thousands of years before that, most anthropologists believe, families consisted of loosely organized groups of as many as 30 people, with several male leaders, multiple women shared by them, and children. As hunter-gatherers settled down into agrarian civilizations, society had a need for more stable arrangements. The first recorded evidence of marriage ceremonies uniting one woman and one man dates from about 2350 B.C., in Mesopotamia. Over the next several hundred years, marriage evolved into a widespread institution embraced by the ancient Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans.

In the ancient world, marriage served primarily as a means of preserving power, with kings and other members of the ruling class marrying off daughters to forge alliances, acquire land, and produce legitimate heirs. Even in the lower classes, women had little say over whom they married. The purpose of marriage was the production of heirs, as implied by the Latin word *matrimonium*, which is derived from *mater* (mother).

In ancient Rome, marriage was a civil affair governed by imperial law. But when the empire collapsed, in the 5th century, church courts took over and elevated marriage to a holy union. As the church's power grew through the Middle Ages, so did its influence over marriage. In 1215, marriage was declared one of the church's seven sacraments, alongside rites like baptism and penance. But it was only in the 16th century that the church decreed weddings be performed in public, by a priest, and before witnesses.

In the Middle Ages, getting married was easy for Christians living in western Europe. According to the church, which created and enforced marriage law, couples didn't need the permission of their families or a priest to officiate. However, while tying the knot could take a matter of moments, proving that you were wed often proved difficult.

Although the church controlled – or tried to control – marriage, couples did not need to marry in a church. Legal records show people getting married on the road, down the pub, round at a friend's house or even in bed. All that was required for a valid, binding marriage was the consent of the two people involved. In England some people did marry near churches to give greater spiritual weight to proceedings, often at the church door (leading to some rather fabulous church porches being added to earlier buildings), but this still did not necessarily involve a priest.

In the Marriage Act of 1753 in England, Lord Hardwicke ruled that marriages required a ceremony to be “official” and that couples under the age of 21 needed parental consent to marry.

When looking for marriage records and you have exhausted your search within Church records and county records, it could be possible they could have married themselves and no records will be found.

Sources: [How marriage has changed over centuries | The Week UK](#) | [The Week UK The origins of marriage: First love marriage in the world | The Week UK](#) [50 Family History Facts | Creative Roots](#) [How And When Did People Get Married In The Medieval Period? | HistoryExtra](#)

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.