

The Restoration of the Fresco at St. Nicholas Church, Strood



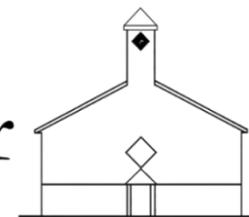
See page 9 for Odette Buchanan's article about the work of artist Helen Smetham and the restoration of her fabulous fresco in Strood's St. Nicholas' Church.

One of two angels on the underside of the arch, above the altar. One holds a sword and this a lily and a closed scroll.

Photographs by Elaine Gardner.

***If undelivered, please return to:
Medway Archives Office, c/o Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road,
Chatham, Kent, ME4 4TR.***

The Clock Tower



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The Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre
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Medway's Restoration Projects



FOMA's Sue Haydock loves promoting Medway's rich heritage and the organisations which support it. One of these is the Friends of Chatham Traction, of which she is now also a member. Sue is pictured in March with a VKR 39 bus which restorer Paul Baker brought to show the Friends en route to Faversham for the application of its external graphics. The bus dates from the mid-1950s and operated for Maidstone and District (M&D) in south west Kent. The Friends of Chatham Traction is restoring its own bus, the sole remaining GKE 68 built in 1939. Inside Bob Ratcliffe tells the story PLUS more images of the GKE during restoration and in its heyday!

Also inside: the restoration of the fresco at St. Nicholas Church, Strood AND Rochester's Guildhall Museum

PLUS Snodland Historical society's 1911 Project.

Strood's Industrial Past and the FOMA AGM



FOMA Chairman, Tessa Towner (left) introduces Odette Buchanan as she prepares to give her talk on 8 March 2016 on Strood's Industrial Past.
Photograph, Amanda Thomas.



Members of the 2015 FOMA Committee (with the exception of Rob Flood) gather at the start of the AGM on 12 April 2016. From left to right (top): Elaine Gardner (Vice Chairman and Events Co-ordinator), Kevin Russell, Betty Cole (Membership Secretary), Bob Ratcliffe, Amanda Thomas, (The Clock Tower Editor and Publicist); (seated) Odette Buchanan, (Secretary), Tessa Towner, (Chairman), Josie Isles (Treasurer). By the end of the AGM we were delighted to welcome a new committee member, Len Feist (not pictured).
Photograph, Sue Haydock.

The Restoration of Rochester's Guildhall Museum

Right: FOMA chairman Tessa Towner with the restored coat of arms which is now back on the Guildhall Museum's façade.
Photograph Amanda Thomas.



Far right: The restored eighteenth century weathervane.
Photograph ©City of Rochester Society.



Treasures of Rochester Cathedral



A fragment of a psalter and kalendar from the fifteenth century, originally thought to have been prepared for the cathedral, but now disproved. The illumination and decoration are of a high standard; the marginal notes were made in the early seventeenth century.

See page 13 for Sue Haydock's report.

The Friends of Chatham Traction

A Chatham & District Traction Company vehicle GKE 68 dating from 1939 with its distinctive apple green and ginger brown colour scheme.
Image kindly supplied by Richard Bourne of the Friends of Chatham Traction. See page 7 for the full story by Bob Ratcliffe.



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From the Chairman

Tessa Towner, Chairman.



It is extraordinary to think that FOMA has now been going for ten years! The inaugural Annual General Meeting was held in April 2006 and back then our friend the late Roy Murrant was our Chairman and I was his deputy (see page 32). We have achieved so much, but there is still plenty to be done in our support of the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (MALSC).

As you know our activities raise money for MALSC and the latest talk on 8 March, *Strood's Industrial Heritage* by Odette Buchanan was particularly well attended (see photograph opposite). Odette is a very popular member of our team and we were all full of admiration for her that she wanted to continue with her talk despite having lost her husband, Rob, a few days' before. Many more attended Rob's funeral and at the reception at the Sans Pareil pub on Frindsbury Hill it was 'standing room only', as they say. Many of us from FOMA were able to attend and I am sure you will join me in sending Odette our sincere condolences once again.

Odette's talk was of particular interest to members interested in the history of Strood. One of these is Len Feist and we were delighted at the AGM on 12 April to welcome him to the FOMA Committee. You can read about the AGM on pages 25 to 19.

The next FOMA event is the quiz on Saturday 30 April and as *The Clock Tower* goes to press we are pleased to say that we have been overwhelmed with requests to make up teams; Amanda is holding the presses so that we can let you know how it went – see page 4.

In conclusion we are delighted to report that the restoration work on the Guildhall Museum in Rochester has been moving forward. The coat of arms and the eighteenth century warship weathervane have been re-gilded and restored (see the photographs opposite) and are now back on the building. In addition, a crack in the Guildhall's 1811 bell has been repaired by the famous Whitechapel Foundry and on 23 February it was rung at 10 am and 5pm for the opening and closing of the museum. Apparently (according to Medway's Heritage Services Manager, Simon Lace) everyone cheered and the ringing is now a daily event! Many of us at FOMA belong to other organisations in the Medway area which help support such projects. Simon does a great job communicating to us all and letting us know what is going on from the Council's point of view. I am sure that by the time the

next *Clock Tower* comes out there will be even more news – and, of course, further details of the autumn commemorative 1066 lectures which Simon has worked so hard to organise.

A Message from Elaine Gardner

Inside this issue of *The Clock Tower* you will find your new membership programme enclosed. Sadly, your Events Co-ordinator has to apologise for the errors. She was clearly thinking of the old Medway brewery company when she added an 'e' to Hulks and got her fingers in a right muddle on the keyboard typing Labyrinth! I am sure, however, these mistakes will not spoil your enjoyment of the forthcoming FOMA talks.

Strood Library Bryant Road, Strood

Do you have any photographs of the old library?

With MALCS's move to the old library site at Bryant Road, FOMA is thinking ahead to future exhibitions and we are looking for photographs and information about the old library. In particular, MALSC does not have a photograph of the exterior of the old library before it was demolished in the 1970s. Do you?

Please contact *The Clock Tower* Editor, Amanda Thomas at
amanda@ajthomas.com

The FOMA Spring Quiz

Odette Buchanan

FOMA's Spring Quiz on Saturday 30 April (see the photograph opposite) proved as popular as ever with 11 tables-full of eager quizzers. Yet again we owe a big thank you to Elaine Gardner. As usual, not only did she compose and write all the questions, but she also bought and sorted out the food for the interval ploughman's. The foot soldiers prepared the food, took the entrance money and sold the raffle tickets! Thanks also go to Tessa Towner for scoring, Betty Cole, Elaine and Tessa for preparing the food, Cat Clement for helping with the tables and selling the raffle tickets, and also Steve Iles, our Treasurer Josie's husband, for all his help.



About The Clock Tower

The Clock Tower is the quarterly journal produced and published by the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (FOMA), www.foma-lsc.org/index.html.

Editorial deadlines

Please note, the deadline is the **last** Monday (or Tuesday when a Bank Holiday occurs) of January, April, July and October. Articles, letters, photos and any information to be considered for inclusion in the journal must be received before this date by the Editor, Mrs Amanda Thomas, 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS, Hertfordshire; amanda@ajthomas.com.

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Front Cover Accreditations and Website Information

The logo for *The Clock Tower* was designed by Bob Ratcliffe.

The banner design (incorporating the logo) and the title *The Clock Tower* were designed by Alexander Thomas.

The Clock Tower is also available at www.foma-lsc.org/newsletter.html

Further Information

Further information on the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre can be obtained on the MALSC website www.medway.gov.uk/malsc or by writing to Medway Archives Office, c/o Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4TR. Telephone +44 (0)1634 332714; fax +44 (0)1634 297060; email: malsc@medway.gov.uk

General enquiries about the Friends can be obtained from the Secretary, Odette Buchanan: 72 Jersey Road, Rochester, ME2 3PE. Telephone: 01634 718231; email: odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk

Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Secretary, Betty Cole, 98 The Wharf, Dock Head Road, Chatham ME4 4ZS, Kent. Telephone: 01634 892976; email: betty-cole@outlook.com

Photographs Needed of Rochester and Strood

25 February 2016

Dear Odette Buchanan,

I am a Life Member of the City of Rochester Society and have been since ay 2008 and am very interested and searching for any information whatsoever such as photographs, newsprint, maps, etc. for the following places in the Rochester and Strood areas;

- i) I was born at 2, St Peters Place, Rochester [in] ... 1936,
- ii) Before the war we moved as a family to 289, Darnley Road, Strood,
- iii) During the war in July, 1944 my late elder brother, Alan, and I were sent to the Swanley Homes for Little Boys, Hextable, as a result of my mother dying and my father serving in the Royal Navy,
- iv) In November, 1947, I was sent to live with an Aunt and Uncle and their son at 10, Ajax Road, a prefab on the Warren Wood Estate, Rochester, before moving to
- v) 71, Grove Road, Strood to be re-united with my father and my family.

In 1960, after university, I first moved Wandsworth, London, and then finally to Crawley, West Sussex in 1961 where I still reside.

I know this is somewhat a bit of a cheek for me to be asking for so much information at one go but any help you, or anyone else, can give, even if it is just pointing me in the right direction, would be gratefully appreciated. Needless to say if there are any costs involved or donations to be made I will be only too happy to pay.

I would also like to say that all the hard work that you and the rest of the committee put in is very much appreciated.

Best regards,

Ken Measures.

Budden Family

21 January 2016.

Dear Odette,

I was looking into the genealogy of the Budden family, and stumbled on the articles in the Clock Tower. The reason is the following. My great-great grandmother is Antonetta Theresia Christiana von Orsbach. And in fact I'm researching the von Orsbach family tree. This goes back hundreds of years, possibly up to about 1200 AC. James Budden (1847-1897) and Harriet Ada Bright (1850-1896) had two children; Marie Ada and James. Marie Ada married Mathias Clemens (also Clemens) von Orsbach in Apr. 1897. They had a son Clemens Hugo Melton M J von Orsbach (3 Nov 1897-14-11-1967). Mathias Clemens died jan/mar 1910. Marie Ada remarried Jan/Mar 1910 with James Edward Piggott and they got two children: James Anthony Piggott and Joan Marie Piggott etc. [...]

Of course my main interest is to get knowledge of what happened to Clemens HMMJ von Orsbach: I know already: Clemens married Gwendolyne Mary Hunt (1899-1985); they had a son Derek M J von Orsbach (born Apr-June 1927); he married Ellen McCarthy (15 Jan 1932-Apr/Jun 1996) but here stops all my knowledge. But since I always try to work broad I'm also interested in the Budden family and of course also in the Piggott family (especially the children of Marie Ada Budden).

Sincerely yours,

Cyp van de Bult.

One can judge the excellence of a quiz by looking at the spread of scores. The maximum one could have scored was 120 - with a possible 20 points on Round 6 and double points if *playing the joker*. Table no. 3 (Martin, Heather, Paul, Beryl, Maggie and Geoff) scored 99.5 and the *also-rans* were closely bunched together with joint fourth only three points less with 96. This proves Elaine's skill at pitching the questions at just the right level of difficulty - even the lowest score was in the 80s. A very close-run competition that had us concentrating hard.

Not only are FOMA's twice-yearly quizzes now eagerly anticipated because they guarantee a fun-filled evening, but they also make a very healthy profit. This time we took £305 in ticket money and £80 in raffle money. The food cost was £75.47 and the hire of the hall was £55; raffle prizes were all donated by committee and various FOMA members. This left us with a net profit of £255. MALSC needs to get its thinking caps on to decide what this can go towards.

Now out with your diaries and get the autumn one entered - Saturday, 22 October!



New Members

A warm welcome to new FOMA members Mr. Stephen Rayner and Ms. Carole Davis-Young.

Secretary's Report

Odette Buchanan



Hullo to you all and to spring 2016. Weren't we lucky with the mild winter and early spring? I never even got round to using my 13.5 tog duvet this year.

Well – that's the tenth AGM over (see pages 25 to 29). There were lots of questions and it was a teensy bit more interesting than most of our AGMs have been; we were also delighted to welcome Len Feist to the FOMA Committee. Perhaps the very best part of the AGM was the gorgeous selection of cakes Elaine Gardner had baked for us all to have afterwards. As you know, the committee is voted for en bloc and then at the first committee meeting after the AGM we assign the offices. Elaine does sterling work not only as Vice-Chairman but also as Events Co-ordinator, but I think we should add to this *Cake Baker Extraordinaire*. In fact it is rumoured that there are some on the committee who only turn up regularly because of Elaine's lovely cakes, and the other month when she couldn't make it there was nearly a revolt and mass walk-out!

I hope you have all remembered to let our Membership Secretary, Betty Cole (betty-cole@outlook.com) have your subs for this year. Membership cards will be posted out with this edition of *The Clock Tower* and all forthcoming FOMA events are listed on the back as usual. Our next talk is on Tuesday 14 June at the usual time of 7.00 for 7.30 pm and at the usual venue – Frindsbury Parish Hall. It should be really interesting – Jeremy Clark talking about the prison *hulks* and not that well known Medway family the Hulkes, who definitely never went to prison - as far as I know.

Looking forward to seeing you at this year's events!

Readers' Letters

We welcome letters and emails from readers with their comments. If you have anything you would like to say please write to: Mrs Amanda Thomas, Editor, The Clock Tower, 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 5NS or email at amanda@ajthomas.com. FOMA Secretary, Odette Buchanan, often receives queries from members or visitors to the FOMA website, www.foma-lsc.org/index.html. If you have any additional information for the following correspondents, please contact the Editor.

James Osenton

25 April 2016 (sent to Cindy O'Halloran at MALSC).

I am researching my family history and know that James Osenton is my 4th great grandfather. I found a publication *The Clock Tower*, issue #29 published in February 2013 that shows photograph of a home that was identified as being occupied by Fred Osenton for the past 40 years, which I believe would be related to me. My family will be visiting the United Kingdom in May and I am hopeful to make a trip to the area. If you can provide me any information regarding the family, residence, and/or contact information I would be most appreciative.

Nancy Jordan.

Jean Skilling, the author of the original Clock Tower article has been in contact with Nancy Jordan.

Watts Almshouses' Boundary Wall

7 April 2016

Dear Sir,

A small piece of Rochester history was vandalised a few years ago. I am in the process of trying to restore the damage as it has a family connection.

Is it likely that any of your members have photographs of the boundary wall on the Maidstone Road of Watts Alms Houses?

When the alms houses were built, the stonemason from Naylor's worked his initials into the finished wall. A.M was picked out in flint Alfred Marchant. may have been one of the senior men of the firm though I have been unable to find exact details. What I do know is that I was shown the wall in 1947 by my grandfather who was very proud of his own father's work. Similarly I was proud to show my daughter in 1973. Sadly, when I tried to show my grandson at the beginning of this century there was a gaping hole. It was repaired haphazardly thus losing the initials.

The Trustees have agreed to the restoration. A mason friend of mine is hoping to do the work this summer. Unfortunately the only record I can trace is an article mentioning the work in the Chatham Observer. 28th December 1934...as "A local story". At that time there were plenty of descendants around who could have confirmed the details. But I suspect he did not bother. The wording suggests he might have got some of the details wrong. The article states that the initials were behind the seat. This fits my memory as there is still a seat by the bus stop.

Can anyone help?

David Marchant.

A Special Offer for *Clock Tower* Readers from Historic England

Historic England is delighted to offer readers of *The Clock Tower* a 33% discount AND free post and packing on their new book, *The Hoo Peninsula Landscape* by Sarah Newsome, Edward Carpenter and Peter Kendall* (rrp £14.99). Please telephone 01235 465577 or email direct.orders@marston.co.uk quoting reference number **7220160003** to take advantage of this offer to obtain your copy for only £10.00! Offer expires 31 July 2016.



The Hoo Peninsula Landscape



The Hoo Peninsula Landscape was released at the end of November 2015 which coincided with the listing and protection by Historic England of a Second World War bombing decoy site at Allhallows, a duck decoy pond at Halstow Marshes, and two London boundary stones at Yantlet Creek and Upnor.

This book raises awareness of the positive contribution the historic environment makes to the Hoo Peninsula, describing how changing patterns of land use and maritime activity have given this landscape and seascape its distinctive character. It includes

new information, involving historic landscape, seascape and farmstead characterisation, aerial photographic mapping and analysis, area assessment of the buildings, detailed survey of key sites and other desk-based research. The book takes a thematic view of the major influences on the history and development of the Hoo Peninsula and demonstrates the role the Peninsula plays in the national story. The book is an important step towards changing the perception of the Hoo Peninsula as an out-of-the-way place, scarred by past development, where the landscape has no heritage value and major infrastructure can be developed with minimum objection.

*Sarah Newsome is a Senior Investigator at Historic England; Edward Carpenter is an Aerial Investigator at Historic England; Peter Kendall is Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments at Historic England.

Images of the Hoo Peninsula can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/1j7Ih77>

The Tale of the Old Brown Bus

Bob Ratcliffe



Bob Ratcliffe is a retired architect. He is President of The City of Rochester Society and a local historian; Bob is also a FOMA committee member.

Bob Ratcliffe is a Trustee of the Friends of Chatham Traction and here he tells the story of the iconic M&D buses and the Friends quest to restore one back to its former glory.

At the far end of Luton Road, near the *Hen and Chickens* is a recent housing development named *Tramways*. This was the site of the headquarters, garage and power house of the Chatham and District Light Railway Company, which operated a fleet of Dick Kerr open-top trams throughout the Medway towns in the early years of the last century. By 1927 the Light Railway Company had been taken over by Maidstone and District Motor Services Ltd. and three years later the trams were replaced by a fleet of Leyland TD1 double-deckers running as a subsidiary of the M and D fleet under the title of the Chatham and District Traction Company.

The new vehicles carried a livery of light green, cream and golden brown, in consequence of which they were known as brown – or *brahn* - buses, the M and D buses being dark green and cream. At first they covered the routes previously followed by the trams, though over the years these were extended as the towns grew.

In 1939 the Leylands were replaced by thirty seven Bristol K5Gs carrying registration numbers GKE 64 to GKE 100. Well appointed, with fluted internal lights and seating of jazz moquette, their Weymann bodies were much more modern in style than the Leylands that they replaced. Indeed even after twenty years of hard work, when *The Traction* had been fully absorbed into the M and D fleet and they themselves were withdrawn, they did not appear dated.

Of the fleet of Bristols, one, GKE 68, was saved by a group of enthusiasts and for the next forty years followed a somewhat precarious existence, eventually being tracked to a yard in Barnsley. After considerable negotiation, and with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and sundry local charities, it is now being restored in the care of the Friends of Chatham Traction and will in due time be seen on the streets of the Medway Towns as an original *brown* bus.



The bus in service in the early 1950s outside Chatham stationers Ive & Lowe.

The bus returns to Aylesford in September 2015 following the rebuilding of its body structure.



The bus at the South East Bus Festival at Detling on 2 April last; photograph by Chris Brooke-Taylor.

But that is not the end of the story. A search is under way for those who worked on or travelled in GKE 68 and her sisters so that suitable tales may be recorded, and it is intended to tell the tale to younger generations who have little knowledge of the public transport system which once served the towns.

For more about the Friends of Chatham Traction see page 35. A colour photograph of the GKE 68 in service can be seen on page 47. Images kindly supplied by Richard Bourne of the Friends of Chatham Traction.

Zeal Unabated: The Life of Thomas Fletcher Waghorn a new book by Dr. Andrew Ashbee

Coming soon in the *Clock Tower* and all good bookshops! The release of FOMA's Dr. Andrew Ashbee's new book on the life of one of Medway's most famous sons, Thomas Fletcher Waghorn.

For some twenty-five years before his early death in 1850, the name of Thomas Fletcher Waghorn was constantly in the public eye. His obsession was to speed communication between England and India and in this he had considerable success. But his temperament was extremely volatile and he often fell out with those in authority as he strove to promote his cause. Furthermore as the son of a butcher he had neither wealth nor influence to support his efforts. Ultimately he



had to bow to the inevitable as The Overland Route he helped establish was taken over by larger concerns. Yet there were many who felt he had been poorly treated by the Government and others and who recognised that his principal aim was to serve his country. Waghorn's story reveals a remarkable man, whose energy knew no bounds as he breathlessly travelled the world, rubbing shoulders with leading political figures of his day in pursuit of his vision. All the signs are that with proper backing he would have achieved much more, and his pioneering exploits would have raised his achievements well above the mere footnote which they have become today.

Ghost Stories at the Guildhall

A talk by Neil Arnold

Prepare to be amused, frightened and entertained!

Thursday 26 May 2016

Doors open for refreshments: 7pm

Talk starts: 7.30pm

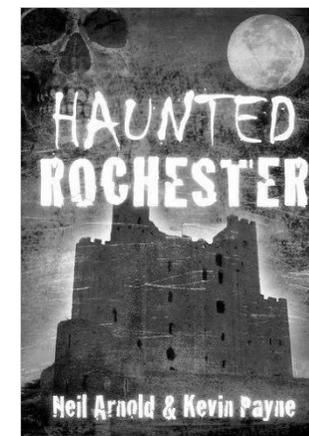
Ticket prices: £7.50

(£5 for Friends of the Guildhall Museums)

Ticket sales & enquires from the Guildhall Museum

Tickets to be paid for and/or collected prior to the event

Restricted access. Telephone 01634 332680





Blue Town Heritage Centre, The Criterion Music Hall and Cinema

<http://www.thecriterionbluetown.co.uk/#!/criterion-music-hall/cb3i>

The present Heritage Centre and café are on the site of two earlier establishments. Originally the New Inn in 1868, the site became The Royal Oxford Music Hall. The following year the building, situated a few doors down from the court house, became The Criterion public house, which included to the rear a music hall called The Palace of Varieties. This offered "rational amusement for all classes" including, in April 1876, a one armed juggler! In 1879 the earlier building was replaced with a brick built one. The Heritage Centre is packed with items, memorabilia and artefacts, including an upstairs area dedicated to HMS *Victory*.

Open Tuesdays to Saturdays 10am - 3pm and for events. Entrance £2.00 and includes entrance to the Aviation annexe at Eastchurch. Entrance is free to Friends. To become a Friend costs just £5.00 a year, for this you receive information before it goes onto the website and invites to special Friends-only events, plus a regular newsletter.

Today the main space at the centre is occupied by the Criterion Music Hall, one of just a few remaining authentic Music Hall buildings, lovingly restored by Jenny and Ian Hurkett and their unbeatable team of volunteers. The Criterion stages professional Victorian style music hall shows (three seasons a year), cinema every Friday and theatre and live music shows; it is also available for private hire. At the time of going to press tickets were still available for :

Booking on 01795 662981 or by visiting the website:
<http://www.thecriterionbluetown.co.uk/#!/criterion-music-hall/cb3i>

St Augustine's, Gillingham

This year sees the Centenary of Gillingham's St Augustine's Church, situated at the top of Chatham Hill with its junction with Rock Avenue. St Augustine's was designed by the well known Victorian Architect Temple Moore whose work was mainly in the north east. His main contributions to architecture were churches, of which he designed about 40, including the cathedral in Nairobi. He also restored older churches, made alterations and additions to others, and designed fittings and items of furniture for the interiors. He designed and altered diverse country houses and buildings including schools, vicarages, parish halls, a court house, and memorial and churchyard crosses.

On July 9, 7.30 pm Geoff Brandwood, Temple Moore's biographer, will be giving a talk at the church (Rock Avenue, Gillingham, ME7 5PW) on Moore's work. Tickets are £3.00, available in advance and on the door; the talk will last around an hour and refreshments will be provided afterwards.

Please to contact Andrew Gray on 01634 571589 or at Andrewpgray@blueyonder.co.uk.



The Restoration of the Fresco at St. Nicholas Church, Strood

Odette Buchanan



Odette is a retired teacher and, of course, FOMA Secretary. She is fascinated by local history and is actively involved in many aspects of this. She was a City of Rochester Society visitors' guide, a steward and guide at Restoration House, she has researched and presented as talks many aspects of local history, especially Broom Hill. Her book, Broomhill – Strood's Hidden Gem was published in 2013 by the City of Rochester Society, (available at: www.city-of-rochester.org.uk/shop/broomhill-stroods-hidden-gem/). Her book, Two Gentlemen of Strood, (short biographies of Henry Smetham and Rev. Caleb Parfett) is also published by the City of Rochester Society. She has produced sundry interpretation boards around Strood and was involved in the now completed England's Past for Everyone Victoria County History Project. and the HLF funded Valley of Visions Strood Community Trail.

St. Nicholas Church, Strood is a Grade II listed building. Dedicated to the patron saint of fishermen, St. Nicholas' dates back to at least 1075. The present building, designed by Sir Robert Smirke (1780-1867)¹ who also designed the main block and façade of the British Museum, was opened in 1814. In 1914, to celebrate its hundredth birthday, Helen Smetham designed and painted a fresco around the arch above the altar on the east wall.

Helen Smetham, ARCA, was born in 1879, one of three children - two daughters and a son - whose father was Henry Smetham, the well-known Strood Historian. After attending Rochester Art School, she attended the Royal College of Art and became an Associate Member. She left Strood to become an art mistress, first from 1914 to 1917 at Twerton H.E. School, Bath and then at Durham County School from 1917 until her death in 1925.

The mural over the altar illustrates how talented she was. The design references back to medieval church wall decorations with its glorious use of gold leaf and rich vibrant colours. It depicts the risen Christ flanked by two angels holding scrolls bearing the inscription 'Holy Holy Holy Lord God of Hosts'. On the underside of the arch, above the altar, there are two more angels, one holding a sword, the other a lily and a closed scroll. The borders and backgrounds are a riot

of stars and ornate acanthus motifs. Another example of her work, a painting of the interior of Eastgate House, can be seen in Rochester Guildhall Museum and a Smetham descendant owns yet more proof of her talent in a watercolour of a Kent scene.



The fresco by Helen Smetham in St. Nicholas' Church, Strood.. See page 48 for greater detail; photograph by Elaine Gardner.



In memoriam, the death of Helen Smetham in 1925; from the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

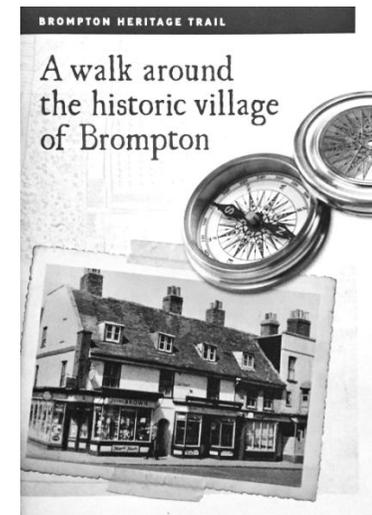
Brompton History Research Group

www.bromptonhistory.org.uk/

Brompton village is a complex civilian area in the heart of a military world. To the south and east lie the Chatham Lines, a series of fortifications built to defend the Chatham Dockyard. To the west lies the Dockyard itself and to the north Brompton Barracks, home of the Royal Engineers.

The Brompton Heritage Trail Booklet is now available!

Available from outlets throughout the Medway Towns including: The Royal Engineers Museum, Guildhall Museum, Medway Archives, the Visitors Information Centre in Rochester and the King George V pub in Brompton. You can also buy it from eBay or borrow it from one of the local libraries in Medway. Take yourself on a trail around Brompton, read more about the village history and view a selection of images in this new booklet. For more information email bromptonhistoryresearchgroup@gmail.com



Gillingham and Rainham Local History Society

Ron Baker, Society Secretary writes: "The Society was formed in 1950 by Ron Baldwin and the people interested in local history. Initially it was a great success in the area and opened a Local heritage centre in Napier Road School, with many of the Gillingham schools using its facilities. With the growth in school numbers the Heritage Centre premises were required for classrooms. The local council were unable to find an alternative site and the Centre never reopened. There is now a desire to rejuvenate the Society. We meet at Byron Road School, Gillingham, ME7 5XX (car parking at the rear, accessed from Milton Road) on the second Friday of each month (September to July) 7.15pm with meeting starting at 7.30 pm.

Talks

10 June, Members Evening.

New members and visitors are always welcome; annual membership £20, visitors £3 per meeting. For further information, contact Ron Baker on 01634 854982 or email r.baker1234@btinternet.com

Events

January 2014 - November 2018, First World War Battlefield Tour Groups.

For more information or to book please call: 01634 822312.

29 March – 8 April, 2016 (excluding weekends), 10:00am – 1pm and 1.30pm- 3:30pm,
Sapper 300.

May 31 - June 1, 10:00am – 1pm and 1.30pm- 3:30pm.

Become a Zulu Warrior!

Tuesday 31 May, Zulu Shields.

Wednesday 1st June, Zulu Jewellery.

Thursday 2nd June, Create a Racket!

Friday 3rd June, Secret Codes.

June 25 - December 20, Exhibition: *Sappers and the Somme.*

This exhibition will commemorate the contribution of the Royal Engineers in supporting the Army at the Battle of the Somme.

Opening hours: Tuesday – Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm; Saturday – Sunday and Bank Holidays: 11.30am to 5.00pm; CLOSED MONDAYS. Admission: pay once and get in for 12 months! Adult: £7.80; Family: £20.80; Concession: £5.20; Children under 5: Free.

The Rochester Bridge Trust

Further information from <http://www.rbt.org.uk/>

The Bridge Wardens' lectures are held in the medieval Bridge Chapel, 5 Esplanade, Rochester ME1 1QE, unless otherwise indicated. Refreshments available from 6.30 p.m. Lectures begin promptly at 7.00 p.m. Tickets are free but places are limited so **MUST** be booked in advance from Sue Reilly by email to sue@maxim-pr.co.uk or by telephone on 01892 513033.

6 October.

The Romans on the Medway, a talk by Simon Elliott.

ICE Kent & East Sussex Historical Engineering Group (KESHEG) lectures are held at various venues around Kent and East Sussex. To register for information about events, please email kesheg@gmail.com

21 May

The Royal Engineers' Museum. Gillingham – Day Visit

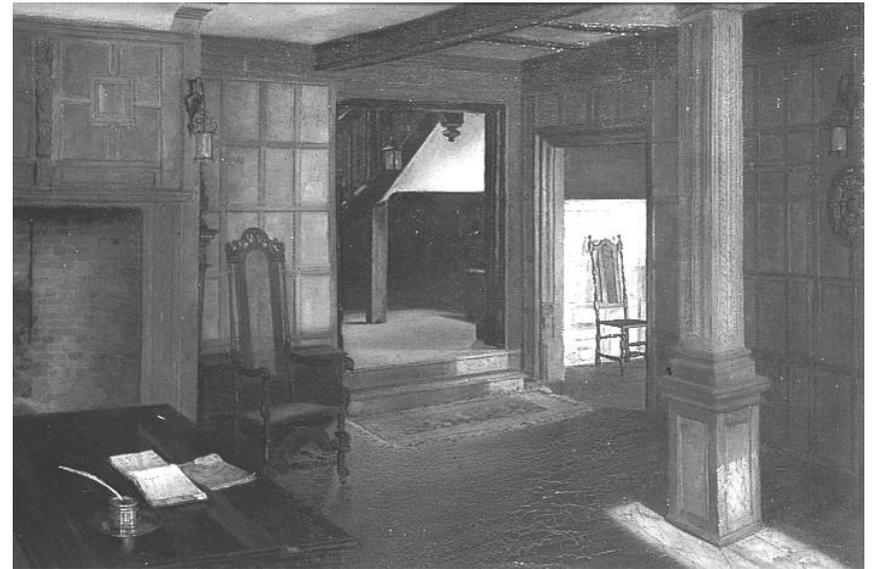
Includes talk on military bridging, museum tour and hands-on model bridge building.

20 September

Historic Bridge Bearings (Menai & Rochester), a talk by William Day and Tim Belcher-Whyte, Arcadis UK; Rochester Bridge Chapel.

17 November

Engineering the Railways of the South East, with a particular focus on the Sevenoaks Tunnel and Dover to Folkestone; Angel Centre, Tonbridge.



Helen Smetham's painting of the interior of Eastgate House; courtesy of the Guildhall Museum, Medway.

Time had not been kind to Helen's mural which had been over-varnished and had become cracked, faded and dirty. Fortunately, the Church managed to secure funding from various sources for its restoration and work started in 2015. Some of the funding allocated was 'matched funding' and so together with other money-raising events, it was decided to hold a concert to celebrate the completion of the restoration. Completion was set for October/November last year, however when work commenced the restoration team discovered some unexpected problems. The project did not therefore reach its conclusion until February of this year and the concert date was set for 12 March.

Unfortunately, due to personal problems I was unable to attend. However I was assured by those who did go that a thoroughly enjoyable time was had by all sitting in the warm, comfortable and welcoming ambience of the church, listening to lovely music while contemplating Helen's beautiful fresco, now splendidly restored to its original glory.

The church has had a lot of other restoration work completed recently so if you have not seen the fresco, a warm welcome awaits you from the Rev. Green and his dedicated team the next time you are in Strood.

Notes

1. See *The Clock Tower*, Issue 12, November 2008 for Michael Baker's article 'Which Mr Baker? or By Nine Votes to Eight' in which he discusses the re-building of St Nicholas' in the early nineteenth century and the relationship between the Smirkes and Bakers.

The 1911 Project

Dr. Andrew Ashbee

Dr Andrew Ashbee was born and bred in Snodland. The former Head of Music at Rochester Grammar School for Girls. Dr Ashbee is internationally known for his work on Tudor and Stuart music and musicians, especially the Maidstone composer John Jenkins. He is the Honorary Curator of Snodland Millennium Museum and the Chairman of Snodland Historical Society.



Snodland Historical Society wishes to compile a pictorial collection of pictures of people who are listed on the 1911 Snodland census, also including the Ham Hill area of Birling. By 1911 it was common for photographs to be made of family members and many remain in personal or family collections. We have been loaned or have acquired many examples, but should like to add to what we have. Pictures and information can be e-mailed to me at aa0060962@blueyonder.co.uk, or brought to the Museum for scanning and saving.

Each person is given a unique number from the census record: 1-4222 for those in the parish of Snodland; B364-B862 for Ham Hill (including Horne Street, but not Legge Lane). Text will be kept to a minimum, but will show age in 1911, birth and death years if known, address, and any occupation given in the census. More detail is available via the 'genealogy' database on the Society's web-site: www.snodlandhistory.org.uk.

The picture of the person can be of any date before or after 1911, of course, but if known, the date (or approximate date) of the picture would be useful. We will hold a list of the numbers, census names and addresses at Snodland Millennium Museum and will put the pages on to one of the computers there for general viewing as well as keeping a printed copy. In due course we aim to put the collection on our website.

The 1911 Snodland Census divides into three sections:

1. Nos. 1-1582: Mostly North-East: High Street N side, Waghorn Road, Queens Road and Queens Avenue, Holborough Road, Holborough, farms etc on the Downs/Paddlesworth.
2. Nos. 1583-2890: Mostly South-East: High Street S side, Brook Street, May Street, East Street, Malling Road East side, Oxford Street.
3. Nos. 2891-4222: West side of main road: upper High Street, Constitution Hill, Birling Road, Malling Road West side, Bramley Road (including Recreation Avenue), the Groves, more Paddlesworth.

Part of the Birling Census numbers prefaced with 'B':
B374-B862: Horne Street, Austen's Farm, Sandhole Farm, Ham Hill.

Friends of Broomhill

Broomhill Park has been awarded a fourth Green Flag; the Award recognises the best green spaces in the country. Help us get a Green Flag for the fifth year running and improve our outstanding high score in the RHS South East in Bloom competition.



Healthy Walks

Every Tuesday, meet at Strood Library at 9.45 am. A guided and pleasant walk with wonderful views overlooking the Medway and Thames, and woodland paths. Duration about 60 minutes. Complimentary tea and coffee served in the library after the walk. Sorry - dogs not allowed in the library. Contact: 01634 333720.

Task Days

Meet at King Arthur's Drive Car Park 11.00 am. Bring your own tools or tools provided. Two hours of free, healthy fun!

For further details see park notice boards, www.friendsofbrommhill.org.uk, find us on Facebook or contact Odette Buchanan, Secretary, 01634 718231, or email odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk

The Chatham Historical Society

Meetings are held at The Lampard Centre, Sally Port, Brompton, ME7 5BU, **excepting January and August.** The Lampard Centre has easy disabled/wheelchair access and a small car park. There is plenty of unrestricted roadside parking space in Maxwell Road, about 50 metres away. Sally Port has some unrestricted roadside parking space, but please avoid the sections with the double yellow lines or the *No Parking* notices.

Further information is available at www.chathamhistoricalsoc.btck.co.uk

The Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive Prince Arthur Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME4 4UG

www.re-museum.co.uk for more details



The Royal Engineers Museum is Kent's largest military museum, with a designated collection of historical and international importance. The many galleries tell the story of Britain's military engineers from the Roman period to the modern Corps of Royal Engineers. The millions of items in its collection tell a sweeping epic of courage, creativity and innovation and the stories of individuals of great renown (General Gordon, Lord Kitchener, John Chard VC) and the average Sapper who has helped the British Army move, fight and survive for over 200 years. The Royal Engineers Museum now has an e-newsletter. To subscribe for free, email 'Yes Please!' to deputycurator@re-museum.co.uk

16 September, 2:30-4:00pm. Tracing Your Huguenot Ancestors in Europe, Dr Kathy Chater; £10.
 17 September, 10:00-1:30pm. Beginners Crochet; £35.
 22 October 10:00-4:00pm Bookbinding, Mike Fitzgerald; £45.
 19 November, 10:00-4:00pm. Make a Rag Rug; £45.
 10 December, 3:00-4:00pm. Secrets of the French Hospital Silver. Tessa Murdoch, Deputy Keeper at the Victoria and Albert Museum and Huguenot Museum Trustee; £10.

Family Events

2 and 3 June 10:30, 12:30 and 2:30pm. Crafty Silks.
 Take inspiration from Huguenot silk weavers this half term and paint your own silk handkerchief: £4 per child.
 Every Thursday of the summer holidays 10:30, 12:30 & 2:30pm - Huguenot Pirates; £4 per child.
 27 and 28 October 10:30, 12:30 and 2:30pm. The Big Draw; £4 per child.

The Saturday Club.

10.00am – 12.00pm: £4 per child or £35 per year.
 Do you like getting messy and having fun? Come along to the Saturday Club to take part in different arts and crafts on the first Saturday of each month. 8+ years. Booking as below.

4 June	Printing
2 July	Paper making
3 September	Marble book making
1 October	Lanterns
5 November	Mosaics
3 December	Christmas ribbon wreaths

Children's Cinema: French Film Club

Join us for morning screenings (10.00am – 12.00pm) of classic children's films with a French twist. Bring your own food and drink and don't worry about the noise! £3 per person. To book visit www.rochesterfilmsociety.co.uk

28 May	A Cat In Paris
30 July	Ernest & Celestine
26 November	Cinderella

Huguenot Museum: Story Time

Bring your under 5s along every Thursday morning to have fun with props and games as we bring a different story to life each week. From Room on the Broom to Owl Babies and the Very Hungry Caterpillar. Toys and play mats available- and even tea for the grown-ups. **Pick up a loyalty card and get the fifth and tenth sessions free.** See our website (www.huguenotmuseum.org) for a full story list. £3.50 per child, adults free. No need to book, just turn up!

Unless otherwise indicated, for all booking call 01634 789347, email learning@huguenotmuseum.org or visit www.huguenotmuseum.org; Huguenot Museum, 95 High Street, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1LX. The Huguenot Museum is open Wednesday – Saturday 10am – 5pm on the top two floors of 95 High Street, Rochester, Kent. Entrance is £4 for adults and £3 concessions and can be validated for 12 months with gift-aid. For more information or to get in touch visit www.huguenotmuseum.org, call 01634 789347 or email learning@huguenotmuseum.org

Heritage News

Sue Haydock

The latest from our roving reporter, Medway Heritage Champion and FOMA Vice President; photographs by Sue Haydock.



Treasures Of Rochester Cathedral

Due to the building work being carried out at Rochester Cathedral, the valuable collection of books in the library had to be stored elsewhere. During this process some of the books were put on display in the Drill Hall Library in Chatham. In March I popped along to take a look! Of the various books, manuscripts and maps on display here is a selection with a few words about each.



Sarum missal, 1534. The service of the mass widely in use in churches until the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer in 1549.

A topographical map of Kent, 1 January 1769. The whole county was mapped at this time including towns, villages, churches, noblemen and gentlemen's seats, hills, rivers, cottages and 'everything remarkable in the county.' This section shows Gillingham, which at the time appears only to consist of Church Street and Gillingham Green. A further photograph of these remarkable books can be seen on page 47.

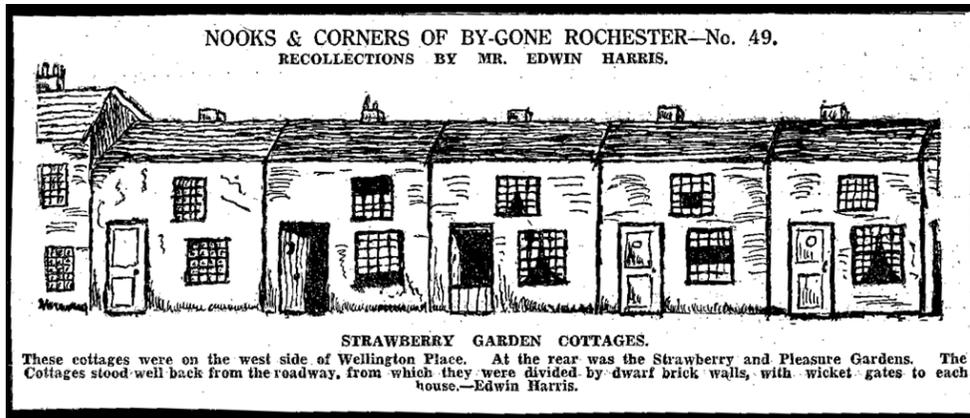


The Strawberry and Pleasure Gardens in Rochester

Helen Worthy



Helen is an Archives and Local Studies Assistant at MALSC, working mainly on the desk. After completing her degree in Classical Civilisation, she worked at the British Museum for eleven years. She then studied for her Postgraduate Certificate in Education and taught at North-West Kent College and Medway Adult and Community Learning Service, before leaving to teach school groups at Chatham's Historic Dockyard and work as a teaching assistant.



Few people walking today along Delce Road will be aware that they are passing the site of the Strawberry Pleasure Gardens. The 'Rochester Tea Gardens' were advertised in 1857 as 'delightfully situated ... about equal distance between the Theatre, and the remains of St William's Chapel,' and Edwin Harris describes how upon payment of a fee, one could eat as many strawberries as one liked.¹

When James Phippen beat the bounds of St Margaret's parish in 1857, he made a detour 'passing up Star Hill to Delce lane, where, on the right, and pleasantly situated, are some exceedingly well arranged tea and strawberry gardens, forming a pleasant lounge for the inhabitants during those oppressive days in summer, when the sight of green fields, and well cultivated gardens prove so refreshing to the eye as well as to the imagination.'²

The Friends of the Guildhall Museums

www.friendsoftheguildhall.com

The Friends of the Guildhall Museums is a group which supports the work of two important but very different elements of Medway's heritage - the Guildhall Museum in Rochester and the Old Brook Pumping Station in Chatham. Supporting the Guildhall Museums will help conserve our local history for generations to come through specialist events and opportunities designed to educate and inspire, telling the stories of the Medway Towns.



The Friends were constituted in 2007, with aims centred on the restoration of the sole surviving Chatham Traction bus, GKE 68 of 1939. The Chatham & District Traction Company had operated bus services over Medway's former tram routes from 1930 to 1955, when it was absorbed into Maidstone & District. The bus, a once-familiar piece of Medway's fabric, is to come alive again as a resource for the study of local and social history.

Buses were central to life in the Towns for many decades, taking people to school, shops, work or play. Studies might look inward to the company's people and facilities, or outward to its services and locations served, and how lifestyle changes influenced its development.

To support the educational aim we are collecting relevant material to form an archive of local transport history, including an oral history collection. We would be happy to receive any items - photographs, artefacts, ephemera - relating to Chatham Traction, its predecessor trams or local bus operations up to 1970 (the year of withdrawal of the last Chatham Traction vehicle).

Grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Rochester Bridge Trust have allowed completion of two fundamental stages - the reconstruction of the body structure and overhaul of the engine. We are now seeking further funding to complete the restoration and to prepare our organisation for its educational role.

We offer talks to interested bodies, and organise occasional events to which the public are invited. For more information contact Richard Bourne (Chairman); 31 Usher Park Road, Haxby, York YO32 3RX; 01904 766375, or 07771 831653. Email Richard@thebournes.me.uk. Or see our website at www.chathamtraction.org.uk.

HUGUENOT MUSEUM

discover your story

Huguenot Museum Main Events

25 June. 11:00-2:00pm. Refugee Week. With Rochester Literature Festival, including short films by local Syrian artist Hala Georges.

16 July 10:00-4:00pm Stitching: Postcards, Cas Holmes;. £45.

10 September. Heritage Open Day; **Free Entry.**

The works to Eastgate House are due for completion at the end of 2016, and include essential repairs to the roof, windows and floors with new heating and lighting installed. Access for visitors will also be improved with a new lift to the upper floors and the reinstatement of a staircase that was removed more than a century ago. The house will re-open to the public early in 2017 with exhibitions and displays telling the story of those who lived there, and space available for cultural activities and events.

Further information can be obtained at: www.friendsof-eastgatehouse.org on Facebook on www.facebook.com/eastgatehouse and on Twitter <https://twitter.com/EastgateHouse>. To join the Friends of Eastgate House, please contact Terri Zbyszewska, The Membership Secretary, FoEH, 31 The Esplanade, Rochester, ME1 1QW or at tzbyszewska@yahoo.co.uk; a copy of the membership form is also available on the website.

Do you remember when Eastgate House was last open to the public, when it was the Dickens Centre, or even before that? Did you visit the house or work there? Perhaps you remember visiting the house as a child and running up and down the stairs? Or do you have special memories of visiting the gardens? Tell us about your special memories.

Please send your memories to us using the contact form on our website, by email to info@friendsof-eastgatehouse.org, or by post to the Secretary (address as above); please include your name, email address, contact telephone number, the approximate date of your story and copies of any photographs you have. No stories or quotes will be used without your consent. Read the article on our website: <http://www.friendsof-eastgatehouse.org/news/do-you-have-any-special-memories-of-eastgate-house>

The City of Rochester Society

“The City of Rochester Society was founded in 1967 to help conserve the historic City as a pleasant place to visit. The Society is still active today, helping to improve the environment and quality of life in Rochester for residents and visitors alike.” Taken from the City of Rochester Society website, www.city-of-rochester.org.uk, where further information on the society and how to join is available.

All talks are at The Moat House, 8 Crow Lane, Rochester, ME1 1RF. See the website for further details. There is a small charge for events to defray expenses; please contact the CoRS Secretary, Christine Furminger on 01634 320598 or at cafurminger@blueyonder.co.uk for further information and how to join.

See Rochester's wealth of historic buildings and hear about the City's long and fascinating history from an enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide of the City of Rochester Society! Every Saturday, Sunday, Wednesday and Public Holiday from Good Friday until the end of October. Starting at 2.15 p.m. from The Visitors Centre, High Street, Rochester. The tours are free of charge, but donations to Society funds are always gratefully received.



The latest information can be found at: www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/

Advertisement published in The Boundaries of St Margaret's Parish, Rochester, Phippen 1857.

In 1859, the pleasure gardens were re-launched by Thomas Penn Simpson, a well-known local figure who was to open the Alhambra in Chatham on Easter Monday 1860.³ Edwin Harris describes him as a ‘tall, broad-shouldered man, with dark hair,’ who claimed to be a descendant of William Penn, Quaker and founder of Pennsylvania, and who was happy to take a turn in the music hall along with various members of his talented family.⁴ According to Thomas Penn Simpson's advertisement in the *Chatham News*, the ‘Strawberry and Pleasure Gardens’ were opened ‘on or after’ Monday July 18 1859 with a concert and ball, and entertainment provided by the Simpson family ‘acknowledged by all who see them to be of a First Class description.’

The gardens boasted a ballroom with a stage, and rural amusements were also offered, including horse and donkey rides, swings, quoits, and rifle and pistol practice.⁵ Perhaps visitors used Mr Baker's rifle range at Delce Farm?⁶ Admission cost 3d with an allowance for children.

In 1862, the *South East Gazette* reported plans for the formation of a public garden and promenade in the Vines for the inhabitants of Rochester.⁷ Perhaps the creation of a public garden in the Vines hit T P Simpson's business in the Delce, or perhaps he preferred to concentrate his energies on running the Alhambra in Chatham. In any case, T P Simpson left Chatham and the Alhambra in 1865, and did not renew the lease for the Strawberry and Pleasure Gardens. Thereafter the pleasure gardens became less popular and the land became a small holding, eventually being purchased by Mr A H Filley who planned out the streets that for the most part still exist today.

Notes

1. *Chatham Observer*, ‘Recollections of Rochester’, 04/03/1932.
2. Phippen, 1857: *The Boundaries of St Margaret's Parish, Rochester* C080554670.
3. Joyce 2003: *Dumb Show and Noise*.
4. *Chatham Observer*, ‘Changing Chatham: No.2 Military Road’, 25/04/1930.
5. ‘Our Towns’ (Clippings from the *Chatham News*, 1909) C080554468.
6. *SE Gazette* 27/01/1863.
7. *SE Gazette* 09/12/1862 p.6.

ROCHESTER TEA GARDENS.

These Gardens are most delightfully situated on the ancient Manor of Great Delce, about equal distance between the Theatre, and the remains of St. William's Chapel, an interesting relic of the 13th century. The situation of the Gardens is extremely picturesque, and commands some fine prospects, affording a delightful summer lounge; whilst, during the season, there is an abundant supply of richly flavored strawberries.

VISITORS SUPPLIED WITH REFRESHMENTS ON REASONABLE TERMS.

The various Amusements consist of Archery, Gymnastics, Swings, Rifle and Pistol Shooting, &c., &c.

DANCING ON THE GREEN.

A Good Quadrille Band in attendance.

Photographic Likenesses taken.

. Accommodation for Pic-nic Parties, Schools, and Benefit Societies. CLOSED ON SUNDAYS.

The Home Front

Catharina Clement



In 2005, Catharina completed a BA in history at Canterbury Christchurch University, and in 2013 a PhD in local history entitled Political and Religious Reactions in the Medway Towns of Rochester and Chatham during the English Revolution, 1640-1660. She has been involved in various local history groups and projects such as FOMA, CDHS, and the Victoria County History EPE projects. She won the 2009 Friends Historical Society Award resulting in a paper on Medway Quakerism 1655-1918 delivered at the Institute for Historical Research and later this year at the Friends Library in London. Currently Catharina works for MALSC.

Conscientious Objection

Part 2: Chatham Conscientiously Objects

Thomas Kennedy evaluated Victorian liberalism with the notion of choice, and decision whether to fight or not.¹ Rochester's return of Liberal MPs for most of the second half of the nineteenth century certainly suggests an endorsement of this view. Frederic Wheeler was a strong opponent of war, campaigning for over 60 years for peace. Whilst his main support came from within his local Quaker meeting, large numbers attended his peace meetings and lectures in the Medway Towns. On his death this message was carried on by the Rochester meeting, but within a strong military location such as Chatham this sometimes led to hostility.²

By the Edwardian period anti-militarist sentiment was strong, following the recent Boer Wars. Although there was a strong sense of patriotism, especially amongst the middle class, Edwardians considered they lived in a period of economic stability which made war unlikely. Efforts to introduce compulsory military training were regarded as warmongering. The Independent Labour Party was the new anti-militarist front and regarded war as imperial aggression.³ Despite Chatham and Gillingham having a few Labour councillors, their loyalty lay with the towns' largest employer; the military.⁴

During 1915 some members of the Jewish community were targeted for having German sounding names with rioting outside their High Street premises. John Lyon had to post a message in the local newspaper from the Synagogue saying: 'No Germans here.'⁵ The former German Fehrenbach family changed their name to Fernbank to avoid hostility. These actions took place shortly after the sinking of

Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Exhibitions

The Pentagon: 40 years of retail therapy

12 May — 28 June 2016

An exhibition to mark the official opening of Chatham's pioneering shopping centre. It includes images of the area before construction and of the Pentagon from 1976 - 2016.

Lest We Forget—1916

30 June - 6 Sept 2016

Remembering the Men of the Medway Towns in WW1: The Ultimate Sacrifice, Part 3: 1916. Exhibition by the Friends of Medway Archives

Foreigners, Immigrants, Citizens – Medway and its Jewish community.

Starts Thursday 8 September.

ALL MALSC EXHIBITIONS ARE FREE.

Unless otherwise indicated, all the above are held at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, (MALSC) Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU, and all talks and events are now free of charge. Further information is available from MALSC; please telephone 01634 332714 to book. TICKETS MUST BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE. Please note: You may be aware that Medway Council has been relocated to Gun Wharf. This move does not include MALSC and until further notice, we are still to be found in the Clock Tower building, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. For Satnav please use ME2 2AD.

MALSC OPENING HOURS: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm; Saturday 9.00 am to 4.00 pm. Wednesday and Sunday closed.

Until further notice, our postal address is Medway Archives Office, c/o Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4TR.

Eastgate House

Eastgate House is one of Rochester's landmarks. Built in the 1590s by Sir Peter Buck, the most senior member of staff at Chatham Dockyard, its structure has been adapted considerably over the years, but research has indicated that the original building may be Medieval or earlier. A Heritage Lottery Grant awarded in January 2011 has enabled Medway Council to begin planning conservation work on the house and to start opening its doors once more to visitors.

Work to restore one of Rochester's most treasured landmarks will resume this spring, 2016. The £2million Heritage Lottery Funded project to conserve Eastgate House was paused in July last year due to the voluntary administration of the main contractor, Fairhurst Ward Abbots. Medway Council has now awarded completion of the project to construction company Buxton Building Contractors Limited. Founded in 1924, Buxton has vast experience working with historic and listed buildings, and is also working on the Heritage Lottery Funded *Hidden Treasures, Fresh Expressions* project at Rochester Cathedral.



News and Events

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Talks

14 June, 7.30 pm,
The Medway Hulks,
A talk by Dr. Jeremy Clarke.

13 September, 7.30 pm,
London Labyrinth
Finding your way through the hundreds of national and local records in London.
A talk by Dr. Kathy Chater.

22 October, 7.30 pm
Quiz Night
£5 for members and non-members. **BOOKING REQUIRED** (see below).
Please do your best to get a table of friends together!

8 November, 7.30 pm,
Borseholders and Bobbies
A talk by Elaine Gardner.

Booking for FOMA talks is no longer necessary! Until further notice all events are at Frindsbury Parish Hall, Church Green, ME2 4HE. Talks are £3 for members, £5 non-members. Booking for Quiz Nights and enquiries through the FOMA Secretary: Odette Buchanan , 72 Jersey Rd, Strood, ME2 3PE; odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk; 01634 718231.

the *Lusitania*, which seemed to create a brief spell of very anti-German sentiment in the local community. Reactions to the Chatham Drill Hall bombing of 1917 were more restrained given that over 120 men lost their lives in one single incident.

With this background, it is perhaps not surprising that Chatham treated its conscientious objectors with a lot less tolerance than Rochester. In December 1915 Chatham's mayor addressed a mass recruitment rally: 'We know that Prussian militarism had been a nightmare to the whole of Europe for twenty years and it was for us to finally crush it.'⁶

Under the Derby Scheme over a 1,000 men attested at Chatham Town Hall with the army doctor examining the men at the rate of 130 in two hours. A similar turnout was witnessed at Rochester and Gillingham. As far as the Medway Towns was concerned the rallies had been a success, but this was not the case across the country and compulsory conscription was introduced in January 1916 under the Military Services Act.⁷ Men who wanted an exemption on various grounds went in the first instance before their local tribunal. These were made up of local councillors and a military representative. In Chatham the tribunal consisted of five Conservatives, two Liberals and two Labour members; both of the latter being employed at Chatham Dockyard.⁸ Conscientious objectors probably realised they would come in for tough questioning at Chatham Tribunal with its strong military links.

One of the first cases to be dealt with by the tribunal in February 1916 was Charles Daniels, aged 22. He was a reporter for the *Chatham News* and claimed absolute exemption as an International Bible Student (more usually known as Jehovah's Witnesses). Daniels was patronisingly commended by the Mayor for his knowledge of the scriptures. The newspaper headed his case 'Love your enemies' and reported their employee's case factually. Chatham tribunal's verdict was a role in the Non-Combatant Corps with a sarcastic rejoinder from the tribunal that Daniels be recommended for the Royal Army Medical Corps, so he could carry out his wish to 'save his fellow man.'⁹ Dissatisfied with this result, Daniels appealed to the West Kent tribunal in March, and for which the case papers survive. His application form was succinct and supported by biblical texts, which was to be expected from a journalist and religious man. He added at the end, 'I would rather suffer than give [up] any point of conviction.' A letter was also produced from F. A. Clements, who was also in the publishing trade, to back up Charles Daniels' long-held conscientious objection. Daniels was not prepared to sacrifice his religious principles by bowing to military service. The Kent tribunal upheld the local decision, but Daniels would not let the matter rest there and put in an application to be heard at the Central Tribunal in London, which was refused.¹⁰

It would appear that Daniels did not let the grass grow under his feet, as on 25 March 1916 his employers published an anonymous letter from 'a Bible Student' at Chatham. He replied to a sermon and newspaper article from the previous week

given by the Rev. J Edgar Williams of the Ebenezer Congregational Church, who challenged Quakers, Christadelphians and similar sects on their literal interpretation of Scripture and conscientious objection. Daniels asked, 'What part of the Bible is to be taken in the literal and what part in the figurative aspect?' in response to the Rev. Williams' assertion that the Scriptures should be read with 'the eyes of a poet.'¹¹

Daniels failed to report to the recruiting office and was arrested on 15 May 1916, coming before Chatham Police Court. He was fined 40 shillings and handed over to the military authorities.¹² However the army considered him unfit for military service and placed him in the Reserve to do work of a 'sedentary' nature. This would generally have been *Work of National Importance*. It appears he absconded from this role as well and was hauled up before Chatham Police Court on 15 December 1916 as an 'Army Reservist failing to report himself,' fined 60 shillings and handed over again to do similar work.¹³ By the summer of 1917 the army was desperately short of manpower, so medical requirements were relaxed. Daniels was recalled for military duty as a category 'C3 man' on 18 June 1917. His next step of defiance was to refuse to sign his army papers for which he was court martialled at Maidstone on 29 June 1917. Sentenced to six months hard labour he was transferred to Wormwood Scrubs where his sentence was commuted to two months. In August 1917 he was interviewed by the Central Tribunal and recommended to be put to work under the Home Office Scheme organised by the Brace Committee. He was sent first to Wakefield Camp and later Work Centre where he was engaged in employment to assist the war effort.¹⁴

The reaction of the military authorities at Chatham to conscientious objectors was much more extreme than that of the tribunal or other citizens. Questions were raised in the House of Commons in June 1916, regarding the treatment of several 'conchie' at the Lower Chatham Barracks on 18 May 1916; in particular the 'Walker' brothers of Hornsey, Middlesex. 'Whether these men were-knocked about in such a manner that one of them fainted twice?'¹⁵ Despite this public scrutiny of the treatment of conscientious objectors at Chatham, a further, more disturbing incident occurred in July 1916. The *Chatham News* published an article on 5 August 1916 headed, 'Chatham Conscientiously Objects.' However the newspaper was at pains to point out this was from an anonymous contributor and not their stance. A rumour had been circulating that the government was to release conscientious objectors from the army and send them home. This was incorrect as the government was, under the auspices of William Brace and the Home Office Committee, setting up a scheme to utilise these men in work camps up and down the country. To get a full flavour of the scene, the article is reproduced here in almost its entirety:¹⁶

'Then came definite news that six of these 'men' were leaving Lower Barracks for the railway station, soon after six o'clock. A large and representative crowd assembled, just without the Government boundary, below the barracks. The barracks itself presented an appearance of life unusual at this hour; men poured out of the doors and lined the verandahs, [sic] hung over the old walls and stood in clusters at the gateways.

Editor's Footnotes

Amanda Thomas



Amanda Thomas is a freelance writer and public relations consultant. Born in Chatham, but now based in Hertfordshire, she belongs to several historical organisations, including the Kent Family History Society, the North West Kent Family History Society, and The Council for British Archaeology; she has a degree in Italian from the University of Kent and is a member of their alumni association. Amanda was made a full member of the Society of Women Writers and Journalists in 2008.

It is hard to believe FOMA has been in existence for ten years. I was an early member, but not one of the first, as not living in Medway it took a little longer for the news of FOMA's advent to filter through the airways. However, I do remember very clearly writing to Stephen Dixon and then meeting the rest of the committee in my quest to become Editor of *The Clock Tower*. Then the journal had no name, of course, and we also had no idea the journey we would undertake and the difference we would make in raising the profile of the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, and indeed, that of Medway's heritage.

Overleaf is a photograph of that very first committee at the inaugural AGM on 6 April 2006. Back row from the left: Russell Race (President), Tony Farnham, Dr Andrew Hann (Committee Member and Kent Team Leader for the *Victoria County History's England's Past For Everyone*), Brian Kingsley Smith (Vice-President). Middle row: John Witheridge (Committee Member), Yolanda Dunn (Committee Member and Press Officer), Bob Ratcliffe (Committee Member), Norma Crowe, (Local Studies Librarian). To the right of the painting, David Carder (Committee Member), Stephen Dixon (Borough Archivist), Amanda Thomas (*The Clock Tower* Editor), Jean Skilling (Treasurer). Front row: Councillor Sue Haydock (Vice President and Medway Council Representative), Roy Murrant (Chairman), Tessa Towner (Vice Chairman). The painting is by David Ellwood of a Short Sunderland making its approach to land over Rochester Bridge. The work was commissioned by Brian Kingsley Smith and it was lent indefinitely to the Castle Club.

In the previous issue of *The Clock Tower* I listed many of our achievements, but perhaps the greatest of all is that we are all still as happy and delighted to be a part of FOMA as we all clearly were ten years ago!

Coming up Next Issue ...

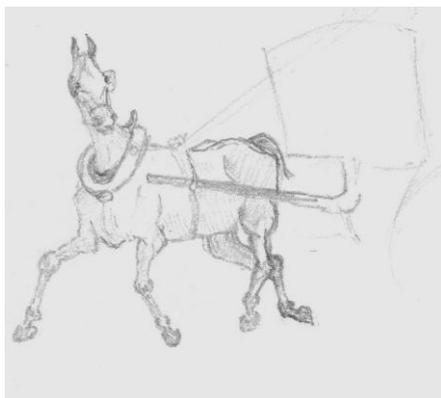
Michael Baker

... someone has been caught by the history-bug!

FOMA member, Michael Baker writes:

“Hidden in a corner of a musty attic I found a well travelled tin trunk, with a brass lock and leather straps. Over the passage of time, no one had thrown it out. What secrets did it hold?

I thumbed through lists of cricket scores and of game shot, diaries, notebooks and some delightful sketch books from the late 1800s. There were a dozen notebooks or diaries, bank books... this turned out to be an infantry officer who hailed from Cobham, Captain Alfred Baker.



As soon as he was commissioned (in the Durham Light Infantry) Alfred found himself aboard ship to Gibraltar to join his battalion. He wrote home about the adventure, and he sketched. Here is a sample (pictured) from Italy, 1885.

His battalion was quite suddenly called to Egypt, up the Nile by paddle-steamer, digging his way out of the blown sand in the morning, leading a Company at the battle against the Sudanese dervishes at Ginnis, recording both the story and the images.

Alfred's life, told by diary and letter home as well as sketch book, leads to Cyprus, to Ireland, all over India and to the Afghan border in the time of Victoria's empire. It will skip the humdrum life in barracks but show you cricketering success, polo prowess and a posting to Nigeria, when slaves were the currency, fever was all about and the French were threatening... and finally to a memorial in Cobham Church.”

Read more of FOMA member Michael Baker's fascinating research starting in the in the next issue of The Clock Tower.

Pictured above, Michael and wife Caroline photographed in 2013 at Caroline's pottery exhibition, The Three Sisters (see The Clock Tower, Issue 31, August 2013).



Yet, there was something peculiar about the crowd, which one could not understand at first. It was quite a normal military and naval crowd in appearance, but there was a subtle difference. What was it? Like lightning, one realised it in a flash-it was the great silence that hung over the possessed crowd. A body of sergeants near the wall passed some occasional remarks, but they were for the most part inaudible. As under a spell, the crowd was held voiceless-it was the silence of curiosity and speculation-the silence of men who had not made up their minds what their personal attitudes would be, and who were awaiting the evidence of their eyes to emphasise the verdict their souls had already given. True, there were men in the crowd who had already made up their minds to their course of attitude, but they were only isolated instances...

Suddenly there is a movement of the small body of men at the barrack gates, who looking back, commence to descend the hill towards the waiting crowd, gazing over their shoulders every now and then. The silence of the crowd is broken, for a murmur arises, swelling gradually into shape, and resolving itself into the words “They're coming!” Almost immediately those who have been so long expected break into view, and their appearance has an electric effect on the assembly-there is an immediate closing up-a large body of Jack Tars stand solidly in the middle of the roadway, the Tommies press towards the centre of attraction in broken segments, and crowd on either side of the roadway.

As the ‘conscientious’ descend the hill, their countenances are keenly scanned by the crowd, and their gait is no less closely observed. Both plainly say “We have our belief-our belief is good-we have suffered for that belief-we have won!” If they consider these latter two expressions finite, they are quickly to be disillusioned. No sooner has the crowd realised what their expressions and bearing mean, than an ominous murmur breaks forth. Almost instantaneously the murmurs develop into shouts of derision and scorn. Two or three of the ‘conscientious’ pale obviously, and they all close in together-but not for long. They reach the Government boundary-a bag of flour is thrown-a rotten egg follows, thrown with great force at close quarters-it strikes its victim squarely between the eyes-he bends down trying to clear his vision, and his head is whitened by more flour. This is the signal for missiles of all descriptions to be showered on the victims, but even this does not satisfy the more indignant of the crowd. Suddenly, a man- a Tommy-dashes forward and strikes right and left at one of the ‘objectors’ and in a second, the six are surrounded. Knocked down, kicked and clawed at, with clothes torn to rags, they find they are suffering again for their belief, and that they have not yet won through. At last four of them succeed in breaking away and running for their lives towards the Town Hall. The remaining two are not so fortunate and suffer still more severely before they succeed in breaking through, and when they do their progress can be traced by the blood they leave behind.

Brutal, perhaps, all this, but, unlike German, a just brutality-the just resentment of Britishers who are fighting for their country. A plain intimation and warning to a weak-kneed Government as to what the people think of such cattle as ‘Conscientious Objectors’.¹⁷

This article resulted in three replies in the following edition; one from a clergyman who did not object to war, but considered this treatment abominable. A second from a lady, who regarded their treatment as even more objectionable and pointed out that these men were actually awaiting Central Tribunal decisions. Indeed, they would not have been going home, but under escort to Wormwood Scrubs prison to serve their court martial sentences. The third was from a supporter, who did not care to leave his name.¹⁸ It must be pointed out that the crowd appears to have

been mainly soldiers and sailors, not Chatham residents. However their military escort looked on and allowed the violence to occur.



IBSA members at Knutsford Work Centre 1919 (Charles Daniels is in the second row, third from left). © www.forthesakeofthekingdom.co.uk. Reproduced with permission of Gary Perkins.

In the next issue of The Clock Tower Catharina will examine the role of the Quaker Peace activists and No-Conscription Fellowships in the Medway Towns.

There is now a CD available at MALSC which includes a database of UK Conscientious Objectors. This was compiled by Cyril Pearce and is more up to date than the online version. It contains nearly 17,500 names and is another useful tool for family historians looking for WWI ancestors.

Notes

1. T. Kennedy, *The Hound of Conscience*, p. 3.
2. See Catharina Clement's unpublished work on Frederic Wheeler & the Peace Movement.
3. Kennedy, *The Hound of Conscience*, pp. 5-6, 11, 18-19, 22, 27.
4. B. Joyce, 'Medway Towns Conscientious Objectors and their treatment at the hands of the Local Military Service Tribunals 1916-1918', (MA Dissertation, 1988), pp.3-4.
5. *Chatham Observer*, 5 June 1916; Daniels was an IBSA member; more information on their stance as conscientious objectors can be found on Gary Perkins website <http://www.forthesakeofthekingdom.co.uk>.
6. *Ibid*, 11 December 1915, 'The Call to Arms', p. 4.
7. *Ibid*, 18 December 1915, 'Rush of Men', p. 7.
8. Joyce, 'Medway Towns Conscientious Objectors', Appendix 1, pp. 54-55.
9. *Chatham News*, 4 March 1916.
10. KH&LC, C/A/2/15/14 File A, West Kent Appeals Tribunal Conscientious Objectors Case Files 1916-1918.
11. *Chatham News*, 25 March 1916.
12. *Ibid*, 27 May 1916.
13. www.ancestry.co.uk, army service record for C. Daniels (service no. 4193); The National Archives WO363; Findmypast under ACC/4793; MALSC, PS/NA/SR42, Chatham Police Court Register 1916-1917, p. 215.
14. Army record no 4193 as above; Cyril Pearce Conscientious Objectors database; TNA, MH47/2/2, No. 4164, 24 August 1917. Daniels died at Forest Hill in 1965 after serving post-war as an elder at East Ham.
15. *Hansard*, Vol. 83, 4 Jul 1916, pp. 1347-1351.
16. C. Pearce, *Comrades in Arms*, (London, 2014), pp. 153-155.
17. *Chatham News*, 5 August 1916, 'Chatham Conscientiously Objects',
18. *Ibid*, 12 August 1916.

Bob Ratcliffe helped us to mark the opening of the new Rochester Station with his exhibition and talks on the Railways of Rochester.

Our current exhibition *Mapping Medway* opened on 31 March. To tie in with this we held a special session on 2 April 2016, 10.30 – 2.00pm: *Medway's Past Mapped Out*. Staff and volunteers were on hand to show people treasures from our local studies collections and assist with specific map-related enquiries. Surplus maps were on sale at bargain prices. Many are still available to buy. If you are interested please ask Norma (as above). We thank FOMA members and MALSC volunteers who came to help: Odette Buchanan, Elaine Gardner, Alan Moss, Doris Herlihy and Len Feist. We had nearly 50 visitors, many of whom were new to MALSC.

We hope to hold more of these special sessions to encourage you and new visitors to MALSC.

Heritage Open Days

Last year's event centred on Gillingham and Rainham and was attended by a small number of people. This year we hope to increase numbers visiting us. If you would like to help us on **Saturday 10 September** please let Norma know (as above). Our theme this year will be history and archaeology, delving into our past with some local antiquarians: Charles Roach Smith, Henry Smetham, George Payne and other local figures.

Thanks for your continuing support which is much appreciated.

Local Studies Report/Norma Crowe

Preparations for our move to Bryant Road in 2017 have directed our work this year with audits of holdings, sorting, assessing, listing and improving our stock.

We continue to work with schools, colleges, libraries, museums and local groups to engage with new audiences and to broaden our user base. As part of this offer we have prepared eight reminiscence packs, which are available for loan to residential homes, day centres and educational establishments. Staff, volunteers and work experience students have assisted with their preparation.

Subjects covered:

1. Shopping
C051154177
2. World War II
C050950682
3. At leisure: sports and hobbies
C051154181
4. Home life
C051155971
5. Working lives
C051158588
6. When we were young: growing up and childhood
C051158652
7. Gillingham, Rainham and Twydall
C050950768
8. Parkwood: the development of the shopping precinct
C051158940

Exhibition Copying

We have created over 100 exhibitions in the past 20 years. When we move we will not be able to keep them, due to lack of space. Volunteer help is still needed to capture the information these exhibitions contain. If you interested in helping with this please email Norma at norma.crowe@medway.gov.uk

Events and Exhibitions

We are grateful to FOMA's committee members for last year's World War I exhibition about 1915 and for the work currently underway in preparing the next section, which will cover 1916.

Jean Lear prepared exhibitions about Strood industry and gave talks at Strood Hub and St. Nicholas Rochester.

Roll out the Red Carpet

P.J. Salter



Pat Salter worked at the Guildhall Museum Rochester and at MALSC for over 20 years. She is a well known author and works include A Man of Many Parts - Edwin Harris 1859 – 1938; Pat is also a FOMA Vice President.

We are delighted that Pat Salter has given us permission to serialise her book, Roll out the Red Carpet, which will later be published in its entirety on the FOMA website. The book is a compilation of work originally undertaken by Pat for an exhibition at MALSC and gives a fascinating insight into royal visits to the Medway Towns over the centuries, from Anglo Saxon times right up to the present day. Thanks to Rob Flood and Philip Dodd for helping to make publication possible.

Introduction

The red carpet has been rolled out, literally or metaphorically, for royal visitors to the Medway area for centuries. However, the red carpet has not always been a celebratory one. Wars, sieges, rebellions and invasions have been occasioned by, or resulted in, carpets of blood. The Medway area has been inhabited since ancient times but the first royal visitor that we know of, with any certainty, was Aethelbert, King of Kent, in 604 and the latest, at the time of writing, that of the Princess Royal in March 2011.

Stuarts

Queen Elizabeth's heir, James the First of England and Sixth of Scotland, visited Rochester in 1606 accompanied by Queen Anne, Prince Henry (Prince of Wales) and the Queen's brother, King Christian of Denmark. The king was met by the Mayor and Corporation who *with gracious reverence presented the mace to the King, who graciously accepted the same and delivered it to the Mayor, willing him to keep it and use it with justice as before.*¹ They then proceeded down the High Street to the house of Sir Peter Buck (now known as Eastgate House) where King Christian was lodged. King James was lodged with the Bishop, Dr. Barlow.

The next day the royal party attended Sunday service at the Cathedral where they heard a sermon by Dr. Parry. They dined onboard a ship *perfumed with sweete and pleasaunt perfume, and hanged with clothe of golde all the sides within ... after dinner they went upon a spacious gallerie made upon lighter between the two Royall Shippes, the Elizabeth-Jonas and the White Beare,* near which was

anchored a *great hulke, which was furnished with ovens for baked meates, and had in it three fair ranges to roast with.* This was inspected by the king before the company were rowed in barges to Chatham to view all the ships. They were then rowed to the opposite shore, where from a hill where a mill stood between Quarry House and Frindsbury Church, they viewed the whole fleet *which in due course discharged their whole ordnance, two thousand three hundred shots being fired.*² The visit ended with a firework display by the Royal Navy.

King James returned to Rochester in 1613, this time to meet the King of Bohemia, who had recently married James' daughter, Princess Elizabeth. The Mayor and Corporation were again in attendance and presented the Princess and her husband with a silver-gilt ewer. The next day the royal party walked out to view the ships.

Prince Charles (later to become King Charles I) came to Chatham on 8 May 1611 where he visited the Dockyard. According to Phineas Pett:³

He landed at the Old Dock, Chatham a little before six at night; and thence walked on foot to Mr Leggatt's house (Roune House) where his supper was ready prepared for him and his train, to his great delight.

As King Charles I he returned to the area in 1625 after collecting his new Queen at Dover. Phineas Pett reported in his diary: *All April and May attended at Chatham to prepare the fleet that was then bound over to fetch the Queen*⁴ from Boulogne. The King and Queen Henrietta Maria rode through Rochester on 16 June, where they were met by the Mayor and Corporation, given a *most learned and eloquent oration*⁵ which the Mayor had previously been instructed to be *verie short* and were presented with two cups of fifteen pounds each. They departed to a *brave volley of shot and great ordnance was delivered from the river.*⁶

Phineas Pett also recorded a visit by King Charles I in 1631 when the king stayed at the Crown Inn in Rochester High Street. The King arrived in Strood on 15 June, at about two o'clock and went to the Crown Inn where he was received by the Mayor and Corporation, before visiting the ships in Limehouse Reach. The next morning he visited more ships on the river and inspected the Dockyard.⁷ The King returned to Rochester in 1641 when he was again received by the Mayor and Corporation, who paid the King's servants £3. 10d for the King's barge, presumably to take him to the Dockyard⁸.

Great celebrations were seen in 1660 following the Restoration of the monarchy, when King Charles II returned to England. Accompanied by the Dukes of York and Gloucester and a large retinue he arrived in Rochester on 28 May where he was met by the Mayor and Corporation.

The royal party refreshed themselves at the home of Colonel Gibbons (now Eastgate House) after which they went to Chatham Dockyard to view the *Royal Sovereign* and other ships in the river, before returning to Rochester where the King spent the night in the home of Francis Clerke whom he knighted. The house is now known as Restoration House.

Newly Catalogued Archive Collections

2015

PC94	Cliffe parish council: minutes M5/2 Update and stock check of all Methodist records	2002 -2010	Jan 2015 Finished May 2015
P85J DE1252	St Albans, Blue Bell Hill parish registers Duppa Estates at Stoke & Hundred of Hoo: deeds and sales particulars, including Parsonage Farm	1931-1998 1869-1903	Aug 2015 Aug 2015
RCA/N	Rochester City Chamberlains receipts (additional)	1669-1727	Aug 2015
DE1251	Miscellaneous legal documents: Rochester, relating to wharves on the Medway	1866, 1880?	Jul 2015
C/ES/150C C/ES/305D P358/1B/1 P138	Chapter School (Strood) records St Peters Primary School Rochester Sutton at Hone Baptism register Title deeds to 181 Frindsbury Road, Strood (formerly 16 Salisbury Terrace, Frindsbury Road)	1921-2009 1891-1990 1962-2012 1903-1951	Jul 2015 Sep 2015 Oct 2015 Sep 2015
P149	London, Tilbury and Southend Railway: lands in Essex belonging to the Sir John Hawkins Hospital, Chatham	1851-1852	Sep 2015
P129 RCA/CS3/6/5	Deeds: Milton Road Gillingham Rochester City Council: surveyors department: bunker	1902-1990 1940	Sep 2015 Oct 2015
DE65/1 DE164 P246/01 (addit) C/ES/190 DE50 DE56 DE1253 PC109	Plan: Fort Darnet Isolation Hospital Brisley Family: misc papers+ Additional. registers Meopham parish Hoo St Werbergh Council School Deeds: 11 Bryant Road Strood Freeman admittance: W Hedgcock Title documents: Delce, Rochester Darenth Parish Council minutes	ND early C20th 1847-1853 1980-2007 1876-1994 1869-1939 1832 1862-1892 1894-1981	Oct 2015 Oct 2015 Nov 2015 Nov 2015 Nov 2015 Nov 2015 Nov 2015 Nov 2015 (Cindy), proofread/ formatted by AC.

2016

N/JZ DE1255 DE1256 DE1254 DE1257	Jezreels Collection Deeds: Castle Rd., Chatham British Twin Disc Ltd., Strood: brochure Deeds: Gillingham, Various Misc dwgs: Rochester Cathedral	1820-1960s 1895-1945 ND c1961 1872-1972 ND c1910	Jan 2016 Feb 2016 Mar 2016 Mar 2016 Mar 2016
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material that had strayed from other collections such as the Rochester City Archives.

Due to the close connections between the two organisations before the Municipal Corporations Act (1835) was passed, some documents had found their way into different collections, and the two archivists have worked together to repatriate this material. The archivist has been undertaking work to identify name-rich collections that would prove suitable for digitisation and publication via a commercial partner. More news about this will be available later in the year.

Outreach

Our exhibition programme continues to be popular, with the Railway exhibition bringing in *lots* of visitors (as did the talks) and the exhibition about Methodist chapels proving to be a surprise hit. Our current exhibition is about Medway Maps and follows on from our successful Mapping Open Day which took place on 2 April.

In October we again hosted our Palaeography Workshop with Dr David Wright. We will be happy to run this workshop again if demand requires it. We are also looking into inviting Dr Wright to give a talk on Kent Ancestors which will tie-in with his new publication on the subject (please let the archivist know if you are interested in either - at alison.cable@medway.gov.uk).

We continue to work with schools and universities, often in tandem with the Guildhall Museum Education Officer to deliver workshops on a variety of topics such as Crime and Punishment and WW1.

Relocation

Work continues on the relocation project and we are hoping to be in our new premises (at Bryant Road, Strood) in Spring 2017. The relocation team have made a number of information-gathering visits to other archives including Bexley, East Sussex and Kent. The archivist is working closely with colleagues at the National Archives to ensure that the new centre will meet the required standards to remain as a place of deposit for Public Records (under the Public Records Act).

Once the building work gets underway at the old Strood Library building, we will 'blog' on the progress via our Facebook page and our Corporate Communications Team will be working to keep Medway citizens informed of developments.

Archive Collections

A list of collections catalogued in 2015 and 2016 is attached. The archivist was particularly keen to complete work on two large collections: Chapter School, and the Jezreel archives. She has also made some additions to the Rochester City Archives, as small amounts of additional material have come to light since the completion of the HLF funded cataloguing project.

2016 is going to be a busy year for us and we truly value your continued support and encouragement

The following morning the King was presented with a loyal address and a silver-gilt basin *of good value*⁹ before the royal party left for London.

Charles returned to Chatham Dockyard several times; it was reported that he would take off his wig in order to inspect the ships in comfort.¹⁰

King James II frequently visited the area as Duke of York and Lord High Admiral; however in December 1688 the conflict created by James between the church and the state led to his abdication and resulted in his arrival at Rochester. He was given hospitality at the home of Sir Richard Head, Mayor of Rochester in 1664 and Member of Parliament in 1678. The house is in the High Street and is now known as 'Abdication House'. He stayed for a few days, left secretly by the back garden, and escaped down the river in a tender owned by Master Browne. He was accompanied by, amongst others, his son the Duke of Berwick.¹¹

In the next issue: *The Hanovers*

Notes

1. Smith, F.F: A History of Rochester
2. Brenchley Rye, W: Visits to Chatham and Rochester
3. Presnail, James: The Story of a Dockyard Town
4. Brenchley Rye, W: Visits to Chatham and Rochester
5. Ibid
6. Ibid
7. Smith, F.F: A History of Rochester
8. City of Rochester Archives: RCA/N1
9. City of Rochester Archives: Ro/A/
10. Fraser, Antonia: King Charles I
11. The History of Rochester & its Environs



Right: part of the Alexander McQueen Collection; c/o Alexander McQueen. (see Huguenot Museum Update overleaf).

Huguenot Museum Update

Amy Dimmock



Amy Dimmock is the new Learning and Community Engagement Officer at the Huguenot Museum, Rochester. Amy studied Classics and Archaeology at the University of Kent before completing her Museum Studies MA at Leicester University. She returned to Kent to begin her museum career as Assistant Curator at The Royal Engineers Museum in Brompton. Amy is passionate about history and crafting and is excited to be a part of the Huguenot Museum team!

The Huguenot Museum has some exciting new activities, events and exhibitions happening over the next few months, so do come along and take part!

In May we are celebrating all things silk with related talks, exhibitions and activities. We at the Museum are particularly excited for the new temporary exhibition in the galleries *Huguenot Silk: Canterbury to Catwalk* where you can see a silk dress the fabric of which was woven in Canterbury in 1724. The Museum also has a silk dress from the new Alexander McQueen collection (see the photograph on the previous page) on display alongside silk items on loan from The Beaney Museum in Canterbury. The exhibition is only on for a short time so make sure you visit before the 18 June to catch it!

The Museum is also taking part in Medway's Print Festival so come along on the 17 and 18 June to see our mini Print Exhibition and discover more about the Huguenots' connection to paper and printing. In June the Huguenot Museum is teaming up with Rochester Literature Festival again to celebrate Refugee Week. Come along to the Museum on the 25 June from 11:00am to 2:00pm to see short films by local artist Hala Georges.

Huguenot Silk: Canterbury to Catwalk

20 April until 18 June 2016 (normal admission prices apply). This special display will explore the Huguenot contribution to the silk industry in Canterbury through objects from three families. Take a look at how the legacy of Huguenot craftsmanship has inspired the Spring Summer 16 collection by Alexander McQueen.

For more information about what is happening at Rochester's Huguenot Museum, see page 35.

The FOMA AGM

Amanda Thomas



The FOMA AGM took place at Frindsbury Parish Hall on the evening of 12 April 2016. Business was swift, and there was some discussion about the Treasurer's Report. FOMA Member, Mr. Ian Smith objected to the £4,900 shown under costs on the Income and Expenditure account. Those present accepted the accounts and for this reason a revised version cannot now be printed here. The minutes of the 2016 AGM read: 'The Treasurer explained that it [the payment] was some of the ring-fenced residue of the HLF Grant. Historically, since the HLF project had finished this amount had been shown pending MALSC's identifying items on which to spend it. She had assumed that since the balance had been identified separately in previous years, Members would know what it was. Each year some of the residue had been used in various approved conservation projects.' The Committee has taken advice on this matter from the Independent Examiner, Jean Skilling, who was also FOMA Treasurer during the HLF project. She is happy to explain the background to the payment on request at jean.skilling@blueyonder.co.uk

Proceedings were followed by tea and cake, kindly prepared by Elaine Gardner, and a raffle. The following reports were read out at the AGM in the absence of Borough Archivist, Alison Cable and Local Studies Librarian, Norma Crowe. The printing of these replaces the regular *Archives Update* column. Copies of all reports and the minutes are available on request from FOMA Secretary, Odette Buchanan (see page 46 for contact details) and will be printed in full in next year's AGM supplement (*The Clock Tower*, issue 45, February 2017).

Archivist's Report/Alison Cable

Partnership working

In 2015, the archivist worked with Dean and Chapter colleagues to arrange the safe transfer of the *Textus Roffensis* to the Cathedral for the purpose of the Magna Carta Exhibition. The *Textus* will be going on display (permanently) at the Cathedral later this year. Additional treasures from the Cathedral archives will also be displayed in the crypt.

The archivist has undertaken work with the Watts charity archivist to help identify