

Front and back covers: The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (right), Strood and Broomhill (rear); photograph by Elaine Gardner.



Inside front and back covers: the area in Chatham covered by the Command of the Heights Heritage Lottery funded project (see page 13)



From the Chairman

Tessa Towner, Chairman.



This is the 40th edition of *The Clock Tower* ... where have the years gone? It seems only yesterday that former Medway Borough Archivist, Stephen Dixon encouraged us to start The Friends of Medway Archives and we have gone from strength to strength.

The journal has undergone a revamp for this issue and you will see that articles are now at the front and *News and Events* are at the back; Amanda also took all our photos again a few weeks ago! Since May this year *The Clock Tower* has been indexed by FOMA member Nic Nicholas and we are delighted that she has compiled an index of all our articles to date as a special supplement to this 40th edition. Many thanks, Nic.

FOMA never stops working to raise the profile of the Medway Archives and our local heritage. This autumn, along with the Friends of the Guildhall Museums and the City of Rochester Society, we have been supporting a commemorative series of four lectures on the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta and the 1215 siege of Rochester Castle. As I write this three lectures have already taken place and all have been very interesting*. The first was by Sir Robert Worcester about Magna Carta, followed by Dr Marc Morris on King John, and the third was by the Guildhall's own Dr Jeremy Clarke on the building of Rochester Castle. The last one will be held on 12 November at the Guildhall by Richard Dunn, Director of the Royal Engineers Museum, entitled *Warfare by Design: Fortify, Hold, Siege and Fight*. The lectures have been well supported and Simon Lace, Medway's Heritage Services Manager, has already proposed that in 2016 - to commemorate the 950th anniversary - we organise another lecture series about the 1066 Norman Conquest. Dr Marc Morris and Dr Jeremy Clarke have already agreed to speak again - so watch this space!!

*You can read Odette Buchanan's review of the first two lectures on page 5; the third and fourth lectures will be reviewed in the next issue of *The Clock Tower*.

Also featured on page 11 of this issue is the next part of Pat Salter's *Roll out the Red Carpet* - somewhat fortuitously this episode is entitled, *Plantagenets*.

Erratum

In *The Clock Tower*, Issue 38, May 2015, Bob Ratcliffe's article, 'A Day in May', about the explosion of the ship Princess Irene, erroneously named the child who died near Grain village as Hilda Johnson. The child's name was Ida Barden. She was from Shorne and was staying with her aunt and uncle at Port Victoria when the Princess Irene was attacked.

Secretary's Report

Odette Buchanan



Hullo again! Autumn is now well under way – and it looks like we're going to have a hard winter – masses and masses of berries on all the bushes and trees. Do you remember back in the spring I said what a busy year 2015 was for auspicious anniversaries? Well, they are nearly all over now, but I am writing this on 25 October, the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt.

As far as Medway is concerned, one of the most significant anniversaries this year has been Magna Carta's 800th. The Council was successful in securing a Lottery Grant to help commemorate this but before this was known, FOMA had been promised a lecture by one of our Vice-Presidents, Sir Robert Worcester. Sir Robert is Chairman of the Magna Carta 2015 800th Anniversary Commemoration Committee and is passionate about our heritage. He was also Chancellor of the University of Kent until 2014, and is now Honorary Professor of Politics here. When Simon Lace, Medway's Heritage Services Manager, secured the Lottery Grant for the lecture series it was expanded into four talks and each one has been a sell-out! First-class speakers with very interesting material - such a treat. Read the first part of my account of the talks on the following page.

On 24 October, there were three *Son et Lumieres* in the moat of Rochester Castle to commemorate the 1215 siege and the undermining of the south east tower by King John's sappers. The weather was awful – high winds and lashing rain – but it didn't stop a large proportion of the population of Medway turning out. It was great fun, very well done with an excellent commentary by Dr. Marc Morris – who was born in Strood!

My very best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year !

New Members

A warm welcome to new FOMA members Josie Iles, and Hazel and Charlie Thorn.

The Magna Carta Commemoration Lectures

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 Parfect) 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.

Sir Robert Worcester: *Bishops, Barons and Books*, 8 October 2015.

Sir Robert is not only a Vice President of FOMA but also, among his many other activities, the Chairman of the International Magna Carta 800th Commemoration Committee; this year he has delivered 75 lectures around the world. He is also very well-known in Kent and Medway and takes a keen interest in local matters. As you no doubt know, Sir Robert received his knighthood for inventing the Mori Poll. His lecture was to have been called *After Magna Carta: Barons and Battlefields of Kent* but he thought his new, alliterative title more relevant to the points to which he wished to draw our attention.

Sir Robert spoke first about the *Textus Roffensis* which is the earliest legal code to be written in the vernacular, not Latin, and which, until recently, was held at Medway Archives. It was set down by Æthelberht, King of Kent from 558 to 560 AD and influenced Magna Carta and many written legal codes around the world including the Constitution of the United States and unexpected countries such as China and North Korea. Before the *Textus* was stored safely at Medway Archives it had had a very chequered career: It nearly got drowned in the Thames but so tightly was it bound that only the edges became wet. Now, thanks to Lottery Funding, the Cathedral crypt has been altered so that it can be on safe, permanent display there.

From 1018 to 1066 Kent was subjected to many Viking raids. They razed the Cathedral and Allington Castle, and pillaged and raped. Proof of the mass capture of Kentish women has been revealed in an analysis of the DNA of today's Icelandic population where 50% of women and 10% of men have Kentish DNA. With the Norman invasion in 1066 peace was established and Kent prospered until William died and one of his sons, Rufus, succeeded him. (1087 – 1100) His Bishop, Odo caused trouble and Rochester Castle was besieged in 1087. After Odo was exiled a shaky peace between the King and the barons was established but unrest was always simmering below the surface. Taxes were imposed upon the barons by successive kings. Eventually the barons revolted because of King John's even harsher treatment and extortionate taxes.

Bishop Stephen Langton was involved in this first barons' war; he aided the barons in capturing Rochester Castle in October 1215 after the failure of Magna Carta. John obtained the support of the

Pope in declaring it 'illegal' and refused to abide by its terms. The rebel barons and over a hundred armed knights arrived at Rochester in early October and together with Bishop Stephen Langton held the City against John. The king arrived on 13 October, after the rebels had pulled down the bridge. John and his knights arrived with five siege engines and both long and cross-bow archers, but were ineffective in breaking the siege. So, on 14 October John sent a letter to Canterbury asking for as many pigs as possible. His sappers mined under the south east tower of the castle, propped up the excavation and burnt the pigs. The heat of the fire burnt down the pit props and the tower collapsed. This was after about six weeks of siege and the barons were already weak and ready to surrender. Many had died of dysentery, they had no fresh water and had been reduced to eating their horses. The war caused many 'hard presses' and contemporary sources called it the worst siege ever.

There is no written evidence but it is thought that John's ally, Prince Louis, landed at Dover from France in early 1216 but was soon defeated by the Constable of Dover Castle, Hugh de Burgh. In a letter from King John to Hugh de Burgh he called Stephen Langton a great traitor. The war petered out later in 1216 when John died and his nine year old son, Henry III was declared King with the knight William Marshal as his guardian.

Sir Robert then entertained us with anecdotes of other battles between the barons and King John, mostly in John's territories in what is now France. He cited the battle of Bouvines in 1214 as the most important. The continued unrest was caused by John's constant need for money to fight battles that he kept losing. At one time he increased the scutage (the tax for not providing knights to fight with the king) from one Mark to three Marks. John lost many battles at sea and around Kent there were many other smaller skirmishes at castles built to protect Medway crossings, such as Tonbridge and Allington.

Sir Robert then gave an account of the many celebrations in which he was involved in 2014. One such was the 750th anniversary of the Second Barons' War of 1264, led by Simon de Montfort against Godfrey de Clare for the King. A Mute Court re-enactment was held at Westminster Hall to start off the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta. Present were eminent lawyers and government ministers from English speaking countries all over the world and proceedings were led by the Usher of the USA Supreme Court. Clive Anderson played King John, in the dock being tried for High Treason, and David Carpenter played Baron Robert Fitzwilliam for the prosecution, encouraging support for the overthrow of the King.

The lecture concluded with Sir Robert reminiscing on last year's Lord Mayor's show when an original copy of the Magna Carta was put in the Lord Mayor's gold coach to be transported from the Guildhall to the Mansion House in London while he and other dignitaries walked behind. He reminded us that Magna Carta was sealed, not signed and called it 'England's Greatest Export.' Throughout the lecture, he had referred to various books about Magna Carta and drew our attention to the sheet he had compiled with reviews of each and where they could be purchased. Please contact me (see page 37) if you would like a copy of this.

Dr. Marc Morris: *King John: Treachery, Tyranny and the Road to Magna Carta*, 15 October 2015.

Dr. Morris is a widely acclaimed historian who specializes in the Norman and Medieval periods. He has had several books published; his latest published this year is a biography of King John (see *Christmas Books*, pages 25 to 26).

He opened the lecture with a brief summary of the events at Worcester Cathedral in 1797 surrounding the moving and opening of John's tomb which had stood in the middle of the choir for centuries but was thought to be empty. It was an irritation to the clergy at Worcester because it was positioned in the middle of the main aisle to the altar and so they decided to have it moved. Much to everyone's astonishment, when the tomb was opened a stone coffin was found containing a skeleton. From the remnants of cloth that had not disintegrated onlookers were able to see that the body had been dressed in the same way as the effigy atop the tomb. The skeleton was measured and they concluded the king had been about five feet, six and a half

inches tall. News soon spread and a great crowd thronged into the cathedral to view the remains. Experts were forced to close the tomb up but not before souvenir hunters had managed to steal many pieces. Bits of cloth and his sandals were later bought by Edward Elgar at auction and some of John's teeth turned up in Edinburgh!

Dr. Morris then explained why one of John's nicknames was Lackland. When his father, Henry II, wrote his will, John had only just been born. He was the last of eight children and not, therefore expected to inherit the throne. The three daughters would be married to European nobles or princes and that left William, the eldest. However William died aged three, followed by Henry, who died six years before his father the king. Richard inherited the throne, and then the next in line, Geoffrey, died 1186. By the time King Henry died in 1189, John was much closer to the throne than had ever been anticipated. Richard only spent a few months of his ten year reign in England and died of wounds inflicted by a crossbow bolt in the shoulder during the siege of the castle at Châlus in France. John acceded with no clear idea or guidance on what was expected of a king.

According to primary source research, Dr. Morris believes that film and television portrayals of King John do not make him out to be as bad as he really was. Medieval monarchs were expected to be harsh rulers who led their armies into battle and treated enemies and those who railed against them severely, but they were also expected to rule fairly and treat their loyal subjects well: John was described by his contemporaries as evil. Writing of his death in the 1230s, Matthew Paris said, 'foul as it is, hell itself is made fouler by the presence of King John.'

Dr Morris led us with many entertaining anecdotes of John's abortive reign. Citing incident after incident of John's cruelty and stupidity, his inability to see that his subjects were becoming more and more angry with his ever-increasing taxes and his total lack of kingly skills. When John ascended to the throne he was king of a vast empire that stretched from the Pyrenees to Hadrian's Wall and included most of Ireland and western France up to the present day Netherlands. Threatened by an increasingly powerful Prince Phillip of France, John managed to waste the vast amount of money he raised from ever harsher taxes on fighting battles that he consistently lost through bad tactics and cowardice. On several occasions he deserted his own knights when the battle appeared to be going against him. After the decisive battle of Bouvines in 1214 the empire had shrunk spectacularly. All that was left were a few territories south of the Loire. After a ceasefire, Philip agreed to a five year truce and John sailed apprehensively for England.

King John had appointed an unpopular regent in his absence as well as imposing an unwelcome scutage while away in France. Not only this, but he was still rowing with the clergy because of the interdict he had imposed. They were demanding compensation for loss of income because of there being no masses, marriages or burials. Of course John had no money, so he placated them with grants of land and power and, best of all, a charter guaranteeing that in future the election to all cathedral and monastic churches would be free from royal interference. The barons were well aware of this concession and it started them thinking that perhaps they could also be granted a charter drawn up in their favour. They looked back at previous monarchs' charters. Prior to John's accession it had been customary for a king to issue a charter declaring his intentions as soon as he was crowned, and they found precedents that addressed their various discontents. By January 1215 at the second meeting of the Temple, the barons arrived in arms and demanded John reinstate the charters of Henry I and the laws of Edward the Confessor. John scorned their demands but they held firm and eventually it was agreed that John would respond to their demands at a council in Oxford at Easter. He also allowed William Marshal, Stephen Langton and the Bishop of Ely to guarantee his word and to avert what he most feared – the barons rising up against him.

From January to Easter the animosity increased. When John reneged on his appointment at Oxford the barons threatened to capture the king's castles. After a few minor successes, they captured London and this forced John to negotiate: not only had he lost his capital city but also the treasury. It was eventually agreed to meet on the water meadows between Staines and Windsor at a field known as Runnymede. The two sides met on 10 June and the barons presented their demands. This consisted of 49 Articles that listed not only the return to sensible rates of taxation but also that any scutage demanded must be approved by the barons first and the king must seek prior permission before raising an army.

There were Articles to do with legal weights and measures, the activities of the King's local agents, sheriffs and underlings whose oppression of every strata of society had so incensed the general population, and judicial and legal articles that enshrined our present day system. The arbitrators on both sides were not named. The negotiations continued for some days and eventually, on 15 June, the royal seal of approval was given. The barons held a conference (some wanted to hold out for even more concessions) but finally on 19 June, John returned to Runnymede and the rebel barons renewed their homage and fealty. All present then swore to keep the peace inviolate, but this promise was very short lived.



Dr Marc Morris points to a map of France and the land King John inherited and lost.

John was not happy at having had to make so many concessions and he wrote to the Pope asking him to declare the charter illegal. This he did. The barons had suspected John would do something like this so they too had not fulfilled all their promises. The Oxford conference was reconvened in July but it was unsuccessful and both John and the barons started preparing for civil war. Meanwhile, the Pope had based his judgement on the failed Easter conference and knew nothing about the charter. It was this lack of knowledge that caused him to call the barons 'worse than Saracens.' Stephen Langton and other concerned clergy tried to mediate but to no avail. Around mid-August John, true to his character, suddenly departed England without telling anyone where he was going. It was assumed he had abdicated and the barons starting looking for a replacement.

But John had had a 'cunning plan'! He had actually sailed round the south coast ports collecting his navy together. He finished up at Dover with his own fleet plus foreign mercenaries ready to invade. After some dithering and to-ing and fro-ing, he and what was left of his Dutch mercenaries set off for Rochester where the barons were ensconced. He started his attack of the city on 13 October. Meanwhile the barons had, too late, realised that they had not provisioned themselves adequately for a siege; they were short of both food and arms and the king found it easy, therefore, to besiege them in the castle. However, none of his siege engines or troops were able to break the defences of the barons. John foresaw this early on in the siege and had called the smiths in Canterbury to make plenty of axes ready to undermine the castle walls. He then asked the population of Canterbury for old, inedible pigs to be sent to him. His sappers tunnelled underneath the south east tower of the keep. They burnt the pigs, the mine props burnt down from the heat of the fire and the corner of the keep collapsed. After seven weeks the siege was over and the barons defeated.

Now a very angry John wreaked his revenge: He and his armies rampaged north and west taking hostages, burning and pillaging wherever he went. This served a dual purpose – it slaked his anger and also the ransoming of hostages replenished his coffers that the war had emptied. Eventually he turned his attention to London which was still in rebel hands, but his efforts were easily beaten back by the barons who had had time to rearm and French reinforcements had arrived. Both the king's attack and diplomacy failed, besides which his widespread pillaging had had little lasting effect and most of the rebel barons outside the capital had gone into hiding or gone abroad. Further reinforcements were due to arrive from France and John with his depleted army managed to send some of his forces to French ports to sink their ships while the rest were at Dover to try and repel them, but the fates were against him. A huge storm blew up in the channel and many of his fleet were lost, but the same storm had scattered Louis' fleet. What remained of the French fleet arrived off-course at Sandwich. John hastily travelled there to fight Louis on the beaches, but wary of conflict - a coward through and through - he abandoned his men and retreated.

Louis chased John to Winchester, gathering more and more support on the way. He entered London to great rejoicing but by the time he got to Winchester John had left for Corfe. Louis decided not to waste any more effort and concentrated on securing his south eastern victories. On realising this, John prepared to go on the attack once more and headed for Windsor to raise a siege there. But the French had been warned and were prepared for the attack. John headed instead to East Anglia to some of the rebel barons. Following further skirmishes John retreated to the north. But his time was running out and on 9 October 1216 he fell ill. Some thought it was dysentery, others excess of food and drink, but it might well have been exhaustion. He had been covering over 30 miles a day for the past four weeks.

After resting in King's Lynn for a day or two he set off once more, taking a short cut across the Wash. This was marshy, tidal ground, treacherous to cross. Here disaster struck and much of his wagon train was sucked into the bog - horses, men, wagons and the crown jewels were lost forever. People are still trying to locate the site today. Then came more bad news: Louis had breached the walls of Dover Castle and Hugh de Burgh feared the siege would soon be over. This brought on John's illness again. Neither bleeding nor anything else seemed to alleviate it and John wrote to the Pope that he feared he had 'a grave and incurable infirmity.' He continued on his journey but was too ill to ride and was carried on a litter. Dr. Morris told us that it was probably at Newark Castle that he wrote his last will and testament, the original of which still exists today.

King John listed thirteen of his loyal servants to administer his affairs, one of whom was William Marshal. They were to make amends to the church and send aid to the Holy Land, they were also to help his sons defend their inheritance and ensure that his other faithful servants were rewarded. Lastly, they were to distribute money to religious houses and to the poor for the salvation of his soul. John died on 18 October 1216 and on that day there was an awful storm over Newark. The inhabitants feared their houses would be blown away and many were convinced that this was God's doing as John's soul went on its way to hell. The embalmed body was taken to Worcester Cathedral because there were enough of his supporters in that city to ensure the funeral would go ahead without trouble. Unlike previous kings, he was not buried wearing his crown and for this reason it is thought that the crown was probably one of the items lost in the Wash.

Few mourned John's death. William Marshal appeared to have been saddened but various chroniclers agreed the king was 'little mourned.' Many people were reported to have had 'dreadful and fantastical visions of him,' the nature of which it was best not to write down. And so at only 49 the reign of probably England's most evil king came to an end and his nine year old son became King Henry III with William Marshal as Regent until he came of age.

In the next issue of *The Clock Tower*, Odette Buchanan looks at the last two talks in the lecture series: *Building Rochester Castle* by Dr Jeremy Clarke, Education Officer at the Guildhall Museum, and *Warfare by Design; Fortify, Hold, Siege and Fight* by Richard Dunn, Director of the Royal Engineers Museum.

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.

Plantagenets

King Richard I probably passed through the area on his way to the third crusade in 1191. The city archives include a grant of exchequer referring to free passage of his troops through Rochester.

There were great celebrations in 1195 when Richard I was once again in Rochester, accompanied by his mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, on his return from the Holy Land. The king's return had been interrupted the year before when he had been captured by his enemy Duke Leopold of Austria who imprisoned him and demanded a ransom for his release. The ransom finally paid, Richard landed in Sandwich and returned to London via Rochester where Hubert Walter (Chancellor and Archbishop of Canterbury) and a vast crowd awaited them¹.

According to F.F. Smith, King John, between 1199 and 1216, *resided in Rochester altogether thirty-five days*. In 1215 conflict brought John to Rochester during the barons' rebellion following the king's refutation of *Magna Carta*. William D'Albini, one of the charter barons, took possession of the castle which immediately brought the King and his army to Rochester². They arrived on the 12 October, where they found the bridge defended by Robert FitzWalter and sixty knights. However, John's forces prevailed. They took the bridge, destroyed it behind them and entered the city the following day. The soldiers ate, drank and even stabled their horses in the cathedral. Despite the use of all siege weapons available at that time, including five throwing machines, *hurling stones against them unceasingly, both day and night* so that the walls were broken down and only the keep stood, the rebels held out for seven weeks. On 25 November the King wrote to Hubert de Burgh³ instructing him to *send to us night and day with all haste forty bacon pigs of the fattest and those less good for eating for bringing fire under the tower*⁴. The plan was successful; the corner of the keep collapsed and John seized the castle.

The following year John was succeeded by his son, Henry III, who held a tournament at Rochester on 8th December 1251. It is believed to have been held in fields south east of the city. A description in a local history of 1772 described the occasion thus:

They exhibited the splendour courage and address, and the beauty of the times. The English held the lists against all comers and it is reported, were so successful that they forced the foreigners with shame and confusion, to retire into the city; and as if that were not a sufficient shelter for them they were compelled to seek safety in the castle⁵.

Ten years later Henry was at Rochester during troubles over England's possessions in France. A letter Henry sent from Rochester to King Louis of France dated 25 May 1261, included: *if any shorted way of peace, more suitable to us and our realm can be found, we propose to pursue it⁶.*

In 1297 conflict with Ireland, Scotland, Wales and France had depleted King Edward I's finances. The king's solution was an order for a seizure of 8,000 woolsacks and the imposition of another tax. This brought the threat of rebellion from within to add to the threat of invasion from France. Edward's thirteen-year-old son was at Rochester when, in August, the king sent 170 armed knights to his son⁷.

King Edward I made a more congenial overnight visit to the area on 18 February 1300 during a progress through Kent. He offered seven shillings each day at the shrine of Saint William of Perth. On the following day the king also paid twelve shillings to Richard Lamberd of Rochester in recompense for the horse he hired that was blown over the bridge and drowned in the River Medway. Eight days later, on his return from Canterbury, the king again visited the cathedral where he offered seven shillings to the shrines of St Paulinus and St Ythamar. At Chatham, he offered the same amount to the *image of the blessed Mary*; the same sum was also offered by Prince Edward⁸.

A further invasion of Scotland by King Edward I in 1306 led to another royal visitor to Rochester castle. Members of Scotland's royal family were captured and transported to London for trial. Included among the prisoners was Elizabeth de Burgh, wife of the King (Robert the Bruce). She was held in various English castles during her eight years' imprisonment, although she was kept in relative comfort. In 1313 the queen was held in Rochester castle where the Constable was ordered to provide a suitable chamber and was paid twenty shillings per week for her maintenance. She was also allowed to have four servants⁹.

As the daughter of Edward's friend, Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster, Elizabeth fared much better than her sister-in-law, Mary; or Isabel, Countess of Buchan, who were held in wooden cages hung on the outside of towers at Roxburgh and Berwick Castles, respectively¹⁰.

Addendum

King John was in Rochester on Maundy Thursday in 1213. According to the Royal Almonry this was the earliest record of a Royal Maundy. This was subsequently proved wrong when recent research revealed a record of a 'royal presentation' by King John at Knaresborough in 1210.

Notes

1. Weir, Alison: *Eleanor of Aquitaine*.
2. Smith, F.F: *A History of Rochester*.
3. Hallam, Elizabeth: *The Plantagenet Chronicles*.
4. Poole, A.L: *Domesday to Magna Carta, Oxford History of England*.
5. Phippen, James: *Descriptive Sketches of Rochester, Chatham and their Vicinities*.
6. Powicke, Sir Maurice: *The Thirteenth Century, 1216 – 1307, Oxford History of England*.
7. Morris, Marc: *That Great and Terrible King, Edward I*.
8. Brenchley Rye, W: *Visit to Rochester and Chatham*.
9. Smith, F.F: *A History of Rochester*.
10. Morris, Marc: *That Great and Terrible King, Edward I*.

Command of the Heights

Nicola Moy, Project Officer



Nicola has worked as Great Lines Heritage Park Project Officer since June 2009, when she was recruited to manage delivery of the central government funded Great Lines Heritage Park. Following on from that her contract was extended for the European funded Walls and Gardens project, which included the design and construction of the RSME Bicentenary Bridge at Fort Amherst, and the mobile phone app for a free to download trail around Fort Amherst. In the summer of 2015, following the award of the HLF grant for Command of the Heights, Nicola was made project officer responsible for this next exciting project.

Medway Council and Fort Amherst Heritage Trust (FAHT) successfully obtained a development grant of £214, 000 for a joint bid submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in July 2015. The aim of the HLF funded project Command of the Heights is to reconnect the military fort with the civilian town of Chatham by removing the nineteenth century building from the Barrier Ditch, re-interpreting the impressive ditch layout and allowing the views up and down the ditch, not seen since Victorian times. The historic gateway to the fort and dockyard along Barrier Road will be re-instated as the principal entrance. The repair and renovation of Spur Battery will provide public space for performances, re-enactments and interpretation of previous uses with a creation of an amphitheatre. All of this work will be supported by community archaeology, opportunities to become involved in the activities and volunteering for the future. Community engagement and consultation events to develop the project will commence at the end of 2015 and into 2016.



*Mid nineteenth century
view up ditch*

Fort Amherst had developed into a fully formed citadel by the close of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, dominating the high ground above Chatham and controlling the southern approaches into the garrison area. As a citadel, it had arrangements for all-round defence and would have served as a place of last resort, capable of continuing to mount a defence even if an enemy had broken through the Lines. It thus had gun positions covering land to the north as well as a majority of guns that face south and east, in the anticipated direction of a main attack.

In the nineteenth century the fort remained in use, probably on a care and maintenance basis with most of its guns dismounted. It was used as barracks and in particular for married soldiers and their families who were trying to escape the crowded conditions of the nearby infantry barracks. The fort was used in some of the nineteenth century training exercises by which the army tested its siege tactics. In both World Wars the fort was in use by the military, as troop accommodation in WWI and as the Civil Defence centre (in the tunnels) during WWII. The evidence of twentieth century military use and adaptation is part of the site's special interest.



Riverside One from the fort



After 1945 the fort fell increasingly into disuse and disrepair. MOD housing was built within the site of Amherst redoubt. Many of the moats at the fort were used as a convenient dumping ground for spoil. In 1980 Fort Amherst was identified for disposal as surplus military land and the freehold of most of the fort was acquired by a group of local military enthusiasts and together they formed the Fort Amherst and Lines Trust that continues to be responsible for the site (now known as Fort Amherst Heritage Trust). Assisted by the local authority and with some grant assistance from English Heritage, the Trust commenced investigation of the fort, recovery of its historic form and repair of its fabric. This process has been ongoing for many years. Most progress was made when Government training schemes for the unemployed could be used to supply the labour needed to conserve the fort. Since such schemes ended, progress has been much slower and dictated by the availability of grants from various sources.

The fully developed bid will be submitted to HLF for approval during summer 2016, and if successful in obtaining the rest of the grant (almost £2 million) practical implementation of the project should commence September 2016. This will follow on from the HLF project Command of the Oceans project currently under way at the Historic Dockyard Chatham.



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

New Waterloo Dispatch!

The re-enactment of the arrival of the Waterloo Dispatch at Canterbury

It was a lovely sunny Saturday on 20 June 2015, when Peter Homewood and I attended a full Canterbury Cathedral for a service commemorating the 200th anniversary of Wellington's victory over Napoleon at Waterloo. The Duke of Kent was Guest of Honour and read the second reading. The service was followed by a re-enactment of the dispatch arriving in Canterbury and Peter and I were fortunate to be in the front row – hence the lovely photos.

The official Dispatch was written by the Duke of Wellington on 19 June 1815 and was carried to London by Major the Honourable Henry Percy, serving with the 14th Light Dragoons, and posted as an extra aide de camp to Wellington. Wellington had eight aides in all but only Percy remained relatively unscathed from the battle and therefore able to deliver the Dispatch.



The post-chaise, with the French eagles protruding from the windows, makes its way to London.

He carried the Dispatch in a purple velvet case, and at about noon on 19 June he went by post-chaise from Brussels to Ostend accompanied by two captured French imperial eagles. At Ostend he boarded the Royal Navy sloop HMS *Peruvian*, and headed for Ramsgate. The wind dropped and in order to make progress, the Commanding Officer, Cmdr James White, and four sailors lowered the sloop's small boat and rowed the remaining 18 miles to Broadstairs, landing at 3 p.m. on 21 June. Percy and White found a post-chaise and reached London at 10 p.m., having gone via Canterbury, Faversham and Rochester. The eagles were protruding from the windows of the post-chaise, which was now being pursued by cheering crowds.

Collecting Lord Arbuthnot on route, they drove to Lord Harrowby's house in Grosvenor Square in London where the cabinet was having supper. Percy burst in exclaiming, "Victory! Victory! Bonaparte has been beaten." The rest, as they say, is history ...



The Dean of Canterbury, the Very Rev Robert Willis, with HRH The Duke of Kent, and the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, The Viscount De L'Isle MBE applauding the speech given by Major Henry Percy.

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.

The Children's War Efforts

We are coming back to that celebratory time of year; Christmas. However for the forces serving in the trenches on the Western Front in World War One there was little to celebrate. Attempts were made to cheer up the soldiers by sending them parcels usually made up of cigarettes and chocolate.

What is often overlooked is the part schoolchildren played in making life just a bit easier for the troops and also the refugees who escaped to England. At the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (MALSC) there are some colourful certificates awarded to young Rose Moyes for her help and support for the Overseas Club.



Rose Moyes' certificate; courtesy of MALSC.

The charity, called the Overseas Club, was set up to aid the lot of the British Empire's troops during the Great War. They decided to supply men on the front line with Christmas gifts to raise their spirits. In 1915, the charity sent out an appeal to schoolchildren, asking them to raise money so that gift boxes could be purchased and sent to servicemen. Sir Edward Ward, who was in charge of the Overseas Club, wrote to children, asking them to imagine 'how unhappy [the soldiers] must be...when they have to stand hour after hour, in the trenches, often deep in water, with shells bursting all around.' The money raised was used by the charity to fill the boxes with small, useful presents to make soldiers' lives more comfortable, such as socks, chocolates and cigarettes.¹

Often whole classes or schools would contribute their pocket money or a few pence towards this charity. Children who raised over a certain amount of money received a certificate praising their efforts. This certificate (pictured) shows two children passing presents to a soldier and a naval officer. On the bottom left is a seal of approval and the aims of the Overseas Club are written out, which include: 'to help one another' and to 'draw together in the bond of comradeship British people the world over.'

Rosalind Kathleen Moyes was born in Gillingham during July 1904. She attended Richmond Road National Girls School and was awarded her certificate by the school in 1915 for her contribution to the Christmas Day Gifts Collection on behalf of the Overseas Club.

Rose, as she was called by her friends, lived at 64 Baden Road, Gillingham and was the youngest child of the family. Her father and elder brothers were all employed in the dockyard and so were not called up for military service.

However hers were not the only charitable efforts recorded by schoolchildren for this period in the Medway Towns. The pupils of Troy Town Girls School in Rochester knitted various items to keep the soldiers warm between August 1914 and January 1915, including socks, mufflers, mittens and helmets.²

Hempstead schoolgirls were in the meantime busy sewing items for Belgian refugees.³ Entered by the head in the log book for 21 September 1914: 'The ordinary syllabus for needlework for the present is somewhat altered. The children will all make garments for distribution to the homeless Belgians or for the children of our own soldiers or sailors.' She reported on 16 December 1914: '80 garments have been made by the girls this term and sent off to the Belgian Refugees in London.'

This small village school went further and raised considerable amounts of money for the War Savings Association. In March 1917 the school had collected over a £100 and invested that in the purchase of War Savings Certificates. As a result of the massive amount raised the children were given a day's holiday for their efforts. They continued collecting throughout 1917 and 1918 raising funds in this way for the government.

Notes

1. <http://www.mylearning.org/christmas-gifts-for-ww1-troops>.
2. *Chatham News* 9/1/1915.
3. C/ES/153/3/1 Hempstead School log book.

Ralph Victor Bardoe of Gillingham: Commonwealth War Graves Recognition

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.

With Remembrance Day just gone, there was a timely reminder recently at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (MALSC) of the ongoing work in ensuring a lasting memorial to all those men and women who gave their lives in World War II. Ralph Victor Bardoe of Gillingham lost his life in 1941 but it was only through the research and perseverance of a customer at MALSC that his contribution has now been officially recognised.

Keen to discover how her ancestor died, Karen Rye contacted staff at the Archives. Having been told that he died on HMS *Dolphin*, it soon became clear that this could not have been the case as the ship was sunk by a mine in 1939. Instead, staff suspected that he had been stationed at the Royal Navy submarine base in Gosport, by 1941 also called HMS *Dolphin* and a shore establishment. An added complication was that Ralph Victor Bardoe's death would have been registered, but does not appear in the England and Wales Death Index. Fortunately MALSC possesses a copy of the GRO's Marine Deaths Index and found a reference number for Ralph Victor Bardoe. Now Karen could order a copy of his death certificate and hopefully find some clues to how he lost his life.

Meanwhile, staff at MALSC began searching the local newspapers for any references to Ralph's death. Due to wartime reporting restrictions, there was no mention of this, nor of any accident at Gosport. Karen continued the search through the papers, but also drew a blank. Staff discovered that the submarine base had suffered several serious bombing raids in 1941, but the dates didn't coincide with Ralph's death. Finally, Karen contacted the Royal Navy Submarine Museum at Gosport, but at first they could find no record of Ralph Victor Bardoe.

From the *London Gazette* of 20 May 1941, we discovered that Ralph was working as an electrical fitter for HM Dockyards, and that he was not in the Royal Navy. The death certificate confirmed that he had died on board an HMS ship (not named). It really seemed that the trail had gone cold. Undeterred, however, Karen continued her search. From the death certificate she knew the exact date of his death, so she searched for any Royal Navy losses on that date. From this she ascertained that it was likely he died on HMS *Union* or HMS *Umpire*.

Meanwhile, the archivist at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum had tracked down the Board of Enquiry report into the accident involving HMS *Umpire*. Buried in the detail were several references to a man named Bardoe, a dockyard electrical inspector. At last Karen had the full story of how Ralph Victor Bardoe lost his life in 1941. He was the only civilian on the Royal Navy U-class submarine, HMS *Umpire*. Built at Chatham, the submarine had only just been commissioned and was heading towards the Clyde for training and sea trials. As she made her way up the North Sea, with no lights and in shallow waters off Blakeney in Norfolk, the submarine was accidentally struck by a Royal Navy escort trawler from a passing convoy. Despite the sea being only 18 metres deep at that point, two officers and 22 men were lost, including Ralph Victor Bardoe.¹

For Karen, and for the staff at MALSC, it now seemed more important than ever that his sacrifice be recorded for future generations, and Karen carefully collated the evidence and submitted her request to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Following an initial rejection, in May 2015 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission contacted Karen and informed her that Ralph Victor Bardoe would be commemorated with an entry on their website, ensuring that, together with 1.7 million other men and women who died in the two world wars, he will never be forgotten. In addition, his name will be added to the Civilian War Dead Roll of Honour 1939-1945 at Westminster Abbey.

It remains only for Karen to make a very important journey to Westminster Abbey. Once Ralph Victor Bardoe's name is inscribed in the Roll of Honour, she will be able to request that the book is opened at his name when she visits.

The wreck of HMS *Umpire* is a protected site, and remains the grave of the men who perished.

If you would like help learning more about your ancestors, or you are interested in your local history, please contact Medway Archives & Local Studies Centre at malsc@medway.gov.uk and our website www.medway.gov.uk/malsc for opening hours)

Notes

1. Young, R & Armstrong, P, *Silent Warriors: Submarine Wrecks of the United Kingdom*, Tempus Publishing Ltd, 2006, p.151

Aspects of Huguenot Society.

A talk by Amy Adams, Huguenot Museum, Rochester

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 was with a mixture of delight and sadness that we welcomed Amy Adams to talk to FOMA members on 8 September, as Amy had recently announced she would be leaving the Huguenot Museum to become a teacher. Luckily for us, Amy remains a FOMA member and to make life even easier, her replacement is also called Amy - Amy Dimmock (see page 24).



Amy (centre) pictured with (left), FOMA Vice Chairman and Events Co-ordinator, Elaine Gardner and (right) FOMA Chairman, Tessa Towner:

Amy's talk began with the startling statement that one in six people in England are of Huguenot descent. This is far more likely in Kent, of course, as many refugees settled here, particularly in Canterbury and Faversham. The background to the Huguenot exodus from France has been given in earlier *Clock Towers*, thanks to the regular column Amy writes for us, however, more detailed accounts can be found in Issue 37 (February 2015).

The new Huguenot Museum in Rochester has on display several artefacts to show how the Huguenots had to practise their Protestantism in secret in France and their plight was not dissimilar to how Catholics were treated in England following the break with Rome. Many Huguenots escaped persecution to Holland and Switzerland, to America and Ireland, even to South Africa, where they became wine makers. But England was a popular destination and was reached by hiding in boats which the French would deliberately fumigate to flush out stowaways. The men who were caught were sent to work as galley slaves on ships, women were sent to Catholic monasteries and children were separated from their parents and sent to live with Catholic families. However, the risk associated with escape was worthwhile as England wanted the Huguenots and needed their skills in weaving and jewellery making. Some refugees only made it as far as the Channel Isles whilst others settled in Dover, then Canterbury and Faversham, London, Norwich, Rye, and then on to Devon and Cornwall to Barnstable and Bideford.

The largest numbers settled in London, but the second greatest concentration of Huguenots was in Canterbury. The first wave arrived in 1572 following the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in France, and Canterbury's population was further swelled two years later when the government moved a settlement of Huguenots from Sandwich: their presence in the seaside town was considered a risk to national security. It was in Canterbury that the Huguenots wove fine woollen cloth, an altogether different quality to that which the English were able to achieve, and for that reason the Huguenots were not seen to be in competition with local craftsmen. However, whilst theirs was perceived to be the most luxurious cloth, it was not long before silk was considered more desirable. In 1685 following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, an even greater number of Huguenot refugees poured into England and in London they swiftly gained fame for their silk weaving. Ironically this caused a decline in Canterbury and despite efforts to revive fine wool weaving, by 1800 there were only ten wool weaving businesses remaining. One of the most famous weavers in Canterbury was James Leman (born 1688) and it is his designs which the Huguenot Museum in Rochester has adopted as a motif.

The settlement in Faversham grew when Huguenots were 'head-hunted' to work in the gunpowder mills. The manufacture of gunpowder and fire arms was another skill at which they excelled. More information about this is available at the Fleur de Lis Museum in Faversham (see http://www.faversham.org/business/Visitor_Attractions/fleur_de_lis_museum.aspx).

Amy went on to talk about the Reverend Thomas Hervé who was born some time between 1648 and 1688. He had lived as a capuchin friar in la Rochelle in France and persecuted Huguenots. As a result of his reading confiscated protestant works he converted from Catholicism and then had to flee France. He arrived in London in about 1730 and was appointed tutor to the daughters of King George II. Hervé also established a Huguenot chapel in Hog Lane in London which was 'considered the mother-church of the French congregation at the west end of London.'¹ Hervé retired to Faversham but he was the first of many French ministers to come to London and were in huge demand by the British aristocracy as French teachers.

Amy explained how another ecclesiastical figure, William Delaune, arrived in England with his son, Gideon in about 1572. The ability the Huguenots had to integrate, succeed and prosper within English society is mirrored in Gideon's life. He was an apothecary and eventually served Anne of Denmark, the wife of King James I. His fortune arose from the development of a new type of medicine and he helped found the Society of Apothecaries. He purchased Sharsted Court for his son Abraham, one of 17 children, though many were stillborn; Gideon died aged 97.

Amy went on to talk about another well known Huguenot family, the Minets. Isaac Minet escaped France in 1686 and we are fortunate that he kept a diary, which has given researchers a useful insight into his experiences. There are many Minet artefacts and information kept at Dover Museum. Isaac's escape was similar to many refugees, by boat at night, the men going on ahead to establish themselves and the wives and children following later. Some merchant families deliberately stayed divided in order to benefit from having contacts on either side of the Channel. The Minets established a bank in England in 1690 and this soon expanded to London; by 1767 the business was a considerable concern. The Minets sold the bank to the Fector family and the business is today known as the Royal Bank of Scotland. Another Huguenot, John Houblon was the first Governor of the Bank of England. Indeed many so-called English institutions were set up by Huguenots, including the Courtauld Institute and Asprey's.

In Issue 37 of *The Clock Tower* (February 2015) we ran the following appeal:

Huguenot Mystery

Can you help solve this mystery about the Huguenot Minet family?

Hughes Minet lived in Dover and London and went into business with Peter Fector to create the bank Minet and Fector in the late 1700s. The bank was the forerunner of the National Provincial Bank and today's RBS, (Royal Bank of Scotland)

– see: <http://heritagearchives.rbs.com/companies/list/fector-and-co.html>.

The agreement between Minet and Fector was drawn up in 1767 in Rochester. The question is – why was it drawn up there?

Amy confirmed this mystery has still not been solved.

Huguenot families were also very interested in horticulture and weavers often incorporated plants into their designs. Many of those who fled arrived in England with the things most important to them: the Bible and bulbs. It has been suggested that they introduced hops to Kent, but they certainly introduced many vegetables which we incorrectly consider native to England, such as celery, carrots, sugar beet and Brussels sprouts.

In Maidstone a settlement was established in the 1500s. Worshippers practised at All Faith's Church which was given over to them and Huguenots established themselves in woollen cloth and papermaking in the area and particularly in Boughton Malherbe. There is also evidence of Huguenots in Tunbridge Wells and in Sevenoaks, but not in the Medway Towns – until the 1950s when La Providence moved to Rochester (see *The Clock Tower*, Issue 27, February 2015).

La Providence and the setting up of the Huguenot Museum has been well documented in earlier issues of *The Clock Tower*. It is the only Huguenot Museum in Britain and Amy explained how they are hoping to acquire many more artefacts and possibly even the holdings of The Huguenot Society in London. Further information about the museum can be found on the website at <http://huguenotmuseum.org/>. The website gives information on the museum's collections but only a small amount has been catalogued so far. The museum is well worth a visit, but anyone wishing to conduct research is advised to book an appointment first.

Notes

1. *The Huguenots*, Samuel Smiles, Cambridge University Press, 2015, p.344.

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!

Autumn has been a busy time at the Huguenot Museum as we welcomed our new Director, Emily Fuggle in October. We are currently planning our event programme for next year and are looking forward to the exciting times ahead! Vikki Hoggins, our Visitor Services Assistant, has been busy researching new stock in time for Christmas, so do stop by and pick up a decoration our two.

Our Extreme Stitching event on 10 October by Cas Homes was a huge sell-out success. Our Family History course is also now sold out for November, but don't worry as there will be more next year. On 21 November we have our Make a Silver Ring course with 'Made by Ore' and there are only a few tickets left!

In October we also had our first school bookings which we were very pleased with. This involved making hippo and elephant masks, exploring Huguenot suitcases and learning to weave. During October half term we were taking part in The Big Draw and getting messy making patterns and prints with plants. Our Children's Craft Club has also been going very well and on 5 December we will be getting into the Christmas spirit making découpage decorations; £4 per child.

The Saturday movie screenings with Rochester Film Society are continuing this autumn, and will be next year too. The next showing is *Ratatouille* on 14 November. Screenings are from 10:00am to 12:00 noon and are £3 per person. Bring your own food and drink and there's no need to worry about the noise! Afterwards children and adults are welcome to have a look around the galleries.

December also brings with it our Christmas Craft activities on 23 December. We will be making traditional Christmas decorations including pomanders. The sessions run at 10:30am, 12:30pm and 2:30pm at £4 per child. We are also getting involved with Dickens Festival on 5 December with some more Christmas craft activities, so don't miss out!

We have been continuing with our regular Thursday morning storytelling sessions for under 5s. There are refreshments (and biscuits) for the grown-ups and stories, colouring and toys for the children. Check our website (www.huguenotmuseum.org) to see which story we will be telling each Thursday.

The Huguenot Museum is open Wednesday to Saturday 10am to 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

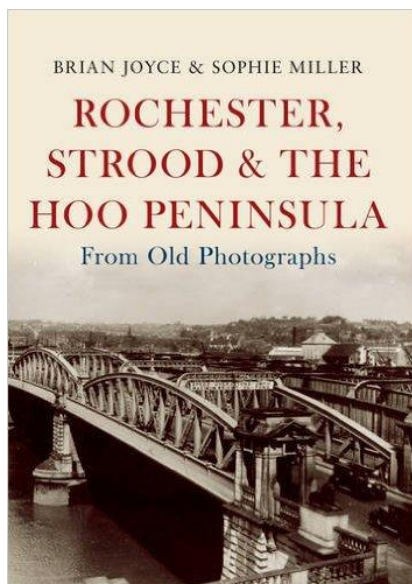
Books for Christmas

Steve Cross

Steve moved from Yorkshire to Chatham with the Royal Navy in 1977, and has lived there ever since. He was an engineer at BAe. Systems at Rochester Airport Works for 29 years, retiring in December 2008. He is now a volunteer at MALSC also a member of FOMA and the KFHS. He has been researching his own family history since the birth of his son in 1985 and now enjoys helping others research their own families with the aid of Ancestry. He also dabbles in the repair and improvement of digital or scanned photographs.



FOMA Members



Rochester, Strood & the Hoo Peninsula From Old Photographs by Brian Joyce and Sophie Miller.

“This wonderful book examines a diverse and fascinating area. Rochester, with its medieval castle and cathedral, Tudor buildings and Dickensian associations is a busy and vibrant tourist destination. Across the bridge from the ancient city, but far less well known is the town of Strood. Originally a medieval fishing village, which played host to Knights Templar travelling to the Crusades, it evolved over the centuries into a Victorian industrial and commercial hub. To the north of Strood, extending eastwards to the Thames Estuary is the Hoo Peninsula. Its marshes and isolated villages led the area to be denigrated by travellers who stumbled across it.”

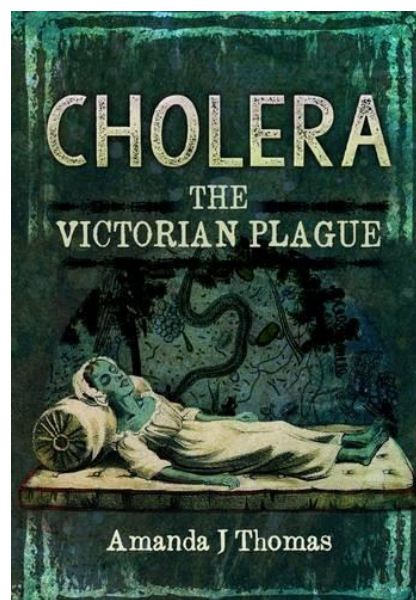
Available from all good bookshops and from Amberley Publishing:
<https://www.amberley-books.com/current-month/rochester-strood-the-hoo-peninsula-from-old-photographs.html>

Cholera: the Victorian Plague by Amanda J. Thomas.

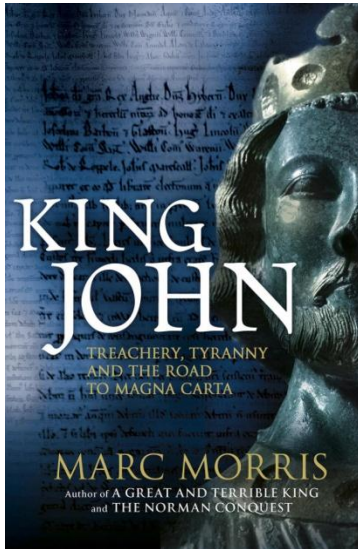
“Discover the story of the disease that devastated the Victorian population, and brought about major changes in sanitation. Drawing on the latest scientific research and a wealth of archival material, Amanda Thomas uses first-hand accounts, blending personal stories with an overview of the history of the disease and its devastating after-effects on British society. This fascinating history of a catastrophic disease uncovers forgotten stories from each of the major cholera outbreaks in 1831-3, 1848-9, 1853-4 and 1866. *The Clock Tower* Editor, Amanda Thomas reveals that Victorian theories about the disease were often closer to the truth than we might assume, among them the belief that cholera was spread by miasma, or foul air.”

Available from all good bookshops and from the Pen and Sword Books website:

<http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Cholera-Hardback/p/10951>



2015 Anniversaries



King John: Treachery, Tyranny and the Road to Magna Carta by Dr Marc Morris (see page 5).

“King John is familiar to everyone as the villain from the tales of Robin Hood — greedy, cowardly, despicable and cruel. But who was the man behind the legend? Was he truly a monster, or a capable ruler cursed by ill luck? In this book, bestselling historian Marc Morris draws on contemporary chronicles and the king's own letters to bring the real John vividly to life.”

Have a look at Bernard Cornwell's pages on Amazon:
([http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-](http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-)

[keywords=bernard%20cornwell&prefix=berna%2Caps](http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=bernard%20cornwell&prefix=berna%2Caps)) for his books, *Waterloo* and *Azincourt* and *The Last Kingdom* which has recently been adapted by the BBC.

Finally, the National Archives Bookshop has an entire section devoted to Christmas ideas:
<http://bookshop.nationalarchives.gov.uk/9/Gifts-and-humour/>



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year - and happy reading!

Archives Update

Alison Cable, Borough Archivist

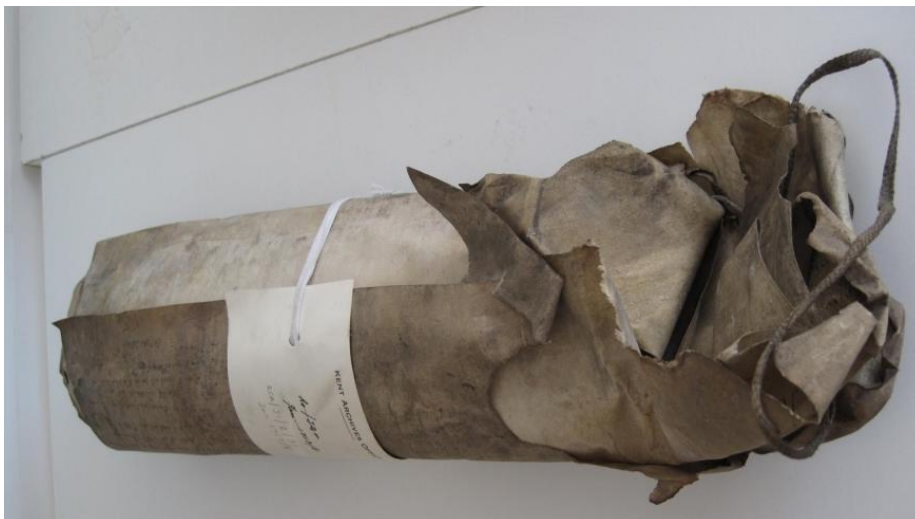


The latest news from the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Rochester City Archives Project: ongoing conservation work 2015

In 2013, we launched the new Rochester City Archives catalogue and exhibition, having already bade a fond farewell to our project archivist, Valerie Rouland (see *The Clock Tower*, Issue Number 25: February 2012). Since then, however, some additional work has been quietly continuing.

Residual Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funds remained for conservation purposes and I have been working with a local accredited paper conservator to see the completion of urgent work on the Rochester Sessions Rolls. These sessions records yield information about crimes and misdemeanours, jury lists, presentments, lists of mayors, oaths of allegiance, coroners' case, and sacrament certificates. They are a smaller localised equivalent of the county Quarter Sessions records.



One of the rolls prior to conservation.

Whilst most of these important records were in a decent condition, at least four were in such a poor condition that they could not be made available to researchers. Two of these rolls have recently been repaired by Julie Fitzgerald of Sevenoaks and have just been returned to MALSC to be reunited with the rest of the collection.

The rolls are made up of individual papers and parchments which would have been kept on a spike in the office of the clerk to the court and then threaded together when the Sessions ended. The file was then rolled for storage – hence 'Sessions' Rolls'. Such formats are very difficult for searchers to use due to the length and springiness of the parchment, and there is danger of the documents becoming damaged when they are handled.

In order to treat the rolls, Julie had to disassemble them, ensuring that the original order of the documents had been retained. The papers have also been de-acidified and any mould spores have been removed. Repairs of torn and worn papers have taken place and bespoke boxes have been made for the newly flattened items.



The flattened rolls

The two rolls date from June 1710 and June 1718 (we also have previously repaired rolls from 1641 and 1717) and are now in robust health and available for research. If you require any further information do drop me an email at: malisc@medway.gov.uk

Newly Catalogued Archive Collections Aug-Sep 2015

P85J	St Albans, Blue Bell Hill parish registers	1931 – 1998	Aug 2015
DE1252	Duppa Estates at Stoke and Hundred of Hoo: deeds and sales particulars, including Parsonage farm	1869 – 1903	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	Chapter School records	1921 – 2009	Jul 2015
C/ES/305D	St Peter's Primary School, Rochester	1891 – 1990	Sep 2015

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.

Saving Our Heritage

This special fortieth issue of *The Clock Tower* gives us an opportunity to remind ourselves why we are members of the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre. Apart from the support we give to the Archives, we also do a considerable amount of work raising the profile of Medway's heritage. The recent lecture series at Rochester's Guildhall to commemorate the Magna Carta and 2015 Siege of Rochester Castle is a good example of how we work with other organisations and also with Medway Council. We value the support of Simon Lace, Medway's Heritage Services Manager, who, as Tessa Towner mentioned in her Chairman's Report on page 3, has already proposed another lecture series in 2016 to commemorate the 950th anniversary of the 1066 Norman Conquest.

In October I attended the Kent Historic Buildings and Industrial Archaeology Conference organised by the Kent Archaeological Society (KAS). This was held at The Criterion, the old Victorian music hall and Heritage Centre in Blue Town on the Isle of Sheppey. We have given a lot of publicity to Jenny and Ian Hurkett who run the centre, thanks to our roving reporter Barry Cox (see *The Clock Tower* Issue 32: November 2013 and Issue 38, May 2015) and the centre is thriving. It is also now included in *News and Events* (see page ?).

At the end of the afternoon session of the KAS conference, Jenny took delegates on a guided tour of Blue Town. The Heritage Centre is situated on the High Street, a short stretch of road bordered on one side by a mixture of older buildings, and on the other by the high harbour wall. This was where Nelson's body was returned to the nation in a barrel of brandy after the battle of Trafalgar! Jenny led us up and down Blue Town's fascinating little streets with its numerous pubs and worker's dwellings. There is even a grand courthouse building and the whole place brims over with Medway's maritime history. Some of the larger houses within the dock area on Naval Terrace have now been refurbished, but the Dockyard Church caused all of us tremendous concern, such is its state of dilapidation.

Heritage champions like Jenny and Ian are doing a great job raising awareness of what is really going on in areas where there is little interest in local history, but it is up to us to support them and become Friends and volunteers (see <http://www.thecriterionbluetown.co.uk/>) So, my New Year's Resolution – which I hope all of you will also adopt – is to Save Our Heritage! We should all do our bit and only then will places like Blue Town become recognised once again as places to live in, visit and appreciate.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !

News and Events

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

8 March 2016, 7.30 pm,
Strood's Industrial Heritage,
A talk by Odette Buchanan.

12 April 2016, 7.30 pm,
FOMA Annual General Meeting (more information in the next issue of *The Clock Tower*)

Saturday, 30 April, 7.30 pm,
Quiz Night.
£5 for members and non-members, including interval ploughman's; tables of 6.
BOOKING REQUIRED (see below).

Booking for FOMA talks is no longer necessary! Until further notice all events are at Frindsbury Parish Hall, Church Green, ME2 4HY. 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.

Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Talks

16 December , 2.30 pm – 4.00 pm
Railways of Rochester
A talk by Bob Ratcliffe
This talk will take place at the Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester.

Exhibitions

19 November 2015 – 19 January 2016,
Railway exhibition,
By Bob Ratcliffe.

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.

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. For Satnav please use ME2 2AD.

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.

Further information can be obtained at: www.friendsofeastgatehouse.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.

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.

HUGUENOT MUSEUM

discover your story

Huguenot Museum Main Events

Make a silver ring with 'Made by Ore'

21 November 1.00pm – 4.00pm

£60

Ever fancied trying your hand at jewellery making? This class will guide you through the traditional silversmithing techniques needed to cut, shape and file your very own beautiful silver ring.

Family events: Christmas crafts

Feeling festive? Have a go at making traditional Christmas decorations, from pomanders to wreaths and tree decorations. There may even be carols and the odd mince pie at the museum. 6+years

23 December

One hour sessions at 10.30am, 12.30pm and 2.30pm

£4 per child

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

Huguenot Museum: Children's Clubs

The Saturday Club.

10.00am – 12.00pm; £4 per child or £30 per year.

Are you super crafty? Join the Saturday Club and have a go at amazing arts and crafts on the first Saturday of each month. 8+ years. Booking as above.

5 September	Batik
3 October	Simple samplers
7 November	Papier-mâché crests
5 December	Decoupage decorations

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

19 December Beauty & the Beast

Huguenot Museum: Story time

Bring your under 5's along every Thursday morning (10.00am – 11.00am) to have fun with props and games as we bring a different story to life each week. From Maisy to Elmer, little mouse and the hungry caterpillar. Toys and play mats available – and even tea for the grown-ups. 0-5 years. See our website (www.huguenotmuseum.org) for a full story list. £3.50 per child, adults free. No need to book, just turn up!

5, 12, 19 & 26 November
3, 10, & 17 December

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

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

First Sunday of September, October, November, December, 2015, February, March, April, 2016.

6th December – shrub plant

7th February – Bob Wade commemoration scrub clear

6th March Wild flower plant, 3rd April – litter pick & scrub clear.

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 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. **For all events please contact: Events Organiser: Chris Furminger (01634 320598) or cafurminger@blueyonder.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.

9th April 2015

Annual General Meeting

Doors open at 7:15 pm, meetings finish at 9:00 pm. Refreshments are available and visitors are very welcome. Admission: £1 for members, £3 for visitors. 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

Events

First World War Battlefield Tour Groups: January 2014 - November 2018

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

8th September – 20th December

Exhibition: Responses to the Archive

A collaboration between students from the University for the Creative Arts at Rochester and the Royal Engineers Museum, Library & Archive.

New permanent Waterloo Display

As part of our commemorations for Waterloo 200, the Museum opened a new cutting edge display which focuses on one of our star objects; the Waterloo Map. This artefact was used by the Duke of Wellington before Waterloo to inform his decision as to where to fight the battle. It still bears the Duke's pencil marks.

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

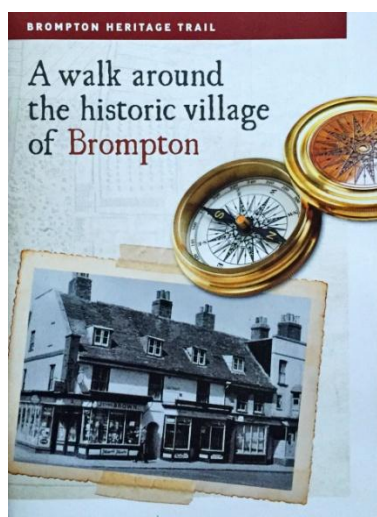
The Rochester Bridge Trust

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

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 on the second Friday of each month (September to July) with meeting starting at 7.30 pm.

Talks for 2015-16:

11 December – *Industry of Lower Medway*, Jim Presto

8 January 2016 – *My Father's Story in Bomber Command*, Mark Cooper

12 February – *Queen Victoria*, Anne Carter

12 March – *The Huguenots*, Staff of the Huguenot Museum, Rochester.

New members and visitors are always welcome. For further information, contact Ron Baker on 01634 854982 or email r.baker1234@btinternet.com



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 :

Christmas with the Crooner

Saturday 28 November, 7.30 pm.

Martin Farbrother returns with his talented vocals featuring timeless Christmas classics from the crooners and more. £10.00

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

Last Chance to Visit ! :

3-22 November 2015,
Monday to Saturday 9am to 8pm
Sundays 10am to 2pm.

FREE ENTRY

Blake Gallery,
Civic Centre,
Woodville Place,
Gravesend,
Kent DA12 1DD.

An art exhibition created by blind and partially sighted members of the Kent Association for the Blind Gravesend Art Group and Wendy Daws.

More details online at:

<https://woodville.seatlive.com/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScotent::loadArticle::permalink=woodville-blake-gallery>



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.

The copy deadline for Issue 41 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 25 January 2016, with publication on Wednesday 17 February 2016.

Publication date

The fourth Wednesday following the editorial deadline.

The Clock Tower is printed by Ray Maisey, Rabbit Hutch Printers, 106 Charles Drive, Cuxton, Kent, ME2 1DU; telephone: 01634 294655; fax: 01634 723510; email: Ray@Rabbithutchprinters.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, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. 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. Telephone 01634 892976; email: bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk

The Committee

President
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Chairman
Tessa Towner: 37 Ravenswood Avenue, Frindsbury, ME2 3BY, Kent.
picketywitch@blueyonder.co.uk

Vice Chairman and Events Co-ordinator
Elaine Gardner: 102 Valley View Road, Rochester, ME1 3NX, Kent.
emgardner@virginmedia.com

Treasurer
Josie Iles 141 Watling St, Strood, ME2 3JJ, Kent
josie_iles@live.co.uk

Secretary
Odette Buchanan: 72 Jersey Road, Rochester, ME2 3PE, Kent.
odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk

Membership Secretary
Betty Cole: 98 The Wharf, Dock Head Road, Chatham ME4 4ZS, Kent.
bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk

Members
Rob Flood: 16 Albert Road, Rochester, ME1 3DG, Kent.
rob@feetontheground.co.uk
Bob Ratcliffe: 12 King Edward Road, Rochester, ME1 1UB, Kent.
Kevin Russell: 11 St Catherine's Almshouses, Star Hill,
Rochester, ME1 2AA, Kent.
k.russell47@sky.com

The Clock Tower Editor and Publicist
Amanda Thomas: 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS, Hertfordshire.
amanda@ajthomas.com