

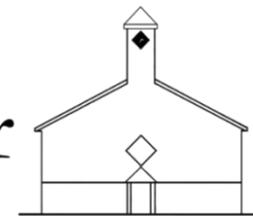
Guildhall Museum Stores Tour



During the Guildhall Museum stores tour in October (see page 47), FOMA's Sue Haydock took a moment to admire the replica costume created by Meredith Towne in 2014 for the commemorations of the centenary of the re-opening of Rochester Bridge. The bridge as we know it today was opened by Lady Darnley on 14 May 1914 wearing a suit similar to the one pictured.

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

The Clock Tower



Issue Number 41: February 2016
£2.00; free to members

The Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre
Excepted Charity registration number XR92894



In the period leading up to Christmas, FOMA hosted a number of lectures. Pictured is Chairman Tessa Towner (left) and Events Co-ordinator, Elaine Gardner with author Linda Parker who gave a fabulous talk on 10 November entitled, *Army Chaplains in World War One*. Inside Odette Buchanan reviews the final two talks in our lecture series on Magna Carta and the Siege of Rochester Castle.

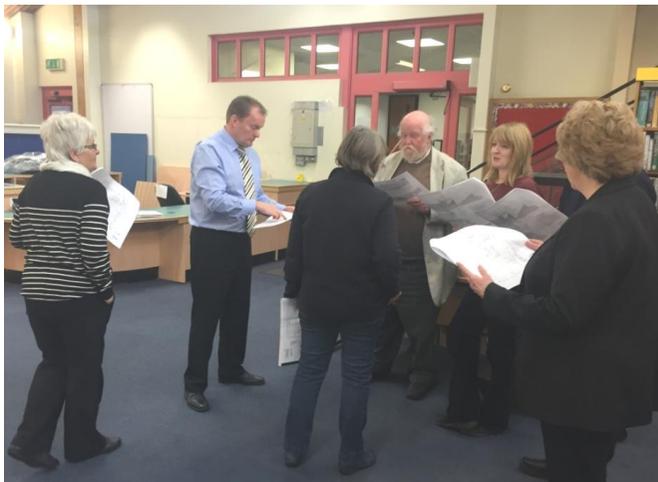
Also inside: Wainscott Primary School commemorates World War One with FOMA.

The New Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (MALSC)

The first FOMA Committee Meeting of 2016 was held at the old Strood Library building in Bryant Road, Strood, the site of the new Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, due to open in Spring 2017. Below are some photographs taken during the tour of the old library building; see Tessa Towner's report opposite for further details.



From left to right: Simon Lace, Medway's Heritage Services Manager, Betty Cole, Elaine Gardner, Alison Cable (Archivist), Kevin Russell, Tessa Towner (Chairman).



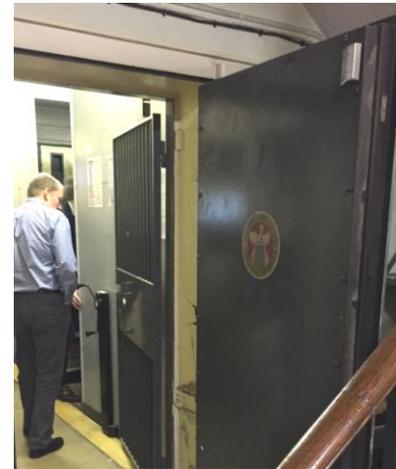
From left to right: Tessa Towner (Chairman), Simon Lace, (Medway's Heritage Services Manager), Elaine Gardner, Bob Ratcliffe, Alison Cable (Archivist), Betty Cole.

Photographs by Amanda Thomas.

Guildhall Museum Stores Tour

On Saturday 31 October 2015, the Friends of Guildhall Museums, which includes many FOMA members, held its AGM. This was followed by a tour of the museum stores by Simon Lace Medway's Heritage Services Manager. After Christmas members of Rochester's various heritage organisations gathered again at the Guildhall to hear plans for its on-going restoration and development. As reported by FOMA Chairman, Tessa Towner on page 3, plans are still in the early stages and so cannot yet be disseminated, but the consensus was extremely positive. Further information will be reported in future issues of *The Clock Tower*.

Right: looking out to Rochester Bridge in the top floor store room. In the foreground are FOMA's Sue Haydock and Alan Moss.



Above left: Simon Lace, Medway's Heritage Services Manager disappears into the basement stores – or is he looking for lost tour members?



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 Kendal. **See page 43 for details.**

The Committee

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Russell John Race, JP, DL (pictured)



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From the Chairman

Tessa Towner, Chairman.



A very belated Happy New year to you all!

The new year has started well for FOMA. On Tuesday 26 January we had our first Committee Meeting of 2016. This was held at the old Strood Library building in Bryant Road, Strood, the site of the new Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, due to open in Spring 2017. Illness prevented a full turnout, but we were delighted to welcome Archivist Alison Cable and Medway's Heritage Services Manager (and FOMA member) Simon Lace. Armed with builders' plans for the refurbishment, Simon took us on a tour of every part of the building and explained what would be happening in the forthcoming months. Amanda Thomas took some photographs which you can see on page 2. This was a fantastic opportunity for us to help fine tune the plans and to hear Alison's ideas and concerns. The new facility will include state of the art storage and equipment which will enhance the service provided by MALSC. It also means that FOMA will have more space for exhibitions, talks and other events. This is a very exciting time and the FOMA Committee is delighted to be included in the process; we are also grateful to all the FOMA members who expressed their views during the consultation process.

In November, Vice Chairman, Elaine Gardner and I visited Wainscott Primary School to see their wonderful World War One display and to talk to them about the war and our work at the Medway Archives. Elaine used to be a teacher but for me this was a new experience! I have never had to interact with so many school children of that age and I have to say I would have been at a loss as to how to cope with all these youngsters, but Elaine was fantastic! It was a great couple of days and we were made more than welcome by Headmaster Hugh Greenwood and his staff. You can read all about our visit in Elaine's article on page 6.

On 15 January 2016 several members of the FOMA Committee were invited by Simon Lace to attend a meeting at the Guildhall Museum regarding its future development of the Museum. Further information about the future of the museum and some more photographs taken by Amanda Thomas can be seen on pages 47 and 48. It is still early days and a lot of money will be needed for these changes but we are delighted that Simon Lace has consulted all of us at such an early stage.

That same week Medway Council also issued a press release regarding the future of Eastgate House. You may recall that in July Fairhurst Ward Abbots, the contractor refurbishing Eastgate House went out of business and since then the £2million Heritage Lottery Funded project to conserve Eastgate House has been on hold. We were delighted to hear that Medway Council has awarded the completion of the project to Buxton Building Contractors Limited which 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.' Eastgate House is due to re-open early in 2017.

The future for Medway's heritage is suddenly starting to look a lot brighter!

New FOMA Treasurer

We are delighted to welcome Josie Iles as the new FOMA Treasurer. Josie has already attended several FOMA meetings and events and is doing a fantastic job!

Josie has lived in Strood with her husband Steve for 30 years. A former Local Government Councillor, Josie represented the residents of Strood South and has also had the privilege and honour to represent Medway as its Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Josie says, "As a keen history buff, I was delighted to be invited to join FOMA and am enjoying being Treasurer and part of the hard working and committed team of Friends. I am very much looking forward to - and participating in - the forthcoming year's events and future projects."



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

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 42 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 25 April 2016, with publication on Wednesday 18 May 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, 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: bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk

*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/1j7lh77>

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.

Delivered by Hand

24 Nov 1015

A poem about MALSC.

At the archives building in Strood
The time can be misconstrued
It's not a quarter to two
But what can you do?
The hands appear to be glued.

By Chris Cornish.

The Clock Tower's 40th Issue

19 November 2015.

Dear Amanda and Elaine,
Our 40th is a real milestone and it's lovely to have been part of FOMA from the very beginning. I just wanted to say that I love the cover with the panoramic photo.
Well done and all the best,
Jean Skilling..

19 November 2015

Amanda,

Congratulations on 40 issues, I am amazed!
Best wishes,
Michael Baker.

Secretary's Report

Odette Buchanan



Happy New Year to you all and I hope a healthy and prosperous one, too!

Time just flies by – I have just finished sorting out all the stuff needed for the AGM so that the leaflet can be included with this edition of *The Clock Tower*. We do hope to see you there this year and please don't forget to bring the AGM leaflet with you - as well as your subs for 2016!

We were thrilled that all the hard work paid off in the autumn with the organisation of the Magna Carta/Siege of Rochester Lectures. All four lectures were a sell-out and it was super working once again with Heritage Services Manager, Simon Lace, the Guildhall Museum staff, and the Friends of Guildhall Museums. The costs involved were covered by funding from the Heritage Lottery Grant that Medway Council was awarded to celebrate the 800th anniversary. FOMA and the Friends of Guildhall Museums were able to share the income from the ticket sales and raffles and the outcome was £450.41 for each society. We are currently waiting to hear what MALSC would like us to purchase for them with the proceeds!

While I'm on the subject, we were all very impressed at the lectures by the professionalism, friendliness and politeness of the students and lecturers from the Mid-Kent College Leisure and Tourism Department. Each evening they were all smartly turned out and met and greeted guests with panache; they also excelled with their refreshment service. Simon Lace was so impressed by the Medway population's love of history lectures that he is now busy organising a series of talks to commemorate the 950th anniversary of 1066 - watch this space!

We, your committee, are also being kept in the loop regarding the progress of the bigger and better Medway Archives. You can read more about this in Tessa Towner's report on page 3 and some photographs of the meeting at Bryant Road, Strood (which I was sadly unable to attend) are on page 2. Work progresses on schedule and we are all looking forward to the grand opening.

The next FOMA event is our March talk – yours truly enlightening you on Strood's Industrial Heritage; see *News and Events* on page 33 for details. I look forward to seeing as many as possible of you on Tuesday, 8 March at the usual venue of Frindsbury Parish Hall - 7.00 for 7.30 pm.

Roll on spring!

World War One at Wainscott Primary School

Elaine Gardner, FOMA Vice Chairman and Events Co-ordinator



FOMA's World War One exhibition for 2015 was nearing the end of its display at MALSC when Tessa Towner phoned to say that she had had a request from Wainscott Primary School to see whether we could be any help with their plans for remembrance week in November. In particular, they were hoping to have access to items from WW1 to add to their displays, and for names of Wainscott WW1 casualties for students to research.

Tessa had no problem providing names of the casualties from FOMA's online De Caville index, and she knew that I had a number of artefacts and information about the Strood casualty Ernest Franks in my possession. So, would I like to get involved? She arranged that we would go into the school to meet the Head teacher, Hugh Greenwood, and find out how we could help.

At the start of November we duly arrived to meet a very enthusiastic, energetic head who showed us around the school and shared his ambitious plans for Remembrance Week. This included a large exhibition in the school hall showcasing all the work each class had produced, as well as whatever artefacts he could acquire. Hugh also showed us the early post-box (pictured) he had acquired next to the 'Letters Home from the Front' display; there was even a trench constructed from pallets and sand bags! We



agreed that we would bring in a selection of the display we had just taken down at MALSC, featuring some of the key 1915 battles and the men who had died in them. I also offered to give my talk relating to the research I had conducted on Ernest Franks and the various documents and medals of his that I still have. I said I could adapt the talk to share how I had done my research and some of the key things I'd found about his life at the front in WW1.

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.



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 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.

Talks

12 March – *The Huguenots*, Staff of the Huguenot Museum, Rochester.
8 April, Memories of Events in the Medway Towns.
13 May, AGM and DVD.
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



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>



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

We arrived at 9.30 am on 10 November, having collected our display box from MALSC, to find the hall at Wainscott a hive of activity, including a lady building and painting a cardboard wall for the post-box. Hugh was filling sandbags! We decided on our material, filled our four display boards and agreed the time we would arrive the next morning. I was given a timetable of the classes we would be visiting, all named after flowers, so little indication of age. I taught secondary students for the whole of my career and the talk I had prepared was been aimed at Years 8 and 9 students, so I knew at that point I would probably have to adjust it a bit.

When we arrived the following morning the school hall looked fantastic and Tessa and I spent some time taking photos before we moved on to talk to the individual classes. The work produced by each class was imaginative and fascinating, whether it was research on an individual, or a set of letters home, or poetry produced by them.

The first talk was to Year 6 who were a very responsive group and the talk went well, with the students passing the various items around, and asking questions on what I had been saying as well as telling us what they had found. Talking to Years 1 and 2 was a whole new experience! They all gathered at the front of the classroom sitting on the floor in front of the (much lower) whiteboard. The first task was to make sure I didn't tread on one of them! It was clear that a very different approach was needed here as they could be very spontaneous with their comments and questions – a mention by me that Ernest was sent to France produced, "We went to France for our holiday!" Then, "We didn't, we went to Devon," and so on. However they were still very enthusiastic and keen to look at, and hold, the medals and other items I had brought; Tessa and I both enjoyed the time we spent with the children.



Elaine Gardner talking to young students at Wainscott Primary School about World War One.

We also gathered with the whole school for their assembly in the hall and joined one of the classes for the two minute silence and the BBC broadcast of events at London's Cenotaph. Tessa then went back to the school later in the day as the displays were then open to parents.

We both felt that we had had a great time, with very enthusiastic and well behaved students and we are hoping that the school will continue their links with MALSC and FOMA when they are studying other history topics. We look forward to it!



World War One displays by the students of Wainscott Primary School.



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

7 April

The Heritage Infrastructure of Chatham Maritime, A talk by Geoffrey Austen, Engineer to the Chatham Maritime Trust; Ward Room, University of Greenwich, Chatham; 6 p.m. for 6.30 p.m.

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.

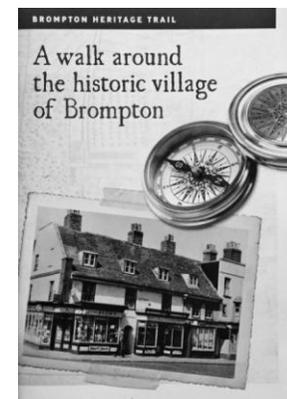
Brompton History Research Group

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.

family fun activities from castle building to tank construction to celebrate 300 years of the RE's history.

Tuesday 29 March - Castle Construction.

Wednesday 30 March, Waterloo Drums.

Thursday 31 March, Shako Hat.

Friday 1 April, Camera Obscura.

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.

3 March.

The Life and Career of Sir William Cubitt, a talk by Sue Threader, Bridge Clerk (Chief Executive), Rochester Bridge Trust.

22 March 2016

The history of bridge design and construction, a talk by Sue Threader; University of Greenwich.

5 May 2016

Engineering Icons – are bridges more than just functional structures? A talk by Phil Tindall; University of Greenwich.

23 June.

National Women in Engineering Day – How to Build a Bridge

An event for people considering a career in civil engineering or anyone with a general interest in bridges

6 October.

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

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 Parfekt) 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.

Dr. Jeremy Clarke: *Building Rochester Castle*, 22 October 2015

Dr. Clarke is the Education Officer of the Guildhall Museum. He told us that he had been captivated by Rochester Castle when he visited it many years ago and this was the main reason he applied for the job with Medway Council. It would enable him to study the castle in detail, while at the same time enlighten visitors with his educational tours of it. Dr. Clarke is constantly asking himself such questions as, 'What's it made of?' 'Why was it made?' 'Why all the steps and where did they used to lead to?' He hoped we all realised that the square tower (the highest in England) was NOT the castle, it is rather the keep *within* the castle.

Rochester was one of the first castles William I had built after he conquered England in 1066 because of its immense strategic importance: This is the first place upstream the Medway can be easily crossed and it is the gateway to the rest of England from the Channel ports. When William had *Doomsday Book* compiled in 1086 it was already there, and the castle has been added to over the centuries. Bishop Gundulf (the Builder Bishop) rebuilt the castle walls in stone in the 1080s and William de Corbeil built the keep in 1127. De Corbeil also added buildings around the curtain walls of the bailey, which have now gone; we just have the clues of post holes and arches and can only conjecture what they were a part of. In the fourteenth century the southeast tower of the keep was rebuilt as well as a bastion overlooking the Medway. Traces of this latter building with its steps leading to the bridge can be seen where the Council constructed a stepped entrance from the promenade to the pleasure gardens within in the bailey when they acquired the castle in the 1870s.



Dr. Jeremy Clarke during his talk.

Dr. Clarke has found a wealth of primary sources from which to learn much about the Norman castle-building techniques. He cited the Bayeux Tapestry as an example. This illustrates the construction of a motte and bailey structure made from a strata of stones and earth upon which to put the castle. Pieces of wall can be seen in St. Margaret's Mews on Boley Hill which Dr. Clarke thinks may have been part of either the original double bailey structure *or* part of the Henry III rebuild. We know Henry put in the south gate (now gone) to join the wall to the castle keep. Moreover, Heddington Castle in Essex was

inspired by Rochester Castle and this has a double earth work for the motte.

We know the castle is constructed from Kentish rag stone. With the transportation of stone difficult and expensive, a major operation involving thousands of cart loads, a quarry would need to be as close as possible to the castle. Rag stone was easily quarried and plentiful around Maidstone and here there is evidence of Roman activity. Stones would have been dressed at the quarry and then probably barged along the Medway as far as possible to the castle. However, Medieval tools made dressing rag stone difficult so softer Caen stone was imported from Normandy to act as a visual demarcation of areas, to trim arrow slits and windows and to decorate the arches of doors. The quarry at Caen would have had specific orders for particular amounts of each shape required. Being softer these stones are now crumbling, whereas the rag stone is still firmly in place. During the thirteenth century rebuild rag stone was also imported from Surrey. Tools had improved and galleries of tunnels were quarried leaving pillars of stone to support them. In the rebuild can be seen a pattern of regular stones supporting each other using the same technique as for dry stone walls today.

The fourteenth century walls and bailey buildings used stone from quarries near Maidstone. They are skew ashlar cut at an angle and the accounts of the pipe rolls list transport costs as well as costs for dressing the stones at the quarry: Philip was paid 6/- a ton for dressing and Will paid 14d per ton to transport materials from Reigate to the castle. The mortar between the stones has mostly been covered by pollution, though some was replaced in the 1960s. Medieval mortar was made by burning chalk to create quicklime which was then slaked by adding water. Once this was put between the stones, the mortar hardened in the air. Course rubble would be assembled like a jig saw and Dr. Clarke showed us some pictures of stained glass from various churches depicting the building of castles. In these it was easy to identify the various craftsmen, labourers and master masons by the tools they were holding and clothes they wore. The labourers were all bare-footed with no stockings.

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.

10 March 2016.

Ordnance Survey, Ancient and Modern, a talk by Colin Brown.

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

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

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

21 January – 17 April, Exhibition: *The Great Lines*.

Immerse yourself in this exhibition by local artist Chris Norman, which aims to highlight the beauty that can be found in the heart of urban Medway.

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

This Easter marks the 300th anniversary of the Corps of Royal Engineers. Join us for

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 5th and 10th 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

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.

6 March Wild flower plant, 3 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!

Dr. Clarke then commented upon the vast amount of wood needed in the building of a castle – not only for the carpentry but also for fires to make the lime, work the blacksmiths' forges, etc. One medieval fire could use a square kilometre of forest and the forests of the south east of England were denuded for construction work. Blacksmiths' forges became more powerful and bellows more efficient with the passing of the centuries. Masons and master masons would travel around with their measuring rods and drawings, but most craftsmen and labourers would be sourced locally and of course the work was seasonal as it is impossible to dress stone when the weather is frosty.

The shape of Rochester Castle is interesting and it had several functions. It was a military stronghold with barracks and regional headquarters, the administrative centre for the area, and domestic living quarters for the lord and his family. The structure also had a great psychological significance as the dominant building guarding the strategic city of Rochester.

The design of the interior is very clever, too. Heddingham Castle in Essex is a small copy of the original, defensive interior design of Rochester – it was built in 1140, 13 years after Rochester. This had a top floor added in the fifteenth century with a steeply pitched screen mimicking Rochester without the trouble and expense of roofing it. Heddingham had no living space for the owner-builder, its purpose was to awe people. This compromised its military use because the spiral staircase has some straight runs. Spiral staircases were generally built with the centre and narrowest part to the left so that descending defenders had room to use their swords in their right hands thus putting any attackers at a disadvantage. Further proof that Heddingham was a 'show-off' castle was that it had no living quarters for a garrison, no chapel, no chambers, no well, and no arrow slits – it is all show with no substance, except that it does have the psychological impact of its height. William de Corbeil brought this concept of intimidation through height from France where heretofore intimidation had been achieved by the length of encircling walls. The division of space was to impress visitors and had no military function.

At Rochester Castle the great hall was lost in the 1215 siege. Money was spent on rebuilding the bailey buildings, repairing the curtain walls and the king's chamber. It had three chapels – one in the keep and two in the bailey - but there was no door into the one by the main bedroom. This had to be accessed by climbing under the portcullis winding gear which shows the chapel had a dual purpose of worship and command of the entrance in times of siege.

After the wrecking of the castle in the 1264 siege, Edward III was mostly interested in new structures; he wanted a convenient garrison to guard the bridge. The bastion overlooking the bridge was built to barrack the soldiers and maintain a manned look-out. With the increased use of cannon and gun fire and a more peaceful rule of law, the castle as a defensive structure was eventually obsolete. It was still lived in as a secular administrative centre with the continued use of the Cathedral for religious administration.

Following questions at the end of the lecture we learnt that there have not been extensive geophysical surveys of the castle foundations, and these would certainly answer some of the questions which still today remain unanswered about how the castle was built and its various stages of construction. In addition, much of the decorative stone was appropriated by Watts to build Upnor Castle and also locals for domestic buildings. Dr. Clarke also surmised that the well was divined once the site was established and it had not been not chosen because a well was there already.

Mr. Richard Dunn, BA Hons., MPhil. Cantab., Director Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive:

Warfare By Design: Fortify, Hold, Siege & Fight, 12 November 2015.

Mr. Dunn introduced himself by telling us he had a keen personal interest in the 1215 siege of Rochester Castle and that through research it was now possible to name around half of the 800 knights and soldiers involved in the siege. He continued by saying that to understand the skill, intricacies and logistics of Medieval warfare in general, and the siege in particular, one must go back in prehistoric times. Defence against invaders and victory were not accidental – triumph went to cool-headed planners who had taken time to design and build sustainable defences in appropriate locations.



Richard Dunn during his talk.

From the earliest ruins found in places such as Malta and research on Egyptian, Greek and Roman structures, defence from an enemy was usually linear; that is an encircling wall manned by enough soldiers to warn of approaching danger. This could then be augmented by a fully armed army in times of attack. If one was to engage in open warfare the battlefield must be chosen carefully to best suit the equipment and men at one's disposal. For example, a broad field with wooded areas or rivers on the perimeter to facilitate the frontal attack of horse and foot soldiers to inhibit the enemy's escape.

The linear defences and fortifications designed by the Romans included forts that were accurately measured distances apart. Strategic, highly engineered stone roads facilitated the movement of foot soldiers marching in hobnailed sandals but inhibited bare-foot enemies. Training, discipline and hierarchical command were essential to hold pivotal ground. The Roman and Saxon shoreline defences were a good example of this horizontality and the calculated marching distances from fort to fort were carefully measured to be a day's march away, as was the reason for bridging the Medway at Rochester: Not only was this the first place upstream easily crossed, but it was also a day's march away from the port of Reculver. Roman city walls marked out the boundary of the city and also provided linear defence. When building a defence wall or fort Roman engineers would dig out staged terraces that would inhibit attackers and make them easy targets for archers manning the walls.

HUGUENOT MUSEUM

discover your story

Huguenot Museum Main Events

- 12 March, 10:00-1:00pm. Silver Clay Pendant; £60.
- 16 April, 2:30-4:00pm. Tracing Your Huguenot Ancestors. Dr. Kathy Chater; £10.
- 6 May, 1:30-4:30pm. Family History Course, Celia Heritage; £20.
- 14 May, 5:00-8:00pm. Museums At Night: discover the Museum after hours and join Rochester Film Society for a screening of *Suite Française*; £7.50/£5.
- 21 May, 2:30-4:00pm. The Art of Dress, a talk by Lee Ault; £10.
- 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**.
- 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

- 18 and 19 February. Hanging Pockets.
Come along for February half term and make your own 17th century inspired pocket to hide your secret keepsakes. £4 per child.
- 31 March. 1, 7 and 8 April. 10:30, 12:30 and 2:30pm. Fabergé Eggs.
The famous Fabergé family were Huguenot descendants, so join us this Easter to make your own Huguenot inspired Fabergé egg; £4 per child.
- 2 and 3 June 10:30, 12:30 and 2:30pm. Craftv 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.

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| 5 March | Fabric flowers |
| 2 April | Paint a pot and seed planting |
| 7 May | Clay |
| 4 June | Printing |

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 Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress of Medway

Cllr. Steve Iles & Mrs Josie Iles,
have great pleasure in inviting you to a

GRAND FUN QUIZ

at

Rochester's Grand Corn Exchange,
Friday 4 March 2016
7 for 7.30pm sharp
Tables of six.

On your own? We will pair you up
TICKETS £10.00 PER PERSON
(including a Classic Ploughman's Supper)

All proceeds from the evening will go to the Mayor of Medway's Charities

If you would like to join us then please contact: The Mayor's PA, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham. ME4 4TR. Please state number of tickets required, quoting ref. X4231 B7500 080748 or if paying by BACS; cheques made payable to 'Mayor of Medway's Charities'. Please also give name, organisation (where appropriate), address, email and telephone number. Joining instructions will be sent nearer the time.

The Saxon King Alfred adopted this same system when building defences to counter Viking attacks after the withdrawal of the Romans from Britain. He operated troop levies from his thanes of four men for every rod (pole or perch) along the highway to be protected. This system beat back many of the Viking raids of AD 884.

With the coming of the Normans this model changed. Linear defence was abandoned in favour of their Viking cousins' system of over-awing the enemy with high structures that commanded panoramic views over the land to be protected. Also, the feudal system was adapted by more centralised government control, not only of taxation and currency but also laws and an expanded troop levy to sustain a small permanent well-trained army. There were also fines (scutage) if the lord did not supply his required allocation of soldiers in times of attack. The Normans also introduced the horses into warfare and this, coupled with flexible archery (the use of both cross bows and long bows) proved very effective. It was not until the fifteenth century that cannon and guns were employed.

Rochester is a good example of a fortified city with its cathedral, castle and walls. Norman castles were originally motte and bailey structures either built on an existing high hill or erected on a man-made mound; a surrounding moat provided further defence. These earthwork castles varied according to local materials but would have been constructed mostly of wood. They would include a look-out tower of up to 100 metres high and water, not just for domestic use but also for fighting. Later stone was introduced and with it the use of colour – such as the White Tower at the Tower of London and elsewhere stone coloured red. Other ways of making bold statements and creating impressive status symbols would be the careful use of local materials – for example flint which would sparkle in the sunlight. The shape and complexity of entrances were also important. Of course many castles used existing structures and enhanced them. Their strategic design was all important and Mr. Dunn showed us diagrams marking cross-bow and long-bow arrow trajectories from Rochester Castle. These demonstrated how carefully the castle had been sited as the bridge was well within firing distance which would inhibit any attempt to cross from the Strood side. Strategically it was crucial to have a view of a ten to twelve mile radius to control the road network.

Although we are shocked today at the Medieval and indeed Civil War use of churches and cathedrals as billets for horses and soldiers, from contemporary records it is obvious that they were built intentionally as places for use in warfare. Their tall towers commanded views of the surrounding countryside, bells were 'air-raid sirens' and the internal design, now lost, was such that horses and other animals could be kept within employing dividing screens and protecting altar barriers.

At Rochester the first stone castle built by Gundulf was very basic and it is thought that there may well have been a counter castle in Boley Hill on the ten to twenty feet high ridge. This would have inhibited flight paths of attackers' arrows from the area around St. Margaret's Church. Although Gundulf's castle was underwhelming, records show that there were fees of 69 horses, armourers, carpenters, stone-masons and ancillary workers as well as five or six knights per month. The estate was to generate a convoy of knights plus double their number of archers, etc. As a good example of a small garrison, it used height to counter the lack of soldiers. A good example, unfortunately destroyed by the Germans in the First World War, was a castle in France manned by 1,000 men. It was 215 feet high and 250 feet to its pinnacle: a monumental structure.

By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there were many different designs of castles. Mr. Dunn showed us examples of concentric patterns for these that also were designed to accommodate the 2,000 to 3,000 inhabitants of the average Medieval city in times of siege. The outer walls would have carefully measured gaps guarded by archers, the gaps too small to be entered by many people at the same time.

The itinerate master masons also designed great cathedrals and they were fantastic draughtsmen. Master carpenters were very important too, well-versed in internal structural details especially the design of roofs. There are very few records extant because each master mason had his own, carefully guarded secret plans.

Rochester castle is a superb example of an impenetrable structure. Apart from the field of fire mentioned above, the intricacies of the only entrance were formidable. The approach twists so that the visitor cannot hold a shield in front of him, above the doorway archery slits allowed the archers to fire outwards, and there was no room for the enemy to establish a battering ram. It only needed one guard, as the entrance had room for only one person at a time and stood on a timber floor which probably had a trap-door. This was not only for heaving heavy equipment up from the basement but also to despatch unwanted guests into it. There was a portcullis and the winding gear only needed two men to guard that. The rising levels of stone from the deeply buried foundations inhibited the enemy too but none of this clever donjon (or inner keep) defence structure was visible from outside – it was a hidden pit to catch the enemy.

The interior of the castle was cleverly designed to withstand not only attack but also siege conditions. As discussed above, one of the chapels could only be approached by climbing through the portcullis winding gear. It was on the first floor with a good view of the entrance and probably had stout wooden shutters with arrow slits. This was good defensive design because it could be used as a look-out night and day. The shutters would have inhibited the enemy from taking pot-shots at anyone within, while the occupants could go about their business by candle light unobserved. Attacking armies were well aware of these designs and professional soldiers never forced entry – it was much more effective to mine under the walls. Further defensive design is seen in the right-handed spiral staircases in the north and south walls and the cross structure of state chambers with beams buried in the walls with a two-way lock in each. The windows on the first floor were too small to enter and too high to be observed outside, they were shuttered and designed to be used by archers.

The state rooms faced the river and windows and corridors were well protected from the weather with shutters. Warmth was essential to aid bowmen in handling their arrows. The roof was a covered board walk and this is why the turrets are very tall – it gave a safe working space that was windowless. There would have been a lead or shingle roof to preserve the interior and keep the stairs dry. 'Foot-log holes' prove their existence.

In times of siege the castle was well served with seven fires and a well. Rainwater was kept for use and the run-off from the roof would wash away sewage. There is a very deep donjon plinth below ground to keep it stable. De Corbeil's tower gave controlled firing lines to the bridge and the defenders were masters of all they surveyed. There was no siege tower because it could not have been tall enough to overlook St. Margaret's rise. Although besieging archers could fire from there, the trajectory of the arrows would send them over the castle.

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.

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.

Wednesday, 9 March, 7.30pm

Discovery and Innovation in the Stuart Period,

a talk by local historian, David Carder.

A time of religious and political turmoil, the English Civil War, restoration of the monarchy and the Great Fire of London. David Carder reveals what life was like and the developments that led to the Industrial Revolution.

Rochester Library, Community Hub Rochester.

Friends of Eastgate House members £3 Non-members £5; **pay on the door.**

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.

Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Exhibitions

Methodist Meeting Places

21 January— 29 March 2016

A look at the chapels, churches and meeting houses in our towns and villages.

Mapping Medway

31 March — 10 May 2016

See the types of maps held at the Studies Centre together with information on their range of coverage in terms of date and area. See how your town has changed.

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

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.

When King John besieged the castle in 1215 he arrived from three sides: The archers in the castle fired at the bridge which harried the soldiers crossing and left the rear unprotected. Then a sheaf of arrows from the bailey floored many more soldiers and their bodies inhibited the advance of John's men. This action probably entailed about 50 cross-bow archers. The successful breaking of the siege was probably caused by bad planning on the part of the barons for they had not allowed enough provisions and ammunition to hold out longer than the six weeks. The water was also polluted and many knights and archers succumbed to dysentery; those who were left were reduced to eating their very expensive war horses or starve.

After the first set-back, John took the bridge with a fire ship on the second attempt. Two thousand more troops arrived from the east and defenceless south. As previously mentioned, John stabled his men and horses in the cathedral, as was the custom, whilst the defenders held the donjon. The cathedral and castle were within cross-bow firing range for each side and it looked as if the siege would only be broken by slow starvation with the onset of winter. The defenders would have to be alert day and night, soldiers would have worked in shifts to attend to repairs and sight engineers would be needed to achieve accuracy of fire. But then John decided to mine the south-east tower. His sappers could work unhindered out of fire range from the defenders whilst they had to keep their heads down to avoid constant bombardment from the Cathedral. Both sides had expert gunners but the cathedral was at maximum range and just out of archery range.

It took time to dig out the tunnel and the sappers worked at night. There was cover for them to approach the wall to be mined. The noise would be audible to the defenders but they would be helpless to stop it in case the basement of the keep collapsed. The mine tunnel would probably have had chimney holes and eventually burning pig fat did its job and some of the tower collapsed. The collapse may have been exacerbated by the tower's design as the windows had been built one above the another. However about three-quarters of the wall stood firm and half of the donjon was still habitable. Ruins are harder to take.

The fundamental design of Rochester Castle was good enough to warrant repairs. The south-east tower was rebuilt curved with a thick redoubt surrounding it so that it was more impregnable than before. It became obsolete with the arrival of gunpowder and cannons and Queenborough Castle (now gone) on the Isle of Sheppey was designed for the use of the first cannons.

Castles were part of an overall defence strategy that took account of pre-determined battle fields, carefully balancing domestic and area administration along with barracks for a small permanent force strong enough to withstand the enemy until relief arrived.

After Mr. Dunn completed his lecture, answers to questions from the audience informed us that, yes, King John was there at the siege. He was a good administrator but did not possess many social skills. It is not known if there are any remains of the tunnel or the original tower today. There was so much debris and rubble that fell it was likely used for rebuilding. The tunnel could have started as far away from the castle as the present site of King's School and it had taken seven weeks to dig.

Mr. Dunn was thanked for his amazingly informative lecture on aspects of medieval warfare and Rochester Castle's part in it.

Keeping up with the Victorians

Alison Thomas
Archive and Local Studies Assistant, The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre



After completing a degree in medieval and modern history at the University of Birmingham, Alison Thomas trained as a teacher and worked in primary education for several years. Whilst bringing up her family she had various part time jobs within education ranging from playgroup assistant to special needs teacher. Alison left work to become a full time carer for four years, and joined MALSC as Archive and Local Studies Assistant at the end of February 2010.

Local Businesses through the Advertising of the Day

J L Lyons

Victorian Music

John Oxenford, writing in 1859, claimed that ‘The Little Music’ had taken over drawing room entertainment to the exclusion of almost everything else. Gone were the ‘round-game table with its chattering, its laughter’ and in its place, amateur music, especially the piano and voice, reigned supreme. Moreover, he claimed that the piano was so dominant that ‘The Little Music’ could be divided into vocal and instrumental – the former executed by the voice *with* the piano, the latter by the piano without the voice!¹ Although Oxenford’s writing was undoubtedly satirical it had a strong element of truth. The historian Asa Briggs says that ‘the piano sold in increasing quantities in mid and late Victorian England - in 1890 more than twice as many were being produced in England than in 1850.’ One contemporary writer is quoted as claiming that the piano ‘makes a girl sit upright and pay attention to detail’ in the same way in which Latin grammar strengthened a boy’s memory. The same writer is quoted as saying, ‘a good play on the piano has not infrequently taken the place of a good cry upstairs!’²

J L Lyons and his Pianoforte Warehouse

It appears that the residents of the Medway Towns were not slow to follow this fashion. The local newspapers of the 1880s and 1890s are littered with advertisements for pianos. One such contributor was J L Lyons who advertised regularly in the local newspapers from 1881 to 1891. One advert from 1890 asked, ‘Who has not heard of the unequalled fame of J L Lyons’ Pianofortes?’ The advertisement shown is from the *Chatham News* of March 1891. As you can see, Lyons stocked Brinsmead pianos. This well-known manufacturer of high quality instruments was established in 1836 and continued for nearly 100 years, producing in its heyday nearly 2,000 pianos a year.³ But Lyons was also selling second hand pianos – perhaps an indication of how desirable the piano had become to the drawing rooms of the less well off - as well as those of the very rich.

Originally an upholsterer, John Lionel Lyons had premises at 180 High Street Chatham. Some readers may recollect the building which was, until recently, occupied by Hinds

News and Events

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Talks

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; business will be followed by light refreshments.
Details in the special flyer included with this issue - **PLEASE BRING IT WITH YOU.**

Saturday 30 April, 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!

14 June, 7.30 pm,
The Medway Hulkes,
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.

Other milestones included the launch of the FOMA collection in 2010; the Committee is always on the look-out for documents to purchase and add to this unique resource held at MALSC. In August 2014 we announced the launch of the De Caville index on the FOMA website which continues to be an invaluable online resource for historians researching the history of World War One in the Medway Towns. 2014 also saw the start of FOMA's on-going work on the First World War and a closer association with Henk van der Linden and the Live Bait Squadron Society. Tessa Towner and I travelled to Holland that autumn to attend a series of events commemorating the deaths of the 1,459 men and boys who were drowned in the North Sea on the morning of 22 September 1914.

Most recently in May 2015 we announced the launch on the FOMA website of the new Index to *The Clock Tower*, compiled by member Nic Nicholas, a professional proof reader and indexer. Nic updates the Index every quarter on publication of the journal and it is a valuable addition to members, and those who find us on the web, wanting to access our breadth of published articles more easily.

Articles published in some of the earliest issues of *The Clock Tower* continue to attract interest, for example, the series on Pocahontas and my own work on the Osmotherly family of the Hoo Peninsula. The FOMA website was launched in 2008 and the online publication of *The Clock Tower* promotes and facilitates this on-going interest, and as the journal is extremely *Googleable* we receive comments and queries from far and wide.

Over the years we have had a steady and loyal band of contributors, including Dr Andrew Ashbee, Michael Baker, Ann Bowling, Odette Buchanan, Peter Burstow, Brian Butler, Joanne Cable, Betty Cole, Steve Cross, Greg Daxter, Elaine Gardner, Brian Joyce, Doris Herlihy, Kathryn Kersey, Peter Lyons, Barbara Marchant, Nicola Moy, Nic Nicholas, Bob Ratcliffe, Nina Robinson, Simon Shreeve, Jean Skilling, Jean Slater, Pat Slater, Tessa Towner, Alexander Thomas, Ken Walter, Bettine Walters, Pauline Weeds, John Witheridge, and the late John Keys, Dulcie Jones and Roy Murrant. MALSC has also provided us with an endless supply of fascinating articles, thanks to Catharina Clement, Norma Crowe, Irina Fridman, Janet Knight, April Lambourne, Cindy O'Halloran, Alison Thomas and Helen Worthy. Our archivists have also been a tremendous support and what Stephen Dixon started, Alison Cable continues. Our relationship with the Victoria County History and Rochester's Huguenot Museum has provided us with some great friends and fabulous articles from Dr Andrew Hann, Dr Sandra Dunster, Amy Adams and Amy Dimmock. Our loyal, roving reporters Sue Haydock and Barry Cox also continue to provide *The Clock Tower* with all the latest Medway heritage news and photographs. But of course, none of it would be possible without the support of MALSC, the FOMA Committee and our printer, Ray Maisey in Cuxton.

Here's to the next ten years!

the jewellers on the south side of Chatham High Street, near the entrance to Fullager's Yard. The photograph shows the area in 1903 not long after John Lionel Lyons had vacated the premises. The building is on the left hand side of the photograph on the far side of George Church's drapery business.⁴

Chatham News 28 March 1891;
MALSC Local Studies Collection.



Chatham High Street c.1903; MALSC Local Studies Collection

It appears that John Lionel took over an established business from George Booth in January 1881. Originating in the 1840s, Booth's claimed to be the 'oldest pianoforte warehouse in Kent.' By April 1891 John Lionel's advertisements indicate his business had grown and that he also owned a depot for pianos just around the corner from his shop, at 13 Railway Street. He retained the Chatham High Street premises until 1899; from 1902 to 1908 he also maintained an antique furniture dealership at 320 Rochester High Street, although according to one directory he still dealt in pianos.

The Lyons Family

John Lionel was the son of Asher Lyons and Sarah Isaacs. Asher was also a Chatham businessman, who initially had premises at 332 High Street and later at 7 Hamond Place. He is listed in various directories from 1858 to 1877 as a silversmith and jeweller. An indication of Asher's business is given in an account of a court case reported in the *South East Gazette* in September 1879. Frederick Weal, a former clerk for the Chatham

and Dover Railway, was sentenced to 15 years penal servitude for a number of burglaries, including stealing '4 gold watches, 14 silver watches, 20 gold chains, 25 gold pins and other articles, together of the value of more than £200' from the premises of Asher Lyons.⁵ A similar burglary had been attempted in 1870 when the thieves unsuccessfully tried to force open an iron door to gain entry to Asher's previous premises in Chatham High Street. One of Asher's sons, either John or his elder brother Joseph, was asleep in the room above at the time.⁶ From 1872 Asher moved to 7 Hamond Place, the blocks of houses there being described by the *Chatham News* as 'the finest in the towns.' The fires which broke out in the area in 1800 and 1820 are well documented but less well known is the third fire of 1871 which broke out in Naylor's oil and colour shop at number 6. The London and Provincial Bank, which at the time occupied number 7, was burnt entirely at the back although the front office was partly saved.⁷ It seems very likely that Asher moved into the premises soon after its restoration.

John Lionel's mother, Sarah, was the daughter of John Isaacs, who was also a silversmith. Sarah's cousin Samuel built the Mersey Tunnel and her cousin Saul was MP for Nottingham. The stories and connections of both these men have been researched by Michael Jolles.⁸

The Chatham Memorial Synagogue

Both John and Asher were members of the Jewish community in Chatham. Asher served as warden, local trustee and Vice Chairman of the synagogue for over twenty years. After his death in 1897 a vote of condolence was passed by the trustees to John Lionel and his family on their loss. John Lionel himself was secretary to the trustees for a number of years at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁹ As such he corresponded with the House Committee of St Bartholomew's Hospital about problems caused on land adjacent to the synagogue's burial ground. He was concerned about 'medicine bottles, poultices and other things thrown from the hospital side' and in particular by people using the graveyard as a shortcut from the hospital to the High Street. It was as a result of his work that the wall between the graveyard and the hospital land was heightened in 1902 at a cost of £10 and the cemetery itself brought into 'decent order.'¹⁰

John Lionel Lyons has proved to be yet another example of a Medway businessman who traded successfully in those products which formed the essentials of Victorian life. He was connected to some of the most important families in the Jewish community and played an important part in the life of the synagogue, most especially in the maintenance of the burial ground. It is therefore fitting that the burial ground at Chatham Memorial Synagogue remains his last resting place.

Notes

1. *Sketches of London Life and Character*, Albert Smith et al 1849.
2. *Victorian Things*, Asa Briggs, Penguin 1988, p.248.
3. <https://www.piano-tuners.org/history/brinsmead.html>; accessed January 2016.
4. Chatham High Street c 1903 MALSC Local Studies Collection.
5. *The South East Gazette*, 1 September, 6 September, 1 November 1879.
6. *Ibid*, 19 September 1870.
7. *Chatham News*, April 15 1871, p.2.
8. Samuel Isaacs, Saul Isaacs and Nathaniel Isaacs. Michael Jolles 1998. MALSC Local Studies Collection.
9. Chatham Memorial Synagogue Minute Book N/J/305/1 Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.
10. Chatham Memorial Synagogue Record Book N/J/305/22 Medway Archives and Local Studies.

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.

The previous issue of *The Clock Tower* was a milestone for FOMA and as we start 2016, the journal enters its tenth year of publication. Over this time we have reported on the activities of the Friends and the Archives and all the other heritage organisations in the Medway area to which we are affiliated. However, we have also been privileged to publish the work and research of members and non-members, many of whom then decide to join FOMA as they understand the need to support MALSC. *The Clock Tower* has been a wonderful showcase and has helped to promote the work of so many of us in the heritage sector.

The very first *Clock Tower* announced the launch of MALSC's online parish records resource, *Medway Ancestors*. It is incredible to think that this only started ten years ago as for those of us who use it on a regular basis, such databases are now a part of daily life. Back in 2006 Ancestry was still in its infancy and Findmypast had yet to take off.

In one of the early issues, number 6 in May 2007, we published an article by one of our regular writers, Dr. Andrew Ashbee, the Chairman of the Snodland Historical Society – and still a FOMA member today. This was to be the start of a long quest to discover the origins of one of Medway's most famous sons, Thomas Fletcher Waghorn, and over the next six years the quest continued. Andrew received further documentary evidence from a Waghorn descendant in Australia and then more evidence came to light which revealed the family had lived in Otham in the late 1700s. In late 2012 we were able to reveal that Thomas Fletcher Waghorn's father was, in fact Thomas Waghorn of Otham, born in 1768.

In January 2009 *The Clock Tower* announced the news that FOMA had been awarded a grant of up to £154,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, making available for research for the first time the contents of 500 boxes of the Rochester City Archives – the so-called *Archives of Great Expectations*. The arrival of Valerie Rouland as Project Archivist was an exciting moment, but in a special 25th issue in February 2012 we sadly said goodbye to Valerie as the project reached its conclusion. This issue also launched a new look for *The Clock Tower*.

Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre: Archive collections catalogued 2015

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

Street Theatre: the Funeral of Admiral Corry, 1907

Brian Joyce



Brian Joyce is a retired teacher who now lives near Manchester. He was born in Chatham and has always been fascinated by the history of the Medway Towns. Brian is the President of the Chatham Historical Society and the author of several books including The Chatham Scandal, Dumb Show and Noise, Chatham and the Medway Towns and Black People in Medway, 1655 -1914. He co-wrote In the Thick of It - Medway Men and Women in the Boer War with Bruce Aubry. His recent publications include Rochester, Strood & the Hoo Peninsula From Old Photographs, and Chatham from Old Photographs and Gillingham and Around From Old Photographs both of which he co-wrote with Sophie Miller.

During the Victorian and Edwardian periods, military and naval parades through the streets of the Medway Towns were familiar sights. For example, the periodic changeover from one garrison regiment to another involved marches to and from Chatham Railway Station through cheering crowds. Regimental bands and colourful uniforms made such occasions vivid and entertaining. Only the inevitable presence of drunks and pickpockets among the onlookers detracted from the splendour of these spectacles. Soldiers and Royal Marines marching off to war - to South Africa or Egypt, for example – gave such events an additional edge, and even larger numbers of tearful girls than usual could be seen in the throng. Between such major occasions were Sunday military church parades, which although conducted in a lower key, could still attract crowds hungry for a diversion on the dour Victorian Sabbath.

A less common, although just as spectacular, addition to this form of street entertainment was the public part of the funerals of leading military or naval figures. That of Edward Kelly, the Admiral Superintendent of the Dockyard in 1892, was fondly remembered by many, combining as it did the Victorian cult of mourning with military display. Kelly's four successors before 1905 all retired from the Yard alive and reasonably well. However, the death in post of the fifth, Alvin Coote Corry in 1907, gave the people of the Medway Towns an opportunity to repeat the experience of fifteen years before.

Rear Admiral Corry had been appointed to Chatham Dockyard in 1905. He had previously commanded nine ships at sea and had led the Naval Brigade's landings at Alexandria in 1882. Although at Chatham for less than eighteen months, Corry had time to encourage the acquisition of more technical knowledge among naval personnel. Also on his watch, an annual sports day was inaugurated in the Dockyard extension on St Mary's Island. He died of pneumonia in late January 1907 at the relatively early age of fifty-seven.

Corry's funeral was meticulously planned in a very short space of time, based as it was on Kelly's fifteen years earlier. The ceremonies commenced when eight Royal Naval petty officers carried the coffin from the Admiral's residence to a waiting gun carriage. This was taken to the Dockyard church, where the Dean of Rochester and chaplains from the Navy and Royal Marines conducted a religious service.

The public part of the funeral began when the gun carriage emerged from the Dockyard's Main Gate and joined the procession which was drawn up outside. This vast column, three quarters of a mile long, moved off when a thirteen gun salute boomed out from Fort Amherst. Its route took it along Dock Road, down the hill into Chatham, then up Military Road and Railway Street, under the New Road Viaduct and past the Waghorn Memorial. It then climbed Maidstone Road to Chatham Cemetery. It took seventeen minutes for the slow-moving procession to pass any given point.

Although this was a working day, and the Admiralty had refused to allow the Dockyard to close for the afternoon, thousands of people thronged the route. The military wore great coats as protection against the January cold, but nevertheless the crowds were still treated to splashes of colour. These were provided by the white helmets of the Royal Marines lining the route as far as Gun Wharf, and the bonnets of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who stood to attention between the Waghorn Memorial and the bottom of Maidstone Road. The plumes of the army officers in the column and the traces of gold in the naval officers' cocked hats also brightened the appearance of this otherwise sombre display. The crowds were at their densest at the corner of Military Road adjacent to the Town Hall, and at the New Road Viaduct. This part of the route was guarded by 450 men of the Royal Engineers.

The onlookers' first glimpse of the procession (see photograph) was of officers of the Metropolitan Police Dockyard Division, who led the way. They were followed by the firing party – 250 men from the Royal Naval Barracks. Behind them and immediately in front of the gun carriage, slowly marched the Naval and Marine bands playing Handel's *Dead March from Saul*.

The coffin was draped with a Union Jack, with the Admiral's sword and cocked hat placed on top of it. Two wreaths graced the casket; violets from Corry's widow at its head and acacia at its foot. Behind the coffin and its pallbearers were nine carriages containing the chief mourners, followed by military and naval personnel. Towards the rear, the bands of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and the Royal Engineers played Chopin's funeral march. A carriage containing the mayors of the three towns ended the procession.



Archives Update

Alison Cable, Borough Archivist



The latest news from the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Following our Heritage Open Day Gillingham- themed Saturday in September 2015, we hosted a visit from a social group based in Rainham. Local Studies Librarian, Irina Fridman showed them our presentation entitled, *Introduction to MALSC* and a selection of our resources were brought out for perusal.

During October I worked with our colleagues at Rochester Cathedral to arrange the safe transfer of the *Textus Roffensis* to the cathedral for the purpose of forming part of the Magna Carta Exhibition. I installed the document and it was brought back to MALSC in December where it will remain until the exhibition space at the cathedral (their HLF project) is ready to receive the *Textus* once again.

In late October, we ran a successful Palaeography Workshop with Dr David Wright. We will be happy to run this again in the spring if sufficient interest is registered beforehand. It is a whole-day workshop and the cost is generally in the region of £30.00 per person.

During the first two weeks of November MALSC was closed for the annual stocktaking. A great deal of collection work was undertaken, such as the removal of some local studies material from out-stores back to the clock tower site. Work on cataloguing the local studies photograph collection continued apace. In terms of archives, we commenced an audit/stock-check of our parish collections and approximately 24 were audited. This work commences a rolling programme which will continue into 2016. Readers will be relieved to hear that nothing was missing but a couple of items were in the wrong box! Also during our closure, I worked on accessions and cataloguing, and a list of our new catalogues can be found below.

In the autumn Local Studies Librarian, Norma Crowe gave a talk to the Strood Branch of the Salvation Army. Medway Council's Heritage Services Manager, Simon Lace and I visited The Keep (the home of East Sussex Record Office) for ideas and inspiration for our move to the Strood Library site (see pages 2 to 3). The East Sussex Record Office is a very new local authority record office building and during the visit, deeds relating to the Delce were transferred to us. I have now catalogued these and they can be found on Cityark under DE1253.

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!

2016 brings a whole new events calendar at the Huguenot Museum with lots of exciting courses and partnerships – see page 37 for further details.

The Huguenot Museum is now home to Rochester Film Society's fortnightly screenings on Tuesday evenings so do come along and say hello. We also continue our partnership with Rochester Film Society for the Children's French Film Club with the first showing on 27 February, *A Monster In Paris*, £3 per person. We are also very excited to partner up with Rochester Literature Festival this year for February Half Term children's activities. We will be making 18th Century inspired hanging pockets which can be used to hide secret keepsakes.

The Saturday Club also continues this year, so bring along your youngsters for different arts and crafts activities every month. On 6 February we will be getting crafty with French Knitting, and on the 5 March we will be making fabric flowers just in time for Mothering Sunday.

The first adult craft-bench workshop of the year was a success with local artist Josie Chisholm teaching our lovely attendees the art of wet-felting. A lovely afternoon was had by all who attended and everyone left with a wonderful piece of felt art. Our next workshop will be on the 12 March when attendees will get to make their own silver clay pendants. Tickets cost £60 and include light refreshments; spaces are going fast so be sure to book soon to avoid disappointment!

Story Time on Thursdays during term-time for under 5s continues this year and we have also introduced a loyalty card for this!

For more information on prices and opening times see page 37, or to get in touch visit www.huguenotmuseum.org, call 01634 789347 or email learning@huguenotmuseum.org

The Dockyard itself was represented in the column. As a concession to those who complained at the Admiralty's refusal to allow a half day closure as a mark of respect for Rear Admiral Corry, the hundred men actually permitted to participate received their afternoon's pay. They were joined by fifty retired colleagues who had been recipients of the Imperial Service Medal. Kent police officers and the Highlanders kept the public away from the last part of the route from the bottom of Maidstone Road to the cemetery.

The Metropolitan Police contingent led the way to the grave and the rest of the procession filed in, minus the bands, most of the military and of course the public. A short religious service took place, followed by three volleys of shots, and in the distance, a thirteen gun salute from a naval battery.

The crowds in Chatham had played their part in these proceedings. They had been appropriately respectful and silent, and many had bowed their heads and doffed their caps when the coffin passed them. Now, cold but presumably satisfied with what they had experienced, they dispersed.



Photographs from the collection of Brian Joyce.

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 1: The Quakers

By late 1915 it had become obvious that the number of volunteers for military service was insufficient to meet the demands of the Western Front and other war zones. Parliament introduced conscription in March 1916 with the passing of the Military Service Act which resulted in the collapse of the Liberal government and the formation of a coalition under David Lloyd George. Britain had never needed national conscription before and compulsion of any sort went against the grain of Liberal ideology. However it was not only the Liberal party, who had strong views on this subject. The next few issues of the *Clock Tower* will focus on the local treatment of conscientious objectors, or *conchies*, as they were often referred to. There were broadly three categories of objection: religious, moral and political. There were also those who had personal or business reasons for seeking an exemption. In total over 17,400 men claimed exemption on grounds of conscience;¹ of these some were granted full exemptions, others appealed and won, some were ordered to join the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU), whilst many took up work of National Importance. Another option was to be enlisted in the non-Combatant Corps or Royal Army Medical Corps. Reluctantly some were pressurised into enlisting and sent to the front. Some felt so strongly that they refused all types of war work and were imprisoned for their beliefs.

The Quakers, the Labour Party and various other groups were against conscription. Indeed the Religious Society of Friends had an historical repugnance of war, which had originated in the English Civil Wars. This group had held a pacifist stance since the late seventeenth century and any member in breach of this view was liable to be disowned by their local meeting. For them it went further than just refusing to do military service; even building warships or paying militia taxes was regarded as supporting warfare. During the course of time the Quaker emphasis on pacifism changed, placing the responsibility upon individual conscience rather than imposition from the Yearly Meeting. In this regard the decision to enlist or not was a matter for individual Friends to decide and if they objected, to what degree they were prepared to make a stand.

Queen Elizabeth I spent five days in the area in 1573 on her return to London during a cold and wet summer progress round the coast of Kent and Sussex. The Queen arrived on 18 September at the Crown Inn. The following day she attended Divine Service and heard a sermon at the Cathedral where £13. 13. 4d⁶ was spent on the festivities. On her last day she was entertained at the home of *that charitable man*, Richard Watts, M.P. for the city, on Boley Hill.⁷

The Queen made a return visit on 1 February 1583. This time she was accompanied by the Duke of Anjou who was en route to Dover and a return to France. In 1568, during the conflicts with Spain, negotiations had begun for a marriage between Elizabeth and the Duke in an attempt to cement an Anglo-French alliance. Although the queen appeared to be fond of the Duke (she referred to him as her 'monkey') the negotiations came to nothing in the face of insurmountable religious differences. During their visit the Queen and her 'monkey' visited Chatham, *the strong point and rendezvous of the London area*,⁸ to view the ships of war.

Notes

1. Brenchley Rye, W., *Visits to Rochester and Chatham*.
2. Mackie, J.D., 'The Early Tudors, 1485 – 1558', *Oxford History of England*.
3. Ibid
4. *History and Antiquities of Rochester & Environs*.
5. Smith, F.F., *A History of Rochester*.
6. Knighton, C.S., *The Reformed Chapter, Faith & Fabric*.
7. Brenchley Rye, W., *Visits to Rochester and Chatham*.
8. Black, J.D., 'The Reign of Elizabeth I 1558 – 1603', *Oxford History of England*

In the next issue: *The Stuarts*.

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.

Tudors

King Henry VII passed through Rochester, on his way from Windsor to Sandwich, three times between 1492 and 1498, during which period the bridge seems to have been in disrepair since he paid two pounds each time for the *ferre bote*. In 1498 he also paid five pounds to the *Mayr of Rochester towards the Bridge there*.¹

More power struggles in Europe brought King Henry VIII to the area on 22 June 1522 during a *statly progress*² with Charles V, Emperor of Germany. The Emperor, in need of an ally against the rise of Lutherism in Germany and the advance of the Turks, sought an alliance with England.³

Henry and Charles stayed overnight at Rochester⁴ on their way to Windsor to negotiate arrangements for treaties for the invasion of France and to cement the alliance the Emperor's marriage to King Henry's daughter, the Princess Mary. Neither the invasion nor the marriage took place.

Henry returned at the end of December 1540 to meet his new bride, Anne of Cleves, who had arrived in England and was housed in the King's Palace, at Rochester, in what had been, until the dissolution of the monasteries, St Andrew's Priory. He found Anne standing at a window watching bull-baiting in the court below.⁵ Henry's eagerness to meet Anne turned to disappointment when he found that Holbein's portrait of Anne had exaggerated her looks.

Nearly a third of Quakers did join up, but many objectors refused to take part in any service that supported the military war effort, for example serving in the Friends Ambulance Unit or other voluntary work ordered by the tribunals. Many were prepared to go to prison for their beliefs. Alfred Horsnail, a Rochester Quaker and councillor was a prison visitor for Maidstone prison in 1916. Maidstone gaol held 90 prisoners of conscience between 1916 and 1918. Whilst Quakers did serve and act according to individual conscience, they also organised group petitions, assisted fellow applicants at tribunals and set up or were involved with national groups to support conscientious objectors.

By the Great War the Medway Towns had a longstanding, integrated and prominent Quaker community. Many of the Quaker men were tradesmen and some local councillors. Their stance on war was well known in Rochester and the neighbouring towns, having led to conflict with the military authorities in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. However by the First World War there was little opposition to their pacifist outlook, even if some regarded it as somewhat bizarre. Rochester council was at the time dominated by Liberal non-conformists, which may account for the remarkably different treatment Quaker conscientious objectors received at the city tribunal compared to their counterparts in Chatham and Gillingham.

Our first conscientious objector was Norman Henry Grubb (1883-1965), a fruit grower from Cobham and a member of the Rochester meeting. He was the son of Edward Grubb, a leading Quaker pacifist who became involved with the No-Conscription Fellowship in 1915. His activities led to the publication of a seditious pamphlet for which he and others were convicted. Norman Grubb's refusal to fight stemmed from his upbringing and own Quaker principles. An intelligent man, educated at Cornell University in the United States, he obtained a Master of Science in 1908. Until his return to Britain in 1913 he held a prominent post in horticultural research at Washington; in order to work in America Grubb had to obtain US citizenship.

Norman Grubb faced one of the earliest tribunals before Strood Rural District in March 1916, aged 33 and single. *The Chatham Observer* quoted: '[He] objected to all military service and all service in connection with the war on conscientious grounds.' The tribunal asked Grubb how long he had been a Quaker and stated many had become Friends to avoid military service. Grubb was quick to refute this assertion and was correct in doing so. Both the Rochester and Maidstone meetings went to great lengths to restrict membership in the war years to prevent such an issue. Norman Grubb was given the option of using his occupation as an exemption, but he refused to exercise it. They tried to trip him up on his pacifist stance, throwing his quote from St Paul back at him. The Strood tribunal then turned to the inevitable question of what he thought of the Germans? The applicant was able to answer that 'he had known many Germans and that these were not so bad as they were painted.' In the end the tribunal concluded he was an alien, as he had taken out US citizenship, and was granted a full exemption on those grounds.²

After the war he took up a post at the East Malling Research Centre, engaging in trials on new varieties of fruit. He worked there for over 50 years and published several works on fruit growing. On his death in 1965 he was remembered by staff as having 'firmly held opinions in support of the "underdog" and on his insistence in trying to understand the motives of the communist when it was fashionable only to condemn them.' The Maidstone meeting, which he had attended, declared: 'He was a conscientious objector to

war, and his pacifism was based on his interpretation of the teaching of Christ. In his refusal to take part he had written to the authorities that he held the essence of this teaching to be the Fatherhood of God and consequent brotherhood of man; His law is the law of love and His teaching that good and not evil should be returned for evil.' Grubb apparently supported the Aldermaston Marches in later life, walking the whole 60 miles in his eightieth year.³

Our second conscientious objector, Ernest Edwin Reynolds (1894-1981) of Strood, later became a Quaker, but had to justify his pacifist views before being accepted as a member of Rochester meeting. Educated at Battersea Polytechnic School, Reynolds then went onto teach languages at Duisburg in Germany during 1913. He returned to England on the outbreak of war and briefly taught at University School, Rochester. Reynolds took on his appointment at the Sir Joseph Williamson Mathematical School in January 1915, a post he held till 1920. His main subjects were English and History and he was also the school's scout master.⁴

At the age of 22 Reynolds was liable to be called up for national service in 1916, but as a conscientious objector to war on moral grounds he put in a request for an exemption. Reynolds must have been before Rochester tribunal some time during early 1916, however his case does not appear to have been covered by the local papers. Presumably his case did not have the desired outcome, as he faced the West Kent Appeal's Tribunal at Chatham in April of that year. The panel were not unanimous in their verdict, but stood by the decision of the local tribunal, dismissing his appeal. His motto was 'Love your enemies' and he informed the tribunal that he had joined the No-Conscription Fellowship at the outbreak of war, becoming the local branch representative. Reynolds made it clear he did not indoctrinate his pupils with his pacifist view and the school petitioned as to his 'useful service as a teacher and scout master'. However the panel gave him leave to take the case to the Central Tribunal in London.⁵

From the Central Tribunal minutes it is quite clear that Ernest Reynolds was given an exemption from 'combatant service only' by the initial tribunal and they backed the decision of both the local and appeals' tribunal in that matter.⁶ Reynolds, as a pacifist, probably requested an absolute exemption. The judgement of the various tribunals indicated he was required to enlist in work of national importance or support the voluntary war effort. His role as teacher did not qualify, yet he remained at the school throughout the war years, being paid on a number of occasions a 'war bonus'. Whether his position as local scout master counted as war work is unclear. In November 1917 Reynolds asked to be admitted as a member of the Society of Friends at Rochester. His application was considered, but the issue of his scouting work was problematic to the local Quakers. They asked him several pertinent questions about his stance on war, which the minutes record as follows:

'and in reply to questions to how far his relations as a scout-master made him responsible to the Military Authorities, were able to explain to the satisfaction of this meeting that it was the attitude of his own church in relation to War which led him to attend our Meetings & enquire into our principles...'

Ernest Reynolds satisfied their enquiries and was accepted into the meeting in January 1918.⁷ He had been raised as a Congregationalist and presumably did not find the local church in agreement with his pacifist views. Reynolds left his teaching post in March 1920 to become an instructor at the scout training camp in Gilwell, Essex. His scouting career was to last until the early 1950s and involved setting up the Scouting International

Relief Service in 1944, which opened displacement camps in Greece, Holland, Belgium and Germany for refugees. His friend Don Potter considered, 'Here was a role totally suited to Reynolds' Quaker principles.' At some point in the 1940s Reynolds converted to Roman Catholicism and published several books on Catholicism and its saints. He was a prolific writer and in his book, *Britain in the Twentieth Century*, drew on his own experience of conscientious objection:

'Conscientious objectors had to appear before tribunals to establish their sincerity. They were often treated with scant respect and even ridicule by members of the tribunal.'⁸

In the next issue of The Clock Tower, Part Two will look at some conscientious objectors who were court martialled and sent to prison for their beliefs.

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. Cyril Pearce's database of Conscientious Objectors of IWM website.
2. CO 18/3/1916 ; The Friend 17/4/1916.
3. Pearce, Clifford., *Maidstone Quakers 1655-1976* (2000) pp. 57-58. After the war tribunals were ordered to destroy all the applications and paperwork. The only surviving accounts are mainly newspaper reports, but the Society of Friends also reported events in their publication *The Friend*.
4. MALSC, C/ES/306/4/6/1/1, Sir Joseph Williamson Mathematical School staff register 1879-1923.
5. CO 15/4/1916.
6. TNA, MH47/2/3, Central Tribunal Minutes 1916.
7. KH&LC, N/FMr1/8, Rochester Monthly Meeting Minutes 1910-1932.
8. <http://scoutguidehistoricalsociety.com/biogs-p-r.htm#reynolds>; Reynolds, E. E., 7 Brasher, N.H., *Britain in the Twentieth Century*, (1966) p. 73.