

The Dutch Raid Commemorations



FOMA Member, Henk van der Linden (wearing his British Empire Medal) and (left) First Sea Lord and Chief of the Royal Navy, Admiral Sir Philip Jones. KCB ADC

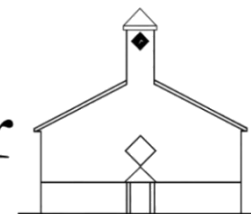


From left to right: The Lord Lieutenant of Kent and former Commander-in-Chief fleet of the Royal Navy Admiral and chairman of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, Sir Trevor Soar, The Mayoress of Hellevoetsluis, Netherlands, Mrs Milène Junius, The Mayor of Medway, Cllr. David Wildey, Frits De Ruyter De Wildt.

See page11.

*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 47: August 2017

£2.00; free to members

The Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Excepted Charity registration number XR92894

The New Medway Archives Centre Opens!



On Monday 3 July 2017 the new Medway Archives Centre opened in Bryant Road Strood. FOMA Committee members were delighted to be invited and were amongst the first visitors to this wonderful new facility. From left to right: FOMA Chairman, Elaine Gardner; Archivist, Alison Cable; Medway Council Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Cllr. Howard Doe; Medway Council Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation (and member for Strood North ward in which the new centre is situated), Cllr. Jane Chitty; Medway Council Leader, Cllr. Alan Jarrett.

ALSO INSIDE – A Clock Tower Special Feature:
The Dutch Raid Commemorations.

And a new series by Peter Lyons: 'Major Thomas Scott'.

The New Medway Archives Centre Opens!



Left (from left to right): Helen Worthy, Archives and Local Studies Assistant, Norma Crowe, Local Studies Librarian and FOMA's Bob Ratcliffe look at some of the documents on display.



Above: Tessa Townner (left) and FOMA Secretary, Odette Buchanan join the tour of the new strongroom.



Left (from left to right): Bob Ratcliffe, Tessa Towne, Sue Haydock and Odette Buchanan examine the 20 September 1564 baptism entry for Will Adams in the parish register for St Mary Magdelene, Gillingham (ref. P153/1/1).

For more on the opening see page 6; more photographs are also included in the online version of *The Clock Tower* at <http://foma-lsc.org/journal.html>

The Dutch Raid Commemorations

Also in attendance at the commemorations (see page 11) was FOMA Life Member, Henk van der Linden who kindly supplied *The Clock Tower* with the following photographs taken by Ray Fothergil (here and back page).



From left to right: Lieutenant General Rob Verkerk, Commander of the Royal Netherlands Navy, Prince Maurits of Orange-Nassau, van Vollenhoven, prince of the Netherlands, Lord Lieutenant of Kent and former Commander-in-Chief fleet of the Royal Navy Admiral and chairman of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, Sir Trevor Soar, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sir Philip Jones.



Henk van der Linden is warmly greeted by Lord Lieutenant of Kent and former Commander-in-Chief fleet of the Royal Navy Admiral and chairman of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, Sir Trevor Soar. To the left of Henk (with his back to the camera) is Henk's great friend, Bill Ferris, Chief Executive of the Historic Dockyard Trust.

The Committee

President
Russell John Race, JP, DL

Vice Presidents

Sue Haydock, Pat Salter, Brian Kingsley Smith, Professor Sir
Robert Worcester KBE DL

Chairman

Elaine Gardner:

102 Valley View Road,
Rochester, ME1 3NX, Kent.
emgardner@virginmedia.com

Vice Chairman

Rob Flood:

16 Albert Road, Rochester, ME1 3DG,
Kent.
rob@feetontheground.co.uk

Treasurer

Josie Iles:

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

Secretary

Odette Buchanan:

72 Jersey Road, Rochester,
ME2 3PE, Kent.
odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk

Membership Secretary

Betty Cole:

98 The Wharf, Dock Head Road, Chatham,
ME4 4ZS, Kent.
betty-cole@outlook.com

Members

Len Feist:

Simon Lace
Garth House,

29 Hawthorn Rd., Rochester ME2 2HW
lfstrood@gmail.com
Rochester Cathedral, The Chapter Office,

Bob Ratcliffe:

The Precinct, Rochester, ME1 1SX, Kent.
simon.lace@rochestercathedral.org
12 King Edward Road, Rochester,
ME1 1UB, Kent.

Kevin Russell:

7 Donald Troup House,
Watt's Almshouses, Maidstone Road,
Rochester, ME1 1SE, Kent.
37 Ravenswood Avenue, Frindsbury,
ME2 3BY, Kent.
picketywitch@blueyonder.co.uk

Tessa Towner:

The Clock Tower Editor and Publicist

Amanda Thomas:
Hertfordshire.

72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS,
amanda@ajthomas.com



Chairman's Letter

Elaine Gardner



This is my first letter as the new Chairman of FOMA and before I do anything else I must say a huge 'Thank You' to Tessa Towner for all the work she has put in for the past seven years. Thankfully she has said she is happy to remain on the committee, and we are both busy producing the next edition of our 1914-18 series of exhibitions at the new Medway Archives Centre. I have noticed at many an AGM I attend that, if those on the committee are willing to continue to stand, the general membership is happy to sit back and vote them in, each happily thinking to themselves 'great, that saves me having to volunteer'. I know because I am just the same: we can always think of reasons why we can't join the team. Even when committee members retire it is difficult to recruit a new member, but many of us are getting on in life and we would love to see new younger members volunteering!

The big event since the last issue of *The Clock Tower* has been the opening of the new Archives and local studies building in Bryant Road, Strood. Its official title is Medway Archive Centre, MAC for short.

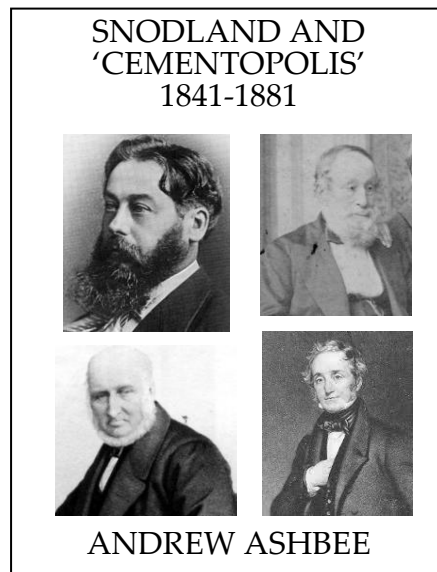
A gathering of council members, FOMA committee and archive staff gathered in the spacious lobby area to listen to a couple of speeches before Cllr Howard Doe officially declared the building open and we all had a tour of the new facilities, including small groups seeing the new archive store. Archive material is still being moved and stored on Alison's new racking system so, at the time of writing this, requesting to research archive material is yet to resume, but when it does readers will have a lovely quiet room in which to work, with no air-con system blasting the backs and feet of those who were unlucky to get the end spaces! The opening hours are as before and the usual local studies facilities are all available, though the space is more restricted than before, creating some imaginative thinking and operating for Norma Crowe, Cindy O'Halloran and their team. Come along to the September meeting to hear Alison's account of the trials and tribulations involved in moving an archive! For details, see *News and Events* on page 36.

As mentioned previously, Tessa and I are busy on the 1917 commemoration exhibition, which this year will be displayed in the lobby area rather than inside the local studies area itself – as will all future exhibitions - which will hopefully attract more of the public into MAC. The Medway Comms team is now producing all the actual display materials so we have to get the contents to them four weeks before the opening date, which has given Tessa and me just three weeks to delve into the old newspapers and get our material together! By the time you read this it will be just about to go on display so do go and have a look. I would like to wish all the MAC staff well in their new surroundings and thank them for all their hard work.

Finally, It is with great sadness that we will be saying goodbye to Ray Maisey, our printer. Ray has been printing *The Clock Tower* since the first issue in 2006 and has decided to retire. We would like to thank him for everything he has done to help FOMA and wish him and his wife, Buffy, best wishes.

New Members

A warm welcome to new FOMA members Mr and Mrs Jonathan Barker, Marion Shoard, and Ed Woollard.



FOMA member Dr. Andrew Ashbee's new book, *Snodland and 'Cementopolis' 1841-1881* has just been added to the KAS AC website (<http://kentarchaeology.ac/>) among the e-books. It focuses on the impact on Snodland made by the growth of the cement and paper industries in the years between the censuses of 1841 and 1881, and also shows links with the neighbouring parishes of Halling, Burham, and Wouldham. It is set out as a series of five essays each focussing on particular aspects of the history: I The Village Grows; II Agriculture, Cement, Paper; III Road, Rail, River; IV Church and School; V The Community. Appendices provide statistics (a) from the registers of Snodland, Halling, Burham, Wouldham, Cuxton; (b) summaries of census occupations for the same parishes; (c) comparative population growth for them, and the parishes of Birling, Aylesford, and East Malling. Lists of Snodland cement workers and papermakers 1841-1881. Printed copies available from Dr. Andrew Ashbee at 214, Malling Road, Snodland, Kent ME6 5EQ; £10 plus £3 postage, cheques made payable to Andrew Ashbee.

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 48 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 30 October 2017, with publication on Wednesday 22 November 2017.

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

Copyright

The copyright of the contents of *The Clock Tower* belongs to the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre and the authors and owners of any articles and photographs printed. The contents of *The Clock Tower* may not be reproduced without permission of the Editor and/or the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

Front Cover Accreditations and Website Information

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

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

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

Further Information

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

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

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

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. 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/

Autumn Conferences

7 October, Blue Town Heritage Centre, Sheerness.

Speakers will include architect and interior designer Stuart Page ('architecture, archaeology and reuse'), Andrew Linklater of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust ('the use and misuse of medieval timber buildings'), William Palin, chairman of the Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust and conservation director at the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich ('the saving of Dockyard Church, Sheerness'), Oliver Leigh-Wood of the Spitalfields Trust ('the Spitalfields Trust Story') and Jenny Hurkett of the Blue Town Heritage Centre ('restoring the Criterion Music Hall, Blue Town, Sheerness').

14 October, Rutherford College, University of Kent.

'If the Kaiser should come', the defence measures set in place in south-east England will be discussed by Peter Kendall of Historic England ('defence on land'), Professor Andrew Lambert of King's College, London ('defence at sea'), Victor Smith of the KAS Historic Defences Group ('air defence'), and Simon Mason of KCC's Heritage Conservation Group ('invasion emergency planning').

Co-sponsored by The KAS, University of Kent and the Council for Kentish Archaeology.

4 November, Rutherford College, University of Kent.

'The Archaeology of Medieval Kent', Clive Drew ('The little-known churches of Throwley, Sheldwich, Badlesmere and Leaveland'), Ted Connell ('The Christopher St John Breen Medieval Pottery Archive'), Keith Parfitt ('The Whitefriars of Sandwich'), Gerald Cramp ('Kent's medieval tile industry'), Susan Pittman ('The Landscape Legacy of Kent's early Deer Parks') and Jacob Scott ('Rochester Cathedral and Castle').

Booking forms and further details of these events can be downloaded from <http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/> Information from Paul Tritton, Hon. Press Officer, KAS; paul.tritton@btinternet.com

Secretary's Report

Odette Buchanan



Hullo. Happy summer holidays. I'm writing this on 15 July. I bet you don't know what anniversary it is today? No? Well let me tell you - today in 1815 was when Napoleon surrendered to the captain of HMS *Bellerophon* ('Billy Ruffian' as she was affectionately known by her crew) and then taken to St. Helena. Another bit of useless information to fill up your brain.

Staying in Strood but coming a bit more up to date, I was thrilled to be at the opening of the new MALSC centre in Bryant Road on 3 July. I must say the builders have done a lovely job of converting the library into a thoroughly modern archives centre with all the latest equipment to preserve Medway's huge stash of archives going back hundreds of years. Your Committee were given a guided tour of the facilities and then, along with Medway Councillors (including Howard Doe who gave the opening speech), Council Officers and Archives staff, we were treated to an excellent finger buffet in the light and airy foyer. Of course one of the stars of the show was the new digital reader that FOMA was able to buy with the very generous donation from City of Rochester Society. Can't wait to use it!

And now news of something to look forward to - I know there is great interest in Medway in all the prefabs that were built around the towns in the late 1940s and early '50s to ease the housing shortage caused by bombing and the demobbed forces coming home. Many of you will have read my series of articles in the last three issues of *The Clock Tower* (issues 44, 45 and 46) based on a talk I gave to the Friends of Broomhill a few years ago. Did you know that there is a Prefab Museum in Catford? A prefab estate there has Grade 2 listing and the museum is funded by a Heritage Lottery Grant.

Anyway, the museum has a *travelling museum* that goes around the country with displays, information and facilities for locals to bring along their memories - pictorial, written and oral. The curators bring facilities to record memories and add them to the ever expanding archive preserving as much information as possible on these *People's Palaces* before those who lived in them are all gone.

FOMA has combined with the Friends of Broomhill to bring the exhibition to the Archives Centre on Saturday, 14 October 2017. It will be open from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm. Do drop in and browse, add your memories to the archive and enjoy some refreshments. Apart from any memories people may have of the prefabs around Medway, it will be a chance to share stories with others. Do make a note in your diaries and we look forward to seeing as many as possible of you then!

Enjoy the rest of the summer, albeit that today is also St. Swithin's Day and it rained this morning - that means 40 more days of rain!!

The Opening of the New Medway Archive Centre

From MALSC to MAC

Alison Cable, Archivist



I have been with Medway Archives (MALSC) for over eight years now and for much of that time relocation has been on the cards. I think the prospect of moving all the archives and local studies collections was a bit too distressing to contemplate so we remained in near-denial for a few years. Various management arrangements came and went and various potential buildings were added to the list and options explored, but nothing came to fruition.

As regular users of MALSC may know, the old building was *past its best* and a bit shabby and a couple of years ago a serious issue relating to the floor loading had to be dealt with in order to shore up the search room. Cracks were appearing in the whole building and it wasn't just our premises but the offices of our colleagues in Highways and Parking seemed to be suffering even more. This was a grave concern. In 2009 The National Archives had given us four years to sort out the strong room issues so the pressure was on and in 2015 a decision was made: we would be moving to Bryant Road. A revamp and reconfiguration would provide a bright new home for MALSC - now called MAC (Medway Archives Centre).

Architects were appointed and the then MALSC team met with them to discuss requirements. There followed various processes of acquiring a building contractor, racking supplier, and a removals company. All these processes took up a considerable amount of time, for example I had 12 site visits from prospective tenderers for the removals contract! Once the racking supplier was appointed we had several meetings to quantify what we had and what we needed and it was decided that our accrual space would have to be upwards (due to the shape of the proposed strong room), which in turn would mean that we would need specialist equipment to retrieve archive boxes from *very high* shelves. So began the hunt for an electric stock picker that would reach up high, turn on a sixpence and be narrow enough to get down the aisles - but sturdy enough to support members of staff!

The builders left the Bryant Road site in May 2017 and we have been slowly moving in since then. The layout of the new site presents some challenges, and it is technically not any larger than our old home. So we are having to be inventive about how we use our storage.

The Bridge Study Centre:

Bridging has been an essential part of warfare for thousands of years. In this gallery the full history of military bridging is explored. Hands on activities from our Sapper Workshop and dressing up are also available for kids.

Gillingham and Rainham Local History Society

The Society meets on the second Friday of each month from September to June 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) 7.15 pm with meeting starting at 7.30 pm.

September 8: *The History of the RNLI*, a talk by Diana Lawrence.

October 13: *The Romans on the Medway*, a talk by Simon Elliott.

November 10: *Medway Aircraft Preservation Society*, a talk by John Gosden.

December 8: *Paranormal/Spooky Kent* a talk by Neil Arnold.

The Gillingham and Rainham LHS with a local Community Project called Love Twydale are presenting on 7 October 2017 an evening of local history as follows:

Dave Barton will speak on *Grange Manor* and Colin Coe on *Old Medway*.

Doors will open at 5.30 pm to allow people to look at the exhibits that have been found in the local area together with the various church activities. The evening will commence at 7.30pm and end at 9.00pm; there will be a break for refreshments. Admission free but donation boxes will be available. For further information please contact Ron Baker 01634 854982

New members and visitors are always welcome; annual membership £20, visitors £3 per meeting. For further information, please visit the website www.grlhs.org; contact Val Barrand on 07947 583327 or email lupusrufus@sky.com



Blue Town Heritage Centre, The Criterion Music Hall and Cinema

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.

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.

14 September, *Young Nelson*, a talk by Brian Davis.

12 October, *Union and Workhouse Records*, a talk by Deborah Collins.

9 November, *A Schoolgirls' War*, a talk by Mary Smith.

14 December, Society Christmas evening.

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

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.

For more information email bromptonhistoryresearchgroup@gmail.com

The Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive

Prince Arthur Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME4 4UG
www.re-museum.co.uk for more details

SEE THE WEBSITE FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

The Royal Engineers Museum is Kent's largest military museum, with a designated collection of historical and international importance.

Events

January 2014 - November 2018, First World War Battlefield Tour Groups.
For more information or to book please call: 01634 822312.

July 25 - September 3: The Mechanicals.

July 25 - September 1: Summer Family Activities.

September 2 - September 3: Medway Modelling Club Show.

September 5 - December 17: Britten War Requiem Prints.

October 24 - October 27: Half Term Family Activities.

December 9 - December 10: Christmas At The Museum.

Opening hours: Tuesday – Sunday 10.00am to 5.00pm, last entry 4.00 pm; Bank Holidays: 10.00 am to 5.00pm, last entry 4.00 pm; CLOSED MONDAYS. Admission: adult – £8.40, child (Aged 5-16) – £5.70, concessions – £5.70, family ticket (2 adults and 2 children) – £22.50; children under 5: free.



We had our official launch on 3 July and have been open to the public since 4th. There is still a great deal of work going on behind the scenes but we are very happy with the ambiance of the new centre and we have had some great feedback from our customers.



The entrance of the new Medway Archives Centre. From left to right: FOMA Committee members Kevin Russell, Len Feist, Tessa Towner, and Secretary, Odette Buchanan.

The Proceedings of the Opening.

The official launch on 3 July 2017 allowed those who had been most closely involved with the creation of the new centre to have a look around. A tour and buffet followed the unveiling of the plaque (see the front cover) and speeches. Transcribed here is the speech given by FOMA Chairman, Elaine Gardner.



As Chairperson of the Friends of Medway Archives, I would like, on behalf of the committee and all FOMA members to wish all the staff welcome to their new home.

The Archives and Local Studies Centre has been in operation now for some twenty two years and I'm sure that, when it was established, the size of the collections were not envisaged to have grown to the point where the floor was no longer strong enough to hold them, and that Alison would be having sleepless nights every time a flood warning for the River Medway was issued worrying about what to save from the archive store - and there is plenty of documentary evidence of the flooding in Strood in the collection here.

I know the staff have all worked exceedingly hard over the past few months to arrive at today's opening in this new, purposely designed facility, and will be ready for the public when they arrive tomorrow – though I suspect that all these new areas will require some clever staffing management, particularly to begin with.

FOMA has been around to support the Archives for eleven years now, and I hope we are going to continue to do so, not just through fundraising, but with practical assistance too.

I for one am looking forward to tomorrow's reopening to the public, as I'm sure we all are – I will be in here in the morning to make a start on FOMA's 1917 exhibition which will be on display in the entrance area here in September, which I think will be rather good as it will be seen by users of the community hall as well as those coming in to MAC.

So again, to Alison, Norma and all the staff, FOMA's very best wishes for the continued success of the Archive and Local Studies collections.



Archivist, Alison Cable addresses guests at the opening prior to the unveiling by Cllr. Howard Doe (right) of the plaque.

Friends of Broomhill

Broomhill Park has been awarded a seventh consecutive Green Flag; the Award recognises the best green spaces in the country. The Park has again been awarded 'Outstanding' in the RHS S.E 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

Task Days are the first Sunday of every month except January, from September to April, inclusive, from 10.00 am to noon. Meet in King Arthur's Drive car park. Hot drinks afterwards. Bring your own tools or we have plenty. Help us keep our Green Flag status for the 8th consecutive year and our RHS S.E in Bloom status of 'outstanding.' IT'S FUN IT'S FREE and IT'S HEALTHY.

Sunday, 3 September, scrub clear.

Sunday, 1 October, bulb planting

Sunday, 5 November, scrub clear and shrub planting

Sunday, 3 December, shrub planting

Sunday, 4 February 2018 - Bob Wade Commemoration Day - Monster scrub clear to continue fulfilling his last wish for us all to conserve our green spaces.

Sunday, 4 March 2018 - Wild flower planting.

Sunday, 1 April 2018 – scrub clear ready for spring.

For further details see park notice boards, www.friendsofbrommhill.org.uk, find us on Facebook or contact David Park, Secretary on 01634 718972, email: davidpark1999@yahoo.co.uk

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.

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

The Chatham Historical Society

Meetings are held at The Lampard Centre, Sally Port, Brompton, ME7 5BU, **excepting January and August.**

October 21, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Bookbinding

In this one day workshop you will learn methods and styles of book binding and how to make your own case-bound book with local craftsman Mike Fitzgerald. Museum admission, refreshments and lunch included with ticket. £45.

October 28, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Huguenots and the Industrial Revolution

Nonconformist and Protestant thinking shaped the development of Great Britain following the Reformation. During the Industrial Revolution, Britain was at the forefront of innovation, an achievement in which Huguenot migrants played a significant part. With Amanda Thomas from Friends of Medway Archives. £10.

Family Events

Summer Holiday Crafts

Come along during the holidays to try a different family friendly craft activity each week.

August 17, 24 from 11:30 am - 2:30 pm; £4.00 per child.

The Saturday Club.

10.00am – 12.00 noon; £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. In March we are getting crafty making finger puppets and in April we are getting messy with tie dye! Booking is essential - see below.

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

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 Verv Hungry Caterpillar. Baby change facilities, 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. £2.00 per child, 50p per additional child, adults free. No need to book, just turn up!

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 Unless otherwise indicated, for all booking call 01634 789347.

St Catherine's Hospital

Alan Moss

Alan is Chairman of the City of Rochester Society. He was born, brought up and still lives within the old city boundary. The maternal side of his family has had roots in Rochester since at least the mid-nineteenth century. On his father's side they are newcomers - immigrants from Gillingham in 1919!



On 30 April this year a celebration was held to mark the seventh centenary of St Catherine's Hospital, one of the City of Rochester's ancient almshouse charities. Much is known about Watts' Charity, of which St Catherine's is now a part, but St Catherine's – despite pre-dating Watts' by over 250 years – has a much lower public profile.

The story of St Catherine's begins in the year 1315 with Symond Potyn. Potyn was the Master of the Crown Inn which, like its present day namesake, occupied a site close to Rochester Bridge in what was then the Parish of St Clement. He represented the city in Parliament during the reigns of Edward I and II. In 1315 he made a Will in which he ... *ordained a House with Appurtenances called the Spittell of St Katherine of Rochester in the suburbe of Eastgate* It was originally intended for men and women suffering with leprosy ... *or other pouer mendicants* Responsibility for the administration of the hospital was given to, amongst others, the Vicary of St Nicholas, Rochester, and ... *the baylie of the same cittie for the time being* When first established, the hospital was situated at the corner of Star Hill and the High Street.

The rules for those admitted to the hospital were strict; they were to be obedient, they were not to go out after dark without permission and, despite Potyn being the landlord of an inn, the rules inveighed against the inmates frequenting taverns, although it appears that they were allowed to purchase drink for home consumption. They were also ordered not to be ... *Debator, Baretor, ... nor Rybawde of his Tonge* For transgressing any of the rules they risked being evicted from the hospital with nothing except their clothes and bedding, 'for ever more'.

An inquiry, ordered by the Court of Chancery in 1704, found that the hospital had been allowed to fall into a ruinous condition with its finances depleted by the granting of long leases at rentals which did not reflect the true value of the land. Firm action was taken: the lessees were required to raise £100 towards the repair of the hospital and all new leases were granted for a term not exceeding 21 years.

In 1717 the hospital was rebuilt and remained in use until 1805, in which year new buildings were erected at the top of Star Hill – a much more salubrious position. The redundant buildings in the High Street were converted into cottages and shops and remained in situ until 1926 when they were demolished to allow for the widening of the High Street/Star Hill junction.

The building of the new hospital had been made possible through legacies from Thomas Tomlyn and Joseph Wilcocks. It had dwellings for twelve almspeople, each one having one good room with a separate wash house. Two new dwellings were added in 1831.

The fortunes of the hospital seem to have fluctuated during the nineteenth century, but by 1884, with an income of £1,000 per annum, the trustees were able to grant two out-pensions of £28 per annum and to raise the stipends of the residents from £28 to £30 per annum. Of these sums two pounds was an allowance for coal and candles. In 1917, owing to the general increase in the cost of living, the monthly stipend was increased to £2-14s-8d.

At the outbreak of the Second World War some of the residents were evacuated to Elham, near Canterbury, while others were taken in by relatives. However, early in 1940 they asked to be allowed to return and this was agreed, not least because their absence had made it difficult to keep the hospital free from damp. Air raid shelters were constructed, but the hospital suffered only minor damage from bombing.

In the 1950s improvements were made to the accommodation, with a separate living room and bedroom being provided for each resident, and a common room for the use of all. In 1974 a proposal was made that St Catherine's be merged with Watts' Charity and this took effect on 11 August 1975. Following further modernisation in the 1980s and 90s, St Catherine's now has 11 self-contained flats for the elderly.

The plaque.



Sources

A History of Rochester, F F Smith;

A History of the Richard Watts Charity, E J F Hinkley.

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

HUGUENOT MUSEUM

discover your story

Huguenot Museum Main Events

September 9, 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Heritage Open Day

Visit us for FREE on Heritage Open Day and find out how you too can trace your family history!

September 9, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Fan Making Workshop

In this workshop experienced tutors from The Fan Museum will provide expert guidance and a wealth of knowledge about the history and craft of fans. Fan sticks and equipment will be provided by The Fan Museum; all you should bring with you is a sheet of paper. Gift wrap is suitable, but not too shiny or folded. Refreshments and Museum entry included with your ticket. £35.

September 16, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Cultural Heritage of the Huguenots

Blue Badge guide Sue Jackson explores the trades, crafts and cultural contribution of Huguenot refugees in the Georgian age of elegance. Museum admission included with ticket. £10.

September 29, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Tour of the Museum and French Hospital

Take a tour of the Huguenot Museum and French Hospital, both on Rochester High Street. Refreshments included. £12,

September 30, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

Herbal Workshop

See a tincture making demonstration led by Lucy Vertue and try making your own herbal ointment, cream and lip balm. Lucy is a practising Medical Herbalist in Kent. Museum admission and refreshments included with ticket. £45.

September 30, 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

The Silk Weaver

Liz Trenow's talk will launch our new Historical Novel Book Club. Please get in touch if you are interested in getting involved. Includes Museum admission. £10.00

October 14, 10:30 am - 11:30 am

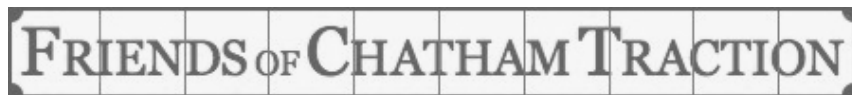
Family Music Gig

We loved having David Gibb for Sweeps Festival so are happy to announce his return to celebrate the release of his second album *Climb That Tree*. Children £3, adults 50p a ticket.

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 see www.friendsoftheguildhall.com/events/**



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

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

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

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

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

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, its events and how to join is available. All talks are at The Moat House, 8 Crow Lane, Rochester, ME1 1RF; there is a small charge for events to defray expenses.

A Clock Tower Special Feature

The Dutch Raid 1667

The Medway Raid or De Tocht naar Chatham

Catharina Clement



The Medway Raid was the final battle of the Second Dutch War (1665-1667) and part of a series of three wars in the third quarter of the seventeenth century over trade and control of the seas. At this period the Dutch were at the height of their naval, trading and cultural power. Background events to the Dutch raid included the Great Plague of 1665, which wiped out between 25 to 30 per cent of the population (at Chatham over 500 perished) and the Great Fire of London the following year, which badly affected trade and commerce. These events were depicted by the Dutch in their artwork and pamphlets as God's punishment for *Terschelling*; an unauthorised raid on this Friesian island by Robert Holmes in August 1666, resulted in what became known as Holmes' Bonfire.

Many excellent accounts exist of the English defeat, especially those written for the tercentenary in 1967; in particular the 1970 work by P. Rogers (*Dutch in the Medway*), who for the first time drew on both English and Dutch primary sources. However, this article will focus on events from the viewpoint of the victor, the Dutch. As victors they have written a great deal about this battle and it is still seen as the pinnacle of Dutch supremacy over the English in their history. My mother was taught at school (in Zeeland the birthplace of Admiral de Ruyter) that this was the last time the English were successfully invaded and considered it strange that the English would want to remember, let alone mark this event in 1967. My parents visited the Dutch Naval Week at Chatham in 1967.

The Dutch were in fact much closer to events happening on the River Medway than the English and, therefore, had a more accurate recollection of the exact movements and have also been more inclined to examine the events in greater detail over the last century or so. Van Waning and Van der Moer's 1981 book (*Dese Aengenaeme Tocht: Chatham 1667*) is the Dutch equivalent of Roger's work in that they re-examined the sources and tried to re-analyse events through the eyes of the seamen.

Tide and Weather Conditions

On the fateful day of 22 June 1667 (12 June in the English calendar) Van Waning and Van der Moer concluded that the tide at Gillingham was high at 13.30, the approximate time of

the breaching of the chain , with a spring tide and full moon. The currents around the chain were west/east with a north-easterly wind. The Dutch Vice Admiral, Engel de Ruyter commented that ‘the wind was E.N.E and it was cool - on 24 June he advised it was misty again, but cleared up as previous mornings by around 7am.’

Van Brakel’s Journal

Dutch Rear Admiral, Jan van Brakel’s journal is viewed as the definitive Dutch account of events on the 21/22 June 1667 and was published shortly afterwards. He was best placed in terms of proximity and involvement in affairs to record events accurately. However, even his account should be treated with caution as he was under threat of charges and hence wanted to play a leading role to curry favour with those in power.

‘Tuesday 21 June. Then 8 of our sailors and 8 soldiers were ordered to go aboard the warship the *Vliegende Faam*, led by commander De Munnik, in order to survey the river at Chatham; our reports also indicated that all the great king’s ships lay there. They had sailed up the river a short way and gave us the news that the English had sunk a few ships across the river, whereupon Van Ghent held war talks and resolved to sail there with 10 ships and 3 fireships. We put the plan into action that evening and sailed up Chatham river at seven in the evening. Shortly afterwards LA (Lieutenant Admiral) van Ghent allowed the white flag to fly from the foremast, and said that the soldiers and sailors must come aboard, which they did. And they have off their own accord burnt and destroyed all the houses and barracks around the fort. (referring to Sheerness)

Wednesday 22 June. Van Ghent allowed the blue flag to fly and his contingent sailed into the Medway. The English had sunk most of their fireships across the river, but had however not blocked off the river fully or we would not have found an opening that we could get through, and sail onward. There we saw our ships in a diversionary attack on 6 English warships, all those laid up with them were familiar to us. Therefore he (Brakel) had requested permission to go with his ship over to them and that he be allowed to second two fireships; permission was granted to him. Then we dropped anchor and our other ships sailed past and found the English ships laying in the following manner: two king’s ships lay by a heavy iron chain that was tightly secured to wooden posts; on each side of the chain (on land) were a battery with 8 pieces, as well as muskets. Regardless of all the shooting from the ships and batteries we sailed right up to the English with our ships and drew up alongside the *Unity* with 42 pieces on board, which we boarded and captured. The fireship *Suzanna* followed us and sailed right up to the chain until she was forced back by the burning; she was followed by the fireship *Pro Patria* which sailed right over the chain and broke it and drew up alongside the burning ship the *Matthias*, with 52 pieces on board. The third fireship, the *Delft*, was shot into the ground and sunk alongside the *Charles V*. The fourth the *Schiedam* followed. We had the ship the *Unity* under control and found ourselves without a sloop or boat; when we called to the sailors aboard Captain Naellhout’s sloop, which we boarded. Then our Captain and Lieutenant Van Borsselen with a few sailors rowed over to the *Charles V* (48 pieces), whereupon our Captain climbed up onto the bow and our other sailors boarded via the bulwarks and found the English in the armoury trying to defend her. Her position was called out every quarter of an hour. Our Captain was handed a *vendel* [type of sword], a sword, two pistols, and ordered a trumpeter to take down the flag, which was done. Then Lt Borsselen received the collar ring and sword.

Medway Archives Centre

The new Medway Archives Centre is now open to the public. Our new address is 32 Bryant Road, Strood ME2 3EP (previously the old Strood library). Contact our expert team if you require further information on 01634 332714. For further details see the MAC Facebook page www.facebook.com/malsc/ , the FOMA website (www.foma-lsc.org) and Facebook page www.facebook.com/fomalsc/

We are now in a position to consider Local Studies donations. Please e-mail the local studies Librarian at malsc@medway.gov.uk

Current electoral registers can be still be viewed at Gun Wharf. Please contact the Electoral Services Team on 01634 332030 to arrange an appointment.

Talks and Exhibitions

Thursday 7 September, 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm

Sleep Well: England will Avenge,

The Chatham Air Raid of 3rd September 1917 and its victims.

Join us for a fascinating talk by Marcus Bedingfield about the Drill Hall bombing of 1917.

Free to attend.

For more information call 01634 332714.

Saturday 14 October, 11.00 pm to 4.00 pm.

The Moving Prefab Museum and Archive Exhibition.

The Prefab Meseum celebrates post-war prefabs and their residents.

Bring your prefab memories, stories and photos!

Unless otherwise state, all events take place at the Medway Archives Centre, 32 Bryant Road, Strood, Rochester, ME2 3EP. Until further notice, the postal address is Medway Archives Office, c/o Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4TR.

Eastgate House

We are delighted that Eastgate House re-opened to the public on Wednesday 19 July 2017. Normal opening hours will be Wednesday to Sunday, 10am to 5pm (last admissions 4.30pm). It will also be possible to open the house on Mondays and Tuesdays as and when required, for example for large group visits and special events.

The Council Heritage Team is still recruiting volunteers who can give up some regular or occasional hours to guide visitors around the house. Seats will be provided so volunteers will not have to stand the whole time they are helping.

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

News and Events

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Talks and Events

Tuesday September 12, 7.30 pm.

Relocating the Archive.

The trials and tribulations of moving MALSC.

A talk by MALSC Archivist, Alison Cable.

Thursday 14 September 2017 to Saturday 18 November

FOMA Exhibition

The Ultimate Sacrifice: The Men of the Medway Towns 1917

Medway Archives Centre., 32 Bryant Road, Strood, Rochester, ME2 3EP.

Saturday October 28, 7.30 pm.

Quiz Night.

£8 for members and non-members. **BOOKING REQUIRED** (see below).

Please do your best to get a table of friends together!

Tuesday November 14, 7.30 pm.

Establishing the Commonwealth War Graves Commission 1917.

A hundred years on from its establishment in 1917, discover why it was set up and what it does today.

A talk; speaker from The Commonwealth War Graves Commission to be confirmed.

Tuesday 1 March 2018, 7.30 pm

Untold Stories and Hidden Treasures

Is Rochester Cathedral revealing its secrets?

A talk by Simon Lace, Rochester Cathedral Chapter Clerk, Executive Director.

Tuesday 13 April 2018, 7.00 for 7.30 pm,

FOMA AGM

Booking for FOMA events is not necessary and until further notice they are held at Frindsbury Parish Hall, 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.

Joining FOMA is easy and can be done on the website (www.foma-lsc.org); membership enquiries can also be directed to the Membership Secretary, Betty Cole, 98 The Wharf, Dock Head Road, Chatham ME4 4ZS, Kent. Telephone: 01634 892976; email: betty-cole@outlook.com

After that we led a Captain, a Lieut-Captain off the ship and had to use our *houwers* [type of sword] in order to keep the enemy out of the sloop, because they intended to overpower us. The Captain of the ship intended to escape by swimming, but was captured and brought aboard; have captured from both ships, 56. Her other sailors, who had seen the destruction first hand, fled to land by sloops, boats or swam. A regiment was based on land by the chain, whom we overcame with a few cannon and musket shots and they confused, fled. The battery men shot with cannon and musket; we with similar weapons, and they with the loss of their people deserted. So a free passage was created in order to bring our resolution to fruition. In the meantime our other ships sailed up the river and the great King's ship the *Royal Charles*, the finest ship in England, was taken by these 6 ships; as well as the *Unity* and the *Charles V*, which we grounded and burnt. And two further English ships were also burnt. There were a further three ships by the wooden floats which they had sunk themselves. Whilst we lay alongside the *Unity* Mr de Witt and Mr de Ruyter came aboard, wished us luck, as well as LA van Nes. Then many people went on land and returned with great booty.'

In the next issue of The Clock Tower Catharina Clement will investigate other non-English sources of the Medway Raid.

The 350th Commemorations – From the Viewpoint of Council's Heritage Team

Abby Found, Heritage Development Officer



2017 marks the 350th anniversary of the Dutch Raid on the Medway; a daring attack by the Dutch fleet that sailed up the river and laid waste to the English Fleet that was anchored at Chatham. Whilst a humiliating defeat at the time, the resulting reforms would ultimately lead to England becoming the world's dominant naval power for years to come. Upnor Castle, now owned and operated by Medway Council, played a key role in this engagement, and over this summer has acted as the focus for a series of Heritage Lottery Funded activities to commemorate the Battle.

The planning for the project began back in 2015, when Medway Council's Heritage Team met with representatives from the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust to put together a programme of events and activities to mark this anniversary. This would lead to the submission of a successful Heritage Lottery bid. The aim of the project was not only to bring this important historical event to the attention to local Medway residents and visitors to the area, but to also ensure a long-term lasting legacy.

The summer's commemorations were kicked off in style, when a party of Anglo-Dutch VIPs, including Prince Moritz visited Upnor Castle to open a new permanent exhibition that tells the story of the Dutch Raid on the Medway. This exciting new exhibition includes models by set designer Andy Stead and features specially commissioned artwork by local artist Kevin Clarkson to bring the dramatic story to life. Our Dutch visitors were treated to the sight of a flotilla of thirty Dutch vessels sailing up the Medway.

As well as the new permanent exhibition at Upnor a second temporary exhibition *Breaking the Chain* is currently on show at the Historic Dockyard where a collection of historic documents and artworks contemporary with the Dutch Raid have been gathered together for the first time. The exhibition at the dockyard runs until September. A series of evening talks by expert lecturers, including Rebecca Rideal, author of *1666: Plague, War and Hellfire*, have also taken place across Medway.

A highlight of the summer was a living history and re-enactment weekend which brought the events of June 1667 to life within the grounds of Upnor Castle. The event saw a record number of visitors, with in excess of 1,200 people visiting Upnor over the course of the weekend. Visitors were treated to live action musket and cannon fire, cookery demonstrations, a working printing press, and the sight of an Anglo-Dutch skirmish. The event was filmed by students from the University of Creative Arts as part of their film studies course.

Medway's school children have also been involved in this Heritage Lottery funded project through a series of on-site interactive history sessions led by a troupe of professional actors aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils (7 – 11 years old). Sessions for Medway's Secondary Schools have also been held at Chatham Historic Dockyard, whilst a series of family craft activities and artist led workshops are enabling families to learn together about the Dutch Raid. These have included screen-printing, knitting, painting and tours of the site by re-enactors.

As well as the new exhibition, visitors to Upnor Castle are also benefiting from the production of a free interpretive guidebook that tells the story of the Dutch Raid and sets the events of 1667 in their historical context. Our younger visitors benefit too with their own new interactive guidebook told through the eyes of the Battle of Medway character, Samuel Squeaks. Both these free new guidebooks were created entirely in-house by Medway Council and have been well received by our visitors.

Thanks to the generosity of the Heritage Lottery Fund the events of 1667 have been brought to life. Upnor Castle and Medway have featured in the national press, including on the front page of the BBC News website. As a result of the commemorations, Upnor Castle is enjoying one of its best years to date.

Margaret Sandiers died in 1836, and although living in Leintwardine, was buried at Hopesay, to be 'near' her daughter. Unfortunately her surname, and Ursula's, is recorded in the registers as Saunders. More deaf clergymen?!

George Urwick moved to Ludlow where in 1841 he was a farmer in St Mary Lane with one child Anna Maria born in 1839, the earlier daughter, Mary Anne, having died as mentioned above. Strangely again, an advertisement in the Shrewsbury Chronicle of 1843 announces the sale of the Raven Inn, 'now in the occupation of Mr George Urwick Sandiers'. Now, George's profession seems more consistent with 'maltster.' By 1851 he is a lodger and an accountant without wife or child. He died in Ludlow in 1858. His daughter Anna Maria (also called 'Ann') was a boarder herself in 1851, lodging in Leominster where she was at school; although it is debateable if this is the same girl, as she is listed as 'butcher's daughter. George really does seem a man of many trades!

In 1869 Ann Maria was a witness at the Downton wedding of Frances Urwick. This corroborates the idea that Margaret Sandiers family were of local Urwick stock, and that she moved back to her family after George Snr.'s death. How did she come to meet a man working in Chatham?

Charles Sandiers, the one who inherited the eight day clock, was born in Gillingham, Kent in 1806 and was a wine merchant. A daughter Margaret was also born in Gillingham in 1808 but disappears from the records. Charles died in 1880 in Coventry. His wife was called Mary, and as no other Mary Sandiers has been found, it is plausible that the Mary named as inheritor in the will may have been this one, Margaret's daughter-in-law. They had no children. In 1881 Anna Maria, George's daughter, was living as a companion to Mary who was living 'on her own means, with dividends from railway stock.' Could this indicate where Margaret's wealth was from?

Anna Maria lived to a good age, also in the Coventry area. Her body was buried in Clifton Road Cemetery, Rugby with the inscription: Anne Maria Sandiers, born 15 October 1839, died 2 June 1939, nearly 100 years old. *The Leicester Daily Mercury* recorded 'One Short of a Century: Rugby Woman's Death. Rugby's oldest woman died today after a short illness.'

And quite probably the last of the Sandiers in England.

What's in a Name?

Vivienne Milton Simkins

Due to the British method of naming, i.e. giving children their father's surname whilst married women lose their maiden names, the continuation of surnames is not to be taken for granted. Some have just disappeared altogether. The First World War also played a part. Many names that were common in a particular area were lost in the deaths of the affectionately named Pals Battalions, as recruits joined from the same parish, and died together.

One rare surname that I have found in our will collection is Sandiers. This doesn't sound very unusual but according to the *Forebears* website, there are only five people now with that name, all in the USA.

On 11 November 1835 Margaret Sandiers of Leintwardine, a widow in ill-health, wrote her will. She left her son George Urwick Sandiers his father's miniature mourning ring and drinking horns. To her son Charles Sandiers she gave the eight day clock and the 'likeness of himself and his late sister Ursula.' Everything else, and we don't know what that was, was left to her daughter Mary.

On the trail of this family, it appears that George Urwick was born in Chatham, Kent in 1805 the son of Margaret and George Sandiers. Margaret and George Snr. were married in London in Sep 1804. Urwick, it seems, was Margaret's maiden name and Ursula the deceased daughter referred to, also had the second name of Urwick. Ursula was buried at Hopesay in 1827, she was only 16. Her abode was given as Crows Moor, now a farm at Long Meadow End, near Aston-on-Clun. The family had come a long way from Chatham. What brought them there? What happened to father George? A search of the National Archives revealed a will made by him in 1821: George Sandiers, overseer on Chatham Lines. (*The Lines is the scarp slope and ridge of the North Downs looking down on the dockyard and the river Medway. The consensus at the Medway Archives is that he was almost certainly overseeing the construction on the dockyard defences across the Lines. The work was conducted mainly by the army.*) This is probably when and why Margaret moved back to the area, and was the year in which Ursula was born

She wrote the will in the same year in fact in which George Urwick Sandiers's daughter Mary Anne was baptised and buried in Leintwardine. His profession was schoolmaster. One might wonder if this was the error of a deaf clergyman, as when he had married Ann Maria Price in Leominster in 1928, the Hereford Journal described him as a maltster, of Ludlow.

Perhaps Margaret moved her family to Leintwardine after her husband died, to be near George and his wife Anna Maria.

Battle Of Medway or When The Dutch Gave Us A Bloody Nose

Sue Haydock



For about two years, from 1665 to 1667 the Dutch and English had been knocking seven bells out of each others' navies in tit-for-tat raids and engagements, now known as the Second Anglo-Dutch Wars. Matters came to a head when the English fleet attacked the Dutch merchant fleet at anchor, in August 1666. Between 150 and 170 Dutch ships were lost, the local village of West-Terschelling went up in flames and at least 2,000 people lost their lives.

This event set the scene for the so-called Battle of Medway. On 8 June 1667, following the plague in 1665 and the Great Fire of London in 1666, another disaster was about to beset the English. Two hundred Dutch ships, led by Admiral Michiel de Ruyter, assembled in the Thames Estuary and attacked Sheerness. Then the ships sailed up to Chatham, breaking the chain across the river, and set fire to several ships, before making off with the English flagship, HMS *Royal Charles*.

At that time sailors had not been paid, ships had not been repaired and the dockyard was not well defended. The raid was a national disaster, and the effect was to project the King and Government into pouring money into ship building, protecting dockyards and generally improving the lot of seamen. This, in turn, led to Britain ruling the seas for the next 200 years.

But that is why from 8 June to 17 June we had all those celebrations, turning fire to friendship, and welcoming a modern fleet of small ships from the Netherlands, a member of their royal family, and a fantastic firework display to end it all! I was lucky enough to be at the opening ceremony at Chatham Historic Dockyard. There were displays by the Royal Marines and the Marine Band of the Royal Netherlands Navy. Looking on, and taking the salutes were HH Prince Maurits of Orange-Nassau, van Vollenhoven, and the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Viscount De L'Isle. Also present were The First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Philip Jones, and Lieutenant General Rob Verkerk, Commander of the Royal Netherlands Navy. Fine weather prevailed and the marching displays and musical prowess of the bands was well received.



From left to right: Lieutenant General Rob Verkerk, Commander of the Royal Netherlands Navy, Prince Maurits of Orange-Nassau, van Vollenhoven, prince of the Netherlands, Lord Lieutenant of Kent and former Commander-in-Chief fleet of the Royal Navy Admiral and chairman of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, Sir Trevor Soar, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sir Philip Jones; photograph Sue Haydock.

The next event I attended was a talk given by Frits De Ruyter De Wildt, the twelfth generation direct descendant of Michiel de Ruyter, Admiral of the Dutch Fleet in 1667 (see Catharina Clement's article on page 11). His talk was humorous,

enlightening, and gave a very clear picture of the circumstances surrounding the raid, and the civil behaviour of the Dutch at Sheerness (after attacking the unfinished fort), and the unreadiness of the English. The effect on the English was to lead the way to the signing of the Peace Treaty of Breda.

The final event I attended was the Grand Finale at Chatham Maritime. Again the weather was glorious and thousands of people flocked to see the entertainment. I was there to see the short historical film just as it was getting dark, followed by the fireworks. A splendid way to end the commemoration of *From Flames to Friendship*.



Sue Haydock with author, Frits De Ruyter De Wildt.

The Commemorations from the Public Perspective

Doris Herlihy

On June 8 I attended the Opening Ceremony in Chatham's Historic Dockyard for the Commemoration of the 350th Anniversary of the Battle of Medway. 1,800 free tickets had been made available to members of the public with 200 of them in reserved seats with the rest for standing only. Seats for us I'm pleased to say!

It was a very chilly day and the strong breeze blew straight into our faces, it looked as though it could start to rain at any moment. We had to be in our seats early. Seating was arranged in a large U shape with a VIP area at the top, in the Main Square opposite the Sail Loft.

We were then treated to seeing the splendid, combined British and Dutch Royal Marine Bands perform plus a drill display by young sailors from HMS *Richmond*. The two band styles were quite different to each other when they played alone, both musically and in marching styles. The Parade was inspected and speeches were made.

across the Lines. Work was going on from the 1780s to circa 1820 and was being conducted mainly by the army. Does the will state the person's trade? Was he a builder or in the army? Our Chairman, Elaine Gardner has made some brief notes from a book in the Archives and has found a map.

Elaine Gardner: Fort Amhurst and other defences on Chatham Lines

Fortifications at Amhurst include moats, gun batteries, casements and tunnels.

Amhurst defences constructed during 18th C. In 1778 Lt Col Debbeig described them as being in a ruinous state so new Chatham lines, from St Mary's creek across the escarpment to Fort Amhurst at Chatham were begun. Main construction was from 1779 to 1786.

Between 1803 and 1810 large sums of money were spent on the Chatham lines reaching a max of £120, 000 in 1805 then declined. Further improvements were made to Amhurst to about 1820.

The whole ridge running through to Gillingham is now known as "the lines" but the name originally referred to the defensive lines above the Dockyard. In the 1850's the area was used for troop reviews (See Dickens' *Pickwick Papers*) and was used by the Royal Engineers for training purposes, esp during WW1

AT: It would appear that George was overseeing the works on the Lines, but it would be interesting to see if he was in the army or not. I would have thought his record might be available on Ancestry or Findmypast, but maybe not. If he were in the army then it could explain how he met Margaret as he might have been stationed in London. She could have come down because of trade – i.e. bringing down to the London markets sheep or cattle - or to find work. I don't know what the economic state of Herefordshire was like at that time but it may have been dire. Certainly at this time more and more people were starting to move from the country to London so it's not so unusual.

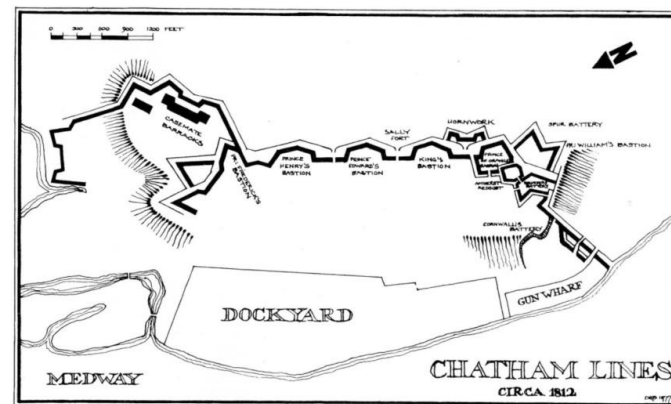


Illustration from the Medway Archives Centre.

Vivienne kindly supplied us with the article she wrote for the Leintwardine History Society Journal (Issue 60, June 2017).

Joseph died on 3 Sep 1864 (Probate record), but I could find no burial at St Nicholas or Frindsbury. So I suspected Non-Conformity. Good old Smetham (pp. 253-4) has come to the rescue with the information that the Lilleys were instrumental in establishing Wesleyan Methodism in Strood. I think he is wrong in saying that Joseph was grandfather to J. S. Lilley (a substantial builder) – he must have been the father and apparently arrived in Strood c.1811. Smetham also notes that JL was ‘manager to Mr. Joseph Brindley’ who built naval ships – and this could therefore provide the link with the dockyard.

All this is really to ask whether it is known what happened to the burials Smetham records at the long-gone Frindsbury Road Chapel and whether the ‘tablets’ were recorded? I presume there is a burial register among the wealth of material at MALSC, but I haven’t yet done a proper search. All an intriguing diversion. My interest is that William Peters was manager of the Poynder and Hobson cement works at Holborough from at least 1822 to 1846 and other members of his family were among the first members of the Independent [Congregational] church in Snodland.

Very best wishes,
Andrew Ashbee.

On Leaving the old Medway Archives Building

From Lorraine Crosby via Facebook, 11 May 2017:

Must be going on 20 years since we've been going there [the Medway Archives]. My daughter did her work experience there. Such lovely people and so many happy memories. So sad to be losing it. Good luck to all the wonderful staff who made it such a lovely place to visit.

An Overseer on the Chatham Lines

On 13 April 2017 we were contacted via the FOMA Facebook page by Vivienne Milton Simkins, archivist with Leintwardine History Society in Herefordshire .

Vivienne Milton Simkins (VMS): Can you help please? I have a will of someone who was an 'overseer on Chatham lines' in 1821. What does that mean?

VMS: Thank you for contacting me about the overseer on the Clapham Lines. It is his widow's will that I began with but I also found George's, made in 1821, when his profession is simply given as 'overseer on Chatham Lines.. I was curious as to what this job was, and how Margaret Urwick, from a small Herefordshire village, might have met him. They married in London in 1804.

Amanda Thomas (AT): I have made some enquiries and have the following information. The Lines is the scarp slope and ridge of the North Downs looking down on the dockyard and river Medway. The consensus at the Medway Archives is that your person almost certainly was overseeing the construction on dockyard defences



The Royal Marines, photograph by Doris Herlihy.

Special guests included Prince Maurits of Orange-Nassau van Vollenhoven; the First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sir Philip Jones; the Viscount De L'Isle, and the Lord Lieutenant of Kent and former Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Navy Admiral and Chairman of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, Sir Trevor Soar.

Sadly, it proved to be very confusing as to what was happening and who was who, as no-one compered the afternoon's procedures. It would have been useful for a programme to have been produced to have helped us out! However, I was proud to have witnessed the Opening Ceremony in such majestic surroundings.



Above: the Dutch Marines; right: the plaque to mark the anniversary; photographs by Hazel Thorn.



Major Thomas Scott

Peter Lyons



FOMA member Peter Lyons is retired after a career spent mostly in banking. He has participated in several local history and archaeology projects and is currently a volunteer at the Royal Engineers Museum, Chatham where he reviews, summarises and enters documentary records so that they are available to the general public on the museum's computer.

Major Thomas Scott (1788 to 1834) was an officer in the Royal Artillery and during the Napoleonic Wars was in Sicily and Spain, at Waterloo and in the Army of Occupation in France. He was born in Rochester, was a frequent visitor in later life as his mother maintained a house there, and was related to an old Kent family the Scotts of Scot's Hall, Smeeth.

Twenty three volumes of his diaries are held by the Royal Engineers Museum, Chatham, running from 1811 to 1834, with a gap from June 1814 to July 1815. Passages in these diaries relate to discipline in the army which was harsh, particularly in time of war as evidenced by these experiences beginning in Sicily and later elsewhere (spelling and punctuation as in the original):

Part 1: Army Discipline

April 17 1812 – (In Messina, Sicily) Got up early in the Morning to go to a very unpleasant business. Seven men deserters brought out to be shot - however only two suffered death for their transgressions the Corporal and the ringleader, who behaved with great fool hardiness, and during the time the sentence was reading, he turned round looked about him with the greatest unconcern directing the men to take good aim, and only regretted he had ever served such a rascally nation as the English.

April 20 - Another very unpleasant morning recreation – two Calabrese brought out on the exercising ground to be shot for desertion – one was unable to stand or kneel – he consequently lay on the ground, the firing party within 12 paces, did not even kill the poor wretches immediately - struck them on every part but vital ones – one poor devil was fired at, two minutes after the first round.

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.

Chatham Naval Dockyard 1914 - 1918

Monday, 10 July 2017.

Hello Odette,

I wonder if I could ask for your help/guidance in where to look for information on my father's service during the First World War, working as a Ordinance Artificer based at Chatham (as stated on his service passport to enable him to travel to Calais to work on the repairs to the Monitor HMS *Marshall Sault*

I know he spent most of the War up in Scotland attached to the Navy at Rosyth, Invergordon and Scapa Flow, including a Passport to go up there!!

Over the years I have spent time searching various records but seem to be bias to Service records not Civilian Personnel called up in specialist trades to work at Government Establishments.

Regards,

Stuart C. Pask.

A Strood Query

8 May 2017

I'll keep this as short as I can. For some years I have been in touch with members of the Peters family (of cement fame) and their genealogical researches. One recently got interested in trying to find why William Peters married Mary Lilley, whose family came from the Harwich area, Essex. She guessed that barges might have had something to do with it. She lives in Cambridgeshire, so had noted that Joseph Lilley, Mary's father, had moved to Strood (1841-61 censuses) and that he was a 'carpenter' (and in 1851 a 'barge builder'). I have looked at various directories [*Pigott* 1823, 1826-7 and 1840, but nothing there – no barge builders at all; Samuel Bagshaw 1847 has JL as a barge builder; I.G. Wright 1838 has him as a carpenter].

William Peters married Mary Lilley at St Mary's Chatham on 23 April 1821, witnessed by Joseph and Mary's sister Sarah Ann, which made me think that Joseph had come to work in the dockyard. The couple were 'of this parish' and married after banns.

Those at the battle of Ginnis were presented with two medals: the Egyptian medal and the Khedive Star. The Khedive was the traditional ruler of Egypt, a title sometimes assumed by the British. The medal ceremony for the DLI took place on December 17th 1886, in Cairo. Alfred was not present but certainly received his medals and wore them. Alas, they have not been kept with his papers in the trunk.



The Khedive Star 1886 with thanks to Spinks British Battles and Medals

A Brief Guide to the Life of Alfred William Baker

| When? | Rank | Where Was He? | Doing What? | Other Events |
|----------------|------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Jan – Apr 1886 | Lt | Kosheh, The Sudan | Garrison | Gladstone, P.M. |
| Apr – Jun 1886 | | Egypt | | |
| Jun – Oct 1886 | Lt | Cyprus | With convalescents | Lord Salisbury PM again |

Notes

1. Alfred William Baker (AWB) 1886 01 09 from Kosheh.
2. Ibid, AWB 1886 02 08.
3. There is a drawing and a plan of these forts at the PRO: WO 78 165.
4. AWB 1886 02 16.
5. Notebook D3. Also ten of other species. AWB 1886 02 27 has the mule race and sketch of the forts.
6. Ibid 1886 02 27, page dated March 6th.
7. AWB 1886 03 24. His May 27 letter describes the sickness as enteric (typhoid).
8. The sketch from Alfred's portfolio. A nuggar's capacity from the DLI's *The Bugle* 11 July 1895.
9. AWB 1886 04 15 and 04 17 and 04 22 to his sister Bee, all from Wady Halfa.
10. AWB 1886 05 01 from Tagoog Heights, Aswan.
11. AWB 1886 05 08 and 1886 05 27 from Tagoog Heights, the 27th letter had the sketch of Abu Simbel.
12. AWB 1886 06 01. He took 4 officers and 150 men, about 5% of the men of various regiments.
13. AWB 1886 06 11 from Ramleh.
14. AWB 1886 06 25 page 3 from Mt Troödos, Cyprus.
15. AWB 1886 06 01 from Aswan and 07 08 from Mt Troödos to his brother Ned.
16. Ibid, 1886 06 25 and 1886 07 11.

April 27 – Got up very early to go and see four of the Calabrian Free Corps hung which was attended with all the usual formalities.

May 25 – Got up very early to see two of the Legion shot – it being a very bad morning it was put off – not much pleased at it as I was purposely dressed to get wet thro'.

Scott considered himself to be less of a martinet than some of his superiors but was certainly not adverse to punishment when he considered it warranted:

August 10 1812 (In Spain) We were the only troops permitted to remain in town – our drivers behaved infamously knocked down the guard. Williamson & I went to quell the disturbance, and in belabouring the two ringleaders about the chops I broke all my knuckles against their teeth.

August 13 1812 – (In Spain) Williamson and I after flogging a man by a drum head Court Martial rode thro' the town which is fortified by works lately erected.

Executions for desertion continued:

August 28 1812 – (In Spain) Two of the 6 Battalion of the Legion were hung at St Vincente this morning for desertion - it was a shocking murderous business – obliged to dig pits under the poor wretches first to prevent them touching the ground.

September 1 1812 – (In Spain) By way of commencing the Sporting season we got up very early and went out, shot four brace of deserters – it was a very cruel business, and they were shot by couples, the others looking on kneeling on their coffins.

January 8 1813 – (In Spain) Got up for the purpose of being witness to a very unpleasant business, happily we did not get there in time to see five poor wretches shot for desertion – was glad to escape so melancholy a scene – but it is highly necessary, it having got to a great pitch in this Army - near 60 having deserted in these ten days – from our foreigners four out of six of the Legion brought in today – the other two having been shot by the Spaniards as they made a fight for it.

January 9 – Four more wretches of the Legion suffered death for desertion at St Vincente – we were not called to witness it

More entries in France and England illustrate his reluctance to be over severe but do acknowledge that punishment was sometimes not only justified but also necessary:

March 12 1816 – (In France) Had to rise very early, to carry into execution the sentence of a Court Martial, when I came home Malbuck met me with abuse about our cruelty towards the soldiers, in punishing them violently.

December 27 1816 – (France) Went out to the morning parade and found the Chief in a violent rage – swearing like a trooper – every thing [sic] going wrong and his passion getting the better of him.

December 30 – In the evening the Gife and I had a walk – took the opportunity of speaking my mind and pointed out clearly where it was impossible he and I ever could agree – am sorry that such rupture should take place but his temper gets worse and worse every day and to show an authority, he acts with the harshest severity – am glad I had an opportunity of telling him a bit of my mind – as it lays before him the estimation in which I hold his proceedings.

April 9 1817 – (France) Got up early to bestow flagellation upon a young fellow who richly deserved it.

August 19 1817 – (France) Was disturbed by Brandon with the money for the present month – and had the mortification to hear the prize money was also to be paid which will I fear cause a repetition of what I was obliged to inflict this morning for the first time since Rogers left the Brigade – after the parade made a speech appealing to their good sense as to committing excesses so as to bring down punishment on themselves.

August 22 1817 – (France) Got up early to go to parade, notwithstanding the bad appearances – the prize money began its work upon our fellows – some of them in a baddish state for the morning parade – did not think fit to put the horses to the Guns – but made the Sgt Major drill them in my presence – for an hour.

August 23 – Go up to Camp early, having a tremendous list of delinquents – I took the gentle means of reproaching them for their conduct and liberties the vagabonds were now upon trial.

September 14 1817 – (France) Went out to the morning parade – sorry to find that all the indulgencies have been entirely thrown away upon the worthless set of Drivers we have – gave a long lecture for the last time.

September 16 – Obligated to turn out at half past five to go and inflict punishment upon three blackguards – no sooner was it over than another behaved in the most mutinous manner – dispatched a Company to settle my gentlemen [sic] hash in the speediest possible way.

Cyprus on June 18th 1886. They were well out of it as up river: *the Dorsets suffered worst, 1,000 went up and 400 will come down. All who died are under 24, but it seems to be the old men who fill themselves with beer every night who die of heat apoplexy.*¹⁵

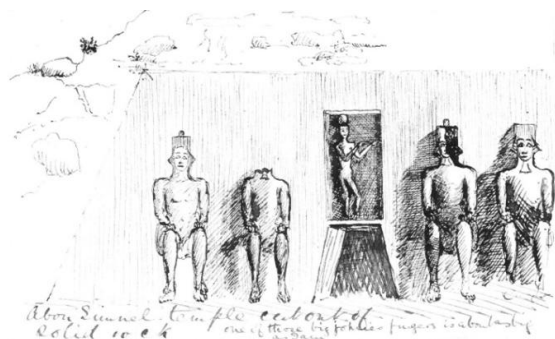
As soon as they reached Cyprus they travelled up to Troödos near Mount Olympus: *rather a different place than Aswan ... on mules and donkeys, a hundred men at a time. All travelling by night starting when the moon rose. Took us four nights. We are bang on top of the mountain, 6000 feet I believe. We form part of the convalescent depot for Egypt men, 700 in all. Swarms with poisonous snakes they say; all the natives wear knee high boots, men and women alike. Couldn't make out the object of the boots till I was told, not much chance of a flood up here. By the way where is this island? I wish you would send me a map of Europe.*

*The water is the finest thing, like soda water, a change from hot green muddy Nile water. Greek was a new challenge: I had just mastered Arabic. They don't understand me, tried to bargain for a 'ίππος the other day without seeing the animal. Knocked him down to 2 bob when the chap brought me a teapot. Evidently ancient and modern Greek are different. But there was cricket an hour's walk up the mountain where he captained The Convalescents v. the Berkshires winning by 11 runs.*¹⁶

We cannot let Alfred depart from The Sudan without a word of what happened next in the region. The Khalifa and his Dervishes held sway in The Sudan until 1896, a full ten years after the battle of Ginnis. Though their threat to Egypt was undiminished, they turned more attention eastward to Abyssinia. Kitchener, who had gained fame for his part in the failed attempt to rescue Gordon, had been in charge of the British forces on the Red sea coast of The Sudan at the time of Ginnis. He was appointed Sirdar (Commander in Chief) of the Egyptian Army in 1892. He rigorously reorganised it, with a view to retaking The Sudan. Britain may well have left The Sudan alone had not France moved towards the sources of the Nile and the Italians, attacked by Dervishes in Abyssinia, asked for military help. In 1896 Kitchener won two battles due to superior weaponry and his efficient organisation which included the laying of 500 miles of railway above Wady Halfa to supply the troops. The decisive battle was at Omdurman. Kitchener then reoccupied Khartoum in September 1896 avenging General Gordon (Ref 7) and he came to an agreement with the French general and both could withdraw.

If there were more letters from Alfred in Cyprus after July 1886 they have not survived. From his own list of dates and places, he left the island in October with his contingent now in better health, returned to Alexandria for a week before shipping back to England. 400 men of the DLI including Alfred were transferred at this point to the 1st Battalion, which had come from India to form part of the garrison at Colchester, while the 2nd Battalion sailed on from Suez to India to be stationed at Poona (Ref 8). Alfred reached England on November 16th, 1886.

Alfred's regiment was the last to leave; he had to load camels all morning on April 29th and then march to the river. It was a gloomy business burying two men a day and sending many home sick, as the temperature reached 120F.



Abu Simbel: Alfred's comment: one of their fingers is about as big as I am.

They were soon back in the stern-wheelers towing barges down to Aswan. *I am boss-man of one and will contrive to get wrecked at convenient spots. Sure enough: ran aground 50 times and one steamer wrecked.* The gloom got to him as he signed off expecting the Dervishes to take advantage of their retreat: *you will hear soon of the massacre of the garrison at W Halfa. I am the remains of (skin and bone) A W Baker.*¹⁰

Aswan seems to have been better provisioned: *...beginning to get fat again. I can understand the good will in the saying "May your shadow never grow less". I wish I had Bert here: it would puzzle him to find something to do.* All Alfred found was a walk and a tub in the evenings. He dared not hope for leave as the number of officers, supposed to be at least a dozen out of the full-strength 25, was down to eight or so due to sickness. One letter ends: *enclosed a young scorpion; don't touch his tail. I caught this joker at breakfast. Off to funeral...*

*Bought a gee the other day for £10, necessary as they put me on courts martial 5 miles from here. Made rather a good bargain too, shall get more for him if we are relieved. We take turns with the 19th to bury men from hospital – four last night – heavy work.*¹¹

Very soon he was able to sell his horse at a profit, because he was offered an escape from Egypt: *I am going to get out of this place for a time. Have to take a party of men, not sick but those most likely to die if left here. I am lucky enough to have got the job of taking them to Ramleh.*¹² Once there: *You can't imagine the change after being up river; trees and ladies with white faces and much cooler.*¹³ And cricket! *Played one game on a pavement in the midst of sand and received one ball which proved sufficient as I hit it too high,*¹⁴ a modest account as his notebook also recorded that he took 3 wickets for 16 runs.

Alfred was now on his way out of Egypt. He was in charge of 130 men from various regiments of the Nile force. They sailed from Alexandria to Limasol in

April 15 1818 – (France) Had the pleasing occupation of a Court Martial during the morning – as is generally the case Monsieur le Major and myself had a bicker - 'tis very odd that we never quarrel upon any other points – but his ideas of discipline never can accord – nor can I carry in mind the bad behaviour of men in former times, when their character has stood fair for several months – and for little indiscretions which soldiers commit – tho' they ought to be met with punishment – yet that ought to be administered with a lenient hand – who of us, is there that sometimes does not commit excesses – if we then with so much more sense, are at times foolish and indiscrete – surely we ought to have some compassion for the frailty of others – who possess a less knowledge of a just propriety of conduct. R & I shall never agree upon this head.

July 11 1818 – (France) Had an unpleasant task to perform going to see a punishment – it was given in very proper style and I should think would have a proper effect upon the minds of the blackguards of which we have too many – they constantly give us vexation and trouble.

January 2 1824 – (Woolwich) Found I had plenty of duty to do in the way of a Court Martial upon an unfortunate Sergt. Of Kitehells for allowing the Company to be in a most insubordinate state, from the inactiveness of his character – want of firmness and due consideration for his station – it is distressing to see an old soldier in such a situation – I felt deeply for him and endeavoured to make out the best possible defence for him – in hopes that he may be discharged without being reduced.

January 30 1824 – (Woolwich) Was called up to the barracks to set a Court Martial – a disagreeable affair, but highly necessary in the present equalising times, when the lower orders claim equal rights to their superiors - and ideas subversive of discipline.

March 3 1827 – (Woolwich) There is a report that one of our men in Portugal knocked Wilgers down for which he has been shot – deservedly – in these times of liberty and equality it is essential to let soldiers know that there is yet some discipline to be observed in the Army.

October 31 1829 – (Woolwich) Went to the Reading Room in the middle of the day – was astonished at the perusal of Col. Bailey's Court Martial, upon the charges of punishing men most cruelly by dipping the Cats in brine – and the Court only sentenced him to be admonished – on account of his not knowing such to be the case – however as the King remarks on the proceedings, if such were the case & things go on in a Regt. without his knowledge, he undoubtedly was not fit to command.

Charles Larkin 1775 - 1833

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.

Part 4

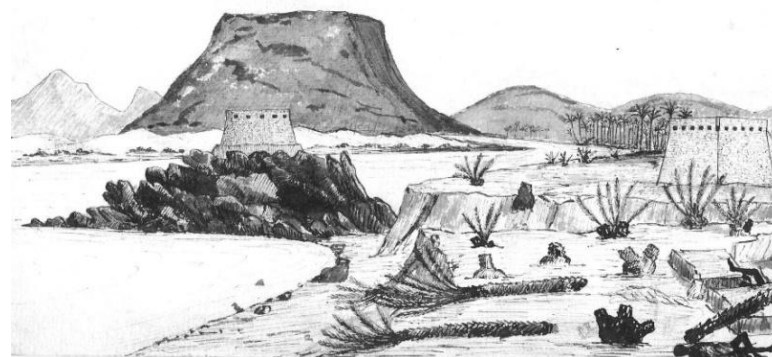
By 1806 Larkin was also concerned with the state of local politics. In the course of the election that year there was a proposed rejection of Admiral Sir William Sydney Smith as one of the candidates and at the closing of the poll there were accusations that the election of James Barnett was illegal. When at '*the closing of the Poll*' Mr Dennis O'Brien, agent for the Admiral made '*base and infamous assertions*' which he then had '*propagated by every newspaper open for the reception of calumny ... never opened his mouth but for the purpose of dealing out other abuse of slander... threatening the returning Officer, deriding the candidates, calumniating and abusing the Electors.*' In reply to this Larkin produced in, December 1806:

'TRUTH UNMASKED; or a True Delineation of Circumstances Attending the Late Extraordinary Contest, for the Representatives of the City of Rochester, with Remarks on the Address of Mr Dennis O'Brien, at the Conclusion of the Poll.'

Larkin explained as Mr Hulkes, elected in 1802, had stated that he would not stand again and it '*... being generally supposed that Sir Sydney Smith would neither offer himself, or be offered as candidate again because the direliction [sic] of his principle manifested by his conduct in Parliament...his total disregard to application of his Constituents, amounting even to contempt his absence abroad' and 'his inability to attend his duty as a Legislator.'*

The true delineation took thirty three pages to describe the procedure followed by the Freeman, including himself, in promoting the two men chosen as candidates, why they were selected and why Sir Sydney Smith was rejected and the '*artful misrepresentation*' of that '*modest, Meek Adjutant General of Westminster bludgeon, Mr O'Brien.*'

Larkin stated:

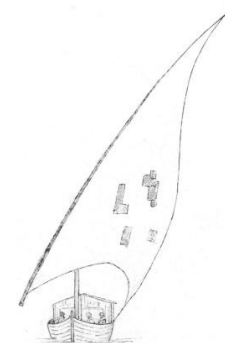


1886 sketch by Alfred of the forts they built at Firket

sick list, others including himself bad at times. Nothing wrong with his humour though: *fashionable here now: any amount of ex MPs and other globetrotters visiting the battlefield. They generally go back quicker than they come though; get sick. Also: The doctor has just gone sick so we shall have a chance.*⁶

In March Alfred and another officer were called downstream to Wady Halfa to take an exam. Leaving Kosheh by camel to take the boat, they lost their way, missed the boat, took fresh camels and rode on, 30 to 40 miles to the railway at Akasheh. Next day 87 miles in a jolting train. A month later, back at Kosheh he heard they were to withdraw downstream, following the policy decisions of December. Everyone was thankful as disease was taking an undue toll. The seasonal drop in the level of the Nile was expected to restrict boat movement, hence the sudden haste. Alfred reported the Army chatter: *the n[*]ggers are trying to turn it off up above.*⁷ He had passed his exam, was proud not to be on the sick list and only too thankful to be leaving.

*A Nile nuggar, able to carry 20 tons of freight.*⁸



A week later he was still at Kosheh, packing up all the stores and getting them by camel to a navigable stretch of the river. The huts recently built were all to be blown up, but *they can't make us plant the palm trees again.* Captured caravans were sold back to the Sudanese. They moved down river, blowing up or burning anything of use and not portable: huts, boats and the railway. *No amusement but I have the skin of a Green Bee-eater for you. Two days later: cannot send the bird so enclose flower of cotton-bush. Yours perspiringly.. A W Baker.*⁹



Alfred's sketch of a sunset, possibly looking upstream to Jebel Abri from Kosheh. January 1886. The village of Ginnis would be on the left of this scene.

I have been trying to discover the ways of the game. Gazelle come in threes and fours down the mullahs to feed in the early morning and evening. Wild geese sit in pairs on the rocks out in the stream all day and feed on the banks at night. Sandgrouse come down to the river from the desert every morning at 9 o'clock, have a drink and go back regular as clockwork: like partridges, bigger with shaped wings for flying long distances. The only other things are rock doves and a sort of silly plover.

We have started a hunt here; one meet so far. The pariah dog is the fox and the game is to ride him down. It gives a first-rate gallop. Mules are first rate and would think nothing of going down the cliffs of Dover. We have also a race meeting: I shall go for the mule steeplechase.²

By mid February, we are building ourselves mud huts instead of knocking down Arab ones. A wonderful variety of skills I'm picking up; cutting trees and building, not to mention a little in the nautical line. We have cut down all the palm trees and levelled the houses for about 1½ miles in front of our position and stuck up two small forts³ I have found a dodge for getting sandgrouse, by going out to a sandbank at 8.30 in the morning. They come down as regularly as possible about 9 o'clock for a drink. I got 4 yesterday; they make a variety in the diet.⁴ In one of the notebooks he listed the game he had shot in those three months at Kosheh: 11 sandgrouse, 26 partridge, 4 (Blacksmith?) plover, a goose, 2 snipe, 5 pigeons and even a pelican.⁵ Later, the race meeting was a success. I rode in a mule race and after a desperate finish saved being last by a head.

As before there were rumours of staying, of going further up river, or of being posted on to India. Anything would be better than knocking about here. I expect we shall grumble just the same. I believe if we were quartered in paradise everyone would grumble. He calculated that 11 of their 17 officers had been on the

'... that no man was more ready than myself to pay a just tribute due to the professional merits of that gallant Knight but that we were met there to consider his virtues, as a Legislator, and not as an Admiral, and that it was neither constitutional nor fair to endeavour, by a splendid embellishment of his achievements in one capacity, to dazzle the eyes of his constituents.'

The chosen candidates were John Calcraft, a 'Patriotic and independent mind ... who from his political principles, as well as his private character ... would be congenial to the Freeman ... supported by the Independent interests of the City,' whose candidature was acquired 'without the slightest solicitation on his part,' and Sir Thomas Boulden Thompson, controller of the Navy, who it was felt would be well received by the City. After an appeal by the Tory faction to the Treasury Sir Sydney Smith was reinstated as a candidate.

According to Larkin, having, after several journeys, meetings and altercations arrived at two candidates, instead of the usual three, it was felt that it would not be necessary to put the City to the expense of an election. However at the last moment Mr James Barnett a 'Banker, in Lombard Street, neither a General, or an Admiral but a gentleman of sound Constitutional principles, possessing a patriotic mind, and old member of the Whig Club, and an honest man,' was added.

It seems that there was a disagreement during the polling, concerning the time that the Mayor, the Returning Officer, should close the Poll. Of the approximately nine hundred qualified to vote 'about five or six hundred were non residents.' (John Prall an agent for James Barnett during his examination by the Committee) many of whom lived some distance from Rochester and it was felt that they had not had time to arrive. The main issue seems to have turned on who said what. to whom, on what day, at what time and who was present at that time. Larkin also mocked the *Hibernian Adventurer* (presumably O'Brien) for attempting to bribe the electors with 'the magnificent and patriotic sum of £5,000' that had not produced the desired effect. John Calcraft and James Barnett were elected.

This was not the end of it. A petition was presented to Parliament by four Freeman of Rochester, Thomas Moulden, H. Lark, R. Brooks and G Warner complaining that John Calcraft and James Barnett were elected '... to the injury and grievance of your petitioners, and in gross violation of the freedom of Election, the standing orders and regulations of your honorable house, and contrary to the laws and statutes of this realm.'

Their evidence to the Select Committee included:

1. ... various violent acts & outrages committed
2. Honorary Freeman voted contrary to the byelaws of the City of Rochester
3. Bribes by James Barnett of meat, drink, entertainments, promises, agreements, obligations, presents, rewards, engagements to vote for him.
4. Public Houses open for treating the voters at the *King's Head*, Mr Holloway, the

Master, where more than £700 was incurred, the *Cock*, ‘The North Foreland, the *Two Sawyers*, the *George*, the *Dredging Boat*, the *Blue Boar* and the *Star* court within a court called for the sole purpose of electing certain freemen which was against the Statutory Law passed by Charles II, Byelaw well adapted for preventing any undue influence being used at an election, and ... requiring that persons should have their freedom twelve calendar months, or any given time before the Election, but in Substance the Mayor should not hold any corporate assembly for introducing anybody to his advantage after dissolution - no meeting after the issue of writ for election.’

Out of seventy applicants forty nine freemen were elected during the court which lasted from four o’clock in the afternoon until three in the morning. According to the evidence of Denis O’Brien ‘access to the hustings’ during the court proceedings was impossible ‘there having been an absolute blockage of the passages ... the close compartment of human beings forced off its hinges and the noise and clamour was so great it was a considerable time before I could obtain a hearing ... the noise and clamour continuing whenever I rose.’

The Committee decided ‘That the right of voting for members to serve in Parliament at Rochester, is in all Freemen not receiving alms or charity and also that the said committee have determined that James Barnett be duly elected a citizen to serve at this present Parliament for the City of Rochester.’

Another election was called for the following year due to the sudden dissolution of Parliament. This time Sir Thomas Boulden Thompson was elected in place of James Barnett, however he was returned again in 1816 at the election caused by the need for a replacement for Sir Thomas who had accepted the office of Treasurer of the Royal Hospital at Chelsea.

The 1806 election was not the only one involving a bribe. According to Henry Smetham, towards the end of the poll in 1835 it was realised that the numbers for each side were equal so £500 was offered to a Mr Janes of the *Duke’s Head* public house. He accepted and the bribe was successful. According to Smetham, Charles Larkin was on the side that paid Mr Janes ‘and doubtless rejoiced greatly, as in fact he did at the local dinner held to celebrate the victory, where much musical praise was offered to this moral achievement.’ However when that election took place Larkin had been dead for two years.

Travels of a Tin Trunk

Michael Baker



Michael Baker’s interest in family history was started by a great-uncle who once unrolled a family tree on the dining-room table. It was seven feet long. After a career in Electrical Engineering, including 20 years overseas, he opened some boxes in the Owletts’ attic ...

In his issue of The Clock Tower, the fascinating story continues of what Michael found in the tin trunk belonging to Alfred, the brother of Michael’s grandfather, Herbert Baker.

Part 5

After the Battle, 1886

The excitement over, the soldier’s life settled down to manning the outpost of Kosheh. They were employed cutting down palm trees and destroying the village that had been an advance post of the enemy.

By the end of January Alfred and his fellow officers had a mess going, ordering what they wanted to come up river. He praised some enterprising Greeks who appeared with condensed milk, bread, meat and jam, at a price, but welcome. He could be terse too. Writing to his parents: *I wish you would finish those elections in England and decide what to do with this place. It is heartily detested by all troops and is not worth holding. You have formed too high an opinion of Egypt; it is not a country at all but a river and 40 yards each side to grow crops and date palms (there is a tax of 9d a year on each palm tree). If you come to settle out here as you talked about bring a water-can.*¹ He was echoing an Arab saying “when Allah made The Sudan, he laughed.”

By now sickness was rife and *summer would be awful*. Within a week they were building mud huts for the whole regiment, *bricks without straw*. Ever the sportsman, Alfred wrote to his brother Herbert, then in a London architect’s office: