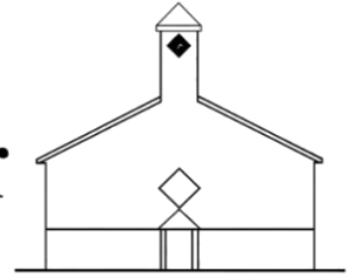


The Clock Tower



Issue Number 37: February 2015
£2.00; free to members

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

1914-2014 Commemorations Come to a Close



FOMA Committee member Bob Ratcliffe polishes the ship's bell of HMS *Kent* at the service held on 8 December 2014 in Canterbury Cathedral to commemorate the lives lost during the 1914 Battle of the Falklands. More inside.

Also inside – EXCLUSIVE - The Huguenots in Medway

Amy Adams, Learning and Community Engagement Officer at the new Huguenot Museum, Rochester, joins the *Clock Tower* team with a new regular column.

In the Archives...

In January 2014 the FOMA Committee and Museums Services Manager, Simon Lace, were taken around the archives by Archivist Alison Cable, as described opposite by Chairman, Tessa Towner.



Left: the FOMA Committee sets off on the tour of the MALSC strongroom. From left to right: Rob Flood, Elaine Gardner, Alison Cable (Archivist), Tessa Towner, Odette Buchanan, Kevin Russell.



Below right: Rob Flood and Elaine Gardner.



Left: Tessa Towner, FOMA Chairman, looks on as Alison Cable, Archivist, opens another box in the archives.

From the Chairman

Tessa Towner, Chairman.



A belated Happy New Year to you all!

It looks as if 2015 is going to be a year which brings many changes, particularly at MALSC. You will all be aware that in early November 2014 Medway Council announced a consultation paper regarding the relocation of the Medway Archives. Thank you to everyone who filled this in and for your very constructive comments. In January the FOMA Committee and Alison Cable had a meeting with Simon Lace, Medway Council's Museum Services Manager – and FOMA member - and it was clear that he was delighted with the response to the paper. The consultation has revealed that the preferred new location is the Strood Library site in Bryant Road. Simon stated at our January committee meeting that there were over 100 responses to the paper which would go to Committee at the beginning of February and then to the full Cabinet meeting later that month. Then, hopefully, a final decision will be made.

Following the committee meeting, we all put on our coats and Alison led us downstairs in the Clock Tower building to the strong room where all the archives are stored. The room is kept at a constant, rather cool, temperature and is absolutely huge. I had been there before, but for most of the committee it was a new experience. Simon also accompanied us and naturally one of the points of conversation was the enormous task facing the council of moving all the papers, maps, and precious items to the new site. One of the most wonderful aspects of the move, however, will be that the council will be providing all new shelving and a much better area to house everything. Alison guided us deftly around the rows and rows of shelving, pointing out important documents and boxes and then also pausing to select some special items she had put on one side to show us. It really was a terrific end to a most productive afternoon.

On a sadder note, I have to announce that our Patron, Dr Mark Beach, has resigned his post as Dean of Rochester Cathedral due to family issues and has moved away from the area. We wish him well for the future and the FOMA Committee will discuss the position of Patron at our next meeting in March.

Secretary's Report

Odette Buchanan



Hullo all, and of course best wishes for 2015! Do hope you all had a good Christmas and are looking forward with eager anticipation to this very exciting year. I thought being the New Year I'd look up a few significant dates to bore the pants off you all. Amazing – there's masses of things cropping up this year. I'll regale you with some of them, the most recent first.

30 January, 1965 was Sir Winston Churchill's State Funeral and many of you will have seen the commemorations last month. Churchill's was the most watched funeral ever with around 350 million television viewers worldwide. Part of the ceremony involved his coffin going down the Thames in the MV *Havengore* which was used until 2006 for educational purposes at Chatham Dockyard.

Back 20 years from 1965 and, of course, 1945 saw the end of the Second World War; 75 years ago was the evacuation from Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain. 100 years ago we were in the middle of the First World War and 1915 saw the failed landings at Gallipoli among other things. Watch out for further FOMA commemorative events, including a 1915 exhibition later in the year.

One hundred and fifty years ago in 1865 not only was Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* published but also Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*. This was also the year of the Staplehurst rail crash in which 10 were killed, 49 injured. Dickens was on the train (incognito but unhurt) and helped in the rescue attempts. Other things of interest from that year were the birth of Edith Cavell, and Elizabeth Garrett Anderson qualified as the first woman doctor. The SS *Great Eastern* crossed the Atlantic to lay the first telegraph cable and – here's a good one – the first speed limits were introduced: two miles per hour in towns and five in the country!!! Even more bizarre that year was the death of an influential army doctor who instigated several important medical procedures and met Florence Nightingale in the Crimea. His name was Dr. James Barry and when his landlady laid out his corpse, she discovered that he was in fact a woman who had been born Margaret Ann Bulkley.

Two hundred years years ago on 18 June, 1815 was the Battle of Waterloo. This year there will be lots of events to commemorate this and I shall be telling you more about a local connection to the Napoleonic Wars in a later edition this year of *The Clock Tower*.

1765 saw the launching of Nelson's flag ship *The Victory* at Chatham Dockyard and also the birth of his lady love, Emma Hamilton. The boat lasted longer. Then the next interesting date is 350 years ago – 1665 and the Plague – aargh! This was rampant in Rochester as well as London and across the British Isles. 1665 also saw a change of government for New Amsterdam which, on 12 June became *New York* when the British acquired it from the Dutch.

450 years ago was the first recorded reference to the pencil being used extensively in England and the Spanish architect el Fratin designed the Martello Tower. The first one was built on Corsica at Mortella, hence its name.

More battles to remember. Six hundred years ago on 25 October, 1415 was the battle of Agincourt. However, before Henry V set off to invade France and reclaim the lands his father had lost, he was told about a plot to replace him with another claimant to the English throne: Edmund Mortimer, 5th Earl of March. The conspirators were tried and executed at the end of July 1415. A hundred years before, 1315 was not a very nice year for Europe. There was a mass famine caused by crop failures which lasted until 1317 and caused awful hardship resulting in reports of cannibalism and infanticide, crime and disease. Millions died and it took several years for the economy to recover.

Finally, eight hundred years ago on 15 June, 1215 King John put his seal on the Magna Carta. Although this was really just an agreement between John and the barons, it has come to signify the beginning of democracy in England. This will be the anniversary to be commemorated this year perhaps above all others. Here in Medway, FOMA, the City of Rochester Society and the Friends of the Guildhall Museums will be holding a series of talks at the Guildhall later in the year highlighting local connections. The dates are in the *News and Events* section and more details will follow in later *Clock Towers*, on the FOMA website and on the Facebook page – please visit it and ‘like’ it. In the meantime I look forward to seeing you at the next talk on Tuesday, 10 March – *Alms Houses and Hospitals* by David Carder.

Read Odette’s article on the Huguenots on page 25.

FOR SALE

Bygone Kent

A full set covering 27 years of original format in binders

circa £20 to £30

All proceeds to charity

Please contact Odette Buchanan for further details (odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk)

News and Events

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

FOMA Events

7 April 2015, 7.00 for 7.30 pm.

FOMA AGM. Business will be followed by light refreshments.

Details are included in a special flyer with this issue - **please bring it with you.**

Talks

10 March 2015, 7.30 pm.

Medieval Hospitals and Almshouses.

A talk by David Carder.

Saturday 25 April, 7.30 pm,

Quiz Night

£5 for members and non-members. **BOOKING REQUIRED** (see below).

9 June 2015, 7.30 pm

Medway Tales from the Dividing River.

A talk by Wilf Lower

November 2015

Army Chaplains in WWI.

A talk by Linda Parker (more details to follow).

Exhibitions

September – October 2015

See below (MALSC)

Booking for FOMA talks is no longer necessary! Until further notice all events are at Frindsbury Parish Hall. 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.

MALSC Events

Exhibitions

15 January 2015 – 3 March 2015

Plaque to plaque: Edwin Harris' contribution to the plaques in and around Rochester High Street

5 March 2015 – 5 May 2015

St. Mary's Island, 1914 - 2014

7 May 2015 – 30 June 2015

The Sporting Life

2 July 2015 – 1 September 2015

Strood: a place of industry

By Jean Lear

3 September 2015 – 31 October 2015

FOMA World War One 1915

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

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

MALSC OPENING HOURS: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm; Saturday 9.00 am to 4.00 pm. Wednesday and Sunday closed. For Satnav please use ME2 2AD.

Eastgate House

Eastgate House is one of Rochester's landmarks. Built in the 1590s by Sir Peter Buck, the most senior member of staff at Chatham Dockyard, its structure has been adapted considerably over the years, but research has indicated that the original building may be Medieval or earlier. A Heritage Lottery Grant awarded in January 2011 has enabled Medway Council to begin planning conservation work on the house and to start opening its doors once more to visitors. Eastgate House is now closed and work was due to start in June 2014. Further information can be obtained at: www.friendsof-eastgatehouse.org on Facebook on www.facebook.com/eastgatehouse and on Twitter <https://twitter.com/EastgateHouse>. To join the Friends of Eastgate House, please contact Terri Zbyszewska, The Membership Secretary, FoEH, 31 The Esplanade, Rochester, ME1 1QW or at tzbyszewska@yahoo.co.uk; a copy of the membership form is also available on the website.

The City of Rochester Society

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

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

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

Friends of Broomhill

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

Healthy Walks

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



The Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive
Prince Arthur Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME4 4UG www.re-museum.co.uk for more details



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

The Royal Engineers Museum now has an e-newsletter. To subscribe for free, email 'Yes Please!' to deputycurator@re-museum.co.uk

Events

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

The Unseen Project: 30th October 2014-27th March 2015

The Unseen Project is an experimental photo-series which uses some of the last infrared colour film ever produced. The work explores the boundaries of our perception, allowing us to see things outside our normal visual spectrum.

14th-17th April: Indian Army in First World War Family Activities

7th-10th April: Animals In War Family Activities

Learn about the vital role animals have played since the First World War.

18th April: Indian Army in the First World War Open Day. Learn about the role of the Indian Army in the First World War and meet the 1914 Sikh Platoon in a day of talks and activities.

16th May: Swing Back In Time- Museums at Night festival. Dust off your dancing shoes for an evening full of energetic swing dancing.

26th-29th May: Napoleonic Family Activities. Unearth the hidden stories of Napoleonic soldiers.

20th-21st June: Battle of Waterloo. View living history displays which bring to life Napoleons last battle.

28th July-28th August: Modern Army Family Activities (Excluding Mondays and weekends)

Find out about life as a Royal Engineer in the modern British Army.

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

The Chatham Historical Society

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

12th March 2015

Lighter than Air

A talk by S. Pope

9th April 2015

Annual General Meeting

Doors open at 7:15 pm, meetings finish at 9:00 pm. Refreshments are available and visitors are very welcome. Admission: £1 for members, £3 for visitors. Further information is available at www.chathamhistoricalsoc.btck.co.uk

Heritage News

Sue Haydock

The latest from our roving reporter, Medway Heritage Champion and FOMA Vice President



Dickens' Post Box

Just before Christmas the post box which was installed about 150 years ago for the specific use of Charles Dickens at Gad's Hill, Higham, was reinstated 2014. I was thrilled to be a part of the ceremony and celebrations on 10 December dressed as Agnes Wickfield from Dickens' *David Copperfield*, with representatives from the Rochester and Chatham Dickens' Fellowship. The post box was taken out of service some twenty years ago, but it was officially re-opened in December by Marion Dickens, the author's great great granddaughter. The box was reinstated by the Royal Mail as a result of pressure from The Charles Dickens Charitable Trust and the Letter Box Study Group. It is thought that Dickens must have posted at least 2,000 letters from here between 1859 and 1870 whilst he lived at Higham. Any letter or Christmas card posted from the box in the week after its re-opening had a special 'CD' franked on the envelope.

It is thought that the original post box would have been painted green and was one of the very first wall boxes in the country – it was a first in every way and I am delighted that we can all now use it again.

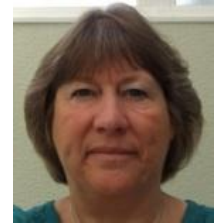


Posting one of the first letters at the Dickens' box - Sue Haydock dressed in character as Dickens' Agnes Wickfield, childhood companion to David Copperfield, and eventually his second wife.

FOMA Members

Kent in WW1 – People, Places and Events

Elaine Gardner, FOMA Vice Chairman and Events Co-ordinator



On Friday 23 January, Rob Flood and I, representing the City of Rochester Society and FOMA respectively, went down to Folkestone to a presentation which highlighted the first year's activity of this project. This Heritage Lottery funded project, organised by Screen South in conjunction with the Imperial War Museum, looks at the Kent coastal towns, from Rochester round to Hythe, during World War One. It is based on a mixture of pictures, postcard memories and family memories submitted from a variety of sources all of which can be seen on the website, www.kentww1.com. We also watched a short film made for the project featuring many of the spoken memories against a background of WW1 film footage.

The articles and memories on the website are arranged by the towns to which they belong, along with a map showing the location of each. There is an opportunity to add family memories, so hopefully local people will add more memories linked to the Medway towns featured – Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham – as these are few in number at the moment. Whilst talking with the project coordinator, Barbara Welch, at the reception afterwards we highlighted the De Caville Index and hopefully a link to this will soon appear on the [kentww1](http://kentww1.com) website.

Life Begins at 40?

Many FOMA members will be aware that Ken Walter (pictured) has been researching the Walter family for some time. He has recently been looking at a branch that settled in Gravesend where four children were born in the 1950s. Ken now has a tree for this family that stretches over six generations, the head of which is from the Dudley/Rowley Regis area in Staffordshire in the late 18th century. Part of Ken's research involved looking at the transcription of burials in Rowley Regis which is where he found this most interesting entry:



'2 March 1817: Mary WALTER, age 43, turn of life.'

Ken commented: 'It was certainly a turn of life for her!'

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@ajithomas.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.

The De Caville Index

Clock Tower Editor, Amanda Thomas, was delighted to receive an email from Anne Roscow whom she met at the Live Bait Squadron commemorations at Chatham Dockyard in September 2014 (see *The Clock Tower*, Issue 36, November 2014). For some time Anne had been searching for the burial place of her relative, Francis (Frank) White who had lived at Cliffe and was killed during the First World War. Amanda suggested she look online at FOMA's De Caville Index (www.foma-lsc.org/foma/new/wwi/index.html) and in January 2015 Anne wrote to say that Frank White had been located at the Calais Southern Cemetery. Anne said:

'Thanks for telling me about the record of all the Medway people lost. Without talking to you I would not have found where he is buried.'

Hospitals in the Great War

From: Ken Crowe
To: Odette Buchanan

4 December 2014

Dear Odette,

I am currently researching the history of the Great War hospitals of Southend-on-Sea. There were three main hospitals (two Red Cross and a Naval auxiliary hospital, Queen Mary's) all of which, but mainly Queen Mary's, took patients from Chatham. Some were brought to Southend from Chatham by boat, landing at Southend Pier, others were collected by ambulance and driven to Southend. Chatham, therefore, seems to have been the base hospital to which our auxiliaries were affiliated. However, I can find nothing about the hospital at Chatham. I wonder if you might be able to help, either with direct knowledge, or by pointing me towards someone or some source that may help.

This is almost the last piece of the jigsaw, but a very important one!

Very best wishes,

Ken, (previously Curator of Human History at Southend Museum).

From: Odette Buchanan
To: Ken Crowe

23 January 2015

Dear Ken,

The hospital at Chatham would have been the Naval Hospital. (It is now Medway Hospital) You may also find it helpful to visit a newly established webpage called the De Caville Index. There is a link to it from FOMA's website and it lists all servicemen who lived in, were hospitalized, died or were stationed in the Medway Towns in the 1st World War. 'Medway Towns' is Rochester, Strood, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham. There was also a hospital at Fort Pitt, Rochester (now a girls' school) and a VAD post in Strood. Hope this is helpful. Let me know if you think FOMA can help with anything else.

Regards,

Odette.

Query on the De Caville Index

From: Paul Scully
To: Odette Buchanan

28 December 2014

Dear Madam,

I understand that you are/were the secretary of the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre. I have been browsing your link to the *World War One in Medway The De Caville Index* page looking for my grandmother's brother ... who I found. However, there is a field on the form which opens with the serviceman's details entitled "Photo / Newspaper Records (if any)"... I could speculate what the initials "CN" mean but wondered if you would be able to tell me please without me guessing? Once I know, I may be able to find out more information about my Great Uncle – one thing that Mr De Caville's page told me that I didn't know was that there is a memorial inscription at Borstal Mission.

Thank you and regards,

Paul Scully.

From: Odette Buchanan
To: Paul Scully

1 January 2015.

Dear Mr. Scully -

Thanks for your enquiry - so glad you find the de Caville Index helpful. 'CN' stands for *Chatham News*. At Medway Archives you can [also] browse old newspapers on film. Good Luck.

Kind regards,
Odette.

Magnum Opus

9 January 2015

Dear Mrs Cole,

Thank you for the informative 'Clock Tower' magazine and news of the move of the Medway Archives, as well as details of all the talks.

May I make a suggestion re the book reviews? No price of the publications featured is given – would it be possible to include this in the future?

Look forward to the next edition of 'Clock Tower'.

Yours sincerely,
Miss J. Beyer.

16 January 2015.

Dear Miss Beyer,

Betty Cole, our FOMA Membership Secretary, has forwarded your letter to me. Thank you very much for your comments, which are most useful, and as you know, I love hearing from members.

I am delighted that you enjoy *The Clock Tower* and that you find it entertaining as well as informative, which is very much our aim. I also appreciate your suggestion about including prices in the book review, and agree with you that it would seem sensible to include these. However, one of the difficulties in doing this is that it can be most misleading, as recommended retail prices are often ignored by retailers and prices on Amazon and other online book sellers websites can vary enormously. I will, however, publish your views and see what other readers think, as I do see that it could, at least, be a useful guideline.

Yours sincerely,
Amanda Thomas, Editor, *The Clock Tower*.

What do other readers think? I welcome your views! (amanda@ajthomas.com)

About The Clock Tower

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

Editorial deadlines

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

The copy deadline for Issue 38 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 27 April 2015, with publication on Wednesday 20 May 2015.

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 CityArk website <http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/> or by writing to Medway Archives Office, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. Telephone +44 (0)1634 332714; fax +44 (0)1634 297060; email: malsc@medway.gov.uk

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

Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Secretary, Betty Cole, 8 Hardy Close, Walderslade, Chatham, ME5 7LL, Kent. Telephone: 01634 316509; email: bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk

Archives Update

Alison Cable, Archivist



The latest news from the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

The consultation regarding the proposed move of MALSC is now complete and has been analysed. We have been working closely with Simon Lace, Medway Council's Museum Services Manager, and soon we will be receiving an update on the MALSC move. In the meantime, Cindy O'Halloran and Norma Crowe have been organising our annual Volunteer Event. This will be taking place on the morning of 11 March and if you are a helper, you should have already received an invitation.

Further to the recent launch of digitised versions of Medway school records (1870-1914) on the new schools database on the website *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk), I noticed that several of our schools had not been uploaded! This was immediately flagged up with *FMP* who are working to remedy the situation and it is expected that the missing records will appear after the up-date in March. The 'errant' records relate to the following schools:

Halling Board School
Rochester Borstal National School
Stoke and All Hallows Board School
Gillingham Hempstead Infants and Mixed
Strood St Marys (Girls School).

Archaeologia Cantiana publishes annual lists of newly available catalogues from the county's archive offices. To follow is the list for Medway Archives (2014). Copies of the catalogues can be viewed in hard copy in the searchroom or on our online archive catalogue: <http://cityark.medway.gov.uk>

DE253	Personal estate of W Pemble of Cobham (mainly sales catalogue)	1823-1824
DE1083	Rimington family papers (of Rochester)	1801-1934
P139B (addl)	Crockenhill parish registers	C20th
DE382	Exchequer case deposition: Milbourn v Fisher (re oyster metage)	1837
DE 487	Rochester Choral Society	1871-1890
DLBM	Medway and Swale Dock Labour Board: Minutes	1969-1989
GBC/Mn	Gillingham Court Leet: minutes and photographs of High Constables	1894-1921
P185 (addl)	Parish registers (Higham)	1843-1907
P94/8/2	Parish of Cliffe vestry minutes & C20th PCC material	1843-1907
DE496	Personal diaries [anon. Woman]	1860,1862
P235 addl	Luddesdowne parish marriage registers; burials	1970s-90s 1813-1995
DE314/1/3;	Chatham Historical Society minutes	
DE314/2/	1988-2002 and attendances 1998-2010	1988-2010
DE497	Wm Cory and Son Ltd: coal lighterage (River Thames)	1921-1971
DE104	Doust and Co: ship repairers, Rochester	1902-1986
DE1250	Rochester & District Music society	1928-2011
PC362	Swanscombe parish council	1894-1926
DE505	Hulkes/Wildash partnership docs	1786-1804
PS/NA/500	Justice Year books	1966-1969
DE1249	Medway Towns Philatelic society	1945-2008

Battle of the Falklands

Bob Ratcliffe



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

December 8 2014 dawned bright and clear, with the winter sun climbing into an azure sky over Kent. It was exactly one hundred years since the same sun had climbed into the same sky over another Kent half a world away. This *Kent*, under the command of Captain J.D.Allen RN, was His Majesty's cruiser *Kent*, part of a naval force under Admiral Sturdee that had been sent south to locate and engage with the Kaiser's pacific fleet under von Spee following the battle of Coronel. It was that morning moored at Port Stanley in the Falklands, and was preparing to round Cape Horn in search of the German squadron.

In the event such a passage was not needed, as the German flagship *Gneisenau* had come eastward with the intention of capturing the Falklands and destroying the wireless station there. The discovery of the British fleet in residence came as a complete surprise to von Spee, who fled seaward with the British in hot pursuit. The detailed tale of the ensuing battle has been told elsewhere. Suffice to say that HM battle cruisers *Invincible* and *Inflexible* sank SMSs *Gueisenau* and *Scharnhorst*, while the British cruisers *Kent*, *Cornwall* and *Glasgow* dealt with the German *Nurnberg* and *Leipzig*. Of the German fleet only *Dresden* escaped, to be hunted down and scuttled by her crew to avoid capture later.

After the battle, *Kent* did venture into the Pacific, and spent much of her time searching for *Dresden*. She never returned to the UK, but her bell did, to serve in a new *Kent* for the duration of Hitler's war. Engraved with the ship's battle honours of both wars, it has since 1950 rested in Rochester Cathedral, and is rung on Saturdays at the page turning ceremony of the Royal Marines' *Books of Memory*.

On the north wall of the nave in Canterbury Cathedral is a tablet recording the names of the eight members of *Kent's* crew who lost their lives in the Battle of the Falkland Islands in 1914, and this tablet was central to a Service of Remembrance held there on December 8 2014, the centennial day, and attended by descendants of Captain J.D.Allen. Present also was *Kent's* bell, on loan from Rochester, and rung prior to the reading of the names of *Kent's* fallen.

At the same time a service commemorating the Battles of both Coronel and the Falklands was being held away to the south in Stanley Cathedral on the windswept Falklands. Attended by the descendants of Craddock, Sturdee and von Spee, it concluded with a wreath laying ceremony and act of Remembrance to those of both countries who lost their lives in those far away battles a century ago.

*Fisher remembers, Sturdee knows me well,
The soul of Craddock hears and is content.
I and my sisters righted Coronel
Write of me, and remember,
I am KENT.*

Bob Ratcliffe and the bell of HMS Kent at Canturybury Cathedral on 8 December 2014.



The Home Front

Catharina Clement



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

Zeppelins over Gillingham

Glancing through the 1915 newspapers for my next instalment in the *Home Front* series I came across several adverts for home insurance against 'Zeppelin air raids.' Insurance obviously could not stop your home or workplace being destroyed, but it gave you peace of mind as you would at least be recompensed for the cost of the damage inflicted!

On 1 November 1917 a 'Gotha raid' targeted the Medway Towns amongst others. It was on this night that two bombs were dropped over Gillingham. One such incident occurred in Canterbury Street, Gillingham, and destroyed Moakes' Bakery. Due to wartime censorship restrictions the incident was reported in the press, but no location given. *The Chatham Observer* of 3 November reported that 'Thirty Gothas visit England:'

'In another town a bomb dropped on a bakery and demolished it, flour and other material scattered far and wide. Happily there was no one in the premises at the time, and there were no casualties. There were a number of horses in adjoining stables, but fortunately the animals escaped unhurt. A fire was started by the explosion, but was quickly extinguished by means of buckets of water. Numerous houses in the vicinity were damaged, and many panes of glass were shattered, including those in a school.'

The Chatham News added a bit more detail.

'While some of the vans on the premises were smashed, others were not scratched. The force of the explosion was tremendous. At a Council School, on the opposite side of the road, over seventy panes of glass were broken, and the houses in the surrounding streets had their windows smashed. One working class street at the rear of the bakery suffered most. Here pieces of the wood from the bakery were hurled onto the roofs of the cottages with such force that holes were made. In one case a piece of wood had gone right through the roof, striking it at the back and protruding from the front, like a skewer.'

Locals could probably work out that this story referred to Gillingham. However we only get that information from later evidence. Ron Baldwin identified in his book, *Gillingham Chronicles*, that 'in the air raid of 31 October/1 November 1917 Thorn & Moakes' Bakery in Canterbury Street was hit and bags of flour, bread and cakes were hurled everywhere. Byron Road School had most of its windows blown out but the backs of houses in Pretoria Road suffered most-great spears of wood were forced through one roof.'

A project into the role of women in the early twentieth century and subsequently published as *The Time of Our Lives*, has left an account of a small child in the war. She writes:

'The first bombs to fall on Gillingham from a Zeppelin destroyed Moakes Bakery (now Jubilee Clips), made a crater in the Lines, now part of Upbury Manor School Field and the third in Luton.'

The memoir of Sheila Iremonger, who was the daughter of 'Winnie' Fitch (pictured in the family group below) of 61 Byron Road, Gillingham, offers us another angle on that event. Winnie would have been 22 years old when this occurred and a reliable witness to the incident. The account continues:

'One Sunday afternoon during the Great War, a large Airship - a German Zeppelin - was sighted hovering over Byron Road. The Fitch Family with their neighbours, gathered at their front doors to view this unusual thing,

quite unaware of the danger they were in. Without warning, a bomb was released from the Zeppelin making a direct hit on Moakes' Bakery in Canterbury Street, opposite the Byron Road turning. The blast from the bomb travelled along Byron Road and the Fitch family were blown off their feet into the front hallway of 61 in a great heap of arms and legs. Fortunately no-one was hurt, but dignity was a bit battered - it caused amusement among the young people because it was the only time they had ever seen their parents in a loving embrace on the floor!'

The Fitch family contributed to the war effort in diverse ways. Their eldest son, James, enlisted in 1915 as an Ordinance Officer in the Royal Navy and was stationed at Chatham Dockyard. The other two boys, Billy and Freddie, were apprentices in reserved occupations in the dockyard. Charlotte was a trained nurse and served in this role throughout the Great War, whilst Victoria Rose took on a clerical post at Southill Barracks in Chatham. All the family survived the war, but had several close shaves on the home front both in Byron Road, Gillingham and nearby Chatham Dockyard.



Fitch family c. 1897. Back row from left: Emily, James, Winifred, Victoria Rose; middle row: Mary, William (father), Emily (mother), Charlotte; front row: William, Alfred. Photograph reproduced with the permission of Sandra @ <http://www.lizandarcy.co.uk>.

The Gillingham bomb which landed on Charles Moakes' bakery at 302 Canterbury Street also shattered the windows of Byron Road School opposite. The log books for Byron Road School give some account of the mayhem it caused. From the Infants' School log of 6th November an entry reads: 'Three of the Girls' Rooms and 3 of the Boys' Rooms could not be used owing to the Broken Windows (Air Raid)...' Byron Junior School Boys' log noted on 26 October: 'School closed for one week...on account of extra strain caused through air raids.' And again on 12 November it was reported that 'It was arranged that the repairs of the windows should be completed in the Boys' School' first, which was strange as the Girls' Junior School appears to have taken the worst hit. 'The windows in the front of the school were smashed during the air raid which took place last week. The children in those rooms are sitting in their outdoor clothes for the present.' Several of the girls' forms had to take refuge for lessons in the hall. Although the windows had to be especially ordered, they were all replaced by 20 November and things got back to normal. It should be noted that throughout the damage no children were sent home or the school closed.

Whilst no direct casualties were mentioned as a result of the incendiary bomb, it would appear from the newspaper accounts that there were two indirect fatalities as a result of the bombing:

'A well-known resident died from heart failure while doing an act of kindness. Mr Robert Briggs (67) had just knocked at the door of a neighbour to give warning, when a bomb fell in the vicinity. When the neighbour opened the door her visitor fell dead at her feet.'

It appears he had suffered a heart attack.

Tragically William Tapsell, a labourer of Canterbury Street, also died in hospital on the same day as a result of an anti-aircraft shell, which entered through the roof of his house and embedded itself in his body as he slept in

his bed. Presumably this was aimed at the Gothas, but went astray, hitting the Tapsell's house, situated next to the Wesleyan Chapel on the corner of Green Street. Incidents, such as these, of *friendly fire* deaths are unfortunately nothing new.



Charles Moakes inspecting the bomb damage. Photograph reproduced with the permission of Patricia Hamilton.

Moakes had sold his previous ice cream business in Luton during 1912 for £400 and relocated to Gillingham. He entered into partnership with Jasper Bailey Thorn, who had an existing bakery business at 300-304 Canterbury Street. Business was obviously thriving as in 1916 they advertised for assistants in the business, offering them £2 a week, but stated they must be 'ineligible' for conscription. The Moakes family lived in nearby Rock Avenue and so were fortunate to escape with no more than a damaged building. Presumably Moakes had some of the above insurance against Zeppelin raids, as the business appears to have been rebuilt on the same spot.



Charles Moakes. Photograph reproduced with permission of Pat Hamilton.

The Moakes family remained in business at 302 Canterbury Street after 1921 when Jasper Thorn retired from the business. In 1929 Charles patented a device to keep pies hot, whilst being delivered in his vans. Not only that, but he certainly knew how to advertise his business. On the side wall of 270 Chatham Hill, Chatham, can still faintly be seen an advertisement of his and in 1952 the bakery was advertised in a local trade magazine as 'Charles Moakes Ltd.' Unfortunately Charles Moakes seems to have been hit by misfortune, as in 1935 the business was burnt down to the ground and had to be completely rebuilt the following year.

Charles Moakes died in 1943 and his estate was valued at £12,429. He had established his business as a family concern with his son Fred succeeding him in the bakery. However he and other family members decided to liquidate the business in 1956 and a meeting was held at Fred's grocery business in Wickham Street, Rochester to wind up the company. The site was finally taken over by Jubilee Clips in 1956.

If it is made by us

—ITS QUALITY

**CHARLES MOAKES
LIMITED**

*Bakers and
Confectioners*

**302 CANTERBURY STREET
GILLINGHAM**

★

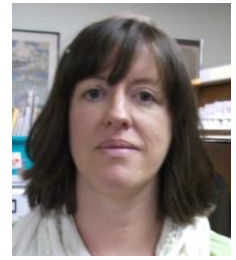
Deliveries to all parts

Moakes advert 1952

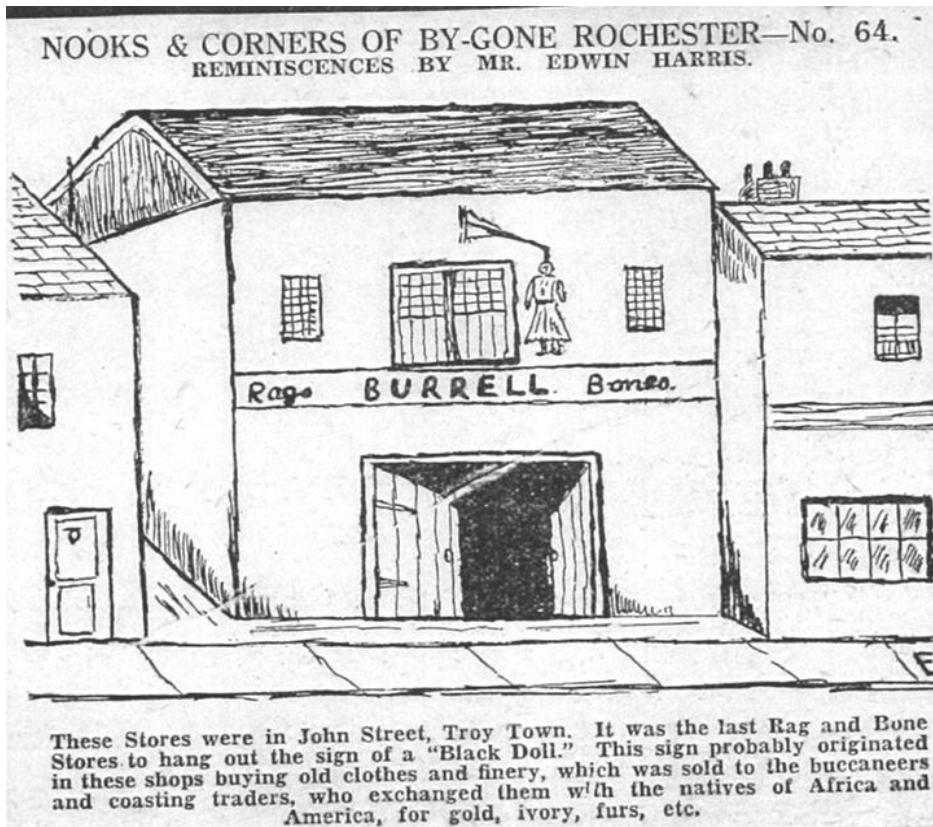
Edwin Harris - Nooks and Corners of By-Gone Rochester

no. 64

Helen Worthy



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



This sketch by Edwin Harris may be the only surviving image of Henry Burrell's rag and bone shop at numbers 30 and 32 John Street¹ in Rochester. Published in the *Chatham News* on 12 February 1937. It shows a black doll, a sign commonly used in the past to advertise the wares of rag and bone stores. The origin of the black doll is not certain, but it was at one time a familiar sight hanging outside marine stores and rag and bone shops, and was probably the origin of the phrase 'dolly shop'. Edwin Harris refers to the book *The History of Signboards*, published in 1866, when he ponders on the origin of the sign,² and includes the following passage quoted directly from *The History of Signboards*:

'The Black Doll, hung at the doors of rag and marine store dealers, probably originated in these shops buying old clothes and finery, which were sold to the buccaneers and coasting traders, who exchanged them with the natives of Africa and America for gold, ivory, furs etc., just as we see at the present day Mr Abraham or Mr Isaacs constantly advertising in The Times for our 'left-off clothes for Australia and the Colonies. The popular legend, however, has spread a halo of romance around the black doll. Once upon a time an ancient dame came to a ragshop in Norton Folgate, with a bundle of old clothes which she decided to sell, but having no time to spare, she left them with the man to examine, promising to call the next day. The rag merchant opened the bundle and found amongst the clothes a pair of diamond earrings and a black doll. Anxious to restore the diamonds (as may be imagined), he expected the old woman to call day after day, but in vain; at last, thinking that she might have forgotten

the house, he hung up the black doll at the door, but the old woman never came and the doll hung until it rotted away, when it was replaced by a new one. The novelty of the object attracted many customers to the house, other ragmen imitated it, and so it became a sign, one which is now fast disappearing and being supplanted by coarse coloured prints with absurd rhymes.'



The rag-and-bottle merchant, Krook, spontaneously combusts— note the black doll. Illustration by Phiz for Charles Dickens' Bleak House, from a copy in the Dickens Collection at MALSC.

Henry Burrell's shop has long since gone, and with it most of the buildings that once stood in John Street, but perhaps we can get a flavour of Henry Burrell's shop from Charles Dickens' short story *Brokers' and Marine-store Shops* published in *Sketches by Boz* in 1836:

'Our readers must often have observed in some by-street, in a poor neighbourhood, a small dirty shop, exposing for sale the most extraordinary and confused jumble of old, worn-out, wretched articles, that can well be imagined. Our wonder at their ever having been bought, is only to be equalled by our astonishment at the idea of their ever being sold again. On a board, at the side of the door, are placed about twenty books--all odd volumes; and as many wine-glasses--all different patterns; several locks, an old earthenware pan, full of rusty keys; two or three gaudy chimney-ornaments--cracked, of course; the remains of a lustre, without any drops; a round frame like a capital O, which has once held a mirror; a flute, complete with the exception of the middle joint; a pair of curling-irons; and a tinder-box. In front of the shop-window, are ranged some half-dozen high-backed chairs, with spinal complaints and wasted legs; a corner cupboard; two or three very dark mahogany tables with flaps like mathematical problems; some pickle-jars, some surgeons' ditto, with gilt labels and without stoppers; an unframed portrait of some lady who flourished about the beginning of the thirteenth century, by an artist who never flourished at all; an incalculable host of miscellanies of every description, including bottles and cabinets, rags and bones, fenders and street-door knockers, fire-irons, wearing apparel and bedding, a hall-lamp, and a room-door. Imagine, in addition to this incongruous mass, a black doll in a white frock, with two faces--one looking up the street, and the other looking down, swinging over the door; a board with the squeezed-up inscription 'Dealer in marine stores,' in lanky white letters, whose height is strangely out of proportion to their width; and you have before you precisely the kind of shop to which we wish to direct your attention.'

Henry Burrell was born about 1811 in Rochester and appears to have spent his whole life in the area, described variously as a labourer,³ timber merchant,⁴ shop keeper,⁵ general dealer,⁶ marine-store dealer,⁷ retired rag and bone merchant,⁸ and finally, in a newspaper report following an inquest into his death, as a rag-sorter. Henry Mayhew, writing in 1851,⁹ suggested that some of the proprietors of rag-and-bottle shops and marine stores 'make a good deal of money,' but this seems unlikely to be the case for Henry Burrell; at the end of his life he was working as a rag-sorter, and lived in lodgings.

Mayhew also reported that rag-and-bottle shops and marine stores might be somewhere ‘servants could dispose of their pilferings,’ and certainly the proprietors of rag-and-bone shops often appeared in the local papers accused of receiving stolen goods. Henry Burrell’s own son, Henry Burrell junior, appeared several times in the *South East Gazette*, and was sentenced to three months’ imprisonment for having dockyard stores in his possession.¹⁰

Laws designed to regulate the business in marine stores required dealers ‘to produce a licence from the justices, at a cost of 5s.; and subjects them to visitations from the police, who may inspect their books and their goods. Every dealer is to keep a book...containing an account of all marine stores he may be possessed of, and stating from whom he purchased them...’¹¹ Henry Burrell was probably illiterate, as he signed his marriage entry in 1834 with an ‘X,’ so he would almost certainly have been unable to keep written records of any transactions.¹² Proprietors were also not allowed to purchase any goods from someone under the age of 16, and were to report any items they suspected were stolen; they were also to keep items for at least 48 hours before changing them in any way or disposing of them.

One aspect of Henry Burrell’s business would have been collecting and sorting rags. Linen and cotton rags were particularly valued by paper manufacturers, as these produced a high quality paper. At times, rag-merchants were able to command high prices for their rags, and between 1848 and 1855 the price of rags doubled due to a general shortage and an increase in the demand for paper.¹³ Rag merchants would have sorted the rags into different grades, and at Springfield Mill in Maidstone for example, women workers in the ‘Rag Room’ would have removed buttons and trimmings, and cut the rags into small pieces.¹⁴ This work was not without its risks, as local papers reported discussions about the possible infectious risk of cutting rags to the inmates at the workhouse at West Malling,¹⁵ some years later there were reports that rag-sorters at Springfield Mill appeared to have contracted small-pox from contact with infected rags.¹⁶

By 1860, rags ceased to be the only raw material for paper-making. Esparto grass was introduced, and by 1887, the paper mill at Snodland was not using rags, just esparto grass and rope. Whether this reduction in the use of rags in the paper-making industry affected Henry Burrell, we do not know. However, there was another major market for rags, and that was as a fertiliser. From an advertisement in the *SE Gazette* on 16 September 1862, we know that Henry Burrell’s son was selling rags to hop growers from his business in Rhode Street in Chatham, and it was very likely that Henry Burrell was also selling rags for use as a fertiliser.

When the Maidstone Farmers’ Club met in 1866, the *SE Gazette* printed their report entitled ‘The Cultivation of the Hop,’¹⁷ and it makes interesting reading, listing many of the ingredients which can be used to manure hops: fresh bones, bone dust, guano, animal matters, farmyard manure, London dung, wool, blood, flesh, soot, woollen rags, shoddy, putrid animal substances, horn shavings and more. Henry Mayhew asserts that, ‘The principal purchasers of any refuse or worn-out articles are the proprietors of the rag-and-bottle shops,’ but does comment that, ‘The stench in these shops is positively sickening.’¹⁸ Rag-and-bone shops and marine stores clearly performed a crucial role, not just selling used items but also finding a use for what today would be considered waste material.

As Henry Burrell grew older, he took lodgings in the Royal George Inn on Maidstone Road, Rochester (now the Granville Arms), and was working as a rag-sorter. He no longer ran his own shop, but was working for a Mr Fowle,¹⁹ probably Thomas Fowle, a marine-stores dealer at 3 King Street in Rochester. In 1884 Henry Burrell had a fall and despite going to work the following day, he took a turn for the worse and was taken to St Bartholomew’s Hospital. He died at the hospital on Wednesday 15 October 1884, and was buried on 19 October at St Margaret’s Cemetery in Maidstone Road, Rochester.²⁰

FATAL ACCIDENT AT ROCHESTER.

On Monday morning, a rag and bone sorter named Berrell employed by Mr. Fowle, Rochester, whilst sitting in the tap room at the Royal George fell off the seat, and his head struck a corner of the fender. Berrell went to work on Tuesday morning, but felt very ill in the evening. He was taken to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where he died from concussion of the brain on Wednesday. W. H. Bell, Esq., the Coroner, for the City, held an inquest at the hospital at noon on Friday; and the Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death."

Chatham News, 18 October 1884, p.5.

Notes

1. Edwin Harris, *Recollections of Rochester*, No.114.
2. Edwin Harris, *Recollections of Rochester*, No.114.
3. 1841 Census.
4. 1851 Census.
5. Melville's *Directory of Kent 1858*.
6. 1861 Census, 1871 Census.
7. 1867 *Chatham & Rochester Directory*, www.ancestrylibrary.com
8. 1881 Census.
9. Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*.
10. *SE Gazette* 29 July 1862.
11. *SE Gazette* 17 July 1860.
12. Marriage to Frances Milton, 2 November 1834 at All Saints, Frindsbury.
13. *Paper Making in the British Isles*, Alfred H Shorter, C080225316; *William Balston Paper-Maker 1759-1849*, Thomas Balston, Methuen, 1954.
14. *William Balston Paper-Maker 1759-1849*, Thomas Balston, 1954.
15. *SE Gazette*, 7 September 1868.
16. *SE Gazette*, 3 October 1881.
17. *SE Gazette*, 12 June 1866.
18. Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*.
19. *Chatham News*, Saturday 18 October 1884.
20. St Margaret's Cemetery Burial Board Register RCA/B/M.

A Clock Tower Special Feature

The Huguenots

England's first museum dedicated to the history of the Huguenots to open in Rochester, 2015.

Amy Adams



Amy Adams is the Learning and Community Engagement Officer at the Huguenot Museum, Rochester. Amy was born and grew up in Gillingham and is passionate about the history of the Medway Towns. She is a founder-member of the Brompton History Research Group and has worked on a number of local history exhibitions in the area. Amy studied Classics at the University of Reading before completing an MA in Cultural Heritage at the University of East Anglia. She then returned to Kent to take up a career in museums. Amy has previously worked as Deputy Curator at the Royal Engineers Museum and Interpretation Manager at Maidstone Museum.

Since the early 1960s the French Hospital, La Providence, has been situated at the heart of Rochester High Street. Originally founded in London in 1718 to provide accommodation and assistance to Huguenots and their descendants, this institution has over the years amassed a beautiful collection of artefacts which relate to the history of French Protestants and the Hospital. It is this collection that will form the basis of the first museum in England dedicated to the history of the Huguenots.

With the help of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, work is well under way to transform the top two floors of 95 High Street (above the Visitor Information Centre) into the Huguenot Museum. The project has been in the planning for some time but work started in earnest last summer with the major structural works commencing and the appointment of the two full-time staff of the Museum, Hannah Kay, the Director, and myself. We look forward to being joined by volunteers when the Museum opens who will assist us with the running of the museum. If you are interested in volunteering please get in touch (details below). The building work was completed early this year and we are currently starting to develop and install our galleries, learning space and shop ready for opening in early summer 2015.

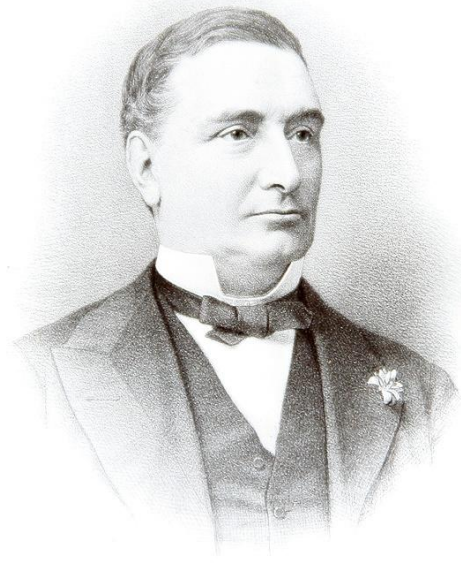
Our new state-of-the-art museum store is also now ready to use. This means that not only do we have a safe and suitable area with which to prepare the items going into the Museum galleries, but we also have the ability to expand our collection for many years to come. In addition to the store we have created an archive room within the Museum. This allows us to be able to facilitate access to collections not on display, as well as to provide resources for researching family history.

It is thanks to the forethought of members of the French Hospital that we have a collection to display. Arthur Giraud Browning (1835-1907), pictured, was pivotal in the creation of the collection. A civil engineer by day, he was also Secretary of the French Hospital. Browning understood the importance of collecting and bringing together artefacts and information about the Huguenots who came to England before they were lost. This led him, in 1876, to make a direct appeal to the directors of the French Hospital to donate books, pictures and memorabilia relating to the history of the Huguenots and the Hospital. As French Hospital funds were dedicated to the care of the Hospital's residents, Browning also proposed that directors could contribute funds with which to purchase additional items to improve the collection.

Two other influential figures in the development of the collection must also be mentioned: Sir Henry William Peek (d. 1898), and Henry Wagner (1840-1926), pictured below and on the inside back cover. We have Peek and Wagner to thank for a number of the portraits now in the collection. Peek, in particular, worked to collect portraits of some of the earliest directors of the French Hospital, but Wagner is the man to thank if you are researching your Huguenot family history. Henry Wagner was an avid historian and researched the history of many of the Huguenot families. He left this research (totalling over 900 pedigree files) along with an invaluable collection of Huguenot will extracts to the Hospital. These are currently housed with the Huguenot Society at the National Archives but there will be access to a number of these documents at the Huguenot Museum.



Left: Arthur Giraud Browning (1835-1907), reproduced by kind permission of the French Hospital.



Right: Sir Henry William Peek (d. 1898), reproduced by kind permission of the French Hospital.

A great many other Huguenot descendants as well as residents and directors of the French Hospital have also donated artefacts, time and money throughout the years so that others might learn more about the history of the Huguenots. Hannah and I are now having great fun looking through this fabulous collection to find out these stories so we can share them with everyone.

With the research and cataloguing of the collection well underway we can start to put together the stories that will form the displays and the inspiration behind our school sessions. The galleries will use the artefacts and the stories behind them to highlight the persecution of the Huguenots in France, their arrival in England, the organisations they set up and the skills and crafts they brought with them. Focus will be placed on the people and families behind the fascinating objects and this will culminate in our final gallery where the lasting legacy of the Huguenot refugees and their descendants will be discussed.

A visit to the Huguenot Museum will not end with our displays. Visitors will be encouraged to continue to explore the stories, whether through researching their own family history or through taking part in one of our craft workshops, lectures or schools sessions which will be held in our dedicated Learning Space. School sessions will take inspiration from the collection to develop hands-on workshops for children. We will host family activities in the schools holidays and craft clubs at weekends as well as crafts for grown-ups, film-screenings and more. Further details on our programme will be announced in the next *Clock Tower*, or visit www.huguenotmuseum.org where more information will be published shortly.

The Huguenot Museum will open early summer 2015. Our opening times will be Wednesdays to Saturdays and Bank Holiday Mondays 10am – 5pm. The research room will be available any open day but we would ask visitors to book in advance. There will be a small entry charge to the Museum but this will include access to the research room and can be validated for 12 months with gift-aid. For any more information on the museum and our developments feel free to get in touch on 01634 789347, email learning@huguenotmuseum.org, follow us on Facebook or Twitter or even look us up on YouTube!

If you are a teacher or home tutor looking for more information on the schools service we will be providing, please do get in contact with me, as above.

A Brief History of the Huguenots

Odette Buchanan



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

The Huguenots were French Protestants who were believers in the doctrines of John Calvin; they eschewed Catholic pomp and the concept of the Pope as God's spokesman on earth. They emerged in France at the end of the 15th century and were cruelly persecuted for their beliefs.



The Huguenot Cross.

With the invention of the printing press, and various clerics across Europe translating the Bible from Latin to local languages, came the spread of the Protestant movement. In France the first French version of the New Testament was produced in around 1294. Other editions appeared and the suppression of what were considered dissident beliefs culminated in 1545 in the Massacre of Mérindol. Thousands were killed in the city when Francis I of France gave orders to punish those who were no longer following Catholic doctrine and from around 1550 members of this Protestant sect began to be called Huguenots.

There are various theories as to why they became known as Huguenots. Most agree that the name started as a derogatory nickname which over time they adopted. Several of the theories propound Swiss, German or Flemish origins but the one I prefer is referenced from association with Hugues Capet who was a king of France in the Middle Ages. He was credited with respecting people's dignity and individuality, not expecting unquestioning servility. 'Huguenote' is equivalent of calling them 'Little Huguenotes' or 'those who want Hugo.'

The Huguenots then faced persecution leading to religious wars with massacres and torture on both sides interspersed with various attempts to create peace. Perhaps the worst massacre occurred on St. Bartholomew's Day in Paris in 1572. Estimates of deaths vary between 5,000 and 30,000. The situation was exacerbated by some Huguenot nobles who exploited the situation to try and establish their own kingdoms. They even formed armies to fight against the Catholic state. The religious wars, interrupted by various Edicts to create calm, continued all through the sixteenth century until Henry of Navarre issued the Edict of Nantes in 1598. This declared France a Catholic country but with Protestants having equal rights. However, this only lasted until the 1660s when the persecutions started all over again.

For over two centuries the Huguenots were hounded, spied on and tortured and so took to meeting in secret at night. In some instances this gave rise to superstitious neighbours thinking the Huguenots were evil spirits who had not been allowed into purgatory on their way to heaven. France was not a good place to be - what would you have done?

There were three choices for the Huguenots: torture, renounce (and go back to being a good Catholic), or emigrate. As with most choices of this nature, money was involved. The majority of Huguenots were town-dwelling, qualified tradesmen not peasants. This meant that many of them had enough money to be able to afford to go to a country that had already turned its back on Catholicism to become Protestant: the Lutheran German states, the Netherlands, Switzerland, England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the new overseas colonies in the Americas and South Africa, and then a century later, Australia.

Many Huguenots went to the Netherlands and joined the Dutch and Belgians in their fight against Spain, their Catholic overlord, between 1568 and 1609. Here they continued to support the Calvinist Reform Church leaders against both Spain and France. With the revocation of the Edict of Nantes an estimated total of 75,000 to 100,000 fled from France to the Netherlands where William III of Orange ruled; he would later become King William of England and rule with his wife Mary, daughter of James II.

The Huguenots took their skills with them when they left France. Many came to England where they established silk weaving colonies in Canterbury, Bedfordshire, East Anglia and various London districts, most notably Spitalfields and Soho. Those with market gardening skills went to Battersea, and some with brewing skills established what became Truman's brewery in Wandsworth. Today one of the few remaining traces of the Huguenots in Wales are a few French village names and the Fleur de Lys Rugby Club.

With regard to Ireland things played out a little differently. Many who had emigrated to Holland in the previous two centuries joined William of Orange's army in his battle against Catholic James II of England. When *King Billy*, as he was known, was victorious at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, there were rewards of land grants and titles for those who had fought with him. Many Huguenots settled in Dublin, Cork, Portarlinton, Lisburn, Waterford and Youghal. In County Cavan it was they who expanded the cultivation of flax, adapted their weaving skills and established the linen trade that flourishes in Ireland to this day.

In North America the Huguenots were only welcomed in the Dutch colony of New Netherland (later the states of New York and New Jersey) and the British colonies, especially Nova Scotia. Other parts of North America were French or Spanish colonies and therefore Catholic, as were many regions in South America where the Huguenots failed to establish themselves.

Some Huguenots who had originally emigrated to Holland later went to South Africa in an organized emigration between from 1688 and 1700. They settled in the East India Company post on the Cape of Good Hope and are responsible for the thriving South African wine trade. There is a monument to them inaugurated in 1948 and a Memorial Museum erected nearby in 1957. Only three generations later, from the end of the seventeenth century, every single descendant of a Huguenot emigrant was speaking Dutch rather than French.

During the Reformation that swept across Europe from the beginning of the sixteenth century the mass Huguenot exodus was an economic *brain drain* from which it took France many years to recover.

And so to the Rochester connection. As I said above, there were many Huguenots in central London. By 1718 an establishment called *La Providence* had been set up, a hospital to care for the more elderly in their community. It was situated near St. Luke's Church in Finsbury and in 1866 it moved to Hackney where it remained until the Second World War. *La Providence* then moved again when the government requisitioned the building which was subsequently bombed.

After the war *La Providence* moved to Horsham in Surrey, but this was not a success and was closed, as many people did not want to be 'in a home.' The Huguenot community started to look around for a more suitable site where they could build small flats which might have a greater appeal.

In the 1950s the Bishop of Rochester was Christopher Chavasses, and he was descended from Huguenots. He was aware that in the High Street there was a run-down brewery and some houses which had been erected in the 1840s. The Church was the ground landlord and the Bishop gave the land to the Huguenots who subsequently refurbished the old houses into 39 flats, all of which were self-contained and unfurnished. They proved to be very popular and even today one still has to be of Huguenot descent to qualify for a flat in this desirable enclave.

Editor's Note: The complex and rich history of the Huguenots is absolutely fascinating and sadly it is impossible to include a full synopsis here. However, suffice to say, many of us with our roots in the Medway Towns will probably have ancestors who were Huguenots. It is important to realise that whilst the main influx of immigrants was in the late 1600s, there were earlier waves of migration. If you have any Huguenot stories, please contact the Editor, Amanda Thomas (amanda@ajthomas.com).

Magnum Opus

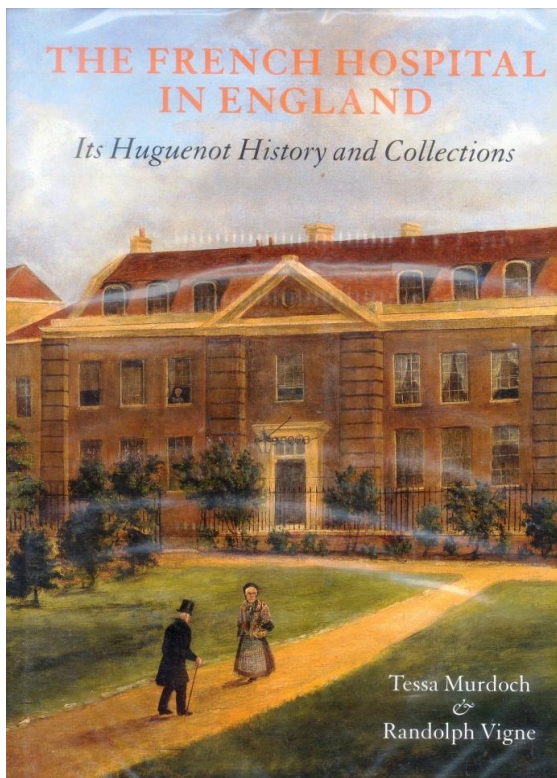
Steve Cross



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

The French Hospital in England: Its Huguenot History and Collections

By Tessa Murdoch and Randolph Vigne



The hospital for French Protestants and their descendants residing in Great Britain, *La Providence*, was incorporated in 1718. It was one of the first establishments to cater for needy immigrants, and to provide care for the mentally ill. The book charts the hospital's history from its early days in London to its present location in the cathedral city of Rochester on 21 June 1960, where it provides sheltered housing for elderly people of Huguenot descent.

The book includes detailed chapters on the building of the hospital, its original charter, the people who ran it over the years, its financial background with all its ups and downs, wartime problems and the re-location from London to Rochester:

'Was there even a need for their Hospital in the welfare state? It was decided that the wishes of countless past benefactors and the needs of present applicants would be best served by the provision of sheltered housing. The move to Theobald Square, renamed La Providence, off High Street, Rochester, in 1965(?) was the result. Here the original 39 flats grew, with its extension to the City Wall, to 60, a Common Room was built and gardens developed, making The French Hospital a home for residents and staff, and a site for its treasures, in an enviable setting. Here residents can enjoy their privacy and have their own furniture and belongings around them, with help in sickness or emergency always at hand.'

The book tells of the involvement of many well-placed persons of the time, quite famous in their own field, and explains in much detail the development of this great achievement, which was to substantially improve the lot of the poor and needy. It provides a substantial amount of information about the state of the country in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the plight of these poor people in those days of 'fend for yourself.' It contains a list of the hospital governors and an inventory of the hospital's goods. All of this information is superbly presented and lavishly illustrated with many beautifully coloured photographs and pictures, including an excellent illustrated section delving into the hospital's heraldry. This is a beautifully produced, marvellously illustrated reference book, (although somewhat expensive at a cover price of £45 for a hardback copy!). It really is a definite must for all serious social and art historians, enthusiasts and researchers into the life and times of the Huguenots. It contains a wealth of facts and figures which will, no doubt, prove to be difficult to find elsewhere, so should have pride of place on any serious researcher's bookshelf.

The French Hospital in England: Its Huguenot History and Collections.

(Cambridge: John Adamson, 2009)

ISBN: 978-0-9524322-7-2

£45.00 (hardback); £25.00 (paperback)

Available from:

The Clerk,
The French Hospital,
41 La Providence,
Rochester,
Kent, ME1 1NB.

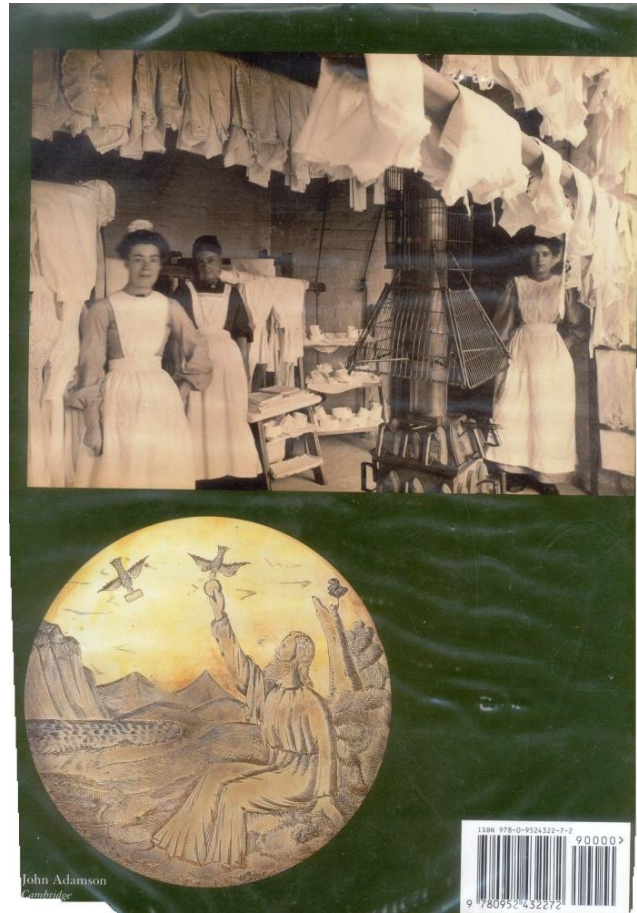
<http://www.frenchhospital.org.uk/book-purchase/>

Tel : 01634 843107

E-mail : steward@frenchhospital.org.uk

Also available from:-

John Adamson Books and Amazon.co.uk



Pictured: back cover

Huguenot Mystery

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

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

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

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

If you have any idea why this may be the case, please contact the Editor, Amanda Thomas, amanda@ajthomas.com; further details on *The Committee* contact page (32).

Editor's Footnotes

Amanda Thomas



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

Rochester's Huguenot Museum

Many of you will remember Amy Adams who, for some time, kept us in touch with goings-on at the Royal Engineers Museum, in her capacity as Deputy Curator. A native of Gillingham, Amy is passionate about our Kentish heritage and it was with some disappointment that we learned in early 2014 of her move to Maidstone Museum. Nevertheless Amy still kept in touch and then in September 2014 we received the news that she was about to take up the post of Learning and Community Engagement Officer at the new Huguenot Museum in Rochester which will be opening later this year. I was also absolutely delighted when Amy agreed to write a regular column about the new museum for *The Clock Tower* and you can read the first of these on page 23.

I was keen to find out more and just before Christmas, Amy invited me for a visit. Once again I made my way to Kent from Hertfordshire around the M25 to meet up with Amy in the foyer of the Visitor Information Centre at number 95 High Street, Rochester. We had met once before at MALSC, but we both felt we knew each other much better since we had corresponded so regularly over the past few years. After a delicious lunch in the Cathedral Tea Rooms, we returned to the High Street and made our way to the space above the Visitor Centre where builders were hard at work completing the new museum. Here I also met the new Museum Director, Hannah Kay.

The museum occupies the upper floors of the building originally constructed in the 1920s for the Gas Board. In all my days living in the Medway Towns I had no recall of this, until I saw the photograph below, and I expect other FOMA members will remember it as well. Due to its historical significance and its position in the High Street, any construction work needed to be sympathetically conducted, which included the retention of the original Critall windows. The structure still retains an enormous amount of early twentieth century character and the high ceilings and pale decoration provide the perfect setting for the display of visual material, reflecting the light which pours in through the huge Critall metal frames. Fireplaces have had to be blocked off in order to control humidity, and Amy explained how this was vital considering the number of precious objects which would soon be available to view. Many of these have rarely been seen before by the public and include paintings of Medway's early Huguenot residents, protestants who left Northern France to escape religious persecution. Odette Buchanan gives the background to this in her article on page 25.

Documents and artefacts will also be included in the display and, in addition to these, textiles on loan from the Victoria and Albert Museum. Amy explained, 'There are not many sites dedicated solely to Huguenot heritage, and there are none which focus on arts and crafts.' It is this which will make Rochester's new museum unique and much will be made of the contribution by Huguenot refugees to our weaving industry and the quality of work which they produced. Most of this creative heritage was eradicated during the Industrial Revolution when cheap, printed imports began to replace fine woven materials such as silk, feeding a consumer market eager to be able to afford that which had previously only been available to the more wealthy members of society.

The new museum will also house the archive previously held by the French Hospital and which could only be viewed by special appointment. Next door to the reception area on the first floor there will be a dedicated research space and reading room where people interested in Medway's Huguenot heritage will be able to study at their leisure.

The project is immensely exciting and the museum is due to open in the summer and Amy and Hannah are looking for volunteers to help! You can contact Amy on 01634 789347, and email learning@huguenotmuseum.org.

The museum will be a tremendous asset for Medway and will set a bench mark for new centres and museums around the country. More information is available at www.frenchhospital.org.uk/huguenot-museum.



The Gas Board showrooms photographed in 1967, number 95, on the north side of Rochester High Street (west), previously numbered 58. J. L. Edwards, Mayor of Rochester, lived here in 1873. Medway Images, ref. C050772633; Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

England's first museum dedicated to the history of the Huguenots to open in Rochester, 2015.



Henry Wagner (1840-1926), reproduced by kind permission of the French Hospital.

Below: the emblem of La Providence, the Huguenot hospital. (see Magnum Opus on page 27).

Henry Wagner was an avid historian and researched the history of many Huguenot families. These are currently housed with the Huguenot Society at the National Archives but there will be access to a number of these documents at the new Huguenot Museum at 95 Rochester High Street. See Amy Adam's new regular feature about the museum on page 23.



The Committee

Patron

Post vacant

President

Russell John Race, JP, DL (pictured)



Vice Presidents

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

Chairman

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

Vice Chairman and Events Co-ordinator

Elaine Gardner: 102 Valley View Road, Rochester, ME1 3NX
emgardner@virginmedia.com

Treasurer

Post vacant

Secretary

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

Membership Secretary

Betty Cole: 8 Hardy Close, Walderslade, Chatham, ME5 7LL, Kent.
bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk

Members

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

The Clock Tower Editor and Publicist

Amanda Thomas: 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS, Hertfordshire.
amanda@ajthomas.com

Dickens' Post Box



The recently reinstated letter box at Gad's Hill, Higham, which was originally installed for the use of Charles Dickens in 1859. Sue Haydock has the inside story on the opening just before Christmas. See page 9.