

**FOLKESTONE & DISTRICT  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**  
[www.folkestonehistory.org](http://www.folkestonehistory.org)  
Registered Charity No. 295994

## **NEWSLETTER No. 88 – Winter 2021**

### **Chairman's Report by Alan Taylor.**

The October meeting started with the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting. Standing for election were: Chairman Alan Taylor and Hon. Treasurer Terry Begent. There being no other nominations these were duly elected. Peter Bamford stood down as Hon. Secretary. Standing for Hon. Secretary was Vincent Williams proposed by Alan Taylor and seconded by Terry Begent. There being no other nominations Vincent was duly elected. The committee members staying on for another year are Hilary Tolputt, Brian Adams, Mark Hourahane, and we have two new committee members Tony Hill and Peter Bamford.

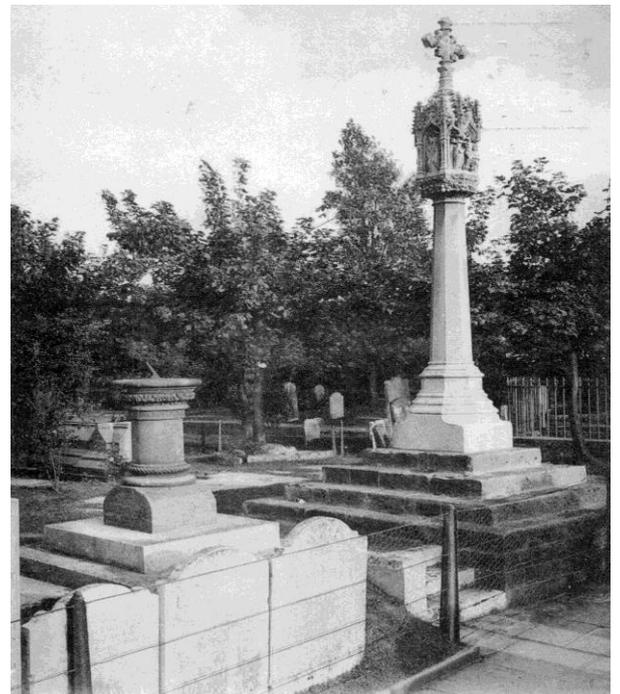
Twenty-six people attended the meeting. The AGM was followed by an illustrated talk entitled Watercolours of Folkestone by Alan F Taylor.

At the November meeting we welcomed our Treasurer Terry Begent who presented his talk entitled 'Folkestone's Cross & Dial,' which was a speculative history of Saint Eanswythe's cross and the sundial in Folkestone's Parish churchyard.

Terry said that our current cross is the third cross on the site and there is evidence which suggests that the first cross was preceded by, and carved from, an even earlier megalith on the same site.

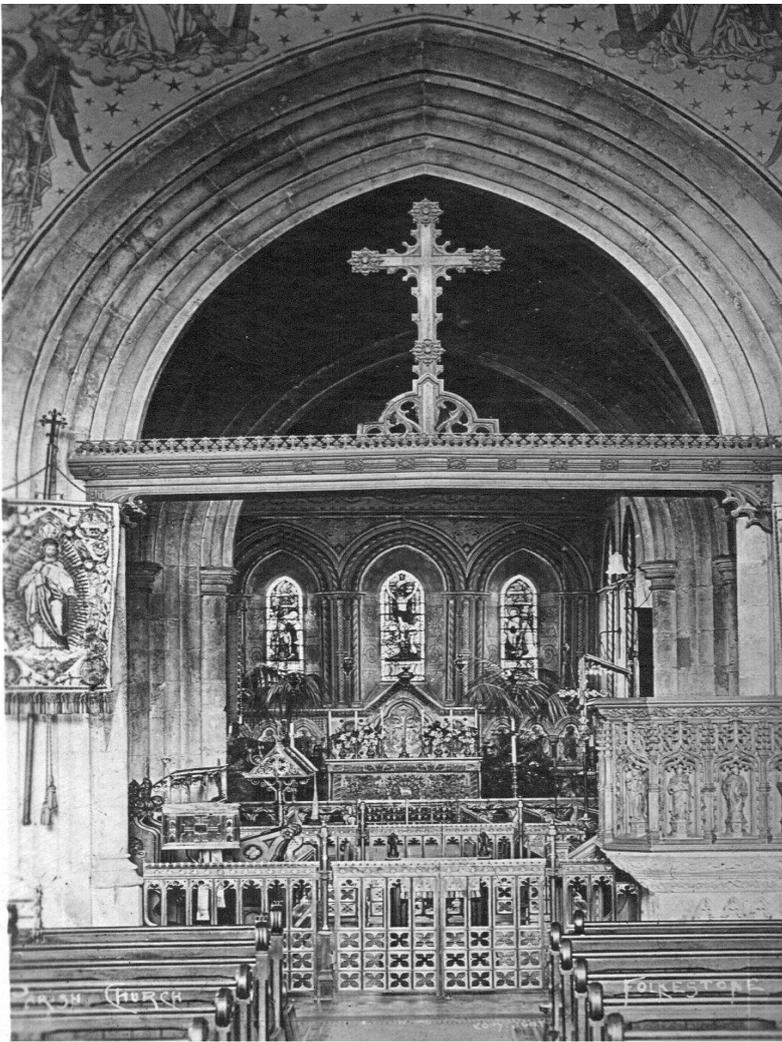
He went on to talk about functions of crosses, forms of crosses, the significance of the site, the moot stones, the first cross, the first sundial, the second sundial and the current, third cross.

Forty-nine people attended the meeting.



### **Rood Screens by John Hendy**

'Rood' comes from the Old English word meaning 'cross' or 'crucifix.' Screens which separated the nave from the chancel were a common feature during the medieval period and were usually made of decorative stone or wood. These were topped by a stout beam supporting a rood loft, or passageway, which in turn supported a crucifix often with figures of Our Lady and St John on either side. The loft was usually lined with candles and at special festivals parts of the liturgy were proclaimed from there. Access to the lofts was via stairways which were frequently built into churches during this period.



Parish Church St Mary's & St Eanswythe Screen, 1892

Screens although with recent changes in liturgical practice, many of these have since been laid aside.

### **Herdson Bay by Eamonn Rooney**

The reader will know of Hudson Bay and the Hudson River in the United States of America. These are named for one Henry Hudson / Herdson. It is generally agreed that the name was variously spelt, thus the Bay and River could just as easily have been named Herdson or Heardson Bay / River.

Very little is known about Henry Hudson's early life other than that he was born in London in either the 1660s (c1665?) or in the 1670s... What else do we know about him?

His grandfather, also named Henry, was a London alderman, who had helped form the Muscovy Trading Company. They were a wealthy family and Henry would have had a good education. He married a girl named Catherine and they had three children: John, Richard and Oliver.

Rood Screens became the norm after 1215 when the Fourth Lateran Council in Rome declared that Christ's body and blood were truly contained in the Sacrament of the Altar under the forms of bread and wine (Transubstantiation). There was then a need to keep the laity from the holiest area of the church in which the Body of Christ reposed on or above the High Altar. In view of this, many churches were extended eastwards while Rood Screens with gates were erected to provide a barrier both for security and also out of deep respect for what lay beyond.

Following the break with Rome it was decreed that the Roods, their lofts and attendant statues should be removed leaving what remained as Choir Screens.

As Protestantism gathered pace during the reign of Edward VI, many screens were unceremoniously demolished. This was especially so during Oliver Cromwell's Commonwealth at which time our churches witnessed an unsurpassed degree of desecration and wanton vandalism from the Puritans.

The great Gothic Revival in church building during the nineteenth century was responsible for the reintroduction of Rood practice, many of these have since been



Henry Hudson



An article which appeared in the Folkestone Express in 1905, relates that:

*“In the year 1607, Henry Hudson, master of a vessel called the ‘Hopewell’ just bound to endeavour to find a North Sea passage, to China, with his crew, including a boy, John Hudson, communicated with the rest of the parishioners (of the church of St. Ethelburga, Bishopsgate) before sailing. This Hudson or Herdson (the name was variously written) was the discoverer of Delaware Bay and the Hudson River”*

Tragedy struck this Henry the explorer, when in 1611, Henry’s crew mutinied and on 22<sup>nd</sup> October he was set adrift in a small boat together with his son and eight crew members. They were never seen again.

Above: Hudson Bay  
Right: The Hopewell

But now to Folkestone:

We have in Folkestone a Herdson Road, and the Herdson coat of arms, which can be seen to this day on a building on The Bayle and there is also a Herdson monument in the Parish Church of St. Mary & St. Eanswythe. The “Express” article goes on to say that Henry came from a family who were related to the family which held the Manor of Folkestone for a time, asserting that:



*“This Henry Hudson, the alderman, left three daughters, one of whom, Barbara, married Charles Dixwell, of Coton in Warwickshire, and her fourth son Basil, subsequently Sir Basil, succeeded to the manors of Terlingham and Folkestone. His estates passed to his nephew Mark Dixwell\*”*

(\* hence Dixwell Road.)

Reference to the *Calendar State Papers of 2 & 3 Philip and Mary* confirms Barbara’s status reciting that named:

*‘Barbara Heardson wid(ow) late w(ife) of Henry Heardson Alderman of London was granted an annuity of £16 to be assigned in the Court of Wards in ... castle, manor, hundred and parish of Folkestone in right of the former Priory’.*

Finally, there is another most interesting connection: in the Parish Church of SS Mary and Eanswythe there is a splendid memorial to the Herdson family and another in Hawkinge Church (now redundant).

In the church of St. Dunstan in the East there was a similar monument to the memory of Henry Hudson explorer: *with kneeling figures like those on the memorial in Folkestone.*

So there you have it; is the “*Express*” correct in its theory that our manorial family of Herdson is connected to Henry Hudson the intrepid explorer? The answer will probably never be known and lies locked in the dim and distant past. Sadly we cannot compare the memorial at St Dunstan in the East as German bombs destroyed the interior of the church; and the space is now laid out as a garden.



St Dunstan in the East, lies on the North side of the River Thames, between London Bridge & Tower Bridge.

### **Notices by Alan Taylor**

We would like to welcome new members: Roger Bell, Cynthia Savage, Heather Tyrell, Tony Dickinson, Lucinda Green, George Beckwith, Jane Heron & Helen MacEwan.

May I join the officers and committee in wishing all members a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

**Reminder - for anybody who has not paid their subscriptions – these are now due.**