



FOLKESTONE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 3 - JUNE 2000

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Due to Major Maber being unable to make the March meeting he was slotted into April and we had our Social Evening in March at which we attempted to show a video on our new projector, unfortunately due to technical problems, this was not possible, however we hope the problem has now been resolved and we will be able to use the projector in the near future.

The setting-up of photographic displays continues to be a very active area. Anne Bamford set up an exhibition of local Victorian photographs and photographic equipment consisting of old cameras and glass negatives etc., at All Souls School, Cheriton. The exhibition ran for five days from Monday 13th. March, on one of these days during the week, Anne was dressed-up as a Victorian photographer.

Have you seen or read the following books by *Charles Fraser-Smith*? The Secret War of Charles Fraser-Smith; Secret Warriors; Men of Faith in World War II; Four Thousand Year War, & The Man Who was 'Q' The Life of Charles Fraser-Smith by David Porter.

On the 18th of January this year a Mr Edward Fraser-Smith from Great Longstone, Derbyshire, was in Folkestone for two days trying to trace his family's connection with the town. While he was in London Street an elderly gentleman passed up the road pushing a bicycle (Sid 'Ikie' Quaife), he told him that he was trying to trace his family's roots and asked if he could help. Ikie gave him my name and said that he would probably find me in the cafe in the fish market called 'The Cabin'. Mr Fraser-Smith found The Cabin only to be told that I had already been and gone that morning.

He then visited the Heritage room at the library where he found that his uncle, (author of the above books) Charles Fraser-Smith was born at, 4 Harvey Street, Folkestone on 26th January 1904. Charles Fraser-Smith's father was a solicitor, he also ran a grocery business at 4 Harvey Street, (one time Tickner's fried fish & chip shop). He died at the early age of thirty-three leaving four children including Charles who was 7 years old at the time, all the children were adopted by their aunty, Mrs Piper, who brought them up at Croxley Green in Hertfordshire.

Mr Edward Fraser-Smith wrote to me on 24th January telling me about his visit to Folkestone and his family's connection, he asked me if I knew anything about the family and enclosed a copy of *The Man Who Was 'Q'*, The Life of Charles Fraser-Smith. I have since sent him some photographs of No. 4 Harvey Street, which is now in flats. If you have any information about the families connection with Folkestone I would be pleased to hear from you.

The following is the blurb from the book, *The Man Who Was 'Q'* by David Porter.

Few men or women have led a life as varied as that of Charles Fraser Smith. Crusader leader and farmer, he went to Morocco to work as an agricultural missionary, founded an orphanage there, and was almost killed by a jealous foreman on the royal estates. Returning to England in 1940, he contributed unobtrusively to the war against Germany and Japan in a way that led to his being used by Ian Fleming as the original model for 'Q' in the James Bond stories.

Subsequently he pioneered new methods of farming in Devon, worked enthusiastically for the Gideons and became an honorary Vice President of Bible Society. At the age of 77 he became an author and has had four books published.

David Porter's racy account of his fascinating life is based on Charles Fraser-Smith's personal records and includes many photographs. It will interest all who have already enjoyed his books and introduce him to many who have not yet made his acquaintance.

Price UK: £3.95 net

M.S. Fraser-Smith,
Little Compass, 1, Westgate,
Louth, Lincolnshire,
LN11 9YN.

The Societies Millennium project, Folkestone Past & Present photographic display was set up at St Martins Church Community Hall on Easter Monday, it created a lot of interest along with postcard albums of Folkestone, Cheriton, Shorncliffe and Sandgate. The albums were provided by Anne & Peter Bamford, Chris Phillips and myself. We also had our book stall there which was manned by David Fundrey.

Another photographic display has been set up at Sandgate library, it consists of Views Round Folkestone Harbour set up by myself and Shepway Past & Present set up by Anne & Peter Bamford. The Past photographs in the Shepway display are copied from postcards published by Howe Bros. - Folkestone & London. Very little is known about this photographic business. The local directories show John Coleridge Howe living at 36 Broadmead Road from about 1908 until 1934 with his occupations variously described as house, business & insurance agent to house agent to insurance broker.

It would appear that the postcards were a sideline, perhaps being produced wholesale and sold on to local newsagents and confectioners. The company produced cards of Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate, Shorncliffe and Dover. Most of the different views of this area were numbered by the company and local postcard collectors collating lists of these cards in their collections have found over 300 different views of Folkestone and 100 for Hythe.

One explanation for the prolific number of local views produced by Howe Bros. is that they brought out other photographers or bought their negatives when they closed down. It is thought that Robert Nathaniel Harmer, Refreshment Room Owner and Photographer from Sandgate could have been one of these.

The research for Howe Bros. was done by Anne & Peter Bamford.

Touring Fleas Cause a Sensation!

During October 1889, an exhibition of touring fleas at No. 70 High Street, Folkestone caused great mirth and amusement and attracted large numbers of inquisitive townsfolk. The talented and highly respectable trained and educated troupe of fleas walked tight ropes, rode tricycles, pulled timber wagons and performed many other marvellous feats.

MARTELLO TOWER No. 3

A short history by Eamonn Rooney

Situate on high ground in the centre of the East Cliff golf links and close to the East Cliff and Warren Country Park is Martello Tower No. 3, one of seventy-four such defensive towers erected between 1805 and 1808 during the Napoleonic period along the coast from Kent to Sussex. The towers, which stand over 30 ft tall, are based on a tower on Mortella Point in Corsica, which although armed with one six-pounder and two eighteen-pounder guns, withstood heavy bombardment by both the British Navy and Army in 1794.

The walls of the tower are tapered to deflect cannon shot and provide a wide range and angle of shot from the roof-mounted cannon. The outside walls are built in a slightly ovoid shape whilst the inside is almost circular and was another aid in deflecting hostile fire. The thickness of the walls facing the sea measures some thirteen feet and the landward thickness is six feet. The tower has three levels. There is no entrance at ground level and this 'basement' provided storage for provisions, ammunition and gunpowder. The first floor was divided into three sections providing accommodation for twenty-four men and one officer. Goods for storage in the basement were lowered through a trapdoor located on this floor. The roof or gun platform was reached by means of a staircase built into the wall of the tower. Situated on the gun platform was one twenty-four-pounder cannon weighing 2½ ton mounted on a central pivot enabling the gun to be pulled round to fire in any direction. The cannon could fire a shot one-mile out to sea.

When not needed for military purposes, the tower was used for housing military personnel and their families. During the Second World War the building again saw military service, at which time an additional room was constructed on the roof, partly obliterating the cannon runway. This new room was given the designation C.M.O. 77 as part of the Combined Mining Operation Service. A number of mines laid from the end of Folkestone pier head to Copt Point could be detonated by remote control from the tower. The service was manned by naval personnel who lived at nearby Hasborough Road and officers based at Varne Road.

Today, Martello Tower No. 3 is owned and operated by Shepway District Council.

The Group 'H' Transmitter Folkestone during the Second World War

as described by June Paine

During World War Two, low powered transmitter sites were dotted all over the British Isles; in all 61 sites formed a network that would provide communications links should some or all of the higher powered transmitters were knocked out of action.

When enemy aircraft approached over the English Channel, individual transmitters were shut down in order to prevent the broadcast signal being used as a navigational aid. Folkestone had its own Group 'H' transmitter in a brick-built hut in the grounds of the Harvey Grammar School, Cheriton Road from late 1941 to 1945. This particular transmitter was unusual in having a conventional mast to support its aerials with cables linked into concrete ties to support the mast. Many other such transmitters were sited near to tall buildings or high industrial chimneys in order to accommodate the aerials needed.

The brick-built hut is still visible from Cherry Garden Avenue, although the mast has long since vanished.



Book Review

By
Annie Bamford

Tales from the Tap Room: An Anthology of Folkestone's Public Houses and Breweries by Martin Easdown and Eamonn Rooney, published by Marlin Publications May 2000. 230mm x 170 mm, 192 pages, 188 illustrations. ISBN 0-9530744-2-0.

This long awaited publication of Mr Easdown and Mr Rooney's on Folkestone pubs has continued the excellent run of books published by Marlin Publications on local topics. Entitled *Tales from the Tap Room*, this well researched book is a worthy successor to Bishop's book *Old Folkestone Pubs*. It not only updates all the information on the pubs in the previous publication, but also includes 30 pubs not previously known.

The first section of the book gives the reader a general history of pubs in Folkestone, including any national events such as the 1830 Beerhouse Act, which might have affected licensed premises in the local area. This act removed all duties on beer and led to 24,000 more licensed premises being opened throughout Britain in the last three months of 1830, including perhaps the 'Isle of Cyprus' in Folkestone. The second section goes into great detail about the history of brewing in Folkestone and as a result mentions quite a few old Folkestone names such as the Marsh's.

The third and largest section of the book is the gazetteer of Folkestone public houses since the fifteenth century. It is this part of the book which I found the most fascinating because of the extended research, both anecdotal in painting a picture of some of the more colourful landlords, but also the court records indicating which pubs were fined for opening extra hours. Each pub entry has at least one illustration, with only a few exceptions for the really early pubs, of both an archive and up-to-date photo for pubs still in business today or an old archive photo where the pub has long since ceased trading. Indeed, it is this part of the book which I shall be dipping into again and again, either for reference to date some of my old photos, or nostalgia, remembering the pubs that Peter and I used to frequent in our youth.

If you are lucky enough to get one of the first 100 hundred books of this 500 limited edition run, the booklet *Bastions of the Bar* is also included in the price. This lists where possible every licensee from 1525 to 1999 of each of the pubs mentioned and this will also prove to be an invaluable reference tool in years to come. It has already proved useful to us as a flagon we have imprinted with 'William Tweed, Royal George Hotel, Folkestone' on the top we have discovered was probably made between 1858-62 when Mr Tweed was listed as landlord in the book.

At £12.50, this book, with its wealth of research and illustrations, is well worth adding to your collection of local books. It can either be bought from the Society stall or direct from the publishers, Tel. No. (01303) 230202.

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