



**FOLKESTONE & DISTRICT  
Local History Society  
[www.folkestonehistory.org](http://www.folkestonehistory.org)**

**NEWSLETTER No. 77 – Winter 2018**

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** by Alan F Taylor.

At the September meeting we welcomed guest speaker Malcolm Robertson who gave us his illustrated talk entitled 'The first time DNA was used to solve a murder.' These crimes were not connected with Folkestone but were actually committed in Leicestershire in the 1980s in the villages of Enderby and Harborough

The first murder was in 1983 of a 15 year old girl named Lynda Mann who lived in Harborough. On 21 November 1983 she came home from school as usual and told her mother she was off to visit her best friend called Karen after which she said she might visit another friend who lived in Enderby, but she promised to be home by 10 o'clock.

Lynda's mother and step-father had been out all evening and didn't get home until about midnight when they found her sister in a very upset state saying that Lynda had not come home at all which was very unusual for her. Her step-father set off straight away looking for her but was unable to find her. At 1.30am her mother contacted the Police; but at 7 o'clock in the morning a porter from a nearby hospital walked along the Black Pad footpath. When he reached the gate he saw what he thought was a dummy laying on the ground, but soon realized it was a body of a female and he called the police. The body was subsequently identified as the body of Lynda Mann and the Police started their investigation.

The Police investigation ascertained that Lynda had been strangled and raped. Some of the semen from her dead body was as taken and kept as evidence. A huge amount of information about possible suspects was gleaned by 150 officers but as the months went by there was no evidence pointing to a suspect. Now one character who the Police came across during the investigation, who was not a suspect, just a bit of a nuisance, was a fourteen year old, very backward, boy, called Richard Buckland. He rode around the area on his bicycle, and his hobby was hiding behind fences or hedges and jumping out when young girls were walking past thinking it very funny. When the officers were trying to investigate he kept pestering them and came up with silly answers although said he was not involved in the murder.

The next murder was two and a half years later in 1986. The victim this time was another 15 year old girl whose name was Dawn Ashworth and she lived in Enderby with her parents. Dawn also went to the same school as Lynda Mann and had got herself a summer holiday job at newsagents. On 31 July 1986 Dawn finished work at 3.30pm. She told her mother she was going to have tea with a school friend and promised to be home by 7pm as she knew her parents were due to go out then. So Dawn set off on foot to head towards Harborough walking along the footpath called the Ten Pound Lane towards Harborough and along the Black Pad footpath which was very dark due to the overgrown bushes. Dawn stopped by a bridge over the motorway which went to her friends house, but it seems she decided to go back home as shortly afterwards she was seen by a passing motorist at the entrance to Ten Pound Lane heading back home.

Now when Dawn hadn't arrived back home at 7 pm, as she had promised, her parents started to worry and her father went out in his car trying to find her, but without success, so her mother drove from Harborough and called at the house of the friend she was going to see only to be told that she

never arrived at their house. Her parents although worried decided to wait until 9.30pm before they contacted the police. On the following day the Police located the body of Dawn Ashworth covered in foliage in a field at the side of Ten Pound Lane.

The post-mortem of Dawn revealed that she had semen on her body which was kept as evidence and the Police were left with no doubt at all that the same person was responsible for both murders and that it was a local person. Richard Buckland, who was a nuisance at the time of the first murder, had been driving around on a motorbike and again he was following the police officers who were trying to investigate and still making a real nuisance of himself. A new witness came forward a young man who knew Richard Buckland and had been told by him that he knew where the body was - hidden under some branches.

With this information and after finding the body where indicated, Richard Buckland, now 17, was arrested and questioned to find out how he knew about the body being in the field and covered with leaves. Richard Buckland was unstable and after several days of interviewing eventually he admitted that he murdered Dawn without retracting his statement. With his knowledge of how Dawn's body was located in the field and with the use of a motorbike that had been witnessed parked under a bridge opposite the entrance to Ten Pound Lane, Richard Buckland was charged with the murder of Dawn Ashworth. The Police, really confident that they had got the right man questioned Richard about the murder of Lynda Mann, but Richard denied the first murder and due to his unstable nature would sometimes withdraw his confession that he had murdered Dawn. This frustrated the Police, because if he had murdered Dawn Ashworth, they were confident that he also murdered Lynda Mann.

In the period of two and a half years between the murders, a scientist at Leicester University had been working on the possibility that he could identify people by extracting DNA from people's hair. At the time this had never been used for any criminal investigation. The detective inspector who was in charge of the investigation had heard about this and contacted Professor Jefferies asking if it would be possible to use DNA to prove that Richard Buckland had murdered both girls. Professor Jefferies agreed and a blood sample was taken with the samples of the semen taken from both bodies. Professor Jefferies was able to say that the DNA in the two semen's samples were the same and that the same person was responsible for the murder of both girls. What the Police weren't expecting was that Professor Jefferies told them that the Richard Buckland's DNA did not match the DNA in the semen samples, so that completely ruled him out as the rapist and murderer of either girl.

After further discussions with Professor Jefferies they decided it would be worth taking DNA samples from all the males living in the three local villages aged between 17 and 34. Three places were set up at the villages for taking the blood samples and letters were sent to all the males in the age groups asking them to attend and to bring some form of identification with them. Within a couple of months 90% of those who were asked to give blood had done so and visits were made by the Police to the other 10% who had failed to take the test initially, but in the end none was the murderer.

Now in the City of Leicester there was a large bakery factory and the manageress of one of the bakery shops had arranged for some of her bakery workers to meet up in a pub after work socially. Among these bakery workers was a young lad called Ian Kelly who lived in Leicester and had connections with the three villages; but he had never been asked to give a blood sample himself. When this group met in the pub it was coincidental that the topic of Dawn Ashworth came into conversation and the giving of blood samples. Then Ian Kelly said something to the group, with almost an element of pride. He told them another worker at the bakery factory named Colin Pitchfork had paid Ian Kelly £1 to go the blood testing venue and give a sample of his own blood while pretending to be Colin Pitchfork. Ian Kelly proudly admitted to his colleagues that he had given his own blood in place of Colin Pitchfork. This information was passed to the Police and in 1987 Ian Kelly was arrested for giving blood whilst pretending to be Colin Pitchfork.

Kelly pleaded guilty for perverting the cause of justice after pretending to be Colin Pitchfork and was sentenced for 18 months, suspended for ten years.

The Police called at Pitchfork's house and asked his wife if they could speak to him and arrested him. Over the next three days Colin, aged 27, was interviewed at the Police Station and he admitted the rape and murder of both Lynda Mann and Dawn Ashworth. He was charged with murder on 2nd January 1988, found guilty, and was given a life sentence with a minimum of 30 years. However in 2009, 11 years after he was sentenced, Pitchfork appealed against his sentence and it was reduced to 28 years.

Colin Pitchfork had a history of exposing himself to women and when the girls had run away down the Black Pad Path or Ten Pound Lane had blamed their fleeing for the fact that he had then been compelled to rape and to murder them.

The Police thought that Richard Buckland must have seen Colin Pitchfork covering the body and probably went and saw the body for himself.

After The Sun newspaper managed to take a photo of Colin Pitchfork walking along the road at an open prison in Gloucestershire and making his own way back to the prison, the families of Lynda and Dawn appealed and now Colin Pitchfork will not be released until 2020.

So, if it hadn't been for DNA and Ian Kelly's admission, Richard Buckland would have ended up with a long prison sentence for a murder he had not committed and Colin Pitchfork would have gone free.

Thirty-nine people attended the meeting one of whom was a visitor.

We would like to welcome new members:

On a rather sad note I would like to announce the death of former member Betty Pace who passed away on 9<sup>th</sup> September aged 80 years now reunited with her husband Dick.

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

**For anybody who has not yet paid their subscriptions – a reminder these are now due.**

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