



## FOLKESTONE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

*NEWSLETTER NUMBER 4 - OCTOBER 2000*

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dear Member,

This year's report may not be as long as previous Chairmen's reports due to the fact that you have been kept up-to-date during the year with reports in your newsletters.

The Society has had a very successful year, with membership slightly up on last year, currently at 135.

The introduction of *Newsletters* has been well received according to the feedback I have had from the members, my thanks go to Martin Easdown and Linda Sage for all their hard work as editors, also for the task of distribution which they have dealt with.

The Society enjoyed a well balanced programme last year with an average attendance at meetings of 71, I am confident the programme for the coming year will be equally good, thanks to the hard work of our Secretary, Peter Bamford and his wife Anne.

As you have already heard from Tom Leftley, our Treasurer, the Society has had a very good year financially, with a healthy surplus. My thanks go to Tom for all his hard work balancing the books which he does in a very professional way.

My thanks also to our Vice-Chairman Chris Phillips for doing the announcements at the meetings and compiling the reports for the Folkestone Herald, an unthankful job because the reports often do not get published.

Many thanks to Trevor Page for running our raffle and David Fundry for running the bookstall. Also to Eileen and Eric Frankland for putting their house at our disposal for our Committee meetings and in particular to Eileen for keeping the minutes.

I would like to thank Daphne Heaver for representing us at the Kent History Federation Meetings in Maidstone, Daphne has been our representative for many years.

Last but not least I would like to thank Mary Hunt and the members who help her for providing us with refreshments, without them we would have very dry evenings.

We had a photographic exhibition at Sandgate library for practically the whole of last year, the subjects have been changed from time to time and they have all been well received.

Our Past & Present photographic exhibition (the Millennium project) had a spell in Sandgate library before moving on to the Parish Church of Saint Mary & Saint Eanswythe for June, July and August. This year it was decided not to have a donation box in the Parish Church due to a number of problems in the past, instead a notice was placed saying that if you enjoyed the exhibition a donation would be welcome in the church donation box. Joan Tilby told me their donations have gone up considerably since the exhibition was installed, she is entering about one third of the total donations each week as a donation from us.

Peter and Anne Bamford set-up a Victorian photographic exhibition with Victorian photographic artifacts for All Soul's School, Cheriton. The exhibition ran for five days from March 13th, and on one of the days Anne was dressed-up as a Victorian photographer complete with half plate

field camera with bellows and tripod.

On Bank Holiday Monday 24th April Peter and Anne Bamford, Chris Phillips, David Fundry and myself set up a photographic display and book stall at St. Martin's Church community hall, this was to help raise money for restoration to the church. The display consisted of Folkestone Past and Present and views around the harbour. Although the day was not that well attended a lot of interest was shown in our display and the book stall took £35.

I was fortunate to get an invitation to the H.S.B.C. bank's centenary reception on the evening of 17th May, during which the Manager, Ben Sharp made a speech thanking people for coming, he personally thanked me for my help in researching the history of the bank and providing copy photographs for their exhibition. He then asked me to come forward to receive a cheque for £50 for the Local History Society.

On Wednesday 17th May we had our annual visit to the Heritage room in the Folkestone library, Janet Adamson (Heritage Office) brought us up-to-date with the library and museum news after which we were allowed to browse through the collection including in the back room, which is usually not accessible to the public.

This years annual outing was to the New Forest on Saturday 17th. July. We left Folkestone at 7.30 am arriving at Romsey in Hampshire at 10.30 where we picked-up our guide for the day. She took us for a 1½ hour tour round the Forest telling us about it, we finished at the village of Beaulieu where we stopped for a two hour lunch break. After lunch we made our way to Buckler's Hard, an 18th century shipbuilding village where we spent time in the maritime museum and workers cottages before embarking on the *Swiftsure* for a ½ hour cruise on the Beaulieu river. The day was a great success thanks once again to our treasurer Tom for organizing it. I think I can safely say the 49 members and friends who went on the outing thoroughly enjoyed the day, arriving home at 7.45 pm after covering about 300 miles.

That concludes my report for 1999-2000



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Perhaps you would like to try your hand at a KENTISH RECIPE by Pat Smith

***Folkestone Pudding Pie***

8 oz. Shortcrust pastry

¾ oz. ground rice

½ pint milk

Grated rind of a lemon

1 oz. butter

1 tablespoon sugar

1 egg, beaten

2 oz. currants

A little grated nutmeg

Set oven to 400°F or Mark 6. Roll out the pastry and use it to line a greased 7 inch flan tin. Mix the ground rice with a little of the cold milk. Heat the rest of the milk in a saucepan, with the lemon rind, over a low heat. Add the butter and the rice mixture to the hot milk. Stir until it thickens. Add the sugar and stir until it has dissolved. Cool slightly and whisk in the egg. Pour the mixture into the pastry case and scatter the currants on the surface. Top with a little grated nutmeg. Bake for 10 minutes and then reduce the temperature to 300°F or Mark 2 and bake for a further 20 minutes until golden and set. Serves 5 to 6.

**Notes about the Bayle from recollection by the late John Dunk, 15 May 1955.  
Written for the late Mr C.P. Davies, Folkestone Reference Librarian.**

Coming up from Church Street and passing Messrs Halksworth Wheelers imitation ancient building, about where Mr Pankhurst Livery keeper had his residence with stables behind, and Mr Fentiman his flower nursery, Mr Darley, watchmaker, a pioneer in electrical apparatus. Lawyer Harts house and offices the figures from the garden are now in Kings North Gardens, after the premises had been acquired by the Corporation.

The site of the Woodward Institute was occupied by the Tyson family house, a square dwelling with a massive iron fence in front. The site was purchased by a local builder who erected a large sign board stating it was the site of a proposed theatre or music hall.

Both Mrs Napier Sturt of the Priory and the Church authorities were perturbed - which might well be the desired effect and the Church with subscriptions and a loan from a lady in Lennard Road bought the site for a Memorial to the late Vicar, Canon Woodward whose tomb is under the tree opposite.

Mr Lacy Ridge, the architect to Chichester Diocese, designed the building which was built with a temporary roof at first floor level, until funds permitted completion. The back part being the new St. Eanswythe's School, moved from St. Eanswythe's House.

The Priory was originally the residence of *Parson Pearce* who preceded Rev. Mathew Woodward. It was bought by Col. Napier Sturt who employed Col. Edis, a well known architect, to design the new drawing room wing and other alterations. As the chimneys were subject to down draft a number of rotating aluminium cowls were fixed, quite a sight on a windy day.

The stables were opposite. After the Colonels death, Mrs Napier Sturt continued to live there with her (first husbands) daughter Miss Violet Ashley Sparke.

The Colonel meant to buy the row of houses and secured one or two but the *British Lion* and others would not sell. A footpath was made along the cliff and Mrs Sturt bought the Battery.

The muzzle loading guns at the Battery were in position and an officer resided at the house until about 65 years ago.

Mrs Sturt used the house as a laundry and residence for Mr Billingham her gardener.

The Bayle Pond used to be open to the road at the end for washing horses. I have an idea a pump stood there.

It was supplied by the Town Dyke, reputed St Eanswythes water under which a frived in iron pipes along the back of the Woodward Institute. The overflow ran down the High Street sewer. It has recently been cut off at Radnor Park.

Folkestone Fair is stated to have been held in the street adjoining there was some connection with a gooseberry pie.

St. Eanswythes House was built by Mr Cranston (father in law to John Tolputt, grandfather Henry Tolputt) timber merchant. He wanted to carry it up another storey but was stopped by the Corporation. It was taken by the sisters (Community of St John Baptist) from Clewer who built the school (2 storeys) adjoining, - destroyed in WWII. Sister Edith Katherine - the Sister Superior lived till she was over 90.

Belle Vue House on the Parade steps with its little spire, was occupied by Mr Earnshaw, Superintendent of the South Eastern Railway, and afterwards by Mr John Andrew, the Magistrates Clerk. It was twice but in the last war totally destroyed (Mrs Andrew, widow, was away).

On the opposite side where the row of houses erected by Mr William Hoad (Shangri-La, etc.) were 3 houses with gardens terraced down the cliff behind High Street. The end house was occupied by Mr Thomas Ledger, Custom House Agent, who kept pigeons, the 3rd. house, rather larger, was occupied by Mrs Farley Marsh who kept a horse and carriage.

The top of the High Street steps were mostly slaughter houses. Coming up from High Street, past the original booking office for coaches, is now a Hotel. Various old property, the tall building set back was Holbeins Printing Works (The visitors List) now G.J. Wilsons stores. The Old Harveian Institute stood where Messrs Parsons Printing Works are now. It was the Borough Library (Mr Stuart Hills) and Miss Potts ( her father Capt. Potts) ran a very successful boys club for many years.

The houses were generally very old, and frequently skeletons were found when the ground was excavated. Some of them were open to each other in the roof, and some had queer circular cupboards and Dutch tile fireplaces. The people on the Bayle were credited with regarding themselves socially superior to the *down town* people.

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## **The Site of the Roman Villa**

As described by Eamonn Rooney

In 1924 an excavation was begun at the East Cliff, on a site just east of Jocks Pitch, under the supervision of a Mr S. E. Wimbolt. The impetus for the excavation was a visit to Folkestone the previous year when Mr Wimbolt, a teacher, identified a stone drain visible protruding from the cliff edge as being Roman.

The excavations revealed a sizeable villa running east to west. The work revealed the villa was built on the site of an earlier smaller building and evidence it was enlarged over 300-400 years. The period of occupation is generally accepted as being from late 1<sup>st</sup> century to the latter half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

The site is situated between the Roman fort at Lympne (Portus Lemanis) and Dover (Dubris). The main building is some 200ft in length with a fronting corridor with numerous rooms leading off. Room 40, in line with the main entrance was found to have a mosaic floor and there is evidence of painted walls in this and several other rooms. In addition, the main villa is flanked on the south side by a second large wing and a Bathhouse.

The exact purpose of the villa is uncertain – there is speculation that it may have been the home of a fleet commander. A number of tiles stamped C.L.B.R. – standing for Classis Britannica, the Roman fleet based in Britain – have been found at the site.

The villa commanded impressive views over the Channel, and whatever its purpose, it ranks as the most important relic of Roman Folkestone uncovered to date. During very dry weather the outline of the villa may be seen in the ‘scorched’ grass above. A recent partial excavation carried out in 1989 by a team from Kent Archaeological Rescue Trust under the supervision of Brian Philp, revealed something of the grandeur of the Folkestone Roman Villa.

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