

February 2007

Previous meetings

We are now well into the New Year and the committee wish all members of the Bridge and District History Society a Happy New Year.

This year promises to be a very busy one for the society with the staging of the Kent History Federation One Day Conference in May. Plans for the conference are well advanced but there is still time to volunteer your help, please contact Jenny Vye.

Our members are not precluded from the conference just because it is being held in Bridge. If you wish to take part in the conference please follow the normal procedure of obtaining the details from Maurice Raraty on the visit booking form and sending in your application direct to the Kent History Federation. Numbers will be limited and it will be on a first come first served basis.

To mark this conference the Society are producing an illustrated (some in colour) booklet on the history of Bridge and its environs written by Meriel Conner and Dr. Maurice Raraty. The book will cover the history of some of the houses in Bridge, and not just the very big ones, personal anecdotes and the history of the village.

The production of this book has been made possible by substantial grants towards the production costs by Kent County Council and Highland Court Investments. These grants have made it possible to give a copy of the booklet to the Conference delegates and also to our members. The booklet will be distributed at the September 2007 AGM to all paid up members, on the basis of one per membership form. If you are unable to attend the September meeting please add a note to your membership application form and we will send one to you.

The Christmas get together was held on the 19th December and Dr. Geoff Doel took us through the songs and poems that had been used in Christmases gone by together with mummers and characters who are becoming increasingly rare. He introduced us to some of the old Kentish carols which have now been all but forgotten and of the Kentish Christmas customs which are now only kept up by enthusiasts. We seem to have lost of sense of community especially on high days and holidays which was taken for granted by our parents and grandparents and which will almost certainly disappear altogether in the next two generations. The hot and cold buffet by Alan Walton and his helpers was extremely good and thoroughly enjoyed by all and the magnificent table decorations by Hilary Derouet were auctioned at the end of the evening with more than £70 being donated to Pilgrims Hospice. Many people who have not been mentioned worked very hard to ensure that those of us who attended had a good time and to them we give our grateful thanks.

The January meeting on the 18th January was a slide show by Richard Filmer on traditional Kentish crafts and industries. We were astonished to see him give a lecture of about 90 minutes entirely without a script and we listened enthralled throughout that time. His lecture started with the crafts associated with wood, of which there were many including fencing, hurdles, gates, rakes, shovels and many other uses and introduced us to many of the craftsmen who are either the last one in their line or who have now ceased to operate. When he had finished one batch of slides he asked if we wanted to see more at which there was roar of approval and we settled back for another 30 minutes of unscripted enjoyment.

The committee have requested that we print a list of members names and these are shown below. The list of members is published with only the names as with the prevalence of identity theft we do not wish to add address, telephone numbers etc.

Mrs Margaret Appleton	Mrs Margaret Marsh
Mrs S Atkins	Mr David Millyard
Mr Graham Atkins	Mrs Jane Millyard
Mrs Jean Baldock	Mrs Joan Monk
Mr Alan Barber	Mr Andrew Monro
Mrs Jean Barber	Mrs Pamela Monro
Mrs Barbara Beinder	Miss Rose Morgan
Mrs Joan Blanche	Mr Peter Morris
Mrs Rosermary Bodger	Mrs Celia Morris
Mr Hugh Bodger	Mrs Judith Musgrove
Mr P. Bradley	Mr Arthur Musgrove
Mrs Sally Bradley	Mr William Oakey
Mrs Joy Bridger	Mrs Elizabeth Oakey
Mr John Cardy	Mr John Park
Mrs Rosemary Cardy	Mrs Janet Park
Miss D Carling	Mrs C Parmiter
Mrs Meriel Connor	Mrs Mavis Parsons
Mr Douglas Cox	Mr John Paterson
Mrs Maureen Cox	Mr Hugh Pearson
Mr. Tim Derouet	Mrs Eileen Piggott
Mrs Hilary Derouet	Dr D.G. Pratt
Mrs Kathleen Diss	Mrs Susan Pratt
Mrs Mary Dixon	Dr Maurice Raraty
Mrs Ann Edmonds	Mrs Dorothy Raraty
Mr David Edmonds	Mr Denis Ratcliffe
Mr Robert Epps	Mrs Kathleen Ratcliffe
Mr Peter Fairweather	Mrs Jane Rice
Mrs Margaret Fairweather	Mr Barry Rice
Mr Russ Feast	Mr Phillip Richardson
Miss Sheila Fenn	Mrs Jill Richardson
Mrs Beryl Field	Mr Edgar Smith
Mr Alan Forrest	Mrs Margaret Smith
Mrs Diana Forrest	Mrs Mary Starrs
Mr Norman Fowler	Mr Leslie Stephenson
Mrs Jill Gillanders	Mrs Sheila Stephenson
Mr Ian Gillanders	Mr Michael Stewart
Mr David Gilmour	Mrs Elizabeth Stewart
Mrs Ann Gilmour	Mr W.Dermot Stewart
Mrs Beryl Graham	Mrs Joan Stingemore
Mr Mervyn Gulvin	Mr John Street
Mr John Harris	Mr R.E. Thomas
Mrs Maggie Harris	Mrs W.L. Thomas
Mr Neville Hilary	Mrs Cicelie Toynbee
Mrs Anita Hilary	Mrs Jenny Vye
Mrs Joan Hill	Mr Martin Vye
Mr John Hill	Mr Alan Walton
Mrs Betty Hill	Mrs Susan Walton
Mr Mark Joplin	Mrs Lois Whigham
Mrs D.E King	Mrs D.E. Whiting
Mr Peter Langley	Mr Barry Whiting
Mrs Brenda Langley	Mrs Hilary Whiting
Mr Peter Lawrence	Mrs Janet Williams
Mrs Jane Lovelock	Mrs Williamson-Powell
Mrs Sheila Macdonald	Mr Williamson-Powell
Dr. Geoffrey Macdonald	

If, when you have scanned the list, you can see that someone that you thought was a member has been omitted or you wish to suggest that someone should be approached as a member please contact the membership secretary, Mr. David Gilmour on Canterbury 832450.

Future Events

The next meeting on Tuesday 20th February is our Member's Evening at the Plough & Harrow, Bridge. Alan Walton will be giving a presentation in the upstairs room on the influence of Count Zborowski, Lady Astor's son, in starting up the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch railway. Count Zborowsski, who lived at Higham House, had a lifelong interest in steam trains and had the Higham railway built in the grounds of Higham House.

After the presentation there will a convivial get together over an excellent buffet in the downstairs bar. The cost will be £5.00 as stated in the programme and not £10 as shown on the visit booking form. This evening is restricted in numbers as the upstairs room will only accommodate 25, but **there are still places available and I would ask you to telephone David Gilmour on 832450 not later than the 15th February to reserve a place.**

Our March meeting in Bridge Village Hall will be a talk by Mike Bundock of the Herne Bay History Society, who will give a talk on clocks and clock-making in Kent. Bridge had several clockmakers before mass production put them all out of business and Mike will outlining the development of time keeping in Kent through the ages.

Our April meeting will be a visit to what was the old workhouse at the Close, Union Road. Many of you will have been there, visited residents and even lived there but Alan Walton will be giving a guided walk around the establishment explaining the layout and the principal features of the buildings which were in use when it operated as a workhouse in the 1830's. To make the best use of daylight we have changed the starting time to 7.00 pm.

Published By David Gilmour on behalf of Bridge and District History Society.

Telephone 01227 832450.

May 2007

This newsletter which should have been published in April has been delayed due the huge amount of work involved in arranging the KHF Conference at Bridge on Saturday 12th May.

KHF CONFERENCE

This conference was a huge success thanks to the tireless efforts and inspirational leadership of our chairman Dr. Maurice Raraty and to the many volunteers who gave so much help in the run up to the conference and who worked so hard on the Friday evening before and on the Saturday itself. We had many favourable comments on our organisation of this event including one from a member of the KHF committee who considered it to be the best conference they had attended.

The conference was introduced by Dr. David Starkey who gave an insightful and amusing speech, the gist of which was that history matters. This was followed by a short illustrated introduction to Bridge and then it should have been a talk by Paul Wilkinson on the Star Hill Dig but unfortunately at the last minute he went off to Turkey on a new dig and our chairman bravely filled in the gap with Paul's slides and notes supplemented by his own. We then had a talk on the Civil War in Kent by Jackie Eales followed by our local expert on brick buildings Dick Bolton who talked on Kent brick by brick, pointing out that many buildings we think of as being made in stone are in fact brick structures, including the Bell Harry Tower at Canterbury Cathedral.

A ploughman's lunch was arranged for over 100 people, some in the School and others in the Village Hall and the Hunter Room and again many favourable comments were received on the quality and quantity of this meal.

Walks had been arranged for all the delegates, two

parties were escorted around Bridge, one party went to Patricbourne and Bekesbourne, visiting the two churches. Another party went to Chilham for a tour of the village and the castle grounds and two parties went to Canterbury for a tour of the Cathedral precincts and unusual Canterbury where they were shown some the buildings not normally seen on a visit to Canterbury. Some of the delegates then returned to Bridge for tea in the Village Hall before making their way home.

All of the delegates were given a booklet on Bridge so that even those who did not take the Bridge tours will have some knowledge of our village and it's history. We have a free copy for all our members and this is enclosed with this newsletter. The authors Maurice Raraty and Meriel Connor are to be congratulated on a splendid round up of the history of the village and some of it's buildings.

CHILHAM VISIT

As a follow up to the conference we have arranged a visit to Chilham Castle principally for those who had helped at the Conference. This has unfortunately been delayed due to health problems for it's owner Michael Peters. The visit will be on **Tuesday 5 June**, This will, unusually, include a visit to the interior of the castle by special arrangement with Michael Peters. This visit will be in member's own cars. Meet at 2 pm at Chilham Castle Gate; please park in the car park at the bottom of Taylors Hill; it is advisable to use the conveniences at the car-park as there is only 1 WC available in the grounds. Wear comfortable shoes as there are many steps and several low walls with steep drops beyond, but no banisters or guard rails. tea and biscuits will be available at the end of the visit. The cost of the visit will be £6.00 for helpers and partners and £8.00 for other members. Apart from helpers this visit will be restricted to members only. If you wish to go please telephone **Meriel Connor on 830487** as soon as possible.

BRIDGE BOOKLET

A copy of this booklet on the history of Bridge is free to members with this newsletter. Further copies can be purchased at the Post Office in Bridge.

Previous meetings

The meeting on Tuesday 20th February was our Member's Evening at the Plough & Harrow, Bridge. Alan Walton gave a presentation in the upstairs room on the influence of Count Zborowski, Lady Astor's son, in starting up the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch railway. Count Zborowski, who lived at Higham House, had a lifelong interest in steam trains and had the Higham railway built in the grounds of Higham House.

After the presentation there was an energetic discussion with many members contributing reminiscences of those times. This was followed by a convivial get together over an excellent buffet in the downstairs bar. The new landlords of the Plough & Harrow laying on a splendid buffet.

Our March meeting in Bridge Village Hall was a talk by Mike Bundock of the Herne Bay History Society, on clocks and clockmaking in Kent. Bridge had several clockmakers before mass production put them all out of business and Mike outlined the development of time keeping in Kent through the ages.

Our April meeting was a visit to what was the old workhouse at the Close, Union Road. Alan Walton gave a guided tour around the establishment explaining the layout and the principal features of the buildings which were in use when it operated as a workhouse in the 1830's. This was a well attended visit with additional support coming from the residents of the close.

Faversham. Open Day

Each year Faversham run an open house scheme which is in July and therefore never included in our programme which finishes in June and starts in September. This year the Open House Scheme will be on Saturdays 7, 14 and 21 July. It Allows admission to historic properties not normally open to the public. Admission to the properties is by purchase of a handbook which lists details of the properties, opening times and maps. This can be ordered on the day at £6.00 or by post at £7.00 in advance from:- Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre, 10-13 Preston Street, Faversham, ME13 8NS tel. 01795 534542 ham@btconnect.com

DEFENCE OF KENT PROJECT

Canterbury Archaeological Trust is currently undertaking a survey of twentieth-century defensive sites in the District of Canterbury. This is part of a wider 'Defence of Kent' survey, organised by Kent County Council, and covering the whole of Kent. The information they collect will be added to the County Sites and Monuments Record, and will be used to help Kent County Council fulfil its heritage conservation responsibilities, to inform tourism and promotion initiatives, and for educational and research purposes. Their task, at Canterbury Archaeological Trust, is to identify, interpret, and record military sites and buildings from all phases of the twentieth century from before the First World War, through the two World Wars, the Cold War, and beyond. They are looking for all kinds of defensive installations and obstacles to invasion: roadblocks, obstacles for aircraft and tanks, trenches, pillboxes, rifle ranges, camps, barracks, drill halls, air-raid shelters and bunkers, to name but a few; they are also interested in pre-existing buildings, such as village halls, adapted for military or civil defence use during wartime. Their survey area covers the whole of the district, from Barham in the south to Graveney and Reculver on the coast. Kent has, at times, been heavily fortified, so there are a great many sites they need to find. Besides the location, uses, and dates of these sites, they are also interested in their present condition, ownership, accessibility, and visibility.

Much of our information will come from maps and archive documents; these, however, will not tell them everything they need to know. Nor can they begin adequately to scour this large district for sites on the ground. They are dependent on local historical knowledge to fill in the gaps. They would therefore be very grateful for anything members of this society can tell them about defensive sites in the Canterbury district, whether from distant memory, or concerning features and buildings you see every day. Should you be able to help, please write to:-

Defence of Kent Project (Canterbury District)

Canterbury Archaeological Trust

92a Broad Street

Canterbury CTI 2LU

or E-mail: defence_of_kent@canterburytrust.co.uk

Published By David Gilmour on behalf of Bridge and District History Society.

August 2007

A message from our chairman.

Enclosed with this newsletter you will find the Society's Programme for the next year, with its varied collection of lectures by some very entertaining speakers, visits to one or two out-of-the-way places, and, what is fast becoming a popular tradition, a social gathering at Christmas with that little bit extra. Since its inception in the Autumn of 1995 your Committee has organised well over 100 events: 64 talks, 41 visits of various kinds, and of course the eleven Christmas socials, to say nothing of the archive, begun by the late John Williamson, and considerably enhanced in the interim. This has all involved a considerable amount of work behind the scenes by the dedicated members of the Committee, but the success, virtually without exception, of these events has been due to the continued support of the members of the Bridge and District History Society. This support was no more evident than in the huge success of the Kent History Federation One Day Conference which took place in May this year. We have received many messages of congratulation from all over Kent for our organisation and presentation which (at least from the outside) appeared flawless. I would like here to thank everyone once more for their help.

Within the Kent History Federation of a hundred or so local societies, BDHS has, in spite of the smallness of our base, ranked among the largest. I hope we can maintain this position by continuing to offer an attractive programme. The costs of doing so continually increase, however, and it is inevitable that this year we are having to raise both the subscription and the entry fees for the talks, which have remained constant for several years. Nevertheless, I am sure you will find membership as worthwhile as ever.

Dr. Maurice Raraty

Exhibitions

We are not organising trips to the exhibitions listed below but they may be of interest to some members.
The Hidden Treasures of Kent.



This exhibition at the Maidstone Museum, St. Faith's Street Maidstone is on until the 9th of September and is a collection of the mainly Anglo-Saxon artefacts that have been unearthed in Kent and principally from Bifrons and Kingston which are held in collections in Liverpool and elsewhere and not normally exhibited in Kent. The exhibition is open from Mondays to Saturdays from 10.00 am to 5.15 pm and admission is free. The exhibition celebrates 150 years of the Kent Archaeological Society.

The Terracotta Army.



The First Emperor of China's tomb guardians from Xian at the British Museum and featuring the largest number of terracotta warriors displayed outside of China. The exhibition is on from 13 September 2007 – 6 April 2008 and admission is £12.00. Tickets can be booked online at the British Museum website.

Membership Fees and Entrance Fees

As mentioned by our chairman in his message to members we are increasing our membership fee. this year (after many years) as our costs are rising inexorably. For example it costs £1.00 per member simply to print and mail out the programme each year. The increase in entrance fees are due to the fees now demanded by speakers which have increased tenfold since the society started. As our treasurer will reveal at the Annual General Meeting, our finances, while in good order, do not permit us to be complacent although we do consider we are giving good value for the fees.

Notes about last season's programme

Chilham Visit

This visit, arranged as a reward for helpers with the conference, was a most enjoyable visit enlivened by Michael Peters. He is the honorary archivist for Chilham Castle and his knowledge of the different periods of the house and its various styles of architecture and of the building and rebuilding taking place through the ages and his explanations of these changes were most instructive. He not only explained the changes to the house but also of the landscape and how the roads in the vicinity of the castle were rerouted to suit the owner's convenience. Our visit to the interior of the castle included the (modern) swimming pool and culminated with tea and biscuits in the dining room. An excellent visit and we must give many thanks to Meriel Connor for arranging this.



KHF Conference helpers on Chilham visit

Precincts visit.

No information on this visit was received at time of going to press.

This season's programme

Just a few notes about the new programme. The talk in October by Robin Fleet is to illuminate (such an appropriate word) the wealth of beautiful stained glass in Canterbury Cathedral and to prepare the way for the visit to the Stained Glass Studio in March. This visit is restricted in numbers and so restricted to members only but early booking is advised because when the visit is fully booked its fully booked. The studio have to take time off from their work to take us around and explain their work and this is reflected in the charge they make to us at £12.00. We expect demand for this visit to be good but unfortunately will not be able to arrange any further visit so book early and don't be disappointed.

The refreshments at the Christmas Evening will be supplied by some of our members and will include much traditional Christmas fare and the format of the evening will be very much a social get together. Those who have attended in previous years have had a really enjoyable and convivial evening.

The member's evening of reminiscences will be very informal and we would encourage those members who can recall the transport arrangements from the 1930's onwards to share their experiences. This will include not only public transport, buses, railways but also day trips by coach, charabang, horse and cart or any other means of transport..

Our visit to the King's school part of St. Augustine's Abbey has been arranged exclusively for our members and we will be able to explore parts of what was St. Augustine's abbey not normally seen by the general public. A recent excavation here has revealed footings of part of the palace erected for the reception of Anne Of Cleves on her way from Dover to marry King Henry VIII.

We have included more visits than usual in this programme with the two mentioned above and the visits to Brook and Whitstable and we hope that these meet with approval by our members.

Published By David Gilmour on behalf of Bridge and District History Society.

Telephone 01227 832450.

Please email any comments to:
dgilmour@freeuk.com

January 2008

We are now well into the New Year and the committee wish all members of the Bridge and District History Society a Happy New Year. As we are now more a third of the way through this season's programme reports of the past four meetings are shown on the next page. Details of the events to come are below.

Future Events

Our next meeting on Thursday 17th January in the Village Hall will be a talk on Life in the Victorian Workhouse by Peter Ewart. This is a follow up to the tour of Bridge workhouse by Alan Walton last year. Peter will be covering all aspects of life for the inmates both in Bridge and elsewhere in Kent.



CHANGE OF VENUE

The February meeting on Tues 26th February is our Member's Evening which will now be held in the **White Horse Inn, Bridge** at 7.30 pm There will be a showing of the DVD produced by Bob Williams an old time resident of Patricbourne Road, Bridge. The DVD will include pictures and film clips of Bridge both before and after the Second World War and will be followed by a member's forum and all will be asked to take part and contribute reminiscences of Bridge past and present. We hope that Bob will be present but this is dependent on his state of health. After the presentation there will a convivial get together over an excellent buffet. This evening is restricted in numbers but **there are still places available and I would ask you to send your forms in to David Gilmour not later than the 15th February to reserve a place.**

Our March meeting on Thursday 26th March is the visit to the Stained Glass Studio at the Cathedral , places for this visit are limited to members only owing to the restricted space available in the Studio. These places have been going quickly and only a few remain, so anyone wanting to come should apply soon. Please include a note of your telephone number and a stamped addressed envelope with your application, which should be sent to **Meriel Connor, 1 High Street, Bridge, CT4 5JY.** The cost of the visit is £12 per person, and the money goes to Canterbury Cathedral.

A Mrs. S. Woodgate of Tunbridge Wells has been in touch with our chairman reminiscing about her childhood in Bridge as a result of reading the Bridge booklet. This is still available at Bridge Post Office for £3.00 or free on application by new members.

Our April meeting on Thursday 3rd April will be a visit to what was the old palace of King Ethelbert which has been incorporated into St. Augustines and thence into King's School. Alan Walton will be giving a guided walk around the establishment explaining the layout and the principal features of the buildings which have been substantially remodelled principally to accommodate, for one night only, Ann of Cleves on her way to meet Henry VIII.

There will be no KHF Conference this year.

Past Events

The first meeting of the season was a talk by Richard Filmer on Hops and Hop-picking. As usual with Richard this was a very interesting, entertaining and educational film which kept us enthralled throughout the evening. He informed us that the Hop collection which used to be held at Wye College has now been transferred to Harbledown.

The October meeting was a talk by Robin Fleet on the stained glass in Canterbury Cathedral. This was as a preparation for the visit to the Stained Glass Studio in March. Robin was very good with a detailed grasp of his subject which was illustrated by some beautiful slides. So much that when he had reached his allocated time he asked if he should continue this was carried by a roar of approval.

Our November meeting was a talk by Martin Taylor, who was largely responsible for achieving the erection of the magnificent statues of King Ethelbert and Queen Bertha in Lady Wootton's Green. He gave us an illustrated talk both on the politics and organisational problems of erecting the statues today, and on the politics and religious attitudes of the late sixth century, which enabled Bertha to persuade the Pope Gregory the Great to send St Augustine to England, and so reconvert the people of Kent (in the person of their King) to Christianity, and so establish Canterbury as the principal seat of the English Church. It is often forgotten in this context that Christianity had been long established in the country, but it was its 'official' recognition by Ethelbert that gave it permanent status. A map of the various proselytising journeys across Europe undertaken in the period gave a clear (though complicated) picture of the intellectual ferment happening in the midst of what have long been considered the 'dark ages', but Martin Taylor's clear and erudite exposition threw some light, and gave us a vivid sense of the age.

The Christmas get together on the 6th December was enlivened by a visit from the Hoodeners.

Hoodening is an East Kent winter custom dating back many centuries. In its current form, a small band of villagers spend around four days before Christmas touring local pubs and private parties, performing a humorous play along the theme of death and resurrection, drinking a lot of beer, and collecting some money for charity. A new play is written each year in rhyming couplets by one of the troupe, and references to recent events (local, national and international) are frequently included, although the setting is based on a ploughing team from the 19th Century.

There used to be groups all around East Kent, but at the beginning of the 20th Century only a few were left, including one based at Nether Hale and another in Sarre. There were various differences from Hoodening as it is now -- for example, they did not announce when they would visit a house (but people knew it was likely to happen sometime in the week before Christmas), they collected money for themselves rather than for charity, and instead of performing a play with a script they fooled around (the Jockey tried to ride the Horse, but was normally thrown off; sometimes the "audience" tried too, but with similar results) and sang popular songs of the period. These activities ceased in around 1921, but the horse survived in an attic and reappeared in 1965, when it was decided to revive the custom. It appears that six original Hooden Horses have survived, of which only the two in St Nicholas are in use -- the others are mainly in museums.

The Hoodeners were quite risqué! and people seemed to either like their performance a lot or not like it at all.....In truth we were their first Hoodening performance and they were still learning their lines. At the end they led us in some carol singing. We gave them money for their chosen charity -The Paula Carr Diabetic Trust.

Refreshments were supplied by Alan, Hilary and Jenny. Hilary raised over £70 for the Pilgrims Hospice from the sale of her table arrangements.

Published By David Gilmour on behalf of Bridge and District History Society.

Telephone 01227 832450.

April 2008

Future Events

There are only two events left on the programme for this season, the visit to Brook and the walk around Whitstable.

The visit to Brook will be on Wednesday 21st May and will include a visit to Brook church renowned for its medieval wall paintings and then next door to the Agricultural Museum which houses the Wye Agricultural College collection of farming implements. This is housed in a medieval barn and an oast house which was once part of the Court Lodge farm estate. The Oast house on the estate was the first round oast house built in 1815. Oast houses were originally built square and it was thought that the hops in the corners did not dry as well as those in centre and therefore a round oast house was suggested. Thorough research however found that there was no difference, either in the way the hops dried or in construction costs, and slowly the oast houses reverted to being square once more. After Brook we had hoped to go on to the Rake Workshop at Smeeth, however the owner has been quite ill and this will not be possible. Instead there will be an optional cream tea at the Devil's Kneading Trough, close by. Places are still available, so please send the slips in urgently.

There are still a few places available on the Whitstable Harbour walk in June with Anthea Bryant so if you wish to go on this please send in the slip.

You will see a report on the visit to the Stained Glass Studio at the Cathedral in Past Events however as there was such a large demand for the Visit to the Stained Glass Studios we are organising another trip for those who were disappointed the first time.

We are unable to get a date before late August or September and so we will be including this as an additional visit in the next programme. Those who were unable to obtain places and were on the waiting list for the first visit will be given priority.

Past Events

Our February meeting, the member's evening on the 26th February should have included a showing of the Bridge DVD but unfortunately due to a severe technical hitch we are not able to show it. We have overcome the technical problems and this will now be shown at the September meeting and will be included in the new programme.

Our March meeting on Thursday 26th March was the visit to the Stained Glass Studio at the Cathedral, which was very successful and much enjoyed by all those who took part. As previously stated we will be repeating this visit for those unable to join the first visit.

Our April meeting on Thursday 3rd April was a visit to what was the old palace of King Ethelbert which has been incorporated into St. Augustines and thence into King's School. Alan Walton gave a guided walk around the establishment explaining the layout and the principal features of the buildings which have been substantially remodelled principally to accommodate, for one night only, Ann of Cleves on her way to meet Henry VIII. She slept in the gateway chamber as did Elizabeth I, Charles I and Charles II and this was also where our members were entertained to tea.

Our season each year begins in September and finishes in June and nothing is organised for the summer months of July and August as we suspect that many people will be away on holiday during that time. However each year Faversham organise their

Faversham Open House Scheme

Many of our members who have used the scheme are enthusiastic about the opportunities it offers to visit historic houses not normally open to the public.

The scheme this year will run on Saturdays the 5th, 12th and 19th July 2008 and to take part you have to buy a handbook which lists the various properties open and acts as an entrance ticket.

The handbooks are £7.50 per person valid for all three Saturdays and can be bought on the day or in advance from the 1st June onwards at Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre, 10-13 Preston Street, Faversham, ME13 8NS, Telephone 01795 534542 or email ticfaversham@btconnect.com.

Properties open for 2008 include:

The Chart Gunpowder Mills,
The Mayor's parlour,

The 16th century Old Grammar School,
Arden House, the northern wall of this house was part of the gatehouse of Faversham Abbey,

The Guildhall with its council chamber
And many other buildings from the Elizabethan and Georgian periods.

The Faversham Society advise you to get your programmes early as not all properties are open on all three Saturdays. Most of the properties are town centre based but some need a car to get to them.

This scheme is now in its 39th year and is the longest running event of its kind in Britain.

Visit Arrangements

The arrangements for the visits are controlled by the visit booking form slips sent out with the programme. Talks are organised by individual members of your committee and as you have seen from the visit booking sheet, the tear off slips have to be sent to that committee member.

In general this arrangement has worked well but there has been some confusion in the past as to where the money has to be sent, particularly if the booking form has been mislaid and from next September we will be including the name of the committee member responsible for that event who will be shown in the programme as the organiser.

Any enquiries, bookings or remittances should be addressed to that member and all the telephone numbers are on the programme.

To safeguard our committee members, and as we are aware of the dangers of identity theft these days, we are including the address of the committee member to whom the booking and the money should be sent on the visit booking forms, which are only sent out to members.

We do not want to include addresses on the general programme which has a much wider distribution.

Published By David Gilmour on behalf of
Bridge and District History Society.

Telephone 01227 832450.

August 2008

Message from Chairman

Once more we come to the end of a successful year, with a membership of over 100 and increased numbers attending the lectures. A highlight for me was the visit to the Stained Glass Studio at the Cathedral. This was a rare privilege, recognised by the members as such, to the extent that a second visit has had to be arranged for those excluded from the first. We as the committee of the Society are truly gratified by members' support and enthusiasm for all the arranged events, which make our efforts feel worthwhile. Even when things do not go quite to plan (as with the abortive showing of the Bob Williams DVD of Bridge scenes) there have been no complaints – again we are grateful.

The next season's programme in fact begins with a new attempt to show the DVD: we hope we shall have ironed out the incompatibilities of the hardware by then, and have had a dress rehearsal!

Other treats we can look forward to this coming year include talks on Canterbury in the Civil War, the mysterious Green Man – a figure represented in many Kentish churches and elsewhere, not least as a pub name (though occasionally travestied into the Frog and Orange), and mediaeval tiles. Visits will include a tour round Wickhambreux and Ickham, led by our old friend Dick Bolton, a trip to Faversham gunpowder mills, and, it is hoped, a visit to Provender, an old house near Faversham, with connections to the Romanovs.

I can also mention that we have just received the draft report of the archaeological excavation at Star Hill, which took place 2003-2006.

This confirms the great importance of the site in the early history (and prehistory) of south-east England, deserving of further investigation, since many questions remain unanswered. I very much hope that agreement can be reached about how this may be best done within a time frame we can all envisage.

Maurice Raraty

Last seasons events

The final two events of last season were the visit to Brook Church and Agricultural Museum in May and Whitstable Harbour in June.

The visit to Brook went very well and we were blessed with a glorious day of sunshine. The tour of Brook church with a local guide covered many aspects of this unusual church with its medieval wall paintings, extensive medieval floor tiles in the chancel and a priests room in the tower. The local people in Brook gave us access to the whole church including the bell tower and it all combined to make a fascinating visit. We then walked the very short distance to the Agricultural Museum where we were given an excellent tour of the museum and the adjacent oast house by the curator. To round off the afternoon some of the group then went to the "Devils Kneading Trough" for a wonderful cream tea.

The visit to Whitstable was well (or over) subscribed and Anthea Bryant gave an excellent guided tour of the Harbour area which was much enjoyed by all.

This season's events

The chairman's message makes note of some of the forthcoming events but some of these events need a special note. At the first meeting at the Village Hall in September we will be showing the DVD made by Bob Williams on Bridge. We are sure we have now overcome the technical difficulties in showing this and we hope this will be an enjoyable evening.

There is a second visit to the Stained Glass Studio in the Cathedral for those who missed out on the first visit. Please get those slips in early as numbers are still restricted.

We have arranged a Christmas Dinner at the Red Lion as the volunteers who have organised the last few Christmas Celebrations in the Village Hall wanted a break from their labours. We have negotiated a good deal with the Red Lion as the price includes a glass of wine and the gratuities and is comparable or even better than the price for many organised Christmas Dinners.

The member's evening this year will take the form of a wine and wisdom evening with prizes for the winning table and there will be a raffle. The theme of the questions will be on history but there will be other headings including general knowledge. If you wish to join up with friends for a table of eight, please do so. If not we will be able to allocate you a place. The price will include a ploughman's and wine so no need to bring your own. The visit to Provender in May has been arranged but we have not yet been able to agree a date with the owner Princess Olga. It will almost certainly be an afternoon during the week.

The cream tea at the Plough Inn at Norton, which is very close to Provender, is optional, but please indicate on the slip if you want to book this. This visit will be in member's own cars and if anyone needs transport will they please contact the organiser as there will be spare seats available.

The Isle of Sheppey had agreed to host the Kent History Federation Conference for 2009 some time ago and before the Federation proved unable to get a society to organise a conference for 2008. This will certainly take place and if you need details please complete the slip on the booking form.

Other Events

There are two events for which we would like to give you notice. These events are not organised by the Society but may prove of interest to some of our members.

The first is a film location visit to Fordwich organised by the Powell and Pressburger Appreciation Society on Sunday 31st August.

Fordwich was the setting for the fictional village of Chillingbourne in the film "A Canterbury Tale". The Town Hall will be open from 1.45 – 4 pm (admission £1.50). A new DVD of the history of Fordwich will be shown in the Undercroft and then a visit to the Court Room. We will also see St Mary's parish church (where Chillingbourne's parishioners were filmed arriving for matins), the entrance to the 'Colpeper Institute', and other nearby places that represented Chillingbourne village.

Meet on Fordwich Quay at 1 pm.

No need to book. Just turn up.

Please give generously to our collection in aid of Kent Kids Miles of Smiles (www.miles-of-smiles.org.uk)

There are very few public parking spaces in Fordwich village. Please find one on or off the road leading from Sturry to Fordwich.

The second event is the Cathedral Open Evening on Tuesday the 7th of October 2008 from 5.30pm onwards.

The Friends of the Cathedral organise this event every year and it is well worth a visit as they bring out some of the cathedral's hidden treasures which are rarely on display, such as ancient maps, stained glass window sections, and historical documents. This year the Archives are taking centre stage showing some of the marvellous collection of maps and historic documents of Canterbury and East Kent. They will also be offering tours to the Corona Tower to look at the renovation work that has been going on during the past months. This is an opportunity to see first hand the work being done with the funds raised by the Save Canterbury Cathedral Appeal. All in all an evening well spent for those interested in the history of this great cathedral.

August 2009

A message from the Chairman

Thank you for your continuing support, another year for our History Society brings a new programme with a strong emphasis on places and events close to home: we hope that members will enjoy the talks by our speakers – including our own committee member David Gilmour, and the visits next year, to the Cathedral Archives, to Saltwood Castle and to Tappington Hall, none of which are normally open to the general public. Tappington is perhaps the least well-known: it was the home of the Rev. R H Barham, otherwise known as Thomas Ingoldsby, famous in his time as the author of the Ingoldsby Legends, though somewhat less renowned these days! If you get the chance, get a copy and read a few of them in advance. It will enhance your sense of location when you come to visit.

Another way of getting the best out of your Society is to capitalise on our membership of the Kent History Federation (which sponsors the annual One Day Conference, to be held next year in Tunbridge Wells) by taking out a subscription to the Federation's *Journal*. It comes out twice a year, in March and September, and contains articles relating to places and people in Kent (September 2006 included a piece on Bridge Place), reviews of recent publications, news about what is going on from societies around Kent and references to websites and other sources where you can find the answers to your own questions about the county – all this for just £8 for four issues! To subscribe and receive a copy of the September edition (Issue 69) and three subsequent ones, send a cheque for £8 NOW to the Hon. Treasurer of the Kent History Federation, Mr R.G. Thomas, 1 Metropole Court, The Lees, Folkestone, CT20 2 LT, together with your name and address, who will do the rest. It's well worth it.

PS I believe there are perhaps a dozen copies of the *Brief Historical Tour* still available from Bridge Post Office, at £3.50. These are the last, so if you have been meaning to get one, now is the time
Maurice Raraty

Last seasons events

We had a full and varied programme for the last season most of which were well attended. The only failure was the Wine and Wisdom evening which did not raise sufficient support and so was cancelled. Our programme started with the DVD on Bridge by Bob Williams which we finally managed to get to work with modern equipment. A very enjoyable trawl through the past in Bridge, with some quirky adjuncts, for a well attended evening.

We ran another visit to the Stained Glass Studio for those who missed out on the first opportunity. A fascinating and educational conducted tour with a real insight into the problems the cathedral has with the maintenance of their glass.

Our October meeting was a talk by Jackie Eales, a Bridge resident, on the Civil War in England. This erudite and informative talk was as usual delivered with expertise and was well received.

The November meeting was an amazing talk by Imogen Corrigan on the Green Man in Kentish Churches. The depth of knowledge she has on the subject kept us all enthralled. Some of the illustrations were incredibly detailed and many came from her own observations.

This season's events

The Christmas evening was a dinner at the Red Lion which was reasonably well attended but was perhaps a little expensive for some. To see what we have put in place for this year to overcome this problem look at this season's events.

Our programme continued in the new year with the talk by Irene Pellett, the expert on tiles in the Canterbury region who not only illustrated her talk but brought samples of the tiles for viewing.

The March meeting was a talk by Roger Mardon on fire-fighting in Kent with some of the slides showing the old Bridge fire fighters and apparatus. I wonder if we were safer then with the fire brigade much closer to us, than now when it has to come from Canterbury.

The visit in April to the Oare gunpowder works and Chart Gunpowder mill was enjoyed by those who went although some seemed to miss the gunpowder mill.

During May we visited Provender, an historic house owned by Princess Olga of the Romanov family. She and some other guides gave a tour of the house which was in a very poor state of repair, for which she is trying to raise money to have restored. How she and her family can live in such conditions is unbelievable but it was a fascinating and interesting tour, not least for the many connections on show about the Romanov family.

Our final visit in June was a summer evening walk around Wickhambreux by Dick Bolton. We were fortunate that the rain which threatened held off until after we had finished the walk. Dick made sure we saw everything of interest in Wickhambreux and the evening was finished off in the Rose Inn.

The Kent History Federation One Day Conference was organised (or not as the case may be) by Sheppey who were celebrating the early history of aviation with which it had many associations. Despite some problems with the visits the lunch was well organised and well received.

The chairman's message makes note of some of the forthcoming events but some of these events need a special note. On all of the visits in this programme we are very restricted in numbers, so early booking is essential and all are restricted to members only. Please see the note in the programme.

The visit to the Cathedral Archives is limited in number because if too many people attend then it is difficult to hear, or see what is being shown. Tappington Hall can only accommodate a limited number of people and for this reason is not normally open to the public, but we have made special arrangements for the Society.

The visit to Saltwood Castle in June 2010 does not have a specific date allocated as this has not yet been booked. Bookings for 2010 do not open until November 2009 which is after the programme has been printed. If, in the unlikely event we are unable to arrange this visit we will arrange an alternative visit to Westhanger Castle. Those who book will be advised if Saltwood Castle is unavailable and given the opportunity to cancel. Saltwood Castle is expensive but does include a home made tea and is a rare chance to visit this fascinating historic site, not normally open to the public.

One of the advantages of belonging to Bridge & District History Society is that it can arrange visits to places which as an individual would not be accessible and we have three wonderful examples in this programme.

Last year there were some comments that the Christmas Dinner was too expensive and so this year we have arranged a wonderful hot and cold buffet, menu attached, at a really low price. Bookings will be restricted to members only and dealt with on a strictly first come, first served, basis, so once again book early.

Published By David Gilmour on behalf of Bridge and District History Society.

Telephone 01227 832450.

November 2009

As Christmas draws near we wish all members a Happy Christmas and our hopes that the New Year to come will be an improvement on last year.

It is worth looking back over the year from Christmas last, since when we have had some memorable visits and inspiring lectures. Even those lectures which at first glance one would have thought would be quite dull, as with the Red Dean of Canterbury, have turned out to be quite fascinating and absorbing. And those who visited Provender will surely never forget that great ruin of a house that could only put one in mind of Miss Havisham's house in Great Expectations.

Since the last newsletter we have had the very interesting talk on the Beaney Institute given by Alan Barber. We hope that when it reopens it will be at least as good as it was, if not better. However these days when you hear that something has been "improved" this does not necessarily mean what it says. The access to the Local Studies room is sorely missed.

Many members have commented on how much they enjoyed the members' evening on the City Gates. As usual the buffet laid on at the Plough and Harrow was excellent and our particular thanks for this go to the landlady who made most of the food herself.

Even in these difficult recessionary times our membership numbers are holding up well and our visits are being well booked, in fact the member's evening was overbooked. The state of the bookings for the visits in the programme to come are listed in the next column.

Current programme

Christmas Evening

The next item on our programme is the Christmas Evening at the Red Lion and this is now **almost fully booked**, we have 2 tickets left. If you wish to go please ring John Cardy on 721360 straight away. Those who have booked will be receiving their tickets with this newsletter. If you think you have booked and not received tickets ring John on the number above.

Cathedral Archives

The talk on the Cathedral Archives has the incorrect date in the programme—this now on the **18th February**, and not the 11th as printed in the programme.

The visit to the Archives is in the programme as the 19th March and this date is correct, however this visit is **now fully booked**.

Tappington Hall

This visit is still accepting bookings so send those slips in as it is limited in numbers.

Saltwood Castle

We still do not have a date for this June visit, and although we have a limit on the numbers, and this has been reached, we may well be able to arrange an additional visit, so if you are interested please send the slips in.

August 2010

A message from the Chairman

Thank you for your continuing support, another year for our History Society brings a new programme with a strong emphasis on places and events close to home: we start with the experiences of this corner of Kent in the Second World War in our talk on Hellfire Corner and continue with talks on Richborough Castle and Bekesbourne Aerodrome. Our visits are often planned to obtain access to places not always or normally open to the general public and good examples of this in this new programme are the visits to The Hugh Walpole Library and Westenhanger Castle.

Another way of getting the best out of your Society is to capitalise on our membership of the Kent History Federation (which sponsors the annual One Day Conference, to be held next year in Bromley) by taking out a subscription to the Federation's *Journal*. It comes out twice a year, in March and September, and contains articles relating to places and people in Kent (September 2006 included a piece on Bridge Place), reviews of recent publications, news about what is going on from societies around Kent and references to websites and other sources where you can find the answers to your own questions about the county – all this for just £8 for four issues! To subscribe and receive a copy of the September edition and three subsequent ones, send a cheque for £8 NOW to the Hon. Treasurer of the Kent History Federation, Mr R.G. Thomas, 1 Metropole Court, The Lees, Folkestone, CT20 2 LT, together with your name and address, who will do the rest. It's well worth it.

PS I believe there are perhaps a dozen copies of the *Brief Historical Tour* still available from Bridge Post Office, at £3.50. These are the last, so if you have been meaning to get one, now is the time
Maurice Raraty

This season's events

The programme only has room for a small potted amount of information about each event, additional information if required is below.

In September we have HELLFIRE CORNER, a talk about how this small corner of Kent endured attacks by bombing and shelling followed in October by RICHBOROUGH CASTLE. Dr. Frank Andrews who is an expert in Roman history will show how this fort developed and changed over the centuries of Roman occupation, and hopefully incorporate some of the recent discoveries made about this building. This talk was due to have taken place last year but was cancelled due to the very bad weather on the night

The talk in November on BEKESBOURNE AERODROME will draw on the large amount of photos taken by the airmen in the FIRST WORLD WAR, when this airfield was a vital component in the battle against the German bombers trying to bomb London.

In December we have our CHRISTMAS HOG ROAST in the Village Hall. We aim to make this a very convivial evening with a Photo Quiz and Prize Raffle and during the evening we will be showing some short clips of very old films including one on Canterbury in the 1920s. The Village Hall does not have a licence so liquid refreshments will be whatever you bring in yourself apart from the first glass of wine or soft drink.

In January we have Eric Hartland who, together with other camera enthusiasts, obtained a lottery grant to convert some of the plate glass negatives stored in the Kentish Study Centre in Maidstone to digital format. Those photos that are of specific views have been re-photographed from the same spot as the original to give a NOW AND THEN

In February at the MEMBERS' EVENING we have Alan Forrest from Barham who has an extensive collection of very old recordings and also has the antique equipment on which it can be played. Some of the sounds recorded so long ago are of amazing quality and some are extremely rare. A really fascinating evening. We have planned for this to be at the White Horse Inn but at the time of going to press this is in the process of being sold, hopefully the new owner will carry out the contract agreed with the present owner. We have previously held this function at the Plough and Harrow, who have looked after us very well, but some of our members are unable to negotiate the steep flight of stairs so we are forced to change the venue.

Our final talk in March will be by Helen Allison, a well known author and speaker who will enlighten us to the way of LIFE IN A VILLAGE IN VICTORIAN TIMES.

Our visits start with the April visit to the HUGH WALPOLE LIBRARY at Kings School. This is not normally open to the public, but on our visit we will be shown some of the extensive collection of manuscripts by celebrated authors of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Our May visit will be to WESTENHANGER CASTLE which has undergone many years of restoration and we will have a private tour, including some of the rooms not normally open to the public, and will be finishing with a cream tea included in the cost.

Our final visit in June is to WYE where we will have a summer evening guided tour by Meriel Connor. We had hoped to be able to look around Wye College but unfortunately this is mothballed by the present owner Imperial College, and it is unlikely we would get permission to visit it. However there are plenty of other things to see and we would finish off the walk in a local hostelry.

A History of Bekesbourne

A small group are compiling a history of Bekesbourne and if you have an article on this subject that you would like to contribute please get in touch with David Gilmour on 832450.

Last Seasons Events.

We have had a good year with many interesting talks in the 2009-2010 season starting with the BEANEY BACKSTORY by Alan Barber who informed us of its origins and history. We continued in October with the members' evening on the CITY GATES of CANTERBURY which not only included the gates in the city walls but other gates within the city of Canterbury.

In November we had the fascinating talk by John Butler on THE RED DEAN OF CANTERBURY who did not stint on his recollections of his communist leanings but gave a rounded portrait of the man. The CHRISTMAS buffet at the Red Lion in December with the fascinating Photo Quiz was very enjoyable and convivial.

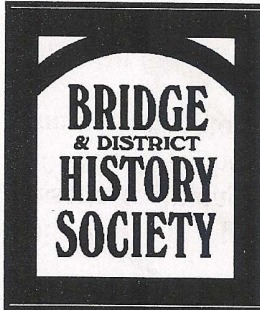
In January we should have had a talk on Richborough Castle by Dr. Frank Andrews but the appalling weather on the afternoon and evening of that day meant this had to be cancelled, as the speaker would have had great difficulty in getting to Bridge, and probably even more problems getting home.

The February meeting on the CANTERBURY ARCHIVES was a very interesting and informative talk and this was followed up in March by the visit to the ARCHIVES. Unfortunately this was a disappointment as the guide in the Archives did not seem to well informed and was in any case mostly inaudible. Although the Archive put out an interesting selection of documents and maps this was the only one of meetings that was a failure.

In April we had a talk by Michael Martin on BRITAIN IN THE HOME FRONT WWII. Michael was an enthusiastic and engaging speaker and the whole evening was greatly enjoyed by those who attended. In May came the visit to TAPPINGTON HALL, where apart from a really fascinating tour of the house, we were entertained to a splendid tea with absolutely delicious egg sandwiches and mountains of cake. This visit was so popular it was oversubscribed and we had to arrange a second visit to accommodate the overflow.

Our final visit to SALTWOOD CASTLE was again oversubscribed but was very much enjoyed by all those who went and had tea with Mrs Clark.

Published By David Gilmour on behalf of Bridge and District History Society.
Telephone 01227 832450.



NEWSLETTER

October 2010

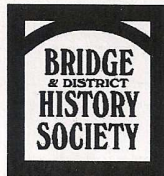
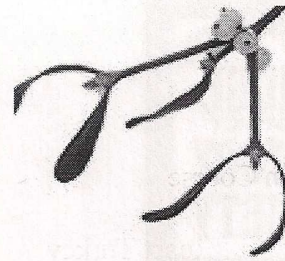
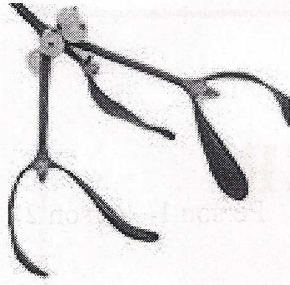
CHRISTMAS EVENING CHANGE OF VENUE

Due to insurmountable logistical problems we regret that we have been forced, reluctantly, to cancel the Christmas Evening Hog Roast in the Village Hall. In order that you should not be disappointed we have made alternative arrangements for a Christmas Dinner in the Red Lion in Bridge.

This will be in a private room and will be a hot meal with a choice of four main courses and four desserts, including the first drink of wine or soft drink, all at the same cost as in the programme of £10.00, and on the same date, Thursday 16th December at 7.00pm for 7.30 pm. We will be running the photo quiz with prizes and a raffle during the evening.

This will be a sit down waitress served meal not a buffet. The menu choices are shown overleaf and the booking form is a separate page, which should be returned to John Cardy. The evening will be restricted to a maximum of 50 people so please book as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Would those who have already booked please contact John Cardy on 721360 to confirm whether they wish to attend the Christmas Dinner at the Red Lion or whether they would not wish to participate, in which case there would be a full refund.

One other change of date in the programme, the KHF One Day conference at Bromley will now take place on Saturday 7th May 2011, and not the 14th May as shown in the programme. Full details as usual from our chairman, Dr. Maurice Raraty.



CHRISTMAS AT THE RED LION 2010

Drink on arrival - either wine or soft drink

Main course choices:

- A Roast Turkey with all the trimmings
- B Vegetable Lasagne
- C Boeuf Bourguignon
- D Poached Salmon with a lemon butter sauce

Dessert choices

- E Crumble of season
- F Sticky Toffee Pudding
- G Christmas Pudding
- H Ice Cream

