



Snodland Historical Society Newsletter

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www.snodlandhistory.org.uk

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Subscriptions

Members are reminded that their subscriptions for this season should be paid before February 2008, otherwise membership will lapse. Rates are unchanged. These can be paid at meetings or sent to the Treasurer, Mrs Patricia Gest, 1, Vauxhall Crescent, Ham Hill, Snodland, Kent ME6 5JT.

Society meetings

30 January. Tony Farnham, Chairman of the Society for Sailing Barge Research (and one of our members) will give his acclaimed talk 'The Romance of London's River'.

5 March. Edward Salter and Andrew Mayfield will give a presentation regarding KCC's 'Exploring Kent's Past' project, which has received Lottery funding. Among its aims is 'to increase people's awareness of the rich archaeological heritage in Kent'. They will highlight local discoveries in a talk entitled 'The work of the KCC Heritage Conservation and some Recent Archaeological Discoveries'.

2nd April. Jim Preston, Industrial Officer for the Council for Kentish Archaeology, will give an illustrated talk on the history of Short's Brothers.

7 May. We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Ann Kneif again, who will give an illustrated talk entitled 'Female Wartime Workers in the Munitions Industry'.

Other activities

Many thanks to Brian and Avril Porter and Brenda Ashbee for manning our stall at the Open Day held by Medway Archives and Local Study Centre and the Kent Family History Society at the Civic Centre, Strood, on 15th September.

A splendid picture of them all has appeared in *The Clock Tower*: the Newsletter of the Friends of Medway Archives:



Thanks to Brian too for manning our stall at the Community Centre during the annual 10K run.

The Clock Tower also carries the following report: 'Celebrating the Achievements of Volunteer Researchers on the VCH Project.' On 27th October 2007 an event was held at the University of Greenwich Medway Campus to celebrate and showcase the work of the volunteers who have made such a significant contribution to the Victoria County History's (VCH) EPE project on the Lower Medway Valley. Dr John Dunne from the University of Greenwich introduced the day,

welcoming the volunteers to their celebration and thanking them for their hard work over the past two years. Dr Andrew Hann, the outgoing Kent Team Leader, went on to review the Kent project's activities and achievements and the national project's education and skills manager Aretha George talked about the important role played by volunteer researchers across the country.

Several of the volunteers then gave a fascinating insight into the work they had done. Linda Brinklow explained her work on the local newspapers, Dr Andrew Ashbee, Honorary Curator of Snodland Millennium Museum and the Chairman of Snodland Historical Society, who led the census group, put Snodland in the spotlight and John Vigar and John Newman talked about the organisation and the findings of the village buildings' survey. Roger Smoothy was persuaded to explain the methods he had developed to retrieve photographs of stunning clarity from damaged glass slides. Finally there were a few words from Stephen Dixon, Borough Archivist, about the new project to open up the Rochester City Archives.

Museum

The Museum will be closed from 9 December and will re-open on 9 January 2008.

Visitor numbers have been well down this year (around 280 compared with 565 last year). We plan to buy two upright display cabinets for some of our smaller exhibits. Currently there is an exhibition showing pre-1914 pictures of parishioners—quite a remarkable collection—and there are more not on display. We were outbid on the two plates shown below, but have added many Hambrook and other postcards.



Research and publications

Thanks to Denis Anstey our database of Snodland Parishioners 1800-1910 is now available to all on the Society's web-site. It will be up-dated from time to time. We find we have been allocated more space than we realised, so other items will be added.

Work is still in progress on a pamphlet comprising newspaper reports of local accidents great and small.

Another begun recently intends to provide as many notes as possible on bargemen and watermen who were resident in Snodland. This is proving most interesting and it is surprising how many passed through the village or were resident here for a long time. Surnames A-F have already shown about sixty persons. One of the difficulties will be to try to attach them to specific barges and for this we will mostly have to rely on family knowledge. Hopefully this list will provide a base from which a more extended list encompassing other local parishes can be created. Most of what we have at present is gleaned from the parish registers and from censuses. Tony Farnham has kindly loaned some of his fine collection of barge photographs for us to scan.

Pam Doolin is helping with several projects: (a) a list of known apprentices; (b) completion of the buildings survey: Ham Hill and the rural parts of the parish and (c) we hope to begin to record the memorial inscriptions at the Cemetery. Eventually we can publish these together with a plan of the graves and the names of those buried (even without any memorial). For the moment it is the two sections nearest the entrance which concern us since these contain the earliest graves. Anyone with a digital camera willing to take pictures from which we can work will be welcomed!