

Ongar Millennium History Society Newsletter

November 2011

Well it's that time of year again! Where did this year go? OMHS has been as busy as ever with meetings, outings, walks and projects. The Ongar Cemetery grave recording has been passed over to the Essex Society for Family History for indexing and publication as a booklet, online on Find My Past and eventually as a CD. However work still continues with St Peter's and St Martin's graveyards. Meanwhile the House History group is looking at some of the old properties in Ongar High Street with co-operation from the owners.

We welcome input from our members for the newsletter and ideas for new areas of research. We will happily print any articles you may wish to contribute, or comments on previous newsletter content.

May I be the first to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year!
Jenny Main, Editor

Come and join us at the OMHS
Christmas Social
 Wednesday 7th December 2011 
at 8pm
Banson's, Ongar Town Council,
Banson's Way, Ongar
Refreshments Raffle
Members only please!
Sorry - very limited parking

Committee Members 2011-2012

Chairman: Felicitie Barnes
Treasurer: John Winslow
Minute Sec: Gemma O'Donnell
Website+: Keith Snow

Vice Chair/Newsletter: Jenny Main
Speaker Sec.: Lorna Vaux
Bookings Sec: Wendy Thomas
Archive: Olive Glassington

Chair's report for OMHS AGM 2011

Good evening. It is good to see you all here. Thank you to Mrs Buxton for presiding over this meeting for us and for your support over the years. My job tonight is to report to you about the OMHS activities and events from the last year. It has been an active and hopefully a stimulating year. As usual our programme has taken the form of talks and socialising in the winter months and visits out in the summer months. We try to keep as far as possible to local topics and we have covered Historic Houses in Ongar High Street with Anne Padfield, Ongar Railway since 1865 with Edwyn Gilmour, Historic Finds in the Ongar Hundred with Frank Knights and Brian Coles, and 'Who actually saved Epping Forest in 19th century' with Richard Morris, followed by two walks in Epping Forest with Patricia Moxey. The locality has been explored with walks to Greensted with Anne Brooks and around Shelley with Michael Leach. All these knowledgeable people are our members and neighbours, and we are very fortunate that they are willing to give up their time to share their enthusiasm with us.

At the formation of OMHS we decided to encourage our members to participate in research, and work on projects which are of interest to themselves. I am happy to say that we are supporting several such projects at the moment, namely the history of properties along the High Street, the recording of inscriptions at St Martin's Church, and pictorial histories of the hospital and the comprehensive school. During this last year the book of War Memories has been completed and been on sale, the record of inscriptions at St Peter's has been passed on to the Essex Society for Family History and the blue plaque for installation at Great Stony School is ready, when they are!

We have participated in town events, such as the annual Ongar Town Meeting. We worked in conjunction with the library staff on the Memory Wall and we have a regular spot in the Ongar News. I was honoured to be asked to write the editorial for the history edition of the Ongar News last January. We have a good relationship with the local press and Sam Smith, who is the local reporter on the Brentwood Gazette, has done us proud with illustrated articles on Frank Knights' collection, the War Memories book and Anne Brooks and the Ghosts of Ongar. He is now asking for any of our members who would like to see their names and stories in print to contact him with their short articles.

There has been publicity in the town recently asking for ideas about the celebrations for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics in 2012. OMHS led the way ten years ago when it was the Queen's Golden Jubilee with the refurbishment of the Budworth Hall Clock. The committee clerk of OTC talked to us at our AGM last year about a museum in Ongar, and I think that, could be the legacy from the Diamond Jubilee.

You have all recently had a copy of the OMHS Notice Board, which is a supplement to the newsletter. This was distributed specifically to update you on the work Derek Berwin is doing to complete the roll of honour of the fallen in WW1 and WW2 and other conflicts from Ongar and District. It is important to get it completed correctly

so if any of you have any information that would help, or you know anyone who does, please contact Mr Berwin directly on the address shown on the 'Notice Board'.

The committee hope you all feel we represent your views and your interests. Last year we had to raise the subscription and although a few members declined to pay it, I am delighted to say that our membership has continued to increase. There are many things we as a committee discuss, and sometimes we do have critics about the content of the year's programme. We are certainly open to ideas. We hope that at this meeting, you will feel able to make suggestions so that OMHS can evolve in a way that suits you all. We will welcome your input.

Before I finish I would like to say how much I appreciate the work of the committee during the year. We all have particular areas of responsibility on the committee, and enjoy feedback, about the website and all the ongoing projects. During the committee meetings one person has had the job of coordinating all this information – the minute secretary. Now Elisabeth is soon leaving the area and is resigning from the committee. We will miss her and Rob so much. Thank you, Elisabeth.

Felicite Barnes

Winter days – long evenings

The OMHS Library is full of interesting books on local, county and London history and personalities. The latest arrival is "A Special Place", a very interesting 48 page book edited by David Jackman on the history of Ongar & District War Memorial Hospital featuring memories of the building and staff.

Just contact any committee member to borrow a title.

John Winslow

Ongar snippets - Death of a miser

On Wednesday an old tiler, who resided at Ongar, in Essex, died of the prevailing epidemic, leaving £7,000 in cash and notes, and a similar amount invested in the Bank of England. The deceased lived in the most penurious manner, and during his illness would neither have a fire in his room nor apply for medical advice, for fear of the expense.

On examining the boxes and drawers in his house the money and documents were found to amount to £14,000. The notes were discovered hidden between the leaves of books, and in some bags were penny pieces and farthings, to the amount of £30, which must have been hoarded up for many years.

A will was also found, bequeathing the whole of his immense treasure to his relatives, about 12 in number. His niece, who was his greatest favourite, displeased him by marrying a second time, and he has not left her a shilling, but has bequeathed £1000 to each of her four children.

Times Jan 31 1837 Source: <http://www.historyhouse.co.uk/index.html>

Epping and Ongar Railway

On Monday 17 October, we at the Epping Ongar Railway were delighted to welcome Felicitie and some of the Ongar Millennium History Society members, to Ongar Station. Although the station is still a building site and therefore not open to the general public, we were able to use the newly refurbished meeting room and show what has been achieved in the Grade II listed station building.

It has been a huge task to restore, as far as possible, the Victorian buildings back to the way they would have looked in Great Eastern Railway days. Research was carried out to establish the original GER paint colours; these were applied and will make Ongar the only original operational GER station in authentic décor.

Much of the work has centred around removing the additional 'false' rooms that London Underground had created within existing rooms. This involved removing non-original walls, opening up old windows, replacing the door to the Ladies' Toilet to the original specifications, as well as many other finer points. The original station would not have had electric lighting, and so all the old surface wiring that London Underground had added, had to be removed and a complete rewire in the roof space undertaken. Gas-style electric light fittings have also been installed to try to keep the period ambience of the building alive.

Outside, the Signal Box has been sited in a location very close to the original one, so that the signalling systems can be installed. In the near future, it will be possible to signal heritage locos which will haul period coaches that have been restored to match. All in all, we hope it will be a very enjoyable and educational day out, and a real asset for the local area. In anticipation of future expansion of services to once again serve Epping, the signalling system currently being installed will be comprehensive.

Although at the moment we are only running engineers' trains, in the first half of next year we will run steam and diesel-hauled passenger trains between Ongar and North Weald, with a diesel shuttle service between North Weald and Coopersale. Initially, the connection to Epping from North Weald will be by heritage bus, thus enabling local people and visitors to have a complete heritage transport experience for the purchase of one ticket.

From a historical and educational point of view, we welcome a closer working relationship with OMHS. As well as the Epping Ongar Railway being a "living museum," we are planning to use the former Parcels Office at Ongar as a museum of railway artefacts, which will include signs and many other objects of interest. Schools and other organisations will be able to make use of the display area, information boards and an interactive computer with touch screen offering audio history and video recordings. There is a rich heritage covering the period 1865 – 1994, and we would be grateful for any assistance that OMHS could give us in finding people who worked on or around or indeed used the railway, so that we can record their experiences for future generations, whilst they are still able to recall them.

As well as helping to help run the railway, we will also be looking for volunteers to man the museum and answer questions, as this will provide a valuable resource for visitors of all ages to understand the life style and work of previous generations. We would be especially grateful for help from OMHS with collating information and artefacts relevant to the railway and its allied community.

Obviously, this is just an outline of the plans and aspirations we have at the EOR and much more detail can be obtained either through our website, or by contacting Felicitie or me personally.

Simon Hanney, Epping and Ongar Railway

Ed's note: Thanks to Simon for the time taken to write this article for us.

OMHS visits EOR

Thank you to Simon and Nick for making John, Wendy and I so welcome on October 17th. We found it extremely interesting to see how much restoration work has already been done at the station and to see the care which has been used to make everything so authentic.

Epping and Ongar Railway is so much an integral part of the history of Ongar, not only with the buildings, but also with the stories of the people who were affected by the arrival and use of the railway. After 1865 when the railway came, Ongar grew rapidly. It was connected to the outside world. The trains carried commuters, school children, shoppers, the mail and newspapers, animals, milk churns, fruit and vegetables. People moved out to Ongar because of ease of access, and new housing estates were built.

OMHS certainly supports Simon and his team, and by close cooperation we can enhance the cultural heritage of Ongar in so many ways. We do hope that the Epping and Ongar Railway will once more bring traffic and people into the town.

Felicitie Barnes

PS Nick, a volunteer at the railway, would like the name of anyone who has had a connection to the railway and has a story to tell, to contact him on nickw@eorailway.co.uk

Catherine and James Saver Grave Reading

The grave stone reading team has started on the next phase of this project. Over the past four years the town cemetery and St. Peter's, Shelley have been completed and now the team of Felicitie Barnes, Gemma O'Donnell, Rosemary Tait, Kathy Wenborne, Keith Snow and David Thompson is tackling St. Martin's Ongar. Since it is an old cemetery it promises to throw up some interesting stories.

There is of course the Boodles' sarcophagus where we believe six of the family rest (oodles of Boodles in fact) plus some Mitfords and maybe others. One of Oliver Cromwell's cousins is buried at St. Martin's and there is a floor stone by the altar, which we hope to read in due course.

One that we have already recorded is that of Catherine Boyer relict (widow) of the Rev. James Boyer. Kathy quickly checked him out on Google and there he was on Wikipedia. Not a very pleasant character by all account. He was the tyrannical headmaster at Christ's Hospital School in Greyfriars (1778/1799) who bullied his pupils, notably Samuel Taylor-Coleridge, Leigh Hunt and Charles Lamb, all of whom went on to become poets of renown. They all wrote about their headmaster in later life, hence the detail we have of James Boyer.

His wife, Catherine, has a raised tomb with a large horizontal flat stone. The inscription reads;

Sacred
To the memory of
Mrs Catherine Boyer
Relict of the
Rev. James Boyer
Many years of Christ's Hospital
London
And late rector of Colne Engayne
In this county
Who died Sept 18th 1828
Aged 70 years

At first glance it would appear that the Rev. Boyer died aged 70 in 1828, but the stone is in "sacred memory of Catherine Boyer" and the final two lines "who died Sept 18th 1828 aged 70 years" refer to Catherine. Wikipedia puts James Boyer's death at 1814 so who thought it necessary to aggrandise James Boyer on his wife's tomb fourteen years after his death? Kathy also discovered that a plaque exists for the reverend at the church in Colne Engayne (now Engaine) that confirms he died on August 4th. 1814 aged 77 years.

There are two other gravestones in close proximity. They are for Francis Boyer, died 1831 aged 58 and William Boyer, died 1815 aged 55. They may be Catherine's children, but she would have given birth to Francis when aged 15 years and to William three years later. Francis Boyer is recorded as being a wine and spirit merchant (i) in the High St. Ongar, while another source states he was a grocer (ii). Whatever the case it is reasonable to assume that Catherine had relatives in Ongar and after her husband's death came to live in Ongar until her own departing.

David Thompson

Sources:

- (i) History House Essex - via internet
- (ii) Pigots & Co Directory of Essex - via internet

Ed's note: Apologies to David that this article did not appear in the last issue as planned. The team are still working hard on the very old graves in St Martin's.

Some of my Mother's Noaks family from Essex

John Noaks of Beauchamp Roding married Ellen Ayllet at Leaden Roding on the 13 October 1611, four hundred years ago last month. I cannot find the birth of John Noaks as the parish records of Beauchamp Roding are lost, and Ellen Ayllet I have not yet found after many years of looking for her in the parish record of Leaden Roding and other Roding Parishes.

They had a son, Adam, baptised on the 20 of October 1621 at Margaret Roding; there might have been other children I have not yet found. He married Grace ? and had son, Adam, baptised 30 July 1649 and a daughter, Ann, baptised in February 1654 at Leaden Roding.

We then find this Adam getting married at High Roding to Ann Perry in February 1673. His son, also Adam Noaks, was baptised on 17 April 1679 at High Easter. I then found him living on a farm called Parvels? or Parfields at Abbess Roding and one girl, Hannah, was baptised at High Easter in 1713, the rest at the Abbess Roding meeting house.

His son, William, born October 1725 married Mary Milton at Farnham, Essex on the 4 March 1746. It states in the parish register that William comes from Matching and they went on to live at Matching and have a large family. Son Samuel born September 7 1755 married Elizabeth Ellis 24 October 1781 at Bobbingworth. He was buried at Bobbingworth on the 16 August 1829. He had five children, three sons and two daughters.

He later married Hannah Freshwater on the 6 of October 1810 at Moreton. She was born at Moreton on 1 November 1783. They had five children - one John married Letitier Cowland on 21 January 1835 at Bobbingworth. They also had five children: Samuel born 24 March 1835 and died December 1902 at High Ongar, married Mary King on 20 July at Chipping Ongar. She was baptised on the 6 October 1839 at Fyfield. He went on to marry Mary Westwood nee Fog at High Ongar on 25 December 1883. His daughter Mary Ann Noakes, my grandmother, was born 2 June 1860 and married Henry Monk on the 30 November 1879 at High Ongar and later lived at Barrack Lane, Stanford Rivers where my mother was born on the 21 August 1902. She was Julia Ellen Thompson, nee Monk.

Richard Thompson

Ongar snippets - Biting off an ear

At Ongar Petty Sessions a few days since, Thomas Butler, a 'navvy' was sentenced to two months' hard labour for savagely assaulting Henry Cobbold, another 'navvy' and biting off a portion of his ear. In defence Butler said it was the way they fought in this country.

Ipswich Journal 5 November 1864

Source: <http://www.historyhouse.co.uk/index.html>

Ongar snippets

On Saturday inst a man, named Feake, led his wife into Chipping Ongar-market, in Essex, by a halter, and there exposed her for sale. She was soon purchased by a young man, a blacksmith, of High Ongar, at the price of 10s. Her person was by no means unpleasing, and she appeared to be about 25 years of age. The collector of tolls actually demanded and received from the purchaser the customary charge of one penny, which is always paid upon live stock sold therein per head! -Evening Paper.

These stories reflect disgrace on the local magistracy. These sales being *contra bonos mores*, are contrary to law on that ground alone; and the public commission of an illegal act is, as every tyro [novice] knows, an indictable offence.

Times Dec 31 1823 Source: <http://www.historyhouse.co.uk/index.html>

Dates for your diary

**Wed Dec 7th
8pm**

Christmas Social (Members only)

Ongar Town Council Offices
Banson's Way, Ongar.
NB Limited parking

**Thurs Jan 19th
8pm**

The Life of David Livingstone -a talk by Zoe Lee and Jean Easter

United Reform Church Rooms.

**Thurs Feb 23rd
8pm**

"Round about Ongar" – film from an Ongar archive, 1930 to the present by David Welford

and projects update
Church Rooms, Castle Street.

**Fri March 30th
7.45 for 8pm**

2012 Marion Slade Lecture "The Buxtons – an old Essex family" by Georgina Green

Admission by ticket – includes cheese and wine.
High Ongar Village Hall

Contributions for next newsletter please!

**The next newsletter will be produced in February 2012, so any articles to
Jenny please by 22nd January. Thank you!**