

Shepherdswell & Coldred History Society



Meetings and Activities 2025

The History Society

Formed in May 2014, Shepherdswell and Coldred History Society is a friendly and welcoming group of people interested in the long and varied history of our communities, from the Bronze Age to the Second World War, and everything in between and later. Our programme is a mix of informal meetings, expert talks and presentations, virtual 'walks' and exhibitions..

Our meetings are free to members; £3.00 for non-members (unless otherwise stated). You can join the History Society on the night for an annual membership fee of £10.

30 January 2025: Members' Meeting: The Plaques to Those Who Served in the Great War

We have been reviewing the information on the plaques in the Village Hall that commemorate those who served in the Great War – thanks particularly to the work of Carol Howell. This meeting will receive a progress report and make decisions about next steps.



Thursday 27 February: Archaeological Dig at St Andrews Gardens Liss Burrows and Emily Brown, of Invicta Archaeology, will report on last summer's dig on land adjacent to St Andrews Gardens.



The dig revealed two enclosure ditches, pottery shreds and animal bones that show the site has been occupied deep into history.

Tonight, we will hear a report on the information found and what the evidence tells us about the early history of our village.

Thursday 27 March: Members' Evening Annual General Meeting and 'Lost Street Names'

This meeting commences with our Annual General Meeting, which reviews the Society's activities and elects the Committee.

We will then have a discussion on 'lost street names' in the Parish.

Thursday 24 April: Memories of Hopping in Kent with Philippa Messiano of Brook Rural Museum

In January 2024, Brook Rural Museum launched an Oral History project to record memories of Kentish hop picking. Funded by the National Lottery and Association of Independent Museums and working in partnership with the University of Kent Special Collections and Archives, *Memories of Hopping* interviewed people about their memories of hopping and hop production, particularly in Brook, Wye and surrounding areas.

The project culminated in an exhibition which featured oral history recordings and artefacts, including hop tokens and tally sticks, photographs, newspaper articles and rare books.

Tonight, the project organiser **Philippa Messiano** reports on its findings and talks about the history of hop production in Kent.



Philippa Mesiano completed her PhD in Medieval and Early Modern Studies at the University of Kent. She trained in heritage collections management at Canterbury Cathedral and now works as Community Engagement & Project Manager at Brook Rural Museum.

Thursday 29 May: Members' Evening Second World War Defences in and around Shepherdswell and Coldred

Tonight's meeting will review what we know about the anti-invasion defences around Shepherdswell and also hear a report on work currently underway to find out more.



Thursday 26 June: A 'Walk through Time' with Keith Roberts. Meet in entrance to Fry's Farm Shop at 7.30

This year's 'Walk through Time' explores Mill Lane, particularly nearest The Green. **Keith Roberts** will, in his usual entertaining style, tell the story of people, buildings and events.



Note: the Walk through Time this year is a real walk – rather than a 'virtual walk' as in recent years.

Thursday 24 July: Members' Evening.

This evening we will take an informal look at the life of Sibertswold School since it was built in 1853. There will be a chance to look at old documents, registers and photographs. If you have any memories or even photos of the old school, please do bring them along for a trip down memory lane.



Saturday 6 September

Big History Day is Back!

11.30 – 2.30, Shepherdswell Village Hall

Admission £1

After last year's break, our celebration of local history returns.

As usual, there will be exhibits, interesting talks, heritage stalls, archaeological finds, activities for children, food and refreshments, including an opportunity to indulge in fantastic home-made cake. Look out for more details nearer the date!



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Scenes from recent Big History Days. Don't miss it this year!

Thursday 26 September:

The Spanish Civil War and its Local Volunteers

with Tom Millard, assistant head teacher, Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School

This talk explores the journey of local volunteers (from Folkestone, Dover and Canterbury areas) who joined the International Brigades and journeyed to the battlefields of the Spanish Civil War (1936-38).

The project began in 2020 as a school project by students of Dover Grammar School for Girls. It was organised by tonight's speaker, Tom Millard, who was their History teacher.



The students' research culminated in an exhibition in Folkestone and, in 2023, a plaque to those who lost their lives was unveiled in Dover.

The talk will particularly focus on Harry Addley, born and raised in Folkestone and a veteran of the Somme. Addley became one of the first British casualties of the Spanish Civil War. The project located several of Harry's relatives, all of whom were surprised to hear details of his life story.

Digital copies of a pamphlet about the project will be available on the night.

Thursday 30 October: Members' Evening.

Exploring and researching local history: topics to be announced nearer the date.

Thursday 27 November: Special Christmas Event Hoodening and the Hooden Horse of Kent with James Frost



Hoodening is a house-calling Christmas custom unique to East Kent. It features the Hooden Horse animal disguise. Tonight, James Frost will explore the tradition, talk about its modern revival and further adventures of Hooden Horses. There will also be a guest appearance from a real Hooden Horse!

James Frost is a freelance theatre designer and puppeteer who has been performing the Hooden Horse since 2005. He has curated exhibitions on the Hooden Horse at Maidstone Museum and Herne Bay Seaside Museum. He has also authored *Animal Guising and the Kentish Hooden Horse* (Ozaru Books, 2023).

For more information, visit: www.jamesedwardfrost.com

29 January 2026: Members' Evening

Exploring and researching local history: topics to be announced nearer the date.

Visit our Website

www.shepherdswhellhistory.org



The History Society website has a growing collection of photographs, archives, information from past censuses and about birth, deaths and marriages.

We also collate oral history interviews with longer-standing residents and offer opportunities and advice about doing online research about family history.

If you have something pertinent to village history, please consider donating to our archive. We will scan old photographs and documents and return them to you. Help us to preserve the past!

For more details about the History Society, contact:
shepherdswhellhistory@gmail.com