



SussexLink



February 2007

A Newsletter for the Sussex Family History Group

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FRC closure — part two

When The National Archives announced last year that it intended to relocate from the first floor of the Family Records Centre (FRC) to Kew by the end of 2008 there was speculation that the Office for National Statistics (ONS) would also be vacating the FRC.

The Office for National Statistics has now confirmed that it does indeed intend to close its public search facility, currently located on the ground floor of the FRC, by April 2008.

From early 2008 facilities to search indexes of births, marriages and deaths will start to be available on the internet. For a while ONS will make indexes available, in paper or microfiche format, at The National Archives in Kew to enable researchers to access those records yet to be digitised.

Peter Murphy, ONS Director of Registration Services, said: "The decision reflects the changes in the way family historians and others prefer to carry out their research, by making use of online facilities. Confirmation of funding for further development of the existing civil registration modernisation programme has now allowed us to plan for most searches to be possible electronically by April 2008 and almost all the rest by 2009.

Because the electronic indexes will not be fully complete when the relocation takes place, we expect that some indexes in the form of books or microfiche, will be available at Kew for a short period after the move. This will ensure that users of the search facility will have access to all records by one means or another."

Embellishing the Picture

Don't forget to book for the Annual Conference on Saturday 24 March, at Clair Hall, Haywards Heath. It is always the highlight of the year for the Group and something not to be missed. The booking form accompanied the December issue of *Sussex Family Historian* or there's one on the website at: www.sfhg.org.uk/confagm.html

The Annual General Meeting follows the conference. This is your opportunity to express views on the progress of the society. Perhaps you would like to be elected to the committee; if so feel free to discuss what is involved with one of the current committee members, or simply ask the secretary Val Orr (secretary@sfhg.org.uk) for a nomination form and return it by 24 February.

Publicity Officer

For some time the SFHG has been at a disadvantage by the lack of someone to spearhead our publicity, promoting our activities both locally and further afield. We welcome Roy Winchester who has now stepped in to fill the role of our publicity officer. Roy may be contacted at: publicity@sfhg.org.uk

Have you renewed?

Don't forget that subscriptions became due on 1 January. If you haven't yet renewed please do so as soon as possible.

The renewal form was stapled to the December issue of *Sussex Family Historian* — on the outside so that you shouldn't have missed it! — or you may renew via the website: www.sfhg.org.uk/memsec.html

Library News

One conclusion of the working party's review into the future of the SFHG library is that it will continue to be based in its present location for the immediate future. The review has shown that some changes are both necessary and possible if it is to continue to serve the needs of members.

The main immediate change is that Thursday evening openings are no longer viable. The current pattern of Saturday openings (10am to 5.30pm on the second and fourth Saturdays, 2pm to 5.30pm on other Saturdays) will continue.

Then, as soon as sufficient volunteer helpers can be recruited, the all-day openings will be extended to every Saturday.

Come to the fair

The Sussex & South London Family History Fair takes place on Sunday 11 February at the K2 Sports Centre, Pease Pottage Hill, Crawley from 10am to 5pm. Admission is £2. There's a large free car park and refreshments are available. Come along and say "Hi" to Don and his crew on the SFHG stand.

The same weekend — Friday 9 to Sunday 11 February — the Federation of Family History Societies will be flying the flag at the Creative Stitches & Hobbycrafts event at the Brighton Centre. Paul Blake and Maggie Loughran will be giving introductory talks on family history.

The FFHS is attending several of this type of event to raise the profile of family history, and family history societies. Maggie says: "it would be fantastic if you could come and help". (admin@ffhs.org.uk)

Crawley update

As well as being their AGM, the Crawley Meeting Centre's February meeting (28 Feb) will have a discussion on One-Name Studies. They meet at Tilgate Community Centre, Shackleton Road at 7.30pm.

The previous week (21 Feb) the topic for Crawley Computer Group will be Wireless Networking. The Computer Group meet in Room 4, South Building, Hazelwick School, Bycroft Way, Three Bridges at 7.30pm.

See the website for programmes for the whole year for all the meeting centres.

Retirement for Roy & Mary

If you've ever been to the Worthing Meeting Centre you'll no doubt have seen Mary and Roy Monnery officiating at the bookstall. This they have done month by month, rain or sun, sale or no sale, since meetings began there.

What you may not know is that Mary also organised the booking of SFHG stands at family history fairs from Hampshire to Kent, to Buckinghamshire and even as far as York. Then they would set off on many weekends to set up and sell at these various places.

After more than a decade, and having recently become grandparents, they want to pass on their bookstall responsibilities to other people. Mary has a lot of experience of family history and has a great ability in passing on imaginative ways forward to those whose research has ground to a halt.

Mary and Roy have both served on SFHG committees and still wish to be involved in some way. They will be at conference this year with Mary's collection of vintage and rare second-hand books and are likely to be at the annual Worthing family history fair in April helping to pass on arrangements to any successors. Any member interested in helping in any or all of these jobs do please make contact.

Roy & Mary, many thanks for all you've done. Have a great "Retirement"! *Joe Bysh*

Thank you, Joan

For a good number of years, Joan Goddard has been helping members with general research queries. Joan now feels it is time that she gave up this role; unfortunately she has been having back problems and it is particularly painful when she sits at the computer. Does anyone fancy giving others a helping hand in the way that Joan has done?

"Say ah", Brian

Our chairman Brian Cutler has not been 100% well over the last few weeks and, as a result, has thought it prudent to reduce his workload. Doubtless we will all join in wishing him well.

In Brian's absence, this issue of *SussexLink* has been compiled by Trevor Hanson (editor@sfhg.org.uk).

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