



# Family Roots

Family History Society for Eastbourne & District  
[www.eastbournefhs.org.uk](http://www.eastbournefhs.org.uk)



E V Dunn and Grandfather

Vol. 37.4 May 2023



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**COMMITTEE MEMBER:**

We have four vacancies.

**Copy deadlines for articles please.**

**January 15<sup>th</sup>, April 16<sup>th</sup>, July 16<sup>th</sup> & October 16<sup>th</sup>.**

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## Editorial

By now you will no doubt have learned of the sad passing of a founder member of our society, Barbara Budd, Family Roots was represented at Barbara's funeral by both committee and society members.

We have learned of the impending closure of Hastings and Rother FHS let us hope they are offered a life, but it will not be by Family Roots as they are a registered charity.

To keep our society safe please try and attend monthly meetings also, if you wish join the committee fresh ideas would be most welcome.

Now for some good news, we have entered into a reciprocal agreement with Berkshire FHS and Shropshire FHS to share digital copies of magazines / journals; these are available in the member's section of our website, as are the Cheshire FHS and Waltham Forest FHS.

By the time you read this it is only a few days till the coronation of King Charles 111, followed by another Bank Holiday, how time flies! but I suppose it does as you get older.

We had out first television specially for the Queen's coronation purchased from a local garage who had a small TV and Radio shop, they also sold bicycles, a bit of an odd combination.

*Till next time John Titmuss*

## **Barbara May Budd née Budgen**

**1st August 1940 – 12th February 2023.**



I have been privileged to have known Barbara for the past 75 years, going back to our school days together firstly at Polegate infants, juniors and then to Hailsham Secondary School, Battle Road. Barbara travelled daily from Berwick to Polegate by train and then when attending Hailsham Secondary School changed at Polegate onto the steam train the Hailsham Flyer, on the Cuckoo line to Hailsham, now the Cuckoo trail.

Barbara May Budgen was born on the 1st August 1940 to Herbert John and Eleanor Ida Jane Budgen nee Ventham. She lived at 11 Downsway, Berwick Station and was baptised at St. Michael and All Angels Church, Berwick and was the younger sister to both Denise and Joan. Her parents lived in Berwick until their passing.

After leaving school she worked on a poultry farm in Berwick feeding, mucking out, grading and packing eggs. At the age of 18 she left home and went to work as a chambermaid in a small boarding house in Eastbourne, later working at a needle factory at Lewes. Her final employment until retirement was as a senior manager working for the N.H.S at the Eastbourne D.G.H in the Central Sterile Supply Department where all items from operations are cleaned, sterilised and repacked for another operation a very responsible position.

Barbara met her future husband Bryan Budd in the late 1950s through their love of ballroom dancing (of which Barbara has many certificates) both at the Pier Ballroom ( Later the Blue Room ) and the Winter Gardens where all of the big bands played on a Saturday evening. They were married at Berwick Church on 28th July 1962. Subsequently they had three children David, Philip and Lynda, she was also a devoted grandmother to Jordan, Daniel, Rachel, James and Sophia-May. When her children were young Barbara devoted many hours to the Brownies as Tawny Owl.

Barbara had a lifelong love of dogs and regularly attended Crufts with her daughter Lynda and was regularly seen walking her dogs around Arlington reservoir. She was devoted to her dogs and spent many hours training and competing in dog shows in obedience and agility classes.

In the 1970s Barbara became an Avon lady and through this organisation she met Phil Webb. This meeting brought together two people with an interest in genealogy, and on attending night school classes on the subject at Ratton School ( run by the late Judith Kinnison Bourke ) they together in 1986 with four other members of the same night school class founded Family Roots Family History Society. She gave of her time generously to promote the society. She held the position of Treasurer from its conception in 1986 – 1991, and from 2001- 20016 was in charge of the distribution of the society magazine. She was a Committee Member for over 30 years. She was also a stalwart in the kitchen when Family Roots held open days preparing and serving ploughman’s lunches and afternoon tea and cakes. She was also an enthusiastic member of the Monumental Inscription team in transcribing the data at Ocklynge Cemetery and churchyards throughout Family Roots catchment area.

Barbara had one other love that was the music of Cliff Richard, she with Linda attended a number of his concerts throughout the country.

Barbara will be sadly missed by all who knew her and her willingness to help others especially with their family history research.

Barbara, Rest in Peace

*John Tyhurst*



# MINUTES OF THE 37<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## OF FAMILY ROOTS FHS (EASTBOURNE & DISTRICT)

**Ocklynge School, Victoria Drive, Eastbourne 6th April 2023**

1. The Chairman opened the Meeting at 7.32 and welcomed the members.
2. Apology for absence were received from Peggy Westwood.
3. Minutes of the last AGM were accepted with no objections on the proposal of June Johnson, seconded by Lionel Jones.
4. There were no matters arising.
- 5 Results of Questionnaire about meeting times.

The Secretary reported that of a total membership of 129, 61 had responded to the question about a change in meeting times from the current Thursday evening to some other time. 51% had preferred to keep the current arrangements, 21% wanted change and 23% expressed no preference. [Figures rounded] It had therefore been decide that there would no change to the existing arrangements.

6. Chairman's Report. page 132.
- 7 Treasurer's Report page 135.
8. Election of Committee

John Tyhurst and John Crane were standing down from the Committee

and Janet Savage was standing down as bookstall manager, but was remaining on the Committee. Helen Lucas was standing unopposed as Secretary in succession to John Crane. Her appointment was agreed and the other changes accepted in one vote, being proposed by Rosalind Hodge, seconded by Pat Turner.

#### 9. Election of Honorary Auditors.

Russell Ridout and Peter Martin were re-elected Honorary Auditors on the proposal of Bill Turner seconded by Theresa Hancock.

#### 10. Subscriptions and meeting fees.

No changes were proposed.

#### 11. Any Other Business:

After discussion and a vote by show of hands it was decided to discontinue the refreshment arrangements at monthly meetings due to a lack of volunteers.

From the floor Lionel Jones expressed dissatisfaction with the effective discrimination against those members without computers, a point reiterated by June Johnson, and Dave Chester thought that there was a lack of opportunity for socialising at meetings.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.05 pm.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The past year has been a time of trying to get back to normal while living with the pandemic as it has not completely gone away. It's great that our face to face monthly meetings have returned although we have kept Zoom meetings in January and February.

Our real life speakers this year have included "Local Blacksmiths", "Dealing with poverty in 19th century Sussex", "Shepherds on the South Downs", "Belle Tout and Beachy Head Lighthouses", "A Day in the Life of a Genealogist" and Kevin Gordon's popular "Bessie's Diary". Our July outside meeting was to the Mint House in Pevensey.

The joy of Zoom has been that our overseas members were able to join our meetings regularly and been able to take part. In January our Zoom meeting was about Jewish entertainers in Eastbourne and in February we heard all about the BBC Radio 4 programme "Wedding Detectives".

Now I must announce the retirement of two of our committee members: John Tyhurst was Chairman for 15 years until our last AGM. He also led the group recording MIs including the mammoth task of Ocklynge Cemetery. Quite recently new CDs of Chalvington and Ripe MIs were made available to buy. John Crane has been our secretary for 20 years, both he and JT have done a sterling job, and both are now retiring from the committee. I would like to thank them for their input over the years.

Janet Savage will stay on the committee but is relinquishing the bookstall. Thank you Janet for doing a great job housing the boxes of books, bringing them along to our meeting and posting them off across the world. We are therefore looking for someone to take over the keeping and selling of books and CDs. If no one comes forward then the bookstall will cease to be. Books are now reduced by 50%.

Ideally we would like four more members to join our committee, so please consider volunteering for a position as a committee member. If you do wish to find out more then speak to any committee member.

We do need to make new arrangements concerning the serving of the meeting tea and coffee. It does not seem fair for the same people to miss part of the talk each meeting. I will be asking you all to consider whether we should have a rota and take it in turns to be on refreshment duty or whether we should do without the tea/coffee break completely.

Sadly we had to announce the passing of one of members Barbara Budd. Barbara was Family Roots member number 2. She was the first treasurer and at the end of the first year the auditor found that she was 2p out and made her look back through the accounts until she found it! She remained an active committee member until her health failed. I remember chatting to Barbara when I first came along to a meeting, she was always friendly and welcoming. Several from the society were represented at her funeral. When I agreed to be Chairman at the last AGM and we were getting used

to meeting face 2 face again the numbers attending meetings were disappointing but since then member attendees have gradually grown as has the number of visitors. The membership now stands at a healthy 130. The questionnaire concerning changing the place and time of our meetings came out in favour of staying as we are. However, we do want to ask for your ideas for our monthly meetings. So let us know of any suggestions for speakers and anything else we can try. The December meeting will be a member's evening where we can share ideas, artefacts, or anything to do with your own family research. So look out your heirlooms, family trees etc. to display and chat about in December. My thanks to Jenny for being treasurer and refreshments, John Titmuss for managing the website and being magazine editor, Shirley for organising our speakers, Russell who sends out the online posts and audits the books, Marianne who has made a super member's secretary and Helen Lucas who has agreed to stand as secretary. All the committee members have contributed to the efficient running of Family Roots with some joining me monthly at the Gather in the Beacon when the history groups meet to recruit new members and network. Lastly, thank you all for coming to our meetings and supporting Family Roots. It really isn't too hard being chairman if everyone else is doing all the work!

The report was accepted with no objections on the proposal of Ailna Martin, seconded by Theresa Hancock

## TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to report that Family Roots is holding its own after two years of lockdown, and we were delighted to resume face-to-face meetings in April 2022. Our membership has been decreasing slightly year by year, but 83% of you renewed your membership in 2022 and during the year we recruited a further 16 new members. The annual subscription figure for last year was £1,406, a drop of £191 over the previous year.

Meeting and visitors' fees have added a further £429 to our income, which we did not have in the previous year, and the share of the raffle gave another £104. Income from FindMyPast royalties was down on the previous year, from £481 to £340. The overall income on the general fund for 2022-23 was £2,294, an increase of £208 over 2021-22.

With the return to face-to-face meetings, we have had to pay out rent again for the school totalling £474 and an increase in speaker fees and travelling costs of £280. However, some other costs have come down, for example postage and printing. We have renewed the licence for Zoom meetings at £144 for the year, which has enabled the society to hold members meetings on Zoom in the months of January and February, and the committee now hold our monthly meeting via Zoom. The saving in rent to the school for those two winter months covers the cost of the licence.

In total our expenditure for the year was £2,553, an excess of £259 over income for the year.

As you all know, the Bookstall is closing unless anyone comes forward to take it on from Janet. Sales of books during the year only amounted to £258, £51 less than in 2021-22, but the income was increased by the addition of £104 from the raffle. Closing book stock figure was £3,390, giving a total receipts figure of £3,752. The total of payments from the Bookstall amounted to £3,661, which gave a total excess of £91 receipts over payments.

There was no movement in Fixed Assets during the year, and the total Current Assets amounted to £9,105. The only Liability was £432 in unredeemed raffle book tokens, and the total net worth of the society at the end of the 2022-23 financial year was £8,673.

The report was accepted with no objections on the proposal of John Warren seconded by Lionel Jones

# FAMILY ROOTS FHS (EASTBOURNE AND DISTRICT)

## General Society Account Receipts & Payments Account for the year ended 31 January 2023

	£	£	(21/22) £
<b>Receipts</b>			
Subscriptions	1,406		1,597
Meeting Fees	268		
Visitors	161		
Donations			8
Share of Raffle income	104		
Research			
Sale of second hand magazines	15		
Advertising			
Findmypast Royalties	<u>340</u>		481
		2,294	
<b>Payments</b>			
Rent	474		
FFHS subscriptions and insurance	49		130
Postages and telephone	252		326
Refreshments	48		
Printing and photocopying	654		701
Stationery	25		
Speaker's fees	697		417
Computer expenses			
Website expenses	72		43
Projects expenses (Bookstall)			55
Zoom licence	144		144
Bank Charges	88		10
Equipment - Microfiche reader bulb			16
Thank you gifts - John Tyhurst & Pat Turner	<u>50</u>		
		<u>2,553</u>	
<b>Excess of payments over receipts</b>		259	



**BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS ACCOUNT**  
**Trading Account for the year ended 31 January 2023**

	£	£	(21/22) £
<b>Receipts</b>			
Book sales	258		309
Share of Raffle Income	104		
Closing book stock	<u>3,390</u>	3,752	3,584
 <b>Payments</b>			
Opening stock	3,584		3,666
Purchases for stock			
Bank charges	61		10
Publication expenses			
Postages, stationery etc.	<u>16</u>	<u>3,661</u>	28
 <b>Excess of Receipts over Payments</b>		 91	
 <b>Cash in Hand - Float &amp; PayPal</b>		 £40	 £28
 Bank Account as at 31st January 2023	 £4,571.43		

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities  
as at 31st January 2023**

<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>(31.1.22)</b> <b>£</b>
		Cost Depreciation	
Microfiche reader	458	458	
2 extendable display panels	132	132	
Laptop purchased Feb 2013	330	330	
Data projector	259	259	
Laptop/projector adapter	10	10	
Radio Microphone (2017)	30	30	
Radio Microphone (2018)	32	32	
Microfiche	2200	2200	
120 white cups and saucers	150	150	
			-
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Stock of books and publications	3,390		3,584
Cash at bank: General Club Accounts			
Current Account No. 1	1,104		1,363
Books and Publications Account			
Current Account No. 2	4,571		4,314
Cash in hand: Petty Cash & PayPal	40		28
		9,105	
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Less unredeemed raffle prizes		432	362
<b>Net worth</b>		8,673	

J. Wootton, Treasurer  
J. Savage, Bookstall Organiser

I have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of my knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of my examination of the accounts, and certify that they give a true and fair view of the affairs of Family Roots (Eastbourne & District) F.H.S. as at 31st January 2023.

R. S. Ridout

## Notes on the Cover Photograph.

Contributed by: Ailna Martin.

The cover photograph this month shows my father, Ernest Vivian Dunn, with his grandfather James Dunn. My father was always known by his second name, Vivian. He was born in Liverpool on 10th August 1900 to James William and Eva Dunn. James William's father, James, was born in 1830 in Johnshaven, Kincardineshire, Scotland, where his father, William Dunn, was one of the very first coastguards in a service that was formed in 1822. The photograph was probably taken some time between 1903 and 1904. James had been a seafarer all his life.

Vivian's parents, James William and Eva Dunn, were living with James William's family at 52, Hatherley Street, Toxteth Park, Liverpool.

Vivian's safe arrival must have been an enormous relief to his parents as his mother, Eva, had suffered a succession of miscarriages and one stillbirth. Two days after his birth he weighed 8½lbs. His father, James William Dunn, registered the birth when the baby was exactly a week old, and at the age of 3½ weeks he was baptised in St. Peter's Church, Liverpool, his father commenting that "the ceremony was a farce". It is significant that the baby was baptised Ernest Vivian and was always to be known by his second name, which derives from a Latin word meaning "alive". One can perhaps read too much into the naming of the child and the timing of certain events in his early life. Did his mother fear

for her precious child's life because of her earlier experiences of childbirth and insist that he be baptised as soon as was practicable lest he should lose his hold on life and die un-baptised? Was she humoured in this respect by her husband who was sceptical of the whole process? Eva was, from all accounts, of a volatile and affectionate disposition, the direct antithesis of her husband, James. Nevertheless, James was careful, almost to the point of obsession, in his observation and recording of his baby son's progress, keeping a methodical note of weight, habits, feeding patterns etc. in a small notebook that is now in my possession.

It is from this small notebook that I first began to suspect that Vivian's mother had not died when he was a small boy, as my siblings and I had always been led to believe. The entries end abruptly in December 1907, following a note to the effect that "Mother has been away since 4th July" and a further note, on 10th December 1907, recording the fact that since the last entry in August 1907 "V." has been in the care of my aunt". As far as my research can ascertain the aunt to whom James William referred was his mother's sister, Elizabeth Trestain Burt (née Bray), who had been a member of his extended family for as long as he could remember. Evidence from census records for 1881 and 1891 points to Elizabeth, as she was recorded as a member of the household on both occasions. James did have another aunt, Ann, on the Dunn side but so far her movements have proved difficult to trace.

Vivian's childhood must have been a very solitary one, though the notebook refers to cousins who may possibly have been the family of James William's younger brother, Frederick John. Oral evidence offered by my mother suggests that Fred's wife was often called upon to include Vivian at family meals when Vivian, as a young teenager, was at school nearby. Frederick John was a marine engineer, employed by T. & J. Harrison. He and his family lived at 63, Langdale Road, Liverpool, 15. Vivian's secondary school was The Holt School in Bagot Street, two or three blocks away.

In May 1906 Vivian began school at Sefton Park Board School, Smithdown Road, which he did not like at first. It would seem that his mother was over-protective of the child and at first refused to let him go to school, leaving the responsibility of helping the little boy to his father. When Vivian was six years old a decision was made to move house to 10, Addingham Road, Mossley Hill, Liverpool, 18. By this time my research has shown that James was now a "single parent", faced with the problem of finding someone to run his home and care for his son whilst he was away at work. The task must have fallen to the aunt referred to above. The change of address necessitated a change of school and Vivian attended Greenbank Road School, known as the Morrison School, where he settled happily. His love of books was nurtured from an early age as his father kept him from "Scripture" lessons at school, with the result the

young child was put to sit out the duration of these lessons in another room and was encouraged to read. There are copies of imaginative writing from this period that would be a credit to a much older child. The fact that they have been preserved suggest that Vivian's father thought so too.

My father talked very little of his childhood years. I do know that he eventually progressed to secondary school at the Holt Grammar School, where he was in the same class as my mother, then Gladys Lishman. It would have been at this period that he would take his mid-day meals at his Aunt Dunn's home in Langdale Road, quite close to the school, as there just would not have been time for him to walk home to Addingham Road and back in the short dinner hour. My mother has always said that Vivian was something of a rebel at school and didn't take a very responsible attitude to his lessons. With the benefit of hindsight it is more than probable that he was a deeply unhappy child, missing a mother's care. He had witnessed her bouts of mental illness during the formative years of his childhood and, since discovering the truth about her illness, I have been astounded that he didn't show more signs of distress than the mere "naughtiness" that his father and aunt referred to on occasion.

I know that my father adored his grandfather, James., who had spent his working life as a seafarer, having qualified for his Mate's Certificate in 1855. He would have been a prominent figure in the child's life. As soon

as he was old enough to do so, Vivian ran away from home and signed on as a cabin boy, his imagination possibly fired with James's tales of the sea. When his father realised that the boy was determined to make the sea his life, he arranged for him to join an old-established Shipping Company in Liverpool as an officer cadet. Vivian's first voyage as a cadet was aboard the S.S. Matador, a ship of Thomas and James Harrison's line, which he joined on 23rd January 1917, when he was almost seventeen. This was at the height of the First World War, and it wasn't long before he was transferred to the Royal Naval Reserve. His transfer took place on or about 26th February 1918 and he served as a 2nd lieutenant on destroyers until his discharge on 12th April 1919. An inscription on the flyleaf of a book of poems treasured by my mother throughout her life, indicates that he served aboard HMS Rother, of the First Destroyer Flotilla. This flotilla patrolled the English Channel and The North Sea during December 1918, and also provided escort support.

Vivian re-joined T. & J. Harrison on his discharge in April 1919, continuing to sail as a cadet under Captain H. M. Booth on the S.S. Historian. His progress through the ranks was steady and is recorded in a document that I have obtained from Harrison's own records. He served on a succession of ships, many very old and, in Vivian's own words, "ready for the scrap heap". He did not talk a great deal of his life at sea, though I do remember tales of weevils in the food and rats running about

the ship, on the lookout for any unprotected scrap of food! There was no refrigeration aboard the older ships and my father suffered stomach upsets almost routinely as a result of bad food.

My father gained his Master's Ticket on 22nd July 1927. A year later, on 10th August 1928, his 28th birthday, he married my mother, Gladys Rebecca Jane Lishman. His persistence won the day! He was devoted to Gladys and their marriage lasted until his death on 3rd July 1981.

Despite having passed his necessary "tickets" it was always a case of waiting for dead men's shoes before promotion occurred. It has to be remembered that the late 1920's and early thirties was a time of deep economic depression, the consequences of which have been well documented. There was no safety net of state support as happens nowadays and soon after I was born in 1931, he was appointed as a ship keeper to a skeleton crew on a ship which was laid up on the river Clyde, in Scotland. It was at this period that my parents closed up their home in Liverpool and lived as a family aboard the ship in Glasgow. Money was extremely tight, as Vivian was by this time retained on half-pay, never great even at the full rate!

All through these years of financial hardship there was never any sense amongst us, his four children, that we were deprived of anything, most of all of the love of our two parents. Since obtaining the copy of his service record, I have been able to tell just when we were all conceived!



The arrival of three successive daughters must have been something of a disappointment to our parents, though there was never any hint that we were unwanted. Nevertheless, the arrival of a son, Angus Alasdair, on 5th January 1935, must have been a great joy.

I remember my father's leaves vividly – the excited anticipation of his imminent arrival home, bringing exotic gifts from foreign parts, and later, during World War Two, items of food which were severely rationed in Britain. As we grew older we all scurried round to ensure that there would be as little housework as possible to be done during his short and precious stay at home.

In the early days of that war my older sister, Rowan, and I were acutely aware that he was in danger on the high seas, though we never fully understood the enormous strain under which he and his fellow seafarers were carrying out their task. Ships were organised into convoys, protected by the Royal Navy, though often that protection was pretty scant as ship after ship fell victim to U-boat attack. My father sailed with one convoy that assembled off Newfoundland. The great majority of those ships was lost and when the few surviving ships limped into port in Glasgow they were met by King George VI. My father was always a great Royalist, and this was one of his proudest moments. Seafarers are a superstitious breed, and on this occasion the ship's crew attributed their safe passage to the fact that their ship was named "Magician" – they

called her their “Magic Can”! Vivian was First Officer aboard this ship from 1937 until she was stranded off Peterhead, on the N.E. coast of Scotland, in May 1944.

Not long after this incident, Vivian was given his first command, and he set sail aboard S.S. Dramatist on 14th December 1944. By this time WW2 was reaching its final stages. We knew that the only dangers now were the age-old dangers that sailors have always faced. As it transpired my father was able to enjoy a well-deserved retirement during which my parents were able to holiday in their beloved Scotland and in the Winster Valley in Cumbria. There were other foreign holidays on occasion, including a trip to Spain during which Vivian was able to exercise the Spanish speaking skills he had acquired whilst still at sea. There was also a memorable holiday spent aboard a cruise ship to Norway and into the Arctic Circle. This was a gift from his children to mark the occasion of his 40th wedding anniversary. One of the highlights of the cruise occurred when the ship’s captain invited Vivian to berth the ship in one of the fiords they were visiting.

The Spanish language skills were put to good use in my father’s retirement as he was frequently called upon by the Liverpool Police to act as an interpreter when Spanish-speaking nationals found themselves in trouble with the courts or became lost on the roads. Vivian continued this work until increasing deafness meant that he had to give it up.

In 1978 Gladys and Vivian celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. There was a truly happy family party in Cumbria. It was a perfect summer's day, with warm sunshine and loving friends and family. Just two years later, on 9th August 1980, Gladys and Vivian attended the wedding of our daughter, Clare – another golden August day, followed the next day by another less formal celebration in our garden at 5, Parkway, Eastbourne, for his 80th birthday.

Sadly, my father was not to see another birthday. Soon after a holiday in Ireland with my mother and sister, Rowan, he was admitted to hospital for surgery for bowel cancer. He suffered an aortic embolism and never regained consciousness after the operation. He died on the night of the infamous “Toxteth Riots” – 3rd July 1981 – having failed to achieve his ambition to live to the age of 100

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## Rootes Family of Eastbourne

Contributed by: Donald Selmes

As we are all members of Family Roots in Eastbourne I thought I would write a few words about the Rootes Family from Eastbourne, the one pre-Victorian Roots family I have found in the town and their unusual use of the Christian name Dedicote. This was the family of Thomas Rootes and Grace Ward who married in Friston on 7th October 1696 with an Archdeaconry of Lewes marriage licence issued the previous day. They were both said to be from Eastbourne.

The first we see of the family in Eastbourne is the christening of Eliza daughter of Thomas and Grace on 15th August 1697 and this is closely followed on 21st August by the burial of a child of Thomas Rootes, presumably Eliza. Then a new Thomas is christened on 7th July 1698, Jane 15th December 1701, Mary 4th April 1703 (she was buried 24th April), son Dedicote on 19th April 1704 (buried 21st April), another Dedicote 15th January 1705/6 (buried 16th January), Richard 5th January 1706/7 (buried 8th January), Mary March 26th 1707/08 (buried March 28th), William 28th February 1708/09 (buried 1st March), George May 5th 1710 (buried May 17th), Mary 31st March 1712 (buried 1st April), and finally John 24th June 1713.

It is only against the burial of the first Dedicote that the registers suggest that this was no normal peasant family as the writing says “Dedicote son

of Mr Thomas Rootes and Grace his wife” which clearly means that Thomas was a gentleman. The only three children who made it past a few months old were Thomas, Jane and John. Even the well-to-do could lose 75% of their children due to child mortality in those days.

Thomas Rootes had been born in Fletching to Thomas Roots and his wife Elizabeth in 1676 - Thomas Roots and Elizabeth Dedicot (or Didicot) who had Banns read at Lewes St Michael. He was described as of Horsted Keynes, Gent son of Thomas Gent, she as a spinster of Ripe, and they married in Laughton on 1st July 1658. Although she was from Ripe at the time she was not born there and Dedicot is not a Sussex name – there is more evidence of it at that time in Shropshire. The elder Thomas had married Mary Bennett in Bolney on 2nd December 1620, he being a gent of Newick and she a spinster of Bolney. (Sponsors: Thomas Rootes; Jn ROOTES Maresfield gent) so this was definitely a family of gentlefolk. The use of the first name of Dedicott in Eastbourne is therefore following the, not entirely rare, habit of naming children after the mother’s surname. The first use of Dedicott was by Thomas and Elizabeth in Fletching who had a son of that name christened there on 9th March 1674. This one appeared to have had no children and died in Fletching in 1716.

The name of Dedicote does not seem to have been an auspicious one – apart from the two who were born and died in Eastbourne, two of Elizabeth Dedicot’s daughters also had sons with varying spellings of that

name. Mary Rootes had married a John Harmer and they had a son Dedicot Harmer who was born in Ardingly in 1709 and buried there in 1711. Her sister Elizabeth married a John Newnham and they had a son Dedicote who was christened and buried in Ardingly in 1708.

The Rootes family didn't stay in Eastbourne and had moved back to Fletching by the time Grace died and was buried there on 15th February 1720 and later moved on to Northiam where Thomas died in 1754. Their son Thomas was an apothecary in Battle when he married Mary Sivier on 8th May 1720. Thomas and Mary had the final Dedicot who was christened in Rye on November 2nd 1720 after which they moved to Northiam and had two further sons Thomas and John.

The last Dedicot (or Dedycourt when he married and was buried) married Elizabeth Noakes in 1742 in Northiam and was the only one who had children – Jane in 1742, Sivyer in 1746 (bit of a theme here using his mother's surname as a Christian name) and yet another Thomas in 1749. This Dedycourt died in Northiam in 1790 making him at 70 years old the longest-lived one. We have a grand total of six Dedicots who between them managed only 114 years, giving an average life of 19 years.

His daughter Jane went on to marry into an extended branch of my own family when she married Solomon Selmes in Northiam on 29th October 1777. Also of interest is that there was a baseborn son called Solomon born to Solomon Selmes and Mary Rootes christened in Northiam on 7th

July 1777 so it was an interestingly busy time for Solomon that year.

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## **THAT’S THE SPIRIT!**

Contributed by: John Crane.

On 17th November 1770, a certain Mr Roots, who had been Mayor of Maidstone was buried in that town. The Sussex Weekly Advertiser recorded that “his wish was to have his body washed in rum and two gallons of rum to be poured into his coffin” and that this wish was carried out.

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## **Bessie’s Diaries – A Lifetime in Eastbourne**

### **Speaker: Kevin Gordon**

Family Roots meeting on Zoom – Thursday, 1st December 2022

By Jenny Wootton

Kevin Gordon, well-known local author and member of Family Roots, was our speaker in December. His grandmother, Bessie Roberts, became very popular in 2021 when he published extracts from her diaries on Facebook, much loved by many who followed her story every day.

Kevin related that he came to give a talk to Family Roots in the 1990s and afterwards Phyl Webb, secretary and founder member of the society, approached and said she had his great-grandfather Ebenezer’s family Bible. Ebenezer’s daughter Bessie died in 1994, and Kevin

inherited her huge collection of diaries, photographs, Common Place Books and family memorabilia.

Kevin started by introducing his family tree: Bessie's parents were Ebenezer and Bessie Roberts. She married Alexander Gordon in 1928 and they had two children, Sheila and Roger (Kevin's dad). On 30 July 1934 the family moved into 8 Annington Road, Eastbourne, where Bessie lived for the rest of her life. Alex's parents were Fred and Hannah Gordon and they lived in Channel View Road. Alex had a brother Reggie, who Bessie often mentions in her diaries and had a love-hate relationship with, and also Dorothy, Dolly and Fred.

Bessie was born on 16 April 1901 in Taddington Road, Eastbourne and she was baptised Bessie Victoria. Her father was Ebenezer Roberts and her mother was Bessie Bennett. They were married in 1894. On the 1881 census, when Ebenezer was 13 he was shown as driver of a goat chaise in Eastbourne. He had also been a greengrocer, a postman, a bath chair man, but his main occupation was painter and decorator. He also did thatching work at the Redoubt. Bessie's father was a member of the Eastbourne Odd Fellows, he was also very active in the Eastbourne Bonfire Society.

Bessie went to Christ Church School, Seaside, and then went on to Willowfield School. She was well educated and loved books. She was also good at drawing and loved to illustrate her diaries with flowers and





scenes of everyday life. She kept a diary for most of her life, together with her “Common Place Books”, and many of the entries give very detailed descriptions of life around her. Bessie was very observant and loved talking to people and wrote down a lot of what she saw or events that happened in the town.

At the age of 10 Bessie befriended a girl named Honor Faux Upshier, who was four years old, and they would often walk together round town or go to the beach. Honor’s father was in bed all the time because he had been bitten by a lion, which seemed a very far-fetched tale as they lived in Eastbourne, and her mother was the niece of Joseph Paxton, the builder of the Crystal Palace. Bessie gave a detailed description of Mrs Faux Upshier in her diary and of this rather eccentric family who she remained friendly with all their lives. Kevin looked up the Upshiers on the 1911 census and found out that Honor’s father was a South African big game hunter (retired), so he probably was bitten by a lion.

Kevin’s grandmother recorded everything in her diaries and common place books and he has inherited an amazing archive. She even wrote down her prayers and Kevin read one out that she had written as a thoughtful 16 year old. He also has hundreds of photographs taken by

Bessie as she was a keen photographer. Her common place books were more like scrap books where she glued in items on a day to day basis – photographs, tickets, programmes etc. She loved photography and many of her photographs were taken of everyday life in her family, such as her father Ebenezer reading the newspaper indoors in 1924 and one of herself cooking in the kitchen. Bessie often did not record names or details on the back of her photographs. Kevin has done research to identify many of them and related the background of some of them in his talk, such as the visit of Shackleton’s ship to Eastbourne before it set sail for Antarctica; the ship ‘Sitakund’ on fire off Eastbourne beach, and photos from the Eastbourne carnival processions.

Bessie left school at 14 and started working at the Saxon Garage in Seaside, but when she was 17 she became secretary at the Howard Pneumatic Engineering Company in Fort Road and obviously had a happy time working there, as she often mentions them in her diaries. She met Alexander Gordon who also worked there as a packer. Alex had been severely injured in the Great War when he was in the Royal Marines and took part in the Zeebrugge raid in 1918. His ship was bombed as they were waiting to land and he lost a leg and badly injured the other leg. He was one of only seven men who survived from that ship. He was fitted with an artificial leg and joined the British Limbless Ex-Service Men’s Association (BLESMA). Alex died in 1978.

Bessie loved swimming in the sea and had a favourite beach, the second breakwater east of the Redoubt, where she would go swimming all through her life. Kevin read Bessie's entry of a lovely swim when she was aged 73, where she describes the scene in such beautiful detail it was easy to picture her on the beach on that clear sunny day.

Another of Bessie's loves was transport, especially the railway. She was taken on her first train journey to London at the age of eight and in later life would sit on the railway bridge at Whitley Road knitting and watching the steam trains go by. She also loved exploring and visiting local pubs, especially The Eagle and The Lamb in Eastbourne. Her main hobby was photography. She owned a Box Brownie and she joined the Eastbourne Photographic Club.

Bessie and Alex had a cat named Suki and a tortoise named Walter, who often appear in her diary entries. She was a great lover of animals and could not abide cruelty to any animal. She was a member of the British Union Against Vivisection (BUVA). She was a regular churchgoer and worshipped at the Cavendish Place Chapel, but she also took an interest in other forms of religion.

Bessie loved the countryside, and often visited her daughter Sheila in the pretty village of Jevington. In later life she enjoyed nothing better than being taken on a long drive by Roger or one of her grandsons through the country villages of Sussex, describing the route and whether

they stopped for tea.

Bessie was a great observer of everyday, often giving detailed descriptions of people she met, but never in an unkind way. She recorded the price of things she bought, what she made for her dinner, and what the weather was like on that day. Fascinating little details that really give a picture of life at that time.

## **The Wedding Detectives.**

**Speakers: Charlotte Sibtain & Cole Moreton**

**Family Roots meeting on Zoom –**

Thursday, 2nd February 2023

By: Jenny Wootton.

Charlotte Sibtain and Cole Moreton were the two presenters on the Radio 4 programme “The Wedding Detectives”, produced by Jonathan Mayo, a trio of history-loving people who became detectives in tracing the families of discarded wedding photographs.

Charlotte Sibtain started collecting wedding photos from the 1950s many years ago when she found an abandoned box of them in the Lanes in Brighton. She wondered why photos of such a special day in someone’s lives had been just thrown away. Who were they? Where did they marry? Have they divorced or died? As her collection grew she began to piece together some of the stories, where names or dates had

been written on the photos, and started posting some of the pictures on Instagram. This soon generated some interest, and more people got involved, which led to Charlotte being introduced to Cole and Jonathan, who had been making radio programmes together, and “The Wedding Detectives” was born. They wanted to tell the stories of the ordinary people behind the photographs. Every programme began with a photograph or an album from over 400 in Charlotte’s collection.

The first couple Charlotte told us about was Kathleen Young and George Sewell, who were married on 4 June 1952. She had found their wedding album, which contained all the information she would need to research the family, including telegrams, letters, receipts from the honeymoon. George was an amateur film-maker, an interested that started after watching silent movies during WW1 while based in the trenches. He went on to become a film producer.

Charlotte explained the process she used to find out where and when a couple might have been married if there was no documentary evidence. By close inspection of a photograph it was often possible to identify a location; the clothes people wore could indicate a period in fashion; the arrangement of a group in a photograph often gave clues as to when and where it was taken. She also used genealogical websites, newspaper articles and obituaries, which often gave a lot of background detail on a couple, and if she was able to get a copy of their marriage certificate this

also gave details of their families.

Cole liked to visit the places the couple would have known – where they lived, the church where they were married, to get a sense of the location they came from. He also liked to talk to people who knew the couple, to piece together their lives.

The next couple they told us about was Sonia and Tim Bryant, whose scandalous story featured in episode 1 of “The Wedding Detectives”. They were married in St Peter’s church, Eaton Square in 1956, and Sonia was given away by Paull, a Cornish soldier from Penzance. Sonia Paynter was a socialite from the West Country, where the family had lived since the 1700s and whose home became notorious in the 1900s for its parties for the rich and famous, when many celebrities would visit. Sonia’s mother Betty was a lively teenager in the 1920s who had a romance with Marconi. The Cornish spelling of the double ‘ll’ in the name Paull enabled Charlotte to trace the correct family. The couple claimed to come from very wealthy families, but neither was who they claimed to be. The lavish wedding left them broke and the marriage was over within a year. This one photograph led to a tale of a love affair, scandals, links with Lawrence of Arabia, murder, and suicide.

The next wedding couple were Brian and Jean Staddon and Charlotte had their whole wedding album, which gave some key details in the front cover. She had fond memories of this couple, who were married in

Windsor on 19 September 1959. Brian lived in Slough and Jean lived near Windsor Castle where her dad was a bricklayer. They met out walking in Windsor and had been together ever since. Cole found Brian's death notice in the local paper and the solicitor's notice asking for family for his estate. He managed to contact Brian's good friends Philip and Maureen who were able to tell him a lot about them. Brian and Jean had no family, but Philip and Maureen were as close to them as family, and they told a moving story about them that would not otherwise have been known. Jean died of cancer in 2015 and Brian two years later.

Jonathan Mayo had found a wedding photograph of Bill and Eileen Cunnington who married in 1939 in a church called the Round Chapel, Bill was in RAF uniform as it was taken just as the war started. Cole used to go to church in London and knew the Round Chapel well, where he said many objectors to the war used to worship. Bill was killed within a year of marrying Eileen when flying his Hurricane plane near Malta. Eileen died from a serious illness in 1945 and is buried in Hove cemetery. Cole tracked down a niece of Eileen in Essex, also named Eileen, who was able to tell him of the intense love affair between Bill and Eileen, which he found a very moving story. She had her aunt's engagement ring. All episodes from both series of "The Wedding Detectives" are still available to listen to on BBC Sounds, and episode 1 in Series 2 has some local contact interest.

## **More on my DNA Journey**

By: John Titmuss

In my editorial for November 2022 I said I had done a DNA test with Ancestry but, did not know how to identify who was parent 1 and parent 2.

As I was more interested in my maternal side I decided to split my tree which I did and produced a GEDCOM file, I uploaded the file to Ancestry and My Heritage.

A few weeks later I was getting matches from all over the place, Ancestry shows who you have DNA matches with also you can see how they are related, also any common ancestors.

Selecting a couple of names I did not recognise but with common ancestors that were in my tree showed up as being on my maternal side; so I now know parent 1 is my mother's side.

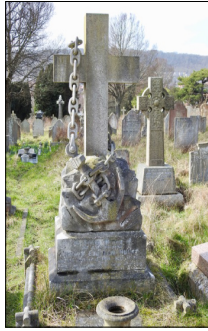
I have been in touch with two second cousins and found through Facebook a cousin I had lost contact with when her husband passed away four years ago.

As the weeks go by more matches will come through when new DNA is uploaded to Ancestry or Find My Past..



## Henry Coleman Hurst

Contributed by: Kevin Gordon



Symbolism on gravestones is often lost. In coastal Eastbourne we would expect a grave swathed with a large chain and anchor to represent the sea, maybe a fisherman or lifeboatman, but Henry Coleman Hurst was neither. He was one of the Hurst family who had arrived in Eastbourne at the time of the Civil War and who made their money from brewing and milling. Henry was not only the proprietor of the Hurst Mill (also known as St John's Mill) but also ran the Upperton Steam Laundry.

In 1888 Henry successfully campaigned to become a councillor, representing the St Mary's Ward of Old Town, Eastbourne. The following year he married Elizabeth Stapley of Annington, West Sussex. The couple had their wedding breakfast in Annington House and in the evening treated the local farm workers to a meal in their honour. There was later an evening wedding dinner at the family pub – The Hurst Arms in Willingdon Road, Eastbourne.

Henry was a devout worshipper at St Mary's Parish Church. The

Reverend Walter Budgen, in his 1912 book 'Old Eastbourne' describes him as 'diligent in business, fervent in spirit and held in high esteem by the Vicar and parishioners'. He became a churchwarden in 1896.

Henry Hurst died of scarlet fever aged just 37 years on 15th January 1898. His last act at St Mary's church was to buy a new Union Flag for the tower and this was to fly at half-mast until his funeral at Ocklynge Cemetery. Hundreds of people attended the funeral and the grave was covered with floral tributes. Although there was already a Hurst Road in Eastbourne, within a few months of his death 'Annington Road' was laid down off Whitley Road.

In November 1898 a stained glass window dedicated to Henry was installed in the north wall of the parish church. (it is just to the left of the north door leading to the parsonage). The window represents Faith, Hope and Charity and it is notable that 'Hope' is holding a large anchor. The window was paid for by Henry's father, Edward Hurst

But what of that huge anchor on the grave? Apparently every Christmas the vicar of St Mary's would give the churchwardens a small heart, cross and anchor to show that they were anchored together by the love of their faith. At least one of the floral tributes left on the grave was in the shape of an anchor.

Although an anchor is of course a symbol of a seafarer, the anchor also represents one who was 'anchored to their faith'.

## Transcription Of An Article

APPEARING ON PAGE 4 OF THE EASTBOURNE GAZETTE ON  
20 AUGUST 1862.

Contributed by: John Crane.

### *INTERESTING MARRIAGE AT BRIGHTON*

A marriage has been performed at the parish church in Brighton, to unite a lady and gentleman of colour, whose previous history gives to the ceremony peculiar interest, chiefly to those who have been so long and so deeply interested in the African race, and who have watched the progress of civilisation, caused by the influence of Christianity on the negro; and the ceremony will also tell our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic that British ladies and gentlemen consider it a pleasure and a privilege to do honour to those of the African race, who have proved themselves capable of appreciating the advantages of a liberal education.

The lady, supposed to be an African chieftain's daughter, was presented, when about the age of five years, to the late Captain Frederick Forbes, R.N., who officially visited the King of Dahomey, with a view to aid the suppression of the slave trade in the interior of Africa, and in his book giving an account of the mission he thus describes the little girl: - "I have only to add a few particulars about my extraordinary present, the 'African child'. In the former portion of these journals I have mentioned

that the Okeaden war; one of the captives of this dreadful slave-hunt was this interesting girl. It is usual to reserve the best born of all the high behests of royalty and the immolation on the tombs of the deceased nobility. For one of these ends she had been detained at Court for two years; proving, by her not having been sold to the slave-dealers, that she was of good family. So extraordinary a present would have been at least a burden, had I not the conviction that, in consideration of the nature of the service I had performed, the Government would consider her as the property of the Crown. To refuse would have been to have signed her death-warrant, which, probably, would have been carried into execution forthwith. Immediately on arriving I applied through the Secretary of the Admiralty, and received for answer that her Majesty was graciously pleased to arrange for the education and subsequent fate of the child. Of her own history, she has only a confused idea. Her parents were decapitated; her brothers and sisters, she does not what their fate might have been. For her age, supposed to be eight years, she is a perfect genius; she now speaks English well and has a great talent and music. She has won the affections, with but few exceptions, of all who have known her by her docile and amiable conduct, which nothing can exceed. She is a far in advance of any white child of her age in aptness of learning and strength of mind and affection, and with her, being excellent specimen of the negro race, might be tested the capability of the intellect

of the black, it being generally and erroneously supposed that after certain age the intellect becomes impaired, and the pursuit of knowledge impossible – that, though the negro child may be clever, the adult will be dull and stupid. Her head is considered so excellent a phrenological specimen and illustrating such high intellect that M. Pistrucci, the medallist to the Mint, has undertaken to take a bust of her, intending to present a cast to the author. Her mind has received a moral and religious impression, and she was baptised, according to the rights of the Protestant church, Sarah Forbes Bonetta.

Her Most Gracious Majesty has provided the means for completing the education of Miss Sarah Forbes Bonetta, whose knowledge and punishments make her an ornament for any society and prove most satisfactorily that the African mind is capable of the highest intellectual attainments. Her Majesty has taken a great interest in her marriage and given it her full sanction. At the same time, she has, besides presents from the Royal family, herself provided the whole of the outfit etc.

Mr James Davies, the bridegroom, was originally a slave, taken by one of our cruisers, and educated in the schools of the Church missionary Society and Sierra Leone, and showing himself to possess great talents, and capable of profiting by education was, with sanction of the Admiralty, placed in an official capacity upon one of her Majesty's ships under the care of Captain Coote, RN and proved himself so useful and willing as to

gain the good wishes and opinions of both officers and men. He afterwards commenced trading on his own account, and is now a prosperous and influential merchant at Lagos, employing upwards of 100 on his fellow countryman, and trying to approve their moral and intellectual status.

The particulars of the ceremony will doubtless be read with interest. First there entered for bridesmaids – ladies of colour – apparelled in white dresses, with red ribbon trimming extending around the neck and across the chest; a broad sash of the same coloured material being fastened about the waist, long streaming ends reaching almost to the ground, white tartan opera cloaks were thrown over their shoulders, and their heads were encircled with bonnets of tuile of the purest white, and the latest fashion; the caps being formed by of blonde, interspersed with apple blossom. In these, all interest was centred, until a few minutes later for fair bridesmaids entered the sacred edifice, two of whom were attired similar to their sister – African – bridesmaids, whilst the other two wore “forget-me-nots” in their bonnets, and their white dresses were trimmed with blue ribbon, with sashes to match.

The next party that arrived included the bridegroom, and five coloured groomsmen. Then followed six fair young ladies varying from about twelve to six years of age, also bridesmaids. These, too, will also dressed in white, with white Tuscan hats trimmed – two with apple-blossoms and

four with “forget-me-nots” with white lace streamers hanging tastefully down their backs. For English bridegrooms and one coloured gentleman concluded the party, with the exception of numerous friends.

The excitement then became intense – all that was wanting was the bride. Some few minutes elapsed, all eyes been rivetted on the door. At length a cheer and clapping of hands from the hundreds without the building announced her arrival. Steadfastly was she scanned from head to foot. She was robed in pure white. Her dress was a glace, silk, the trimmings being of the same material. A wreath of orange blossoms encircled her brow, and a veil of white lace hung tastefully from it over her shoulder and bosom. She was met at the door by the bridegroom, and appeared considerably nervous, the incessant throbbing of her deeply-coloured breast, being very perceptible through her thin garments. Of her personal qualities, we may safely say she is one of the prettiest coloured ladies we ever beheld.

The entire length of the nave of the church was crammed with people, anxious to obtain a glimpse of the ceremony. The right Rev the Lord Bishop of Sierra Leone, assisted by the Rev Henry Venn – performed the service, which was strictly in adherence to the form of the Church of England. Captain Forbes RN, father of the late Captain Forbes, who brought Miss Bonetta to England, gave away the bride. The ceremony lasted about three quarters of an hour, when, the registry having been

signed, the happy couple and the bridal party left the church, being lustily cheered on their exit by the populace, which had assembled in hundreds at the vestry door. A merry peal of the church bells added much to the cheerfulness of the scene at the conclusion of the ceremony.

NOTES:- Marriage registered Brighton Sept 1862 Qr vol 2B, 280.

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## ORPHAN CERTIFICATES

We have some certificates that are no longer required. They are pre-owned but in good condition, the cost is £2.00 + P&P.

You can see the certificates we hold by either looking in the February 2022 magazine for births, May 2022 for marriages and August 2022 for deaths. Or in the ‘Orphan Certificates ‘ section of our website

**Birth.** ROSE Selina Camden Town 1843

**Marriage** LANGDEN / ROSE St. Pancras 1863

We also have one will.

CARTER Henry Charles died in Weston Super Mare formerly of East Putney. Date of death 7<sup>th</sup> January 1929.



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# MAP OF "DISTRICT"

Showing parishes for "Family Roots" local research.



Map reproduced by kind permission of East Sussex County Record Office.

Alciston \* Alfriston \* Arlington \* Berwick \* Bishopstone  
\*Chalvington \* Chiddingly \* Dallington \* East Blatchington  
\*East Dean \* East Hoathly \* Eastbourne \* Folkington  
\*Friston \* Glynde \* Hailsham \* Heathfield \* Hellingly\*  
Herstmonceux \* Hooe \* Jevington \* Laughton \* Litlington  
\*Lullington \* Ninfield \* Pevensey \* Ringmer \*Ripe\*  
Seaford\*Selmeston\* Warbleton \* Wartling \*Westdean \*  
West Firle \*Westham \* Willingdon \* Wilmington

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The following titles are obtainable from:

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