



NEWSLETTER

No. 172
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The first recorded expenditure on the 14th-century manorial barn at Kingsbury, St Michael's was by John Moote, abbot of St Albans from 1396 to 1401. More than six centuries later I am delighted to report that one of our members and her husband have paid for the barn to be transformed from its dilapidated state into a

magnificent monument to local mediaeval timber craftsmanship.

Adam and Jill Singer, who live in Kingsbury Manor, bought the listed Grade II* barn in 2007 from the developers of the site in Branch Road formerly occupied by Express Dairy. The barn is once again part of the Kingsbury Manor site. Before work could begin, its owners had to obtain a licence from English Nature for the temporary exclusion of bats. Although work could have started in

October 2007, the bats' life cycle and a delay in the issue of a licence allowed pigeons to continue their depredations until work began in October 2008.

The owners decided early on to replace as little of the original fabric as possible. Seasoned oak was inserted into rotting joints and beams. The failed weather-boarding was replaced using untreated elm (ironically from Holland) fixed with traditional rose-head nails. Re-roofing was necessary because the tiles had been re-fixed using nails that had corroded so much that very few tiles could be re-used. New hand-made tiles were attached to riven oak battens by 60,000 hand-made oak pegs. The size of the holes in the tiles varied, sometimes within one tile, so the pegs had to be of different sizes to match. The oak pegs, riven battens and undersides of the tiles remain visible from the inside. An attempt has been made to reproduce the original fragmented pattern in the roof using the remaining original tiles on the east gable which is visible to the public from Branch Road.



The barn under wraps during the renovation work, and revealed in its new state. Left, Roger Miles and members of the Archaeology Group have been surveying the barn and Roger recently led A&A members on a tour of the renovations

The work was overseen by Oxley Conservation (www.oxleyconservation.com) and the builders were IJP (www.ijp.co.uk), specialist timber workers who showed great attention to detail and an enthusiasm for the original fabric. All the strapping and ironwork was cleaned and restored. The great barn doors had to be remade, but internal doors were conserved. The window openings on the north elevation have new oak shutters because the old ones were decayed. The owners are particularly grateful to Roger Miles and his colleagues of the

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***A new
name
for our
Society?
see page 2***

Society's Archaeology Group for making a meticulous survey of the barn which will add greatly to our understanding of its development.

Adam and Jill had no financial help with the conservation of the barn, but they are delighted with the way the work has been carried out and very pleased to have revealed the barn's stunning internal structure and its external appearance. They found a serious anomaly in the VAT rules: for a nationally listed building VAT is payable on conservation work, but not on new work, such as extensions. This seems to go against common sense and sends the wrong message to anyone thinking of conserving an existing building.

The owners are making plans to secure the barn's future. They will be interested to hear from anyone who has an idea for some sort of ongoing use by the community. Adam and Jill's achievement is highly commendable and a great contribution to the fabric of our City. I hope that members of the Society will come up with some imaginative ideas for making use of it. Please contact Adam and Jill by mail (Kingsbury Manor, St Michaels, St Albans AL3 4SE), by email at oxhey@oxhey.demon.co.uk, or by telephone (01727 838965).

Michael Cooper

PROPOSED CHANGE OF SOCIETY NAME

As we all know, our Society was founded back in 1845 with the original name of the St Albans Architectural Society, which largely reflected its members' interest in, for example, the preservation of the Abbey. The name, however, seems to have caused some dissatisfaction even in our early years, so that only five years later the name was changed to include 'archaeology'.

In the following half century, it became clear that even this was not adequate, as 'St Albans' was in fact thought originally to refer to the archdeaconry (then under the diocese of Rochester) rather than the city. Matters were rather brought to a head by the establishment of the new diocese and then that of local government under Hertfordshire County Council, with the result that the name changed again to St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society.

Over the intervening years there have been more misgivings over the accuracy of the title. At an AGM several years ago, it was suggested from the floor that 'history' should be included, but it was felt that such a potentially momentous change should have a far greater consideration than could be given during that short meeting, and the matter was referred to Council. However, Council could not come to any positive decision (apart from rejecting the proposed 'Historia'), and so it was rather left for a decision to be made at another time, at some unknown date in the future.

After much discussion, your Council (on a decision of eight votes in favour, none against and four abstentions) has decided to propose to our membership that the name

of our Society should be changed to **The St Albans and Hertfordshire History Society**, for the following reasons:

- Our current name no longer expresses the main interests of our members. Indeed, as long ago as 1863, a lecturer apologised for giving us a paper that was neither architectural nor archaeological.
- Our name should represent what its members do in order to meet its constitutional objectives and to attract new members
- Our present name is far too unwieldy.
- Our proposed new name is a more accurate reflection of our interests and will help us move forward into the 21st century.

The change will be proposed at our Annual General Meeting on 8th September, 7.30 p.m. at Verulamium Museum, where there will be further discussion and a firm decision on this most important matter. **So do come to the AGM and state your views.**

Members now have more than three months to consider and discuss this proposal from Council. To help inform the debate we are inviting members to send their views and comments in advance to our Secretary Bryan Hanlon by email or post (contact details on page 12). Extracts from correspondence received will be circulated to all members with other paperwork in advance of the AGM.

Bryan Hanlon
Secretary

HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY NEEDS YOUR HELP!

The *Hertfordshire Archaeology and History* journal needs volunteers to help with the distribution and marketing of this professional publication and journal of record for the County. In particular we need help with the maintenance of institutional and ordinary subscriptions and the distribution and billing of the journal to subscribers and members of the Society. All

records are computerised and the time involved is approximately 2 hours per month.

We also need one or more volunteers to maintain the non-subscription outlets for the Journal including booksellers, museums, specialist venues and conferences. Someone with creative ideas about other markets for the Journal, including new ways to increase subscriptions, would

be most welcome. We are also seeking to encourage more submissions to the journal from archaeology and history oriented organisations. It may be possible to create a part-paid position for an experienced person in this role.

Please call or e-mail Prof Bill Martin, HA&H Journal Coordinator, 01442 395615, hertsarch@ntlworld.com

SUBSCRIPTION

REMINDER

By the time you receive this newsletter it will be nearly the end of the Society's financial year and this note is a reminder that subscriptions are due and payable on 1st June for the forthcoming financial year. The level of subscriptions currently in force is as follows:

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| Individual member | £12 |
| Spouse or partner of a member, living at the member's address | £6 |
| Children of a member under the age of 18, living at the member's address | £6 |
| Students who provide evidence that they are in full time further or higher education | £6 |
| Family membership | £21 |

Those of you who have direct debits in place do not need to do anything; your subscription will automatically be collected from your bank account on 1st June. If you are not yet signed up to the direct debit system, please reconsider whether you wish to do this. I highly recommended that you do so and you should complete the form sent out when the system was introduced, sign it and forward it to me. If you have mislaid your form I do have some spare which I can send to you if you call me on 07711 696 417.

For those who do not pay by direct debit, please send a cheque for your subscription to our membership secretary, Peter Jeffreys. If you still pay by standing order, please ensure that you have amended this with your bank to give the correct level of subscription with payment on the correct date, 1st June. Please also cancel all old standing orders as they will make payments of the wrong amount and at the wrong date and may lead to a double payment. This will lead to administrative problems for us both.

If you have any concerns you wish to discuss with me, please call me on the above number.

John Thomson

Treasurer

ST ALBANS CITY VISION: OUR RESPONSE

The following statement was approved by the Society's Council and sent by the President on 13 March 2009 to local organisations and individuals who are engaged in various ways with the formation of a long-term development strategy for St Albans. A further statement was approved by Council and sent in response to the exhibition of options for development held in April. The detailed master-plan is expected to be completed by September.

WHY HAVE A NEW MUSEUM OF ST ALBANS?

Any citizen who is aware of the history of St Albans is likely to be interested in the city and care for it. People who know something about the lives of others who walked the same streets as they do, whether they were rich or poor, youthful or elderly, newcomers or long-established, are likely to have a broader understanding of life here and now than people who have little knowledge of the past. The Society's vision is a museum that brings to citizens of all ages, ethnicities, religions and socio-economic classes an active interest in what we all share -- life today in a city with a long recorded history; but the present museum building in Hatfield Road is generally accepted as inadequate.

Urban Practitioners Ltd has been commissioned by St Albans City and District Council to produce a report for the Council's 20-year development strategy. We welcome this initiative, particularly at a time of economic recession when it is essential to have a clear vision of how St Albans should be developed. The Society's participation in the polls, surveys and workshops organised by Urban Practitioners has convinced us that a new museum should be a core element of the development strategy. The purpose and function of a new museum should be settled before deciding where it should be built. If the process is reversed, the outcome could be another inadequate building. The Society's vision of a new Museum of St Albans is set out below.

THE VISION

1. A landmark building in an attractive setting; designed by architectural competition to resonate with the history of St Albans; built using high quality materials; and worth visiting for its architectural importance.

2. The building houses a museum and other cultural resources which all sections of the population as well as tourists want to visit for entertainment, leisure and learning.
3. The building is equipped throughout with IT for performing, teaching and learning, with high-speed data transfer internally and externally.
4. It has a raked lecture theatre and flexible spaces inside and outside for an art gallery, exhibitions, workshops, performances, and meetings of local clubs and societies.
5. It has a public library of paper and digital records, access to the Society's collection, and facilities for secure storage of archives and artefacts.
6. A shop and café are open to the public whenever the building is in use, including evenings.
7. The building is promoted and widely accepted as a welcoming place to visit and stay for a while, as well as a centre for entertainment, meetings, learning, teaching and developing new skills.
8. The Society is a major stakeholder in the Museum. It co-operates with other organisations (such as Hertfordshire County Council, St Albans City and District Council, The University of Hertfordshire, local schools, societies and citizens' groups) to publicise the museum, contribute to events, mount exhibitions and make it an agreeable place for residents and tourists.
9. The Society continues its association with the Museum of St Albans which began when the first Museum of St Albans was conceived and built more than a hundred years ago.

LIBRARY NOTES AND QUERIES

The library team is delighted to welcome a new member, Elizabeth Gardner, who has a range of valuable experience and skills. Her first degree was in history, and she completed a doctorate in medieval history at Oxford, then working in the library, and as an editor, in a current affairs institute in London. Since she had her family she has worked in local schools, mainly with children with special educational needs. She has been a volunteer for more than ten years at the Museum of St Albans, organising and cataloguing the library, helping with enquiries and carrying out research. She has written a history of Marlborough Road Methodist Church, and was one of the authors of the recent book on Marshalswick House and its estate. She is currently working with museum staff on a history of Fleetville. The Arc & Arc is very fortunate to have Elizabeth's assistance in the work of its library. Elizabeth's first task has been to index a collection of some 600 35mm slides, mostly of local scenes, donated by Frank Kilvington.

The library team continue the long-term tasks of cataloguing books and pamphlets, and organising other library materials, dealing with enquiries, and talking to visitors, from whom we learn a good deal. Other volunteers have been sorting and indexing papers, and producing a single index to the *Transactions*, *Herts Archaeology*, and *Arc & Arc* publications since the 1850s.

Apropos the slide collection, the indexing has been done without the use of a slide viewer. If any member has a small battery-powered viewer for which they no longer have a use, and would be happy to donate it to the library, we would be very grateful.

Members who attended the visits to Kingsbury Barn, guided by Roger Miles (see page 1) (and members who missed them) may like to know of an article containing a description of the barn and its construction in *Herts Archaeology*, vol. 3 1973, pp134-138. The medieval aisled barns at Kingsbury Manor Farm, St Albans, and Croxley Hall Farm, by Stephen A Castle, includes a plan and section of Kingsbury barn, and a photograph of the original roof-tile pattern which is

followed in the current renovation and conservation project.

Books added recently to stock

A Redbourn commoner: a country life, by Geoff Webb. Stroud, Amberley Publications, 2008. 127pp, photographs. First published 1982. The author's family ran a dairy in Redbourn for over a hundred years.

The reign of King Henry VI, by R A Griffiths. Stroud, Sutton Publishing, 1981. 968pp, bibliogs, index.

John Monk of St Michael's: the life story of a St Albans Victorian, by John Everett. Oakley Press, 1989[?]. 42pp. John Monk, born 1802, died 1890, was a village bootmaker who also served the parish, in a variety of capacities. This memoir draws on records held in St Michael's parish chest.

The Peasants' Revolt: England's failed revolution of 1381, by Alastair Dunn. Stroud, Tempus Publishing, 2004. Includes an account of the revolt in St Albans, and its aftermath.

Recent Journal articles

In *British Archaeology*, Jan/Feb 2009

■ Pp 30-33, John Evans, by Susanne Bangert. The author is one of the initiators of the Ashmolean Museum's Sir John Evans Centenary Project, which has sorted, catalogued and re-housed his archive.

In *The Alban Link*, No 70, Spring 2009

■ Pp 4-9 Friends, ancient and modern, by Stephen de Silva. An account of the medieval fraternity of St Albans Abbey, drawing on the Book of Benefactors of St Albans Abbey, compiled about 1380.

■ Pp 10-14 The forgotten ceiling, by Michael Rose. The ceiling paintings in the Abbey choir, re-discovered in 1875, are described and interpreted.

■ Pp 16-20 The Caen connection of 1909, by Jean Payton. The Entente Cordiale of 1904 led to an association between St Albans and Caen. Mayor Arthur Faulkner was instrumental in arranging civic exchange visits in 1909 of dignitaries from each city.

In *Herts Past and Present* no 13, Spring 2009

■ Pp 3-10 Hertfordshire children and the First World War, by David Parker.

■ Pp 11-16 Paul Victor Edison Mauger, FRIBA (1896-1982): Quaker architect of Welwyn Garden City, by Oliver

Bradbury. Includes photographs of some of Mauger's buildings, and a list of his known work at Welwyn Garden City.

■ Pp 17-20 Arthur Sebright, a Victorian ne'er-do-well: the story of a Flamstead younger son, by Arthur Addington. Arthur Sebright was an aristocratic black sheep, involved in financial and marital scandals.

■ Pp 21-30 More hidden histories: new evidence relating to Hertfordshire and the slave trade, by Jill Barber. Hertfordshire people played a key part in the capture, enslavement, and transportation of people from west Africa. The role of eight families is described.

In *London Archaeologist* vol 12, no 4 Spring 2008

■ Pp 107-113 Red or yellow? The changing colour of London's roof-line, by Sophie Unger. Reports on an investigation of one of the rural suppliers of roof tiles for later Roman buildings in London. The yellow or orange-brown tiles were transported from Harrold in Bedfordshire.

Newly received journals

London Archaeologist Winter 2008/9

Landscape History vol 30 2008/9

Conservation Bulletin no 60 Spring 2009

Hertfordshire People no 108 March 2009

The Local Historian vol 39 no 1 February 2009

Local History News no 90 Winter 2009

British Archaeology no 106 May/June 2009

THE LIBRARY TEAM

Gill Harvey, 01727 853415

Anne Wares, 01727 860705

Donald Munro 01727 760808

Elizabeth Gardner 01727 861101

Tony Cooper 01727 865032

Or email via the Society's website, www.stalbanshistory.org

The library is open on Wednesday and Friday mornings from 10 a.m. to 12 noon in the former Judge's Robing Room at the Old Town Hall. Access is currently through the Tourist Information Office.

CLOCK TOWER REPORT

The Clock Tower re-opened for the season on Easter Friday 10th April, and will be open each weekend and Bank Holiday until Heritage Open Weekend, Sept. 12/13th. Easter began well, with plenty of visitors streaming in.

All the opening dates and times are on the SAHAAS website (Clock Tower page); we are responsible for the following dates:

Saturday/Sunday 30th/31st May
 Saturday/Sunday 13th/14th June
 Saturday/Sunday 27th/28th June
 Saturday/Sunday 11th/12th July
 Saturday/Sunday 25th/26th July
 Saturday/Sunday 8th/9th August
 Saturday/Sunday 22nd/23rd August
 Sunday 13th September

Now the season has started, the current rota moves around between respective Weekend Organisers and is frequently updated. So if you wish to volunteer for a session, the easiest way to sign up is to call into the Clock Tower on one of the above dates and write your name in to a convenient slot. Alternatively, contact me to ask who currently has the rota, and you can ring them.

I would like to welcome our four new clockateers this year, and two new Weekend Organisers - existing clockateers who kindly agreed to help.

Jill Bennett

Clock Tower Co-ordinator, Tel: 01727 867685. 29 Cornwall Rd, St Albans or e-mail: jill.bennett@waitrose.com

OBITUARY JOAN AUSTIN

A long time members, Joan died recently in St Albans at the age of 91 after a short illness. She was chairman of the Architecture and Local History group from 1975 to 1978, continued as Vice Chairman until 1981 and as a Committee member until 1990. During the 1980s she also served on Council. When the Society became 150 years old in 1995 an event was held in celebration and Joan attended on this occasion. Thanks to Graham Norman who supplied this information.

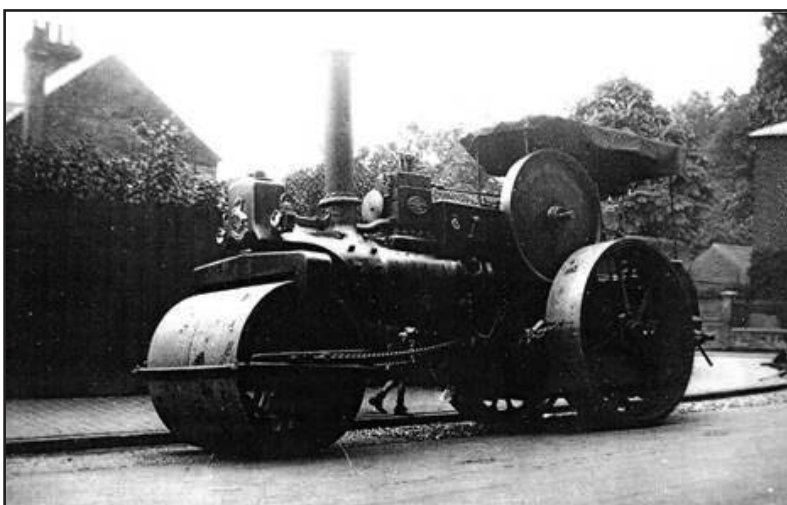
Doreen Bratby

ROLLER'S RETURN ...

Sold by St. Albans Corporation in 1958 for £25, their surviving 1913 10-ton Aveling & Porter steam road roller will be making a return to the City on Tuesday 26th May as part of the lead up to the following weekend's (May 30/31st) Steam and Country Show at Oaklands (Smallford site).

The roller will visit the Museum of St. Albans, Hatfield Road car park from 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm, then travel along St. Peter's Street and Victoria Street, pausing briefly for photographs at 96 Victoria Street (which was the Corporation yard where the roller was based until 1930) and then the Grimston Road depot adjacent to the City railway station.

This photo, dating from about 1920, shows the roller at work in St. Albans. Today it still proudly displays its original owner's plate.



HALH NEWS

This week we learned of the death of the distinguished local historian Lionel Mundy whose contributions throughout Hertfordshire will be remembered for many years to come. He was a former President of HALH. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Diana his wife and their family.

Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies launched their community archives project in Welwyn Garden City in March and received several offers of people willing to become involved. Two days later a similar presentation was held at Hertford and more people offered help with the setting up of the 'gateway' Hertfordshire memories website. In the autumn there will be further launches as new pilot projects come on stream.

HALH's summer event has attracted almost capacity interest for the Wheathampstead event and speakers are now being contracted for the 30th Symposium to be held at the British Schools Museum in Hitchin. Over £75,000 has been contributed towards an appeal to purchase the Delme Ratcliffe archives for HALS.

Planning has already begun for the usual events for 2010 - the Spring Lecture, Garden Party and Symposium.

John Cox

Arc & Arc Representative on HALH Committee

70 YEARS ON ...

VERULAMIUM MUSEUM CELEBRATES ITS 70TH BIRTHDAY

A brief report on papers presented at a conference at the University of Hertfordshire on 9th May 2009 to mark the 70th anniversary of Verulamium Museum.

Following a brief introduction by Emeritus Professor Martin Biddle, **Dr Isobel Thompson** spoke on 'putting the pre-Roman archaeology in its county-wide context'. She illustrated how the urban archaeological database (UAD) linked to a geographical information system (GIS) has given new insights into pre-Roman Hertfordshire. The roads linking the settlements were predominantly in a NE/SW direction, not N/S as was thought; in particular, an axis between iron-age sites in Folly Lane and King Harry Lane implies a processional way linked to a ritual site at Verlamion where the axis crosses the river. Details can be seen on the historic environment record (HER) at www.heritagegateway.org.uk

Dr David Neal is the author, with Stephen Cosh, of a beautifully illustrated scholarly book *Roman Mosaics in Britain*, published in four volumes by Oxbow Books for the Society of Antiquaries. David Neal drew on a life-time of study and meticulous recording to talk about 'the mosaics of Verulamium'. He pointed out that some mosaics were placed in anterooms with the intention that they would be viewed through portals in adjoining dining rooms. He also corrected a common misunderstanding about the dates of the mosaics in Verulamium; only seven of the 47 recorded date from the 4th century. This information was relevant to the conclusions of the subsequent speaker.

Dr Neil Faulkner's topic was 'Verulamium and the end of Roman Britain'. He began by citing three opinions on the last days of Verulamium as an inhabited city: Wheeler said it had 'some resemblance to a bombarded city' by the late 3rd or early 4th century; Shepherd Frere saw 'survival of active life well into the 5th century'; and Niblett found evidence of use of timber buildings until the late 4th or early 5th centuries. Faulkner then

showed histograms of data he had collected from more than 300 excavation reports which all showed a highly significant decline in the occupation of cities and villas after around 350 AD, evidence which does not contradict Neal's conclusion that very few mosaics in Verulamium were laid as late as the 4th century. Faulkner then spoke of the difficulties of finding good evidence of life in the aftermath of Roman Britain, a lack which encouraged him to make the 'highly speculative' suggestion that warlords appropriated *Romanitas* as a means to power and used timber with Roman masonry and bricks to build fortifications. Faulkner was, however, able to say that he was sure 'someone was doing something'.

Dr Stewart Bryant covered the period 400-1050 AD in Hertfordshire. He suggested that Beech Bottom Dyke was an extension in the NE direction of the ritual path discussed by Thompson in the first paper. He too stressed the difficulty of finding good archaeological evidence of settlements in early Anglo-Saxon Hertfordshire through ploughing and mainly ephemeral timber buildings. He turned instead to place names and landscape features for evidence. He found that there was a fall in the population of Hertfordshire between 400 and 750 AD. Although this conclusion is in accord with evidence presented by Neal and Faulkner, it raises the question 'Where did all the people go?'. Perhaps evidence that they remained more-or-less where they were has not yet been found. Bryant held out some hope that pollen analyses of the upper sequences of excavations could be useful (apparently interest has hitherto been mainly in the lower levels).

Professor Nigel Goose's topic was 'population, economy and society in St Albans 1300-1900'. He made it clear that speaking as a historian, not as an archaeologist, he found St

Albans to be well served by archaeology, but suffered from a lack of good historical research into its late mediaeval and early modern past. He said St Albans was at its peak as an important town in the early 16th century when it was by far the most populous centre in Hertfordshire and a nationally important town. Since then, it has undergone periods of alternate stagnation and slow decline. Trade brought by pilgrims declined, but was not replaced effectively by new activities. It remained a market town and staging post, a description justified by the book *St Albans 1650-1700; a thoroughfare town and its people*, published by our 17th-century research group in 2003.

Hertfordshire became a county of small towns, of which St Albans is one. Goose went on to describe a diversity of economic and social functions, with the straw-hat industry as the only dominant commercial activity. He said that, by 1900, St Albans had become a city of light industry and resources, but it was also a city of social contrasts.

The final presentation was by **Professor Martin Biddle** who spoke on the excavations at the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Albans and what has (and has not) been learnt from them. He began with a reference to St Jerome who recorded how the people of Ephesus went to the temple on the hill outside the town to worship, a practice that was found by archaeology in the 1940s to have been repeated in Bonn and other German cities. Could a Saxon church for the cult of the martyr Alban have stood on the site of a Roman cemetery above Verulamium? Martin and Birthe Biddle have made three excavations to the south of the Norman Abbey in St Albans in order to try to answer that question. They found evidence of a Roman cemetery, but only hints of a Saxon church have come from the excavations so far. Unable to excavate beneath the floor of the nave, the most likely place to

continued on the next page

investigate next lies further down the hill, south of the present Abbey. The date and place of Alban's execution have been much debated, but Biddle thinks that a date around 290 AD is likely and that it is highly improbable that the execution would have taken place in a cemetery. A more likely place is the Folly Lane site that Thompson suggested was of pre-Roman ritual importance.

In the final plenary session, your President asked the speakers for their views on whether a Society like ours in a time of rapid social, legal, economic and technological change could continue to contribute to solving some of the interesting local archaeological and historical problems that remain. Their

response was positive, with some specific ideas for members to participate in projects that are being planned. Please keep your eyes and ears open for further information.

Chris Green and the Museum staff are to be congratulated for the organisation and running of such an interesting conference. The speakers deserve the gratitude of everyone in the 100-plus audience for well-prepared lectures, authoritative deliveries and exceptionally careful timekeeping. If in my haste to meet the Society's Newsletter deadline I have misrepresented their views, I apologise and hope that they will let me know so I can make amends.

Michael Cooper

OXFORD, WITH OPTIONAL VISIT TO THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2009

Depart by coach at 9 a.m. prompt from Westminster Lodge Car Park. Leave Oxford at 4.30 p.m.

Standard tours cost £6 and last one hour. Book and pay in Oxford. Tours take place at 10.30, 11.30, 14.00 and 15.00 and visit Duke Humfrey's medieval library and the 17th century Convocation House and Court where Parliament was held in the Civil War.

Extended tours, which need to be pre-booked, take place at 11.30, 14.00 and possibly 15.00. State your preference. These cost £12 and last 90 minutes. You will see everything included in the standard tour, plus the Upper Reading Room, underground book stacks and the Radcliffe Camera.

Both tours apparently involve a large number of stairs and the Extended Tour especially includes some steep stairs and a substantial amount of walking.

BOOKING

The coach fare is £12 per person.

If you wish to do the extended tour please send a cheque for £24 per person. There is a limit on numbers, so bookings will be first-come first-served.

If you wish to do the standard tour send £12 per person and pay on the day in Oxford. No forward booking is available.

If you wish to just use the coach and make your own plans in Oxford the cost is also £12 per person.

Please state the names of the people for whom you are booking and which option you wish to take.

Cheques should be made payable to SAHAAS and sent to Gill Charles, 9 Tilsworth Walk, St Albans AL4 9JT. Please include an SAE so we can acknowledge your booking.

AND BRYAN WENT TO THE PARTY ...

Yes, our much loved Museum was 70 years old and on 8th May (70 years exactly to the day after its original official opening), the "great and good" of St Albans assembled to celebrate the occasion. We had speeches from Chris Green (of course), followed by the Mayor, Cllr Bert Pawle and then Lord (Tom) McNally. Our MP, Anne Main, was also in attendance.

After the drinks and nibbles - plus birthday cake! - we moved to the Hypocaust, where a new signboard illustrating the various insulae of the Roman city was unveiled, before we moved again to the London Gate where several of us tried out the new hand held "Veni Vidi Verulamium" mobile media tours. These were literally "hot off the press" (if that can happen with computers) - although I think it fair to say that one or two gremlins still need to be sorted out in the software!

All of this under a beautiful blue sky - what a nice way to spend an afternoon!

Bryan Hanlon

Other 2009 Outings

Tuesday 9th June

Evening visit and walk around Tring

This walk will be led by Pat Howe: contact her for more details and to book your place (contact details on page 12)

Tuesday 23rd June

All-day 'Church Crawl' by coach

To be led by Jane Kelsall. Currently fully booked. To be on the waiting list contact Gill Charles (01727 840860; gillcharles_1@hotmail.com; 9 Tilsworth Walk, St Albans AL4 9JT)

Thursday 16th July

Morning visit and walk around Old Amersham

Led by Jennifer Clark. For more details and to book a place contact Ray and Wendy Shaw (01582 832510; raywenshaw@yahoo.co.uk; Ivory Cottage, Rose Lane, Wheathampstead AL4 8RD)

Tuesday 4th August

Evening visit to Rothamsted

This walk will be led by Kate Morris: contact her for more details and to book your place (contact details on page 12)

THE FUTURE OF HISTORIC CITIES

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY 10TH HERITAGE SEMINAR

This was a 'high-powered' gathering of 70-80 academics and others. Apart from the Cambridge University staff (American, Danish, Greek, Sudanese and Swedish), we had speakers/attendees from (at least) Australia, Belgium, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sri Lanka and USA. These included the president of the International Society of City and Regional Planners, and representatives from the World Heritage Centre (UNESCO) and English Heritage.

The seminar's website stated: "The 10th Cambridge Heritage Seminar (CHS10) focuses on the preservation of historic cities and the built environment. It asks: how can cultural and natural landscapes be sustained in a rapidly globalising world? How can professionals involved in heritage practice deal with the challenges of modernity without the risk of losing cultural uniqueness and diversity?"

We therefore thought that we would gather some ideas on how we could help to preserve historic St Albans, although it is perhaps significant that St Albans, Edinburgh, Cambridge and Leicester were the only British historic towns represented: four of us from St Albans out of a probable maximum of 80 attendees! Whereas Arc & Arc representatives had expected some practical sessions on how to protect our historic heritage, the two days were really a succession of papers given by academics, for academics. You may, however, find the following points made of some interest (not in any particular order of priority).

- Importance must be given to the immaterial elements as it is often these where people find their quality of life
- CAD (Computer Aided Design) may help architects to design the most advanced buildings, but nothing can replace the imperative need actually to visit the site in question to appreciate its surroundings, sounds, smells etc.
- Many planners seem to be unaware of the historic environment in which they are operating.
- There is a British Standard that is far more helpful than its English Heritage equivalent when considering the interaction of heritage within the wider problems of the environment
- 'Heritage people' are usually brought into the equation far too late down the road of any development.
- There is apparently a UK National Planning Guideline concerning tall buildings within a town
- World Heritage Site status is not necessarily for ever: the Kathmandu Valley has lost its classification due to its failure to follow its own age-old principle of having no building taller than the home of the gods (i.e. the temple) and building right up to the historic site, rather than leaving it in its original special setting)
- The linking of monuments and green areas by pedestrian routes is considered to be a practical way of improving the historic environment: the case in the Athens archaeological park was presented
- People are attracted to a quality of life, not to romantic facades
- Heritage is both tangible and intangible - not just one or the other
- When protecting an historic site, it is important to consider not only whether this is desirable, but also whether it is feasible in a possibly changing future
- Since the urban buildings of today will be the heritage of tomorrow, every effort must be made to ensure they are of the highest quality (as per the Declaration of Amsterdam in 1970).
- The future of historic towns lies in the protection of what we have inherited from the past but also in the production of our own creative layer
- 90% of the remaining Aztec archaeology in Mexico City has been destroyed within the last 20 years
- Xian (the ancient capital of China, formerly known as Chang'an) has a 45 year master plan (from 2005 to 2050 to take the ancient city within the city walls back to a recreation of the city during the Tang dynasty of 1000 years ago
- In the UK local government has been left by national government with the responsibility of preserving the historic heritage, but not the capacity to carry out this task.

Bryan Hanlon

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome the following, and hope they will enjoy becoming involved with A&A activities.

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mr & Mrs Graham Appleby | Great Shelford |
| Mrs & Mrs Banfield-Taylor | Bricket Wood |
| Susan Bellamy | Robert Avenue, St Albans |
| Colin Donald | Marshal's Drive, St Albans |
| Jennifer Faldon | Bridle Close, St Albans |
| Mr & Mrs David Fletcher | Windmill Avenue, St Albans |
| Sandra Harper | Hemel Hempstead |
| Mrs J Halse and family | Deva Close, St Albans |
| Dr & Mrs BF Hutton | Harpenden |
| Teresa Jones | Highview Gardens, St Albans |
| Nicholas Mein | Avenue Road, St Albans |
| Mr & Mrs J Parks | Welwyn Garden City |
| Alison Metcalfe | Barncroft Way, St Albans |
| Rosalind Trent | Claudian Place, St Albans |
| Peter Wilson | Harpenden |
| Teresa Wood | Seymour Road, St Albans |

ENGLISH HERITAGE RESCUES HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

In May English Heritage announced that it would take ownership of Heritage Open Days, securing the future of the popular cultural event and reassuring one million participants and 35,000 volunteer organisers by guaranteeing that it will take place this year. English Heritage previously helped the Civic Trust to fund and operate Heritage Open Days, but concern had been raised over the event's future since the Civic Trust in England announced that it had gone into administration.

Heritage Open Days is England's biggest voluntary cultural event. More than 3,500 historic and unusual buildings – including many in St Albans and the surrounding area – open their doors to the public for free and put on tours and events during the second weekend in September. 90% of the population live within 30 minutes of a Heritage Open Days event.

Steven Bee, Director of Planning and Development at English Heritage, said: "English Heritage can reassure all those who like to take part in Heritage Open Days that it will happen this and every year – and we look forward to an excellent weekend of events on the 10th-13th September. Heritage Open Days is an important cultural event and we are very grateful for the continued support of all the volunteers across England, on which the success of the event depends."

Katja Condy, Heritage Open Days Manager, said: "When the news of the Civic Trust's demise broke a month ago, it came as a shock to thousands of volunteers across the country who were already gearing up for another celebration of their local heritage in September. It put a huge question mark over the future of the event. We are greatly relieved that the programme has found a new home and that we can now focus on making

the 15th edition of Heritage Open Days another success.

"We have been working very closely with English Heritage for many years, and they proved a friend when we needed them most. The transfer of Heritage Open Days to English Heritage will build on this long-established partnership. We see it as a fantastic opportunity for both England's largest grassroots heritage event and the Government's lead body for the historic environment."

No information is yet available about the future of the Civic Trust's other responsibilities.

For details of open buildings visit www.heritageopendays.org.uk

VISIT TO TYTTENHANGER HOUSE

Following in the footsteps of our predecessors, some 116 years ago when in June 1893 they drove from St Albans Town Hall through the 'leafy lanes' to Tyttenhanger House, a large party from the Society visited Tyttenhanger on 28th April. There are not too many lanes anymore, but the house, built in 1654, is very much still there, and we were taken round by Mr Paul Bonnington, son of the present owner.

First we had an opportunity to admire it from the outside, looking at the fine brickwork, and somewhat eccentric arrangement of windows, work of a bricklayer, rather than an established architect! We debated about the bricked-up windows - window tax or decoration?

We then moved inside for a welcome hot drink: early evening even on a fine April day can be chilly! We were able to look at part of the interior - much of the house is now given over to offices. We admired in particular the fine carved decoration on the staircase -- truly a notable feature -- the carved wooden door cases and the collection of portraits of previous owners, Popes, Freemans and Blounts. The chapel on the second floor is a very interesting feature, with its large two-decker pulpit, linenfold paneling --

The facade of the house and our host Paul Bonnington



presumably brought from an earlier house as there were several houses on the site before the present one -- and triptych of the Lords Prayer, Apostles Creed, and Ten Commandments.

A fascinating evening and thanks are due to the Bonningtons, and to the Bratbys for making the arrangements.

Gill Harvey

TUESDAY LECTURE REPORTS

On Tuesday 10th February our lecturer was Ann Dean, whose lecture on **the Church of St Michael: A Hidden Treasure** drew her usual packed audience. She described how the church was built over the pagan site and was one of the 'foundation' churches placed at the main accesses to St Albans for the many pilgrims to the Abbey. Its walls contain Roman tiles salvaged from the ruins of Verulamium and there are remains of Saxon windows. Inevitably, alterations were made over the centuries, such as the aisles added in the 12th century through to the energetic restorations of Lord Grimthorpe. However, St Michaels remains a charming little Hertfordshire church, full of interest, well displayed in Anne's excellent illustrations, and her lecture provided a most interesting and entertaining evening.

In March Christine Aitken gave a lecture on **Childwickbury**. She has a long association with the estate, where her father was farm manager. The name Childwickbury is thought to have come from 'dwellings by the well', and was one of the Abbey's many holdings. It has passed through a number of owners during its history, including Sir Geoffrey de Childwickbury in the 14th century, the Toulmins, Sir John Maple and the Joels, to name but a few. She described the amenities added through the years for the benefit of the tiny population. John Blundell Maple was a horse racing figure and established what was the largest stud in the country at the time. This activity was continued by the Joels and the stud (sold in 1993) is still in existence. Christine's lecture on this surviving

estate, close to St Albans and so well known to most of us, was very enjoyable and of much interest.

In what was to be our final lecture in April, David Pearce spoke on **Hertfordshire you may have missed**, illustrated by his own photos. He described some of the unusual features tucked away in our villages, mostly in East Herts. Hunsdon church spire was originally on St Albans Abbey tower, while at Clothall there are traces of a 15th century window from a leper hospital. The large number of puddingstones in Standon are thought to be part of a series of markers leading to the Neolithic flint mines at Grimes Graves. He also described the fine angel roof at Furneaux Pelham church and the lovely single angel at Braughing. David's talk provided many interesting examples of interest throughout the county and provided a very enjoyable evening.

A correction: In our previous issue we reported on '200 years of history at Ashwell', which should, of course, have been 2000 years, as our speaker referred to the prehistoric barrows and the iron age fort, as well as Roman remains near the village.

And a farewell. With our April lecture we see the demise of the Architecture and Local History Group, which passes its lecture responsibilities to the Programme Committee. The ALH Group, formed in the 1960s, has put together hundreds of talks and its officers deserve our thanks for their hard work.

Betty Ewens

AN APOLOGY

Some twenty or so of our members deserve a profound apology, for when they arrived at the lecture theatre on Tuesday 12th May, they found the lights etc in full operation, but no sign of lecturer or indeed any of our usual team.

The facts behind this rather sorry state of affairs are that the School informed us in early March that they were withdrawing availability of the lecture room and this was announced at all subsequent Tuesday and Friday lectures, withdrawn from the *Herts Ad* billboard, and promulgated via the website and email. (Gerard also told the Kings Langley Local History Society, in the hope that they could also inform their members). Unfortunately – perhaps inevitably – this message did not get through to those members who did not attend the March and April lectures or who are not in frequent contact with the wonders of “the web”. The School's other client then cancelled its booking, but this message was not passed on to us, or even to the caretaker who opened up the room.

That is the background. It does not, however, excuse the fact that no one was in attendance at the School in case members did arrive. For this, we offer our full apologies.

This occurrence has taught us a lesson in that, until we have – somehow — a means of contacting the entire membership should any similar occurrence happen in the future, then at least we must have a Society representative on hand to explain and apologise. We fervently hope, however, that this will not happen again!

Bryan Hanlon
Secretary

CURRENT SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Please contact me if you would like copies from our list at special prices for members of SAHAAS. Copies of books are usually available at Society events. If you are out of town I can quote you the cost of delivering copies.

Clare Ellis

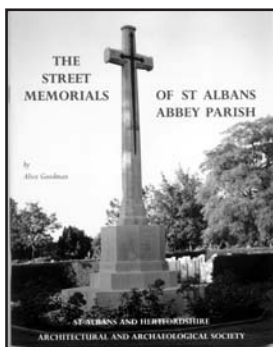
91 Sandpit Lane, St Albans AL1 4BJ. Tel 01727 856250 clare.a.ellis@btinternet.com

The Street Memorials of St Albans Abbey Parish

Alice Goodman, 1987

Describes St Albans during the 1914-18 War, and the unique street memorials erected to the fallen.

£4

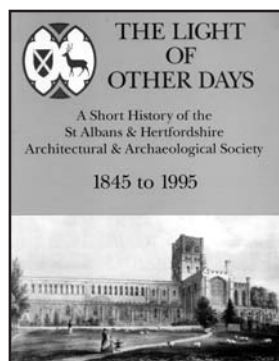
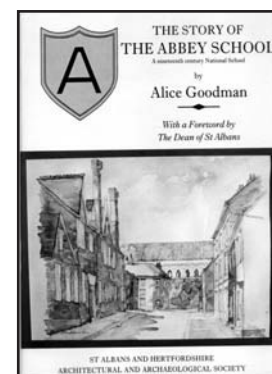


The Story of the Abbey School

Alice Goodman, 1991

History of the National School founded by the Abbey Parish in 1848.

£4



The Light of Other Days

Brian Moody, 1995

A short history of the Society's first 150 years.

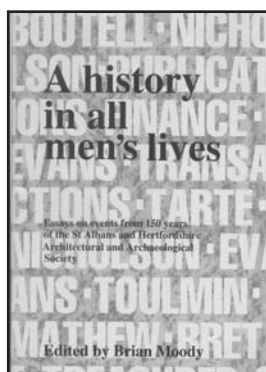
£1

A History in All Men's Lives

Ed. Brian Moody, 1999

Papers on notable past members of the Society and events from the first 150 years. Authors F Kilvington, R Busby, J Brodrick, B Moody, D Aubrey and J T Smith.

£2



St Albans 1553

by David Dean, Pat Howe, Betty Masters & Kate Morris, 2003

Celebrates the granting of a Charter to St Albans by the boy king Edward VI in 1553, and explains its importance in providing the foundations for our local government, establishing the Mayorality and authorising the town's markets.

£4

AVAILABLE AT WATERSTONE'S, ST ALBANS

St Albans 1650-1700, a thoroughfare town and its people

Ed. J T Smith & M A North, 2003

The result of twelve years of work by the Society's Research Group, with ten authors.

SOCIETY LECTURES 2008/9

Friday 29th May 2009

The Restoration of Kew Palace and Queen Charlotte's Cottage

Lee Prosser

Kew Palace is a jewel set in the Royal Botanic Gardens. It remains Britain's smallest royal residence, and was the place where King George III was sent to be shielded from the public eye, when the world considered him mad. The actual house was built in 1631, and is a rare survivor of a London merchant's residence. For ten years it was closed to the public before being the subject of a multi-million pound conservation project, which restored it to its former

glory. This talk charts some of the fascinating discoveries that were made, and the long road back to life.

Lee Prosser is Curator - Historic Buildings at Historic Royal Palaces, the charitable trust which cares for five of our most important royal residences: the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace, Kensington Palace, Kew Palace and the Banqueting House in Whitehall. He is an archaeologist by training, and was part of the team which led the restoration of Kew.

Details of the 2009-10 programme will be published in our September newsletter

Friday Lectures start at 7.45pm at the College of Law, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield Road Campus St Albans

Tuesday Lectures start at 8.00pm at St Albans Boys' School, Romeland, St Albans

They are open to all members of the Society. Non-members may attend two meetings as guests.

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