



ST ALBANS & HERTFORDSHIRE
ARCHITECTURAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 209 August 2018



Recognise this St Albans railway bridge? If not, see page 24 for the answer.
(Reproduced courtesy of Herefordshire Archive & Records Centre)

Included in this issue:

Finding a Papal Bull
Annual General Meeting
City Station's 150th birthday
New Museum + Gallery

Discovering Concealed Shoes
Alban City School Project
Society's Summer Social
Archaeology Conference

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Have you a minute?

Do you enjoy tracing family history? The Home Front Project collected a large amount of information about the city's residents at that time. Rather than lose all that information, we have formed the Biographies Project with the aim of better recording it.

We are entering our information on templates which will be accessible online and in the library. At present the information is in files of notes which need to be transcribed. There is no need to do any additional research unless you want to, just help transcribe what we have. Of course, there would be no objection to anyone's adding to what we already have! If you can help us, or want further information, please email me (Anne Wares) at homefront@stalbanhistory.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

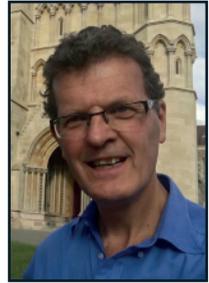
Our Society heads for the 2018/19 season in rude health. None of it would be possible without the hard work of so many people, both on the Council and among the wider membership. We are very lucky.

Over the summer we enjoyed the sell-out summer social at the Côte Brasserie, otherwise no. 3 High Street. Between Liz Rolfe and Past President Kate Morris we learned about the history of this important house and its Vintry Garden as well as the 'enchanted mews courtyard' as described by Chris Wares in his article (see p. 30). I hope this might be a model for future summer social events to complement our New Year Party.

There was also the excellent walk round the historic centre of Codicote as guests of the Codicote Local History Society. Again my thanks to Pat Howe for organising this.

The library has been enhanced by significant new acquisitions masterminded by Donald Munro and also by a stock of new chairs thanks to the

generosity of the Land Rover Experience at Luton Hoo (and our luck in having Frank Iddiols as the link).



Our first direct contribution to exhibitions at the new Museum was led by Sue Mann. We produced the panels describing treatment of the homeless in the town through history to complement the 'Squatlife' exhibition of photos from the 1980s. Wearing another hat, I represent one of the largest council estates in St Albans. Its residents have been hugely enthusiastic about this exhibition. Many of them have visited, they have seen that the new museum is for them and illuminates their own experience. There are useful lessons here for our own Society.

So what's coming up? This newsletter and the new membership card unveil another brilliant lecture programme developed by Dave and Gill Girdziusz.

Pat Broad and others are progressing a publication on the architectural legacy of Percival Blow who did much to shape the look of St Albans and

Harpenden. Christopher Blow, his architect grandson, is helping us with material and providing his own insights into his grandfather's work.

Professor James Clark will be writing up his fizzing lecture delivered last year on 'The People of St Albans and Their Abbey' for our *Herts Archaeology and History* journal. Members will be able to purchase this at the usual big discount to the official price.

Work is also well underway on a new website thanks to the hard work of a team led by Peter Bourton. This must become a shining window to the outside world, linking into social media platforms too.

The Society offers such tremendous value – the newsletter, the library, the lectures and seminars, the trips, the help and advice on research, meeting similarly minded people, the opportunity to be published. Our membership may be healthy but I still keep meeting people who have never heard of us. So frustrating!

To give ourselves time to think through matters such as promoting the Society, your Council held two

away-days this year. As a result there are various pieces of work in progress and also some opportunities where we need volunteers to step forward. There's more to do on our mission, vision and values as well as mapping out the different bodies with which we interact and how we add value.

At the recent Hertfordshire Archaeology Conference held in Bishop's Stortford, someone observed that some of the most significant new discoveries are currently sitting on museum shelves waiting to be identified and reported. I'm not sure we can offer that but we do have four important archaeological reports on past work carried out by Society members just waiting to be written up. Volunteers please! Roger Miles will be writing up a job spec.

Finally congratulations to Margaret Kent, one of our longest standing members, on the occasion of her 100th birthday.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the AGM and opening lecture on 11 September.

Sandy Walkington

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that
the Annual General Meeting of
St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society
will be held at **Marlborough Road Methodist Church** on
Tuesday 11 September 2018 at **7.30pm**
for the following purposes

Agenda

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) President's comments
- 3) To adopt the minutes of the AGM held on 12 September 2017
(enc. with the November 2017 Newsletter)
- 4) To receive the accounts for the year ended 31 May 2018
(enc. with the August Newsletter)
- 5) To receive reports from our various Groups
(inc. with the August Newsletter)
- 6) To elect the following members to serve on Council (with their responsibilities) until the next AGM:

Peter Burley	Vice President
Bryan Hanlon	Secretary
David Moore	Treasurer
Pat Broad	Publications Officer
John Cox	Publicity Officer
David Girdziusz	Chairman, Programme Development Committee
Gill Girdziusz	Lecture Secretary
Pat Howe	17th Century Research Group
Caroline Howkins	Clock Tower
Frank Iddiols	Technical
Christine McDermott	'Hertfordshire Archaeology and History' journal

Jon Mein	Newsletter Editor and Webmaster
Roger Miles	Archaeology Group
Donald Munro	Library
Sally Pearson	Minutes Secretary
David Smith	Membership Secretary

- 7) To confirm the election of Chris Hall as Independent Examiner of the accounts.

The AGM will be followed by a lecture given by Kate Harwood:

‘Repton and the Regency Park and Garden in Hertfordshire’

THE NEW MUSEUM + GALLERY

How wonderful to see the Old Town Hall open as our new museum and gallery! Commanding such a central position at the head of St Peter’s Street, it is Georgian elegance restored, but so much more – a showcase for all aspects of St Albans life, a skilful mixture of old and new.

There is much to see - the timeline, the old courtroom and the cells, new views from the side galleries, the displays of art in the assembly room but for me, the most interesting was the excellently researched and presented gallery of the history of printing in St Albans, which I hope will be the first of many specialist exhibitions about the city.

Congratulations to the City Council, the Museums and Galleries Trust, the museum team and the University of Hertfordshire who have worked so hard to bring this project to fruition and grateful thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund and all those who contributed so generously locally to make it all possible.

The official opening evening reception on 6 June was for key contributors, of which SAHAAS was one. Tickets were very limited and I am grateful to the Society’s Council for allowing me to go to this exciting evening. I felt that I represented all our members who gave their time, energy and money to our fundraising.

Helen Bishop

TREASURER'S REPORT

Enclosed with this newsletter are the accounts for the financial year ended 31 May 2018 which were signed by the independent examiner on 23 July 2018 and were approved by Council on 27 July 2018. As in previous years the accounts are presented in the format required by the Charity Commission's Accounting and Reporting by Charities - Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP2005). They also contain a report from an independent examiner even though the Charity Commission does not require such a report for Charities with income below £25,000. I am more comfortable, however, to present to you accounts which have been subject to independent examination.

The results for the year are split between the restricted and unrestricted funds.

Restricted Funds:

There was no activity here and the Mayor's Prize was not awarded this year.

Unrestricted Funds:

Income:

- Membership Subscriptions received at £6,716 and remain the main source of income for the Society.
- Income from the Clock Tower opening was £4,500, an increase of £500 on the previous year.
- Gift Aid for the financial year 2016–2017 amounting to £1,439 was received. A claim for 2017–2018 has been submitted and this will be shown in next year's, 2018–2019, accounts.
- Other smaller amounts include £350 from talks given by the Home Front Group and £438 from University of Hertfordshire Press being royalties on sales of the Home Front book.
- A generous donation of £1,000 was received from a member for the benefit of the Society to be spent at the discretion of Council.
- Fund raising activity was centred on raising funds for the Museums and Galleries Trust with a quiz night being held in June 2017, which raised £2,001 this being donated to the Trust. No donations were made from the Society's funds.

Expenditure:

Running/Admin costs were generally in line with expectations, the increase in Post & Telephone reflects a decision to purchase a stock of second class stamps before the price increase.

The key areas of expenditure are: the Lecture programme, Newsletter, Library and Publications:

- Lecture costs have been well controlled. The move to a different venue and the continued use of high quality speakers hasn't materially increased the costs.
- The Newsletter costs have increased by £394 reflecting the rise in paper and printing costs.
- The Library as anticipated in last year's report shows a significant increase due to the purchase of a new cataloguing software package at £1,915 plus an annual licence fee of £1,195. £2,000 was set aside in 2016–2017 accounts for the software with the licence fee taken from this year's income.
- Publications, the Old Town Hall book was published at a cost of £3,200. Again funds, £4,000, were set aside in the 2016–2017 accounts in anticipation of this. The Publication Account which forms part of the annual accounts reflects this.

Balance Sheet:

The activities of the Society generated a surplus of £3,295 including the donation of £1,000 and helped by projects, Library software upgrade and Old Town Hall publication coming in under budget.

Funds available to the Society now stand at some £19,840, net £7,840, after allowing for a reserve of £12,000. The major project on the stocks at the moment is the new web site for which a figure of £5,000 has been earmarked. There are two publication projects currently being undertaken, which if they come to fruition will incur expenditure of £1,200+/-.

Overall this financial year has been satisfactory due in no small part to good 'house-keeping' and management of costs. It is anticipated that the increase in the annual subscription agreed at the last AGM will improve income for the coming year(s) with a knock-on effect on the Gift Aid amount. It has to be borne in mind that the contribution from the Clock Tower is an unknown quantity and whilst good over the last year or so, £4,500 in 2018 and £4,000 in 2017, it cannot be assumed that it will always be at this level or better.

Regrettably I am unable to attend the AGM. May I suggest that if any one has a question regarding the accounts they can e-mail me (money@stalbanshistory.org) by 28 August and I will endeavour to provide a reply to be given on the night and, if appropriate, included in the next Newsletter. Similarly, I will respond to any matters raised at the AGM by e-mail direct to the enquirer; please leave an e-mail address with the Secretary, Bryan Hanlon.

David Moore
Hon. Treasurer

CLOCK TOWER REPORT

Visitors have been paying to climb the 93 steps of the Clock Tower to enjoy the magnificent views since 1914. The Arc & Arc took over the tenancy of the building from 25 March that year and sublet the ground floor to Mr Richardson who, along with running a stationery shop there, also acted as the custodian and collected the 2d entrance fee. Although only 76 visitors were recorded in the first week, numbers did pick up. He stated at the 'Hertfordshire Archaeological Society' [sic] Annual Meeting that the total number of visitors for 1914 was 6,780 but "the war caused the expected numbers to drop during August and September."

Although we don't have the excuse of the outbreak of the First World War for the expected drop in visitor numbers for this year we do have other events to take account of. Both the Royal Wedding in May and the opening of the St Albans Museum + Gallery in June had the effect of lowering our numbers. We almost didn't open for the last slot



The Clock Tower c.1915 showing the Arc & Arc's signboards on the near corner (Caroline Howkins)

on Sunday 15 July due to the World Cup, but luckily (*Editor: surely 'unluckily'?*) England didn't make it to the finals so Mike eventually found a volunteer to accompany him for the 3pm session. The greatest effect on numbers will be missing the last three weekends of the season in September as the Clock Tower will have to close for repairs.

We will, however, be open for the first weekend of Heritage Open Days (HOD), from Thursday 6 to Sunday 9 September. As part of national HOD celebrations of 'Extraordinary Women' we will be putting on a display about the local Suffragette heroine, Constance Lytton, asking "Who was your local heroine?" In keeping with the idea of HODs to open buildings to the public that are

not normally accessible, we will unlock the third floor Dial Room on the Thursday from 1.30pm until closing at 5pm. We will also again be taking part in the exciting 'Three Towers Challenge' on the Sunday along with St Peter's Church and the Cathedral.

Hopefully now, all our Clockateers have had a chance to look at and use the new online rota system for signing up for sessions. Mike has managed to get it up and running this season and, so far, it appears to be working very well. But if you have any comments do email us via clocktower@stalbanhistory.org.

As always, we are looking for new volunteers to join the roster of Clockateers. Manning the Clock Tower for one of the sessions over Saturday or Sunday with another Clockateer is a fun and interesting way to meet new people and talk to the diverse range of tourists who visit our city. If you would like to volunteer, please do contact us at the above email address.

We are open every weekend and bank holiday until mid-September, depending on the scheduling of repairs. As always, Mike and I would

like to thank all the Clockateers for giving their time to keep the Clock Tower open for the public to enjoy.

Caroline Howkins & Mike Carey

17TH CENTURY RESEARCH GROUP REPORT

In recent years the Group has focused on transcribing early 17th century probate documents from the St Albans area. We are pleased to say that transcriptions for the 1600-15 period will be published by the Hertfordshire Record Society (HRS) later this year.

Since sending the transcriptions to the editors last year, our task has been to write an introduction to the volume. This would analyse the information contained in the documents and place it in its historical setting, with reference to other relevant publications. We submitted our first draft in March 2018. Heather Falvey, one of our editors, responded favourably and gave us ideas for additions and improvements. With my co-author, Jane Harris, we tackled Heather's suggestions realising that these would create a work of academic interest to historians in this field of study.

This has now been finalised, illustrations chosen and the design of the cover agreed. The launch will be announced on the SAHAAS website and by enews in due course.

Meanwhile transcribing documents covering the period 1616-30 has continued and I should like to acknowledge the sterling work by David Lasky who turns out transcriptions faster than we can process them.

We are proposing to continue our work and this will constitute a second volume. I understand from the HRS that this cannot be fitted in to the current schedule but we do hope to eventually go up to at least 1649.

Pat Howe

NEWSLETTER REPORT

I took over as editor of the newsletter from the May edition with John Humphreys continuing to provide DTP support. While I don't anticipate any change to the format, I do wish to include more research content. Members will hopefully notice some changes in this regard already. One challenge we faced this year was the steep rise in print and distribution costs,

something we are not sure will abate any time soon. So, we are grateful to the several Society members who volunteered to hand-deliver newsletters when Maggy and Roderick Douglas step down shortly. We are currently considering ways of managing the print costs and will report back about this in due course.

Copy deadline for the November 2018 edition is Monday 15 October. If you wish to submit material or have any comments to make, please email me at newsed@stalbanhistory.org.

Jon Mein

HERTS ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY **REPORT**

Copies of volume 17 of our journal are still selling to individuals and institutions. Any new members who might be interested in buying a copy at the members' price of £5 (usually £20) are advised to contact me via hertsarch@stalbanhistory.org. You can find details of the contents on our website. Early preparations are underway towards the publication of volume 18, which is expected in 2019.

Christine McDermott

The **'Squatlife' Exhibition at the Museum + Gallery** including material provided by the Society ends Sunday 26 August 2018.

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Following the retirement of Roy and Doreen Bratby this committee now consists of Dave Girdziusz, Gill Girdziusz, Pat Howe and Tony Berk.

Gill was responsible for twenty-four lectures: sixteen on Tuesdays and eight on Fridays. Three different venues were used for lectures in 2017/18 but all lectures for the coming year will be at Marlborough Road Methodist Church.

Three of the best attended lectures were 'Verulamium Revealed' by our member Kris Lockyear, 'The People of St Albans and their Abbey' by Professor James Clark and 'History & Architecture of 18th Century Gorhambury' by Viscountess Grimston.

Pat and Tony arranged three very successful visits. These were to the Samuel Pepys Library in Cambridge on 25 October 2017 followed by Colchester on 1 May and Codicote on 5 July.

As usual Roderick Douglas and Frank Iddiols provided excellent service with the IT/AV used at lectures. The team has now been expanded with the addition of John Ridge who kindly volunteered to assist. Unfortunately

Roderick will be stepping down this year as he is moving out of the area. We thank him for his valuable contribution over the years. His reliability and expertise will be greatly missed.

Attendance figures for the lectures have been buoyant since our move to the church. The suggestions for lecture topics, possible speakers and potential visits are always welcome and help us enormously with putting the programme together for the future.

Please do contact us by emailing lectures@stalbanshistory.org.

Dave Girdziusz

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Our most notable achievement in 2017-18 was the much-delayed publication of *The Old Town Hall, St Albans*. Released in September 2017 with a launch at Waterstones, sales reached 397 copies by June 2018. Over 90 members bought copies; thank you for your support.

We sold 18 copies of other publications and total revenue from all publications (excluding our *Herts Archaeology & History* journal) amounted to £1,539.

Other achievements included a draft publishing strategy which has had positive feedback from Council. We played a full part in the website project and are planning to revamp the publication section for the new website. Work on publishing standards progressed with the production of house style guides for print and web. The committee has also been exploring ideas for new publications which we hope to develop in the coming year.

At the start of the year, the committee comprised Patricia Broad, John Cox, Ann Dean, Sue Mann, Christine McDermott and Roger Miles. Roger stepped down in March 2018 and Jon Mein joined in May, taking over from John Humphreys who withdrew from the committee in 2017. We met three times and held one email meeting.

Patricia Broad

LIBRARY REPORT

It has been a productive year for the Library on a number of fronts, with staff as busy as ever making inroads into the growing mountains of materials coming our way. The developments have by and large been covered in previous Newsletters but

the main areas of progress have been:

The implementation of the ***Soutron On-Line Public Access Catalogue***, enabling members and the world in general to see our book and pamphlet holdings - a real step forward. Although cataloguing training has been variously interrupted, it is now progressing well and we expect to have five cataloguers operational very soon. We are now tackling an extensive backlog, and the work is spread by cataloguers taking batches for cataloguing on-line at home.

Library Volunteers. The appeal for Volunteers has been very successful. In addition to those mentioned in previous issues, the Library Team has been very effectively reinforced recently by Ros Trent, Philippa Hurst, Terry Price and Lin Watson, who are weighing in with admirably focused enthusiasm.

Computer hardware. In a major development our computer problems have been greatly relieved by the generosity of Christine Dunn in response to my note flagging up our difficulties in the last *Newsletter*. As a result we have been able to replace the computer that was vir-

tually at a halt with a high-spec machine tailored to our needs built by Malcolm Merrick. We can look to upgrading its companion. It also gives us the opportunity to consider alternative ways of local networking (the public Wi-Fi connection at Sandridge Gate being intermittent), and also to look at image collection management software in order to optimise the arrangement of our extensive digital images collections. We really are most grateful to Chris for her splendid gift-aided generosity, which could hardly have come at a more opportune time.

Large monitor screens. Caroline Howkins has very generously given us two large TV / computer screens. One is particularly big and will be excellent for viewing maps etc. The second will replace the monitor for the main Library PC.

Research materials. John G.E. Cox has gifted us files and folders from his personal collections of local materials which he is happy for us to distribute into our various special subject files, etc. There is much fugitive material amongst this and we are very pleased to have it.

Beardsmore final instalment. The portfolio case of estate agent particulars relating to properties in St Albans and area was collected from the Cathedral library in May.

Furniture. The somewhat vexed question of suitable and uniform seating for the Library, Council meetings and Seminars has been resolved by the eagle-eyed Frank Iddiols spotting a suitable batch of used but comfortable office chairs. Posteriors will now be uniformly pampered, though some may regret the chronologically reduced range of sedentary experience.

The progress over the past year is as ever down to the enthusiasm and hard work of our splendid and happily augmented band of Library volunteers. Particular thanks are due to Jon Mein, Tony Cooper and Frank Iddiols for being such Library stalwarts; to Malcolm Merrick for his help and advice on scanning, computer hardware and equipment; to Di Dunn and Susan Smith for their work on the paper files; to Sue Bellamy for her listing work on deeds, now virtually complete; Diana Penton for her indexing work on the Kinneir Tarte papers; to Sally Pearson for all her

efforts in organising disposals of surplus stock which have raised several hundred pounds; to the catalogue trainees (especially Caroline Howkins for her 'magic' minute taking); and to Sheila Green, John Cox, David Lasky and all others who have helped from time to time. Thanks to the efforts of all these folks we have settled very successfully at Sandridge Gate, where we have an overall visitor rate little different from what it was in the Old Town Hall.

Donald Munro

FREDERICK WALTER KINNEIR TARTE, ARCHITECT

We have recently published a handlist of the contents of the Library's collection of material about this local architect on our website. Here Diana Penton, who produced the handlist introduces this intriguing man.

My interest in this fascinating story arose from enquiries to the SAHAAS Library about the site of The Dell in Sandpit Lane. As a resident for over 20 years I had often wondered what preceded the present block of flats

built in 1965. When Tony Cooper kindly supplied details of a fine house built in 1900/01 designed by Kinneir Tarte, I was hooked! I joined the Society and found myself compiling a handlist from three full box-files of evidence gathered in the 1980/90s by past-president John Brodrick.

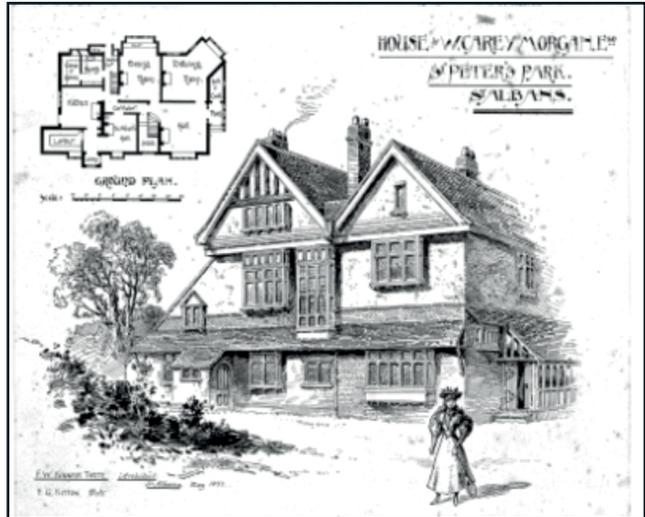
In 1999 John contributed an article about Tarte, 'A Man of Two Worlds', to the Society's publication *A History In All Men's Lives*. He also gave a lecture to the Society in 1996, reprised in 2013. Working through his meticulous research revealed Kinneir Tarte as a most engaging man, warm, energetic, versatile, sociable and public spirited. He came to St Albans as a young architect in 1886 and, as well as designing numerous buildings, plunged into life in the city becoming a councillor, joining many societies, including ours. By 1907 he had reached a peak in his standing in local society, professional and public life.

Then suddenly, at the height of his career, aged 50, astonishingly, he abandoned it all and emigrated to Australia to become a farmer, later promoting the benefits of Milch

Goats. The reasons for his departure are obscure, but he tackled his new life with courage and energy.

Reading his diary of the long journey to Australia was a delight. No complaints or gloom but a cheerful, observant and witty account of daily life on board, although his description of the streets of Melbourne, which he thought magnificent, as 'finer than any in England, except for

St Peter's Street in St Albans' was especially poignant.



Sketch by F.G. Kitton of a house designed by Tarte (SAHAAS)

Diana Penton

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE SOCIETY LECTURE PROGRAMME

Two significant changes will affect the Society's lecture programme from the start of the 2018/19 season in September.

1. All lectures will be on Tuesdays; we find Tuesday night talks attract a higher attendance than Fridays.
2. The venue for all lectures will be Marlborough Road Methodist Church, our current Tuesday night venue, so we will no longer be using the St Albans School lecture room.

No venue is perfect but the church provides easier access for members with mobility issues and is more flexible when there is a big attraction in terms of topic or speaker. It will also lessen the possibility of lectures being moved at short notice. Some people will be sad to lose the link with the school but we feel on balance this is the right decision.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SAHAAS DEEDS COLLECTION

Since the 1970s, the Society has received various property deeds and legal papers relating to St Albans from both individuals and firms of solicitors. This collection received a considerable boost in 1983, around which time members became alarmed at the wanton destruction of a number of historic documents which occurred when a local firm needed more storage space. The Society appealed to business organisations likely to hold such material to donate it to the Society for research purposes. The generous response resulted in the collection of 44 boxes of deeds and other documents numbering some 1500 - 2000 items dating from the

second half of the 16th century to the late 19th. Most of this material was sent to what is now Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, but a small proportion concerning the ancient borough of St Albans and a number of legal papers from local solicitors' firms were retained and are now housed in the Society's Library.

Overall these documents represent an important collection for those studying the history of the city from the 16th century onwards. However, until recently, only a part of this collection had been listed, notably the documents relating to the ancient Borough of St Albans calendared by the late David Dean, a past president of the Society. In particular, there remained a large number of previously uncatalogued legal papers awaiting atten-



Plan of premises on south side of Fishpool Street, 1877
(SAHAAS Deeds Collection ref. SDC/1/140)

tion. These have been listed over the last year or so and comprise deeds, particulars of sales and correspondence about properties in the city including those in the areas around Dagnall Street, London Road and Catharine Street.

With the cataloguing of these documents, the whole collection has been fully listed for the first time. This catalogue is now available via the Library page on the Society's website. It is anticipated that this data will be transferred to the online library catalogue in due course.

If you have any questions concerning this collection please email us: library@stalbahshistory.org.

Susan Bellamy

LIBRARY NOTES

Beardsmore Collection materials

Here is a further selection of some of the more interesting items recently catalogued.

The Hertfordshire almanac and county handbook for the year ... 1881. Hertford: Stephen Austin & Sons, 1881. iv, 143,[i],63p.; ill.; 19 cm. A mine of information about Hertfordshire and its institutions, listing office holders, addresses, etc. Contents include the

"*Hertfordshire Almanac Advertiser 1881*" being 63p of trade adverts bound at end.

A Week at Welwyn, by William Chambers. Second edition, with additions. London: W. & R. Chambers, 1876. 92 p.; map; 17cm. The notable Scottish publisher and lexicographer's account of touring around Welwyn and Hertfordshire in the earlier 1870s.

South Mimms, by Revd Frederick Charles Cass. Westminster: printed by Nichols and Sons, 1877. 128p.; ills., geneal. tables; 30cm. 4to. One of three scholarly parish histories by Cass, printed by Nichols for the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society. The others, also in our Beardsmore acquisitions, are for *East Barnet* (1880) and *Monken Hadley*, [Barnet] (1885-92).

The Garden City. A study in the development of a modern town ..., by C.B. Purdom. With 4 coloured pictures by T. Friedensen and 140 other illustrations. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1913. xii, 329 p. A near-contemporary account of the development of the first Garden City at Letchworth. This is one of several interesting items in a wealth of Beardsmore Collection materials on the early development of Garden Cities and New Towns in Hertfordshire.

Hesketh Prichard, D.S.O., M.C.: hunter: explorer: naturalist: cricketer: author: soldier: a memoir, by Eric Parker. London: T. Fisher Unwin, [1924]. ix, 271 p., [8] leaves of plates : ill., ports. ; 23 cm. Prichard (1876-1922) married Lady Elizabeth Grimston in 1909, lived at Prae Wood, died at Gorhambury and was buried at St Michael's Church, St Albans. The copy has various tipped- and pasted-in pieces, 1918 to 1970, relating to Grimston and Hesketh-Prichard family members; including a MS. letter from Prichard to Sybil Grimston, Oct. 1918.

Donald Munro

New Library acquisitions

This ancient road: London to Holyhead; a journey through time, by Andrew Hudson. Burgess Hill: Red Door, 2017. 217pp, illus. map, index. The London to Holyhead road largely follows the Roman road, Watling Street, and now the A5, through Hertfordshire and St Albans. Its history, changes, events and travellers along its length are noted.

A place in the country; Three Counties Asylum 1860-1999, by Judith Pettigrew, Rory W. Reynolds and Sandra Rouse. Hatfield: Hertfordshire Publications, 2017. 120pp, illus, notes, index. The Asylum was founded in 1850 near

Stotfold to house the 'pauper lunatics' of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire. A detailed account is given of the buildings, changes in treatments and care of patients, and of the staff who looked after them. It became known as Fairfield Hospital before it closed because of the end of institutional care.

Cassiobury: the ancient seat of the Earls of Essex, by Paul Rabbitts and Sarah Kerenza Priestley. Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2017. 159pp, illus, bibliog. Cassiobury Park is the largest in Hertfordshire, reputedly given to St Albans Abbey in 793 by King Offa of Mercia. The history of the estate, house (once described as a palace) and the owners is related, with copious illustrations. Sadly it has no index.

Recent journal articles

In: *London Colney History Society Newsletter*, no.34, Spring /Summer 2018

pp 7-8 "Who lived at Cotlands and when? Part 1", by Colin Chapman. Cotlands, later called Cotlandswick, seems to have been built about 1898. Among the families living there in subsequent years were the brewing Adeys. The house became a prisoner of war work camp in WW1.

In: *The Alban Link*, Spring 2018, no.88 pp 8-9 "Charles Wilton, picture frame maker, carver, gilder and artist, 1843-1911", by Hazel Gowland. A brief account of the life and business of Charles Wilton. One of his clients was Lord Grimthorpe, of whom his opinion was low. A member of SAHAAS, Wilton wrote and published a pamphlet on early maps of St Albans, including Benjamin Hare's map of 1634. Further research on his life is under way.

In: *Rickmansworth Historical Review*, no.15, June 2018

"West Hertfordshire: in the steps of Herbert Tompkins. Part 3: Bushey to Cassiobridge", by Brian Thomson. The main feature of the article is Sir Hubert Herkomer's home and his school in Bushey, which operated from 1883 until 1904. From 1905 it was run by Lucy Kemp-Welch as Bushey School of Painting.

Tony Cooper

ST ALBANS & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY NETWORK AUTUMN CONFERENCE

Date: Saturday 20 October

Venue: Verulamium Museum

Presentations include Pope Adrian IV, watercross, the other side of boundary walls, Cathedral Stories, local inspirations for a Dutch artist, the new Museum + Gallery, and a Harperbury patient's story.

Bookings opened on 29 July so, by the time you read this, tickets may all have been snapped up. To check please email the organisers via sanetwork@me.com.

HERTFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM

Date: Saturday 10 November

Venue: Lemsford Village Hall

This year's theme is 'planned settlements'. Talks will include Roman Verulamium, Saxon and medieval towns, 18th century St Albans and Hertford, Victorian Hitchin, the Chartist settlement at Heronsgate and Letchworth Garden City.

Tickets will be £12 for members, £15 otherwise.

More information will follow via enews and the website or keep an eye on www.halh.org.uk.

THE CONCEALED REVEALED PROJECT

Following her interesting talk at the Herts Association for Local History spring event in May, we invited Dr Houlbrook to provide this introduction to her project.

What do an old shoe, a wooden poppet, and a dried cat have in common? They are all objects that have been found hidden away within the fabric of buildings. In fact, a vast variety of items has been found under floorboards, thresholds, and hearthstones; within walls; up chimneybreasts; above ceilings and roof beams; and in thatching. People usually find them today when they're renovating their homes, and the objects are in such odd places that most of them can't have ended up there accidentally. They must have been deliberately secreted away by past occupants or builders many years ago.

But why? Practically nothing was written at the time about this custom, so we have no sources explaining why such objects were concealed and what their concealers were hoping to achieve. This hasn't stopped people from proposing theories, the most popular being that these items were hidden to protect both house and occupants from malevolent forces. According to this theory,

these objects were apotropaic (evil-averting) devices.

The question remains though: why would an old shoe, a wooden poppet, and a dried cat be considered effective supernatural safeguards? Concealed deposits range from the mundane to the distasteful, but they certainly don't seem inherently magical. And yet people went to the trouble of bricking them up in walls, secreting them up chimneybreasts, or laying them beneath hearthstones. They must have invested them with some significance. But why? And how can we distinguish between protective, accidental, non-ritual, or even sentimental concealments (e.g. time capsules)?

Together with Owen Davies I have been asking these questions, and pinning finds of hidden objects onto a map, freely available to view here: www.historypin.org/en/person/66740. We are asking that anyone who has found a hidden object, or knows a story about one, to please contact us. We would be very happy to hear from you.

More information can be found on the project website:
theconcealedrevealed.wordpress.com.

Dr Ceri Houlbrook
University of Hertfordshire
Email: c.houlbrook@herts.ac.uk

PAPAL BULL FOUND IN ABBEY'S COLLECTION

According to the Society's minutes a papal bull of 'Pope John 26th' was exhibited at the meeting on 14 April 1852 which had been found to the south of the Abbey's Lady Chapel. Given that there was a Pope John XXIII in the twentieth century this seemed to warrant further research.

Two newspaper reports gave more details and both referred to Pope John XXIII not XXVI. The *Hertford Mercury* (24 April 1852) reported that the bull had recently been excavated in a garden adjoining the Abbey's east end and that it had the heads of St Peter and St Paul on one side and *Johannus P.P. 23* on the reverse. Of particular interest was that the Revd Nicholson, the Society's chairman and rector of the Abbey Church, 'gave some history of this pope' so he must have existed.

Having discovered that John XXIII was pope from 1410 to 1414 and that the Roman Catholic Church refers to him as an antipope, it became clear that he was in place during the Great Schism in the Western church. The papal court had officially returned to Rome from Avignon in 1377 but papal elections continued in Avignon too. To

resolve the problem the cardinals held a council in Pisa in 1409 and they elected Pope Alexander V and then, when he soon died, John XXIII but that simply resulted in three popes as the others both continued. At a further council at Constance in 1414 all three popes were forced to resign and Pope Martin V was elected as the sole pope. It was he whose three bulls were found with the skeleton of Abbot John of Wheathampstead in the recent excavation at the cathedral.

More details of this turbulent period can be found in *The Chronica Maiora* by the Abbey's chronicler, Thomas Walsingham, which conveniently covers the period 1376-1422. The English translation by David Preest with introduction and notes by Professor James G. Clark is particularly useful as Clark corrects inaccuracies and adds details to Walsingham's narrative.

I am delighted to say that the lead bull exhibited at the meeting has now been found in the cathedral's muniment room and is exactly as described in the *Hertford Mercury* report (see photos overleaf). It would be good to know what document it was attached to but unfortunately this part of Walsingham's Abbey chronicle is missing. One possibility is an injunction about

the collection of the papal tax or Peter's Penny as we know John's predecessor, Alexander V, sent one. Hopefully Prof. Clark can resolve this.

Many thanks to Liz Rolfe for her help with this note.

Sheila Green

The obverse (top) and reverse (bottom) of the bulla (Reproduced courtesy of the Cathedral & Abbey Church of St Alban)



CLOCK TOWER CURIOS

Drawing on her unrivalled knowledge of the history of the building, Caroline Howkins has drafted several short notes about the tower for the Newsletter. Expect to see the others in future editions.

When was the Clock Tower built?

Any entry for the Clock Tower found in a directory or guide up until only a few years ago would have stated that it was built sometime between 1403 and 1412. But, since 2009 when sample tree-ring dating of the building's timbers was carried out, we can be more precise. The basis of dendrochronological dating is that trees of the same species, growing at the same time, in similar habitats, produce similar ring-width patterns. In the case of the Clock



Tower, four samples were taken from timber joists in the Dial Room on the third floor (see photo) which showed that one tree was felled in the winter of 1401-2, and the others in the period 1401-4. This suggests that the tower was erected quickly and probably by 1405.

Caroline Howkins

WHERE IS THAT BRIDGE?

Struggling to think where in St Albans the bridge shown on the front cover is? If so, you won't be alone as it no longer exists, at least not in that form. It was the original Midland railway bridge over London Road which, we assume, was largely replaced in the 1890s when the railway was widened. What a pity the 'handsome skew bridge', as the *Herts Advertiser* described it in 1866, has been lost.

We came across that contemporary photo when we were thinking about how to recognise the 150th anniversary of the opening of what is now the City Station for passenger traffic on 13 July 1868. As this is arguably one of the most important dates in the history of St Albans, the remainder of this brief note looks at the building of the Midland railway in the eastern outskirts of the town and then considers what some of its short-term effects were.

For much of the mid-1860s this was a busy building site. On what had been green fields there were hundreds of men constructing the new gaol as well as the large embankments and bridges of the Midland railway extension from Bedford to London. Exactly how many

were working on the two projects is uncertain. In 1867, material from 700 workers' huts was put up for auction by the railway contractors. Through extrapolation this suggests there were up to 7,000 navvies in the area, a barely credible figure that needs further thought. There were certainly enough of them to concern the town's inhabitants. Drunkenness was a problem with beer readily available from at least one



London Road bridge today from the south-west
(Roderick Douglas)

off licence on site as well as new public houses like the Midland Railway Inn (now the Horn pub) close by. As a counter, local churches clubbed together to provide the navvies with other things to occupy their spare time.

The opening of the Midland station in 1868 passed with little celebration. Contrast this with the pomp that surrounded the opening of the Abbey station ten years earlier. Then there

was a public holiday in the town, flags everywhere and a procession from the Town Hall down Holywell Hill to the station. The official speeches that followed expressed relief that St Albans was at long last plumbed in to the rail network and anticipated prosperous times ahead. It is hard though to find evidence for any economic bloom. Prospect Road, where properties on the south side of the street about the Abbey station, is a useful indicator. Here the few mid-Victorian houses remind us that development in what was the prime spot for speculative railway sprawl was little better than desultory. We can draw the same conclusion for the opening in 1865 of the Hatfield branch line station in London Road.

The Midland line differed from the other two in that it did bring significant change. Admittedly we have to look to the mid-1870s to find it. Only then for example was the town council confident enough to initiate the upgrade of Victoria Street from not much more than a farm track to today's thoroughfare linking town centre and station. New residential streets around the station came later in the decade. Developed on the west side of the railway, Oswald Road in 1878/9 was probably the first to be laid out. Stanhope and Granville roads, to the station's immediate east, followed in

1880. Other 'firsts' were the modern straw hat factories owned by Scott and Kershaw. These were built a year later in Victoria Street, their close proximity to the station convenient for importing cheap plait from the Far East, a new source being tapped from c.1870. The previously 'old fashioned town', as one observer described St Albans in 1864, was now a city expanding beyond its municipal boundaries. The Midland railway was a key factor in this change as it still is for the prosperity of the city in the 21st century.

A fully referenced version of this note is available in the Society's Library. Our thanks to Edmund King, Rudi Newman and Anne Wares for their help.

Jon Mein and Roderick Douglas

Missing Back Issues of the *Newsletter*

We are lacking issues 53-57 from our Library file of the Society's *Newsletter*. These date to the early 1970s. HALS would charge heavily for reproduction copies, and we wonder if any of our more senior members have or have inherited copies that we could photocopy or digitise ourselves.

If you are able to help please do let us know via library@stalbahshistory.org.

RECENT PLANNING REPORTS

This is the second in our series of abstracts from reports considering recent archaeological work or architectural assessments. These were produced to satisfy planning conditions. If you would like further information about any of these, please contact the district archaeologist, Simon West, via simon.west@stalbans.gov.uk.

Town Hall Chambers,

31 - 37 Market Place

Archaeology Solutions Ltd (ASL)
(Report no. 4932; 2016)

Technical analysis allowed the [National Heritage] list description, which ascribes an early 18th century date for construction, to be refined. The earliest fabric visible is consistent with a 16th century date and prior to the planned works included a large chimney stack and a portion of exposed timber-framing at first floor level, along with the roof structure. During the planned works the ceilings and floors were exposed revealing substantial floor joisting typical of the date, as well as small diagonal ties triangulating the tie-beams to the original wall-plate (not present).

Monitoring also revealed a structural divide between the southern three bays and the northern two bays, with the southern range containing 16th century fabric, while the northern element is probably of 17th century date, though insufficient fabric was exposed to confirm with certainty.

The next general phase is largely consistent with a late 17th century or early 18th century date, perhaps around 1700. This saw the entire street front rebuilt in brick as well as substantial internal alterations. Detailed inspec-



Town Hall Chambers (Roderick Douglas)

tion was carried out in the first floor rooms where modern dry lining has been removed as well as at roof level where sections of the parapet have been exposed. The panelling in the first floor front rooms appears contemporary with the re-fronting of the façade, while some time later the panelling was

hidden behind wallpaper of which only fragmentary remains survive.

132 – 142 Fishpool Street

Archaeology Solutions Ltd

(Report no. 5219; 2016)

[Formerly a large gap in the building line on the north side of the street]

The excavation and monitoring recorded small scale Roman activity in the form of three pits and a chalk and clay surface. Similar activity has been recorded at sites nearby and this relates to activity beyond the city walls in the 'urban periphery' of Verulamium. The archaeological work also recorded post-medieval features which would appear to relate to activity to the rear of street frontage development during this period. Much of this activity appears to relate to domestic habitation. The final phase of activity recorded relates to 19th century activity. Masonry structures appear to represent brick-built outhouses and garden features, including attempts to terrace the natural slope of the land. Activity appears to cease in the mid-19th century when the site became used as a garden area.

Hare & Hounds public house, Sopwell Lane

Wessex Archaeology

(Report ref. 118250.02; 2017)

The National Heritage List for England description suggests a date of 17th century and available historic mapping

confirms that it existed by 1721. The roof above the main part of the property comprises a typical queen strut arrangement of 17th - early 18th century date which has had two phases of expansion. It has a large brick chimney within the centre of the west three bays; these bays are likely to have formed the earliest part of the building.



The Hare and Hounds (Roderick Douglas)

Laths and plasterwork were added to the roof space, probably during the 18th century, to form a garret. Two bays were then added to the east during the late 18th-early 19th century and repairs made using sawn softwood timber. An extension to the south was added in the late 19th century and a single storey extension between 1924 and 1937, although this roof was not inspected as part of the works.

Edited by John Ridge and Jon Mein

Note: thanks to Wessex Archaeology and ASL for permission to use their abstracts.

CONGRATULATIONS ...

... are due to several SAHAAS members.

The Hertfordshire Association for Local History gives awards to people who have made significant contributions to the promotion of local history in the county. On a balmy afternoon in May, Mike Neighbour received the award for his achievements in this field from the association's president, Dorothy Abel Smith.

Even if you don't know him by sight, many of you will be familiar with Mike through his excellent two-volume publication, *St Albans' Own East End*, his regular blog as well as his work with local history group Fleetville Diaries. His focus stretches beyond the eastern half of the city though. For example, he actively supported the recent Smallford station project for the Smallford Station & Alban

Way Heritage Society, and is one of the founders and leading lights in the St Albans and District Local History Network. Add to these his remarkable feat in capturing and then indexing digital copies of over 13,000 photos from the *Herts Advertiser* (1914-60) and it is clear that Mike's award is very well merited.

Congratulations as well to Simon Langsdale for his recent award of an MA from the University of Hertfordshire. The subject, the management in the early Victorian period of the Abbey parish charities, is particularly interesting. In identifying probable links between the embezzlement of charity funds and the more familiar story of electoral corruption, Simon questions our understanding of the town's many scandals at this time. You can download a copy of his dissertation from uhra.herts.ac.uk by searching for 'blagg' or wait a year or so to hear his talk to the Society as part of the 2019/20 programme.

And last but not least, congratulations to Andie Hill. You'll recall her description in the May newsletter of the schools-focused 'St Albans Legacy' project she's leading. We are delighted to record that Andie has since received over 200 entries to the competition, some of which will be on display at the museum later in the year. More anon.



Mike Neighbour with Dorothy Abel Smith (P. Sheail)

THE ALBAN CITY SCHOOL (HATFIELD ROAD) PROJECT

In 2016, the School's headteacher asked Helen Bishop, then the Society's President, whether we could provide research into the background of the original Victorian school to form the basis for teaching materials for a Year 5 module. This site has played a significant role in education in St Albans in various guises. St Peter's National School was built on land donated by Earl Spencer in 1836. The 1870 Elementary Education Act started the involvement of the State with the formation of the Education Department which gave powers to Boards of Education run by local people elected by ratepayers. Revd Horatio Nelson Dudding, vicar of St Peter's, handed over the school to the new board. It opened with 24 scholars as the Hatfield Road Board School for Boys, the city's first board school, in 1879.

We provided information in a variety of forms which the teachers could use to achieve the skills outlined in the National Curriculum. This included a timeline, background notes and a map. It is one of the fortunate schools which has a surviving log book from 1879 to 1896 giving an invaluable insight into school life. Thus, much of the work could be based on a primary source. The *Herts Advertiser* provided another angle with

detailed accounts of the Board meetings which were very lively at times particularly when religion or the rate to be paid were discussed.

We provided a copy of the logs, a compare and contrast exercise for 1879 and 1890 and excerpts on themes including attendance, fees and pupil behaviour with some possible questions to ask pupils. As today, the pressure to produce the highest possible exam results was great particularly as this effected funding and teachers' pay.

It proved to be a fascinating subject which merits more research to produce a fuller history of this interesting school and the development of the Board schools in general. Is anyone interested in helping? If so, please do get in contact via newsed@stalbanhistory.org.

**Philippa Hurst, Helen Bishop and
Romaine Byers**

THE GREAT WAR REMEMBERED

An evening of remembrance with the words and music of the soldiers fighting for King and Country. This fund-raising event is at St Michael's church on Friday 7 September 2018. Tickets are £20.

See stmichaels-parishchurch.org.uk

SUMMER SOCIAL: DINNER AT THE VINTRY

It is a rare treat to have one's history served up with fine dining but that is exactly what we were treated to when we met at Côte Brasserie for a Society summer social.

Joining the Mayor of St Albans, Cllr Rosemary Farmer, around fifty or so members of the Society met at The Vintry, 3 High Street on Tuesday 10 July for dinner and to discover the fascinating history of the house, its gardens and its inhabitants.

The evening began *al fresco* with an invitation to explore the grounds at our leisure. Accompanied by some well written 'taster notes' that included helpful maps and images we were able to explore the Vintry Gardens while catching up with friends in the late evening sunshine. I am sure I was not alone in being amazed to discover that, hidden away behind the building, lay such an enchanting mews courtyard which the owners very kindly permitted us to enter from the restaurant gardens. St Albans still has the ability to surprise!

After our perambulations the party retired inside to a delicious three course meal, served with generous portions of perfectly seasoned history.

Between courses Kate Morris entertained us with the history of the house and regaled us with tales (some of them scandalous!) of the occupants, which Ann Dean's dramatic performances brilliantly, and humorously, brought to life.

All in all, a thoroughly enjoyable evening. The combination of exploring local history with a fine meal in a local restaurant is a recipe for success that it would be well worth revisiting. Our thanks to Kate Morris and Liz Rolfe for their impeccable research, Ann Dean for her performances and Christine McDermott for her excellent organisation.

Chris Wares

Note: Please see the back cover for photographs from this event.

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to the following new members:

William Fingland	St Albans
Paul Jellings	St Albans
David Kemp	Hatfield
Terry Price	St Albans
Nicholas & Judith Salisbury	St Albans

David Smith

AN EVENING IN CODICOTE

On a very warm evening in early July, fifteen members gathered at Codicote Museum situated behind the Peace Memorial Hall in the High Street. We were greeted by Nicholas Maddex, chairman and founder member of the Codicote Local History Society. The Museum building predates the Memorial Hall by about twenty years and was built in 1905 as a working men's clubhouse; it later became the base for the local British Legion. The Museum collection includes two sets of tools, one belonging to Alfred Males who was born in 1888 and was a self-taught carpenter and draughtsman, and the other to Alfred Kelly who was one of several generations of shoemaker and repairers.

Nicholas then took us on a guided tour of the centre of the village. The first reference to Codicote is in 1002 when King Aethelred the Unready sold the manor to one of his ministers, Aelfelm. The latter then gave it to the Abbot and Chapter of St Albans Abbey which owned it until the Reformation. A weekly market was granted in 1267 to be held on Fridays. The market place was situated at the junction of the main Welwyn to Hitchin road and the road from Wheathampstead.



The former George & Dragon (Pat Howe)

Several coaching inns once existed in the village to take advantage of traffic on the Bedford to London route. One of the main inns was the George and Dragon which was built in three phases between 1500 and 1600 and is now three separate dwellings. Another was the Red Lion: dating from the 17th century, this was still trading in 1960.

Also in the village, and like St Albans, there are a considerable number of timber framed dwellings which were then clad in brick in the 18th century.

At the end of our tour we retreated back to the shade of the museum for very welcome biscuits and cups of tea provided by the Local History Society.

Our grateful thanks to Pat Howe for organising a very interesting evening.

Graham Norman

A DAY IN COLCHESTER

At 8.30am on 1 May 2018 we boarded our coach for Colchester (*Camulodunum*), two hours away. We arrived at the War Memorial to meet the experienced Blue Badge guide, Patrick Denny. He introduced the area as the site of the oldest recorded pre-Roman town in Britain. The Romans later gave it the high status of *colonia*, signifying that it housed military veterans.

In Castle Park sits the largest remaining Norman keep in Europe; it is 50 per cent more extensive than London's White Tower. It was built between 1069 and 1076, by Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester, founded on the podium of the Roman temple of Claudius. The massive vaults beneath have been excavated and are viewable on a castle tour. The familiar story of Roman material recycling is illustrated externally by

local flint facing and Roman brick and tile lacing and string courses. Interestingly, the tiles of the string course are laid on their sides and not flat. Patrick explained that the builders simply picked up piles of *pilae*, from their positions raising a hypocaust floor, turned the stacks through 90 degrees with mortar still intact, and placed the stacks in the walls where they are still to be seen as a continuous string.

We walked around the castle, looked at the monument commemorating the Civil War siege and gazed over the beautifully maintained and landscaped gardens flowing down to the river before walking to the nearby narrow historic streets. Here we saw a road with coloured pavements setting out the corner of a great Roman theatre, probably built over an earlier one mentioned by Tacitus as being here in the time of Boudicca. We entered the ground floor of a house maintaining an exposure of the excavation of the theatre's foundations with useful wall illustrations indicating the theatre's form and use.

Second came the Dutch quarter: ancient streets and eclectic architecture, home to 16th century Flemish refugees fleeing religious persecution, and earlier Jewish and other refugees. Here, we viewed late



Part of the group by the Roman wall (Roy Bratby)

medieval timber-framed and jettied houses. This walk ended past the prominent Victorian water tower, named locally as 'Jumbo', by a pedestrian arch at the Balcerne Gate through a section of the town's Roman wall. Colchester is fortunate in having large portions of this wall intact where some of the facing survives, not just the core.

After lunch, we moved to the Roman *circus* for a tour led by Philip Crummy, Director and Principal Archaeologist of the Colchester Archaeology Trust. The only known example of a *circus* in Britain, the site is still a work in progress having only been discovered in 2005 during exploratory excavations prior to development. It became a Scheduled Monument in 2007 and now has a visitor centre housing an excellent 3-D scale model.

The *circus* was an elongated oval race track, approximately 450m by 70m with a *spina*, or separator, along much of its central area containing large lap-counters. Highly skilled charioteers sped around several times and dangerously jostled and raced in teams. Up to 15,000 people could be seated and there is a clever full-sized cross-sectional model of the *circus's* raked seating. The location of the starting gates is indicated with narrowly spaced full-sized block-built sections. Chariot horses were bred smaller and lighter than horses today.

From Colchester, we travelled to St Michael and All Angels Church in Copford to be welcomed by the well informed church warden, Heather Garnham, who also kindly provided tea and biscuits. The Norman and later frescos are some of the finest and best preserved in Britain. Saved from the Reformation by white-wash, the Victorian renovators cleaned and then falsely coloured some of the images. However, the vista, including an unusual arch of zodiac symbols, shows how wonderfully and fully decorated churches of this era were.

Elated and tired, we returned from this packed day at 6.30pm.

Dr Tony Berk



Wall paintings at Copford church (Roy Bratby)

LECTURE PROGRAMME

11 September – 20 November 2018

All lectures commence at 7.45pm.

All lectures are held at Marlborough Road Methodist Church.

Late changes will be notified on our website and via e-news.

Tuesday 11 September **7.30pm**

Annual General Meeting followed

by:

Repton and the Regency Park and Garden in Hertfordshire

Kate Harwood

Over the course of his career Repton was commissioned for 400 sites across England, Scotland and Wales, with influences further afield. Seventeen of his commissions were in Hertfordshire, a high concentration for a small county. However, he was not the only landscape designer of note at that time; Lewis Kennedy and William Sawrey Gilpin also designed gardens in Hertfordshire. The talk will put their work in our county in context and look at what the future holds for these sites.

Kate Harwood is a former university lecturer in Garden History and is Conservation and Planning Officer for Hertfordshire Gardens Trust (HGT) and a member of SAHAAS. She lectures, writes and teaches on garden

history and has been working with the HGT to produce a book on the Humphry Repton sites in Hertfordshire in time for his bicentenary in 2018, as well as on a number of local and national projects. Kate is the national research co-ordinator for Repton for the country gardens trusts and is helping to organise the seminar to be held at the Garden Museum in London in November.

Tuesday 18 September

Wrest Park – Thomas Archer's Pavilion

Richard Luscombe & John Wallace

Thomas Archer (1668-1743) was a leading Baroque architect, whose extant works bear testimony to his strong continental influences. Among these are St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham; St John's, Smith Square, London; and Chatsworth's grand Cascade House of 1703. In 1709 he began a commission from Henry Grey, 1st Duke of Kent, to build a magnificent domed Pavilion at the end of Wrest Park's Long Water. A major restoration in 2017, by English Heritage, reclaimed the Pavilion's iconic place as a central focus. The lecture will outline the history and architecture of the Pavilion within the context of other garden buildings at Wrest.

Richard Luscombe and John Wallace are members of the Volunteer History

Research Team at Wrest Park; an English Heritage property. Richard is its Volunteer Historical Records Keeper. Qualified as an historian, he has a background in teaching and local studies librarianship. He frequently writes on the history of Wrest. John is a Joint Co-ordinator leading the Volunteer History Research Team. A chartered architect, with many years' experience working on historic buildings, his background is invaluable for his historical research with English Heritage.

Tuesday 25 September

Whitechapel in 50 Buildings

Louis Berk

Whitechapel is one of the best-known districts of Greater London, if not the world. The buildings here range from the majestic – for example, the Nicholas Hawksmoor churches at the eastern and southern end of the district and the magnificent Royal London Hospital in the centre – to a wonderful series of social housing projects which date from 1695 to the modern era. The buildings also map the journey of the various immigrant communities from the Huguenot weavers of the 18th century to the large Jewish community of the 19th and 20th centuries to the recent growth of the Bangladeshi community, as evidenced by the changing face of Brick Lane. Louis Berk will be

discussing a selection of buildings from his books on Whitechapel illustrated with his photography of the area.

Louis Berk is an award-winning photographer and former secondary school teacher who has specialised in urban photography in the historic east end districts of Whitechapel and Spitalfields for the last 15 years. Amongst his many publications his most recent books include Whitechapel in 50 Buildings and Secret Whitechapel (jointly authored with Rachel Kolsky) and East End Jewish Cemeteries: Brady Street and Alderney Road, the result of a 5-year photographic study in two of the oldest Jewish cemeteries in the east end. He has also had his work published in books and magazines in publications as broad as a biography of the artist Banksy and the 'Boris Bus'.

Tuesday 9 October

Marshalswick Mansion and St Albans's Country House Heritage

Dr Peter Burley

Marshalswick mansion stood on the northern side of St Albans until 1927, when it was dismantled brick by brick. It is the only country house lost in St Albans in the inter-war period. This talk will look at the origins of the house and its name, who lived there over the centuries and the different garden design and architectural

phases it went through. Its heyday in the late 19th century and what remains of its heritage will be explored, together with why it failed when other country houses of the same period locally have survived. Re-watching a few episodes of Downton Abbey will be essential preparation for this talk!

Peter read history at the University of York and then did research at University College London, gaining a PhD in 1981. Among his published works are Witness to the Revolution (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), on the French Revolution and The Battles of St Albans (with two colleagues – Pen and Sword, 2007). He is a member of the Battlefields Trust, English Heritage and SAHAAS, of which he is vice-president. He participated on the St Albans Museums and Galleries Advisory Group. He is researching, writing and presenting on local topics. He has lived in St Albans – and on the battlefield of the Second Battle of St Albans (1461) – since 1976.

Tuesday 16 October

Neville Chamberlain: a Reputation Revised

Dr Martin Holmes

Although regarded as a disastrous Prime Minister by the British public, Neville Chamberlain has been defended by many professional biog-

raphers and historians, albeit for differing reasons. In this talk Dr Holmes explains the discrepancy and seeks to shed fresh light on Chamberlain's enigmatic and controversial career.

Dr Martin Holmes is well known as an Oxford University specialist in British and European Politics and History in the 20th century. A graduate of University College Oxford, he was Lecturer in Politics at St Hugh's College Oxford, 1987 – 2009, since when he has been an (Hon) Member of the Senior Common Room. He is the author of six books on British and European Politics and the author of many articles and essays and has been the Oxford Director of the University of Nebraska annual undergraduate summer program since 1989. He has spoken regularly at academic conferences in Britain and Europe as well as lecturing in the United States, South Korea, Australia and Malaysia.

Tuesday 23 October

The General in Winter: the Marlborough / Godolphin relationship

Dr Frances Harris

The lecture will draw on Dr Harris's book, *The General in Winter: the Marlborough-Godolphin Friendship and the Reign of Queen Anne*. It was said of Queen Anne's Captain-General, John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, and her Lord Treasurer,

Sidney, 1st Earl of Godolphin, that each was “the greatest of his kind that hardly any age has afforded”. Their public partnership was chiefly responsible for what has been called “the glories of the Age of Anne”, the Union of England and Scotland to form “this Island of Britain”, and its establishment as a European and global power. But it was not just a public partnership; it was also a close and lifelong friendship which fully encompassed Marlborough’s beautiful and tempestuous wife Sarah. One of the places most closely associated with it was Holywell House, St Albans, and the gardens Marlborough created here.

Frances Harris was formerly Head of Modern (post-1603) Historical Manuscripts at the British Library and since her retirement in 2010 has held Honorary Research Fellowships at Sheffield University and Birkbeck College, University of London. She has published several books and articles on the later Stuart period of British history, including A Passion for Government: The Life of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, Transformations of Love: The Friendship of John Evelyn and Margaret Godolphin, and in 2017, the last volume of the trilogy, The General in Winter: the Marlborough-Godolphin Friendship and the Reign of Queen Anne.

Tuesday 6 November

**The Monks’ Graveyard Excavation:
Finding a lost Abbot at the Abbey
Church and Cathedral of St Albans**
Ross Lane

Between August 2017 and February 2018, the Canterbury Archaeological Trust worked at the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban ahead of the construction of a new visitor, education and welcome centre. Commissioned by the Dean and Chapter and overseen by Cathedral Archaeologist Professor Martin Biddle, the team was tasked with excavating ground situated within the angle of the south-east Transept and Presbytery. This lecture will describe the significant finds discovered during the excavations including the long-lost brick-lined tomb which evidence suggests contains the remains of Abbot John of Wheathampstead who died in 1465.

Ross Lane is currently a Project Officer at Canterbury Archaeological Trust having started with the company in 2005. Originally from Canterbury his entire archaeological career has been involved in the study of Kent and its surroundings, with a particular interest in the development of pre-historic settlements. His previous experience excavating medieval sites include a Hospice founded by St Radigund’s Abbey in

Canterbury and a selection of buildings from rural medieval Sturry, Kent.

Tuesday 13 November

Lamer Park

Dr Kris Lockyear

Archaeology begins at home, and in this case literally. Lamer was a minor country house situated just north of Wheathampstead. With its origins in the 13th century, the estate survived until just after the Second World War when most of the land was sold off for agriculture, and the Georgian house demolished. A surprising amount of the house and gardens survive, however, and the speaker now lives in part of the coach house constructed in c.1760. The grounds were designed by Nathaniel Richmond and Humphry Repton. This talk looks at the archaeology and history of the area, including map evidence and church monuments, to throw light on one of the less well-known estates of Hertfordshire.

Kris became interested in archaeology at the age of 10 when he visited Verulamium on a school trip. He joined the Welwyn Archaeological Society aged 11 and excavated with Martin Biddle on the Chapter House site at the age of 13. Having undertaken a BA at Durham, an MSc in Archaeological Computing in Southampton, and then a PhD at UCL,

Kris took up a post at UCL where he is now a senior lecturer. He returned to live in Hertfordshire in 2002 and was able to develop his love of the archaeology of the county. Since 2009 he has been director of the Welwyn Archaeological Society, and in 2013 he founded the Community Archaeology Geophysics Group. Amongst his various publications is the edited volume Archaeology in Hertfordshire: Recent Research, published in 2015 by the University of Hertfordshire Press.

Tuesday 20 November

Sir Thomas Gresham's Exchange

Professor Stephen Alford

“Go to the Exchange, crave gold as you intend.” (William Haughton, *Englishmen for My Money*, 1598). Sir Thomas Gresham's first great contribution to the life of Elizabethan London was the Royal Exchange, the purpose-built merchants' bourse which opened in 1567. Why did Gresham finance and build it? What did Londoners (and others) do there? What does the Exchange tell us about Gresham's ambitions both for himself and for London? And what does it suggest about how trade and culture were changing and developing in the later sixteenth century?

Stephen Alford was educated at the University of St Andrews and taught for

fifteen years at the University of Cambridge before moving in 2012 to Leeds as Professor of Early Modern British History. He is the author of six books, including a biography of William Cecil, Lord Burghley (2008), The Watchers: A

Secret History of the Reign of Elizabeth I (2012), a short study of King Edward VI for the Penguin Monarchs series (2014) and most recently London's Triumph: Merchant Adventurers and the Tudor City (2017).

THE THIRD 'ARCHAEOLOGY IN HERTFORDSHIRE' CONFERENCE

Along with several other Society members, I made the journey on Saturday 14 July to the Museum in Bishop's Stortford to attend this biennial conference. I am not much of an archaeologist, Victorian social history being more my pigeon. On the face of it, the programme of ten 30-minute talks promised little to justify a 2-hour round trip to the Essex border.

I am glad I made the effort as there were plenty of highlights. Two talks in particular held my attention: Ross Lane's about the recent dig at the Abbey and Helen Gibson's discussion of the 'New River'. Both were certainly worth hearing and are by coincidence part of the Society's 2018/19 lecture programme. An introduction to the development of Bishop's Stortford also contained much of interest with its overview of the changes to the location of the river crossing and the town's street pattern. And then there was Mark Landon's talk about the extensive Iron Age coin mould discoveries at Braughing. These are impor-

tant for our understanding of the development of coinage at this time. Quirky stuff, to me anyway, but nonetheless fascinating. Having to leave early, I missed Richard Mortimer's presentation about Iron Age territorial boundaries: subsequent reports of this were excellent.

In general terms, what was noticeable was how accessible the talks were to someone with my limited archaeological knowledge. There were few occasions during the day when my comprehension was defeated by unexplained jargon for example.

Hearty congratulations to the organisers, Kris Lockyear and other members of the Welwyn Archaeological Society together with Chris Lydamore and the museum team. The organisation was good, the venue with its on-site parking was easy to find and the IT/AV facilities fit for purpose. For most of us the proposed location for the next conference will be much closer to home: St Albans in 2020.

Jon Mein

Pictures from the Summer Social

The former stable block with the exit to Holywell Hill



Now that's a view to have from your back garden!

Kate Morris describing the former inhabitants of no. 3 High Street



(L-R) Liz Rolfe, Cllr Rosemary Farmer, Mayor of St Albans, Sandy Walkington and Kate Morris