

# ST ALBANS & HERTFORDSHIRE Architectural & Archaeological Society

## President's Report



**Donald Munro**

### A Happy New Year Everyone

The Society's social year got off to a splendid start at the New Year Party, where it gave me great pleasure to welcome two of our patrons the Earl and Countess of Verulam; and also Councillor Eileen Harris, the Mayor of St Albans, and her husband.

The Verulams were delightful, much enjoying the time they were with us, taking great interest in the quiz, and asked me to convey their apologies for having to go so early. Similarly the Mayor Eileen Harris and her husband thoroughly enjoyed their evening - and were amongst the last to leave! Thanks to everyone involved in making it such a successful evening.

The year has also begun well in other ways. The new research project on the World War I Conscriptio Appeals Tribunals has attracted a good number of volunteers. Our splendid 'St Albans Seen & Unseen' exhibition of Richard Darnell's photographs, together with other materials from SAHAAS's collections, attracted a considerable footfall in the North Transept of the Abbey over Residents First Weekend. Similarly the lecture programme has been very strong over recent months, and there are many interesting talks lined up for the rest of the session. My thanks to everyone involved in all these activities, all of which add to the sense of vigour in the Society.

Similarly the Library is virtually full each Wednesday and Friday morning, with volunteer staff fielding queries from visitors, and there is considerable

momentum in recording and indexing our source materials. Much of this is being made available on the Arc & Arc website, which is a rapidly expanding resource. Our contact with other groups is expanding. In late November Jon Mein and I had a very useful exploratory meeting with Dr Sarah Lloyd and Dr Julie Moore who operate the Heritage Hub at the University of Hertfordshire. This seeks to encourage networking, to some degree co-ordinate, and on account of their being within the academic loop, potentially help find funds for research projects. It is early days, but one outcome is likely to be some student assistance giving them practical experience on some of our projects.

It is also encouraging that the gradual reduction in membership appears to have virtually halted, and we have had an encouraging number of new members in the past few months.

### Brian Bending

Sadly it is not entirely vim and vigour. As most of you will already know, Brian Bending died on 24 December after a long illness borne with admirable fortitude and stoicism. Brian is a considerable loss to the Society. He was a vigorous and active member of the Society and Council, and did valuable work for us, particularly in regard to IT and the website. An appreciation of his work for the Arc & Arc was read at his funeral in January, and an obituary is included in this *Newsletter* (see p.3).

### Alison Baugh

Unfortunately, we are also about to lose the services of our Newsletter editor Alison Baugh due to family and business circumstances. Alison has done an excellent job of editing the *Newsletter* from a standing start, and was also very helpful, and extremely patient, through the to-ing and fro-ing that afflicted the House Style Committee deliberations. Thank you very much indeed Alison on behalf of us all. I have approached a



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## President's Report (continued)

number of members, but the post of *Newsletter editor* is still vacant at the time of writing. I would be very pleased to hear from any member willing to consider taking on this vital task for the Society. Please see advert on p. 6. We need to have someone in place for the May issue.

### Looking ahead

Partly as a result of these and earlier losses, and to tap the interests and skills sets of members who have joined in recent years, we will be surveying the membership in the next couple of months.

With so many members becoming active in various forms of inquiry, can I remind you that the *Newsletter* can function as a vehicle for 'Notes and Debates'. Please consider sending in contributions or queries for future issues. Some may be best handled by the Library,

but hopefully we might generate some stimulating debate in the columns of the *Newsletter*.

The **Look! St Albans Final Report** will be presented to the public at Dagnall Street Baptist Church on Wednesday, 20 March at 7.30 pm. Please see the report on the project p.10. It would be very pleasing to have a good turnout from the Arc & Arc for this project in which Mike Cooper was involved at a very early stage.

Can I draw your attention again to the advertisement for the **Mayors Prize 2013** (see p.6). Advance notice of one entry has been received so far. It would be good to have more.

And soon Bryan will be back from Africa. The omens point to 2013 being another vigorous and eventful year. Sláinte

*Donald Munro*

**President**

## SAHAAS NEW YEAR PARTY 2013

The Society's annual social event was held at Verulamium Museum on 11 January.

The Mayor, Councillor Eileen Harris and her husband Richard, together with the Earl and Countess of Verulam were guests of honour. The Mayor, who stayed till the end of the evening, made very enthusiastic and complimentary remarks about the Society in her brief address. The Verulams regretted that they could spend only twenty minutes with us. We also welcomed Joyce Wells and Paul Barton who came by taxi from Verulam House

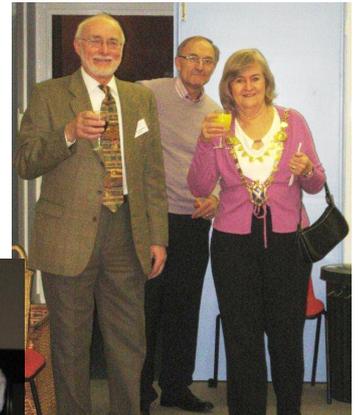
Friday Lectures Secretary Doreen Bratby organised the usual mouth-watering table of food, whilst John Cox organised the hot mulled wine, red and white wine and juices which were served by Carole Oldknow and Richard Green. In the absence of our usual 'partymeister', Bryan Hanlon, a quiz, found testing but interesting, was set by the President. John Cox also mounted a display, part quiz, part seeking information, of St Albans scenes.

As usual the New Year Party proved a successful evening, very much enjoyed by those present. The Society is grateful to everyone involved in making it all possible, including Pat Howe, Roger Miles, Jon Mein and teams in addition to those already mentioned. In retrospect, the only disappointment was a fall in numbers attending. That could have been due to several environmental (e.g. weather) and health factors, amongst others. Council will look at this and seek to ensure that numbers recover come 2014.

*John Cox*

Press and Publicity

*The Mayor, Cllr Eileen Harris, The Right Worshipful the Mayor of St Albans City & District, Consort and the President, Donald Munro*  
[Roy Bratby]



*The Quiz*  
[Roy Bratby]



*The 'Spread'*  
[Roy Bratby]

*My grateful thanks go to all members who contributed food and helped to make such a delightful spread. To my small group of ladies also I give my thanks for displaying it so tastefully and helping to make it such a successful event.*

*Doreen Bratby*

## BRIAN BENDING—An Appreciation

Brian Bending died early on Christmas Eve. Right from his announcement a year ago that he was going into hospital for an exploratory operation to the time of his death, Brian bore the development of his cancer thoroughly philosophically and with great fortitude.

Shortly before he died he drafted a personal memory of an event in his own life: the celebrations on VE Day in May 1945 at the end of World War II. His father took him to see Downing Street and together they walked down The Mall towards Buckingham Palace where he saw the King and Queen, Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret and Mr Churchill on the balcony.

Brian never talked about himself or of his family. I first met him when he joined St Albans Morris Men. When I was the Bagman (Secretary) he was the Assistant, dealing with the club's finances, a task that he was expert in and which he managed for the club for the rest of his life. He also 'managed' the club's 'animal' – the "Harry" (Hertfordshire's Hart) which he used to great effect in regular Monday summer outings at public houses or at meetings of the Morris Ring. He looked after the Harry, undertaking repairs as required.

Born in Greater Manchester, his family moved to London at the beginning of World War II. He attended Dulwich College from where he went to King's College, London where he graduated with a degree in Electrical Engineering. During a work-placement he went to Helsinki, Finland, where he purchased records of all Sibelius's Symphonies - part of Symphony No.5 was played at his funeral. Initially he worked in Borehamwood on programmes for railway signalling but following redundancy went to Welwyn Garden City to work for Rank Xerox.

Both his sons, Thomas and Adrian, recount his love of reading about history and of library visits when he would carry home books on historical figures, such as Oliver Cromwell. Not only did he support the Arc & Arc he also attended the annual symposiums of the Hertfordshire Association for Local History.



It was at the 2006 event that he told me in his matter of fact way of his wife's cancer. Juliet died in 2007.

His knowledge of computers was put to good use when he introduced the Arc & Arc to the digital world, initially supporting the Library when it undertook the computerisation of its holdings, and helping to develop the use of the Internet. The creation of the website – [www.stalbanshistory.org](http://www.stalbanshistory.org) - is his living Memorial. He was our first webmaster, publicising its activities and those of other history organisations for the benefit of SAHAAS members; but working also with non-members when it was decided to accept contributions from outside the Society to the 'Living Memories' section of the website. To those in the Library team he was often their saviour: in his own quiet way he patiently nursed their implementation of a library catalogue; researching hardware when required; showing endless patience as the team got to grips with this new technology, and in creating the 'information network' which has now been taken over by Jon Mein.

Our future in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been greatly assisted by Brian's unsung work in harnessing the modern technology to the benefit of us all.

*John G.E. Cox*

## St Albans New Museum and Gallery Project

The SADC application to the Heritage Lottery Fund was submitted in mid-December. SAHAAS sent a letter of support with caveats to accompany the application. Very positive noises are being made about the prospects by the SADC; we can only wait and see. No decision is expected until later March and the competition will be very fierce.

We were pleased to take up the offer of Lesli Good, Culture and Heritage Manager, to meet and address the SAHAAS Council about the project. She did this along with her colleague Nicole Deufel, Audience Development Officer, on 30 January. An interesting session gave Council a clearer picture of the direction things may go. Members aired frankly several of SAHAAS's concerns about the present state and future of the St Albans Museums Service and its financing. Time did not allow covering all our concerns re aspects of policy development, conservation and retention of objects.

We are grateful to Ms. Good for taking the time to come along. It became apparent however that the SADC officers had little real knowledge of the part SAHAAS plays and has played in St Albans heritage circles. A particular concern is the future of the SAHAAS Library for which there is no allowance in the proposed scheme at present. Gill Harvey has written to Lesli Good expressing our concern, and also explaining the active and growing role that SAHAAS Library plays. The serious talking will take place once the outcome of the Heritage Lottery Fund bid is known. But it is good to have the marker down, and Council members will make sure that the Society's activities past and present are brought to the attention of the SADC staffs.

The situation regarding the possible sale of the Museum of St Albans site is still unclear.

*Donald Munro*

**President**

## Clock Tower Report

2013 started with a short but highly successful opening of the Clock Tower by the Civic Society for Residents Weekend on 26 January but our main season will begin, as usual, on Good Friday (29 March) continuing until the end of September.

The Joint Clock Tower Committee is currently being re-formed for the new season, involving more people in the planning of our efforts and improving communications. The annual Clockateers' party, the annual thank you to all the volunteers who keep the Clock Tower open, will be on Friday, 1 March at St Michael's Church Hall. It is a good opportunity for volunteers to meet each other and enjoy a glass of wine or two.

8-10 March the first ever St Albans Film Festival will take place with films, talks and discussions at various venues around the City, including: Waterstones, The Maltings, St Albans Museum and Dagnall Street Baptists church.

There will also be Surreal Cinema workshops at the Clock Tower and the Boot pub over the weekend of 9-10 March between 11.00-3.00pm with sessions every twenty minutes (lasting an hour). Those over 15yrs are invited to experience the weird world of Surreal Cinema. There are 120 places per hour, pre-booking is recommended and more details can be found on the website at [www.stalbanshistory.org](http://www.stalbanshistory.org). Volunteers from the two societies will be on the roof of the Clock Tower to point out the riches of our surroundings. I don't know how surreal we are but we are happy to find out!

Good luck for the new season and, as always, I am happy to hear from anyone who would like to be a Clockateer.

*Helen Bishop*

Arc and Arc Clock Tower Co-ordinator

## First World War Project—Update

Following the launch of the project in the last newsletter, we are pleased to announce that the team now consists of seventeen people. This number is made up of fourteen 'passionate amateurs', all with different interests and skills. We also have three professional historians to guide us on our journey. Two of these are members of the society, namely Dr Julie Moore and Dr Mark Freeman. Alan Wakefield of the Imperial War Museum, a St Albans resident, is also joining us. With this level of interest the project may well evolve into a more general assessment of the Home Front in St Albans rather than the original plan just to cover the effects of the military tribunal.

A little later than planned due to the snow, our first monthly meeting is on the 6<sup>th</sup> February. If you would like to know more about the project take a look at the Society's website. We are still recruiting so if you are interested drop us an email to:

[www1mt@stalbanhistory.org](mailto:www1mt@stalbanhistory.org).

*Anne Wares & Jon Mein*

## NEW MEMBERS

**We are delighted to welcome the following new members to the Society:**

Alison Casey, Cannon Street, St Albans  
 Alison & Philip Doggett, Great Missenden  
 Anthony Dolphin, The Park, St Albans  
 Christopher & Margaret Kenyon, Lemsford Road,  
 St Albans  
 Judith Nayler, Meadowcroft, St Albans  
 Elizabeth & Chris Rolfe, Abbey View Road, St Albans  
 Graham Thomas, Partridge Road, St Albans

## SAHAAS Monthly feature in *Herts Advertiser*

The first two articles in this new *Herts Advertiser* series have been published. In November 2012 appeared Sue Mann's piece on Eleanor Ormerod, and in January 2013, Jon Mein on the Fighting Cocks. The article for February, already submitted to the *HA*, is by Gill Harvey on Walter J. Lawrance, (the 1<sup>st</sup> Dean of St. Albans Cathedral).

Matt Adams, the *Herts Advertiser* editor has agreed that these articles can be put on our website [www.stalbanshistory.org](http://www.stalbanshistory.org) with links to the Newspaper.

Further contributions of 700 words with two or three pictures are welcome for inclusion from June onwards. Please e-mail [johng.cox@btinternet.com](mailto:johng.cox@btinternet.com) or talk to me at one of the lectures.

*John G.E. Cox*  
 Publicity Officer

## Keeping Up with the Old News

A useful source of information for members interested in what is going on in archaeological and antiquarian world is SALON - The Society of Antiquaries of London Online Newsletter. This can be found at [www.sal.org.uk/salon/](http://www.sal.org.uk/salon/) It is edited by the excellent Chris Catling, who some may know from his contributions to *Current Archaeology*. There is a wide range of topics, some of which are specifically to do with SAL matters, but plenty of general news, book reviews, notices of exhibitions, conferences, etc.

SALON appears monthly and the Society is notified of it by virtue of the fact that we are members of the Congress of Independent Archaeologists. I am the nomi-

nated recipient of the e-copy of SALON, and there is no reason why I should not compile a circulation list and pass each issue on to anyone who is interested and online.

The Society of Antiquaries (chartered in 1751) is to be found in Burlington House, Piccadilly. The premises include a library and museum, which are open to visitors. Kelmscott Manor and Estate, sometime the home of William Morris, belong to the Society and are likewise open to the public. [www.sal.org.uk](http://www.sal.org.uk)

*Roger Miles*  
Archaeology Group

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## The 17<sup>TH</sup> Century Research Group - "Widows Reads"

The 17<sup>th</sup> Century Research Group has been busy transcribing wills and those of widows' in our possession are now complete, reaching a total of some 112. Below are some titbits which you may find interesting.

Mary Loft carried on running The Mermaid after her husband died and in the *London Gazette* of 1683 she placed an advertisement requesting the return of a "stolen or strayed" gelding for which "one guinea will be given as a reward" to Mrs Mary Loft of the Mermaid, St Albans.

Anne Dell made a generous bequest to her servant; she stated in 1687 that the house in which she had been living in East Harding Street, St Brides, London is leased from the Goldsmiths Company and that about 40 years is unexpired. She requested that her "faithful servant Mary Turner shall occupy and enjoy the house for the term of years that are unexpired".

The mother of Sarah Jennings, Duchess of Marlborough, requested to be buried at the Abbey Church as near as convenient to her "dear first children" and that her daughter's coach should follow the hearse, but once at the church there was to be no further "ceremony". I notice that Sarah's father also requested no "pomp or ceremony".

Some wills were not written but spoken in the company of two or three friends or neighbours and a record made by one of them. One such will is that of Elizabeth Covinton in 1603. The document explains that Elizabeth is in the pest house belonging to the Borough of St Albans. The witnesses, including her sister, came to the field

adjacent the house to comfort her. They "called and asked her how she did [she] answered I am very sick and holding up her head she saw her said sister Sara unto whome the said Elizabeth said O Sara thou woldest never come to me till now. I gave thee all that I have.....". How sad is that?

Fifteen widows mentioned jewels. Joan Cowley described a ring she wished to go to her son as "that his father used to wear marked MR". Anne Dell bequeathed a necklace of pearl and gold lockets to her aunt. Sarah Grubb requested that her pearl hat band should go to her cousin. Anne Goldsmith, a daughter of the Ferrers family of Markyate, listed a table diamond amongst a plethora of riches.

A number of widows made provision for the education of children. Sometimes they were children in their family, but on other occasions they were poor children of the parish. Anne Dell provided £10 towards the apprenticeship of one poor child in St Michaels and one in St Martin in the Fields. Margaret Mease made provision for her four orphaned grandchildren. She appointed her nephew, Robert Robotham, as Executor "not doubting of his special loving care in seeing my poore children trained up and educated in the fear of God.... And I doe hereby require them all on my blessing that they be obedient advised counselled by my said executor in all things".

A fuller account of our findings will be published at a later date.

*Pat Howe*

**The Mayor's Prize, 2013**  
**An invitation to enter**  
**The deadline for applications is**  
**30 April 2013**

This annual prize, currently £100, is offered for an outstanding piece of work which makes an important contribution to the history of St Albans or Hertfordshire. Applicants must be either in full-time education or working as amateur historians. The prize is administered by the Society on behalf of St Albans City and District Council.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate the originality of their work and critical usage of primary sources.

Full details of procedures, instructions and guidelines, and application forms are available on the Society's website at  
[http://www.stalbanshistory.org/  
 page\\_id\\_309\\_path\\_0p30p113p.aspx](http://www.stalbanshistory.org/page_id_309_path_0p30p113p.aspx)

Any questions about the prize should be sent to the President:

**Donald Munro, MA, FRHistS**  
**65 Meadowcroft St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 1UF**  
**01727 760808 Email [chair@stalbanhistory.org](mailto:chair@stalbanhistory.org)**

## HELP!

### SAHAAS NEWSLETTER EDITOR NEEDED ASAP

As a result of Alison Baugh having to step down, the Society needs an Editor of the Newsletter with immediate effect.

**Do we have a member with relevant  
 experience and/or enthusiasm  
 able and willing to take this on?**

Please will anyone interested contact:

**Donald Munro, President**

01727 760808 [chair@stalbanhistory.org](mailto:chair@stalbanhistory.org)

or **Pat Howe, Acting Secretary**

01727 857274 [pathowe@talk21.com](mailto:pathowe@talk21.com)

## Men in Reserved Occupations during the Second World War

*We have received the following note from the University of Strathclyde. Please liaise directly with Dr Robb if you or anyone you know is interested.*

Instead of fighting on the front line, many men of military age spent the Second World War at home in Britain, working in 'reserved occupations'. These included the well-known cases of agriculture and mining, but also many engineering trades and some professions. Much less is known about the experiences of these men than about those who fought.

A new research project, based at the University of Strathclyde, is examining reserved occupations across the length and breadth of Britain. Dr Robb would be interested to interview men who worked in these occupa-

tions, and can be contacted as per the details given below. Interviews would take between one and two hours, and at a place of your convenience.

*Dr Linsey Robb*

**School of Humanities, McCance Building,  
 University of Strathclyde  
 Glasgow G1 1XQ**

0141 548 2229

[linsey.robb@strath.ac.uk](mailto:linsey.robb@strath.ac.uk)

## Library Activity Report

We hope to publish shortly on the website an index to *Ridgway Lloyd's collection of newspaper cuttings*, compiled by Sheila Green. This covers St Albans in the late nineteenth century and is another small milestone in our efforts to make our material more accessible. We also have an update of the main *book catalogue*, the first since April 2012, and an update of the *Journals Index*. We have also put on the website the *Plan of the Abbey* drawn in the late nineteenth century by the Rev. H.Fowler. This is his final version, and is a very fine piece of art work quite apart from the intrinsic interest of the plan itself.

Our Residents First Weekend exhibition in the Abbey was extremely successful, as the weather recovered just in time. It featured the stunning photographs of St Albans, taken by Richard Darnell under the title "*St Albans, Seen and Unseen*" also some of the library's more interesting pictures titled "*St. Albans through Victorian (loosely interpreted!) Eyes*". This included pictures from our Stanley Kent collection, a series of views of the Abbey before and after restoration and very interestingly, and by kind permission of David Kelsall, pictures from the Du Cane collection which must be some of the earliest photographs of St.Albans at around 1865. Our grateful thanks are due to Richard himself, who was in attendance both days, to John Cox for help with publicity, Frank Iddiols for laminating facilities, John Mein (of course!), Roger Miles for transport of the various boards and other bits and pieces, Peter Swinson for the loan of his big computer monitor, Anne Wares and Pat Howe who provided stewarding help on the days, and to a shortly to become member, Emma Arbuthnot who was our liason with the Abbey - truly a team effort!

Recent enquiries have included Oster Hill; Hamaro House, Grange Street; the Presbyterian Chapel in Lower Dagnall Street; and the restoration of Great Gaddesden Church. We did manage to trace details of a Jewish maternity home for unmarried mothers in the Hatfield Road! **Does Hamaro House mean anything to anybody?** We singularly failed to resolve it, and we don't like doing that! Life is nothing if not varied!

We plan to mount an exhibition at the Hertfordshire Family History Society's day for family historians, on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. This is at Woolmer Green Village Hall.

### A Selection of Recently Added Books.

Daphne Godwin. *A Fine and Private Place, the story of Harpenden churchyard*. Harpenden Local History Society, 1985.

Deborah Spring. ed. *Gardens Pleasant Groves Delicious*. (Hertfordshire Garden History, vol.11). Univ. Hertfordshire Press, 2012.

Hertfordshire Family History Society. *St Albans, the Abbey Churchyard*. Hertfordshire Monumental Inscriptions, 2012

*St Albans Town Hall Conservation Statement*. Purcell, 2012.

### A Selection of Journal Articles.

*Hertfordshire People* December 2012.

This contains a query from one of our members, Richard Darnell who is researching H. Olney and Son, bootmakers at 21 now 27, Market Place from 1882 to around 1956; also Horne's outfitting stores, from 1857- around 1911. He has looked at directories and local papers.

*If you can help please contact Richard c/o the Arc & Arc Library.*

*British Archaeology* Jan/Feb 2013.

*Sunday evenings won't be the same without Time Team*, by Mike Pitts; pp. 22-29. A consideration of Time Team's origins, appeal, achievements and demise.

*London Archaeologist* Winter 2012/13.vol.13 no.7.

*London's Medieval Port*, by John Schofield; pp. 181-6. Assessing data from London's medieval port.

*Gill Harvey*

Library Representative

## THE LIBRARY TEAM

**Gill Harvey 01727-853415**

**Anne Wares 01727-860705.**

**Donald Munro 01727-760808**

**Jon Mein 01727-865514**

**We also have a number of volunteers, who are equally part of the team, but would perhaps not yet feel very confident about fielding enquiries.**

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

**You can email us via the Society's website  
www.stalbanshistory.org**

## Book Review

Jacqui Banfield-Taylor, *The River Ver: A Meander Through Time* (Wellington, Somerset: Halsgrove, 2012)

This fascinating, highly detailed and richly illustrated volume is an example of local history at its best. Many residents of St Albans are almost unaware of the river Ver, and certainly unfamiliar with it except for short stretches. This book offers a detailed description and history of the whole 24-kilometre length of Ver, based on a range of published sources and more recent local memories of the river and its environs. It is not possible in such a short review to do justice to the range and depth of the book, which will be a worthy investment for anyone interested in the local history of St Albans and Hertfordshire.

After introductory chapters on the geology and archaeology of the Ver, the book is organised by stretches of river, beginning with Kensworth to Harpendenbury and ending with Moor Mill to the River Colne, of which the Ver is a tributary. Apart from the very first section after the source, the whole length of the Ver is in the county of Hertfordshire. There is less water in the river than there once was, as shown, for example, in a J. H. Buckingham illustration from 1853 on p. 101, and as remembered by one resident of Sopwell who (p. 122) comments on the width of the Ver in the 1930s. Going fur-

ther back, the author quotes (p. 77) the C17th poet Michael Drayton, who in *Poly-Albion* wrote of "That Ver of long esteem'd, a famous auncient [sic] Flood ... here glorify'd of yore".

Although no longer glorified, the Ver remains an interesting, if often overlooked, river, with many existing features of historical interest. Not the least of these is grade-II listed Redbournbury watermill, of which this book has a particularly detailed account (pp. 59-64). Other mills feature prominently in the book: there is, for example, an interesting early C20th photograph of workers outside Park Street Mill on p. 132. It is also interesting to note the remarkably large number of names that have been given to the Ver over the centuries: 26 are listed in the introduction (p. 9).

Although Jacqui Banfield-Taylor's name is given as the author of the book, she explains in her introduction that it was begun by her late father, the local historian Ted Banfield, author of *Remember London Colney*. The completed book is a worthy tribute to Ted Banfield, who died in 2004. Signed copies of *The River Ver* are available from the author by contacting [riverver@btinternet.com](mailto:riverver@btinternet.com) or 07792-588892.

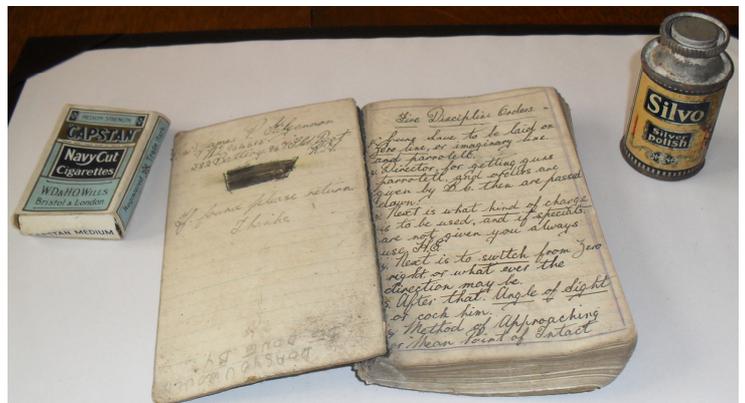
Mark Freeman

## Kilgannon Notebook—Progress

We have made good progress following our request for help in the last newsletter to interpret a notebook containing details of military wireless systems recently handed to our library. Five members of the society as well as a neighbour of another have taken a look at the book or commented by email. In particular, Peter Lawrence and Roderick Douglas have largely solved the conundrum of its date using their expertise in this area. Evidence from the drawings of equipment indicates that the owner of the book, James Kilgannon, was using machines current in the late 1930s and early 1940s. He was probably in the Royal Marines although there is still a possibility he was in the Royal Artillery.

Work continues to identify Kilgannon and establish his link to 2 Holywell Hill where the notebook was found.

Jon Mein



Kilgannon Notebook

[Jon Mein]

## Time Team at The Manor of the More

As a member of the Arc & Arc (though invited by the *Time Team* production unit via Three Rivers Museum) I visited the More site in Northwood, near Rickmansworth, on the third day of filming. I spoke with Tim Taylor (Producer), Phil Harding, Prof Martin Biddle (who excavated at the site in the early '50's and is an honorary member of this Society) and of course presenter Tony Robinson who specialises in asking 'man on the street' questions.

All were very keen to describe what they were working on to visitors young and old. Over the

three days several large trenches were excavated by the Wessex Archaeology Unit to reveal complex remnants of three levels of major structural foundations: the latest of these, Wolsey's palace. One small Henry V coin was found along with C16th floor tiles from Antwerp, plus many small pot shards. Some firmer dates for the structures may well be established by the post-excavation examination of the relationship between stratigraphy and finds.

The original site was probably chosen by Anglo Saxon settlers due to its proximity to water. The 'more' is thought to derive from an Old English word *mor*, later expressed as 'mere', meaning marshy land. Although not mentioned in the Domesday Book, the Manor is believed to have been given by Offa to St Alban's Abbey at its foundation.

The *Time Team* programme is expected to go out on Channel 4 on Sunday, 3rd March. If you want to learn more about previous digs and some of the history of the site before the programme airs, have a look at the following articles, all of which are available in our library:

H Braun, *The Castle of More*, SAHAAS Transactions (1936), pp. 38-41 (available on our website)

M Biddle et al, *Excavation of the Manor of the More*, Archaeol Journal (1959), Vol 116 pp.136-199

H Falvey, *The More: Rickmansworth's Lost Palace*, Herts Past (1993), 2nd Series, pp. 2-16

*David Harding*



Top Left: Tony Robinson—*Time Team*, More Dig

Above Right: Trench 1—*Time Team*, More Dig

Above Left: Trench—*Time Team*, More Dig

[David Harding]

## Transactions Digitisation Project

I hope that members have been noticing the monthly additions to the Society's Transactions which are available on our website. We now have available online over 50% of the documents as scoped in the original Digitisation project. We have added four further volumes to the project to ensure we have captured as many as possible of the Society's early publications. These cover the original excavation of the Roman theatre at St Michael's

(1848); a review of the history of Abbots and Kings Langley (c.1850); a consideration of the Abbey restoration (1881); and a book of maps of the borough of St Albans. The task of scanning these will commence shortly and the documents should be on the website by the end of the year.

*Christine McDermott*

Representative, Herts Archaeology & History

## LOOK! ST ALBANS DESIGN CODES EXERCISE

### Report and Announcement of Public Presentation

It is good to report that this interesting and innovative exercise in community design is on the move again. SAHAAS was much involved in the public sessions almost a year ago.

The Look! St Albans Steering Group met on Monday, 21 January to make arrangements for late amendments to the **Look! St Albans Final Report** produced by last year's exercise, and for the public presentation of the report. It considered both the amendments and the future of the group in the light of recent legislative changes and SADC planning decisions. It is hoped that the final version of the report will be dedicated to our Past President Prof Michael Cooper, who was an early mover of the exercise.

The report contains an outline and illustrative pages for a design code controlling new development in the centre of St Albans, presenting a high degree of clarity on permissible development. It is not a finished document and it will require a great deal of further work to achieve a level of detail acceptable to the Planning Office. The SADC planning team representative said the report had been well received by the council and they would be willing to take it forward as *design guidance*.

**The future of the group.** Several of the group had not visualised it continuing beyond the production of the report, the point was made that the stalling of the Strategic Local Plan meant there was something of a vacuum in city centre planning and potential developers were constrained by the uncertainty. There is also a disquieting possibility currently of piecemeal development. The broad community base of the Steering Group gave it legitimacy sufficient for developers to consider working with the group in developing and testing the design codes. Considering localism legislation and the huge costs to developers for pre-application community involvement, they could well view working with the SG in design workshops 'as money well spent'. This suggestion was well received by the 'developer' present at the meeting, and it was agreed that the SG would seek community approval of this possible next step at the open design meeting on 20 March.

It was agreed that a continuing SG should have a constitution, which should possibly include taking out public liability insurance. A small group is looking to draw up formal terms of reference before the 20 March meeting. The Civic Society and SAHAAS representatives were insistent that if the Group was to continue in an active form, the finances needed to be regularised, including having its own bank account. It was suggested that

sponsorship might be found.

### Public Meeting - Wednesday, 20 March

The design codes report document will be presented to the public at an open design meeting to be held jointly with The Prince's Foundation for Building Community at **Dagnall Street Baptist Church on Wednesday, 20 March at 7.30 pm**. All are welcome. Besides the report, there will be a presentation of prizes to schoolchildren who participated in the original exercise.

**Please do try to go along to the public presentation** of the report on 20 March. The whole exercise has been an interesting experiment in public participation in community planning, and with recent legislation freeing up planning, it is more important than ever that broad based bodies that can genuinely claim to speak for their communities should develop. The principal interests of the Arc & Arc are historical, but we have a role, well developed by Michael Cooper, as custodians of our city's heritage. Whilst we would generally take a lead from the Civic Society on major planning issues, we should try to play a part in a *Look! St. Albans City Centre Design Forum*, or whatever the successor group may be called.

### An Appeal!

Is there an enthusiast out there in the Society, with planning or architectural experience, and/or a keen interest in ensuring sensible planning in Central St Albans, who might be interested in becoming involved as an Arc & Arc representative in this innovative group? I personally have not the surveying background that Mike Cooper had, and much of the activity associated with *Look* is increasingly technical. If so please email me at [chair@stabanshistory.org](mailto:chair@stabanshistory.org) and we can arrange a chat. We'd be most grateful for some experienced backup.

Donald Munro  
President

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### BEFORE THEY ALL DISAPPEAR—Thank You!

*BEFORE THEY ALL DISAPPEAR* is the title of a comprehensive illustrated CD and an historical record of 274 St Albans pubs, past and present, together with their very colourful pub signs.

We would like to thank SAHAAS for including details in the last newsletter and we are delighted to be able to tell you that we have reached our target of just over £1,000 and will be sending Keech Hospice for Children and Adults a cheque at the end of December.

Rosemary Wenzel & Tony Stevens

## LECTURE PROGRAMME 2013

### Friday, 22 February 2013

*St Paul's Cathedral before Wren*

#### Dr John Schofield

St Paul's Cathedral is the most important monument and historic building in the City of London. But Wren's masterpiece is on the site of a previous cathedral which was in fact larger and over its 1000 year history, until

destruction in the Great Fire of 1666, a building with many important architectural aspects. Now, the archaeological account of the largest building in medieval Britain has been compiled from recent excavations, Hol-lar's unique suite of internal and external engravings of the 1650s, and older discoveries since the time of Wren.

John Schofield is the Archaeologist of St Paul's Cathedral. He worked at the Museum of London (1974- 2008), and has published several well-received books on the archaeology and architecture of London, including *The Building of London from the Conquest to the Great Fire* (3rd ed, 1999). His talk will be based on *St Paul's Cathedral before Wren*, published by English Heritage in 2011.

### Tuesday, 5 March 2013

*Tudor Hertfordshire*

#### Daphne Knott

The C16th was a time of rapid change. The new Tudor dynasty changed the face of England. Using documents from the collection at Hertfordshire Archives, this lecture will illustrate how national events, such as the Reformation and the Armada left their mark on Hertfordshire society and how we can find out about the lives of local people in that period.

Daphne took a postgraduate archives diploma at University College London. She worked at the National Maritime Museum where she was the senior curator of their extensive manuscripts collection. She has worked at Hertfordshire Archives since 2008.

### Tuesday, 12 March 2013

*Spies in the Sky*

#### Taylor Downing

*Spies in the Sky* is an illustrated talk on the extraordinary story of the unsung partner organisation to Bletchley Park, the photo intelligence centre at Medmenham. Daring reconnaissance pilots took aerial photographs over Occupied Europe and photo interpreters invented a completely new science to analyse them. A remarkable group of boffins and academics worked at Medmenham. It will be of interest to anyone who has enjoyed hearing of the code breaking at Bletchley Park.

Taylor Downing is a best selling writer and an award-winning television producer. He has produced more than 200 TV documentaries on historical subjects over the last twenty years. His popular history books include *Cold War* with Sir Jeremy Isaacs (Abacus 2009), *Churchill's War Lab* (Little, Brown 2010) and *Spies in the Sky* (Little, Brown 2011).

### Friday, 22 March 2013

*Reflections of Empire*

#### Dr Jan Piggott

A description, with slides, of the Festival of Empire at the Sydenham Crystal Palace in the Coronation Year, 1911. A brief history is given first of this second Palace, twice as large as the Hyde Park building, and its contents and activities. For the Festival three-quarter-size replicas of Empire Parliament Houses were erected in the Park, and an 'All Red Route' electric railway passed through Imperial landscapes and activities with backdrops, buildings, actual people and animals, showing, for example, a tea plantation and a diamond mine.

Dr Jan Piggott, FSA, taught for most of his career at Dulwich College, London. He has mounted exhibitions on Shackleton; J.M.W. Turner's book illustrations; the architect Charles Barry, Junior; and the Crystal Palace at Sydenham.

### Tuesday, 9 April 2013

*The Role of the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust*

#### Dorothy Abel Smith

The Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust was formed in 1963 to help preserve buildings of architectural and historic importance. This was the time when there were few building regulations and a great deal of indiscriminate demolition. During these 50 years the Trust has acquired, restored and sold on many listed buildings as part of a revolving fund. The Trust retains several properties that include Grade I Place House, Ware, The Much Hadham Forge and Museum and the last Windmill in the county at Cromer, near Stevenage. The HBPT works with local authorities and private individuals to help fulfil these aims.

Dorothy Abel Smith MBE has lived in Hertfordshire all her life. She has been Chairman of the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust since 2002 and previously worked for the Historic Houses Association. She is also involved with the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE Hertfordshire) and the Hertfordshire Heritage Fund.

## LECTURE PROGRAMME 2013 (continued)

**Tuesday, 16 April**

*The Boxmoor Trust - Past, Present and Future*

**Speaker to be announced**

This talk will trace the history, geography and use of the Trust today.

**Friday, 26 April 2012**

*St Pancras Hotel: Conservation Cause Célèbre*

**Richard Griffiths**

The Midland Grand Hotel shut in the 1930's. It narrowly escaped demolition, but Sir George Gilbert Scott's masterpiece has defeated all attempts at re-use – until now. With the arrival of the international station at St Pancras it has proved finally possible to restore the building for use as a hotel and residential apartments. This talk will tell the story of the building and of its restoration from the viewpoint of the joint architect for the project, responsible for the conservation strategy and for the design of the new wing and public areas of the hotel.

Richard Griffiths Architects specialise in the creative conservation and reuse of historic buildings, and the design of new buildings in sensitive historic contexts. The practice has had extensive involvement in the regeneration of the King's Cross area. Richard Griffiths is also Cathedral Architect at St Albans Abbey.

**Tuesday, 7 May 2013**

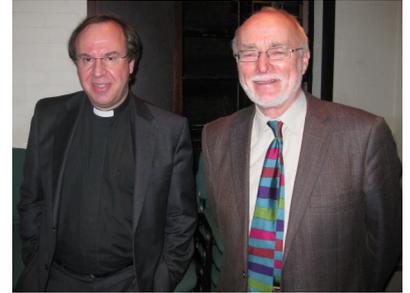
*Secret Wireless Intelligence in WW2*

**Stan Ames**

The work of Bletchley Park in WW2 is now well known but less is known of how the messages were obtained and made use of. The area around St Albans had a range of secret establishments directly connected with the gathering of intelligence and its analysis and dissemination. The work was started in 1938 by the GPO at their radio station in Smallford and at a radio direction finding station in a field near Sandridge. Other radio stations were set up as the war continued and hidden in King Harry Lane was the most secret organisation of all, the Secret Intelligence Service MI6, where the highest levels of intelligence were gathered and processed. Some of the personalities involved later became famous, others infamous.

Stan Ames was a research chemist. In retirement, his hobby of Amateur Radio brought him into contact with World War Two radio operators who were involved in "Y" (wireless interception) work. A detailed study of the subject was only possible by making many visits to The National Archives at Kew to examine declassified

*Rev Iain Lane and the President, Donald Munro (Rev Iain Lane gave the lecture on Friday 25 January on 'Gaudi – Inhabited Sculpture')*  
[Roy Bratby]



"Top Secret" documents. He has given numerous lectures on the subject including several at Bletchley Park.

**Tuesday, 14 May**

*St Albans Canal*

**Jon Mein and Frank Iddiols**

A canal linking St Albans to the wider world came close to being built in the 1790s. With the great and the good mobilized to support the project, extensive - and expensive - work was carried out in support of the necessary Act of Parliament. To great relief 'An Act for making and extending a navigable Cut from the town of Watford...to the town of St. Alban' received Royal Assent in July 1795. Then nothing happened. This talk explores the successes and failures of the canal's promoters.

Jon Mein is currently researching 19<sup>th</sup> century St Albans.

Frank Iddiols has an interest in maps and mapping with particular interest in London, Hertfordshire and St Albans. **[Please note this lecture is a change to that previously advertised]**

**Tuesday, 21 May 2013**

*Striking a Light – The Truth about the Bryant & May Matchwomens' Strike 1888*

**Dr Louise Raw**

The Bryant & May Matchwomens' Strike in London in 1888 is little-known. However at the time it attracted national publicity and led to questions in the House and the disgrace of a 'household name' British company. Louise Raw's years of research, culminating in a PhD thesis and book *Striking a Light*, now in its 4th print run in a year, has shown that the strike was actually of immense historical importance and has been neglected by historians - the true story of the wild and wonderful women of Bryant & May is much more interesting, colourful and entertaining than the orthodox version!

Dr Louise Raw is an historian and newspaper columnist. She has been researching, writing and talking about the matchwomen for 15 years and is an acknowledged expert on the subject. and is organising a festival for 2013 in London to celebrate 125 years since the matchwomen's 'strike that changed the world.'