



# ST ALBANS & HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHITECTURAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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## NEWSLETTER 190

NOVEMBER 2013

Founded 1845  
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[www.stalbanshistory.org](http://www.stalbanshistory.org)

## MARGARET TAYLOR

29<sup>th</sup> November 1915 - 10<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

First female president SAHAAS and an active supporter of the Society over many years. A tribute recording her life and work is published on Page 5.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The new session is continuing the momentum found in the past year with lots of Society activity progressing apace. The lecture season has started with a number of excellent papers including, particularly, Prof. Nigel Saul on Magna Carta, Dr Richard Buckley on the search for Richard III at Greyfriars, Leicester, and splendid papers by former president John Brodrick and by Jane Kelsall.

The combined efforts of several of our groups did us proud with their impressive Heritage Weekend exhibitions in the Cathedral transept and the Clock Tower in September. Members have figured large in the 3<sup>rd</sup> St Albans and District Local History Network Conference on 26 October, and John Cox organised an excellent Symposium programme on *Hertfordshire's Buildings: Traditional building materials* for the Hertfordshire Association for Local History for 2<sup>nd</sup> November. Both these conferences were very

well attended and most enjoyable. Our congratulations and thanks all round for the prodigious efforts and organisational verve put into arranging all this.

### Publication

Let me draw your attention to our first Society publication for a couple of years. Amidst all the above activity the First World War Group has produced a timely, attractive and highly informative *Memorials Walks* leaflet, already in its second printing. This is available at the Tourist Office, Clock Tower, and the Museums. The Publications Committee has other prospective titles in preparation.

### Membership

It is also pleasing that the flow of new members steadily continues, and a very enjoyable New Members Evening was held on 25 September. With other distractions easing, the form of the proposed *Membership Survey* will soon be finalised, and it

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should be with you before the next Newsletter. As I said in the May issue, the survey is intended to provide an up to date picture of a membership now considerably different from what it was five years ago. We want to know your particular interests, and hope to identify and encourage members who might wish to play a more active part in the Society's activities, whether as a Council member or in other ways.

The Questionnaire will be mailed to all members, asking about your interests and skills, and your views on a number of SAHAAS matters. It will also be available to members on-line via the website, and we would prefer that *those who can do so should complete the survey on-line*. Those without Internet access should fill in the form manually.

Whichever you prefer, *please do complete the questionnaire* when it reaches you. The higher the response rate, the clearer the picture of the membership, obtained, which should help us plan Society activities better.

### **New Year Party**

The main annual event for our membership to socialise is of course the New Year Party which this year will be on 10<sup>th</sup> January. With Quiz setter Bryan Hanlon returned from Africa, we are hoping for a very good turn-out. Tickets will be available at upcoming lectures at £6 in advance or £8 at the door on the night.

On a personal note, it has been very interesting visiting other historic places in the past couple of months. Malmesbury, Wilts, a one-time fortified hill town, is the oldest burgh in England, and had a very interesting Heritage Weekend exhibition in its Town Hall. It also has a fine remnant of a great abbey church. By total contrast I had a most enjoyable outing recently with the Caithness Field Club to East Coast fishing stations tucked away deep in startlingly rugged and rocky inlets south of Wick. A very tough environment, breeding very hardy people.

With best wishes for the festive season in December and I hope to see many of you at the New Year Party on 10<sup>th</sup> January.

**Donald Munro**  
President

## **ST ALBANS NEW MUSEUM PROJECT**

The re-submission of the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund was made in August. A supportive letter from English Heritage was received in time to accompany the re-application. The HLF decision is expected on 19th November but will not be made public until a week after that date.

**Donald Munro**

### **NEW TREASURER NEEDED**

After several years of service, John Thomson has decided to cut down on his commitments and has regrettably tendered his resignation as Treasurer. A replacement is required. The task is, by definition, vital to the running of the Society, but the duties are not onerous. John will provide a full job description and a comprehensive handover. With this position there will, of course, come a seat on the Society Council and the person will become a Trustee of the Society.

Interested? Then please contact Donald Munro or Bryan Hanlon for an initial chat.

### **NEW MEMBERS**

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

Mr Peter Limebear, St Albans  
Mr Roger Talbot, St Albans  
Mr Richard Butler, St Albans  
Mrs Julia MacDougall Wood, St Albans  
Mr David W Aston, St Albans  
Mr John Goh, Welwyn Garden City  
Mrs Catherine Webster, Park Street, St Albans  
Mr & Mrs David & Gillian Girdziusz, St Albans  
Ms Gill Brown, Stevenage  
Mr Paul Mears, St Albans  
Ms Barbara Ward, Kings Langley  
Ms Dee Drinkwater, St Albans  
Mr Caedmon Bradley, Redbourn  
Mr David & Mrs Jacqueline Brown, St Albans  
Mrs Carlyne & Mr Douglas Downer-Smith,  
Hemel Hempstead  
Mr Joe Davis, Hemel Hempstead  
Miss Ana Barron, St Albans

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### ST ALBANS AND HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Annual General Meeting was held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013 at Verulamium Museum. Seventy one members attended.

Apologies for absence were received from Chris Argue, Helen Bishop, Jennifer Cooper, Maggy Douglas, Mark Freeman, James and Vanessa Gregory, Richard and Gill Harvey, Pat Howe, Christine McDermott, Robin and Frances Morland, Anthony Oliver and John Thomson.

President's comments: A full report from the President had been published in the Newsletter. He felt that we had become involved in local issues with considerable effect, and highlighted the high number of members involved in the First World War project, led by Jon Mein. He thanked all officers and members of Council, particularly Pat Howe who had so ably stood in during the Secretary's five months' absence. Much of their hard work for the Society is unseen, but is vital for the life of the Society. He reminded everyone that we are hosting the HALH symposium on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, and encouraged all to participate on this day.

Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013 had been circulated. Their adoption was proposed by John Cox, seconded by Gerard McSweeney and unanimously agreed.

Accounts for the year ended 31 May 2012 had been circulated. Jon Mein proposed and Roy Bratby seconded that the accounts for the year to 31 May 2013 were received. This was carried unanimously.

Reports from Groups had been published in the Newsletter. Their adoption was proposed by Jane Kelsall, seconded by Irene Cowan, and unanimously accepted.

Election of members of Council: Before introducing the nominees present to the company assembled, the President paid special tribute and thanks to Gerard McSweeney who, after many years of devoted and able service to the Society, had decided to stand down from Council. The following members were elected en bloc, proposed by Gerard McSweeney, seconded by Jane Kelsall and agreed unanimously :

Bryan Hanlon	Secretary
John Thomson	Treasurer
Helen Bishop	Clock Tower
Doreen Bratby	Lecture Secretary
Roy Bratby	Chairman, Programme Development Committee
John Cox	Publicity Officer
Roderick Douglas	Website
Gill Harvey	Library
Pat Howe	Minutes Secretary/17 <sup>th</sup> Century Research Group
John Humphreys	Newsletter Editor
Frank Iddiols	Member without portfolio
Christine McDermott	Representative, Hertfordshire Archaeology & History
Jon Mein	Representative, First World War Project Group
Roger Miles	Representative, Archaeology Group
David Smith	Membership Secretary

Re-election of Independent Examiner: The re-election of Mr J R West as Independent Examiner of the accounts was proposed by John Cox, seconded by Roy Bratby and unanimously agreed. Members thanked Mr West for his work on the accounts.

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Join with other members and guests at the SAHAAS New Year Party  
January 10<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 p.m. in the Verulamium Museum

*Continued from Page 3*

At the conclusion of the meeting, the President presented Richard Darnell with a “certificate of appreciation” to mark his industry and dedication in building his extensive collection of photographs of architectural survivals in early 21st century St Albans and surrounding areas, and its subsequent donation to the Society.

After the AGM, Roy Bratby advised all present of future changes in lecture locations, following an unforeseen change in policy by St Alban’s School. Tuesday lectures will now be held at Verulamium Museum until further notice.

The evening concluded with an excellent lecture by Nigel Saul, Professor of Medieval History at Royal Holloway, University of London, and a member of the Magna Carta 800 Committee, entitled “*Magna Carta – History and Politics*”.



**Richard Darnell with President**  
*Photo by Frank Iddiols*



**Professor Saul with Doreen Bratby**  
*Photo by Frank Iddiols*

## THE MAYOR'S PRIZE 2014

### AN INVITATION TO ENTER

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. Submissions can be in the form of an essay of between about 5,000-10,000 words, including any illustrations. The Society recognises the growing use of IT as an aid to research and will accept submissions with fewer words and various digital images and other data when appropriate.

Full details of procedures, instructions and guidelines, and application forms are available on the Society’s website at <http://www.stalbanshistory.org>

**The deadline for applications is 30 April 2014**

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

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

*Note: Two submissions were made for the Mayor’s Prize in 2013 but, though both interesting exercises in themselves, neither of them met the criteria for awarding the prize.*

## MARGARET TAYLOR

Margaret Swinnerton was born the youngest of three sisters in Nottingham on 29<sup>th</sup> November 1915, and grew up in a house of ideas and conversation. Her school wanted her to take a degree in domestic science, an idea which Margaret ridiculed, cookery never being among her prodigious list of talents. She went instead to Birmingham to train as a physiotherapist and these medical skills remained throughout Margaret's life – e.g. whiling away the hours of her convalescence last winter at the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital, Welwyn, she showed the staff that she understood the exercises required of her at least as well as they did.

In 1937 Margaret married a promising young teacher called Tom Taylor. Over the following years they were blessed with six children. Margaret had a deep love for her whole family and followed their divergent lives with interest. They in turn blessed her with no fewer than 31 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Work took the family successively to Guiseley in Yorkshire, to Bath, and to Cricklewood in 1946 when Tom became Headmaster of Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School. This role was Tom's lasting legacy. He is remembered for moving the school to Elstree and setting it on the path to its present prominence. Haberdashers' became one of the deepest and enduring commitments of Margaret's life. She threw herself into the task of headmaster's wife: entertaining staff at her own expense, undertaking international trips with the school play and orchestra, and continuing her involvement long after Tom's retirement in 1973 - most recently in 2011 as guest of honour at the old boys' dinner on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the new school buildings. Many SAHAAS members will recall her lively and engaging account of life at "Habs" in her last paper to the Society as recently as 2009.

Margaret and Tom moved to St Albans in 1974 from where she pursued her diverse interests deep into retirement. Through her love of history she served as a cathedral guide. She also became a skilled archaeologist, undertaking Roman digs, and was a member of Birthe Biddle's team on all the Chapter House excavations from 1978. And, of course, she became the first female president of our Society. Her love of people and especially children was evidenced through her charitable work for Save the Children Fund and her support for playgroups such as the St Michael's Tiny Tots. She had a skilled artistic bent, adept both at painting and the piano. She kept fit through gardening, walking, and swimming - she had an unstoppable vivacity for life which belied her age. At 92 she could be found white water rafting on the Colorado and there is a photo from a similar period of Margaret in America up a ladder repairing the roof of a heritage log cabin. She was driving until the age of 95, benevolently chauffeuring to church those whom *she* termed 'elderly people'.

Margaret faced impairments, operations and accidents over recent years with stoicism and strength. Since last December she fought off norovirus, c. difficile and double pneumonia before finally being settled in Oaktree Manor Nursing Home where she received excellent care from the dedicated staff during her last few weeks. She died at Oaktree on the afternoon of Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August, and a Service of Thanksgiving filling St Michael's church was held on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

Your president, secretary and other members of Council and numerous members of the Society joined with many others to remember Margaret's full and varied life. Tributes were made by several family members and – of course – by Haberdashers' Aske's school. Following the service, we all joined the family in the churchyard to witness the interment of Margaret's ashes under a nearby tree.

A truly remarkable, and much loved, lady.

*We are indebted to the Rev Kenneth Padley of St Michael's church for helping with the above résumé of Margaret's life*

**Bryan Hanlon**

## 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY RESEARCH GROUP

### Report for 2012/3

*"My family, descendants of Roger Williams, Founder of Rhode Island and son of Alice Pemberton, daughter, I believe, of James Pemberton, leaves me speechless reading this history. Is there someone there to receive me on a trip to see these places?"*

These are the words of an email received during the year. The writer had read the article about the Pemberton Almshouses on the Society website. Alice Pemberton was the sister of Roger who founded the Almshouses; she married James Williams and their son, Roger, became a prominent figure in the development of Providence, Rhode Island. Roger left England in 1631 because his Puritan leanings precluded him from working in the Anglican church. He founded the first Baptist church in America.

Another enquiry related to the Bullwer family. We knew very little about them. A Mary Bullwer was referred to in the will of Robert Skelton (1632) as his niece and burials for Thomas and his wife, Mary, (1649 and 1638 respectively) were recorded in the Abbey registers. Skelton bequeathed three properties in St Albans to Mary Bullwer which later appeared in the will of her son John in 1656 together with the names of the tenants occupying the dwellings. These inhabitants we knew quite well. For example, one was Charles Tyrell. When his wife died in 1662 he requested a non-conformist preacher to take the funeral service in the Abbey church. A well-documented story of a shooting took place at the funeral. One of the points of information we have learnt during the exchange of information over the Bullwer family is that Tyrell was an apothecary. Only by researching the Bullwer family and reading John Bullwer's will would we have acquired this information.

Our enquirer is a historian practising in Texas and New York with a particular interest in the history of language sciences and as such has been doing research on John Bullwer and his family. Bullwer (1606-1656) was an English physician and early Baconian natural philosopher who wrote five works exploring the body and human communication, particularly by gesture. He was the first person in England to propose educating deaf people.

We have also heard from a descendant living in Australia of the Kentish family. We were able to provide a copy of our interpretation of the family tree.

All these enquiries come as a result of the Society website. It is a pleasure to provide and exchange information, especially if it is possible to meet with these dedicated researchers.

The work of transcribing probate documents dating from 1600 to 1649 is proceeding with a view to publication in a year or two. The team consists of seven enthusiastic Society members. We are asked to give talks from time to time. Jane Harris outlined our work at the St Albans and District Local History Network Day Conference in November and I gave a talk to the Abbey Guides in July entitled *Getting to know the townspeople of 17<sup>th</sup> century St Albans through probate and other surviving documents*.

**Pat Howe**

July 2013

*Editor's Note. Pat submitted this Annual Report for the August Newsletter but it was overlooked in editing.*

## CLOCK TOWER REPORT

This has been an excellent year for the Clock Tower in many respects. At least 7,000 adults and 2,000 children have come to visit. These figures are certainly an underestimate. Our success is due to many factors: the wonderful summer weather undoubtedly helped, the presence of Magna Carta all through August brought a huge number of people to the city centre as have other special events like the film festival, there have been extra happenings in the Tower, such as children's story telling and pumpkin making and we are now open for longer until the end of September. All this is in addition to Residents First Weekend, Heritage Open Days, the 'turn on' of the Christmas lights and we hope other pre-Christmas weekend openings jointly with the Civic Society and also during the Christmas Market in the Vintry Gardens.

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The reconstituted joint Clock Tower committee had its second meeting in October. We meet early in the year to plan the season and at the end of the summer to review our work. We also continue to send a representative to the City Attractions Group which meets every few months.

It has been good to see this development and it has depended on much greater co-operation among the groups involved: the two societies whose volunteers are the mainstay of Clock Tower operations, the City Council who maintain it, and the Museum Service staff who are working hard to increase visitor numbers in the city generally.

This City Attractions Group is one of several set up on the back of the City's Visitor Strategy, which encourage co-operation between everyone involved in a particular area of work, whether commercial, local government or the voluntary sector. Our group includes the Abbey, the Museums, the Clock Tower, Butterfly World, Willow Farm, the Signal Box, the de Havilland Aircraft Centre and Redbourn Museum. We encourage each other and it provides a valuable forum for the exchange of ideas and information.

As usual, I thank all those who have helped to make this the most successful summer for many years.

### **Helen Bishop**

SAHAAS Clock Tower Coordinator

### **LIBRARY NEWS**

The library continues to be very busy on Wednesday and Friday mornings, We have had recent enquiries about East Lodge, Oaklands; and William Longmire, the builder responsible for some of the nineteenth century Abbey restoration work, and other buildings in St Albans. This last came from a Longmire descendant in the USA.

We were also busy researching the existence of MI6 in St Albans during the Second World War for the BBC. Thanks to the better organisation of the map collection, Frank Iddiols was able to pinpoint the exact location of "Brescia", the MI6 registry. The building is still there, in the grounds of St Columba's College.

It is pleasing to report that after the great success of our exhibition in the Abbey over Heritage Open Days, the Abbey have invited us back for Residents First Weekend in January. We will be showing a display on "Education in St Albans 1830-1914", so do try and drop in over the weekend. These exhibitions have a really worthwhile footfall and are the most effective means we have found yet of publicising the Society's holdings.

We continue to add digital images to our website, including recently a number relating to the 1907 Pageant, and Frederick Kinneir Tarte - St Albans architect who suddenly took off for Australia - a somewhat wayward thing to do perhaps in 1907! Our thanks for these are due to Malcolm Merrick. We are also thinking about indexing and digitising Richard Darnell's fine collection of 1200 slides of St Albans buildings and architectural details.

We are adding new books to the collections and take a small but hopefully relevant number of journals on local history, and on archaeology. There are too many items to list, but here are a few recent articles of interest:

"Roman Britain As You've Never Seen It Before", by Alex Smith, in *British Archaeology* (Sept/Oct 2013) pp 48-51. The first results coming from the East of England, of a major project reconsidering rural Roman Britain using the masses of data from two decades of commercial excavation.

"Time Team Talk about the [manor of] More", by Heather Falvey, in *Rickmansworth Hist. Soc. Jour.*, No. 100 pp 8-11. A report of the excavation in 2012.

In addition our own Jon Mein has followed up his piece on military tribunals in *Herts Past and Present*, with an article in the autumn issue on St Albans inns and alehouses.

### **Gill Harvey**

Librarian

## FIRST WORLD WAR GROUP

We are delighted to welcome three further researchers to the group, namely Linda Clarke, Liz Rolfe and Romaine Byers, making a total of 21. Research has started recently in two new areas, namely food provision and the relationship between the Army, including the many thousands of soldiers billeted in and around the city, and the locals.

In tandem with the Society's Library display, our display at the Abbey Heritage Open Days was well-attended and we received several good leads. In the run-up to the event we published the *War Memorials Walk* leaflet and also a large table ("matrix") listing the details of nearly 600 men who died during the war together with the many war memorials in the city on which their names appear. Both are available to download from the Society's website. We are grateful to everyone in the group for their help at the Abbey and towards the publications thanking Sue Mann, Barry Bateman and Gareth Hughes in particular for their extensive contributions.

The 1911 census transcription project is now underway with nine members of the Society responding to our cry for help in October. This is a two-part project: in Phase One, our aim is transcribe into a spreadsheet the details of all 24,000 or so people living in the City on census night – 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1911. So we can fully analyse the transcription, we will classify each person according to occupation and status. This, the second phase, should start in November and we anticipate completing both phases by the end of February 2014. The results of this project will form a key part of our understanding of the social, occupational and demographic aspects of the city in 1914.



**Wagons Loaded with pontoons in London Road**

*Photograph by permission of HALS*

Finally, a word of thanks to Mike Neighbour, author of the excellent "*St Albans East End*" books. Many of you will know that several years ago the then owners of the *Herts Advertiser* destroyed the paper's collection of photographic negatives. While it is impossible to replace that unique resource, Mike is currently doing the next best thing. Using the original copies of the newspapers held at HALS, he is capturing every photo via a digital camera. He has recently given the Society a complete digital set of these photos from the 1914-1919 period transferring copyright to us at the same time. (The collection is available in the Society's library). Our President acknowledged this generous gift by sending a letter of thanks to Mike.

**Jon Mein and Anne Wares**

### St Albans War Memorials Walk Leaflet

Throughout St Albans there are at least 40 memorials to those who died in the First World War. In September the Society's Home Front Research Group produced a leaflet that maps a tour round most of these showing not only the unique collection of street memorials but also others sited at old factories and schools.

Having 'sold out' of the first run a new version is now available from the Tourist Information Centre and digital versions can be viewed on the History Pin website [www.historypin.com](http://www.historypin.com)



## MUCH HADHAM

A group of Society members paid a visit to the village of Much Hadham on 18 September 2013, which started with a tour of the Forge Museum, led by the curator, Cristina Harrison. The museum is set in a Grade II listed building, once a farmhouse on the Moor Place estate, parts of which date back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The forge and bellows room are part of a 17<sup>th</sup> century barn conversion, and in 1811 the shoeing room and blacksmith's shop were added when Frederick Page moved in. He began a dynasty of four generations of Page blacksmiths, the last of whom, Miss Jean Page, conveyed the forge and its two cottages to the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust by Deed of Gift in 1988. The museum underwent a major restoration in 2009, and more work is currently underway, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The museum includes a local history gallery, well-designed to be accessible and of interest to visitors of all ages, and galleries devoted to the craft and mythology of the Blacksmith, the Page family and beekeepers.

A key aspect of the museum came to light in the front room of the original cottage. Investigations during the restoration revealed some amazingly preserved Tudor wall paintings under many layers of subsequent paint and wallpaper. These include a large painting of the Judgement of Solomon, with Elizabeth I as Solomon, apparently a common practice in obsequiousness in Tudor and Stuart times. The paintings include the Royal Arms of Elizabeth and the Newce family arms.

Cristina explained to us that these paintings were intended by the owner of the building to display his wealth to all who saw them, to promote themselves locally and in the Royal Court. The house was owned by the Newce family, who left the City of London and established themselves as the leading family in Much Hadham in the sixteenth century. A small but well-decorated internal window in this painted room would have been the means through which Clement and William Newce conducted financial dealings with clients.

Pat Howe, on hearing of the Newce family, realised that Much Hadham may hold the answer to a mystery of one of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century group's wills, that of Elizabeth Newce, who died in St Albans in 1695, and about whom no further information had been found. This was of great interest to our group. Cristina assured us that she had found no other families with this name and that 'our' Elizabeth must be a descendant, probably granddaughter, of Clement Newce.

When the wealthy Newce family moved to Hertfordshire from the City of London, they would have found a village already prosperous, probably due to the manor having been bequeathed to the Bishops of London by Ethelfleda, widow of the 10<sup>th</sup> century Saxon king Edmund the Magnificent. The Bishops' summer palace still exists in some form (although



Cristina Harrison with SAHAAS Members

*Photo by David Girdziusz*

now a private residence) and is adjacent to St Andrew's church.

Cristina took us for a walk through this beautiful village, described by Pevsner as "visually probably the most successful village in the county" and the main street as being "long, of very high architectural quality and beautifully maintained." The buildings certainly are very attractive, big Georgian houses alongside C16 and C17 cottages. Nearly all of these are now residential, although at one time there would have been shops, businesses such as the saddlery, some coaching inns (Much Hadham lies on the route from London to Norwich and Cambridge), some schools and even one large house being used as a hospital during the First World War. Many of the houses have names now which signify their earlier use. The current Manor House stands on the foundations of the Tudor house built by the Newce family.

Much Hadham lays claim to being the birthplace of the Tudor dynasty. This is because Catherine de Valois, widow of Henry V, gave birth in the Bishops' Palace, to Owen Tudor's son Edmund, who became the father of the future Henry VII.

We visited St Andrew's church, with its lovely example of the traditional Hertfordshire spike. The sculptor Henry Moore had lived in the village at one time, and the church has a splendid stained glass window, depicting the Tree of Life, designed by him. It is a magnificent church with a 121 ft long nave; Cristina pointed out tiny traces of the red leather which would once have covered the door. These and other unusual characteristics for a church in a village this size are probably explained by the fact of the bishops holding the manor for several centuries. There was a plaque in the church which stirred the interest of our group, as it marked the tomb of one Jeremy Pemberton.

This was a most interesting and enjoyable morning visit, for the arranging of which Pat Howe deserves our thanks. Some of us had a pleasant lunch in the village, while others went to visit the Henry Moore foundation in Perry Green.

**Christine McDermott**

Join with other members and guests at the SAHAAS New Year Party  
January 10<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 p.m. in the Verulamium Museum

## FRANCIS FRITH IN ST ALBANS

(Continued from "Francis Frith in St Albans" SAHAAS Newsletter 189)

At the end of March members of the Society spotted an interesting historical St Albans item on eBay – a Victorian stereo view of the Market Place. Even the thumbnail photograph showed that it must date back to 1858 and was therefore the earliest known photo of the town. Stereo views may be familiar from antique shops. The camera took two exposures of the same scene from slightly separated viewpoints, giving a 3-D effect when placed in a suitable simple viewer. But we are more concerned with the historical content of the card than its optical trickery.

It is a warm summer afternoon: the Clock Tower clock says 5.20, and the sun is still high to the west. Windows are wide open. From Waxhouse Gate, on the south side of the High Street, we look straight up Market Place past the Town Hall in the distance. In front, on the left, is the timber-framed shop built around the Clock Tower in about 1550. It is a saddler's, and looks rather trim, but the Clock Tower behind it (called the *Clock House* then), looks every one of its 450 years. Its stone details (the quoins and windows) are rotten and worn inches back from the rest of the wall. The worst places have been replaced with brick. Concern was growing at this time about the state of the Tower, and the surrounding shop was demolished in 1858 to allow works to take place. The Tower was finally restored, with a rather heavy hand, in 1865, and this is the only known photograph before its restoration. Careful comparison does however show that not all the flint coursed exterior was renewed in 1865.

But to our surprise the photograph is even earlier than 1858. On the right in the middle distance is the roof of a long single-storey building – the old 'Market Hall' – the corn exchange. The roof of the old Hall was supported on posts and there were no walls – it was open to the



elements. Beneath it grain was sold retail to householders, and wholesale to millers, bakers and corn factors. The Corporation decided to demolish it in 1855, did so during or after July 1856, and opened the new indoor Corn Exchange – which remains on the same site – in 1857. We think the photograph probably dates to mid-1855 and cannot be much later than June 1856.

The drum-like object inside railings in the right foreground is one of the town's two public pumps – built to a strange patent design – shortly before its removal. Behind on the right is *The Boot* public house.

The surprise about the town revealed by the photo is how tidy it seems. Etchings made only a little earlier show the same scene muddy, tumble-down, and full of horses and chickens. Perhaps the change was real, with a pedestrian pavement and street drain installed here at the heart of the town in the early 1850s.

**Chris Green**

### LOOK! ST ALBANS:

Our Community Voice on Design

A letter of invitation has been issued to all interested to the first AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> November at Dagnall Street Baptist Church at 7 pm. A revised draft constitution has been prepared. Both a draft summary of the constitution, and the draft Memorandum of Understanding with SADC can be seen on the Look! St Albans website "<http://www.scribd.com/LookStAlbans>" There is also a rather stylishly attractive public notice for the meeting and its headline speaker Tony Burton, the Director of Civic Voice. The main purpose of the AGM is to ratify the Constitution. Unfortunately this clashes with the already arranged Frank Iddiols' SAHAAS lecture. I informed Vanessa Gregory before the AGM date was

agreed that the 19<sup>th</sup> was unsuitable. However, the 19<sup>th</sup> was the only date available for Tony Burton to speak.

For all its flaws, "Look" is a project that is in the interests of assuring sensible development in St Albans City Centre, and one that this Society should seek to support. There does need to be at least 30 supporters present to ratify the constitution. Can I ask that those of you with interests in city development and conservation who would not be going to Frank Iddiols' talk on Ordnamce Survey benchmarks to please try to go along to the "Look" AGM? Please contact me if you wish more background information and a fuller picture of the state of the exercise.

**Donald Munro**

Join with other members and guests at the SAHAAS New Year Party

January 10<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 p.m. in the Verulamium Museum

## HERTFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM

The Hertfordshire Association for Local History (HALH) Symposium (Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November) was a great success and as one person wrote afterwards: "Good Speakers – Very good lunch, tea and coffee. Splendid"!

The topic "traditional building materials" was suggested by past HALH President, Mr Robert Dimsdale, who alas has now moved from his native Hertfordshire to live in Switzerland but it was good to be able to welcome both Robert and his wife, Françoise, to the Symposium.

Over 120 local historians had booked to come though there were a few "no shows" on the day.

The five main speakers – Professor Martin Biddle, Mrs Pam Ward, Robin Harcourt Williams, Helen Gibson and Robin Webb all gave us excellent talks on their individual topics of "Tile", "Flint and Totternhoe stone", "Brick", "Wood (Timber)" and "Thatch". There were two further speciality talks: about Caleb Hitch's bricks, used throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Ware and other places in East and North Hertfordshire (Dr Alan Thomson); and the use of "Clay-bats" – very large unbaked clay bricks that were used for walls and 'working buildings in Ashwell (Peter Greener).

The Symposium was held at Abbots Hill School, Nash Mills, Hemel Hempstead, which has been on the site



for just over a century. The school had purchased the original and then derelict house which had previously been lived in by both John Dickinson, the paper maker and Sir John Evans, a former Vice-President of SAHAAS. Today, the school's excellent facilities are a joy to use and the landscaped grounds are well cared-for.

There were interesting displays by several of the county's local history societies including SAHAAS, with Jon Mein demonstrating the research being undertaken by society members on the First World War's effect on the local St. Albans community.

The Symposium's success is also mirrored by the financial return, yielding a small surplus for both HALH and SAHAAS.

**John Cox**

*Photograph - Frank Iddiols*

## ST ALBANS AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY NETWORK, Autumn conference Saturday 26th October, 2014

The third Local History Network conference was held at Verulamium Museum featuring an extensive and varied agenda of talks. Our main "pitch" was an account by Jon Mein and Barry Bateman of the SAHAAS First World War project. Several other members of the Society gave excellent presentations. These included a splendid account by the Rev. Peter Wadsworth of "The early history of St Saviour's Church, St Albans" – with illumination of Wilton Hall, a notable SAHAAS personality; an interesting explanation by Kris Lockyear & Ellen Shlasko of the "New geophysical surveys at Verulamium"; an excellent short survey by Kate Harwood of "Historic Gardens across Hertfordshire"; and a brief but intriguing account by Andrea Hill of her painting "The Second Battle of St Albans Map". There were numerous other contributions by local and other historical activists,

most notably an enlightening paper by Peter Clayton of the Treasure Valuation Committee on "Treasure Trove and working with museums".

It was a very interesting day, and the organisers Mike Neighbour, Catherine Newley of MoSTA, Elizabeth Gardner and Brian Adams are to be congratulated. It is a very useful exercise in bringing a wide range of local historical researchers together to hear papers of local and general interest, and keeping each other aware of their various activities. If I have any query about the arrangement it would be that perhaps too many papers are squeezed in, and longer should be allowed in the day for the invaluable opportunity for one to one or group networking. That said, Bravo!

**Donald Munro, President**

## LECTURE PROGRAMME

5<sup>th</sup> November 2013 - 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014

### Synopses and Personal Profiles

**Tuesday 5 November 2013**

***Butcher, Baker, Candlestick Maker – The City Livery Companies***

**Professor Tim Connell**

Trade and craft associations have flourished all over Europe for many centuries, but the City of London companies, now collectively known as the Livery, are unique in their survival, number and diversity. The social and economic conditions which gave birth to the original guilds have long since been overtaken by the development of industry and commerce, but the livery companies still flourish today as living institutions. Their survival has been achieved by doing what they have always done: fostering their trade in a wide context, serving the community, and embracing modern skills and professions.

*Professor Tim Connell is Professor Emeritus at City University London where he set up the Languages department and was Director of Language Studies for nineteen years. He is a graduate of Oxford, Liverpool, City and London universities, and has also studied in Spain and Mexico. His particular interest is in the field of professional training for translators and interpreters, where he works closely with the Chartered Institute of Linguists (of which he is a Fellow and Vice-President) as Chair of the Educational Trust Board. International education is another area of key concern.*

*Tim writes and broadcasts regularly on a wide range of themes relating to London, languages in the modern world and diverse cultural topics. He is a member of the All Party Parliamentary Languages Group and works closely with the Industry and Parliament Trust. During his time at City University he developed close links in the Square Mile as a Freeman of the City of London. He is a Liveryman of the Stationers' and Newspaper Makers' Company, where he sits on the Court of Assistants. He is a Fellow of Gresham College and is Chair of the Gresham Society.*

**Tuesday 12 November 2013**

***Tudor Hertfordshire***

**Daphne Knott**

The sixteenth century was a time of rapid change both nationally and locally. 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 is the Learning and Access Officer of Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.*

*After completing a history degree at Southampton University, Daphne took a postgraduate archives diploma at University College London. Her first archive post was at the head office of British Petroleum, where she became Company Archivist. Several years as an adult education lecturer on a variety of historical topics followed while her family grew up. Before taking up her current position, 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 19 November 2013**

***Ordnance Survey Bench Marks in and around St Albans***

**Frank Iddiols**

This lecture begins with the brief development of the Ordnance Survey's Benchmark system in England and relating to St Albans through primary, secondary and tertiary marks. We will then look at the method for identifying and locating the positions of existing Bench Marks focusing on the Bench Marks which have been located in and around St Albans. A practical demonstration of how Bench Marks can be used will be included in the lecture.

*Frank holds an Honours Degree in Education and has worked in the Construction Industry gaining various professional qualifications. He has lectured on Construction subjects.*

*He has an interest in maps, particularly of London, Hertfordshire and St Albans and volunteers as a Clockateer.*

**Friday 29 November 2013**

***The Edwardian Social Network***

**Guy Atkins**

This lecture will guide us through the astonishing culture of writing, sending, and collecting postcards in Edwardian Britain. At half the price of sending a letter and with up to six posts a day, the postcard allowed the Edwardians to master quick, informal messages long before our digital social media. Using cards from his personal collection, he will reveal the forgotten tactics and delights of the 'Golden Age' of postcards. The lecture will draw on Guy's recent article on the Edwardian postcard craze in *History Today* (June 2013).

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*Guy Atkins is a writer and researcher currently undertaking a PhD at the Museum of London and Goldsmiths, University of London. His research interests include the political potential of historical objects and cultural institutions. He writes extensively on the history of the postcard, and is a columnist for Picture Postcard Monthly and Stamp & Coin Mart magazines. His blog on postcards can be found at [www.postcardese.com](http://www.postcardese.com) or @postcardese on Twitter.*

## **Tuesday 3 December 2013**

### **Cassiobury – A Walk in the Park**

**Laurie Elvin**

The lecture begins with a discussion of the origin of the name Cassio, which seems to be unique to SW Herts. Next the extent of the Cassiobury Estate of the Earls of Essex, which was sold off in the early 20th Century, will be described. A 'walk' will then be taken around its perimeter, much of which can be followed today, showing images of lost and extant buildings on the Essex estate. Another path is then taken through Whippendell Woods, through the middle of the estate, to pick up other important buildings, including Cassiobury House itself.

*Laurie Elvin is Chartered Surveyor who developed his interest in archaeology and local history by obtaining a Diploma in Archaeology from Birkbeck, University of London in 2006, after retirement. Since then he has participated in over 300 days of fieldwork including wetlands of Thames foreshore and Severn Estuary, Roman and Tudor periods at Syon Park, West London, Neolithic and Roman in North Hertfordshire and 19th /20th century in community digs in Central London. He is Chairman of SW Herts Archaeological and Historical Society and has researched various aspects of Watford's Local History.*

## **Tuesday 10 December 2013**

### **German U-Boats and the Battle of the Atlantic.**

**Ian Thompson**

This lecture will briefly cover the build-up and background of the U-Boats prior to WW2. Then moving on to the main types of boat, their weaponry and performance and the anti-submarine weapons used by the Allies.

It will concentrate mainly on the Battle of the Atlantic and emphasise some of the key points of the campaign, in particular the attack on the eastern seaboard of the USA in 1942 and the increase in Allied

airpower and the German response and finally the effect on the conflict brought about by the breaking of the German naval Enigma cyphers. In 1940 Admiral Doenitz had said "I will show that the U-Boat alone can win this war" They so nearly succeeded.

*Ian is a retired Government employee with no military background. He has always been interested in military history, in particular WW 2 with a special interest in the German Navy. Since 2007 Ian has been a volunteer guide at Bletchley Park which also includes giving talks to outside groups. In addition Ian also organizes and runs quiz nights for a number of golf and rotary clubs.*

## **Friday 10 January 2014**

### **New Year Party**

## **Tuesday 14 January 2014**

### **The Old Town Hall St Albans**

**Chris Green**

St Albans has had a difficult relationship with its chief modern architectural statement, the new-Classical Courthouse and Town Hall (1830-2). This talk looks at the building and its alterations in the context of declining influence within the county.

*Chris Green was formerly Director of St Albans Museums and now pursues archaeological, historical and other interests.*

## **Tuesday 21 January 2014**

### **St Albans in the First World War**

**Jonathan Mein and Dr Julie Moore**

After one year of research on the project, *The First World War: the Home Front in St Albans*, the group will present an update of their findings. In particular they will consider the effect of the war effort on the economic development of St Albans focusing on the staple trades of the straw hat manufacturers, boot, shoe and raincoat makers as well the large printing companies. The controversial topic of the treatment of the city's 25 conscientious objectors will also be addressed.

*Jonathan Mein has a degree in History and Law. Having worked in the computer industry advising large organisations how to negotiate with the major software vendors like Microsoft and IBM, he is currently taking a career break giving him time to research and write about 19th century St Albans - and the coal mining community of Pembrokeshire! Jon won the 2011 Mayor's Prize for the outstanding contribution to the history of St Albans and Hertfordshire.*

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*Julie Moore is a Research Fellow with the University of Hertfordshire's Heritage Hub. A Hertfordshire resident for more years than she is prepared to admit, her research focus has been on 19<sup>th</sup> century social history in general and Hertfordshire in particular. Her Master's Dissertation looked at Evangelicalism in St Albans during the period 1858-65, and her Doctoral Thesis, completed in 2010, was entitled 'The Impact of Agricultural Depression and Landownership Change on the County of Hertfordshire, c.1870-1914.' Julie is a member of SAHAAS, and a member of the First World War Home Front Research Team.*

## **Friday 31 January 2014**

### **St Albans Abbey in its Medieval European Setting**

**Brenda Bolton**

When Adrian IV became pope in 1154, his elevation brought great benefit to the great Benedictine abbey of St Albans where his father had become a monk. By means of two separate embassies to the Curia in 1156 and 1157, Robert de Gorrion, the then abbot, sought to acquire privileges of abbatial primacy and exemption from episcopal authority—in the case of St Albans, the Bishop of Lincoln—which would secure for the monastery the position of premier Abbey of all England. But the Abbey was already renowned throughout Christendom and the lecture will attempt to address its wider European significance from the refoundation by Offa, king of Mercia (757–96) to the fourteenth-century abbots who presided over the General Chapter of all Benedictines.

*Brenda Bolton taught Medieval History at Westfield College, later Queen Mary & Westfield, in the University of London for more than thirty years. She specializes in the religious history of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, and particularly Innocent III (1198–1216), the pope who approved St Francis of Assisi. She is also one of the editors of the Ashgate series entitled Church, Faith and Culture in the Medieval West which deals with aspects of ecclesiastical history including the papacy and monasticism.*

## **Tuesday 11 February 2014**

### **'Widows' reads – Observations from the Wills of 17<sup>th</sup> Century St Albans Widows**

**Pat Howe**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Century Group has recently transcribed over 100 wills and 33 inventories of widows living in St Albans. The lecture will analyse these documents under a number of headings such as wealth in relation

to the occupation of their deceased husbands, to the ownership of property and the moveable assets such as furniture, bedding, plate, livestock and crops. The paper also draws out interesting concern and provision for young relatives. The length of time women remained a widow and in some cases carried on the business of their husbands shows a liking for their independence. Aspects of their religious beliefs will also be discussed.

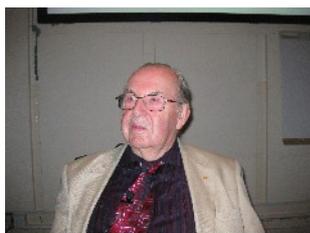
*Pat joined the Seventeenth Century Population Research Group after completing a dissertation assessing the extent of religious dissent in St Albans as part of a degree in Modern History. She now co-ordinates the Group's research and maintains the database that comprises biographical information on people who lived and worked in the town during the seventeenth century. Pat contributed to the book St Albans 1650-1700 and the booklet on the Pemberton Almshouses and she has published a number of articles in academic journals.*

A reminder of some of our guest speakers



5 November 2013  
Tim Connell  
*City Livery Companies*

15 October 2013  
Jane Kelsall  
*Royal Monuments at Windsor*



25 October 2013  
John Brodrick  
*F.W. Kinneir Tarte*

*Photographs - Frank Iddiols*



**HALH Symposium - SAHAAS Display-**  
*Photo - Frank Iddiols*



**Much Hadham**  
*Photo - Roy Bratby*



**Heritage Open Day- A corner of the SAHAAS Display**  
*Photo - Frank Iddiols*



Please join us for our

# NEW YEAR PARTY

**Verulamium Museum**

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2014, at 7.30 p.m.**

Our main social event of the year.  
Meet with fellow members for  
Conversation and Quiz, Mulled Wine and Festive Food  
New members especially welcome

A finger buffet will be organised by Doreen Bratby (01727 858050)  
*She would welcome offers of party food: sweet or savoury*

Liquid refreshment will be in the capable hands of Bryan Hanlon,  
Carole Oldknow and Robin Green

Tickets £6.00 when purchased in advance

Tickets are available at each evening talk,  
or by completing and posting the form on Page 16

£8 at the door



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January 10<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 p.m. in the Verulamium Museum

