



ST ALBANS & HERTFORDSHIRE
ARCHITECTURAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 198 NOVEMBER 2015



Photograph: Frank Iddiols

*After 117 years the Museum of St Albans
in Hatfield Road closed its doors on
20th September 2015*

SOME ITEMS INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message
Annual General Meeting Report
Group Reports
John Carrington

Ancient Walls
That Sinking Feeling
Stumped
Lecture Programme

NEW YEAR PARTY - FRIDAY 8TH JANUARY

CONTENTS

Membership	2
President's message	3
SAHAAS Annual General Meeting 2015	5
Library Report	8
Recent acquisitions	8
Journal articles	9
Home Front Project	9
Clock Tower	10
The 17 th Century Research Group	12
Publications & Publicity	13
War Memorials	13
Civic Society Awards	13
Elizabeth Gardner	14
Rita Cadisch	14
Roman Wall	15
Hall Place Wall	16
That Sinking Feeling	17
Birklands School	18
The St Albans Architectural Heritage Project	19
Stumped no longer by odd game	20
John Carrington, farmer of Bramfield	23
Contributions	24
Programme Development Committee Report 2014-15	25
Friday Lecture Report	25
Lecture Programme November 2015 –February 2016	26
Foundry Data	30
Diary Dates	31
SAHAAS NEW YEAR PARTY	32

MEMBERSHIP

The Society welcomes the following new members:

Mrs Hester Gabbutt, Harpenden
 Mr Bryan Morris & Ms Susan Jarratt, St Albans
 Mr Mike Neighbour, Hoddesdon
 Mr David & Mrs Pamela Samuelson, St Albans
 Mr Terry Turner, Harpenden

David Smith
Membership Secretary

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The last month has been dominated by the book sale our Society and the Civic Society have organised in aid of the New Museum and Gallery for St Albans. It has involved many hours of hard work by people who have helped collect books from generous donors, stored books, sorted books, transported books, publicised this event using leaflets, the Internet and the *Herts Advertiser*, and also provided refreshments for the workers and the customers. The result was an astonishing sale of between 5,000 and 6,000 books which filled the Assembly Room of the Town Hall on Saturday 24th October.



Inevitably, at the close of the sale, we were left with a number of unsold books and these were reviewed and either donated to charities or are being offered for sale on the Internet. I am glad to say that the sale has raised over £2,000 for the project. Congratulations to all concerned.

This was an example of team work at its best. It would be impossible, I think, for me to thank everyone individually who contributed to the success of the day, but I am grateful to everyone from both societies and the museum staff who were part of this effort. It shows what we can achieve together!

On 13th October I was invited to the Awards Evening at the Maltings organised yearly by the Civic Society and went to represent us. I was impressed with the care and professionalism with which the team inspected the various features put forward for awards and the variety of items, ranging from improvements to walls, new housing, Earthworks new eco-building, and Farrow and Ball's new shop. It was perhaps no surprise that the Odyssey was the overall winner, but I was particularly glad to note that the newly instituted Trevelyan family award went to the Council team of restorers who had spent time and funds repairing our unique First World War Abbey Parish street memorials. The long-standing interest and all the hard work done by Alice Goodman, and more recently by

Continued from Page 3

John Cox and Ann Dean and the Arc and Arc generally was publicly acknowledged and the photo supplied by John Cox of Trooper Walter Bell proudly displayed.

My last message this time is to ask for more members to help with the Clock Tower. It is the responsibility of both the Arc and Arc and the Civic Society and we need some of the newer members to come forward to help. I have to say that being a clockateer is enormous fun and I cannot quite relinquish it in spite of now having other duties. This year has been a particularly successful one, due to the work of Caroline Howkins, Mike Carey and Jill Singer, but it all depends on the clockateers who report in to do their turn and this can be a little or as often as you like. (*See Page 11*).

This will be the last newsletter before Christmas and our New Year Party on Friday 8th January, so may I wish everyone a time of peace and good cheer.

Helen Bishop



SAHAAS NEW YEAR PARTY
Verulamium Museum
Friday 8th January 2016 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

Tickets available at all SAHAAS functions or by post
(see Page 31)

SAHAAS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015

The Annual General Meeting was held on 15th September 2015 at Verulamium Museum. Eight-six members attended. Bryan Hanlon opened the meeting by commenting on the high numbers in attendance and asked members to let him have ideas for a more suitable venue.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Helen Bishop (President), Caroline Howkins, Frank Iddiols, Gerard McSweeney, Alison Metcalfe, Richard Mein, David Moore, Liz Rolfe and David Smith

2. President's comments: Donald Munro stood in for Helen Bishop who had prepared an address which Donald read to the assembly.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2014 had been circulated. Their adoption was proposed by Ann Dean and seconded by Mike North and unanimously agreed.

4. Accounts for the year ended 31st May 2015 had been circulated. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Christine McDermott and seconded by John Cox and unanimously carried.

5. Reports from groups had been published in the Newsletter except for that of Doreen Bratby, the Lecture Secretary. She reported that during the year there had been two changes of speakers at the last minute and she was grateful to those members who stood in at short notice. Overall the speakers had been of a high standard and attendance good. She thanked members for their part in the success of the programme. Adoption of the reports was proposed by John Cox and seconded by Anne Wares and unanimously accepted.

6. Election of members of Council: The following members were elected en bloc, proposed by Mike North and seconded by Julia Merrick and unanimously agreed:

Continued from Page 5

Helen Bishop	President
Bryan Hanlon	Secretary
David Moore	Treasurer
Doreen Bratby	Lecture Secretary
Roy Bratby	Chairman, Programme Development Committee
Mike Carey	Clock Tower (jointly with Caroline Howkins)
John Cox	Publicity Officer
Maggy Douglas	Minutes Secretary
Roderick Douglas	Website
Pat Howe	17 th Century Research Group
Caroline Howkins	Clock Tower (jointly with Mike Carey)
John Humphreys	Newsletter Editor
Frank Iddiols	Technical Officer
Christine McDermott	Hertfordshire Archaeology and History
John Mein	First World War Project Group
Roger Miles*	Archaeology Group
Donald Munro	Library
David Smith	Membership Secretary

*Note: * Roger informed the meeting that he had joined the Society in 1983 and now wished to step down from the leadership of this group. Members acknowledged the tremendous work he has done and showed their appreciation with their applause. (There have been two expressions of interest in Roger's position followed by extended discussions, but no decision as yet.)*

7. Award of Honorary Membership to Kate Morris : Details of the proposal that Kate should receive Honorary Membership of the Society were published in Newsletter 197. In addition, Jon Mein, in proposing this award, added his own tribute. Most notable was when Kate was Mayor of the City in the year 2007-8 when she put the history of the City at the heart of her mayoralty. She picked out six periods of history and organised an event open to the public to mark each of them. Kate also established the Mayor's Prize – a competition requiring participants to research an aspect of local history and commit it to

Continued on Page 7

Continued from Page 6

writing. Her aim was to encourage people to participate in this activity and the winner would receive £100. Jon Mein competed in 2011, won the prize and his success opened the door for him to study for an MA. Another member of the Society, Anne Wares, won the prize in 2012. Both felt that these achievements led directly to the formation of the Home Front project. Another of Kate's many contributions is the work she has done in the twinning of St Albans with Worms. In September 2014 the Home Front Group put on a successful conference when Kate arranged for Dr Daniel Nagel from Worms to lecture on the experience of the German Home Front. In return, Kate gave a speech in German at Worms involving many hours of preparation.

The proposal was seconded by Roderick Douglas and carried unanimously.

Kate responded by saying she was flattered to receive the honour, she was grateful to the Society from whom she had received encouragement and support, in particular J. T. Smith who had persuaded her to engage in transcription and data input for the 17th Century Group which gave her a taste for further research.

8. Election of Independent Examiner: The election of Mr Chris Hall as Independent Examiner of the accounts was proposed by John Humphreys, seconded by Jon Mein, and unanimously agreed.

9. The Street Memorials of St Albans Abbey Parish: Members were reminded that this publication was available for sale at £8.00 each.

The meeting concluded with a presentation by David Thorold, Curator of Prehistory to Medieval at Verulamium Museum, on 'The Sandridge Hoard'. 159 Roman gold coins had been found by a member of the public using a metal detector. Apart from a find in Corbridge of 160 coins, this was the largest collection of gold coins ever found in Britain.

Bryan Hanlon
Secretary

LIBRARY REPORT

The Library continues busy as usual although regular procedures in cataloguing have been badly held up by the loss in recent months of the Internet connection. We are pursuing this with St Albans District Council (SADC). The Library team will be meeting in November to take forward planning the move, and also to consider a restatement of SAHAAS Library policies – to be brought to Council.

St Albans City Archive Catalogues – updated transcript. Our thanks go to Jon Mein and John Cox who, with the permission of HALS, have produced for our website an updated edited transcript of this major primary source for local research.

Local Libraries Group. A meeting was held on 27 October. Progress reports were given on the impact of the HLF applications affecting the Cathedral, Museum of St Albans and SAHAAS libraries. There has been major restructuring in the Hertfordshire Library service, with changes at St Albans, which fortunately remains with Watford one of the major public libraries in the county.

In view of the extent of change going on in all institutions, apart from the forthcoming Beardsmore Collection local material disposals list (to be shown to SAHAAS, St Albans Museums, and HALS) there is little scope at present for developing the sort of cooperation we envisage – for example, local Union Catalogue, etc. These are on the back burner until the very substantial changes in the various institutions have bedded down. We will however keep in touch and keep each other informed of developments.

Donald Munro

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

The diary of John Carrington, farmer of Bramfield, (See Book Review Page 23)

Archaeology in Hertfordshire: recent research, a festschrift for Tony Rook. Edited by Kris Lockyear. Hatfield: Hertfordshire Publications, 2015. 356pp, illus., plans, tables. Tony Rook's 80th birthday in 2012 was marked by a conference organised by Welwyn Archaeological Society. The fifteen papers presented there focus on the county's archaeology

Continued from Page 8

from the Neolithic to the post-medieval periods. Two appendices list Roman coin hoards and excavation coins and PAS finds from the county.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

The Local Historian vol 45, no. 3, pp 224-231. "How accurate are the nineteenth century censuses? Using Parliamentary reports as an external standard", by Keith Lawrence.

The occupations of women and family members were not systematically recorded in 19th century censuses. This study focuses on the occupation of toll-collectors, and suggests that the role of women in this occupation may have been grossly underestimated.

In *Herts Past and Present*, no 26, Autumn 2015.

P.2 "Brief guide to sources: sources for population figures", by David Short.

Pp 3-8 "A Hertfordshire tax strike in the 1630s", by Alan Thomson. King Charles I's extension of the ship money tax to inland counties met fierce resistance. This is a detailed account of Hertfordshire's opposition to the tax in the years before the Civil War.

Pp 9-16 "Hertford's historic pageant 1914", by Philip Sheail. Examines the funding of an historic pageant staged in the spring of 1914 to celebrate the town's millenary.

Pp 17-19 "Barnet battlefield survey, 2015-2017", by Heather Falvey. Describes a project to identify the site of the Battle of Barnet in 1471, a key battle in the Wars of the Roses; the exact location of the site has long been disputed.

Pp 20-26 "The country engineer: the story of Goode's Engineering, Royston", by Martin Dawes. The history of this agricultural engineering business from its beginnings in the mid-19th century to its demise in the late 1970's.

Tony Cooper

HOME FRONT PROJECT

Further to the report in the August issue, the manuscript for *St Albans: Life on the Home Front, 1914-1918*, is almost complete. We are gathering together images for the book and have received tremendous support from Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, St Albans Museums, national

Continued from Page 10

Continued from Page 9

libraries - including the Imperial War Museum - and many very kind individuals who have given us permission to include images from their collections. Project team member Sheila Green has taken on the heroic task of compiling the bibliography. The book will be published next summer by Hertfordshire Publications, an imprint of the University of Hertfordshire Press.

**Sue Mann, Anne Wares
& Jon Mein**

CLOCK TOWER

2015 has been a very busy year for the Clock Tower – 11,423 adults and children climbed the 93 steps to see the magnificent views during our summer season, from Good Friday to when we closed on the last weekend of September. The highest number of visitors since the early 1980s! The Tower joined in with various local events during the year including Residents' First Weekend (January), Palm Sunday (March), "Star Gazing" as part of the Film Festival (May), and also in May when the Clock Tower was lit from within in purple to help raise awareness for the Charity Crohn's and Colitis UK, and Heritage Open Days in September. It is hoped that next year the

Clock Tower will join in with even more of the many St Albans festivals, including the Food and Wine Festival, but probably not the Fashion Week!

1207 visitors climbed the steps of the Clock Tower over Heritage Open Days alone, from Thursday 10th to Sunday 13th of September – well in excess of our usual visitor numbers. The special events held over these four days that hopefully helped to draw visitors to the Clock Tower included: opening up one evening so visitors could take photos of the setting sun and the stars in the night sky from the top of the Tower; giving visitors a rare chance to look round the third floor Dial Room which is usually closed to the public; and a screening of a film of archive St Albans postcards transforming into current day photos. Two static displays were also available to view on the first floor – one showed the results of the dendrochronological date testing of the timbers of the Tower and another, of post cards and photos, showed the changing way the Clock Tower was depicted over the past 200 years. A replica Victorian ceremonial Clock Tower key was also available for visitors to see, touch and hold; weighing 6½ lbs. and 17 inches length it is a most unusual and interesting item.

Continued on Page 11

Continued from Page 10

100 blue, yellow and red balloons were released from the top of the Tower in a "Grand Balloon Race" on Saturday, 13th September producing a lovely array of colour in the skies above the tower. The balloons, at £1 each, were sold in aid of our funds and a prize of Clock Tower merchandise will be awarded to the purchaser of the balloon that travels the furthest and to the person who finds and returns the tag. Since their release, two tags have so far been returned – the furthest, from 60 miles away in Little Thetford, will be the winner if no further tags are returned.

444 people signed the Visitors' Book over the six months that the Clock Tower was open this year; starting with the Mayor on Good Friday 3rd April. And they came from everywhere: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the United States of America, as well as St Albans (Vermont) and St Albans (Australia).

Visitors described the view as – lovely, fantastic, amazing, great, wonderful, beautiful, excellent, magic, nice, brilliant, super, splendid, stunning, delightful, awesome, outstanding, miraculous and enchanting. The Clockateers were praised too as "very friendly", "very kind", "very nice people" and "welcoming". The general comments ranged from: "Amazing" to "Gyönyörű" (Hungarian for "beautiful").

From the above you can see the Tower and its volunteers are greatly appreciated by those who visit. It is only possible to keep this iconic building open with the help of our merry band of Clockateers and we are always looking for new volunteers to join the roster. Can you spare an hour or two to man the Clock Tower next year for one of the sessions over Saturday or Sunday with a fellow Clockateer? If you would like to volunteer please do contact Mike Carey or Caroline Howkins via email: clocktower@stalbanhistory.org or come along to our Clockateers' Party on Friday, 11th March 2016 to sign up for a session and meet your fellow Clockateers.

Continued on Page 12

Continued from Page 11

The Clock Tower is now closed for the summer season but will open again on Sunday, 15th November (2pm to 6.30 pm) for the opportunity to watch the Christmas Lights being turned on at 6 o'clock.

As always, Mike and I would like to thank all the Clockateers for giving their time to keep the Clock Tower open for the public to enjoy and we hope to see you all at the Clockateers' Party.



Photograph: Andy Lawrence

Children release balloons from the Clock Tower roof

Caroline Howkins & Mike Carey

THE 17TH CENTURY RESEARCH GROUP WISHES TO RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS TO TRANSCRIBE PROBATE DOCUMENTS

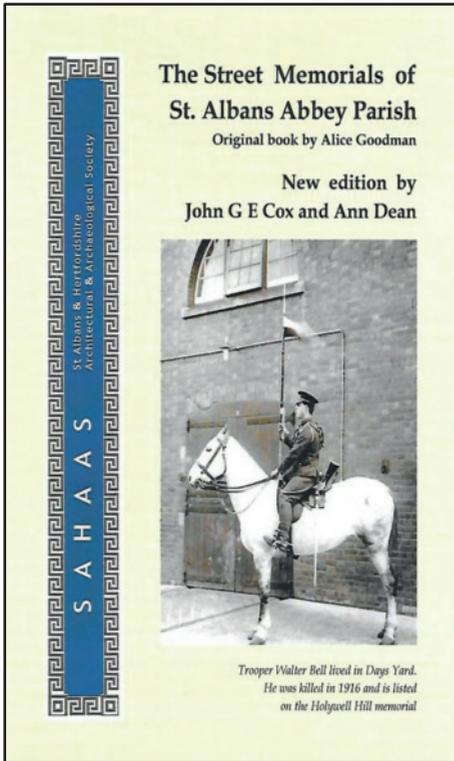
These documents are mainly wills and inventories which provide a fascinating insight into the lives of the people living in St Albans in the seventeenth century. We are working towards publication.

To promote this, a workshop will be held on Tudor and Stuart handwriting on Tuesday, 2nd February 2016 from 10am to 12 noon. This is intended to provide an introduction for those new to transcribing and a refresher to those with some knowledge.

For further information please contact Pat Howe at:
pathowe777@gmail.com

PUBLICATIONS & PUBLICITY

WAR MEMORIALS



Sales of our new publication *The Street Memorials of the St Albans Abbey Parish* progress well. The book records the history of the Abbey parish's unique collection of First World War street memorials set against the background of life in the city at the time. Add in the results of Ann Dean's research into the stories of the 110

men whose names are inscribed on the memorials and you will find the book to be a thought-provoking companion for anyone interested in the city's modern history.

If you are starting to think about Christmas presents for someone with an interest in local history or perhaps the First World War (or both), why not put our book at the top of your list? The cost is £9 if you buy from Waterstones in St Peter's Street, the Tourist Information Centre or the Cathedral Bookshop. As a SAHAAS member, you can buy your copy at one of our lectures, at our library, or direct from me, for £8, the Society retaining the full profit.

John G E Cox

CIVIC SOCIETY AWARDS

At the St. Albans Civic Society awards ceremony last week, a new award was made by the Trevelyan family. It was Peter Trevelyan's father, Sir Geoffrey Trevelyan, who founded the Civic Society in 1961. This new award was made to the City and District Council for their efforts in conserving our precious, unique Street Memorials. The editor included a picture of the newly conserved Holywell Hill memorial in the August newsletter.

John G E Cox

ELIZABETH GARDNER

Elizabeth (or Liz) died in September – a service to celebrate her life was held in a packed Marlborough Road Methodist Church on 21st of that month. Elizabeth was a Londoner born and bred – or perhaps more accurately a “Finchleyite”? – and a proud pupil of Henrietta Barnett School in Hampstead, before graduating from Somerville College, Oxford.

With husband Andrew, Elizabeth moved to St Albans where both James and Hannah were born, and became a volunteer at the Museum of St Albans where, from a SAHAAS point of view, her most significant contribution was the cataloguing of their library. She was also a very welcome addition to our own library team, and answered many enquiries from members and public alike. In between these activities, Elizabeth somehow found the time to write the history of *“Marlborough Road Church 1898-1998”* from its origins in a baker’s outhouse, and then co-authored *“Marshalswick: The story of a house and its estate”* and *“Fleetville: A Community in St Albans”*. Sadly, the onset of cancer curtailed these activities, and her long battle with this illness finally ended in September. Our sympathy and thoughts are with Andrew and her children.

Bryan Hanlon

RITA CADISCH

A retired head mistress, Rita and husband John came to St Albans in 1977 and she soon joined our Society, where her special interest was Archaeology. She worked on “finds” from the St Albans Chapter House Dig and enjoyed telling friends how the various abbots’ bones that came out of the Chapter House were ‘extremely clean’ as she had personally washed them! The following ten summers were spent with Martin Biddle and his team, searching for the Saxon Abbey.

Rita was a member of Council for several years, organising rotas for the annual summer openings of the Clock Tower. A regular attendee at the lectures, outings and social events, she willingly assisted over the years with the preparation and laying out of the food at the New Year Party.

A “young” 89, Rita died on 11th September 2015, following a stroke. On 2nd October her many friends came to St Michael’s for a memorable funeral, the church was full, the measure of what she meant to so many people. She was a true supporter and friend to the Society - and she will be missed.

Ann Dean and Doreen Bratby

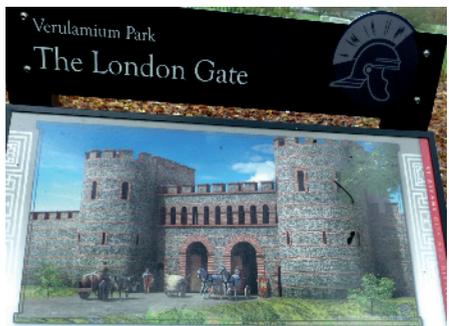
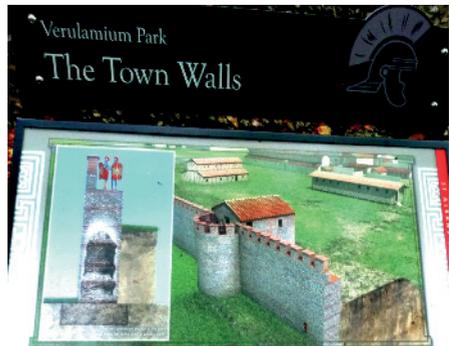
ROMAN WALL

Actions to maintain the fragment of the Roman wall in Verulamium Park continue and include the maintenance of the structure of the wall, signage, and protection of the site.

On 10th September 2015 representatives of concerned organisations met at the Verulamium Museum and the chairman of the St Albans Civic Society has circulated a summary of the actions in hand or planned. An extract of the summary is published on our Society web site.

Roger Miles represented SAHAAS at a further meeting on 30th October and reported “ *English Heritage have postponed the repair work planned for the wall fabric. The proximity of winter weather was judged to give the mortar insufficient time to consolidate well; next spring and summer will improve the chances of a longer-lasting job. Some small-scale, restorative landscaping is to be carried out between the free-standing sections of wall out in the park itself. Extended consideration is being given to the balance to be struck between admonitory and persuasive signage which will augment the information boards*

already appearing. There is a real danger of the object of the exercise becoming obscured by signs saying what is not permitted and what will be prosecuted. A proposal for low level barriers between the path and the wall is under consideration, to make a not over-intrusive separation between viewers and viewed”.



Photographs above show details of two examples of the interpretative boards recently installed

Continued from Page 15

HALL PLACE WALL

And on the subject of walls, Bryan Hanlon draws attention to the following:

Many drivers (and pedestrians) may well be concerned at the state of the wall outside Hall Place, where it abuts St Peter's churchyard – and wonder why nothing seems to be happening to improve the situation. In fact, nothing is quite as simple as it may appear.

In March of this year, the wall was found to be in a near state of collapse, and measures had to be put in place to make it safe on a temporary basis, with the unfortunate effect of closing the footpath and diverting pedestrians into the road. Due to the age, historic fabric and integrity of the wall, it is not a simple case of “patch repairing” as the wall itself needs to be retained in its original look. Rebuilding of the wall cannot take place in winter months due to the chemical composition of the lime and mortar reacting with low temperatures.

The section of the wall that needs to be demolished will require the careful removal of all bricks, flint, etc, so that they can be set aside, restored and used again. SADC is carrying out extensive research before restoring the wall to its original condition, and have received ground scans and x-rays of the area within the churchyard which show a number of ‘anomalies’ in the excavation area. These are possible burial sites and St Peter's Church are obviously very interested in these results, as it could lead to an archaeological dig and hold up any future works.

We shall keep you posted!

Bryan Hanlon



*Scaffolding supporting wall
in St Peter's Street*

THAT SINKING FEELING

The ongoing drama of the Bernards Heath sinkhole is made up of equal parts local history and geology, combining two of my interests and justifying a long wait for something big to happen in the neighbourhood I moved to 40 years ago.

A full explanation of what took place requires more space than is available here, but it can be summarised by saying that it was one manifestation of a phenomenon which occurs the world over in terrain based on calcareous rock, i.e., chalk or limestone. St Albans lies on the former.

Our water supply is pumped out of the porous chalk beneath us. Dissolved atmospheric carbon dioxide in rainwater is weakly acidic and will, in turn, slowly dissolve chalk or limestone.

The hard evidence appears as scale in our tap water when it evaporates or is significantly heated. In St Albans, or the higher parts at least (where Bernards Heath is to be found), the chalk bedrock is covered by some thin (by geological standards) layers of sandy clay and pebbles. Rainwater has to pass through this before it gets into the solid chalk and variations in the permeability of the covering, com-

bined with natural fissuring and weaknesses in the chalk itself, result in enhanced flow through it in places. Dissolution of the chalk is increased as a consequence and not necessarily uniformly, resulting in 'pipes' down into the chalk which the capping sand, clay and gravel will collapse into and fill.

Now the local history. Bricks have been made on and around the Heath since medieval times, but the scale of the industry increased significantly in the middle of the nineteenth century with clay pits of appreciable extent and depth resulting. Some are still to be seen, greatly enjoyed by the younger generation on mountain bikes. Others, which held water and became flooded and a danger, were backfilled, some opportunistically with the town's rubbish. This practice in turn became offensive to the local residents, especially in warm weather, and had to stop. Instead inert fills and soil, possibly dug from the footings of new buildings, would have to be used.

Compounding the effects of clay extraction, bricks require mortar to become houses and in the 19th century this would have been lime (not cement) mortar. Lime is readily made from chalk, by heating it in a kiln. Thus in our locality a brickyard

Continued from Page 17

could supply the two essentials a builder required, dug from the same piece of land. The chalk, being the deeper of the two, may in places have required shallow shafts. Ordnance Survey maps around the turn of the 20th century show where this local industry was happening.

Thus, by around 1900, percolation of rainwater through the layers covering the chalk under the Heath had become in places even more irregular than the natural pattern. Thereafter, any buildings constructed on known or suspected 'made ground' required suitable foundations. Fontmell and Bridle Closes were developed in the 1970s on ground known to have been clay workings and, within local people's memory, still the site of an informal tip. The consequence of this, if not adequately allowed for, is no surprise.

Modern geophysical survey methods enable 'seeing beneath the surface' and the County Council have employed them to assess the highways next to the sinkhole, which are their responsibility. The security of adjacent properties, unfortunately for the owners, is not.

The foregoing is a 'stripped down' account of what led to the St Albans Sinkhole and of necessity omits much

detail. I am putting together a lecture and/or conducted tour on the geology and local history leading up to the appearance of the sinkhole. This will be under the banner of The Friends of Bernards Heath. The FoBH website, www.bernardsheath.org, will carry more information in due course.

Roger Miles

·
·

BIRKLANDS SCHOOL

I am researching the social reformer Madeleine J Symons (1895-1957), who attended (New) Birklands, a private girls' school on London Road, St Albans, from c. 1908 to 1913.

I should be grateful to hear from anyone who has any information or documents, including issues of the school magazine, relating to those years. (But I already have the material on the Hertfordshire Genealogy website.) Birklands seems to have closed c. 1969. Can anyone supply the exact date and/or say what happened to the school's records?

Prof Martin Ferguson Smith, Braidfit, Foula, SHETLAND, ZE2 9PN. Email: oinoanda@hotmail.com

THE ST ALBANS ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE PROJECT

(including the St Albans Historic Buildings Survey)

My colleagues and I on the Local Studies Team at St Albans Central Library are currently working on tidying and repackaging some of our material. We have recently rediscovered the above resource, and it swiftly raised a question in my mind: how many of my fellow SAHAAS members are aware of it?

The Project was carried out in 1986-87. Various local and national bodies contributed to funding, and it was devised and co-ordinated by Adrian Havercroft, then Keeper of Field Archaeology for Verulamium Museum. Its original title is *The St Albans Archaeological Heritage Project*, but what the library has is essentially an *architectural* survey, so we have retitled it as such, just to make it clear. (Whether other research was involved we do not know).

It is divided into seven areas. Colney Heath, London Colney, Sandridge and central St Albans are kept at St Albans Library and have been worked on recently. Harpenden, Redbourn and Wheathampstead are currently at Harpenden Library. From the areas cov-

ered, you may surmise that, it contains a lot of relatively modern buildings as well as more “historic” ones.

Each street takes the form of a “traverse”, walking up one side surveying odd numbers, then down the other surveying even numbers in reverse order. For each building there is a black-and-white photograph and an accompanying text page with a detailed list of architectural features. One might regard it as an earlier version of Google Streetview with added architectural detail - a valuable record of houses, shops, businesses, pubs, farms.

In most cases we have combined photos and text in the same lever arch file, with the relevant pages usually opposite each other (if possible) for easy reference. However, the city centre (subtitled as *The St Albans Historic Buildings Survey*) had photos and text separate, with photos mounted on large sheets of black paper combined in a leather portfolio. For ease of access and storage we have hung the photos in the last drawer of our Illustrations Cabinet, keeping to the original order. The hanging storage wallets should conserve them well, and these can always be taken out and combined as a group. The text remains separate, in the same lever arch format as the other areas.

Continued from Page 19

In St Albans, only the more central, historic streets were surveyed: Chequer St, Fishpool St, French Row, George St, Hatfield Rd, High St, Holywell Hill, London Rd, Lower Dagnall St, Market Place, Queen St, Romeland, Romeland Hill, St Michael's St, St Peter's St, Sopwell Lane, Spicer St, Upper Dagnall St, Victoria St, and Wellclose St.

The introduction also refers to a computer database, with instructions on how to access it using an Amstrad computer. This was to remain in the care of the Museum Service, along with the original survey data and photo negatives, so any enquiries on this aspect should be directed to them.

The surveys are not yet on the computer catalogue. They are shelved on top of the Illustrations Cabinet in the Local Studies Reference section, awaiting the perusal of local experts and interested parties.

Scott Chalmers
Library Assistant
St Albans Central Library

STUMPED NO LONGER BY ODD GAME

In the charming book entitled *J H Buckingham - A Window On Victorian St Albans*, written by Felicity Hebditch with a biography of the rather rascally artist by our late President, David Dean, there is one watercolour that is perhaps slightly more curious than all the rest.

It is *The Celebrated One Arm and One Leg Cricket Match* on page 26 of the book and is dated "about 1858". Hebditch describes the illustration as follows: "One of Buckingham's gossipy pictures with comments like 'Three sisters ready to make match to play a game with any young cricketer': no doubt contemporary St Albans people would have known who they were! Likewise the man marked 'Fine calves, little brains'!"

Such matches date from the late 1700s, played by aged Greenwich Pensioners against veterans from the Chelsea Hospital, the latter in their long red frock-coats and the former in navy jackets and tricorne hats. The Royal Hospital Chelsea reports one of these events as taking place between 1844 and 1854. In the same period, a

Continued on Page 21

Continued from Page 20

different source has a report of a match between two teams of Greenwich Pensioners attracting 2,400 spectators, the majority it was said, being there "...merely for the say of the thing". On this occasion, the reward for each player included "... free passage to and from the Royal Hospital, a glass of grog to drink to Her Majesty's health and ten shillings for his two days' exertions".

Taking the date of "about 1858", searches through the archives to find the St Albans match proved fruitless but now the puzzle of the Buckingham sketch has been solved by Jon Mein. He has found reports in the *Luton Times* and the *Herts Advertiser*, which indicate that the St Albans match took place ten years later, in 1868 and it was a money-making enterprise staged by James Gentle, a well-known publican, caterer and popular cricketer who played for the St Albans Cricket Club and other Hertfordshire sides.

Under the headline "Cricket Extraordinary, Great Sensation Match, One Arm v One Leg, Army and Navy Pensioners" it was announced: "Mr James Gentle begs to inform the inhabitants of St Albans and neighbourhood that he has made arrangements with the

above celebrated Elevens to play one of their novel matches at St Albans on Monday and Tuesday August 31st and September 1st 1868."

It was further reported that Mr Gentle, having been at considerable expense, earnestly requested that those intending to witness the match should purchase tickets as early as possible. A single ticket cost 6d. The venue was Victoria Playing Fields, between Folly Lane and Verulam Road, the home of St Albans Cricket Club at that time.

"The one-armed were of course the general favourites," stated the *Herts Advertiser*, in a post-match report. "It was apparent from the beginning that they would not at the close be second best. And so it turned out, for on Tuesday afternoon, when the scores were balanced, the one-armed were declared to be victors by 103 runs (326 against 223)."

We can see from Buckingham's sketch that there was a good turnout and so Mr Gentle probably more than covered his costs. The *Herts Advertiser* complimented him stating: "Excellent refreshments at moderate prices were purveyed on the ground by Mr Jas. Gentle whose conduct throughout

Continued on Page 22

Continued from Page 21

gave general satisfaction and met his best reward in a grand success."

The *Luton Times* reported some dis-sention: "It is said by some of the spectators that the game was not played, and that it was quite disgust-

ing – they would not go half-a-dozen yards to see anything of this kind".

But who was the man with "fine calves, little brains"? Certainly not the entrepreneurial Mr Gentle.

Sue Mann

References:

J H Buckingham – A Window On Victorian St Albans by Felicity Hebditch with a biography by David J Dean, St Albans Museums (1988)

'A Cricket Match with a Difference', *Royal Hospital Chelsea* – www.royalhospitchelsea.blogspot.co.uk

'When a team of one-legged men faced a team of one-armed men at cricket', John Hotten, *Guardian Sport Network* - www.theguardian.com



Caption: Greenwich Pensioners at play
with the spectator described as having "fine calves, little brains" to the right

Acknowledgement: St Albans Museums

JOHN CARRINGTON, FARMER OF BRAMFIELD

Book review of his diary 1798-1810

Vol I, 1798-1804

Edited and with an Introduction by
Susan Flood.

Hertfordshire Record Publication No 26
for the membership year 2010-2011.

Hertford, 2015. ISBN 978-0-9547561-9-2

John Carrington was a prosperous resident and dutiful citizen in 18th century Hertfordshire – Lord Cowper’s tenant of Bacons in Bramfield near Hertford, where he was sometime churchwarden and overseer. He was also chief constable for the parishes in that part of the Liberty of St Albans and his community duties and business affairs brought him regularly to the Assizes, to meetings at the Town Hall and inns in St Albans. His jottings concerning these and other journeys, the business conducted and other personal activities provide a valuable insight into the life of his times in St Albans and Hertfordshire.

Publication of the long known ‘diary’ by the Record Society brings the information in it to a wider audience. Susan Flood’s introduction sets the scene, identifies individuals and places, and highlights significant areas of interest.

Carrington was not a high status individual, but he was successful and prominent. Starting life as a servant to a local landowner, he became, in maturity, a substantial property owner with considerable responsibility for local administration, enjoying income from the various positions and the connections which brought him a varied and pleasant life.

He tells us of the weather, crops, and market prices as well as of people he encounters, including a variety of lodgers and visitors to the farm. His later life, when his sons could look after the farm, is full of interest. He rides to market in Hertford, to neighbouring parishes and towns on Liberty business, and sometimes to London on business or pleasure. He describes in detail a trip to Brighton on holiday. He travels usually on his own horses and ponies, but sometimes in his cart and also remarkable distances on foot. We hear of the routes he takes and where he stays and eats. His notes include costs, prices, and what he gives by way of donations and tips, and taxes he pays and collects.

Significant for St Albans researchers are his frequent journeys to the town. He stays and eats exclusively at the Red House, an inn centrally placed, at what we can now interpret as at the Chequer Street entrance to The Maltings. Run by a

Continued from Page 23

cousin, Thomas Piggott, it was a natural stopping place for Carrington. His contacts in the town revolve around the business for which he came – so his frequent contacts with attorney John Cowper may have led to articles for cousin Thomas Piggott's son Isaac. Isaac Piggott subsequently became Town Clerk in St Albans.

The notes are arranged by date and were clearly intended only for Carrington's own record, but they were subsequently bound together and so now form a diary. Separate from this volume is the 'Arithmetic Book'. This was a workbook, maybe from his own schooldays. It has been used by family members for notes, both of a business nature and for more general observations. It is from this volume that we hear of the celebrations around the coronation of King George III in 1761, well before the start of the 'diary' notes, which record his life only from 1798 to 1810, notably a period of both war and peace. This kind of social historical information is interesting, but also valuable to set other historical data in context. Some details will add something for individual researchers, but the picture of the life of an active person with social responsibilities has value of its own. The background details added by the introduction and copious footnotes make it easy to digest, although I did note the deliberate mis-

take, which reminds of the need for caution in using any material of this kind – the two boroughs in the county each had two representatives in Parliament rather than the one suggested in one of the notes.

The book is a valuable contribution to the early modern history of Hertfordshire and St Albans, and a good read for its insight into personal situations and the occasional extraordinary event. I enjoyed Carrington's candour when, 'fuddled' after a night out, he fell off his pony – this is information not readily found in text books!

Kate Morris

CONTRIBUTIONS

As always. I welcome members' contributions to our Newsletter (text or photographs)

Please email to me at Newsed@stalbanhistory.org or post to:
12 Church Crescent,
St Albans,
AL3 5JD.

Latest date for submissions is:
Tuesday 19th January 2016.

John Humphreys
Editor

(Editors's note: reports held over from NL 197)

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT 2014-15

The Programme Development Committee consists of Roy Bratby, Chairman, Doreen Bratby, Pat Howe and Roger Miles.

The Committee held a number of meetings throughout the year and was responsible for fifteen Tuesday lectures, four of which were presented by our own members. We are extremely grateful to them for their contribution to the life of the Society.

Pat Howe arranged a very successful day outing to Layer Marney and Paycocks in April which was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who participated. Plans have been made for a further day outing to visit Saffron Walden and Audley End.

We continue to be indebted to those members, namely Roderick Douglas and Frank Iddiols, who give of their time to assist with the IT/AV in connection with the lectures and our thanks go to them. Once again I make a plea for additional help in this important area and would welcome volunteers to come forward to spread the load.

I have been encouraged by the attendances at the lectures and as always your suggestions for lecture topics, possible speakers and future visits are always welcome.

Roy Bratby

FRIDAY LECTURE REPORT

Looking back over some of the Friday lectures of the past year . . . Dido Belle growing up at Kenwood . . . Robert Hunter co-founder of the National Trust . . . and Thos Hollis V 18c Republican Eccentric with St Albans connections, I am mindful of two changes that had to be made at the last minute. To those speakers who stood in at short notice I am truly grateful, as indeed I am, to all who lectured throughout the Friday programme.

There was a good track record of members attending and showing enthusiasm by the quality of question and answer sessions, often commented on to me by encouraged speakers.

Thank you members for the part you play.

Doreen Bratby
Lecture Secretary

**LECTURE PROGRAMME –
NOVEMBER 2015 –
FEBRUARY 2016**

Tuesday 17 November 2015

Geoffrey de Havilland, Two Old Houses and Freeman's Folly

Mike Garrick

This talk will contain a brief history of Salisbury Hall and Astwick Manor and describe Salisbury Hall as de Havilland's Design Centre. Included will be a description of the development of the Mosquito and Horsa glider including a short film clip illustrating how wood was used to make aircraft and the importance of construction techniques and the importance of both aircraft to victory in WW2. The development of apprentice training at both Salisbury Hall and Astwick Manor and its progression to present day apprentice training at the University of Hertfordshire also feature.

Mike was born and grew up in America and subsequently gained a BSc in Biological Science followed by an MA in Science Education at Kings College, London. He was a Commander in the US Navy with 3,700 pilot hours to his name and more recently, after qualifying as a teacher in

1994, he taught all science subjects to GCSE standard and biology to A-level standard and was Head of Science at Chesham Park Community College.

Friday 27 November 2015

Those Wild Wyndams – Three Sisters at the Heart of Power

Claudia Renton

Mary, Madeline and Pamela – the three Wyndham sisters – were painted by John Singer Sergeant in 1899. For *The Times* it was 'the greatest picture of modern times'. These beautiful rich, fin de siècle women clad in white came to epitomize a vanishing world: the leisured, gilded, existence of the late Victorian aristocracy that was to be dealt a deathblow by the First World War.

Yet their lives were far more turbulent than their air of calm suggests. Brought up in artistic and liberal circles, their childhood was freedom-loving and filled with medieval fantasies. Their parents were intimate friends with the Pre-Raphaelites, and the sisters, with Mary as a leader, became involved in 'the Souls' – an accidental grouping of brilliant, sincere and loyal friends with liber-

Continued from Page 26

ated morals and shocking beliefs about sexual equality. Bowing to convention, all three made excellent marriages, but only one was happy. All found emotional support from others – Mary with Arthur Balfour and the poet Wilfrid Scawen Blunt; Pamela with the Liberal statesman and ornithologist Edward Grey.

Claudia Renton gained a First at Oxford and was awarded the Gibbs Book Prize for Modern History. Now a practising barrister, she has also enjoyed a career as an actress, appearing with the RSC and at the National Theatre. She is co-author of 'Heroes' with Simon Sebag Montefiore and was identified as one of the Guardian's 'new history girls' and one of Vogue's 'Bright Stars' of the next decade. She lives in London.

Tuesday 8 December 2015

Horace Warner and his Spitalfield Nippers

The Gentle Author

The Gentle Author will tell the story of photographer Horace Warner and how he came to take portraits of some of London's poorest people at the end of the nineteenth century, now acclaimed as the

most important series of images of Londoners in this era.

Friday 8 January 2016

New Year Party

Tuesday 12 January 2016

The High Sheriffs' role past and present day

Fergus McMullen

Fergus McMullen will tell us about the McMullen's family long association with the county when the first McMullen, William, arrived from Ireland with the household of the 2nd Marquis of Downshire to settle in Hertfordshire. In 1827 his son, Peter, founded the McMullen Brewery. Fergus, who was High Sheriff of Hertfordshire from 2014-2015, will explain the role of the High Sheriff both past and present.

Fergus McMullen is currently the Production and Sales Director for the brewery and pub business which is still family owned. His wife, Kate, works in an interior design shop in Saffron Walden and they have five children between them.

Continued from Page 27

Tuesday 19 January 2016

The Secret Wireless War

Stephen Barnard

During the Second World War, secret government departments set up a series of radio stations at purpose-built studios hidden deep in rural Bedfordshire. Their purpose was to broadcast black propaganda to Germany to sow dissension and spread disinformation. Under the direction of German-born Sefton Delmer, the stations put out an amazingly mendacious mix of truths, half-truths, fabricated news and music. In this illustrated talk, Stephen Barnard explains how and why the stations were set up, what impact they had on the war effort, and what evidence remains of the studios today.

Stephen Barnard worked at Reader's Digest for 21 years before going it alone as a freelance writer. He is the author of five books and he has lectured extensively on the history of broadcasting, popular music and wartime cinema. Brought up in Dunstable, Stephen now lives in Letchworth.

Friday 29 January 2016

Cyril Swinson and the 1948-1953

St Albans Pageants

Peter Swinson

Cyril Swinson was a St Albans man through and through and a founding member of the Company of Ten and The St Albans Film Society. He also founded and was Chairman of the St Albans Ballet Club; President of St Albans School Old Albanians and writer/director and Pageant Master of the 1948 and 1953 St Albans Pageants. He was also a Director of the London publishing company A&C Black, famous for publishing 'Who's Who' and many books about ballet, which was his area of expertise. He was also one of the founders and chairman of the St Albans Civic Society, a governor of St Albans College of Further Education and on the board of St Albans Library.

Peter was the first son of Cyril and Brenda Swinson and has lived in St Albans all his life. He joined Marconi Instruments in 1966 as an apprentice, becoming an Electronics Design Engineer. He had a fascination with the Cinema Industry. 2003 saw him setting up his own consultancy in the technical film industry before retiring in 2010. During his business travels Peter visited more than 55 countries.

Continued on Page 29

Continued from Page 28

Tuesday 9 February 2016

Fire and Steam – How the Railways changed Britain

Christian Wolmar

The railways were the key invention of the 19th century. They enabled the spread of the industrial revolution and as a result stimulated the massive economic development of the Victorian era. In their wake they brought about a whole host of major changes in the way people lived: from bank holidays to big sporting events, fish and chips to mail order business – all were made possible by the railways. Christian will explain all in this talk.

Writer and broadcaster specialising in transport and railways, Christian has written a series of rail history books and thousands of articles, many of which can be found on his website, www.christianwolmar.co.uk

Tuesday 16 February 2016

Nouveaux Riches to Nouveaux Pauvres

The Story of the Macalpine-Lenys

Ian Macalpine-Leny

Ian will describe how beginning in 18th Century Scotland, the story goes first to Moghul India, then 19th Century Dumfriesshire, the Boer War, Arabia, the First World War, colonial Kenya, the Second World War and, finally, Lincolnshire. No Prime Ministers or Archbishops of Canterbury (yet) but an amazing array of characters that have got up to all sorts of fascinating things. Fortunately, despite house fires and the nomadic existence forced on military families, a large number of original records and photographs have survived to paint a very clear picture of how this family lived, and the fun they all had doing it.

Ian Macalpine-Leny was educated at Uppingham and read Biological Sciences at the University of Birmingham. After doing research in Zoology, he joined international insurance broker Willis Faber in 1972. He retired in 1999. Married to an American with two sons, he now lives mainly in the Lincolnshire countryside. His main interests are natural history, fly fishing, game shooting and family, past, present and future. He has published two books.

Continued from Page 29

Friday 26 February 2016

When the British ruled Germany after the end of the Second World War

Christopher Knowles

After the end of the Second World War, Germany was divided by the victorious Allies into four zones of occupation. The country was in chaos and the scale of destruction, of houses, factories, roads and railways had to be seen to be believed. The whole fabric of the Nazi state had collapsed. This talk looks at how three important and influential British individuals - Field Marshal Montgomery, Harold Ingrams and Henry Vaughan Berry - set about the task of reconstruction, political renewal, and personal reconciliation with their former enemies.

Christopher Knowles studied history as an undergraduate at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, from 1971-74. After a career in electronic publishing and computer software, he resumed his academic studies at the Centre for Contemporary British History (CCBH) at the University of London in October 2005. His PhD thesis, 'Winning the Peace: The British in occupied Germany, 1945-1948', was awarded the annual prize of the German Historical Institute, London, for 2014. He is now a visiting research associate at Kings College London.

FOUNDRY DATA

Foundries used to be almost everywhere. The metal work that they produced filled the streets, factories and homes of Britain (and much of the rest of the world) and is rapidly disappearing. The firms have mostly closed. Everyday stuff is being melted down, often leaving no trace and certainly no written or photographic record. Those of us who are involved in this project are attempting to capture this information before it's too late.

This is a heritage project using digital technology and an invitation is extended to members of SAHAAS to participate.

For further information about the project see: www.foundrydata.org

We hope you can join us!

Many thanks,

The Foundry Data team



Scene from the Book Sale - 24th October 2015



SAHAAS NEW YEAR PARTY
VERULAMIUM MUSEUM
Friday 8th January 2016, 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 Val Argue
(Tel: 01727 853083 Email: cv@argue.eclipse.co.uk)
She would welcome a contribution of a plate of sweet or savoury -
the Society is very happy to reimburse members financially

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

Tickets £6.00 (when ordered in advance) £8.00 at the door
Tickets are available at each evening talk, or by completing and
posting form reproduced on Page 31