



Founded 1845

STALBANS AND HERTFORDSHIRE
ARCHITECTURAL AND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

No. 153

April 2004

Registered Charity No. 226912

Hon. Sec: B.E. Moody

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at 8.00 p.m.
on Tuesday May 11th at Verulamium Museum.

This newsletter contains copies of the Agenda, Statement of Accounts
and Reports of Officers and Group Chairmen.

Please remember to bring it with you

The business meeting will be followed by a talk by
Chris Green, Director of St Albans Museums, on
The Tudor Axle-treed Cart Found in St Albans

FUTURE LECTURE PROGRAMME

Tuesday 6th April	Thatching	Robin Webb
Tuesday 20th April	The British Schools: bringing literacy to the Industrial revolution	Brian Limbrick
Friday 30th April	Rome: art and emperors	Dr Paul Roberts
Tuesday 11th May	The Tudor axle-treed cart found in St Albans	Chris Green
Tuesday 18th May	Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills	Peter Adams
Friday 28th May	Blazing trails down under	Vivienne Smith
Tuesday 7th September	Landscape and ritual: the late iron Age of Hertfordshire	Dr Stuart Bryant
Tuesday 14th September	Development pressures in Herts	John Wood
Friday 24th September	Kingsbury Barn	Adrian Gibson
Tuesday 28th September	The Iron Age chariot: recent discoveries and interpretations	Anthony Spence
Tuesday 6th October	St Albans: water, rail and Victorian Gothic	Gene Mitchell
Tuesday 12th October	Mr Telford's bypass: the making of Verulam Road	Ann Dean
Tuesday 19th October	The Mary Rose	John Fisher
Friday 29th October	Cromwell warts and all	Prof John Morrill

Some September and October details may be subject to change and details of these lectures and others for the second half of 2004 will be announced closer to the date

FUTURE VISITS

Saturday 19th June All Saints Church, Sheepy Magna, and the Moira Furnace See page 13

Please note that Tuesday meetings are held at St Albans School and start at 8.00 p.m.
Friday meetings are at the College of Law, Hatfield Road, and start at 7.45 p.m.
They are open to all members of the Society. Non-members may attend two meetings as guests.

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 11th May 2004, Verulamium Museum at 8.00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. To confirm the minutes of the previous AGM held on 13th May 2003
3. To adopt Reports from the following Officers, and the Accounts for the year to 30th September 2003:
 - Hon. Secretary
 - Hon. Treasurer
 - Hon. Lecture Secretary
 - Group Chairmen and Project leaders
4. To elect a President, as John Brodrick retires from office and **Mr David Dean** is nominated to succeed him
5. To elect Officers and Vice-Presidents. The Hon. Secretary, Lecture Secretary, Librarian and Membership Secretary are proposed for re-election. **Ms Dee Drinkwater** is nominated as Newsletter Editor to replace Mr Anthony Barry and **Mrs Ann Dean** for the vacant post of Publicity Officer. There are vacancies for Hon Treasurer and Excursion Secretary, for which nominations are invited

Mr David Dean will temporarily retire as Vice-President, but **Mrs Kate Morris** and **Mrs Margaret Taylor** are proposed for re-election. **Mr John Brodrick** is proposed for election.
6. To elect three members to fill vacancies on Council. **Mrs Ann Kaloczi**, **Mr Stuart Rolfe** are proposed for election and **Mrs Gene Peyton-Jones** for re-election after one year's service
7. To confirm the nomination of Group Representatives, viz:

Archaeology	Mr Roger Miles
Architecture and Local History	Dr Gerard McSweeney
Research Committee	Mr J T Smith
Property Research	Mrs Kate Morris
17th C Population Research	Mrs Pat Howe
Conservation	vacancy
8. To appoint an Independent Examiner
9. Motion by Mr Roger Miles: "That this Society strongly urges that the Joint Editorial Committee should add the words '*and History*' to the title of *Hertfordshire Archaeology*"
10. To transact any other competent business

B.E. Moody
Hon. Secretary

After the AGM there will be a lecture by Mr Chris Green, Director of St Albans Museums, on
A Tudor Axle-treed Cart found in St Albans

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It seems hardly possible that I have been in office for nearly two years. In that time, my domestic circumstances have changed and it became clear to me around the middle of last year that I would be spending considerably more time away from St Albans after the end of 2003. Consequently I thought it best to tell the SAHAAS Council as early as possible that I could not serve for a third year and they should look for a new President to be appointed our next AGM in May.

The Society has been fortunate in its past presidents and, needless to say, I felt most honoured to be asked to follow in the footsteps of such eminent predecessors.

The SAHAAS has had a remarkable record of achievement in the century and a half since it began. This is well recorded in the excellent book *The Light of Other Days*, written by our long-serving Secretary, Brian Moody. Throughout its history, the Society has made notable contributions to the recording of the history and archaeology of the St Albans area. It has a long list of high quality publications and it has provided its members with an intellectual feast through its series of lectures.

However, when I took office I wondered if we had not been a bit reticent in making our locality aware of what we had achieved and, perhaps more important, what we might contribute to the common wheel in the future. To that end I suggested to the SAHAAS Council several lines of action that would make our neighbours, and especially the City Council, more aware of us and our potential. It so happened that the Charter celebrations of 2003 gave us a golden opportunity to make a start on that process. Our immediate past President, Kate Morris, together with Pat Howe, David Dean and Betty Masters, took the initiative to produce a high quality illustrated book, *St Albans 1553*, to support the SADC's organised events. They also mounted an art competition for local primary schools that produced some excellent entries and may have forged some permanent links between the Society and the teaching of history in local schools. We also provided a free public lecture on the subject of the Charters issued by King Edward VI which was attended by over 200 people.

Another signal achievement was the publication of thirteen years' research by a large number of our members on St Albans in the latter half of the 17th century. That was published by the Hertfordshire University Press and has been warmly praised by all who have read it.

The Society's past successes in the field of research and publications have occurred because individual members took an initiative. The classic example was the suggestion by our eminent member John Smith thirteen years ago that a group should make a detailed study of St Albans in the 17th century. However, the Society itself was not proactive in such matters. To give us a bigger role in that field the SAHAAS Council established a Research Committee under John Smith's chairmanship to suggest fields in which research could fruitfully be undertaken and to stimulate people (not necessarily confined to our own membership) to do the research. I think this will prove to be a most important change. I hope that all these new initiatives that have occurred on my watch will prove to be fruitful in the future.

As I come to the end of my term I do feel concern for the Society over the next few years. Like many similar local bodies we have been experiencing great difficulty in finding people willing to help run the Society. As I write we are looking for a new President, a new Treasurer, a Publicity Officer, a Conservation Officer, an Outings Organiser and a Organiser of our contribution to manning the Clock Tower over summer weekends. I fear that if we do not fill these posts we will have to stop performing functions where we can and, where we cannot, the Society may have to operate less efficiently than in the past. We may also have to contract out functions we cannot man adequately from within our membership and that will increase our costs.

I would finally like to thank all who attend our meetings for the wave of kindly warmth that I receive from the audiences when I am officiating.

John Brodrick

HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT

As we continue to investigate and record the history of St Albans, it is easy to forget that we may sometimes be helping to make history as well as rediscovering it. For example, it is now four and a half years since we decided to join the efforts being made to save the unexcavated half of Verulamium from destruction by deep ploughing.

The first thing we did was to organise a petition to English Heritage, which many members will remember signing, and helping to collect other signatures. When the total had reached 1,500 names, I delivered the petition to the Director of English Heritage, in the hope that it would stiffen their resolve. It was encouraging subsequently to hear people in high places referring to 'the strength of local feeling' about the problem, but when nothing actually happened, we and others continued to lobby everyone who might have some influence, such as the eminent archaeologist Lord Colin Renfrew (an Old Boy of St Albans School). We should particularly thank our Honorary Member, Ros Niblett, for

her persistence in this respect – how did she manage to get the public support of Tony Robinson?

The unfortunate Government Minister for Culture, Media and Sport had a few other problems to deal with, like Stonehenge, the Millennium Dome and Wembley Stadium, but at last her Department has managed to reach agreement with the Gorbambury Estate to stop deep ploughing in perpetuity, and to return the land to pasture. Verulamium has been waiting 1,500 years for this!

This year we have also been looking to the future. We have an increasing number of members with computers, and we now have an embryo website, address stalbanhistory.org, which we hope will develop into a valuable means of communication. It may take a bit longer to equip the Archaeology Group with the sort of computer graphics that we see on television, but who knows what the future holds?

Brian Moody

HON. TREASURER'S REPORT

Our income this year is rather higher than last year, despite lower interest rates on our investments, and is due to:

- 1) Higher donations. A larger donation from the Clock Tower reflecting the highly successful Jubilee Year and a substantial surplus from our Excursions. Traditionally our Excursion Secretaries not only organised the visits but also handled the finances. This enabled them to keep a float for the following year. Any surplus funds were given back to the Society from time to time and were treated as donations. This year our new Excursions Secretary Isobel Leek preferred me to handle the money side – details are shown in the Accounts – and the remaining surplus from previous years has accordingly helped to boost our Donations.
- 2) Tax Relief reflecting an ever-increasing number of our members generously giving Gift Aid – so much easier than the 'consumer unfriendly' old covenant. My grateful thanks!

Expenditure this year was higher than previous years reflecting the cost of our new Website and celebrating the anniversary of the 1553 Charter; however, as we did not have to make any provisions there is a comfortable surplus of income over expenditure.

The Street Memorials Appeal project has now been completed and we are hoping that the balance can be used in conjunction with the Council to some of the other plaques which are in urgent need of refurbishment.

This year we published *St Albans 1553* which was well received. This helped to boost our sales and offset the probably inevitable fall in demand on some of our other publications. I doubt that some of today's current best sellers will have the same degree of longevity as *Around St Albans with Geoff Dunk*, which has been going for over 20 years now – in no part due to the efforts of Norman Kent to whom our grateful thanks for all his hard work.

Our grateful thanks for the work of our Membership Secretary Megan Atton. With a steadily rising membership her workload continues to grow remorselessly and we are in her debt.

My thanks also to our Honorary Auditor Pauline Jennings for her efforts on our behalf.

As usual the books will be available for inspection at the AGM when I shall be pleased to answer any questions.

David Aubrey

For reasons of confidentiality SAHAAS accounts have been withheld from the version of the newsletter displayed on our website

HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY - WHAT'S IN A NAME?

At the coming AGM I am asking those present to endorse a request to Council that it press for a change to the title of *Hertfordshire Archaeology* to more accurately reflect its aims and actual range of content.

From its inception HA was intended to include material of much wider scope than the purely archaeological. This aim has only been achieved with varying success and for one volume spectacularly not.

Hertfordshire is not a large county and if we are to publish HA with anything like the regularity we wish, the content cannot be restricted to purely archaeological reports. Relevant to this is the change in the last 25 years, in the pattern of field archaeology; there has been a steep decline in research excavation, leaving rescue ahead of development as the principal source of field work. This does not result in published reports so often, unfortunately. The present backlog is a result of publication delay.

The history of HA over the last 10 years or so has been an embarrassment and frustration to our society, the Editorial Committee and both professional and amateur archaeologists and historians in the county. By the date of the AGM the long-awaited next volume should have appeared. This has been achieved in part by employing the services of an outside company and if this is to continue in order to ensure regular publication the total production cost will rise.

The economics of HA are questionable on any rational basis at present. A significant fraction of the print run lies in Council members' garages and eventually has to be disposed of. This despite the fact that Society members are entitled to a free copy; damning evidence of the fact that it is, or just as importantly, is perceived, not to be of

interest. A simple change of title could help maximise the number and range of potential contributors and in turn ensure the attention of as many subscribers as possible.

Many county journals reflect the breadth of content in their titles, I instance that for Essex (a county with one and a half times the population and over twice the area of Hertfordshire): *Essex Archaeology and History*. My proposal, although I am quite open to other suggestions, is that the name of our County Journal be changed to *Hertfordshire Archaeology and History*.

I am aware that the HA Committee has in the past considered just such a change as I am proposing, but that it was unable to get the agreement of our principle partner, the East Herts Society. Given all the circumstances and recent history of HA, should they maintain that position I could only characterise it as Luddite and unsupportable. I doubt it will have escaped members' notice that this proposal is coming from someone on the 'archaeological wing' of the Society and that clearly no axe is being ground in proposing de-emphasis of archaeology. Archaeology in the County will in no way be disadvantaged by the change. If our membership should endorse the line I am proposing, at our AGM, it is my hope that the weight this will carry would cause East Herts to rethink.

When I spoke on this matter at the last Society Council meeting I had the distinct feeling that I was pushing at an open door. The formal backing of the membership is all that is required.

Roger Miles

Chairman, Archaeology Group

PROPERTY HISTORY GROUP

The Group has taken a slightly different turn in the last little while. Whereas there is greater difficulty in pushing the records back in time for some parts of the original area under research (St Peter's Parish in the Borough), it is recognised that the picture is like only one half of a jigsaw without considering the Abbey Parish. A small subgroup is now setting out to cover the same aspect of the research already undertaken for the descent of property in St Peter's for the Abbey Parish. Similarly, they will start by looking at the census and directory records for the late nineteenth century, so we will soon have a very comprehensive set of data for the Victorian period in the town.

It is planned to make a presentation on what can be concluded from some aspects of this data during the next season's calendar of the Architecture & Local History Group.

In the meantime, an article on the history of the site between the old St Peter's Vicarage and the Pemberton Almshouses on Bowgate, written by Gerard McSweeney, has already been submitted to *Hertfordshire Archaeology*.

Kate Morris

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

The publishing event of the year was obviously *St Albans 1650–1700: a thoroughfare town and its people*, edited by J.T. Smith and M.A. North. The project began in 1991 and even though about a dozen people wrote specific chapters, more like sixty were involved over the twelve-year period to a greater or lesser degree. It is important that the results of so much research should not go to waste. A start has therefore been made to collect this useful material for our library!

Another book of local interest added to our stock is *The Roman Chilterns*, by Keith Branigan and Rosalind Niblett, published by the Chess Valley Archaeological and History Society. It is a very attractively produced book, with chapters on Verulamium.

An important project, which is in progress, is the creation of a computer catalogue of our stock. To this end, Brian Bending is setting up a database.

Writing last year's report, I bemoaned the uncertainty of the position of Kyngston House, where the library is situated, and the position does not seem to have been resolved. An additional room has been allocated to us, which has proved useful for the storage of copies of our publications, which had previously been distributed between attics, garages etc of various members.

Joyce Wells

LECTURE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Our final lecture for 2002/3 on Art, Industry and Coalbrookdale nearly did not happen. David Hopkins from Manchester experienced travel difficulties. Though late arriving, we were compensated, for he delivered an excellent lecture on the nineteenth century drive to improve quality and design in British manufactures through the medium of the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the impact it had on Coalbrookdale.

The Venerable Clifford Offer, Archdeacon of Norwich, had spoken to our Society in the nineties on King Offa. Now, commencing our 2003/4 programme, he returned to speak about Hitchin, Mercia and the Councils of Clofesho. We learned that Chelsea and Clofesho were the two principal meeting places for the great Mercian Church Councils of the eighth and ninth centuries. Clofesho was a key centre in Mercian times. His further research, he believed, proved that Hitchin was Clofesho.

"Who was the Merry Duchess of St Albans?". Members soon found out as they listened intently to Joan Perkin as she unravelled the story of the colourful life of Harriot Mellon, actress, banker, hostess and philanthropist. Life's journey took her from poverty in 1777 to move in circles that led her to become the wife of Thomas Coutts, the royal banker. Following his death in 1822 he left her the Bank, and, using her business skills, she doubled its value in 15 years. It was some years later that she married the Duke of St Albans, and became one of the most famous London hostesses, friend of Sir Walter Scott, George IV and the royal dukes. She gave lavishly to the poor and died in 1837.

Members turned out on a cold November night and were soon drawn into the atmosphere of warmth, comfort and luxury of some of our Hertfordshire cinemas of yesteryear. Who better to speak to us than professional film historian Allen Eyles, who had painstakingly recorded details and taken photographs of cinemas which have long since disappeared, or been altered out of all recognition. As members reflected with nostalgic affection of cinema-going before the multiplex, they were surely bemused as they thought of the back row on a rainy day!

At the beginning of this year we turned our attention to architecture. One of our own members, Mr George Atkinson, illustrated how the sixteenth century Venetian architect Andrea Palladio had influenced three Englishmen – Inigo Jones, Roger Pratt, and Lord Burlington – and their followers. We can now look afresh at one of our favourite St Albans buildings, Romeland House, and see the Venetian characteristics in its windows.

Inclement weather last year prevented our President, John Brodrick, from giving his lecture on the Dark Ages, but this year he was successful. His lecture spanned the period AD 350 to AD 650. His interest in such times was captured rather later in life. His readings about King Arthur and the Dark Ages aroused his interest. His enthusiasm for the Roman period remains today.

Still to come – some architecture, history, archaeology. . . and three Hertfordshire men who made their mark!

Doreen Bratby

17TH C POPULATION RESEARCH GROUP

The highlight of the year was the publication of *St Albans 1650-1700: a thoroughfare town and its people*. The book is the culmination of thirteen years' of study, research, writing and discussion and its publication was marked by a launch in December where the photo of contributors was taken with the President of our Society, the Mayor and her deputy.

A display on emigration to America was shown at three events during the year which included photographs of two present-day Americans who are descended from families who left St Albans for North America, probably for religious reasons, in the 1630s.

The trawl through the HALS wills index continued and the resulting wills have been entered on computer and family trees revised accordingly. Work on the PCC index is ongoing.

The Protestation Oaths 1642, the Oaths of Allegiance 1696 and various special rates and levies found in the churchwarden's accounts are now on the computer. The 1642 oath has been printed and sent to HALS, the Society of Genealogists and the SAHAAS library and our webmaster. We are planning to do this with other lists of names.

During work on the age at death in the burial file, it was noted that after the age of 5 the number of people dying

aged between 5 and 75 was similar; findings will be compared with the twentieth century. Transcription of St Peter's poor law documents also continues and the information is being computerised. A new database for inventories has been developed to enable easier analysis.

Among the Wills which we have been reading was that of Roger Pemberton, founder of the almshouses which still exist in St Peter's Street. The Will is fascinating in the enormous care which he took in detailing the terms of his bequest. With the approval of the A&A Council, we decided to transcribe the Will, and produce a booklet which will include details of how the terms are currently administered, photographs and pedigrees of the family etc.

The District Council, which now runs the almshouses, has agreed to our holding a small reception, by invitation, probably in late May, and for small groups to visit the almshouses. Anyone with information which we may not already have, or a particular interest in this project, is asked to contact one of us.

Pat Howe and Clare Ellis



Photo by courtesy of the St Albans Observer

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We welcome the following new members and hope that they will enjoy their membership:

P. Bonner	Hoddesdon
E. Brown	St Albans
Mrs V. Burns	Parkstreet Lane
Dr & Mrs D. Buttress	St Albans
M. Catlin	Eversholt
T. Cooper	St Albans
M.E. Cox	St Albans
M. Glody	Stanmore
Mr & Mrs P.M. Fletcher	TSt Albans
Mrs L.C. Hill	St Albans
Mrs M Jones	St Albans
D.R. Martin	St Albans
Mrs J.A. Massey	Bricket Wood
Mrs J.O. Mast	Bricket Wood
S. Rolfe	Harpenden
J.T. Sang	St Albans
Miss K Sidders	Wheathampstead
Mrs J. Stroud	St Albans
Ms C. Treweek	St Albans

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP REPORT

The turn of the year is a quiet time for the Group's outdoor activities although, as has been observed in previous reports, the marked decline in the severity of winters in recent times means we can do some things without the thermal discomfort endured in the past.

Processing of finds from the Amwell Villa – we are probably justified in referring to it as a villa, but only fuller excavation would confirm this – is largely complete. A report by a pot expert should give us an idea of the time bracket for the site, with the reservation that it would be based only on unstratified material from the ploughsoil. The figure would be conservative, as the earliest phases would be the deepest and may be undisturbed.

Recent excavations for the construction of a swimming pool not far from the site were monitored, but did not reveal anything significant. However, there would undoubtedly have been other buildings and land features associated with something of the size that we have identified. Aerial photograph archives may be useful to this end.

Roger Miles

NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY DAYS 17TH AND 18TH JULY 2004

The Society is traditionally rather quiet over the summer period when many go away or just relax between seasons. Only the Society outings punctuate this lull. However, those who are here will have an opportunity this year to continue their delight in the history, architecture and archaeology of all around us over a very special weekend in July.

St Albans will be buzzing with activity, this being the year of the biennial St Albans Festival. For the first time, the St Albans Carnival will be being brought forward to coincide with the Festival, adding the parade and funfair to the already packed programme.

The Museum Service will be continuing their tradition of staging an event for National Archaeology Days, and this also coincides with this last weekend of the festival. This year's theme will be the Middle Ages and our Museum friends will be offering medieval foods, handling sessions of medieval objects and so on.

This year, an additional attraction will be the arrival of a party of medieval guests from our twin town of Worms in Germany, who will be hosted by the St Albans Worms

Partnership. They will be visiting the Abbey on the Friday (as pilgrims), telling tales of the Nibelungen (in English) in a storytelling tent in the Park, and quaffing ale with a distinctive medieval flavour (and offering guests a taste, no doubt).

The Society is supporting by sponsoring a public lecture, to be held at St Albans Girls' School in Sandridgebury Lane. Professor John Gillingham will discuss the world of Richard Lionheart and the Plantagenets, seen from England, Germany and the Middle East on the Saturday evening. (Richard was incarcerated in the Imperial Castle at Trifels not far from Worms and there will be an exhibition at Verulamium Museum to illustrate the connections.)

There will be more publicity about the event in due course, but mark the date in your diaries now; it is going to a fun weekend. SAWP will be holding a medieval banquet on the Sunday to honour their guests and there may be some places for SAHAAS members.

Let Kate Morris know if you are interested in any aspect of the weekend and would like to be directly involved.

RETURN OF OLD ST ALBANS

Good news for those of us who have been mourning the decimation of our local history archive. In 1634, Benjamin Hare produced a map of the town of St Albans. This hung for many years in the Council Chamber (W H Smiths) until its loss in the early 19th century. Two copies are known to have been made: the first in 1798, by Thomas Godman, and the other was a simpler line drawing by Agutter. For at least 40 years the superb Godman copy hung in the City Library. Last year the library/internet office saw no reason to retain it and passed it on to the County Record Office. Here it received much needed conservation treatment.

Now for the good bit. The record office has had the map scanned and reproduced in colour. Reproduction was so good that at first I thought it was Godman's work. A colour copy has already been sent to the museums service and a second is awaiting delivery to the Maltings library. Godman was a first class cartographer and his copy is full of fascinating detail, from the pillory in the market place to the gallows on Bernard's Heath. Keep an eye open for its return.

Digital scanning has also come to the aid of the Hertfordshire Record Society. In collaboration with the record office they have re-published the county map of Hertfordshire by Bryant, 1822 (pictured below). This is now available at a scale of 1.5 inches to the mile, on four large sheets in a handsome A4 folder. The quality

of reproduction surpasses that previously possible. Up to circa 1820 Hertfordshire had changed little, from a cartographical point of view, since the medieval period. Importantly, and unlike the Phillimore Atlas, the parish boundaries shown are those of the pre-1830s reforms and include detached parts. A place index has been compiled and included. Map sets can be purchased from HALS at £7.50 per set. Record Society members receive a free copy as part of their membership.

The Record Society is currently hoping to reproduce the county and town maps of Dury and Andrews 1766, before the end of the year.

David Dean



BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

The visit to the Women's Library and the Ragged school Museum both held interest, especially for the older members of the party. Those who had been office secretaries could reminisce about the aged typewriters and calculating machines on show but, happily, none of us had as grim an upbringing as the ragged school children. One of the guides at the museum had been a featherweight champion of the area and had worked as a porter at Billingsgate.

Our programme for the rest of 2004 is listed below:

- 12th May Marc Fitch Local History Collection, Leicester University, and Leicester Museum
- 5th June Phillimore Lecture: *We have no factory bell*, a talk about domestic textile workers
- 16th July Arundel Castle Archives, Sussex
- 15th Sept Docklands Library, Archives and Museum
- October National Archives (formerly PRO and Historical Manuscripts Commission), Kew

In January 2005 there will be a guided visit to the House of Lords Record Office and to the archives of the Institute of Electrical Engineers in Savoy Place. The IEE is the largest professional engineering society in Europe and the archives contain some notable

collections, including that of Silvanus P. Thompson, whose 3500 printed books and 12,00 pamphlets date from the fifteenth to the early twentieth century. There are several manuscripts, among which are three volumes of medieval texts.

If you are interested in any of these events please get in touch with the Association's Business Manager, Mrs Annmarie Jones (BALH, PO Box 6549, Somersal Herbert, Ashbourne DE6 5WH (tel 01283 585947 or e-mail amjones-balh@supanet.com; www.balh.co.uk).

On 10th March 2004, a Local Heritage Initiative (LHI) Conference was held at the British Museum and I attended on behalf of BALH. Funded by the Heritage Fund, the Countryside Agency and the Nationwide Building Society, it aims to encourage interest in the local environment. Over about four years, LHI has awarded grants to about 780 projects, costing a total of £10.7 million. The average size of grant was £15,500 and the maximum that can be awarded is £25,00, but no matching funding is required. Those interested should log on to www.lhi.org.uk.

Norman Alvey

EARLY ANGLO-SAXON KINGSHIP

After the lecture on *The Dark Ages* on 27th February 2004 two of our members asked questions about this topic that I could not answer adequately on the hoof.

"Did the Anglo-Saxons have kings in their homelands before they came to Britain in the 5th C AD?"

"What was the influence of the Bretwalda on the consolidation of Anglo-Saxon power?"

Our earliest historical references to the German tribes come in Julius Caesar's *Gallic Wars* (about 60 BC) and the *Germania* of Tacitus writing about 150 years later. Caesar uses the word *feri* to describe the Germans which translates variously as 'savage, barbarous, fierce and cruel'. Both writers allude to German tribes having an atomistic society where the people of the tribes seldom congregated in villages but lived isolated on small farms in clearings among the dark forests of Northern Europe. Archaeology shows there was a hierarchical society and there are literary references to leaders to whom the Romans attached their word *rex*. These men seem to have had basically social and ceremonial functions and, when war threatened, competent temporary fighting leaders were chosen from among the warrior class. It could well be that early leaders of Saxon incomers like Hengest, Horsa, Cerdic and Cynric were chosen military leaders of this type. Malcolm Todd, a leading authority on the European barbarians of these times, says that the little evidence that exists suggests the Saxons of the 4th and 5th centuries AD had changed little from their forebears.

There is more evidence that the Jutes and Angles, living on the Danish peninsula and to the West of the Germans in Frisia, had achieved what one might call 'command kingship' by the late third century AD.

So a short answer to the first question could be: "The practice of kingship among the Saxons in their homeland was weak but it was somewhat stronger in the homelands of the Angles and the Jutes".

The word *Bretwalda* is found for the first time in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the writings of Bede in the late 800s AD. Bede uses it as a collective noun for seven early English kings who had overlordship among the English territories of the from the late 6th to 9th centuries AD. Given the better acceptance of kings amongst the Angles and Jutes, it is interesting that six out of these seven men relate to Anglo-Saxon territories on the Eastern side of England and four of those kings ruled Northumbria. The odd man out among the Heptarchy was Ceawlin who ruled Wessex until his death in AD 593.

How these men achieved their pre-eminence, whether by success leading a federation of minor kings in war, or by personal charisma, or by buying power, distributing gifts arising from superior wealth, is not known. It does not seem that military conquest of other kings was the source of their influence. Modern scholars consider the contribution of the Bretwalda to the unification of Anglo-Saxon England as minimal.

John Brodrick

HERTFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 8th May 2004

The AGM will be held at County Hall, Hertford. at 1.00 p.m. and followed by a lecture at 2.00 p.m. by our Guest Speaker

Dr Maragaret Gelling

Place Names and Landscapes

Dr Gelling is well known as an authority on place names and was President of the English Place-Name Society from 1986 to 1998. She has edited EPNS volumes for many counties and is currently Hon. Reader in English Place Name Studies at the University of Birmingham.

It always surprises me how few members of SAHAAS are individual members of HALH or attend its meetings. Our members may attend the annual Symposium at reduced rates, this year in Baldock on 13th November. Membership is £7.00 or £10.00 for two members living at the same address and sharing a single mailing and twice-yearly journal, *Herts Past and Present*.

Clare Ellis
Secretary HALH

SOCIETY OUTING

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, SHEEPY MAGNA, WARWICKSHIRE
AND THE MOIRA FURNACE, DERBYSHIRE

SATURDAY 19TH JUNE 2004

All Saints Church: There are few traces of the ancient past at the church; it is only the written word which describes the windows and monuments depicting the noble families whose estates were in the Sheepys. Rebuilding the enlarged church we see today began in 1778. The chief interest lies in the beautifully coloured and descriptive Victorian windows and in the reredos. The latter is a beautiful work in Caen stone, surrounded by panels of alabaster, depicting the Last Supper. The windows in the south aisle were designed by Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris in 1879. Very different in style and colouring, there are also two windows designed and executed by C.E. Kempe in 1897. A parishoner will meet us at the church and help us enjoy its history and beauty.

Moira Furnace: This coke-fired blast furnace is a spectacular brick structure completed in 1806. It has survived because it was unsuccessful and consequently never rebuilt. Now restored, it forms the centrepiece of an excellent museum of iron-making. The furnace was begun in 1802 for Lord Moira, who inherited a rural backwater in the Ashby Woulds. He recognised the potential of the area's coal and iron ore deposits and began a programme to develop his collieries and the iron ore lying in the clay bands. The line of tramway, built to carry coal and limestone to the site, can still be seen. A range of seven lime kilns lies below the banks of the canal and continued until the 1850s to supply quicklime to farmers and builders. The Ashby Canal ran for thirty miles to join the Coventry Canal to carry coal to distant markets and to bring in grain and limestone. We shall have guided tours of the furnace and the limekilns and a short trip on the canal.

Coffee will be served at the Church of All Saints, included in the cost.

Lunch is to be taken independently. Bring a packed lunch to eat on the coach or at Moira where, if the weather is clement, there is ample space and the coach will be close at hand. Alternatively, eat in the Furnace Tearooms, a small cafe. To ensure service please complete the appropriate section on your booking form. Two items only have been selected for simplicity, though beverages and icecreams will also be available. Pay on the day.

Tea may be taken independently in the Furnace Tearoom.

Clothing. Although the ground is not rough at Moira, there are slopes and steps, so please wear sensible shoes. Also bring a waterproof and/or umbrella as for much of the afternoon you will be in the open air.

Cost of the outing is **£23.50**, which includes coach transport, guides' fees, a donation to the Church, gratuities and morning coffee,

Organiser: Isobel Leek, telephone 01582 621671

Timings.	Depart	St Albans,	St Peter's Street	8.30 a.m.
			Westminster Lodge Far Car Park	8.40 a.m.
		Harpenden	Southdown	9.00 a.m.
	Return approx	6.45 p.m.		

BOOKING FORM

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, SHEEPY MAGNA, WARWICKSHIRE, AND THE MOIRA FURNACE, DERBYSHIRE
SATURDAY 19TH JUNE 2004

Please reserve (indicate number please) seats on the coach for Name

I enclose a cheque for £ payable to SAHAAS

Please tick to indicate where you plan to join the coach St Albans, St Peter's Street
 St Albans, Westminster Lodge
 Harpenden, Southdown

Please complete this section if you plan to lunch at the Furnace Cafe

For lunch we request Cheese ploughman's please indicate the
 Ham ploughman's number of meals

Signed Telephone No.

Name (please print clearly)

Address

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