



Founded 1845

STALBANS AND HERTFORDSHIRE
ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY
www.stalbanshistory.org



NEWSLETTER

No. 155

December 2004

Registered Charity No. 226912

Hon. Sec: B.E. Moody, 24 Rose Walk, St Albans, Herts AL4 9AF

LECTURES AND EVENTS

Tuesday 7th December	St Albans historic landscape	David Dean (SAHAAS President)
Friday 14th January	The Society's New Year Party at Verulamium Museum	
Tuesday 18th January	Thomas Fowler: A St Albans worthy	Tony Billings (Local historian)
	Grimthorpe: A St Albans giant	Rob Weston (Chairman, A&LH Group)
Friday 28th January	Child employment in 19th century Herts in perspective: varieties of childhood*	Prof Nigel Goose
Tuesday 1st February	Cremation burials at Turners Hall Farm, Wheathampstead	Simon West` (Verulam Museum)
Tuesday 8th February	Lord Rothschild and the Tring Museum	Teresa Wild (Curator, Rothschild Museum)
Tuesday 15th February	Mortared, plastered and rendered – lime's role in historic buildings Jeremy Ingham is with a local firm of consulting engineers to the construction and building industries. A geologist by training, he investigates and advises on stone and masonry materials in new and historic buildings	Jeremy Ingham
Friday 25th February	Ancient technology*	John Brodrick (Past President, SAHAAS)
Tuesday 1st March	The lost inns of the High Street, Hemel Hempstead	Elizabeth Buteux (President, HHHistorical Society)
Tuesday 8th March	Labelled heads: portraits on coins and medals	Richard Abdey (British Museum Dept of Prehistory)
Friday 18th March	Britons in early post-Roman Hertfordshire: the placename evidence*	Dr John Baker
Tuesday 22nd March	How St Albans has changed and developed: who did what and where	Kate Morris et al. (Property History Group)
Tuesday 5th April	History of Redbourn	Alan Featherstone (Village historian)
Tuesday 19th April	Archaeology and Local History Group AGM Our evolving view of the Romans	John Brodrick
Friday 29th April	The strange story of the Metropolitan Railway	Dr Clive Foxall
Tuesday 10th May	SAHAAS Annual General Meeting at Verulamium Museum Verlamio-Verlamium	
Tuesday 17th May	Our past: treasure finds from England and Wales	Simon West Richard Hobbs (British Museum)
Friday 27th May	Indian influences on 18th century English gardens	Kate Harwood

* More information about these lectures is on page 10.

**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.**



*The President and Council
wish all members
a happy, healthy and prosperous
Christmas and New Year.*

*We look forward to seeing
as many of you as possible
at our New Year Party on
14th January,
details of which are enclosed
with this newsletter*

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Our numbers continue to increase steadily and we welcome those who have joined recently:

Michael Clasby	Richmond Walk, St Albans
Mrs Carolyn Crawshaw	Woodstock Road N, St Albans
Mrs B E Croom	Newlands Close, St Albans
Dr Thomas Dunn	London Road, St Albans
Mr & Mrs Hammant	West View Road, St Albans
David Harding	New Road, Croxley Green
J C MacChesney	Worley Road, St Albans
Mr Michael and Mrs Irene Neve	Tippendell Lane, St Albans
Donald Porter	Digswell Rise, Welwyn Garden City
Jonathan Rodwell	George Street, St Albans
Mr & Mrs James Rose	Abbey View Road, St Albans
Mrs J G Smith	Marshallswick Lane, St Albans
Mrs Melinda Sparke	Jennings Road, St Albans
Mrs B Starkey	Hamilton Road, St Albans
Mrs & Mrs Clive Walter	Ryder Seed Mews, Pageant Road, St Albans
Mrs Julia Wood	Sopwell Road, St Albans

YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU!

Our busy Society depends on being able to share out all the many jobs and offices between as many members as possible, which means we are always looking for new volunteers. This year we have done quite well so far with our new Treasurer, John Thomson, and Newsletter Editor, Dee Drinkwater, in post, and Brian Hanlon has agreed to stand as the next Hon Secretary.

The first urgent vacancy in 2005 will be for a Membership Secretary; our membership records are now computerised, but we shall need a successor to Megan Atton, to deal with applications and resignations (see *also page 9*). Keeping the Clock Tower open for visitors is of great benefit to the community – and to the Society – and we need someone to arrange the rota of weekend organisers, who in turn line up the individual helpers.

This is an 'easy' job, which should be virtually finished by Easter. Or would you prefer to organise one or two summer excursions for members, or to take the Minutes at five Council meetings per annum? Potential candidates are also being approached for the role of President.

Finally, we need to elect three members at each AGM to serve on our managing Council for three years, in order to help the Society to keep moving in the right direction.

Please let me, or any of the Officers, know whether you can help.

Brian Moody

THE FUTURE OF KYNGSTON HOUSE

Towards the end of October we received formal notification from Chris Green, Museums Director, that St Albans Council is likely to dispose of Kyngston House, our current 'base' and location of the Society's library. We are thus faced with the challenge of locating new premises in a relatively short time.

The advantages of and accommodation that we would hope to re-establish, include:

- (a) An essential base from which our Archaeology Group can function
- (b) A base from which our library can operate to the mutual advantage of our members and museum staff
- (c) Weekly contact with the city's principal archaeologists and a two way exchange of information.

I am probably showing my age in suggesting that, the best interests of the local community, good intentions and common sense, will rate low in the final list of priorities. However, thinking caps on. Whatever the outcome, the Society will move forward, thanks to its members and our forward looking supporters.

FROM THE MUSEUM SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The major societies, St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society (SAHAAS) and Harpenden History Society (HHS) make substantial contributions to the work of the Museum Service and to the community as a whole. ... The Museum Service will do all in its power to ensure that the societies have appropriate accommodation for the future.

The matter was discussed at the November meeting of the SAHAAS Council, and some possible options were considered. Chris Green of the Museum Service notes how much he values the work of the Society (see quote above), and will bear our needs in mind when searching for new facilities for his own team, though we do need to research alternative options for ourselves. More news about this in the new year.

David Dean

CLOCK TOWER VISITS



Attendance was quite good this year. We sold 5479 tickets despite losing two of the best weekends at the beginning of the year because the repairs to the Tower could not be finished in time for the start of our season. As the table shows, 2002 was our best year, with 6892 people attending and the lowest in the last ten years was 1995 with 4957 attending. It would be interesting to spot what causes the year to year attendance to vary so much. I doubt if it is the weather. 2003 was a splendid summer as compared to 2004 but, had we not lost two weekends, ticket sales would have been similar this year despite the poorer weather.

The Clock Tower is important to the SAHAAS. Each year we get a 'dividend' for our efforts. It is £850 this year and so worth one quarter of our subscription income – worth much more than additional members, really, as we do not have to provide services for them!

The Society still needs a new Clock Tower Co-ordinator. It would be a pity if we lose this income simply because we cannot find someone to do that not very burdensome task. Also we need more volunteers to man the individual 90 minute sessions and a few more

CLOCK TOWER TICKET SALES 1994 TO 2004

Year	Adults	Children	Total
1994	4113	1310	5423
1995	3882	1075	4957
1996	4640	1359	5999
1997	5089	1182	6203
1998	5089	1263	6352
1999	4870	1292	6162
2000	4501	1259	5760
2001	4986	1222	6288
2002	5365	1527	6892
2003	4466	1162	5682
2004	4305	1174	5479

Weekend Organisers. Those of us who do provide help for the Clock Tower find it most enjoyable and rather addictive!

John Brodrick

Clock Tower Co-ordinator (Retired)

THE ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP REPORT

EXCAVATION

Our report in the last Newsletter hinted at possibly significant further finds at our Amwell Villa site. At the end of the season's work the operative word is still 'possible' rather than 'probable'. One find of pottery outside and to the south-east of the building could point to activity in the Medieval period. However, the saying 'one swallow does not make a summer' is one which must be applied in archaeology.

The lone pottery find was at over half a metre's depth and the top-soil went down to almost a metre (i.e. this was the depth of the undisturbed 'natural', which is where excavation stops). There was a significant slope to the natural surface. Manually excavating to this sort of depth over any wider area is not a casual undertaking, so it was not possible to look for further verification in the time available. What might be inferred from the exceptional depth of the natural (in the rest of the field, around 25cm) is that the trench was sounding a back-filled quarry pit of some sort, almost certainly extracting clay, given the nature of the local subsoil. One hypothesis might be that clay was being dug at the eastern end of the villa site at some post-Roman period. A 2003 trench failed to find the east end wall of the building and did not reach natural. Did the quarrying take away some of that end of the building?

Our investigations now rest with having confirmed the presence of a substantial Roman period building, with the suggestion of some later activity.

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEYING

Work at St. George's School looking for the 'Roman' road has concluded. No decision has been taken yet on whether to follow up with any excavation. Although clear signs of a linear buried feature were found in the second

area of the grounds investigated, its alignment and the evidence of once-existing buildings nearby make a modern explanation a strong possibility. A small test pit might give an answer, without an enormous effort.

A new resistivity survey has been started at a site to the south of Amwell which showed distinct cropmarks from the air in 1976 (very dry, 1976!). Ros Niblett has long been interested in getting some confirmation on the ground here. So far in the area covered we can 'see' geology, but no archaeology.

Down-hill from the villa site the clay cap on the Lea valley ridge has ended and chalk comes very close to the surface. There should be something to report in the next newsletter.

A THANK YOU PRESENT

Since 1987 the Dickinsons have been our tolerant hosts on Cross Farm and an opportunity arose from the Amwell excavations to give them a memento of our work there. Amongst the many fragments of building material we found were two with animal footprints, so, with the Dickinson children particularly in mind, these were framed and presented. Which animals? Dog and deer.

MOVES AFOOT

In recent years the security of the Museums' (and hence our) occupancy of Kyngston House has been increasingly uncertain and we now have news that it is required to be vacated by April 2005. The Group will be busy over the winter rationalising and minimising the finds we have there. Fortunately this is the low season for fieldwork, so there is a slight silver lining to a dark cloud.

Roger Miles

PROPERTY GROUP

Research continues into the background to properties in both St Peter's and Abbey parishes. The group will be making a presentation concerning their work at one of the Local History Group's lectures on Tuesday 22nd March which will highlight properties which have come and gone in the St Peter's area as well as giving an overview of the way in which the research has been carried out.

Kate Morris

THE ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP'S YEAR

Opportunities occurred throughout the year for members of the group to assist at Museum service excavations.

The new hypocaust building in Verulamium Park required electrical supply and earth cables meeting modern standards; the building contractors removed the previous cable, opening a trench from the Inn on the Park that skirts the tennis courts, then runs via the black sports pavillion past two sides of the playground, then makes a left turn uphill left of the path and straight to the hypocaust: a distance of several hundred yards.

Permission is rarely granted for excavations in Verulamium and our volunteers were glad to help. The trench was carefully dug down to Roman level, one side was scraped flat and sections of one entire side were drawn. Plan drawings recorded features in the bottom of the trench, including buildings, walls, streets, wall plaster and tessellated floors. The most interesting floor is around 10 metres long, red with grey rectangles checkering two areas. All the information will be plotted onto the Verulamium town plan, clarifying what is already there and perhaps adding new detail.

That was on weekdays from March to June (rained off occasionally!).

The next call for volunteers was to take part in the continuing excavations of first-century habitation at Turnershall Farm. The villa foundations were uncovered again and a variety of pits and ditches surrounding and beneath it were excavated. Features found included a second and third metal-working hearth and many types of bones from different kinds of animals, some in peculiar arrangements. Baby skeleton No. 1 was buried in one of the narrow rooms in the villa (under the stairs?); and No. 2 was in a small pit that had been disturbed by a larger Roman rubbish pit outside the front of the villa. Later a trench alongside the gas pipeline (it was laying this which first disturbed Roman building materials in 1995) was extended; the corner of a wall recorded by H.A.T. at that time was at last rediscovered and shown to be part of a small, well built bath-house.

Altogether about 18 members have taken part in the digs above; it was fascinating to take part in this many-sided and interesting season. Currently we are marking our small finds at Kingston House, where live our boxed finds from over the years.

Janet Miles



MEETING OLIVER CROMWELL

A near neighbour of Hertfordshire 400 years ago; an undergraduate at Cambridge; a small businessman and town counsellor; a working farmer; a soldier and MP; and ultimately Head of State is how Professor John Morrill unveiled the chequered life of the colourful character of Oliver Cromwell – warts and all ... a man who, in life, had risen and fallen and risen again in common with other leaders over the centuries. Uniquely, three years after his death, Cromwell was disinterred and his embalmed corpse hanged.

John Morrill is Professor of British and Irish History at the University of Cambridge, a former President of the Cromwell Association, and Acting Master of Selwyn College. He is a prolific writer and broadcaster and he

has written extensively on Oliver Cromwell over many years including writing his life for the new Oxford dictionary of National Biography and in his book *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*.

He held 80 members spellbound as he re-examined the classic dilemmas about Cromwell: was he a precursor of modern liberal democracy and religious pluralism or a military dictator and religious bigot, especially when he crossed the Irish Sea and massacred the garrisons of Drogheda and Wexford? The lecture revealed some new and exciting discoveries about Cromwell which put his life and career in an entirely new light ... if only we had been taught like this at school!

Doreen Bratby

CURRENT SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

The following Society publications may be purchased by members, at the prices quoted, by prior arrangement with the Hon Secretary or Hon Librarian.

- | | | |
|------|---|----|
| SA4 | <i>Around St Albans with Geoff Dunk</i> , Ed George Wilde & Norman Kent. | £4 |
| | Forty articles on local history selected from over 300 which Geoff Dunk wrote for the <i>St Albans Review</i> between 1974 and 1982, dealing with Roman and Saxon relics, the Abbey, churches, priories and nunneries, streets, buildings, trades and markets, and personalities. | |
| SA5 | <i>The Street Memorials of St Albans Abbey Parish</i> , 1987, by Alice Goodman. | £4 |
| | Describes St Albans during the 1914-1918 War, and the unique street memorials erected in the Parish to the fallen. | |
| SA8 | <i>Education by Election, Reed's School, Clapton and Watford</i> , 1990, by Norman Alvey. | £4 |
| | History of Reed's Schools. Orphans were selected for admission by votes from subscribers to a charity between 1813 and 1940. | |
| SA9 | <i>The Story of the Abbey School</i> , 1991, by Alice Goodman. | £4 |
| | History of the National School founded by the Abbey Parish in 1848. | |
| SA10 | <i>The Light of Other Days</i> , 1995, by Brian Moody. | £2 |
| | A short history of the Society's first 150 years. | |
| SA11 | <i>A History in All Men's Lives</i> , 1999, Ed. Brian Moody. | £4 |
| | Papers on notable past members of the Society and events from the first 150 years. Authors F Kilvington, R Busby, J Brodrick, B Moody, D Aubrey and J T Smith. | |
| SA12 | <i>St Albans 1553</i> , 2003, by David Dean, Pat Howe, Betty Masters & Kate Morris. | £3 |
| | Celebrates the granting of a Charter to St Albans by the boy king Edward VI in 1553, and explains its importance in providing the foundations for our local government, establishing the Mayoralty and authorising the town's markets. | |
| | <i>St Albans 1650 -1700, a thoroughfare town and its people</i> , 2003, Ed. J T Smith & M A North. | |
| | The result of twelve years of work by the Society's Research Group, with ten authors. | |
| | Copies may be obtained by Society members from Hertfordshire Publications, an imprint of the University of Hertfordshire Press, for £13 including post and packing. They should apply to University of Hertfordshire Press, Learning & Information Services, College Lane, Hatfield AL10 9AD. | |

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP REPORT

During September and October we enjoyed six lectures on various topics. Unfortunately, due to illness and holidays, I missed three of these talks. I am, therefore, very grateful to Gerard McSweeney for supplying me with his notes of these events. He has, in effect, written half of this report.

We started the new season with a visit from the County Archaeologist, Dr Stuart Bryant, whose speciality is the late iron age in Hertfordshire and who described to us the landscape and rituals associated with that period. It seems it was a very dynamic time, with a transition from tribe to state government. Much information has been gathered from many cremation burials in the county and we learned of the importance lasting about 50 years of Braughing as an 'import' town before and after the Roman conquest. Dr Bryant speculated that Beech Bottom was not a defensive structure but a ceremonial way probably connected in some way with the 'kingly site' of Verlamion.

By coincidence our next speaker was Dr Bryant's superior from County Hall. This was John Wood, Environment Department Director of Hertfordshire County Council, who gave us an excellently illustrated talk on the problems facing the County in providing for the future of its people. Hertfordshire's problems arise from having at least six large towns of different character, three large airports near its perimeter, two major motorways and is constrained by large greenbelt areas. The tasks include building the large number of houses and consequent infrastructure specified by the Government, coping with an increase in population and traffic, working with the new Regional Authorities and yet trying to strike a balance between these requirements and keeping the County a pleasant place in which to live. This is the 'local history of the future', although the speaker did not say as much.

The Iron-Age Chariot was the title of our next lecture given by Anthony Spence of the British Museum. About fifteen chariot burials have been excavated in recent years, throwing light on the history and construction of high-status iron-age chariots. With modern scientific tests these have shown the inaccuracies of many previous ideas of chariot design. Modern reconstructions indicate that all the problems have not been solved and emphasise the sophistication of the original builders.

We came nearer home at the beginning of October when Gene Mitchell, a Blue Badge guide from London, related the history of the New River bringing good clear water to the inhabitants of London. Gene combined this with a fascinating account of the Midland Railway bringing its main line (through St Albans) to the terminus at St Pancras. This Gothic masterpiece of Sir George Gilbert Scott, both station and hotel, was described in some detail and she produced many slides to enhance her presentation.

The following week we were at home with the history of Verulam Road, part of Thomas Telford's great plan to take a road from London to Holyhead. Ann Dean, one of our own members, has made a detailed study of this part of St Albans and she presented a riveting and enthralling evening of local history. Having outlined the road system through St Albans prior to 1820 she showed how Telford tackled the problem of a new western route out of the town. She illustrated her talk with early photos and pointed out interesting buildings that grew up along the new road and the diverse people who lived and worked in them.

The sixth lecture of the season was a visit from John Fisher who, with many slides and replica artefacts, gave us the latest knowledge on Henry VIII's flagship, the Mary Rose, which was so dramatically raised from Portsmouth waters in 1982. We learnt many facts about Tudor times and John was at pains to correct one misconception – that the ship was on its maiden voyage – in fact the ship was 35 years old and sank (probably through being overloaded and badly handled) as it went out to fight the French fleet near the Isle of Wight. Amazingly some 29,000 artefacts have been raised from the wreck and work on restoring and drying out the hull will continue for another 20 years. Will our lecturer come back and bring us further up to date at that time?

And so into November when our speaker was Stephen Potter, an Abbey guide who came to talk about tiles in the Abbey. His subject was very dependent on visual aids but the computer gremlins were at work and he was unable to link his laptop to the school Powerpoint system. Stephen, to his great credit, struggled manfully on and with some ingenuity his audience were able, at a distance, to see pictures of the tiles on his laptop screen. He fascinated us all with his description of medieval tile making and we are all now eagerly awaiting the official report from the Biddles to learn whether the tiles, found in the Chapter House excavation in the 1970s, comprise the earliest decorated tile floor in England.

The second lecture in November brought Peter Street, a university lecturer, to St Albans to talk about the Great Exhibition of 1851. He gave a fascinating talk, full of facts and humorous anecdotes, which held the attention for over an hour. Amazingly, it appears that less than a year elapsed from the very first germ of the idea to the opening on 1st May 1851: a remarkable achievement by mainly Prince Albert, Joseph Paxton and Henry Cole. The evening finished with many members vying with each other to recall from where they had watched the demise of the Crystal Palace when it burned to the ground in 1936. I (R.W.) just remember my grandfather telling me about it!

Rob Weston & Gerard McSweeney

Local History Group

ENQUIRIES TO THE WEBSITE

WWW.STALBANSISTORY.ORG

One of the features of our website is that visitors can send emails to the Officers, and also to "Enquiries". The site does not reveal names or email addresses but forwards the enquiries to me.

They are a varied bunch: some are local, some are intercontinental, some are thoughtful and well presented, while others are so sloppy that the enquirer appears to be too lazy to do any work themselves (I am not going to reveal which), and I suspect that some are commercial companies who would use our reply in their publicity. Some I have answered, some I have forwarded to other members, and some I have ignored.

Subjects include:

- An affair between the Duke of Cumberland and Lady Grosvenor at the White Hart in 1769
- The librarian of the University of Colorado querying our name, which is incorrectly given as the "St Albans Architectural & Archaeological Society" in *St Albans 1650-1700, a Thoroughfare Town*
- A great storm in 1362, which seems to have damaged, or even destroyed, the Abbey Gateway (the present one is a year or two later)
- History of 19 and 21 Victoria Street and a request for photos etc

- The Professor of History at the University of British Columbia asking about Elsie Toms, who had helped him as an undergraduate
- The history of the arches in the Abbey
- The history of Dalton Street
- Nell Gwynn and the Dukes of St Albans
- Suitable street names for a proposed development on the Territorial Army site in Camp Road
- Research for a novel involving Geoffrey de Gorham, Abbot Richard d'Albini – and what is said to be the first play performed in England

With such a wide range of subjects and standards I am not sure what to do. It would be good to attract local enquirers to join us. I should like to help the thoughtful, charge the commercial, and ignore the lazy, but it is not always easy to distinguish them. I don't have the time or knowledge to deal with them all myself. I could forward enquiries to others, but some might involve a bit of trouble. Perhaps the ideal would be to build a pool of helpers so that none was called too often. Advice, and offers of help, would be welcome. Your email address, or even existence, would not be revealed without your consent in each case.

Brian Bending

THE PEMBERTON ALMSHOUSES

A NEW SAHAAS PUBLICATION

A commemorative booklet to celebrate the founding of the Pemberton Almshouses in St Peter's Street is near completion. The research and compilation has been done by Clare Ellis and Pat Howe as part of the ongoing work of the Seventeenth Century Population Research Group. The publication contains interesting historical facts and anecdotes, but at the same time takes the reader through 400 years to modern times when the almshouses are still being used in much the same way as the founder stipulated. It is well illustrated with ancient and modern pictures.

The price is not yet fixed but should be well within members' Christmas shopping budget.



Please look out for it in the bookshops or telephone Clare Ellis 01727 856250 or Pat Howe 01727 857274.

THE SAHAAS LIBRARY

There have been several interesting additions to the library stock recently. Members may remember a book published in 1991 by the Bricket Wood Society entitled ***All My Worldly Goods – An Insight Into Family Life From Wills and Inventories, 1447–1742***. Now under the editorship of Meryl Parker a companion volume has been published ***All My Worldly Goods II – Wills And Probate Inventories of St Stephen's Parish, St Albans, 1418–1700***. Any of us who have been involved in family or local history know how valuable these sources can be.

Copies are available price £12 + £2 p& p from Mrs F. Massey, 34 South Riding, Bricket Wood, telephone 01923 671141.

The latest publication by the Fraternity of the Friends of the Abbey is a leaflet entitled ***Windows*** and prepared by one of our own members, Margaret Wilson, who is an Abbey guide. A plan of the Abbey numbers all the windows. There are many illustrations, descriptions of the subject matter and details of the designer. This very attractively produced leaflet is on sale at the Abbey bookshop, price £1 .

Mrs Margaret Day has given us a copy of a 20 page pamphlet with the interesting title ***St Albans – The City Historical with a Message for the World***. It was issued by the local Chamber of Commerce. It is not dated but it

seems most likely to have been produced shortly before the 1914-1918 war. It is worth quoting a few sentences, which are addressed to the visitor:

'You cannot afford to overlook this important historical City that is if you are really interested in the history of our great country and all it has meant to Civilisation, for as it happens the history of St Albans is the History of England – indissolubly linked!

'Arriving at St Albans you will find various conveyances to the hotels etc. St Albans has well maintained livery stables, and is remarkably fortunate as to the most perfectly equipped Motor Garages. The return fare from Town was 3s.4d. and a season ticket –1st class £13.11.0. subject to a 5% increase for Government duty.

'St Albans has many claims as a most desirable residential place. Electric Light, Baths, Museum, Library (Carnegie), Recreation Grounds, Park, Amusement Halls, Three Banks, Three Railways, High Grade Schools for Girls and Boys, Two Golf Links, splendid drainage and sanitation perfect.'

I wonder how we would describe ourselves today.?

Joyce Wells

Librarian

WANTED: A MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

I have enjoyed this position for 14 years – and made many friends in the process. When I took over from Matthew I devised by own system of recording members' subscriptions. It was done entirely by hand and now I feel that a much more efficient system could be developed, using modern technology – but I am computer illiterate!

The task consists of recording subscriptions as they are paid, and entering details of new members as they join. An address list is needed so that the newsletter can be sent out: at present this happens three times a year and the envelopes and address labels are prepared by the Membership Secretary.

It would be ideal if I could explain my system to a new

recruit so that he or she could develop a new system, which could be in operation before I resign at the 2005 AGM. Please do consider whether this is a service you could do for the Society.

DELIVERING THE NEWSLETTER

We have decided that all newsletters should be posted in future, in the interests of speedier and more efficient delivery. Up till now, many stalwarts have tramped the streets delivering copies in the St Albans district. We are very grateful to all those who have undertaken this service over the years.

Megan Atton

FORTHCOMING LECTURES

Our first lecture of 2005 is on Friday 28 January. **Professor Nigel Goose** will cover child employment prospects in 19th century Hertfordshire and will underline the fact that child labour in this period was more prevalent in the home than in factories or mines. He reasserts the claims of counties such as Hertfordshire to be considered as full participants in the complex process that we call 'industrial revolution'.

Professor Goose is a graduate of the Universities of Kent and Cambridge and currently Professor of Social and Economic History at the University of Hertfordshire, and Director of the University's Centre for Regional and Local History. He has published widely in the fields of urban, economic and social and demographic history from the 16th to the 19th centuries, and has recently published two books on the Berkhamsted and St Albans regions of Hertfordshire in 1851.

On 25 February our past President **Mr John Brodrick** speaks on Ancient Technology. For members who have not met him, he has spent

the whole of his working life in business. He worked initially as a professional economist being the economist for two large industrial companies (English Electric and Mullard Ltd) and then moving over to marketing becoming Sales Manager for Marconi Instruments Ltd which brought him and his family to St Albans. Later he started his own international trading business from which he retired in 1989. He has always had an interest in history.

His lecture will show that the Romans are probably famous for two things – their largely invincible armies and their application of technology to every aspect of life. However, they drew on a heritage of science and technology from Egypt, Syria, Greece and Etruria – not to mention China and India. In his talk he will give a sketch of ancient technology in many fields and discuss why the Romans did not achieve an Industrial Revolution 1500 years before Britain did.

Dr John Baker, on 18 March, will be speaking about Britons in early post-Roman Hertfordshire. Suggestions

that a British community survived in parts of Hertfordshire and neighbouring counties through the fifth and sixth centuries are not new, but the evidence is not conclusive. He will discuss the toponymic evidence from the area, especially examining the significance of place-names that preserve British or earlier elements, and attempt to shed further light on the major questions of cultural survival and change.

A part-time lecturer in medieval history at Birkbeck College, University of London, Dr Baker also teaches at the University of Leicester. He has published work on place-names and has research interests in Anglo-Saxon settlement, in particular using a multidisciplinary approach to study cultural change and to test place-names theories. His book *Cultural Transition in the Chilterns and Essex Region, 350AD to 650AD* is due to be published by the University of Hertfordshire Press in 2005.

I do hope you will join us at these three lectures.

Doreen Bratby

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

On the September visit to the Museum in Docklands, Bob Aspinall proved to have an unusual CV for a librarian, having occupied a wide variety of posts in the London Docks when it was a centre of world trade. He knew his records but his talk was spiced with anecdotes from his own experience. Much was now on computer but the paper records went back for hundreds of years. He doubted whether computer records would last that long and, moreover, the paper records contained not only the original entry but also any later amendments which might throw fascinating sidelights on the career of an ancestor. As he has now retired the privilege of chatting to him among his beloved records and illustrations will not occur again. Of course, the museum will still be there and it is well worth a visit.

There are still a few places for the visit to the Institution of Electrical Engineers and the House of Lords Records

Office on 20th January 2005. In March there will be a visit to the King's College Maughan Library, housed in the old PRO building in Chancery Lane; also in April or May a tour of the Chichester Record Office and the Video and Film Archive. Other visits are planned to take place during 2005 and, as BALH generally have very knowledgeable and interesting speakers conducting the tours, they are good value (£5 for members and £7.50 for non-members).

Details and application forms are available on www.balh.co.uk. Alternatively you can get in touch with the Business Manager, Mrs Annmarie Jones, BALH, PO Box 6549, Somersal Herbert, Ashbourne, DE6 5WH, Tel: 01283 585947, or e-mail amjones-balh@supanet.com.

Norman Alvey

The SAHAAS Newsletter welcomes your comments, ideas or contributions, which may be edited; please send to deedrinkwater@beeb.net or to 35 Portland Street, St Albans, AL3 4RA.

Our next issue will be in January 2005 and the closing date for contributions is Friday Friday 31st december