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NEWSLETTER

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

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Registered Charity No. 226912

Hon. Sec: Bryan Hanlon, 24 Monks Horton Way, St Albans AL1 4HA

FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT

About myself

After a degree in French and Librarianship qualifications in London, Ted and I arrived in St Albans with a six-month-old daughter in January 1963, in two feet of snow! The next twelve years were spent bringing up three children. Knowing nothing about local history, my work and voluntary activities involved community service as Deputy County Organiser for the hospital library service and Secretary of Napsbury Hospital League of Friends, which led to membership of the Community Health Council, in Barnet and then St Albans.

Our fourth child arrived in 1975. Our own family history led me to study genealogy and work as a researcher. I then obtained secretarial qualifications and became national secretary for a women's organisation.

My life changed in 1979, when I stood for an 'un-winnable' seat on the District Council. The Young Conservatives did all the hard work and St Peter's ward elected one Labour, one Conservative and one Independent! Since then I have served three terms of office, representing three different wards. I was deputy Mayor in 1990-91 and served as Chairman of Drugcare St Albans for six years.

In 1993 Jane Kilvington persuaded me to join the A&A, of which I had never heard, and I joined Council when I became Newsletter Editor in 1995. I made up for lost time when the Cambridge University Institute of Continuing Education ran a Certificate course in Local History. Further courses lead eventually to the Master of Studies external degree, with a thesis on the 18th century Poor Law Records of the Abbey Parish. I have also just resigned after six years as Secretary of the Hertfordshire Association for Local History.

The Way Forward

It is a great honour and privilege to have been elected as President of the A&A, for which I thank you all. I look forward to the challenge and to working with several new Officers and Council members. You will find their details on the following pages. Others

have retired, several after a long period of service. We thank them all for their contribution to the Society's activities, in particular Brian Moody after 16 years as Hon Secretary!

My own current priorities for developing the Society's activities are:

Research. The 17th Century and Property research groups have made an excellent start in publicising their work, with presentations to Society members and other organisations. I hope to see more meetings devoted to the research and interests of members, with a publications subcommittee providing the necessary skills to publish our research, so that others can benefit from the knowledge we gain.

Social. New members' evenings have been very successful in introducing the activities of the Society, but we need more opportunities for members to get to know each other. Venues are only available for a limited time, but perhaps some meetings could allow more time for discussion. I have enjoyed many of the Society's annual excursions and very much hope that someone will offer to reinstate these. Could it be you - or several of you?

HALH. It is always disappointing when few of our members attend meetings of the Hertfordshire Association for Local History, which is an ideal way of broadening our horizons. HALH activities are described on Page 11 and, since the annual symposium will be held in St Albans in November, this is your opportunity to get involved and find out how interesting the county-wide perspective can be.

Premises. Finally, I have high hopes that a replacement for our library at Kynngston House could allow much greater opportunities for a wide range of activities between meetings.

Clare Ellis



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INTRODUCING THE SAHAAS COUNCIL



Margaret Taylor
VICE-PRESIDENT

Although I trained as a physiotherapist, I always wanted to be an archaeologist – no career for a woman in the 1930s! However, I have since been involved in many digs at Gorhambury, Cross Farm and the Abbey. I was first Lady President of the A&A from 1987 to 1990. We have a very exciting Society and I would like to see more young members involved in research.



Kate Morris
VICE-PRESIDENT

I am a Past President of the Society and have a degree in historical research. I have coordinated the work of the Property History Group since its inception, contributing substantially to the compilation of a database of historical information about structures, plots and residents in St Peter's Parish. A linguist and librarian, I currently teach English as a Foreign Language and serve as a District Councillor.



John Brodrick
VICE-PRESIDENT

I was formerly the Chairman of SAHAAS, and am retired businessman, much travelled in business life. My interests include history, particularly Roman history, investment, digital photography and cooking.



David Dean
VICE-PRESIDENT

I joined the Society in the late '60s, and have enjoyed the company and collaboration of some super people. Now I am looking forward to the next 37 years! Thank you for the honour of four years as President and four as Chairman of ALHG. I hope that the next generation will have similar opportunities.



Bryan Hanlon
HON SECRETARY

Having been a member since goodness knows when, I decided this year it was time I devoted more time, and more effort, to its activities - hence my "volunteering" for this role. Since childhood, I have loved anything to do with history, archaeology and architecture; as a keen walker, I am always happy to discover a new church I can explore. I would like to see the Society continuing to promote itself in the community at large, and fully realise that this will need not just the efforts of Council but of all our members too!



John Thomson
HON TREASURER

I joined the society in May 2004 to take up the post of Hon. Treasurer. I am a member, and have been for many years, of the world's oldest Institute of Chartered Accountants, that of Scotland. However all my working life has been in the City of London holding a variety of senior finance positions in financial institutions.



Wendy Klein
LIBRARIAN

I've been a member for about four years and spent two years researching Adelaide Street with the Property Group. I was born and brought up in Luton and have lived in St Albans since 1993 so am a local girl and have always been interested in local history. I'd like to oversee a successful move to the Town Hall for our library and to computerise the collection, so increasing its accessibility and awareness of information available.

Doreen Bratby
LECTURE SECRETARY

My career in administration and communication; my interest in architecture and history; and my membership of 20 years of listening to good lectures has urged me to put my experience back into the Society as Lecture Secretary. I encourage other members to do likewise in order to ensure that we continue with a long and healthy future for our Society.



Ann Dean
PUBLICITY OFFICER

I have been a member for over 25 years and was part of the group that transcribed the St Albans Quarter Sessions Rolls, published by Hertfordshire Record Society and St Michael's Parish Registers for the 17th Century Group. A retired Occupational Therapist, I am a CityTour Guide, Hon. Archivist for St Michael's Church and am researching the social history of 19th and 20th Century St Albans. I would like to see more young people joining us.



Dee Drinkwater
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

I have always been interested in history since my imagination was fired by castle visits as a teenager. I have worked in communication, print and design for over 30 years. I would like to see the Society promoting its interests among younger members to secure it an active future.



Peter Jeffreys
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Formerly Secretary and Registrar of the University of Hertfordshire, I am now involved in a project to produce its official history, I am a history graduate with a background in teaching and in educational administration. I would like to see the Association expanding its research activities and building on its previous successes.



Paul Harding
PUBLICATIONS

I have been a member for 18 years and particularly enjoy many of the Tuesday local history evenings. I have always been impressed by the vast knowledge of St Albans that our members have developed and would like to see it turned into more publications that all our members could enjoy.



Brian Bending
WEB MASTER

I spent most of my working life programming computers embedded in industrial equipment. Personal computers were only just coming in when I retired so I learnt to build a website by trial and error. The Arc & Arc seems to me to be a set of groups which have little contact with each other or the members at large, and I should like to see much more communication. My wife and I have lived in St Albans since 1969 and belong to several societies dealing with history, industrial archaeology, and historic buildings and gardens.



Jill Bennett
CLOCK TOWER COORDINATOR

We joined in 1995, and at the 150th Birthday Party we volunteered as 'clockwatchers' and later became weekend organisers; so this role was almost inevitable! Formerly a professional librarian, I became a freelance editor for the Stationery Office and now work as Editor for a national garden society, and the International Organ Festival Society in St Albans. I would like to see SAHAAS reach a younger audience, particularly to recruit some young blood for the Clock Tower!



Bill Martin

I retired from the aerospace industry two years ago, hoping to find more time for geophysics and archaeology. Roger Miles and I have developed surveying instruments for the Society and hope to do more work this year. My current commitment to the Society is as Coordinator for *Hertfordshire Archaeology*, working towards the publication of Volume 14 – a real challenge for a physicist! The coming year presents a number of challenges in achieving change in our publications and initiating innovative ways to support archaeology and history research in the county.



Gene Peyton-Jones

I left my nursing career to become an army wife, coming to St Albans in 1970. For 18 years I worked in the Cathedral archives, for the last ten of these recording the Cathedral inventory. I also worked on the chapterhouse and other excavations. I hope that moving the library to a more prominent site will benefit all members.

**Gordon Brown**

Having for several years been an active member of the Archaeology Group of the Society, I have now rejoined Council for a second period of service. I have in the past also represented SAHAAS on the Editorial Committee of *Hertfordshire Archaeology*.

**Gill Charles**

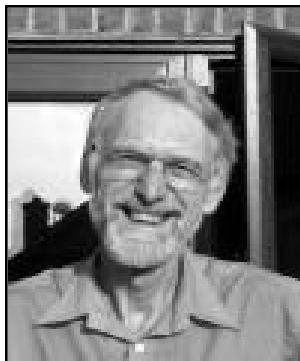
I am a semi-retired primary school teacher and a fairly new Blue Badge Guide (for just the past three years), interested in tourism in the City. As a recent convert to the Arc and Arc, I am still amazed at what wonderful lectures take place on Tuesday and Friday evenings. I'm not sure what I think my role will be just yet.

**Gerard McSweeney**

I retired after 40 years as an analytical chemist at the British (later Malaysian) Rubber Producers' Research Association. My interest in local history was inspired by an early WEA course on Wheathampstead run by Lionel Munby, leading to joint publications. This type of activity is an essential part of a local history society.

**Pat Howe**

Having completed a dissertation about 17th century St Albans as part of a degree in Modern History, I was joined the 17th Century Group, which was entering information onto the database and reconstructing families. In December 2004 I contributed to *St Albans 1650-1700*. Since then I have co-ordinated the work of the 17th Century Population Research Group. There is plenty of scope to extend our work, but I would like to see SAHAAS promote new areas of research and to forge links with the award winning History Department at the University of Hertfordshire.

**Roger Miles**

I had a passing encounter with archaeology in my teens when my family moved to St Albans, but, unfortunately and rather inexplicably, was not aware of the A&A. Had I been, it might have led me to a career in archaeology. I joined in 1983 and became Chairman of the Archaeology and Local History Group in 1985. As well as taking part in excavations in the St Albans District. I was involved for 10 years in excavations in North Wales and experimental archaeology arising from this (which continues). Combining my profession (engineering) and hobby I have established a small business designing and manufacturing specialist equipment for use in field and post-excavation archaeology.

HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

We are currently looking at the most appropriate way to move forward with this authoritative journal.

Have you received a copy of Volume 13, published earlier this year, or of previous volumes?

If you have views on the content, the physical presentation of the journal, its value to Society members and/or to professional archaeologists or any other aspect please contact Bill Martin on 01442 242614 or at [william.e.martin@ntlworld.com](mailto:wiliam.e.martin@ntlworld.com)

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

In the past few months we have welcomed:

Sheila Fordham	Camlet Way, St Albans
Sue Mann	Camlet Way, St Albans

COUNCIL NEEDS HELP URGENTLY MINUTES SECRETARY

The five Council meetings each year are where all activities of the Society are approved and, in the words of one recent Society Chairman, "if it isn't in the minutes, it didn't happen!"

Joyce Winn has been our Minutes Secretary for 16 years and is now planning a well deserved retirement. We urgently need to recruit a successor to this important, but not too onerous, role.

All you need to do to be in on the inside workings of Council is to come along to the meetings, take notes (so shorthand is useful but not essential), draft minutes for the President and Secretary to approve. All the printing and mailing is done by the staff of Verulamium Museum.

If you are interested please contact the Hon. Secretary, Bryan Hanlon, on 01727 851734.

ROMAN MOSAIC ON DISPLAY

Many of you will already have seen, or even passed an opinion on, the unusual little white building which has appeared beyond the playground in Verulamium Park. This rather futuristic looking structure houses what we all used to know and love as The Hypocaust. Now, being interested in that sort of thing, we all knew what a 'hypocaust' was – of course, it was one of those technologically advanced systems the Romans taught the Brits to install in the new bathhouses and villas they built all over the place. 'Ours' at Verulamium, or what remained of it, lay under a particularly fine mosaic at one end of what had been a 200 ft long villa, and one might view it, if lucky, inside the garden-shed-like building across the mud on a good day.

However, since not all park visitors will necessarily know, this new building, which displays it to wonderful advantage, is now signed Roman Mosaic. This seems reasonable, since the mosaic floor under which the hypocaust directs the heating is perhaps even more impressive than the heating system itself. Certainly it is worth a visit in its own right, and many would not have known it was there before.

All of this became evident at the formal opening of the building which took place on Monday 4th July. True to form for this month's weather so far, the heavens opened in the middle of the afternoon, soaking the distinguished guests on their walk across the park, including Lord

Salisbury who had come to perform the opening ceremony. However, this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the many interested visitors who witnessed the occasion. Lord Salisbury pointed out the importance of our heritage and the challenge of maintaining it – not least raising the funding to do so. He entertained us with the story of his personal challenge, that of renewing the pipework for the heating system at Hatfield House, immediately on his inheritance of that substantial villa. Sylvia Collier of the Heritage Lottery Fund responded to a vote of thanks for support from that quarter by pointing out the contribution made to such projects by each and every lottery game played. She also called for further ideas for projects of this kind for the future.

Whatever one's opinion of the building now in place, it cannot be denied that it affords so much better access to the beautifully restored and cleaned mosaic – the only one from Verulamium still visible in its original position, and the technology behind it. We can study the artefacts and their interpretation in the comfort and convenience of the Museum, but nothing substitutes for seeing the real thing *in situ* and imagining the goings on around it almost 2000 years ago. Very well worth taking one's visitors to, any day during Museum opening hours, nowadays up an easy access footpath, neatly signed so we can't miss it.

Kate Morris

BALH AWARD FOR MOODY

As our distinguished Hon. Secretary of 16 years' standing retires from his post on Council, we are delighted to record a prestigious award made to him. The British Association for Local History conferred a Lifetime Achievement Award on Brian Moody at their AGM.

Norman Alvey, who nominated Brian for the award, mentioned not only Brian's many activities as a member of Council of SAHAAS for more than 16 years and his many erudite publications, but also in particular his fundamental role in the campaign to save the Roman sites in Gorhambury from the damage caused by deep ploughing and in the reinstatement of the unique First World War memorials of the Abbey parish.

Congratulations to Brian on behalf of all our members.

17TH CENTURY POPULATION RESEARCH GROUP

Members of the Group received a warm welcome at the St Albans Branch of the U3A (University of the Third Age) when we gave a presentation on "Three Hertfordshire Worthies". Sylvia Beare portrayed the benefactor, Francis Combe, as a learned man with puritan leanings. The talk was well illustrated with members' own photographs of books he donated to Oxford University, a monument to his wife Anne in Abbots Langley church and a book discovered in the archives at Hertford containing a rota of ministers who were to fulfil a clause in his will requesting that lectures be given in St Albans Abbey once a month on a Saturday.

Clare Ellis told the story of Roger Pemberton who founded the almshouses in St Peter's Street and marvelled at the fact that this building is still used for the purposes laid out in Roger's will in 1627. The meticulous detail given in Roger's will as to how the almshouses should be built and administered has continued to a large

extent for nearly 400 years.

Seventeenth century inventories illustrated Jane Harris's talk on John Carter, carpenter of St Michaels. Jane made it clear that carpenters at that time often embraced architecture and building construction and she speculated that Carter may have made his money by working in London after the Great Fire.

Pat Howe

CAN YOU HELP THIS GROUP?

Volunteers are needed to word-process wills in Microsoft Word which have been transcribed and are at present either in handwriting or typescript. Ability to read 17th Century script is not required. The wills are very interesting and the work could therefore be enjoyable. Please apply to Pat Howe either telephone 01727 857274 or Email pathowe@talk21.com.

ARCHITECTURAL AND LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

A further four lectures brought us to the end of the 2004/5 year. Kate Morris, a Past President of the Society, introduced the Property History Group represented by three of its members – Gerard McSweeney, Wendy Klein and Paul Chitty. Between them they gave a comprehensive report of the Group's researches into St Peter's parish. Working from the 1878 O.S. map they looked at some 500 structures and occupancies together with details of the basic houses, inhabitants and constructions. Gerard investigated buildings on St Peter's Street, opposite the church, and from a bundle of deeds he examined eight properties between the Pemberton Almshouses and the building known as the 'vicarage'. Wendy specialised in researching Adelaide Street and Paul wound up the evening by linking the results of their historical findings with tourism and recording the facts for future generations. It was especially interesting to learn, in some detail, of the activities of another Group of the Society.

On 5th April our speaker was Alan Featherstone who lectured on the history of Redbourn. He is well qualified with this subject having been a local resident for 50 years and is the curator of the Redbourn Museum and also archivist for St Mary's church. He outlined the history from Neolithic times and mentioned iron-age tools found at the nearby site of the Aubreys. Watling Street ran through the village but no Roman villas have been found although Roman bricks are incorporated in St Mary's church. Could these have been carted up from Verulamium? Redbourn's connection with Alban and Amphibulus was recalled and we heard about the corn mills in the village. In more recent times Redbourn became famous for its "tea" with the arrival of the Brooke Bond/Oxo factory. This site now houses the excellent Redbourn museum.

The Group A.G.M. was held at the next meeting. The retiring Chairman gave a report in which he stated that 21 lectures had been given during the

year and Barry Walkington, to whom much thanks was due, had devised this programme. Average attendance at the evening lectures was 63. Gene Peyton-Jones and Barry had organised two excellent outings, which, sadly, had not been fully supported. The Chairman thanked all the committee members for their contribution to the success of the Group but he expressed his concern at the lack of volunteers for committee work. It had been almost impossible to find a replacement Chairman and it was the agreement of Betty Ewens to come back to her previous appointment that resolved that problem.

The meeting was followed by an update on the excavations being carried out at Turners Hall Farm near Wheathampstead. The lecturer was Simon West who has been in charge of the dig since the start. He mentioned that our area of Hertfordshire has been incredibly lucky in having three top archaeologists working here at various times. These were Mortimer Wheeler in the 1930s, Sheppard Frere in the 1950s and Rosalind Niblett at the present time. Turners Hall is now no longer an archaeological site as it has devolved into a huge landscape. Interestingly Simon advised members that it is now thought that the big change in 1st century Britain came with Boudicca in AD 60 and not with Claudius' invasion in AD 43. No doubt this statement will give our members with Roman history interests something to consider and argue about in the future.

On 17th May our lecturer was Dr Richard Hobbs, Curator of Roman Britain at the British Museum and, in addition, curator of the present Buried Treasure exhibition at the B.M., soon to move to Norwich. Dr Hobbs' talk was based on this Exhibition's treasures, some being seen for the first time, such as the Roman cavalry helmet cheekpiece, still being conserved, and an intriguing pre-Roman skeleton called the Amesbury Archer because of the number of arrowheads buried with him. DNA

tests revealed that he originated from central Europe and had probably succumbed to a gangrenous leg wound. Beautiful gold and silver cups, jewellery, seals and medallions from pre-Roman times to the Saxon era were illustrated in Dr Hobbs' lecture.

On 29th June a small group joined our excursion to the Walter Rothschild Museum in Tring, at the invitation of Alice Dowswell, who had spoken on the Museum at one of our Tuesday lectures. She and her colleague, Paul Kitchen, gave us a privileged tour behind the scenes where the vast collections of ornithological specimens are kept, some dating from the explorations of Captain Cook and others. We toured departments specialising in skins, skeletons and the largest collection of eggs in the world. The Musseum is a world centre of excellence with research into many aspects of ornithology, including supporting recent Dutch research into bird 'flu. Chenies Manor's beautiful house and gardens were at their best in the summer weather. Chenies was one of Edward I's hunting lodges and passed to Sir John Russell after the Dissolution, remaining with the Russells until the 1900s. The church contains a large chapel which is the Russell family mausoleum. A most enjoyable and interesting day deserving better support by members. A big thank-you to Barry and Gene for organising these visits.

The 2004-5 season passed all too quickly, but our next season will soon be upon us, starting on Tuesday 6th September, and promises to be a very good, varied programme compiled by Barry Walkington, our lecture secretary. See you then!!

Betty Ewens, Rob Weston

THIS SEASON'S LECTURES

Tuesday 6th September 2005

The Organ Builder of Redbourn

At St Saviour's Church, Sandpit Lane

Peter Collins

Mr Collins expertise extends over 40 years of organ building

Tuesday 13th September 2005

The Keeper of Berkhamsted Castle

T.C. Stevens

Mr Stevens has been guide and keeper at the site for 30 years

Tuesday 20th September 2005

Excavations at the Roman Port of London

Bruce Watson

Museum of London Archaeologist

Friday 30th September 2005

Nelson: Death and Transfiguration

Professor Andrew Lambert

As we celebrate Trafalgar 200, this lecture examines the artistic and cultural response to Nelson in the four decades between his death and the completion of Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square. It will address artists as diverse as Blake, Gillray, Turner and West: Works in oil, stone and ink, along with biographers, poets and politicians.

Andrew Lambert is Laughton Professor of Naval History in the Department of War Studies, King's College, London, and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He has written many books, his latest being *Nelson: Britannia's God of War* was published in October 2004. Professor Lambert has also taken naval history to the broadest audience with a number of television appearances. In 2001 he took part in the BBC series 'The Ship', a reconstruction of Captain Cook's first Pacific voyage, as a crew member and historical consultant. He wrote and presented the three part series, 'War at Sea' for BBC2, broadcast in 2004.

Tuesday 4th October 2005

Illustrated History of Dunstable and its Priory

Tony Woodhouse

Historian

Tuesday 11th October 2005

Conversion of the Earl of Clarendon's Mansion at Chandler's Cross

Michael West

Structural engineer with a widely respected local firm

Tuesday 18th October 2005

The Army In St Albans In WW1

Chris Reynolds

Local historian

Friday 28th October 2005

Bridges of Medieval England

David Harrison

David Harrison's book on this topic, *English River Crossings*:

400 to 1800, was recently published by OUP. After studying for a DPhil at Oxford he became a House of Commons Clerk where he has had a number of jobs. Between 1997 and 2004 he was Clerk of the Environment Transport and Regional Affairs Committee and its successors.

David has, for many years, roamed the river banks of England in search of ancient bridges. We shall hear how the construction of a network of bridges transformed English river crossings between the sixth and twelfth centuries. From the 11th century the bridges were rebuilt in stone. We shall see slides of the surviving bridges which demonstrate that they were impressive examples of engineering comparable with the great medieval cathedrals. They are also proof of the great importance of road transport in the middle ages and of the size and sophistication of the medieval economy.

Tuesday 1st November 2005

Slum Life In 19th Century Kings Cross

Gene Mitchell

City of London Guide

Tuesday 8th November 2005

Sir Hubert Herkomer: Bushey's Victorian Painter

Hugh Lewis

Curator of Bushey Museum

Tuesday 15th November 2005

Protection of Rural England

Kevin Fitzgerald

Director of the Council for the Protection of Rural England

Friday 25th November 2005

London and the Gunpowder Plot

Dr John Schofield

2005 marks the 400th anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, when Guy Fawkes and others tried to blow up James I and his parliament at Westminster. As part of the celebrations of this anniversary, it is appropriate to try to understand the plotters and why they did what they did. One aspect which is not often studied is the background in London: how catholic London had been destroyed in the previous 70 years, through the dissolution of the monasteries and the Reformation which affected parish churches; this would have greatly unsettled catholics and contributed to their radical plans. Guy Fawkes and the other plotters should be seen in their London context.

Dr John Schofield is Curator of Architecture at the Museum of London. He is an archaeologist turned architectural historian, who has dug and written about London since 1974. He is the author of *The Building of London from the Conquest to the Great Fire* and *Medieval London Houses*.

Tuesday 29th November 2005

Jim Forrester, A.K.A. 5th Earl of Verulam

John Cox

Gorhambury archivist for many years

continued overleaf...

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.

Tuesday 6th December 2005

Gothic Revival - It Started Much Earlier Than You Think
 Jane Kelsall
 Local historian and church enthusiast

Tuesday 17th January 2006

Victorian Garden History
 Isobel Leek
 Garden enthusiast

Friday 27th January 2006

Prisoners of War in Britain 1793-1815
 Mr Paul Chamberlain

Tuesday 31st January 2006

A Silk Purse from a Pigs Nose
 Robin Webb

Aviation engineer who recounts the many years spent coping with a medieval cottage

Tuesday 7th February 2006

2000 Years of St. Michaels Street
 Ann Dean
 Local historian

Tuesday 14th February 2006

The Carillon at the Abbey
 Deryck Hannaford

The engineer who has re-built the carillon

Friday 24th February 2006

New Light on the Lady with the Lamp
 Dr Susan Mary Grant

Tuesday 28th February 2006

In Search of the Druids: The Realities of Religion in Iron Age Britain
 Dr J.D. Hill
 British Museum Archaeologist

Tuesday 7th March 2006

The Great Train Robbery
 John Wooley

The policeman who was first on the scene

Friday 24th March 2006

Restoration of Windsor Castle ... After the Fire
 Mr Alan Frost

Tuesday 28th March 2006

The A&LH Group AGM, followed by Rule and Reality - Life in a Great Medieval Abbey
 Rev. Peter Wadsworth
 Vicar of St Saviour Church, Sandpit Lane

Tuesday 4th April 2006

St Albans Historic Landscape: Post 1250 AD
 David Dean
 St Albans City Guide and local historian

Tuesday 11th April 2006

St Pancras Station, Midland Link-Thames Link-Euro Link
 George Atkinson
 Well known local architect

Friday 28th April 2006

Inexhaustible Fancy and Solid Judgement: The Life and Works of Nicholas Hawksmoor (1661–1736)
 Mr William Palin

Tuesday 9th May 2006

Romans in the Bulbourne Valley
 Alex Thompson
 Local historian

Tuesday 16th May 2006

SAHAAS AGM
 followed by
2000 Years of Coinage
At Verulamium Museum
 Mr David Thorold

Friday 26th May 2006

Lost Gardens of Hertfordshire
 Mrs Anne Rowe

DID YOU WORK WITH FRERE OR WHEELER IN VERULAMIUM?

If you did Claire Thornton, Collections Manager at the Verulamium Mudeum, would love to do an interview with you.

You can contact her at Verulamium Museum, St Michaels, St Albans, Herts AL3 4SW, on 01727 751822 or at c.thornotn@stalbans.gov.uk.

PUBLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

At a recent Council meeting we agreed to set up a Publications Subcommittee. Its remit will be :

- To encourage writing and publication of original research and other interesting material
- To promote the Society's profile through its publications
- To assist in the practical aspects of publication.

The Subcommittee will be chaired by Dee Drinkwater, our Newsletter Editor.

We would like to recruit two or three Society members with appropriate interests and/or experience. This is a great chance to get involved in the work of the Society. If you are interested please contact Dee Drinkwater on 01727 868765.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL ...

Transcribing 17th century wills and inventories may not be everyone's idea of an enjoyable spare-time occupation. But apart from its value for local history, it often provides an insight into the characters and ways of thought of individuals and into the living conditions of 17th century people.

It even has its comic side, if we allow ourselves to be drawn into the vagaries of 17th century spelling. Although most people could recognise, in a bedroom, '1 pare buts and shous' or a 'pillickis', or even a 'cunnellstike', and in a 'chichin' (kitchen) 'some oldd wud' and a 'ginstule', 'fine bease and boulaks' in a yard is a bit more problematical, as is 'three horas and hras' (presumably horses and harness). The material round a bed causes particular trouble: it varies from 'vaylions' to 'vallines', 'valanes', 'vallands' or 'falence'. And the bedclothes themselves can include, for instance, 'for blannccates' or '2 pr Ihn Sheeates' or even 'eight peares of shitts'! And the word inventory itself causes great trouble, appearing as 'Emvetarey', 'Imnetary' and 'Imetterey'. The best summing up at the end of an inventory is an assurance that it was 'A prasad by ous whose names are her onto a fexed'.

Curious bequests are also intriguing. Why, for instance, does Edward Pawpett bequeath to his grandchild all his wearing apparel, but make an exception of his best breeches, which leaves to his loving wife Ann? In the same will, as well as leaving her all the goods of which she was possessed of before her marriage, he leaves her his 'greene Rugge', but only on condition that she pay for 'such beere and Ale as shall be owinge for by mee to the brewer at the tyme of my decease'. If she fails to do this, the green rug and the goods go to his daughter. Ann receives only forty shillings towards settling the debt.

But there are signs of intimate affection too. Thomas Cowley leaves to his grandson 'my coverlidd with Birds upon it that my Grandfather gave me'; and John Wethered gives to his son Stephen 'the yuse of that end of the Seller where now the rabetes

are kept so long as he shall continue unmarried, with the yuse of the two pige houses'. Thomas Carpenter leaves to his son his best gold ring and another gold ring with this posey: 'In thee my choyce I doe rejoice'. In a verbal will as he lay dying, Thomas Lucy says to his wife: 'I would have thee bee kind to my child and my Mother, and lett my Mother enjoy my house and the Pykle to it she now lives in as long as shee lives'.

On the other hand, family quarrels also loom. Edwards Ayleward leaves a share of his wife's linen and clothes to his daughter Anne 'notwithstanding She has been so undutifull a daughter', but only provided 'She behaving herself in a decent manner and not quarrelling or falling out with any of her brothers and sisters, which if she do, I desire my Executors and Executrix may let her have none of them'. Joshua Lomax specifies that his widow is to use part of his estate to provide a portion for their daughter Elizabeth 'if shee shall bee obedient to her said mother, but in case shee disposeth of herself in marriage contrary to the will and advice of her said mother, I do not will her one farthing of the value thereof'.

Bequests to wives often depend on their not re-marrying, and Robert Wolley takes the opportunity to warn his wife against it. 'As for marriage I leave you free', he says, 'for I am no more yours nor you mine. Only take amongst you those monitory cautions left by a worthy, at partinge ever deserving yur best regard, take heed of ye pretences of men and of their affections, for they last but in honest and worthy men & noe greater injury can befall in this life then to become a prey and then to be despised'.

Funeral arrangements, when they are specified, vary widely. At one extreme, Susanna Howard says simply: 'my Body I doe committ to the Earth to be buried privately in the night tyme'. At the other, Joshua

Lomax lays down a text and general principles for the preaching of a sermon at his funeral at St Michael's church in St Albans, which is to contain no 'Panegyricks or Epaneticks' of his life, and ordains that sermons are to be preached at St Albans Abbey and the other two parish churches on succeeding Sundays and on specified Sundays in each succeeding year. Similarly, William Foxwist forbids usages 'too commonly used', such as 'The laying of the dead Corps under a Table and Candles or Tapers lighted or unlighted' or 'The Feastings (especially in the same house) where the dead Corps lay and whence it was taken'. On the other hand, he does not debar 'the use of some convenient Refection by the moderate use of wyne or other drinck, Biskett, Cakes or the like'. Similarly, Lewys Montgomery desires the decent interment of his body 'in Flannell' and 'privately without Escutcheons, Pauls, Mourning Habits and all such useless Ceremonies, only a cup of Wyne and a Sprigg of Rosemary, the whole charge not to amount above the summe of Twenty Markes'. Susanna Rolfe and Alice Deacon both wish those attending to have a pair of white gloves, and the former adds a glass of wine.

Undoubtedly the most valuable result of transcribing wills is in the tracing of families and properties, with a great deal of information about levels of prosperity and, in the case of tradesmen and merchants, stock lists. But it will be clear that there is more trivial interest to be found on the way, and the occasional laugh. If you are called Hughes or Hewitt, you would not expect to find these two names standing next to each other in a list (spelled Hues and Huit), and would you prefer to be married to Ellen Snuggs or Judith Smothers? And it would certainly be better to be called Robert Luckupp rather than Richard Cockup!

*Frank Kilvington
Former President*

ST PANCRAS CHAMBERS

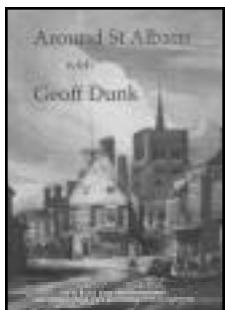
If you have not yet visited this splendid Victorian building you need to act soon as tours end on 28th August. Tours are at 11.00 and 1.30 each Saturday and Sunday. No need to book, just turn up at the cage in front of St Pancras Station (corner of Midland Road, near the British Library. Cost £5.

CURRENT SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

After many valuable years looking after distribution of our publications, Norman Kent has passed that duty on to me. Please contact me if you would like copies from our list at special prices for members of SAHAAS.

In future when I attend Tuesday meetings I will have two copies of each publication with me; however, I do not attend every Tuesday so a telephone call in advance will be useful. If you do not attend Tuesdays please call me with your requests. If you live in St.Albans I will deliver; If you are out of town I can quote you the cost of delivering the copies you would like. I will be pleased to hear from you at 57 Camlet Way, St.Albans, Herts. AL3 4TL Tel. (01727) 839577

Paul Harding



Around St Albans with Geoff Dunk

Ed George Wilde & Norman Kent

Forty articles on local history selected from over 300 which Geoff Dunk wrote for the *St Albans Review* between 1974 and 1982, dealing with Roman and Saxon relics, the Abbey, churches, priories and nunneries, streets, buildings, trades and markets, and personalities.

£4

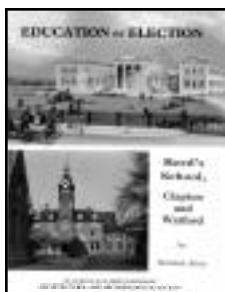
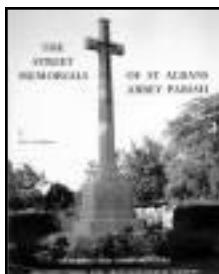
Last few copies of this popular title

The Street Memorials of St Albans Abbey Parish

by Alice Goodman, 1987

Describes St Albans during the 1914-18 War, and the unique street memorials erected to the fallen.

£4

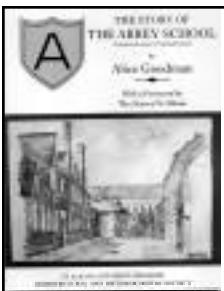


Education by Election, Reed's School, Clapton and Watford

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Orphans were selected for admission by votes from subscribers to a charity between 1813 and 1940.

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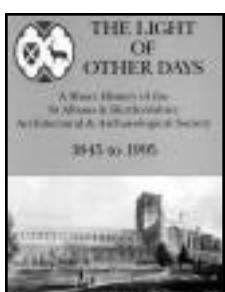


The Story of the Abbey School

by Alice Goodman, 1991

History of the National School founded by the Abbey Parish in 1848.

£4



The Light of Other Days

1995, by Brian Moody

A short history of the Society's first 150 years.

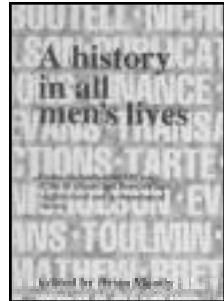
Half-price offer, £1

A History in All Men's Lives

Ed. Brian Moody, 1999

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.

Half-price offer, £2



St Albans 1553

by David Dean, Pat Howe, Betty Masters & Kate Morris, 2003

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.

£3



The Pemberton Almshouses

By Clare Ellis and Pat Howe, 2005

A commemorative booklet to celebrate the founding of the Pemberton Almshouses in St Peter's Street, resulting from the ongoing work of the Seventeenth Century Population Research Group.

£3

ALSO AVAILABLE

St Albans 1650-1700, a thoroughfare town and its people

Ed. J T Smith & M A North, 2003

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. Apply to University of Hertfordshire Press, Learning & Information Services, College Lane, Hatfield AL10 9AD.

ST PETER'S STREET TREES

The proceeds of the raffle held at our millennial New Year's Party were used for the Society to sponsor one of the replacement trees in the avenue on St Peter's Street. Carefully chosen specimens of London plane replaced the old limes which had graced the street since the last decade of the nineteenth century.

'Our' tree was planted outside the Royal Bank of Scotland and an article giving some background to the old avenue and its replacement appeared in the Society newsletter No 144 (April 2001).

From the local newspapers, all should know that it is proposed by Hertfordshire Highways to upgrade the street from a safety, and hopefully from an aesthetic, point of view during this year. Some works (at the Catherine Street roundabout and at the Peahen junction) have already taken place.

The project is a very ambitious one and will cost much more than was at first envisaged. However, the decision has been taken to progress it. We have been assured that, whilst it will involve some further cost to the project, it can be assumed that the life of none of the trees will be jeopardised by the works, even though pavement levels may change around them. Where trees were already in difficulty, following adverse weather and other hazards, they will be replaced, restoring the newly uniform avenue which looks so good now it is in summer leaf.

Kate Morris

WHY NOT JOIN HALH?

The Hertfordshire Association for Local History is an active group with a good range of activities which would be sure to interest many SAHAAS members. The following events are hosted by different Associations throughout the County each year:

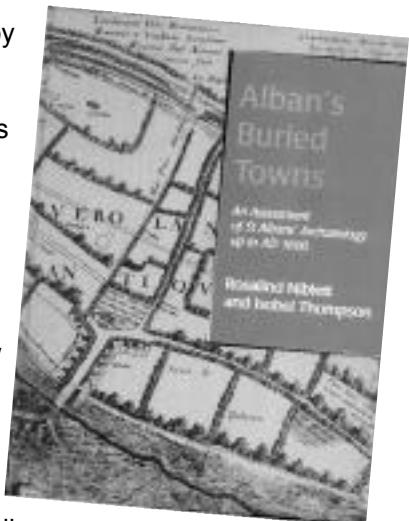
- AGM with a distinguished speaker
- Annual symposium. In November this year SAHAAS will be hosting this symposium – see the panel opposite for preliminary details
- Summer garden party
- Weekend on Hertfordshire History held at Madingley in alternate years
- Study days - try measuring medieval burgage plots in the main street of Hitchin on a busy Saturday afternoon!

The journal *Herts Past and Present* is published twice yearly. Price £10 for four issues, from Dr Gillian Gear, Nicholls Farmhouse, Lybury Lane, Redbourn, Herts AL3 7JH. This is an opportunity for your research to reach a wider audience.

Membership forms from Mr John Donovan, Hon Secretary, 19 Cringle Court, Thornton Road, Little Heath, Herts EN6 1JR

ALBAN'S BURIED TOWNS

If you are fascinated by the mysteries that lie buried underneath the St Albans of today, this is the book for you. Written by Ros Niblett of St Albans Museum Service, and Isobel Thompson, the book offers a comprehensive review of what's been discovered under our feet, from earliest times to 1600.



During this period St Albans was, successively, an Iron Age tribal capital, one of the most important Roman towns in the country and a major medieval monastic and religious centre.

It's the first in a series of planned volumes resulting from English Heritage's Urban Archaeology Strategy. It seeks to distill what has been learned from hundreds of individual discoveries, observations and excavations and to make sense of these in the wide context of the story of St Albans.

Available from Oxbow Books Park End Place, Oxford OX1 1HN (tel 01865 241249), or at oxbowbooks.com. ISBN 1-84217-149-6. Price £40

HALH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

12th November 2005

St Albans Girls School, Sandridgebury Lane,
St Albans

TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL BEFORE THE RAILWAY AGE

The national scene will be set by the historical author, Dorian Gerhold. The remaining programme will be presented by Alan Thomson of Hertfordshire University, Jill Barber of HALS, Alan Greening, Alan Ruston and David Dean.

The St Albans contribution will concern characteristics of a thoroughfare town and the rise and fall of the local inn trade. County-wide societies will be represented by display stands.

The organising committee will need a lot of helpers, both in advance and on the day, so please contact Clare Ellis on 01727 856250 if you would like to be involved.

A registration form for individuals and for Societies which would like a display stand is included with this newsletter