



# NEWSLETTER

No. 173 August 2009

Founded 1845

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### A lively and productive year

As our Annual General Meeting approaches, reports on the year's activities from many of the Society's active groups can be found inside this Newsletter. I am grateful to the group members for their

lively and productive work. I also offer my thanks to the Society's Officers and other members of Council; they seem to enjoy giving their time freely to the routine management of the many diverse activities of the Society. Without contributions like theirs the Society would be moribund.

### Changing our Society's name?

Council has decided to propose to the 2009 AGM that the name of the Society be changed to 'The St Albans and Hertfordshire History Society'. If the proposition succeeds, the new name will be the fourth in the Society's history. In each case the change was for the same reason as now: to indicate the Society's main interests and activities.

### An exciting future

In my first year as President the Society has started some important long-term projects which will increase public awareness of what we do and help us to fulfil our obligations as a charitable trust. The construction of a new website is one of our major activities. When the design and procedures for using it are completed, it will replace the existing site and provide a much greater variety of content and easier public access. Anyone in the world who has images or text relevant to local history can send them to the editorial team who will decide whether or not to place the material on the site for general use. Members and groups can use the site to publish the results of

their own research (subject to peer review). The winners of the annual Mayor's Prize (details of the first winner can be found on p. 10) will be also be able to publish their work on the website. News and opinions will be separated on the site from scholarly publications.

The website will also be used as a public archive of the Society's records. Some successful trials with the cooperation of the University of London Institute for Historical Research have recently been completed. We can now transform paper copies (texts, photos and maps) of the Society's earliest publications from 1848 and the Transactions since 1884 into digital facsimiles that can be placed on the website, made available to the public and searched for the occurrence of words specified by users.

### Influencing our city's future

The Society's Council has presented its views on the proposed Local Development Framework (LDF) to the District Council, particularly with regard to a new Museum of St Albans. The LDF will determine what St Albans will become in the next two decades. All members are urged to make their personal views on the LDF known to the District Council in the final public consultation (see p. 7 for details).

### Publicising our activities

One essential role in the Society remains unfilled. Despite many general and specific attempts we have been unable to find a member who is willing and able to promote the Society to the public. We have much to offer that will enrich civic life, but we can not make a major contribution without effective publicity. The absence of someone to promote the Society locally is a critical hindrance to our progress. Can it really be true that none of our 450 members is able and willing to fill that gap? I look forward to helpful replies.

*Michael Cooper*

**AGM  
8th Sept  
details  
inside**

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of  
St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society  
will be held at Verulamium Museum on

**Tuesday 8th September 2009 at 7.30pm**

for the following purposes:

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To elect Professor Michael Cooper as President
3. President's comments
4. To adopt the minutes of the previous AGM held on 16th September 2008
5. To receive the accounts for the year ended 31st May 2009 (enclosed)
6. To receive reports from our various groups circulated in the latest newsletter
7. To appoint as honorary members Brian Adams, Brian Moody and Margaret Taylor
8. To elect the following members to serve on Council (with their responsibilities) until the next AGM:

Bryan Hanlon	Secretary
John Thomson	Treasurer
Brian Bending	Website Manager
Jill Bennett	Clock Tower
Doreen Bratby	Lecture Secretary
Roy Bratby	Representative, Programme Development Committee
Dee Drinkwater	Newsletter Editor
Judy Faraday	Representative, 19th Century Population Research
Chris Green	Museums and Heritage Officer
Gill Harvey	Representative, Library
Pat Howe	Minutes Secretary/Representative, 17th Century Population Research
Peter Jeffreys	Membership Secretary
Gerard McSweeney	Co-opted Member
Bill Martin	Representative, Herts Archaeology & History ( <i>pro tem</i> )
Roger Miles	Representative, Archaeology Group
Kate Morris	Representative, Property Research Group

9. To confirm the re-election of Mr J R West as Independent Examiner of the accounts.
10. To amend the Constitution, Clause 1, paragraph 1, to read  
'The name of the Society shall be "St Albans and Hertfordshire History Society" ...'

*Bryan Hanlon*

Secretary

AGM Business will be followed by a lecture on  
**Fleetville: the History of a Community in St Albans**  
by Brian Adams

Proxy voting will be permitted to allow those who cannot be present to express their views. Those who wish to exercise this option should complete the enclosed form and return it to the Secretary, at 24 Monks Horton Way, St Albans, AL1 4HA to arrive no later than 7.30 p.m. on Sunday 6th September.

## PROPOSED CHANGE OF SOCIETY NAME

In our last newsletter, we invited members to send us their views on Council's proposal that our name should be changed to **The St Albans and Hertfordshire History Society**. We have received comments from a grand total of seven members, and give here a synopsis of their thoughts. There will be an opportunity for debate on this important matter at our AGM on 8th September; please come along and say your piece! If, for whatever reason, you are unable to attend, we are enclosing a proxy vote form so that you can ensure that your opinion is included in the final vote.

*Bryan Hanlon*

Secretary

### **For the proposal**

- We both agree that the proposed new name will be a great improvement to the present title, which is well past its sell-by date
- From the perspective from the public library, a change of name is definitely a good idea. Any experiences I've had when referring to the Society, whether with the public or other staff, corroborate exactly the points you listed in the newsletter.
- On the 'unwieldy' point (a word which sums it up perfectly), I've often heard people say: 'that's a bit of a mouthful, isn't it?'. I've also had: 'but I thought the Arc & Arc weren't really interested in people, more buildings and artefacts'. I tried to put them straight on this, but could see how the name would create that impression. It's like the name is an obstacle you have to get round, or get out of the way, before you can encourage further dialogue or interest in the Society.
- Some people think that SAHAAS is a more specialised body, and that there must be another, more general, St Albans Local History Society, not realising that we are it!!!
- The proposed new name is simpler, while still reflecting the wide interests of the Society, covering Hertfordshire and not just St Albans. 'History' indicates the focus of many of the lectures and outings and embraces architecture, archaeology and much more. The proposed name does not lose anything but is perhaps more accessible to more people and might encourage an increase in younger members. Might it be easier to promote the Society to keen sixth-formers and local history students?

### **Against the proposal**

- I think it is silly to change the name. Everyone knows about the Arc and Arc, it is a distinctive name and we do cover both architecture and archaeology which implies history. I would loathe the name to be changed.
- The present name of the Society is admittedly long, but so is the Society's history, and each part of the name is connected with a significant part of its history. One of the Society's declared objectives is to preserve evidence of the past, not to destroy it.
- The proposed name appears to be essentially the same as the Herts Association for Local History, and might be construed as competing with them. Also there are a large number of History Societies and Local History Societies in the County, and we should not appear to be impinging on their territories.
- It is claimed that the present Society name is too unwieldy, but in its written form it is known and quoted all over the world; I have never encountered any difficulty with it. Of course we have two shortened forms for verbal purposes which are also well known by non-members.
- By the nature of our Society, we have a particular predilection for preserving as far as possible the heritage bequeathed to our generation by the past. We are proposing to unleash the engines of destruction against a venerable name. It is said that the current name does not reflect what the Society currently does. But is this not an inevitable concomitant of historical change?

## R.I.P. KAY BOUTWOOD

Members will be saddened to learn of the death of Kay Boutwood, the widow of our president from the 1970s, Aubrey Boutwood. She always looked elegant and beautiful, in later days an example of how to grow old gracefully. Kay's funeral took place at St Michael's Church on Tuesday 28th July; Bryan Hanlon, as secretary, officially represented the Society, together with Jane Kelsall and Alan Longstaff, and also Phoebe Killey and Paul Barton from Verulam House, where Kay spent her last years.

Kay was born in Bedford in 1920 and spent most of her working life as a secretary, becoming senior secretary at Rothamsted. Kay was married to Aubrey for 44 years from 1957 until his death in 2001. They were

devoted to each other. Apart from their avowed interest in 'The Arc & Arc', they had a wide and varied circle of friends and interests in St Albans and supported The Company of Ten. They loved the National Trust and the world of antiques – it is said that John Bly of the Antiques Road Show advised her which pieces of furniture to keep for her room at Verulam House.

Kay will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Donations in her memory for the work of the National Trust at Ashridge may be sent to: Phillips Funerals, 68 Alma Road, St Albans, AL1 3BL.

*Bryan Hanlon and Jane Kelsall*

## ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2009

Enclosed with this newsletter are the accounts for the financial year ended 31 May 2009 which were approved by Council on 5 August 2009 and signed by the independent examiner on that date. As last year, the accounts are presented in the format required by the Charity Commission's *Accounting and Reporting by Charities - Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP 2005)*. They also include an expanded report from the Independent Examiner, again a Charity Commission requirement as the income of the Society is in excess of £10,000, which limit will change for next year.

The surplus of income over expenditure for the year was £4,279, an increase of £3,656 from the year to May 2008, but which includes £3,044 from the Mayor's prize (see below).

Excluding the Mayor's prize, income increased in the period by £765, the main contributory factors of which were:

- Slightly higher subscriptions mainly due to those who paid twice
- a £300 increase in the donation from the clock tower, for which many thanks are due to Jill Bennett and her hard working team of volunteers
- slightly more interest, which under the current conditions will all but disappear next year
- more excursions
- fewer disposals of redundant items from the library

At the end of her term as Mayor of St Albans, past president Kate Morris set up a prize 'for an outstanding contribution to local history in St Albans or Hertfordshire'. The funds raised have been given to the Society to manage on behalf of the Council and are therefore considered to be restricted for that purpose only.

Expenses are virtually the same as last year, only 1.5% higher; the main changes being:

- more excursions
- the change in emphasis of lectures from the Architectural & Local History group to the Society
- higher spending by the library

In the balance sheet there is an increase in fixed assets due to the development cost for a community website, the purchase of publicity posters and furniture for the library. Additionally there is a virtual doubling of creditors due mainly to the rush of claims for reimbursement of expenses around the year end. I intend to suggest ways of avoiding this anomalous situation at the next Council meeting. The result is that the cash resources of the Society (excluding the Mayor's prize fund), have increased in the year by £1,765 to just under £28,439. The unrestricted reserves of the Society (again excluding the Mayor's Prize fund) now stand at a healthy £25,566.

*John Thomson*  
Treasurer

## A NEW WEBSITE AT WWW.STALBANSISTORY.ORG

After five years with our website in its present form it is time to grow, and when Judy Faraday drew on her experience with the John Lewis Partnership to suggest that the newly-established 19th Century Group should publish their research on an interactive community website the idea was discussed by a group of Council members who agreed that a new site should have the following features:

- it should continue the service given by our existing site covering the Society and its activities
- it should provide for the publication of completed work as papers or in electronic formats
- it should allow anyone to contribute comments or other material to projects running on the site
- material submitted must be checked by an editor before it is published for all to see
- it must be possible for authorised members to update the site quickly

The Society engaged Community Websites Ltd, which has experience with such websites, to provide the structure and mechanism of a site which Arc & Arc members would fill with material. The new structure will make it easier to include a variety of digitised formats, with the catalogue of our library as an early project. The site includes

'advertisements' for hot news (like 'tonight's lecture has been cancelled') and there is search facility based on Google software.

The site will be managed by Judy Faraday, Janet Ouston and myself. A dozen members have been trained as Editors and have started to fill the pages. I am handling the Society's programmes of activities and the very few technical problems, and will continue the present broadcasts of news by e-mail.

We hope to launch the site in September when the Society's domain name *www.stalbanshistory.org* will redirect visitors to the new site – you won't need to change your bookmark. Until then *www.stalbanshistory.org* will point to the existing site which is still being maintained.

Meanwhile you can see examples of Community Websites' work at:

*My Brighton and Hove*  
<http://www.mybrightonandhove.org.uk/>

*Trewins Memory Store*  
<http://trewins.memorystore.org.uk/>

*Community Websites Ltd*  
<http://www.communitysites.co.uk/>

*Brian Bending*

## REVIEW OF THE YEAR

### Library

The library mounted two exhibitions of material from its collections, one at the New Members Evening, and one at Residents First Weekend. Both were well received and, in the case of Residents First, a significant number of new membership forms were handed out, which hopefully resulted in some new members for the Society.

We have made considerable progress in sorting the miscellaneous papers, cuttings etc. so that they are more easily found. Progress in cataloguing is happening, but is slower than we would like, mainly because of the limited time available each week. We continue to receive a steady stream of enquiries, in person, and via the internet, including a gentleman in Bristol, wanting details of his former school in St Albans, and a Dutch gentleman working on Gorhambury, and a copy of whose work (in English!) has been promised to us.

We were delighted to have a new member, Elizabeth Gardener, join the library team. She has a background in medieval history, and experience as a volunteer at the Museum, both of which are invaluable to us. We regretfully bade farewell to Scott Chalmers, who felt that a full time library job, and working with us in his spare time was possibly 'a step too far!' He continues to provide a valuable link with the Hertfordshire library service, however.

Tony Cooper

### Archaeology Group

Although the renovation of Kingsbury Barn was completed early in May we have continued recording miscellaneous small features which were still outstanding. In addition, there has been some below-ground archaeology resulting from landscaping and installation of utilities. Features exposed were mostly 19th/20th century, but a water and electricity trench just clipped the corner of what seems to have been a medieval rubbish pit which provided a mini dig for just a few excavators. The number of finds was not large, but included the remains of a handsome meal of oysters.

The planning consents for the Kingsbury Dairy development included conditions relating to archaeological investigation. These were done in two phases (by archaeological contractors) and the most significant finding was that a Roman building lies partly beneath the north corner of the barn: only the footings survive, however. The exploratory trenches covered all but the south side of the barn, so it seemed worthwhile checking this area before planned landscaping is done there. To that end we put down some trial trenches in what would have been the yard approaches to the south porch. These showed some very tidy stratification of, again, mostly 19th and 20th century surfaces, but indications were that there had not been disturbance of earlier levels, just accumulation on top of them. Thus fuller excavation could be worthwhile in the future, probably 2010, unless anything else intervenes.

Roger Miles

### Hertfordshire Association for Local History

In July 2008 Bushey Museum welcomed members for the Garden Party; in November the Barnet Local History Society hosted the 29th annual Local History Symposium *Care in the Community* which included the launch of another University of Hertfordshire Press book in the Hertfordshire Publication series *A County of Small Towns*, which includes a chapter on 'Alban to St. Albans AD800 to 1820' by HALH and Society member David Dean. One of the two editors, Dr. Terry Slater, spoke of Hertfordshire's strong local history scene which he said was unparalleled elsewhere in the country.

In January 2009 plans were initiated to hold the 30th Symposium to be held at the British Schools Museum, Hitchin, on 7th November. *Educating Our Own* will include a contribution by another society member, Dr. Janet Ouston.

The Spring Meeting and AGM was held at St. Stephen's Parish Centre in May where a capacity audience heard an outstanding lecture by Professor Tom Williamson on Hertfordshire's

Landscape: from the perspective of its field boundaries and footpaths. and as I write this (on 14th July 2009) this year's Garden event is a visit to Wheathampstead and includes a visit to David Godfrey Evans' ancient cottage, once part of the Westminster Abbey estate.

Representatives of the Association were involved in setting up the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies website project [www.hertsmemories.com](http://www.hertsmemories.com) and on 17th August it is hoped that some people may be able to assist English Heritage to identify some of the Aerofilms photographs of Hertfordshire.

John G.E. Cox

### 19th C Group

We have been very active during our first year, with a number of meetings held to discuss both matters arising from the new web site, onto which our research will be posted, and the various topics members have been busy identifying and recording.

Our members have interests ranging from the mayors of St Albans, to education in the city, and the group consists of both those who have been researching this time period of St Albans history for many years, to those for whom this has been a new and exciting experience.

At our meetings it has been a joy to hear the stories of new discoveries, experiences at record offices and new sources of information from the internet. These are all being shared and have led to a broadening of the knowledge of all members of the group. We are delighted that the group contains such a wide cross section of the Society and hope that, in the months to come, we can encourage others who might feel they would like to contribute their material to our body of knowledge.

The group also has a new medium in which to display the work it has undertaken. We are using the new website purchased by the Society to record our findings in a pilot scheme which we hope will shortly include

*continued on the next page*

academically reviewed contributions. This exciting development will give all members the chance to personally deliver short or longer pieces of research, including images and text without the complex requirement for publication in hard copy.

Working as the pilot group for this new medium the group undertook training on the software by attending three sessions led by Community Sites (the software company who have supplied the website). This training was undertaken by twelve members of the group over three weeks at the Learning Zone in Welwyn Garden City Library. During the training we learnt how to add articles and images to the site and also how to edit and develop areas of interest.

We have been operating a dummy site for the last three months to ensure we are happy with the way it operates and are in the process of adding material to the site which will go live later this year. We have been working closely with Brian Bending to ensure that the site is easy for members to use and contains information of use and interest to all.

We are keen to help any member who has material on the 19th century which is not, as yet, published, present their material in a format which can be loaded onto the site, as it is important to launch the site with a number of articles and images which give future contributors an idea of the quality and scope provided by this new means of academic dissemination.

Our editors would also be pleased to accept offers of help by those knowledgeable members of the Society who would be prepared to offer assistance with proof reading articles before they are added to the site. Whilst we are hoping that many new researchers will be prepared to add their material, we are determined that all content should be accurate and should not compromise the attention to academic rigour which has always been required prior to the publication of any Society material.

So if you have any material which you feel you could contribute to our research on the 19th century please do not hesitate to contact me. We will add it to our body of research which

we hope, in years to come, will become an invaluable addition to the knowledge assembled by the Society.

*Judy Faraday*

### **17th Century Population Research Group**

Painstaking research and complex analysis over some five years in two areas have come to a conclusion during this past year.

John Carter's inventory provided sufficient information for a drawing to be made of his parlour. The value of his assets was high in comparison with other carpenters in the town, which led us to an investigation into his background. John came from a family of master carpenters well respected in the town. They worked for the Grimstons at Gorhambury and the Spencers at Holywell House. We found original contracts and descriptions of work to be carried out in the archives at HALS. Jane Harris and I have put together a paper which compares inventory values and provides information on furnishings and equipment in a 17th century home. We are actively seeking publication.

Pat Nellist and Joyce Wells spent many hours at HALS transcribing the St Peter's Overseers of the Poor records. We have been impressed with the diligence of these officers in providing for the poor of the parish as well as their record keeping. Pat and I have produced an article which has been accepted for publication by *Hertfordshire Archaeology and History*. The next edition is due in the autumn. Please look out for it and see the results of our research.

The SAHAAS website has produced some enquiries. One such contact was a person who had found a parchment in the loft of a house on which he had been working. The

document was dated 1695. He thinks it had been in that roof space since then. He wanted an explanation of its contents and on visiting us he was delighted when he found colleagues in the 17th century group could decipher the handwriting. Sylvia Beare and Carol Parker made a full transcription and the parchment is now in the care of HALS.

Through the Internet, I discovered a descendent of Thomas Olney, a shoemaker who left these shores for America in 1635. Thomas settled in Salem, Massachusetts, with his wife and two children and was granted 3 acres of land. The family moved to Providence, Rhode Island, in 1638 where Thomas rose to a position of importance. It is clear from the records that Thomas was literate and many legal documents bear his signature. He was one of the founder members of the Baptist church in Providence, confirming that his reason for leaving England was to seek religious freedom.

The visit to Tyttenhanger stimulated our interest in the Blount family who owned the property in the 17th century. We found four family wills which members have transcribed and it appears that Sir Henry Blount and his son, Charles, were quite unconventional. Sir Henry travelled in Europe and the Middle East, wishing to 'gain knowledge by means of personal experience without the constraints of national and religious history'. Charles is described in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* as a 'freethinker and author'. I suspect that the extraordinary chapel on the second floor was a venue for secret religious meetings.

*Pat Howe*

## **NEW MEMBERS**

We are delighted to welcome the following, and hope they will enjoy becoming involved with A&A activities.

Mr & Mrs David Beardsall	Cunningham Avenue, St Albans
Sue McClinton	Sunderland Avenue, St Albans
Richard Darnell	Ware
Mark O'Connor	Watford

## CLOCK TOWER REPORT

Finding sufficient helpers to keep the Clock Tower open has proved increasingly difficult this season. Despite recruiting some new volunteers, we have 'lost' a similar number, so in practice we have fewer than 70 'clockateers'. With around 400 or so members, that's a markedly small proportion of members whose efforts bring in a substantial proportion of the Society's annual income! (a portion of the Clock Tower revenues are paid to the Society). As a result, some stalwarts have done more than their share of duties, and I would like to express my thanks to them, as well as my apologies for the many telephone calls soliciting their help.

A few people who had agreed to do a session did not turn up for their slot: sometimes unfortunately, people forget (despite our reminder-system). This leaves the previous helpers stuck in the Clock Tower, trying to contact them and the Weekend Organiser. It is not easy to find someone else to take over at such short notice. So we do ask helpers to make a firm commitment, and let us know if something prevents their coming: please ring the Clock Tower (01727 860984), or the relevant Weekend Organiser, or me (867685).

There must be more members who can spare the odd hour and a half during a weekend: why not spend it in the Clock Tower? It's a unique building, only kept open due to our efforts – and you'll enjoy meeting tourists and locals who wander in to see it.

Heritage Open Weekend this year is 12th/13th September and entrance is free. This is normally our last opening for the season, but we've been asked to open for an extra weekend on 19th/20th September, as part of the Giant Monopoly Game which is to be held in St Albans city centre (this celebrates the fact that St Albans now holds the illustrious Mayfair slot on the new Monopoly board!) No details known at present.

The opening dates and times are on the SAHAAS website (Clock Tower page).

These are the remaining dates when the Arc&Arc is responsible for opening to the public (the Civic Society covers the other days):

Saturday/Sunday 22nd and 23rd August  
Saturday/Sunday 5th and 6th September  
Sunday 13th September Heritage Open Weekend

Saturday 19th September

*Jill Bennett*

Clock Tower Co-ordinator

## SHAPING OUR COMMUNITY

### CONSULTATION

In its progress towards a 'local development framework' for the next 15 years and more, the District Council received the views of 'stakeholders', including this Society. Our 'vision', reported in full in the last (May) Newsletter is a landmark building, with museum and other cultural uses.

Having taken account of the many 'visions' it received, the District Council has now published its 'Sustainable Community Strategy' in an eight-page Summary, Shaping Our Community, and nine detailed documents,

The Summary describes the Key Issues as relating to green belt, jobs, homes, recreation, shopping, schools and youth. The second of the nine detailed documents, the Full Consultation Document of 108 pages, includes 11 Strategic Objectives. SO 5 (page 24) envisages St Albans as a regional hub and premier location for recreation, culture, leisure, heritage and tourism. Detailed under Leisure, Culture & Tourism (pages 70-74). paragraph 16.4 mentions a cultural hub, possibly in the City Centre, perhaps including theatre, music and the arts. Paragraph 16.5 mentions the possibility of relocating the Museum of St Albans to form part of a potential cultural hub, but describes its current location as fairly central.

Society members should examine these documents, which are available at the District Council offices and at [www.stalbans.gov.uk](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk), and make comments to the District Council by 28th September. However, by then a City Centre Master Plan may have been published with broad details or options for shops (food and non-food), cinema, hotel and leisure, cultural and other uses. It is likely that our Society and members will then have a further opportunity to express their views, especially on culture-related matters, to the District Council.

*David Tuckett*

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**We cannot run the Society without support from members and we urgently need volunteers to help in a number of areas.**

### ***Press and Publicity***

We need a keen volunteer to promote our Society to local people and to build relations with the press and local bodies. Our reputation and membership help us undertake new activities and mean we have more influence on the future policies of local government. Discuss with Michael Cooper.

### ***Lecture helpers***

The Lecture Programme is entirely dependent upon IT and AV facilities. Volunteers are required to join the dedicated team who take it in turns on a rota basis to provide this service. Training can be provided. Further information from Roy Bratby.

### ***Clock tower***

To keep the tower open takes a lot of volunteers but individually it only means a couple of hours. See left for details and contact Jill Bennett if you can help

### ***Herts Archaeology and History***

Bill Martin has done a fantastic job in getting this prestigious journal up-to-date but he is keen to relinquish this role and we need a new co-ordinator. Details of what's involved from Bill Martin.

*Contact details for Council Members on page 16.*

## TRING: AN EVENING VISIT AND WALK

Two dozen members assembled on the evening of 9th June in the central car park in Tring to meet our guide, local historian Wendy Austin. Near where we stood is the museum, open on market days, run by the local history society and developed with the help of a substantial grant from the lottery fund.

The first sight Wendy pointed out was a distant view of The Mansion, set in Tring Park. Charles II awarded the Tring Park estate to Henry Guy, a Groom of the Bedchamber, and Secretary of the Treasury, who, among other tasks, looked after the pensions of royal mistresses, including Nell Gwynne. It seems he laid out the grounds of the estate using Treasury funds, foreshadowing modern duck-housing and moat-clearing at public expense by more than 300 years! The house was designed by Wren, but none of his work is now visible since it was encased and enlarged by the Rothschild

family who owned it from 1873 until after World War II. The family played an important part in Tring's recent history, as we saw in the course of the tour.

A settlement at Tring was recorded in Domesday, and it became a significant market town. The church is 14th century with a 15th century tower, and a peal of eight bells, and was restored in Victorian times. A sculpted image near the west door, of Bishop Claughton of St Albans, commemorates the creation of the new diocese in 1877. Tring has the earliest war memorial in England, erected before the end of World War I, and unusually includes human figures in its carving. Across the road stands the Rose and Crown hotel, a Tudorbethan successor to a Georgian coaching inn. It is one of several imposing buildings nearby commissioned by Lord Rothschild.

*Tony Cooper*



*Above, the 1828 vicarage in 'Tudorbethan' style with some impressive chimneys*

*Left, The church of St Peter and St Paul is Grade 1 listed*

## VERDUN TREE PLAQUE REINSTATED

Thanks to the efforts of our secretary Bryan Hanlon in geeing up the St Albans Council, we are please to say that the missing plaque has now been reinstated - complete with spelling mistake! We are assured that a correctly spelled replacement is on its way so watch the space!

The tree – a chestnut – is just off the path leading from the Wax Gate to the Abbey and the plaque reads 'This is the Verdun tree, grown from a seeding (*sic*) of the last growing tree on the battlefield. It was planted Sunday morning 18th January 1976 to mark the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Verdun.'

The battle of Verdun has, of course, great symbolic importance in France, with '*la voie sacrée*' credited with saving the city during the darkest hours of WWI. Indeed, such was its importance that it was HMS Verdun which the British chose to bring the Unknown Warrior back from France. Unfortunately SADC cannot afford to put up another plaque giving this extra information.



## LIBRARY NOTES AND QUERIES

One of the pleasures of working in the Arc and Arc Library is discovering what the library contains. Even after three or more years, we are still finding new items, or learning more about items we know of but have not examined.

We have several rolled brass rubbings, which we are reluctant to unroll because they are mostly on paper, very fragile and easily damaged, and their length makes them awkward to handle in the limited space of the Judge's Robing Room. However, curiosity got the better of us a few weeks ago, and we looked at one of the rubbings, of two medieval figures, a man and a woman side by side. There is no accompanying information on the images, or the whereabouts of the brass, which we assumed was in Hertfordshire. The brass incorporates a text in abbreviated medieval Latin around the perimeter, which is not easy to read, even for those members of the library team who, in E.L. Wisty's words 'have the Latin'. However, the date of 1491 was readable, and after a good deal of discussion it seemed the individuals represented appeared to be a knight, Sir Peter Lee and possibly Eleanor, presumably his wife. The image of the man was puzzling, since he is depicted tonsured and wearing priest's vestments over his armour. We checked the few books on Hertfordshire brasses held by the library to see if we could confirm the identification, but found nothing of that date or description. Our curiosity was now thoroughly roused, and Elizabeth searched the internet once she got home, and with some luck, she says, found a description that matches most of the information we had deciphered. The man was Sir Peter Legh, and the woman his wife Ellen. She died in 1491, but he lived on until 1527. It seems he commissioned the brass after his young wife died, and took holy orders, which explains the puzzle of his style of dress. They were not Hertfordshire people, however. The brass is in St Oswald's church in Winwick, Haydock, Lancashire. So the puzzle of this brass rubbing was resolved. It leaves us with other

questions however. How did we acquire it? And what do we do with it?

### **Books recently added to stock**

*Medieval parks of Hertfordshire* by Anne Rowe. Hatfield, Hertfordshire Publications, 2009, 255pp. A study of the parks created between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries.

*Signals: a railway miscellany; Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire*. Copt Hewick, Yorks, Book Castle, 2008, photographs, 276pp. Describes railways past and present, and railway walks, in the three counties. (Reviewed page 10.)

*Writing local history*, by John Beckett. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007, 244pp. Sets out how local history has come to be where it is today; in a sense a history of local history writing.

*God's clockmaker: Richard of Wallingford and the invention of time* by John North. London, Continuum, 2005, 441pp. A biography of the brilliant mathematician, arguably England's greatest medieval scientist, who became Abbot of St Albans.

*Liberty, loyalty, property: the landed gentry of Hertfordshire from 1588 to 1688*, by A.G. Davies. Hertford, Hertford Museum, 1988. A study of the role of Hertfordshire's landed gentry from the Armada campaign to the revolution of 1688.

*Historic Sandridge; the story of a Hertfordshire parish*, by Edward Giles and Richard Thrale, with sketches by R. Giles. Sandridge, [St Leonard's Church?] 1962. 46pp. Published in celebration of the 850th anniversary of St. Leonard's church, this volume is the precursor of *Historic Sandridge revisited*, 1999.

### **Recent journal articles**

In *Current Archaeology*, May 2009, pp30-35. Roman villas in Britain, by Brian Walters. A new examination of the evidence suggests these 'villas' might be temples, shrines or tax depots.

In *Research News (English Heritage)*, Spring 2009, pp26-28. Whose blue? The true story behind the sky-blue roof of St Pancras International Station. Not strictly relevant to St

Albans or Hertfordshire, but the article might interest members who use the station.

### **Journals recently received**

*The Local Historian* May 2009

*Local History News* Spring 2009

*Current Archaeology* Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec 2008, Jan, Feb, Mar, May 2009

*British Archaeology* July/August 2009

*Hertfordshire People* June 2009-07-24

*Conservation Bulletin (English Heritage)* Summer 2009

*London Archaeologist* Summer 2009

*Ver Valley Newsletter* July 2009

### **And finally...**

We had a very unusual visitor to the library a couple of months ago, who approached not on foot via the Tourist Information Centre, but by air. Preceded by much fluttering and falls of soot and old mortar, a pigeon descended the Town Hall chimney and emerged in the library fireplace. Confused and distressed, it resisted capture, and could not be persuaded to leave by the window, which opens only a few inches. Reinforcements had to be called in, fortunately after the library session had ended, but it did not end well for the pigeon. The chimney is to be netted to prevent similar events.

### **THE LIBRARY TEAM**

Gill Harvey, 01727 853415

Anne Wares, 01727 860705

Donald Munro 01727 760808

Elizabeth Gardner 01727 861101

Tony Cooper 01727 865032

Or email via the Society's website, [www.stalbanshistory.org](http://www.stalbanshistory.org)

The library is open on Wednesday and Friday mornings from 10 a.m. to 12 noon in the former Judge's Robing Room at the Old Town Hall. Access is currently through the Tourist Information Office.

## WHAT'S ON?

### HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHIVES COURSE

#### How to Read Old Documents

Have you come across documents you can't read when researching local or family history? This course will give you an introduction to why documents were produced, how to read old handwriting and the language in which they were written before 1733 (Latin).

This is a four-week course on Wednesday afternoons starting 9th September from 2.30 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. It costs £25.00 and takes place at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies Register Office Block in Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EJ.

Advanced Booking is essential. Tel: 0300 1234 049 (ask for Local Studies Library) or e-mail [hertsdirect@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:hertsdirect@hertscc.gov.uk)

### HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

#### Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th September

Throughout the UK there will be many events and guided tours, including buildings which are not normally open to the public - all free of charge. Among them will be special free-of-charge access to the Clock Tower. London Open House provides similar attractions on the following weekend.

For further details check the websites [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk) or [www.openhouse.org.uk](http://www.openhouse.org.uk)

## NEW BOOKS

### Signals: a railway miscellany, Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire

Murray Eckett, Copt Hewick, Book Castle Publishing, 2008, ISBN 978 1 903747 90 2. Copies available from the author at 2 Regency Court, Alexandra Road, Hemel Hempstead HP2 4AX, price £10.99, plus P&P.

This is a book for the general reader rather than the historian or rail enthusiast, consisting in a series of articles, some originally published in Hertfordshire Countryside. Under each county, the articles are grouped into lines forming part of the current national network, such as the Abbey Flyer; closed lines, mostly those converted into foot or cycle paths, such as the line from Hatfield to St Albans, now the Alban Way; and preserved lines and sites, such as the Icknield Line from Chinnor to Princes Risborough and the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. There are also accounts of the three county branches of the Locomotive Club of Great Britain, of somewhat limited interest to non-members. The line and site articles contain brief histories, and useful accounts of the route or layout and what can be seen. There are plentiful illustrations, but a

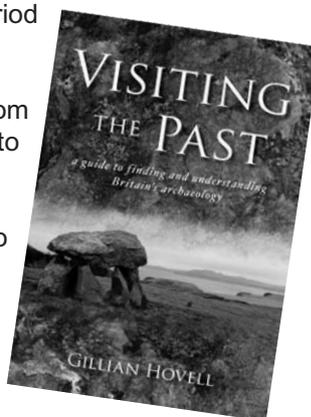
map showing the location of the lines and sites would have been helpful.

*Richard Harvey*

### Visiting the Past: A guide to finding and understanding Britain's archaeology

Gillian Hovell. The History Press, Brimscombe Port, Stroud, Glos GL5 2QG. £12.99

A period-by-period introduction to British Archaeology from the Stone Age to the Industrial Age. Includes the best sites to visit and what to look out for. Aimed at beginners and amateurs.



To buy a copy at the special price (until end September) of £10.99 including P&P visit [www.thehistorypress.co.uk](http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk) or ring 01235 465577 and quote code THPVP4833.

### Archaeology Group

As far as excavation in 2009 is concerned, assuming more luck than we had in the past two years, the intention is to do further work on our Amwell site. This will start on Monday 24th August, for two weeks. Members of the Society are welcome to take part, with the proviso that a minimum of a full day is worked at any one time. Contact Roger Miles who will send/e-mail details of the dig.

Seemingly putting the cart after the horse, Roger is offering again this winter to run the short course entitled How Archaeology is Done. It comprises six Thursday evenings, starting at the end of October. There will be a very modest charge to cover expenses. Anyone wanting further details, or to reserve a place, please contact him.

### Testing Time: The New Chronology

Controversial historian, archaeologist and Egyptologist David Rohl will be putting forward his ideas on the true historical setting of the biblical epics in an open meeting on 19th September. The three-lecture programme will be held at the Tanners Room, Harlequin Centre, Warwick Quadrant, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1NN.

Admission costs £10. More details and booking [www.sis-group.org.uk](http://www.sis-group.org.uk) or write to SIS Secretary, Innisfree, Highsted Valley, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 0AD

## THE 2009 MAYOR'S PRIZE

The prize has been awarded to Miss Rosemary Hearle for her essay *Walter J. Lawrance: First Dean of St Albans*. The Prize will be presented to the winner by the Mayor in September.

## VISIT OXFORD WITH OPTIONAL VISIT TO BODLEIAN LIBRARY

**23RD SEPTEMBER 2009**

Depart by coach at 9 a.m. prompt from Westminster Lodge Car Park. Leave Oxford at 4.30 p.m.

Standard tours cost £6 and last one hour. Book and pay in Oxford. Tours take place at 10.30, 11.30, 14.00 and 15.00 and visit Duke Humfrey's medieval library and the 17th century Convocation House and Court where Parliament was held in the Civil War.

Extended tours, which need to be pre-booked, take place at 11.30, 14.00 and possibly 15.00. State your preference. These cost £12 and last 90 minutes. You will see everything included in the standard tour, plus the Upper Reading Room, underground book stacks and the Radcliffe Camera.

Both tours apparently involve a large number of stairs and the Extended Tour especially includes some steep stairs and a substantial amount of walking.

### BOOKING

The coach fare is £12 per person.

If you wish to do the extended tour please send a cheque for £24 per person. There is a limit on numbers, so bookings will be first-come first-served.

If you wish to do the standard tour send £12 per person and pay on the day in Oxford. No forward booking is available.

If you wish to just use the coach and make your own plans in Oxford the cost is also £12 per person.

Please state the names of the people for whom you are booking and which option you wish to take.

Cheques should be made payable to SAHAAS and sent to Gill Charles, 9 Tilsworth Walk, St Albans AL4 9JT. Please include an SAE so we can acknowledge your booking.

Last few spaces!

## OUTINGS PROGRAMME 2009-10

The Programme Development Committee will shortly be finalising the programme for 2010 and details will appear in a later Newsletter. If you have suggestions for possible outings or would like to take responsibility for arranging an outing please contact Roy Bratby.

## VISIT TO OLD AMERSHAM

Old Amersham is a little treasure lying in the valley of the River Misbourne. Its broad, tidy main street is lined on both sides cheek by jowl with charming old buildings in variety.

Twenty members of the Society met on Thursday morning 16th July under the arches of the Market Hall (*below right*) which was given to the town in 1682. We ambled for the next hour with our guide, Jenny Clark, through the quiet streets – stopping here and looking there. We saw the imposing houses of the wealthy and the simple dwellings of the townspeople. The inns with high arched entrances were a characteristic of the town and a necessity in the days of the stage coach. We peered at tiny cottages up the alleys leading off the High Street, once the scene of straw-plaiting but now had given way to hanging baskets aplenty. One such alley was a jewel, there was one almshouse after another (*top right*), after another, with colourful gardens stretched in front of them. Looking down on them nestled high in the hillside was the broad south face of the old Rectory as if keeping guard.

Taking the route over the bridge of the River Misbourne we wended our way back through the meadow which hugged the town and ended our walk in the well kept Memorial Gardens. We took a well earned break for a lunch of our choice and members were free later to visit the Museum or the Art Exhibition.

It is hoped that this short piece has given you but a flavour of Old Amersham and that you will be tempted to go and see for yourself all the sites that have not been mentioned and which are of so much historical and architectural interest.

*Doreen Bratby*



## THE CHURCH CRAWL

Sunshine and smiles were much in evidence on the 'church crawl' in June – a delightful day spent visiting five very different Hertfordshire churches with Jane Kelsall to guide us in her humorous and knowledgeable way.

Our first stop was St Michael and All Angels in Waterford. Jane gave us a brief history of stained glass on the way, and when we arrived we could see why. This little church, consecrated in July 1872 by Samuel Wilberforce, was like stepping into a glittering kaleidoscope, with the sun pouring through windows designed by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and later Parsons and Strachan. They were low enough to be seen easily and even touched, something suggested by Dorothy Abel-Smith, who gave a short talk on the church. It was built by Robert and Isabel Smith to celebrate his recovery from illness and to provide a church for Waterford, until then part of Bengoe. Mr Cooper, a churchwarden, raised the carved font cover, and amused everyone with the information that the font made an extremely rude noise as the last water drained away after a christening. It was almost a relief to learn that somewhere as exquisite as St Michael's had a small but entertaining flaw!

Next was St Dunstan's in Hunsdon, an early 12th century church with a handsome Tudor brick extension and a magnificent 'Hertfordshire spike' on its sturdy square tower (the legend that this had come from St Albans Abbey is apparently untrue). St Dunstan's 16th century worshippers included Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I – beat that for an upmarket congregation! Inside, the Carey Chapel, built for the 3rd Lord Hunsdon, is splendid; the alabaster effigies of him and his wife in their Tudor robes are extremely fine, and their coat of arms with its swan crest was much in evidence. There are many notable features in this little church but one particularly worth seeing for its rarity is a brass plaque on the wall showing the dance of death.

Lunch was individual choice in

Hertford before we reconvened at the Church of St Andrew – impressive from the outside though its Victorian interior was neither especially exciting nor particularly attractive.

St Mary's in Hertingfordbury came next – a church with a rich endowment of alabaster and fine monuments including a beautiful memorial to Spencer Cowper by



*Left to right: St Dunstan's, Hunsdon; St Mary, Hertingfordbury; and St Michael and All Angels, Waterford*

Roubilliac in the Cowper Chapel. The main focus of this was a very grand monument to the 7th Earl Cowper, last of his line, in splendid Garter robes.

The vicar, the Rev. Bill Church, gave a talk about some of the historic people connected with the church, including Jane Wenham from Walkern, the last 'witch' to be tried. Subsequently pardoned, she was taken in by the Cowper family, living with them for ten years till she died and was buried here. So, did the Cowpers have a decade of doubt or worry every time something unforeseen or unfortunate happened? Probably not: they were obviously thoroughly good people.

Our final call was St Etheldreda's in Hatfield. On the way Jane gave us some information about the church and the lady for whom it was named, also known as St Audrey. The church is affectionately referred to by the locals as 'St Eth's' and was once part of the diocese of Ely. It is a large church extensively rebuilt in 1872 by David Brandon, giving it a slightly lopsided appearance inside. It has two splendid memorial chapels: one to the Brocket family features two alarmed-looking Tudor ladies lying on

their left sides, one above the other, gazing out earnestly at those gazing at them.

Opposite is the magnificent Salisbury Chapel, and Robin Harcourt-Williams, in charge of the Salisbury Hall archives, was on hand to tell us about it. The focus of the chapel is the opulent memorial to Robert Cecil, the first earl. It was designed in his

lifetime, when his effigy was created to ensure an accurate likeness, and is in Carrara marble. He holds the white staff of the Lord Treasurer and his head rests on two lush cushions, all set on a black marble slab supported at each corner by the four Virtues, all well-endowed kneeling women. Below the slab, and at ground level, a skeleton lies with its head on a very thin pillow. The creator of this splendid piece was Maximilian Colt, a Huguenot, who also carved Queen Elizabeth I's tomb in Westminster Abbey. Besides money, he also received for life an annual suit of broadcloth and fur. 1868 saw the last Salisbury to be interred in the vault: Robert Cecil, 3rd Marquess of Salisbury and a Victorian Prime Minister.

It was a very contented group that rejoined the coach for the return to St Albans. Mike Cooper expressed thanks on behalf of us all to Jane Kelsall for her lively and informative talks, to Gill Charles for the excellent arrangements and smooth running of the entire day, and to the coach driver for his patience and skill. It was all truly well done.

*Maureen Butler*

# LECTURE PROGRAMME 2009 - 2010

**Tuesday 8th September 2009**

**Society AGM at Verulamium Museum  
Fleetville: the History of a Community in St Albans**  
*Brian Adams*

The Fleetville History project was undertaken in 2008-9 as part of a museum-based programme looking at less familiar areas of St. Albans. Evidence was collected from St. Albans Museum, the Central Library and Herts County Archives. In addition, some three dozen Fleetville residents were interviewed to bring the history up to date.

The development was traced from the 18th century turnpike and the creation of St. Albans Cemetery in the 1880s. Housing expanded, first for the workers at Sander's Orchid Nursery and then for the several printing works in the area. Later concerns included Ballito's and Marconi, during and after WW2. The demise of these was quite rapid and has led to many changes over the last 25 years. The story of the shops, schools and churches in Fleetville is also included.

Brian Adams has recently retired as Historian with St. Albans Museums Service, and was previously head of the Museum Education Department.

**Tuesday 15th September 2009**

**Sir John Evans KCB, FRS; an Extraordinary Local Gentleman**  
*Michael Stanyon*

When a seventeen year-old boy came to Nash Mills in 1840 at a time of bitter personal disappointment he could not have envisaged that he would continue to live there for 66 years. Nor that he would rise to the very top, not only of his profession, but of International prominence in a wide variety of academic disciplines. As well as this he achieved the highest offices in the County and several other interests.

This talk will outline a few of the significant milestones of Sir John's life and show how the wealth generated by his management of the John Dickinson Stationery manufacture created an opportunity for his remarkable antiquarian pursuits and in due course led to the opportunity for his son, Sir Arthur Evans to reconstruct the remarkable Minoan Palace of Knossos on Crete.

Michael Stanyon was able to pursue his interest in local history full time after an early retirement from the manufacture of telecommunications equipment. He achieved this through the establishment of the Dacorum Museum Store leading to a second career as Community Heritage Officer for Dacorum Borough Council. Following his final retirement he assists the Apsley Paper Trail as one of four voluntary part-time archivists.

**Friday 25th September**

**Revisiting Spong Hill: an Anglo-Saxon Cemetery in Norfolk**  
*Dr Catherine Hills*

Dr Catherine Hills is senior lecturer in early medieval archaeology at Cambridge University where she has been for over thirty years. She specialises in the archaeology of the period, after the end of the Roman period in the North Sea region. In the 1980s she presented a couple of TV series for Channel 4: Blood of the British and Down to Earth. In the 1970s she, with others, excavated Spong Hill, near North Elmham in central Norfolk, the subject of the lecture. The group published all the material, including a complete analysis of the cremated bones, between 1976 and 1994, in a series of catalogues in the series East Anglian Archaeology, but, she says, it is only now that she has had time and resources to go back to writing the synthesis of the material and so it seems a good time to talk about this.

Spong Hill is still the largest complete Anglo-Saxon cemetery to be excavated in England: 2300 cremations and 57 inhumations dating to the fifth and sixth century AD. The cremations were contained in decorated pots, and often associated with melted jewellery or unburned grave goods including sets of miniatures, tweezers, shears and razors. Much of the material has close parallels with finds from North Germany which may be where some of the people buried at Spong Hill had their origin: although others may well simply be local Britons who had become 'Saxon' in their material culture. This lecture is in recognition of the 800th Anniversary of Cambridge University.

**Tuesday 13th October 2009**

**Lord Grimthorpe and Other Dragons: The Career of Walter Lawrance**  
*Gillian Harvey*

Lawrance was Rector of St Albans from 1868 to 1914, and the first Dean from 1900 until his death in 1914. He was closely involved, both with the major restoration of the Abbey, and the formation of the diocese.

Following a degree in politics and modern history, Gill spent her working life as a librarian, in public, college and school libraries, finishing with a brief spell, and a steep learning curve, setting up a library for a firm of pharmaceutical consultants! She was Hon Librarian of the Surrey Archaeological Society for 25 years and has published a book and a pamphlet on Surrey local history topics. She is currently the Society's Chief Librarian.

**Tuesday 20th October 2009**

**The Royal Palace of Kings Langley**  
*Richard Boustred*

When England was ruled from Kings Langley: a glance at the Royal Palace which dominated this village for 300 years.

Richard Boustred was Schools Officer to Colchester and Essex Museum from 1967 to 1989 after 14 years teaching, 4 years in farming and 3 years in the Royal Navy including D-Day.

**Friday 30th October 2009**

**'For my name and memory', or why St Albans should Make More of Francis Bacon**  
*Prof Michael Cooper*

The philosophical writings of Francis Bacon (1561-1626) changed mankind's understanding of the natural world. Professor Cooper will show that Francis Bacon's philosophy, often misunderstood, was the foundation of experimental science which continues to add to our understanding of the natural world. Bacon's influence on science, technology and industry was profound, yet there is no significant civic recognition of his life at Gorhambury, first as a precocious child and later after allegations of sleaze had cost him his appointment as Lord Chancellor. Although one citizen of St Albans in the 17th century recognised the importance of Bacon's philosophy, little evidence has been found of similar recognition here since then. Professor Cooper suggests that it is time for St Albans to commemorate a man who had such a profound effect on the material lives of mankind.

After graduating with a degree in Physics from Bristol University in 1957 Professor Michael Cooper was recruited by the Colonial Office and sent to the Royal School of Military Survey to be trained as a land surveyor for work in Nigeria. His career since then has been mainly as an academic, but he is a Chartered Surveyor and a Chartered Engineer. Now retired, he is Emeritus Professor of Engineering Surveying at City University and Visiting Professor at University College London. A PhD in the History of Science is his justification for tonight's topic, but he is working hard to justify his appointment as President of this Society.

**Tuesday 10th November 2009**

**Plain Mr Whitbread**  
*Sam Whitbread*

The Whitbread family has been a part of Bedfordshire life since at least the 13th century. From small beginnings as peasant farmers, through appointments as local officials, to the founder of the Brewery (one of the most notable success stories of the Industrial Revolution) and his son, the radical Whig politician and follower of Fox, the Whitbreads have left their mark, both locally and nationally. The title of the talk refers to the fact that at least two members of the family were offered peerages but preferred to 'remain plain Mr Whitbread'.

Sam Whitbread was brought up at the family home, Southill in Bedfordshire. Rejecting full-time careers in politics and the family firm, he preferred to concentrate on farming and forestry in Bedfordshire. He served on Bedfordshire County Council and as a magistrate and was High Sheriff in 1972/73. Elected to the Board of Whitbread in 1972 as a non-executive director, he became Chairman in 1984, serving for eight years. He was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire in 1991 and retired as Chairman of Whitbread the following year.

**Tuesday 17th November 2009**  
**Wycombe's Contribution to Aviation**  
*Dave Scott and Ian Simmons*

The talk will concentrate on the less well known facts in the area and in and around High Wycombe including the Birthplace of Sir Geoffrey de Havilland, aviation events before WW1 including Cody, Bleriot's local house by the River Thames, Amy Johnson's last residence and her other local connections, local airfields, Cobham's Flying Circus, the manufacture of major aeroplane parts in both WW1 and WW2 in the town's furniture factories and the manufacture of almost the entire Wooden Mosquito Airframe in WW2

Dave Scott has lived in Wycombe for over 30 years and has been a lifelong aviation enthusiast, starting out as an aircraft spotter at White Waltham in 1955. He discovered the birthplace of Sir Geoffrey de Havilland in High Wycombe. He flies radio controlled model aeroplanes, has a Pilot's Licence and flies at RAF Halton. In his spare time he does voluntary work at the 'Berkshire Museum of Aviation'.

Ian Simmons has spent most of his life in Wycombe. He was a cabinet maker and furniture designer with Gomme's and William Bartlett. He spent time in the RAF working on aircraft like the Proctor and Mosquito.

He worked for Personal Plane Services at White Waltham for Doug Bianchi and later for Airwork (Booker), Fairey Aviation and Westland at White Waltham. Currently retired, he does voluntary work at the Berkshire Museum of Aviation, masterminding the restoration of a Miles Martinet (non flying), also some work for Personal Plane Services (Tony Bianchi) at Wycombe Air Park on wooden airframes and fabric covering on airworthy aeroplanes. He is very knowledgeable about wood, adhesives and fabric relating to aircraft.

**Friday 27th November 2009**  
**What Happened to Henry VIII?**  
*Suzannah Lipscomb*

Suzannah Lipscomb, author of *1536: The Year that Changed Henry VIII*, will discuss how, when and why Henry VIII was transformed from a sunny young hedonist into the fat, ruthless tyrant of popular legend.

Suzannah Lipscomb is Research Curator at Hampton Court Palace. She was part of the team responsible for the series of exhibitions, events and activities at Hampton Court Palace in 2009 to mark the 500th anniversary of Henry VIII's accession, and has featured on a range of TV and radio programmes talking about Henry VIII, including the BBC's *The One Show*, *Time Team* and *Radio 3's The Essay*. Her first book, *1536: The Year that Changed Henry VII* was published in March 2009, and she is completing her D.Phil. on gender in early modern French history at Balliol College, Oxford.

**Tuesday 8th December 2009**  
**Canal Architecture**  
*Runnals Davis*

**Friday 8th January 2010**  
**Society New Year Party at Verulamium Museum**

**Tuesday 12th January 2010**  
**Commerce and Conflict - The Early Development of London's docks**  
*Tom Wareham*

**Tuesday 19th January 2010**  
**The BBC in Wartime**  
*Stephen Barnard*

**Friday 29th January 2010**  
**The Second Battle of St Albans, 17 February 1461**  
*Dr Peter Burley*

**Tuesday 9th February 2010**  
**Social Welfare in St Peter's Parish, St Albans, 1663-80**  
*Pat Howe and Pat Nellist*

**Tuesday 16th February 2010**  
**A Brief Walk through the History of Shenley**  
*Bob Dearden*

**Friday 26th February 2010**  
**Enigma - How Breaking the German Ciphers in WW2 led to the World's First Computer**  
*Hugh Davies*

**Tuesday 9th March 2010**  
**The Villages of East London**  
*Peter Lawrence*

**Tuesday 16th March 2010**  
**Bogislaus Rosen (1572-1658) - a 17th Century Estonian Merchant**  
*Irene Cowan*

**Friday 26th March 2010**  
**Bedlam: London and its Mad**  
*Catharine Arnold*

**Tuesday 13th April 2010**  
**Luton Hoo Past, Present and Future**  
*Zena Dickinson*

**Tuesday 20th April 2010**  
**Law and Disorder in St Albans 1750-1900**  
*Ann Dean*

**Friday 30th April 2010**  
**Pageantry, History and Identity: St Albans in the Twentieth Century**  
*Dr Mark Freeman*

**Tuesday 11th May 2010**  
**Berkhamsted: Trades and Industries through the Ages**  
*Jenny Sherwood*

**Tuesday 18th May 2010**  
**The Five Churches at Waltham Abbey and the Development of the Town**  
*Peter Huggins*

**Friday 28th May 2010**  
**'The fair majestic paradise of Stowe': Stowe House and Landscape Gardens**  
*Andrew Rudolf*

Friday Lectures start at 7.45pm at the College of Law, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield Road Campus St Albans  
 Tuesday Lectures start at 8.00pm at St Albans Boys' School, Romeland, St Albans  
 They are open to all members of the Society. Non-members may attend two meetings as guests.

## CURRENT SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Please contact me if you would like copies from our list at special prices for members of SAHAAS. Copies of books are usually available at Society events. If you are out of town I can quote you the cost of delivering copies.

*Clare Ellis*

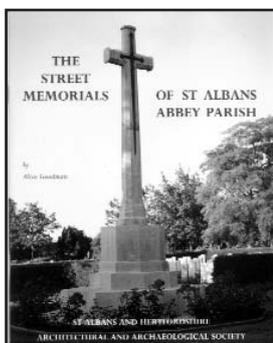
91 Sandpit Lane, St Albans AL1 4BJ. Tel 01727 856250 [clare.a.ellis@btinternet.com](mailto:clare.a.ellis@btinternet.com)

### ***The Street Memorials of St Albans Abbey Parish***

Alice Goodman, 1987

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

£4

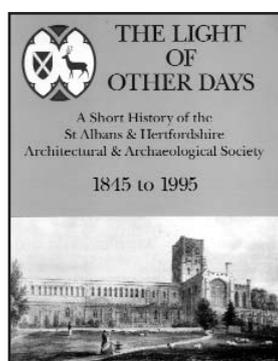
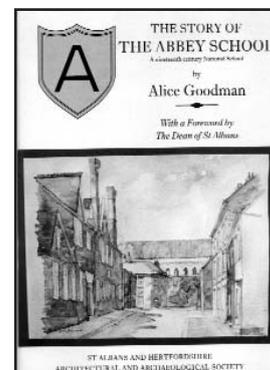


### ***The Story of the Abbey School***

Alice Goodman, 1991

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

£4



### ***The Light of Other Days***

Brian Moody, 1995

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

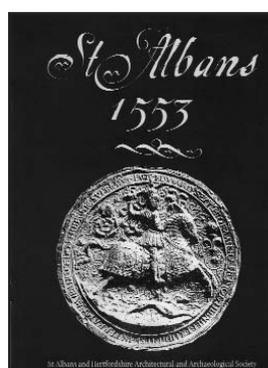
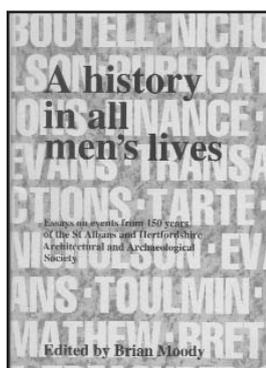
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