



SPRING FLOWERS AND CIVIC GARDENS

The flowering cherry trees in Sandridge Road St Albans were such a splendid sight in April that they attracted the attention of the local press. The white petals usually die away before the red flowers come into full bloom, but this year, the 550th anniversary of the second Battle of St Albans in the Wars of the Roses, all trees were in full bloom at the same time – a poignant memorial to those who were killed beneath Lancastrian and Yorkist banners in the place where now red and white flowers cluster overhead.

Each spring the cherry blossom in Sandridge Road brings to mind the thoughts of A. E. Housman's *Shropshire Lad*: 'Loveliest of trees, the cherry now/Is hung with bloom along the bough/.../Now, of my threescore years and ten/Twenty will not come again,/And take from seventy springs a score,/ It only leaves me fifty more". The Lad (and Housman) was unaware that the 'only' fifty years left to him were to be put at hazard by the 1914-18 war.

The appearance of bluebells in Langley Wood, now a small part of the Woodland Trust's Heartwood Forest, is another springtime reminder of English poetry and the first world war. Edward Thomas wrote *In Memoriam (Easter 1915)*: "The flowers left thick at nightfall in the wood/This Eastertide call into mind the men,/Now far from home, who, with their sweethearts, should/Have gathered them and will do never again". Springtime, so obviously a sign of hope and renewal, also has sombre resonances, expressed in *The Waste Land* by T. S. Eliot: "April is the cruellest month, breeding/Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing/Memory and desire, stirring/Dull roots with spring rain".

We are grateful to the people who first planted the trees in Sandridge Road and to those who now maintain them despite occasional vandalism. Residents and visitors also get much pleasure from the flower-beds in roundabouts and public parks and gardens across the city, designed, laid out and maintained by St Albans City and District Council (SADC). An exception is the small garden behind the Museum of St Albans in Hatfield Road. Perhaps SADC can't decide whether responsibility for maintaining the museum garden lies with 'Museums' or with 'Gardens'. In any case, the museum garden has been largely neglected by SADC even though the Council is the Trustee of land given by Earl Spencer at the end of the 19th century for a new museum. Hertfordshire County Council decided last month to acquire the museum garden, by Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) if necessary, for use as a playground for a proposed new free primary school to be located in buildings formerly occupied by the University of Hertfordshire School of Law. Sufficient land on the School of Law site (or on the adjoining property if necessary) makes the proposed compulsory purchase of the non-contiguous museum garden seem capricious.

This Society was prominent in the creation of the present museum which was opened in 1899. We have drawn the attention of SADC to its obligations as Trustee, but we have had no indication yet that SADC has any plans or even any intention to ensure that the land remains accessible to the general public. We will join with other interested local groups to press for the land to be used efficiently for its original philanthropic purpose: the display and promotion of local history to visitors and citizens.

Michael Cooper



The garden at the rear of the Museum of St Albans in Hatfield Road, looking north.

On 20th July 1898 Lady Evans, wife of Sir John Evans, a Vice President of this Society, laid the Museum's foundation stone. At the same ceremony, Earl Cowper, owner of Panshanger Park, planted in the garden a sapling from the famous Panshanger Oak. As early as 1719 the Panshanger Oak was recorded as containing more than 300 cubic feet of timber, which meant it dated from around 1500, only a lifetime after the Second Battle of St Albans. The sapling planted by Earl Cowper in 1898 can be seen in the picture. It now bears a Tree Preservation Order.

AGM: 6TH SEPTEMBER 2011

With the exception of Dee Drinkwater, our newsletter editor, all current members are prepared to stand for office for the coming year but - by the recommendation of at least ten members - two additional members may be elected to serve on Council for a period of two years.

I am sure that everyone will have this date firmly in diaries and on calendars, but could I please remind all that no items may be discussed at an AGM that have not been included on the agenda. Could I therefore please ask that, if you have an item that you wish to be included, you notify me in advance (by 31st July).

Bryan Hanlon

Secretary

(Contact details on page 8)

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

By the time you receive this newsletter it will be nearly the end of the Society's financial year and this note is a reminder that subscriptions are due and payable on 1 June for the financial year 2011/12. The level of subscriptions currently in force is as follows;

Individual member	£12
The spouse or partner of a member, living at the member's address	£6
Children of a member under the age of 18, living at the member's address	£6
Students who provide evidence that they are in full time further or higher education	£6
Family membership	£21

Those of you who have direct debits in place do not need to do anything; your subscription will automatically be collected from your bank account on 1st June. For those not signed up to the direct debit system, please reconsider whether you wish to do this. I highly recommend that you do so. The appropriate form can be obtained from me (phone 07711 696 417) or from our membership secretary David Smith (phone 01767 260 579) and you should send the completed form to me.

For those of you who do not pay by direct debit, please send a cheque for your subscription to our membership secretary, David Smith. If you still pay by standing order, please ensure that your instructions to your bank give the correct level of subscription with payment on the correct date, 1 June. Please also cancel all old standing orders as they will make payments of the wrong amount and at the wrong date and may lead to a double payment. This will lead to administrative problems for us both.

If you have any concerns you wish to discuss with me, please call me on 07711 696 417.

John Thomson

Treasurer

(Contact details on page 8)

17TH CENTURY POPULATION RESEARCH GROUP

I gave a talk at a Herts Network of U3As Study Day on 6th April. I focussed on the astonishing legacy of documents which have survived and how it is possible to create stories on individuals as we have done in our study of St Albans. I quoted our work on Roger Pemberton, Lydia Hope and John Carter. We have published on the former two and our article on John Carter will come out in the spring edition of the journal *Local Population Studies*. The talk was well received and I have been asked to repeat it in the autumn because the event was oversubscribed.

We are now working on widows' wills. We should like to publish transcriptions of some 150 wills with an introduction comprising an analysis. We are in the early stages so have no idea what size publication this might be but would like the Arc & Arc to publish it. I consulted Nigel Goose and he thought it an excellent idea, but asked why we did not go further and publish all our wills in a number of volumes. This is a daunting prospect - the salient facts of 600 wills have been entered on our database but not all of them have been transcribed.

Pat Howe

LIVING MEMORIES

We launched the community memories of life in St. Albans since 1900. So far only five or six entries have been submitted: it is probable that it will not take off properly until the autumn 2011. It does not matter how long you have lived locally we want to create an alternative to producing a book or paper by sharing memories online.

A member who does not have the internet has just submitted an entry on how the University of the Third Age has become part of her life since arriving here 20 years ago, a listing of the scientists from Rothamsted Research who achieved membership of the Royal Society which celebrated its 350th anniversary in 2010 and a memory of a former Albanian who recalls revisiting the city about 40 years after he moved elsewhere.

Do you know people who have lived here all their lives? If so, can you ask them about their memories, and submit it on their behalf?

John Cox

Co-ordinator

(Contact details on page 8)

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

It has been suggested that the Society might make use of 'Facebook' or 'Twitter'. Does anyone have any experience of using them for a society such as ours? If so please let me know.

John Cox

Press & Publicity Officer

(Contact details on page 8)

A VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE

24TH SEPTEMBER 2011

The St Albans Civic Society is organising a day coach trip to give everyone a real flavour of this historic city, and have offered places to members of our Society.

Leaving St Peter's Street at 08.45 a.m., we expect to arrive in Cambridge by 10.00 a.m. where we shall first visit Kings College Chapel (entrance fee payable). At about 10.45, we shall leave the chapel for a coffee/wc stop (of your own choosing) before we have a 1½- 2 hour guided walk around this part of the city, cost expected to be about £7, followed by lunch (again of your own choosing. or bring a picnic if you prefer).

Allowing approx. one hour for lunch, we then offer two options:

- EITHER: stay in Cambridge to 'do your own thing' or, if you wish, join another (different) two-hour tour (cost about £5). Both morning and afternoon tours would be 'gown' rather than 'town'.
- OR: travel on in the coach to Anglesey Abbey, one man's vision of English country living. The Abbey is an early 20th century luxury home, lovingly created from the remnants of 800 years of change. The beautiful gardens are a modern version of the grand 18th century landscape gardens, such as Stourhead and Stowe. (Free to National Trust members.)

The coach will leave Anglesey Abbey at 5.00 p.m. to collect members from Cambridge, and return to St Albans at about 7.30 p.m.

You do not, of course, have to join us on the guided walks: you may prefer to saunter around on your own, take a punt on the Cam etc. It's up to you.

The cost of this coach trip will be £17.50 per person. Guided walks, entrance fees etc will be extra, paid on the day. (We have estimated these extra costs, as 2011 figures have yet to be confirmed.)

How to book:-

- Please fill in the form below for the visit(s) of your choice
- Make cheque payable to SAHAAS
- Date each cheque with the date of the visit - 24/09/2011
- Send your completed form to Bryan Hanlon at: 24 Monks Horton Way, St Albans, AL1 4HA, tel. 01727 851734
- Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for receipt

Seats are allocated on a first come, first served basis. Cancellations may mean no refund although every effort will be made to sell on seats to those on any waiting list. Your friends are welcome: they may even join our Society too!

BOOKING FORM

Name Tel. no.

Address

I wish to reserve _____ seat(s) for the visit to Cambridge on 24th September 2011. I would like to join:

- the morning tour
- the afternoon tour
- the visit to Anglesey Abbey

I enclose one cheque, dated 24th September 2011, made payable to SAHAAS, together with a stamped addressed envelope.

Please send to Bryan Hanlon, 24 Monks Horton Way, St Albans AL1 4HA

LIBRARY NOTES AND QUERIES

The Library team mounted an exhibition of Stanley Kent photographs in the Public Library in March, a selection from those we showed in the Old Town Hall over Residents First weekend in January. We thought it would give the public a greater opportunity to enjoy these excellent photographs of St Albans between about 1895 and 1920, and to provide a little publicity for the Arc & Arc as well.

Brian Moody has been busy doing some research on the history of the Clock Tower, and has provided us with a short account of his findings. The tower was built by Thomas Wolvey, and was made over to the townspeople in 1426. It was built not to serve as a gesture of independence from the overbearing Monastery, as has been believed hitherto, but simply to house the new clock and the large bell – rather disappointing to those of us who like to imagine the town as a radical place at that time. Brian brings the history up to date, including the origin of the Arc & Arc's involvement in keeping the Clock Tower open to visitors.

Among the documents we have in the library is a collection of scrapbooks containing copies of 19th century engravings of the Abbey. Most of them are well known to the Abbey library, but on examination recently it was found that several were not known there. They have now been photographed for that library's collection.

Recently we have helped enquirers seeking information on a memorial formerly in St Peter's Church, with the history of houses in Fishpool Street, and the source of the anecdote that grass grew two feet wide on the St Albans coach road after the coming of the railway. Sheila Green had indexed a newspaper cutting in an album compiled by Ridgway Lloyd in the 1870s. The cutting came from County Press (Hertford) in October 1842. It is not yet clear if this is the ultimate source of the story. We hope more will be discovered on this topic, and when it is it will be reported here.

Books recently added to stock

Hertfordshire's geology and landscape, edited by John Catt.

Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire Natural History Society, 2010. 374pp, illus, maps, diagrams. Published jointly with Hertfordshire Geological Society, the book provides an account of the county's geology, and relates it to the soil, ecology, agriculture, prehistoric archaeology, hydrology and mineral resources.

Verulamium Lake and Park, St Albans, 1927-1934, by Janet Ouston. Friends of Verulamium Park, 2010. 30pp, photographs, refs. A history of the early years of the park, with photographs showing construction of the lake.

Britain after Rome: the fall and rise, 400-1070, by Robin Fleming. Allen Lane, 2010. 458pp, maps, bibliogs. An academic study of the people of early medieval Britain and the communities in which they lived.

Hertfordshire Histories: roads, by Tony Rook. Welwyn Heritage, 1991. 20pp, maps.

The story of Welwyn Roman Baths, by Tony Rook. Welwyn, Hertfordshire Histories, 2002. 50pp, illus, photographs, plans.

"I've come about the drains"; an adventure in architecture, by Tony Rook. The author, 2005. 96pp, illus, photographs, diagrams. Concerned with the way Roman baths worked, but also discusses other ancient buildings.

Lockleys Roman Villas, by J B Ward-Perkins and Tony Rook. Welwyn, Tony Rook, 2007. 175pp, plans, diagrams, photographs. Reprints Ward-Perkins 1938 report in The Antiquaries Journal of his excavation of the villa, together with Rook's paper on his excavation of the villa at Dicket Mead, Lockleys, Welwyn, from Herts Archaeology vol 9, 1967.

Beaumont School 1938-2008: 70th anniversary. Various authors. 56pp, photographs. A compilation which includes Jean Brown's account written for the school's 50th anniversary, interviews with staff, and examples of correspondence with the local education authority during the period 1938-1942.

A history of St Dominic (sic) School, Harpenden: the first seventy-five years, by Kevin A Rafferty. Privately

published, 1996, 45pp.

The view from Church Green: memories of the Harpenden Free Press, 1936-1960, by John Seabrook. Poole, The Author, 2010. 157pp, illus. Recollections of how Harpenden was seen and recorded by its own local paper. The author was a journalist on the paper from 1948 to 1959.

Recent Journal Articles

In *British Archaeology* January/February 2011, pp 32-37. Names on terra sigillata: tracing the work of Roman potters, by Michael Fulford. Nearly fifty years after Brian Hartley started work on a record of individual potters of Samian ware, the project is nearing completion. Six of the nine volumes have been published, and a searchable online database is being completed.

In *Rickmansworth Historical Society Newsletter* December 2010, pp 3-15. Woodwick: A Knights Fee Manor, by Adrienne Jacques. A history of the manor, which was awarded to St Albans by the Kings of Mercia. Now known as Woodoaks Farm, it lies in West Hyde, near Rickmansworth.

In *Current Archaeology* September 2010, pp 28-35. Baldock and the end of Roman Britain, by Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthew and Gil Burleigh. New excavation evidence from Baldock suggests that Roman life continued there after the conventional date for the end of Roman rule.

In *Harpenden and District Local History Society Newsletter* December 2010, pp 8-9. Rothamsted Allotments Club, by Eric Brandreth. John Bennet

THE LIBRARY TEAM

Gill Harvey, 01727 853415
Anne Wares, 01727 860705
Donald Munro 01727 760808
Tony Cooper 01727 865032

Or email via the Society's website, www.stalbanshistory.org

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

Lawes set aside ten acres of land in 1882 to provide allotments for agricultural labourers of the parish.

In *Current Archaeology* February 2011 pp 28-35. Mosaics and the end of Roman Britain, by Stephen Cash and David Neal. The authors have recorded all the known Roman mosaics in Britain, and reflect on what mosaics might tell us about the period when Cirencester was the capital of Roman Britannia.

In *Hendon and District Archaeological Society Newsletter* April 2011, pp 5-6. The Roman wooden water pump; an ingenious machine, by Richard Stein. An account by Sue Willets of a lecture based on the author's research at Reading University. Two of the 18 known force pumps were found in England.

In *Current Archaeology* May 2011, pp 36-39. The Lord of the Rings: Roman rings and the cult of Toutatis, by Adam Daubeny. Toutatis was a Roman god popular with soldiers, but

hardly known in Britain. In recent years more has learned about him, largely from evidence derived from a series of finger-rings, found mostly in the east Midlands.

In *The Alban Link* Spring 2011

pp 8-11. Abbots of the Abbey of St Alban: Richard of Wallingford, Abbot 1327-1336, by Sheila Green. Richard became Abbot at a time of turmoil within the monastery, and of problems with the town. He tackled these, whilst continuing with his scientific studies; he had built astronomical instruments as well as his great clock.

Pp 18-23. Matthew Paris and Henry III's elephant, by Richard Cassidy and Michael Clasby. Attempts to show why Matthew was interested in the elephant, what is known about it, and its significance to Matthew and Henry.

Journals received

British Archaeology March/April, and May/June 2011

Current Archaeology January, March and April 2011

C20: the magazine of the Twentieth Century Society, Winter 2010/2011

Hendon and District Archaeology Society Newsletter, January, February, March 2011

Hertfordshire People, March 2011

History Today, January, February, March, April 2011

Independent Archaeology, February 2011

London Archaeologist, Winter 2010/2011

Research News (English Heritage), Autumn 2010

Rickmansworth Historical Society Newsletter, March 2011

Ver Valley Newsletter, January and April 2011

FORTHCOMING OUTINGS

Thursday 26 May

Morning walk around Hitchin

10.30 till 12 noon

Cost £4 per person

To reserve your place please contact Pat Howe
by email pathowe@talk21.com
or by telephone 01727 857274

Tuesday 21 June

Evening walk around Flamstead

guided by Eric Edwards.

6.30pm

Cost £4 donation to St Leonard's Church.

To reserve your place please contact Pat Howe
by email pathowe@talk21.com
or by telephone 01727 857274

STORAGE

In January 2011 we organised commercial storage for the society's possessions in a 24 sq.ft. unit which will cost us £750 annually. Insurance is covered through our subscription to the British Association for Local History.

To maximise on the cubic capacity, Roger Miles erected some metal shelving which houses all our publication stocks and equipment need for social gatherings. An inventory has been made of everything there and a record is made of everything which is borrowed.

Anyone who wishes to use the display screens etc. should contact me.

John Cox

Press & Publicity Officer
(Contact details on page 8)

WHY NOT BE A REVIEWER?

The Editor of *Hertfordshire Archaeology and History* (published jointly by this Society and the East Herts Archaeological Society) is looking for more people to review the quality of papers submitted for publication.

Any members who would like to know more about the reviewing process, and how they could take part in it, are invited to contact the editor:

Dr Isabel Thompson, Historic Environment Unit, Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall EMG CHN 108, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8DN

Tel 01992 555245 or email isobel.thompson@hertscc.gov.uk

LECTURE PROGRAMME 2010-11

WE'RE ON THE MOVE!

The lecture below will be the final meeting to be held at the School of Law, University of Hertfordshire, St Albans (starts 7.45 p.m.). The Society has met there for its Friday lectures for more than eleven years and enjoyed comfortable spacious accommodation with first-class IT equipment and a central position within the town centre - the equivalent is hard to come by.

We sincerely thank the University for allowing us to hire its premises for so long and they, in turn, will be moving the School of Law to accommodation on their Hatfield Campus in June.

Notification of the address of our new Friday meeting place will be announced in our August newsletter, along with details of our 2011-12 lecture programme.

Friday 27th May 2011

Ten Minutes to Noon: A History of Copped Hall

Peter Dalton

Peter Dalton will cover the history of Copped Hall starting from the first known record of a building on the site in 1150AD and bringing you right up to date following the disastrous fire in 1917 and the subsequent and current restoration of the gutted mansion.

Peter graduated in 1970 in economics from London University then pursued a successful career in the sales and marketing of laboratory equipment to hospitals and universities. In 1986 he started a recruitment agency finding sales people and service engineers for companies supplying this highly specialised market place. He retired in 2006 since when he has been involved in voluntary work with, amongst other organisations, the CAB, the Poppy Day Appeal, the Royal Gun Powder Mills, Ingatestone Hall and, of course, Copped Hall, the latter for some 14 years.

THE HOLOCAUST - A CHILD'S EXPERIENCE

If you missed this lecture on Friday 25 March you may be interested in this potted history of the speaker, Steven Frank.

Steven Frank was born on the 27th July 1935 in Amsterdam, Holland. He is the middle child of three sons. His father, born in Holland, was a distinguished lawyer who was a member of the Dutch resistance. He was betrayed and subsequently imprisoned by the Germans and finally murdered in Auschwitz in January 1943. His mother was born in England and came to Holland to study.

After an idyllic childhood prior to the invasion of Holland, Steven was deported to Barneveld in March 1943, then to Westerbork in September 1943 and finally to Theresienstadt in the Czech Republic in September 1944 where he survived along with his two brothers and mother. They were liberated by the Russian Army on the 9th May 1945. The family arrived in England in June 1945 by a devious route through war-torn Europe to be reunited with his mother's family, and he has remained there ever since. Steven Frank is married and has three children, three step children and twelve grandchildren.

Education after the war was difficult, not because he had to learn a new language, but having had virtually no primary school education during the war he left school with just two O-levels. After working very briefly he did two years' National Service in the Royal Signals with active service in Cyprus in the 1950s. He started working in a laboratory producing photographic and fine chemicals in Hendon whilst at the same time studying in the evenings to get O and A levels and then onto University (London)

part-time and obtained an honours degree in Chemistry. By this time he had moved to the Colne Valley Water Co. (who supplied you with water) and later to the Rickmansworth Water Company where he was in charge of the laboratory dealing with water quality. On the merging of these companies into Three Valleys Water, he was given early retirement at the age of 55. Since then he has had the most fulfilling part of his life culminating in being 'up front' in giving 450 talks in schools and other organisations instead of being a 'backroom boy'.

Roy Bratby



Steven pictured with Prof. Michael Cooper after his lecture. (Photo by courtesy of Frank Iddiols)

Standon Parish Church, Hertfordshire

AN AFTERNOON EXPLORING THE MEDIEVAL MONUMENTS FOLLOWED BY AN EVENING CONCERT

Saturday 25th June, 2011
In aid of the Friends of St Mary's Standon

St Mary's Standon has a number of interesting features: its celebrated – and separate – tower, an impressive range of medieval brasses, the magnificent tombs of the Sadleir family, and its remarkable past, all attract visitors from near and far. To celebrate its history a number of talks will be given by a range of distinguished speakers about the church and its monuments in the church

Programme:

- 2.00 Welcome by the Revd David Payne
- 2.15 Introduction: Standon in the Middle Ages:
Professor Caroline Barron (Royal Holloway, University of London)
- 2.30 The Church Building of St Mary's Standon:
Dr Linda Monckton (English Heritage)
- 3.00 The Medieval Brasses of Standon: Mr H. Martin Stuchfield
(Vice-President, The Monumental Brass Society)
- 3.30 *Break for tealcoffee and an opportunity
to look around the church*
- 4.15 John Field, alderman of London and his family at Standon:
Mrs Jane Williams (Queen Mary, University of London)
- 4.45 The Sadleir Family Tombs in the Chancel: Dr Phillip Lindley
(University of Leicester)
- 5.15 Concluding discussion and questions chaired by
Professor Caroline Barron (Royal Holloway, University of London)



The Star pub (01920 823725) across the road from the church has kindly agreed to cater for those who wish to purchase supper there between the talks and the concert. We hope you can join us there!

7.30 Concert: Church Music Through the Ages - Music for Choir and Organ

The cost for the day will be £10 (concessions £8) for the talks and tea, and £5 (concessions £3) for the concert. Tickets will be issued on a first come, first served basis and early booking is encouraged. If there is room, tickets will also be available for sale at the door on the day. Please complete this form and return it, with your cheque (made out to The Friends of St Mary's Standon) to:

Mrs Caroline Franks, 74 High Street, Standon, Herts SG11 1LB (caroline.franks@uicl.co.uk) enclosing a SAE.

NAME:

ADDRESS

.....

..... Post Code

EMAIL:

TELEPHONE:

I enclose a cheque for £ for tickets.

I plan to have supper at The Star pub after the talks Yes No