



## A FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It is hard to believe my three years as President will soon come to an end. People often wonder why time seems to speed up as they get older. Some explanations are given in a very readable book<sup>1</sup> by a professor of the history of psychology who makes this analogy: imagine running downstream alongside a river which is flowing at a fast but steady rate along the floor of a valley. When we are young we run quickly, so the river seems to be flowing more slowly; as we become older and run less quickly, the river seems to be flowing faster than before; and when we finally stop running, the river flows on as it always has done.

The Society is coping well with the increasing speed of technological change. More than half the members access the internet where they can read the latest Society news, follow links to a wide range of forthcoming events, search the Society's ever-growing archive and library catalogues, submit their own contributions to local history, and comment on what others have written. Members of Council use the internet for routine internal communications and discussions as well as for communicating externally with the press, other Societies and institutions, and with all levels of government.

During my presidential term I learned much about the Society and its members. It has become clear to me that the Society has an important role to play in influencing the future of St Albans as well as in recording its past. The first two of our Charitable Objects are: *to promote public interest in, and improve public knowledge of, the architecture, archaeology, and history of St Albans and Hertfordshire; and to work to secure the protection of monuments, structures or other features of architectural, historical, or archaeological interest in the area.*

1. *Why Life Speeds Up As You Get Older* by Douwe Draaisma, Cambridge University Press 2001.

In such matters the Society must engage with the public, and make our views known to local and national governing bodies. When our aims coincide with those of other local charitable organisations, such as the St Albans Civic Society and the St Albans Museums and Galleries Trust, we seek to work together, especially at a time when the City & District Council seems to have abdicated its responsibility for maintaining a reservoir of talented and professional employees with a collective wealth of local knowledge of the fabric and history of our City. The loss of expert knowledge puts at hazard the City's exceptional heritage which the District Council often publicises in straplines and slogans. I am grateful that the District Council supports our other two objects (to maintain a library and encourage the preservation of material of historic interest) by providing a room close to the Tourist Information Centre for our library with access to members and visitors on Wednesdays and Fridays.

A century and a half ago, when most members of our Society were Anglican clergymen, the more senior of them had easy access to the ears of national and local government. But society has changed and if we want our voice to be heard by those elected to make decisions, we should cultivate more public interest in the history of local places and people. Informed public interest in St Albans' past will help shape St Albans' future.

The annual Mayor's Prize and a new St Albans heritage photographic competition for children and young people are already in progress. A programme of activities in partnership with local societies, trusts, museums and educational institutions as well as the traditional lectures and visits will increase public interest and give opportunities to enrol new members. This brings me to the main disappointment of my presidential

term: my failure to persuade the Society to change its name. Any organisation with a name that no longer describes the

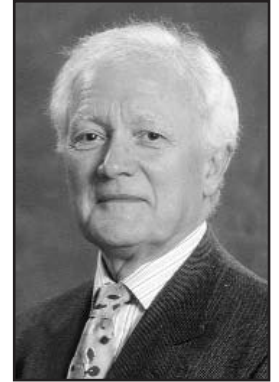
main interests of its members and which requires 23 syllables to say and 71 keystrokes to write will deter many prospective members, especially those who are interested in local history and find 'history' nowhere in the title. On the other hand, our secretary was recently contacted by a member of the public who assumed the Society's members were 'all architects or archaeologists' and was disappointed to learn that we did not have a large reservoir of members with technical knowledge of local architecture.

I would like to offer my personal thanks to all members of Council who give freely of their time in the pursuit of the Society's constitutional Objects. It is appropriate here to thank Dee Drinkwater in particular whose meticulous editing of 30 issues of the Newsletter now comes to an end as she sets off to travel more widely.

I shall have great pleasure at the AGM in September in proposing on behalf of Council Donald Munro as President for 2011-2014 (see p. 6).

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve the Society as President at a time of technological change and I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to do so.

*Michael Cooper*



**PLEASE NOTE**  
**New Venue for Friday Lectures**

St Albans School, Abbey  
Gateway, St. Albans AL3 4HB

## 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 6th September 2011 at 7.30pm for the following purposes:***

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To elect the President for the period 2011 to 2014
3. President's comments.
4. To adopt the minutes of the previous AGM held on 7th September 2010.
5. To receive the accounts for the year ended 31 May 2011 (enclosed).
6. To receive reports from our various groups circulated in the latest newsletter.
7. 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
Helen Bishop	Clock Tower
Doreen Bratby	Lecture Secretary
Roy Bratby	Chairman, Programme Development Committee
John Cox	Publicity Officer
Alison Baugh	Newsletter Editor
To be confirmed	Representative 19th Century Research
Richard Shwe	SADC Museums Representative
Gill Harvey	Library
Pat Howe	Minutes Secretary/17th Century Population Research
David Smith	Membership Secretary
Christine McDermott	Representative, Herts Archaeology & History
Roger Miles	Representative Archaeology Group
Michael Cooper	Co-opted member, President 2008-2011
Gerard McSweeney	Co-opted member

8. To confirm the re-election of Mr J R West as Independent Examiner of the accounts.

*Bryan Hanlon*

*Secretary*

To be followed by a lecture by Chris Green, former SADC Museums Officer, entitled:

***From Clock House to Clock Tower: a reconstruction of St Albans Clock House before the Victorian restoration of Britain's only medieval belfry***

## ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2011

Enclosed with this newsletter are the accounts for the financial year ended 31 May 2011 which were approved by Council and signed by the independent examiner on 9 August 2011. 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 contain a report from the Independent Examiner, even though the Charity Commission do not require such a report for Charities with income below £25,000. I am more comfortable, however, to present to you accounts which have been the subject of independent examination.

The results for the year are split between the unrestricted funds and the restricted funds. Dealing first with the unrestricted funds, the activities of the year resulted in a surplus of income over expenditure for the year of £926 against a deficit last year of £2,154. Income from unrestricted sources increased in the period by £2,600, the main contributory factors of which were:

- Slightly higher subscriptions as we continue to attract new members.
- A significant increase in the donation from the clock tower, as funds which previously had been retained have now been distributed. This is shown as a debtor in the accounts as receipt was after the year end.
- The expected virtual disappearance of interest income under the current constrained financial conditions.

- No excursions so therefore no income, but offset by the proceeds from the New Year party which was held again this year.

Expenses are slightly down on last year, by around £500, the main changes being:

- No excursions so therefore no expenses.
- New Year party costs again this year.
- A donation of £500 for the Samuel Ryder trail leaflet.
- Storage costs of £338, which will rise to £750 annually.
- Higher spending on publicity and printing & stationery.

On the restricted funds, no donations were made to the Mayor's Prize, but no prize was awarded this year. The grant of £2,000 from the Mercers' Charitable Foundation that was received at the end of the last financial year has been spent on the project to digitalise the Society's Transactions.

In the balance sheet there is very little to comment on. The unrestricted cash resources of the Society have decreased in the year by £1,120 to £24,632. The unrestricted reserves of the Society now stand at £24,338. Both of these figures show the finances of the Society remaining in a robust position.

*John Thomson*

Treasurer

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## INTRODUCING DONALD MUNRO YOUR COUNCIL'S NOMINEE FOR PRESIDENT

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Donald Munro, a retired academic librarian, has been a member of the SAHAAS Library team for five years. He and his wife Beryl have lived in St Albans for 33 years.

Raised and schooled in Montrose, North Britain, Donald read history at Aberdeen University 1960-64. After two years cataloguing manuscripts at the John Rylands Library, Manchester, he went to the Institute of Historical Research, University of London to compile two volumes of Writings on British History. Moving to the Library staff from c.1973 he worked in cataloguing and Collections Development until his retirement in 2006. He was then made an Hon. Research Fellow of IHR, which he still represents on a national libraries' subject advisory group. A Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a Bibliographical Society member, he has continuing research interests in several historical areas with a bibliographical slant, including the migration of manuscripts (post-

Dissolution) and the Scottish provincial newspaper press.

A frequent attendee of WEA courses, and a member of St Albans U3A, he has many interests (he thinks perhaps too many!) including art, politics, walking, sports (golf, athletics, football), poetry, and has catholic musical tastes with particular enthusiasm for Scottish/Irish/Gaelic traditional music and song. He also actively collects books on Scottish local history and topography, and, like many former librarians, in a small way he trades as a hobby in Scottish and interesting academic and antiquarian books generally.

Locally he was for many years a governor at the Cunningham Hill Schools. At various times he has been active in or supported residents' interests in planning issues in south-east St Albans, and was a long-time member of the Labour Party, until the Iraq War. He has frequently prepared quiz evenings for Save the Children and other local groups.

He feels greatly honoured to have been asked to put his name forward as

a nominee for the Presidency, especially following such a distinguished line of predecessors. Whilst having no particular current research interest in St Albans history, he hopes that his experience of the academic historical world and familiarity with collections of printed primary historical materials and guides to sources may be tapped to the Society's benefit. He will continue to help catalogue the Society's Library at the Friday morning sessions, and trusts that he will become recognised, as at IHR, as a friendly approachable face of the Arc & Arc.



## REVIEW OF THE YEAR

### **Library**

The Library continues to attract enquiries, both national and international, but it would be nice to see members making more use of our material which is quite extensive, particularly on St Albans.

We have almost completed the cataloguing of the bookstock, only another approximately 4,000 newspaper cuttings and other miscellanea to go! Thanks to the efforts of Brian Bending there is a catalogue available on our website. It is hoped to improve this in the not too distant future, but people can use it to check what is in the library.

We opened the library for a general exhibition of Stanley Kent's photographs of old St Albans, during Residents First Weekend in January, and later displayed the material for two weeks in St Albans Public Library.

Future plans include the upgrading of the Catalogue already mentioned, and the transfer of the Kent photographs onto our website. We also hope to revive the Society's publishing programme to a limited extent.

We were very sorry that Tony Cooper and Elizabeth Gardner have both decided to reduce their time in the library. Both have contributed enormously: Tony is responsible for the reorganisation of the map collection, and Elizabeth's general historical background has been invaluable. We thank them enormously for their contribution, and are glad not to be saying 'goodbye' entirely. We also welcome the large number of extra volunteers who responded to our appeal. We may not be able to offer all of you immediate employment, but your offer is much appreciated, and we will try and use you as much as we can.

*Gill Harvey*

### **Clock Tower**

The 2101 season was a very busy one, with approx. 4600 adults and 1500 children climbing the Tower. Visitors come from all over the world and are fascinated by the unique history of the building and the wonderful views from the top. The

latest research puts the date of the Tower's construction at 1403, making it the only medieval clock tower remaining in England. The town clock tower at Morpeth, Northumberland, is Tudor.

The system of weekend organisers has worked very well, in spite of my un-technical means of communication, and two new people have strengthened this team: I am grateful for their enthusiasm and efficiency. We continue to add to the list of volunteers who seem to enjoy manning the tower and talking to visitors on summer weekends. There have been few problems apart from the occasional group of unaccompanied teenagers.

We now charge adults £1 to go up the tower and accompanied children go free. Unaccompanied children are admitted at the discretion of the volunteers present. While we want to encourage youngsters to be interested, they do require some supervision and should be refused entry if volunteers do not feel confident about dealing with them.

Takings on an average weekend are around £350, more on bank holidays. All monies are paid into the Clock Tower account (held jointly with the Civic Society), which now has a healthy balance from admission fees and the sale of postcards and badges. Income from the Clock Tower is the second largest source of income for the Arc & Arc, and plays an important part in funding our activities.

I started last season, my first as Clock Tower Co-ordinator, with no experience and some apprehension, but soon learned what wonderful support was forthcoming from the Arc & Arc Council members, from Chris Green (at the time SADC Museums Officer) and from the many clock-towers. I have enjoyed it, and thank all those who make it possible to open the Clock Tower to visitors every summer: we have a good team.

*Helen Bishop*

### **Programme Development**

The Programme Development Committee (Roy Bratby, Chairman,

Doreen Bratby, Pat Howe and Roger Miles) met regularly throughout the year and was responsible for 17 Tuesday lectures, two of which were presented by our own members, Ann Ledger and the Rev. Peter Wadsworth. We are extremely grateful to them for their contribution to the life of the Society.

In addition, three walks were arranged by Pat Howe: an evening walk around Hertford in September; a morning walk around Hitchin in May and an evening walk around Flamstead in June.

Thanks are due to those responsible for the various events and for the associated administration, not forgetting our members who supported these activities.

We are also indebted to those members, namely Roderick Douglas and Frank Idiols, who have given their time to assist with the IT/AV part of the lectures and our thanks go to them. I would emphasise that we continue to need additional help in this area and would welcome volunteers to come forward. Training is available and it would help to spread the load.

Your suggestions for future visits, lecture topics and possible speakers are always welcome.

*Roy Bratby*

### **Friday Lectures**

The AGM last year saw members queuing to test various flavours of cordials . . . cordials made from recipes of the late nineteenth century when hundreds of coffee taverns were opened throughout the country serving non-alcoholic drinks in times of the Temperance movement. According to our member Jon Mein, St Albans was no exception.

The year's lecture schedule was not without incident: a cancellation on the occasion of the Royal Wedding (though we shall hear that lecture later this year) and a cancellation due to illness but grateful to our member Kate Morris on this occasion for sharing her research as she tracked the development of St Peter's Street

*continued on the next page*

and showed how we have arrived at the present-day traffic configuration.

We had the pleasure of hearing writer, broadcaster and historian Dr Nick Barratt talk about his book describing what it was like on board the Titanic on its first and what was to be its last voyage. He vividly portrayed the scenes when passengers' courage and hope turned to despair as realisation dawned of the immensity of the disaster of this liner of great promise.

We had the unique opportunity to hear first-hand from a survivor of the Holocaust. Steven Frank unfolded his childhood memories of one atrocity after another during this period, losing his father, but happily escaping with his mother and brothers at the end.

Ten Minutes to Noon, a History of Copped Hall was our final lecture of the year. Peter Dalton explained how it suffered a disastrous fire and how this gutted mansion has been painstakingly restored by dedicated volunteers making it their life's work with only donations from the public. The house has activities and holds events, but the work is continuous.

As I have said, this lecture was the final one of the year. It was also the last lecture to be held at the School of Law, University of Hatfield after ten years of Friday lectures. We have enjoyed the central location, the comfort of the Lecture Theatre, and the excellent IT system on which the success of our lectures depend.

In closing, I thank the University for allowing us to use their accommodation for so long, those of our members who have devoted their time to give a talk and our membership for their unfailing support.

*Doreen Bratby*

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

The work of this group continues apace. Sylvia Beare's article on Lydia Hope's pictures was published in the Spring edition of *Herts Past and Present*. Sylvia was inspired to put pen to paper when she was working on Lydia's probate documents. Lydia was a rich widow,

living in St Albans, and her inventory listed thirty-four works of art. Sylvia has traced some of the pictures to the collection of Charles I. To discover more I recommend that you read this fascinating article.

An article on John Carter, carpenter of St Albans, compiled jointly by Jane Harris and myself, was published in the academic journal - *Local Population Studies*. Whilst working on the probate inventories we were struck by the affluence of this tradesman. He owned two houses, furnishings equal to those of a well-to-do gentleman and he was literate. His inventory was detailed in such a way that, with the help of JT Smith and a professional artist, a drawing has been constructed of Carter's parlour complete with the furniture listed.

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. The talk was well received and I have been asked to repeat it in the autumn.

Through the website we have had a few enquiries from descendants of 17th century inhabitants of St Albans. This is an exciting aspect of our work and the descendants are always thrilled at the information we can give them.

We are now working on widows' wills. We should like to publish transcriptions of some 150 wills with an introduction, analysing their contents. We are in the early stages so have no idea what size publication this might be but would like the *Arc* and *Arc* to publish it. In response to the report in the last newsletter, three members have volunteered to help with the transcriptions in addition to those already in the Group.

My thanks to all members of the group.

*Pat Howe*

### **Archaeology Group**

The activities of the Group have been limited in the year past.

In late summer and autumn of 2010

we added to the survey of Kingsbury Barn by making a comprehensive drawn record of the walls that the Barn timber structure stands on. They are a patchwork of original and repaired materials, dating from the 14th century first build to the present. In fact there is even earlier material incorporated since, almost inevitably, re-used Roman brick is to be seen.

Still on the topic of barns, a visit was made to the Chiltern Open Air Museum to assess the feasibility of getting a dendrochronological date for the St Julian's Barn timbers which are stored there. It is a 'sister' barn to Kingsbury, along with Croxley, both of which have been satisfactorily dated by the technique.

Indications are that it will be worthwhile attempting to get a set of cores. Council has agreed to fund this first part of the project and at the time of writing it just remains for another visit to COAM, to confirm practical arrangements.

If an adequate number of useable cores are obtained, funding will then be required for the lab work necessary to deduce the dating. This is the more expensive part.

*Roger Miles*

### **Herts Archaeology and History**

At last year's AGM Christine McDermott was co-opted on to Council as representative for the *Herts Archaeology and History* editorial committee, and during the year Dr Isobel Thompson was appointed Editor.

There have been a number of key issues that needed resolution during the year, and much progress has been made in placing the Journal on to a firmer footing. These issues include how the Journal is to be funded, a more economical process for printing and publication, a revised agreed list of peer reviewers and an updated style guide.

There is sufficient material to hand for volume 17 of the journal, and progress is being made towards publication, anticipated to be some time in 2012.

*Christine McDermott*

## A WALK AROUND HITCHIN

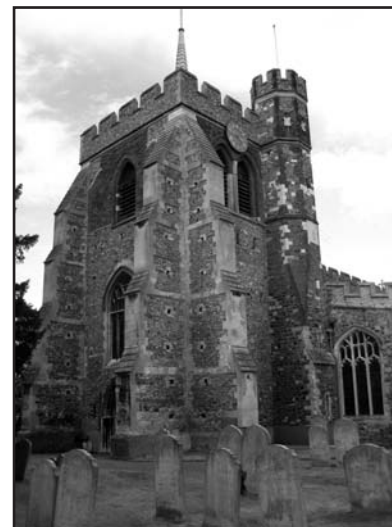
On 26th May 17 of us met our guide, Terry Knight, in the South Porch of Hitchin Parish Church. It is a large church with large clerestory windows making it very light. There are many carvings on the pews, the wooden screens and the 14th century wooden ceiling of the north aisle, and also on the stone abutments supporting the roof timbers. After we had looked around inside Mr Knight took us out and told us that King Offa founded a monastery in AD 792 which was burnt down in AD 910. Its successors were destroyed by gales and an earthquake and the present church dates from the 14th and 15th centuries. It is the largest parish church in Hertfordshire, second only to the Abbey, and was built on the profits of the wool trade. Like all old churches it has been repaired many times and the tower alone includes Roman bricks, mediaeval bricks, flint, and stone from more than one source.

The Market Place includes genuine Tudor and earlier timber buildings, 1930s mock-Tudor, an Italian tower on the 19th century Corn Exchange, Egyptian pillars on a 1930s shop (a brief fashion following the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb) and a Victorian Chinese cast-iron cabbies' shelter.

The mediaeval market place was much larger but (as in St Albans) traders' booths became ever more



permanent leaving a smaller open space (the modern market is elsewhere) with narrow approach roads, so we walked up one road and back down another. There were many former pubs, with arches leading to large yards, that at first glance looked like coaching inns but Hitchin is not on a trunk road and was never a major coaching centre. The pubs served the market traders and



customers and many of the yards used to have warrens of tenements housing up to 200 residents.

Hitchin is fortunate in that the modern traffic misses the old centre (unlike St Peter's St), the streets are narrow and there is only local traffic (but you have to look out). There are many small local shops and although the national retail chains are represented they do not dominate. The old buildings are well preserved although Mr Knight did say that requires constant vigilance.

It was interesting to see a town that is so similar to, and yet so different from, our own. Our thanks to Mr Knight and to Pat Howe for organising the visit.

Brian Bending

### LIVING MEMORIES: PLANS FOR NEXT SEASON 2011-12

After the initial launch in January of Living Memories only a few entries have appeared on the website although there are a number of contributions in the pipeline.

At the end of July I am going to talk to some residents at Verulam House about 'memories' and I hope to have an article which I am preparing for the September issue of (St. Albans Cathedral's) *Abbey News*. I hope that by September we will have invested in three new banners which can be shown to local groups, societies etc. as a means of attracting information for the memories section of our website.

Finally I understand that an article that I wrote last Spring on the Origins of the Society is to appear in the Autumn issue of *The Albans Link: Newsletter of the Friends of the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St. Alban*.

John Cox  
Publicity Officer

## THE WEBSITE: THERE'S MORE IN IT THAN MEETS THE EYE!

The present website was launched in November 2009 and is growing steadily, serving as a topical **Notice board**, a source of **Society information**, a **Publisher** and a **Collector**. Many people dip into it but do you know how much is there? Do spend five minutes experimenting and you might be surprised.

### Finding your way around

The site is divided into categories containing sub-categories and pages. It is usually obvious where a page will be and to make it easier many pages can be reached by more than one route. There are two other features to guide you:

- *See what's new.* New pages are listed at the bottom of the home page; click on the link to see the page, and there is a link to slightly older pages.
- *Look at this!* The right-hand column has links to topical items, especially urgent things like car-park warnings.

### Notice board

See *What's on* for our Lectures, a Calendar of events and directions to our Venues. The lecture programme announces any late changes and warns of car-parking problems (see also *Look at this!*).

### Society information

The background of the Society and its groups.

- *Our Society.* Constitution, membership, current affairs, groups

- *Library.* Catalogues and news bulletins
- *Clock Tower.* History, the view from the top, calendar of open days
- *Links.* Archive resources, publishers, museums, HALH, HALS, LPSS and other societies
- *Contact us.* Email links to the officers and group organisers

### Publisher

- *Newsletter.* Newsletters from 2004 are available in PDF form.
- *Transactions.* Society Transactions from the 1840s to the 1960s are held in our library and are being made available on the website.
- *Publications.* The site publishes research papers by members and advertises books by members.

### Collector

We welcome contributions from everyone. There is advice on how to do it but if you would like help please ask me.

- *People & places.* The distinction between these short items and full Research papers is a bit fuzzy and some things appear in both places.
- *Living memories.* Memories of those who knew St Albans as it used to be.

### Search engine

At the top of the page there a magnifying glass and a box. This provides a search for pages containing a word or simple phrase

(there is no AND or OR function). It takes a couple of days before new pages appear in the search.

### The bottom line

Most people ignore the 'small print', but take a look.

- *Site map.* The site map shows what is in each category and can be useful in a search.
- *Accessibility.* A standard page intended for people with a visual handicap. I have no expertise in this area and would welcome suggestions.
- *Privacy.* Legal stuff.
- *Terms of use.* More legal stuff.

### eNews

Few people look at the website every day so I broadcast an email to warn of important additions.

- An enews does not give full details of an event but only draws attention to a webpage.
- An enews never has an attachment because it might be slow to download and some systems reject them for fear of viruses.
- There are 200+ addresses on the distribution list; since many represent a family we probably reach about two-thirds of members.
- To join, please email me.

Brian Bending

## ST. ALBANS FESTIVAL OF LIFE 2011

Our contribution for the 2011 St Albans Festival of Life in June was judged a great success by more than one member of the Society's Council.

This year we highlighted three new aspects of our activities. In the brief for the event displays had to be 'interactive' so a working party consisting of Helen Bishop, Pat Howe, Christine McDermott and myself put together a Town Centre Heritage Trail which proved to be popular as a hand-out. Of the 200 copies produced most were taken by members of the public. In addition we attracted people who expressed a

willingness to talk about their memories of living in St. Albans. A copy of the 1953 Pageant Programme cover was a particular draw and it will take some considerable time in going to see all those who volunteered to make a contribution to our Living Memories web-based project.

Finally we introduced a Summer Competition for young people from 4 to 18 years, challenging them to take a photograph on something to do with the history of St. Albans. The Treasurer agreed to an overall budget of £100 for prizes so that there will be

one £25 for each of the age related classes of from 4 to 8 years, 9 to 13 years and 14 to 18 years. So far over 1250 leaflets have been distributed to Libraries, Museums, the Tourist Information Office and the Clock Tower. The closing date for entries is Monday, 12 September 2011.

In addition to these three activities we distributed information about the Society: how much it costs to join and the sort of lectures that are given. We also sold copies of *The Pemberton Almshouses, St. Albans, 1650-1700.*

John Cox

## AN EVENING IN FLAMSTEAD

Our guide, Eric Edwards, who lives in the village, first explained that there were about 1,000 adults and 500 children resident there at the moment, a considerable fall in numbers from the 18th century. Eric had brought along a number of enlarged photos taken at the turn of the 20th century so we were able to compare these with the present layout.

One of these showed the village school, which still looks much the same even if its use has changed into the village hall. Walking along the High Street the vista was much as it has been for centuries except perhaps that the houses looked in better repair and more lovingly cared for. One of the pleasantest surprises was that Flamstead still functions as a close-knit community, everyone seems to know each other and the local shop/post office is used to announce local events, in this case the funeral of a resident.



*The Saunders Almshouses*

Many changes in building use have been sympathetically carried out, an old barn replaced by housing using the boarding effect in which the barn had been built. The pound yard where

stray animals were kept until a fine was paid is now an attractive small garden. There are still two functioning pubs out of eight but the others have been turned into housing.

The most exciting feature is the church with its ancient and much repaired tower which was built using materials to hand at the time including Roman tiles, flint and odd pieces of stone. In the interior the wall paintings rival those of St Albans Abbey. There are many other associations with St Albans; a member of the prominent

Flamstead family, Mr Thomas Sanders (sometimes Saunders) of Beechwood married Helen Sadlier in St Peter's Church on 11th December 1662. Helen's father, Mr Robert Sadlier, was a well-respected citizen of St Peter's. Their daughter Ann subsequently married a Seabright and lived at Beechwood. This same family also established the Saunders Almshouses, built in 1669, which were modelled on the Pemberton almshouses in St Peter's Street.

Two of the memorials in the church are of great interest, the marble tomb of the Saunders children dates from 1690. The child (a girl) in the foreground is the only one to survive.



*Flamstead Church and the Saunders and Fowke memorials*



The monument cost £1,500 to build. The other of Bartholomew Fowke is rather fine; at first we thought he might be in the Society's 17th century database but unfortunately although the Fowke family are present there is no Bartholomew.

All in all a very pleasant and interesting outing, thank you to Pat Howe and Eric Edwards.

*Irene Cowan*

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

My wife and I were pleased to exchange greetings recently with our eminent Honorary Member Professor Martin Biddle, on a cruise from the Bosphorus to Venice. He was in very good form, and regaled passengers with the history of the region, starting from the time when the Mediterranean was a landlocked basin, from which all the water had evaporated. A visit to Roman Albania was a first for most of us, and we wondered what was their connection with Alban.

Martin is still closely involved with St Albans, and is Consultant Archaeologist to the Abbey; he will shortly be starting a new excavation at Moor Park, Rickmansworth.

*Brian Moody*

## OPEN DAY AT KINGSBURY BARN

As part of Heritage Week, Kingsbury Barn will be open to visitors on the weekend of 10th and 11th September. There will be guided tours.

As a bonus, ahead of final landscaping of the Barn environs, an exploratory trench is being opened just before Heritage Week.

There may, or may not, be something to see in this. Visiting times are 10-12 a.m. and 2-4 p.m. both days.



## LIBRARY NOTES AND QUERIES

### Electronic information resources

In each issue of the Newsletter we list the new books, pamphlets and reports we have acquired since the last issue, and highlight the articles from journals we receive which we think might interest our members. These are all printed paper documents. We also have some digital resources. The latest of these is a database of public houses in St Albans, covering the years 1822-1914. It has been put together by Jon Mein, who has recently joined the Library team. Jon describes it thus: "During this period the number of pubs (on-licensed) grew from 41 in 1830 to 87 in 1887 – one for about every 40 adult males in the city – before heading into decline. Contained in a spreadsheet on the library's laptop, the database has 7500 entries tracing changes in tenancy for each pub, together with lease and freehold information. Sources used range from the most obvious such as census returns, newspapers, and trade directories to others such as poor rate assessments, vestry minutes and brewery archives. It is mostly complete for the Abbey parish part of the borough, but the absence of key records for St Peter's and St Michael's parishes mean the history of some pubs is incomplete".

Other electronic information resources acquired in recent years are listed below. All are on CD, and like Jon's database can be consulted in the Library. It would be helpful to have forewarning of an intended visit so we can ensure the laptop is available.

- o *Universal British Directory* 1791. Scanned images of the original five volumes.
- o *Names 1451-1500*, St Albans, Hertfordshire. Compiled by V.S. White.
- o Aerial photographs of St Albans. Undated, source unknown.
- o *Hertfordshire Quarter Sessions, 1588-1619*. Herts Family History Society, 2009. An index compiled from sources at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, containing almost 47,000 entries.
- o St Albans Cathedral: the Hudson

Library catalogue; the Muniment Room catalogue (main); recent architects' plans; and engravings.

- o Hertfordshire Family History Society: Directory of members' interests. February 2010.

### Recent enquiries

Enquiries we have dealt with in the last few weeks have concerned the origin of some properties in Abbey Mill Lane; the whereabouts of Francis Bacon's burial; Henry Hilliard and the Bluecoat School; Romano-British inscriptions; The St Albans Steeplechase; Mogg Bowen and St Albans School; Alan Pickles' papers; and Verulam House's role as a maternity hospital from 1939.

### Books recently added to stock

*Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre, St Albans, Hertfordshire: archaeological excavation report*. Salisbury, Wessex Archaeology, 2010. 32pp, 2009. Plans, diagrams, photos.

*The monumental brasses of Hertfordshire*, by William Lack, H Martin Stuchfield and Philip Whitmore. Stratford St Mary, Suffolk, The County Series, 2009. 758pp, illus. Lists existing brasses, indents and lost brasses, with illustrations of all figure-brasses pre-dating 1700.

*An historical atlas of Hertfordshire*, edited by David Short. Introduction by Nigel Goose. Hatfield, Hertfordshire Publication, 2011. 204pp, maps, illus, bibliog., index. Contains 82 maps on a variety of topics, with descriptive notes on each topic.

*Fifty golden gardening years*, by Roger Aylett. Wisbech, Burall Floraprint, for Aylett Nurseries, 2005. 215pp, photos. An autobiography and history of the nursery business.

*Childwickbury*, by Christine Aitken. The Author, 2011. 212pp, illus, maps, bibliog., index. Traces the history of the estate, its owners, and those who lived and worked on it, from medieval times to the present day.

### Recent journal articles

In *Bricket Wood Society Newsletter*, June 2011. Pp 2-3. Congregational worship in Bricket Wood. A brief chronology, based on an undated pamphlet covering the years 1884 to 1944, now in the Bricket Wood Society archive. A photograph of the original chapel c. 1820 is included.

In *Herts Past and Present*, Spring 2011. Pp 3-11. The grain crisis of the 1630's and malting in Hertfordshire, by Alan Thomson. A succession of poor harvests, and increasing demand from a growing population created a crisis in the grain market. One consequence was a ban on malting barley, leading to unemployment and acute poverty.

Pp12-17 *The Radcliffes in the Levant: an examination of the Delmé-Radcliffe business papers, (1706-1767)*, by David Warden. Ralph Radcliffe founded a London merchant house trading in the Middle East. The business papers are held at Herts Archives and Local studies.

Pp18-27 *Admiral Henry Killigrew: politics, marriage and family life*, by Gerard McSweeney. Concerns the Admiral's retirement to St Albans and his political intrigues. His letters, and those of his wife, before and after marriage, provide a sketch of contemporary life.

Pp 28-30 *Hertfordshire rail excursions in the 19th century*, by Nigel Agar. From the middle of the century railway companies encouraged affordable tourism, and advertised regular excursions.

### Journals received

*British Archaeology* July/August 2011

*Current Archaeology* June, July and August 2011

*Hendon and District Archaeological Society Newsletter* May, June and July 2011

*Hertfordshire People* June 2011

*History Today* May, June and July 2011

*London Archaeologist* Summer 2011

*Research News (English Heritage)* Spring 2010

### THE LIBRARY TEAM

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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 Judges' Robing Room at the Old Town Hall. Access is via the Tourist Information Office.

## BOOK REVIEW: CHILDWICKBURY

Researched, written and published by Christine Aitken (a member of the Arc & Arc and the Hertfordshire Association for Local History). 2011. £40.00. ISBN 978-0-9567930-0-3.

Christine Aitken was one of the original members of the 19th century Research Group established by Judy Faraday three years ago, and I remember her talking about her researches into the history of Childwick, the estate situated between St. Albans and Harpenden.

Christine's book tells the story of this estate and its occupants from before the Norman Conquest up to the present day. The cover shows the Lodge on the Harpenden Road.

From 1948 to 1978, Christine and her family lived at Cheapside Farm, where her father was farm manager. This was the only major land purchase the Joel family made between 1906 and 1978. It was run as a commercial enterprise separately from the rest of the estate and was expected to be profitable. In the 1978 sale the entire farm was purchased by the Luton Hoo estate, which continued to farm

there until the 1990s. Part of the land has been used to create Woollams, the sporting facilities of St. Albans School and the Old Albanians Rugby Football Club.

The book gives a history of the various owners of the estate, which was originally part of St. Albans Abbey until its dissolution in 1539. From then until 1978 it remained a private estate: only seven different owners were in possession. These included the Lomax family (1666-1854) the Toulmins' (1854-83) John Blundell Maple (1886-1906) and Jack B. Joel, diamond and gold magnate, and later his son, Harry 'Jim' Joel.

When Jim Joel sold much of the estate in 1978, the Mansion was purchased by Stanley Kubrick, the film director. 'Jim' Joel retained Childwick Manor, the Childwick Stud and land. After his death in 1992, the Stud was purchased by a

company headed by the Marquesa de Moratalis, in whose hands it remains.

There is also information on the Church of St. Mary (in St. Michael's Parish); Childwick Green School; the Hawkswick Estate; the One Bell public house; and the Childwick Club. Christine has been thorough and has been helped enormously by many people including access to the Childwick Trust's papers. I particularly like her use of maps, plans and historical photographs. From 1881 to 1885, Sir George Clausen, RA, lived on the estate and used his time in painting the 'Hertfordshire peasant'.

Using her family background, she has used her research skills to tell its story in considerable detail, including an analysis of every Census, 1851-1901 and the stories of young men who died in both World Wars. An extensive index helps the reader enormously.

*John G.E. Cox*

## HALH

I continue to represent the 'Arc & Arc' on the Executive Committee of HALH, the Hertfordshire Association for Local History, and remain Hon. Secretary. In the past year there have been three successful events: the AGM, held this year in May saw the long-awaited *An Historical Atlas of Hertfordshire*, edited by David Short with an introduction by Professor Nigel Goose. The AGM was brief and the only change was the election of a new Hon. Treasurer, Chris Brimblecombe. The 2nd Lionel Munby Memorial Lecture by Professor Mark Bailey of the University of East Anglia on The Black Death in South East England, was well received and attracted a number of questions.

This Autumn, the 32nd Local History Symposium is being held on the topic of 'Hertfordshire's Historic Gardens' and is being organised by Hertfordshire Gardens Trust, for HALH at Abbot's Hill School, Hemel Hempstead HP3 8RP on Saturday, 12th November 2011.

*John G.E. Cox*

## AN HISTORICAL ATLAS OF HERTFORDSHIRE

edited by David Short, 2011, Hertfordshire Publications. Price £25. ISBN 978-0-9542189-6-6.

Contributions are arranged by subject, with an introductory section which includes introductory essays and maps on the geology, soils, landscape and Hertfordshire's origins, each written by an appropriate local expert. Further sections cover Boundaries, Buildings, Communication Routes, Demography, Early Settlements, Industries and Work, the Landscape, Religion and Religious Buildings, Social Issues, Towns and Villages and finally War and Civil unrest.

There were 50 individual contributors, all expert in their field of activity. Each contribution includes a map, produced with assistance of Stewart Bryant and the Historic Environment Unit of Hertfordshire County Council, and John Elvy of the University of Hertfordshire's Geography Department. However, the editor produced the final versions of the maps.

I well remember John Donovan who was, until shortly before he died, Hon. Secretary HALH enthuse on 'Milestones' and of how he had located two on the Gorhambury Estate (which as some will know I had an association as part-time archivist for some time). Many of the contributors were present at the book launch. Alas, four of the contributors died before the Atlas's publication: Peter Bigmore (Ancient Woodland and Parliamentary Enclosures), John Donovan (see above), Adrian Gibson (Timber Buildings; Country Houses) and Philip Plumb (Medieval Roads and Bridges; Turnpike Roads; Coaching Routes, Post Roads, and Inns; Lock-ups, Cages and Prisons).

The book is dedicated to Lionel and Diana Munby 'who have inspired generations of local historians'.

This is a fantastic resource, so well produced and published by the University of Hertfordshire Press in full colour.

*John G.E. Cox*

# LECTURE PROGRAMME 2011-12

**Tuesday 13th September 2011**

**Public Statements and Private Lives: British Church Monuments through the Ages**

*Jane Kelsall*

This lecture will consider the origin of church monuments and the changes in our attitudes to the posture of effigies after the Reformation. This is not a gloomy lecture about death since monuments were usually erected during the lifetime of the person commemorated, so we see them as they wished us to see them. Often there is a big gap between appearance and reality, and that is always fun to examine.

Jane Kelsall, one of our members, was born in St Albans and educated at Lyndale, The Girls Grammar School and St Albans Art School. She was employed at Barclays Bank and later obtained a degree in English and History. Jane has just retired from the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts (NADFAS) after 25 years of lecturing to them, the National Trust (NT) and others. She has been an Abbey Guide for 34 years.

**Tuesday 20th September 2011**

**Roman London**

*Robin Densem*

Robin Densem intends to describe the Roman City of London, including material on siting, public buildings, religious activity, and the development of the settlement. The important features that had fixed the site of Roman London ensured its reuse in late Saxon times and its continuous history as the City of London ever since.

He has been a practising archaeologist since 1972, with a break to gain an undergraduate degree in archaeology from University College London in 1973-6. He has taught a course on the history of London, including Roman London, to an evening class at Birkbeck College for the last seven years and before that he worked for the Museum of London Archaeology Service and its predecessor bodies in London, from 1976.

**Friday 30th September 2011**

**The Fields Beneath: The History of One London Village**

*Gillian Tindall*

This talk is based on Gillian's book of the same title, first published over thirty years ago and in several different editions since, and now (2011) out in a brand new edition with an extra chapter bringing it up to date. She takes the old St Pancras parish, now part of Camden, and show how, from the Domesday Book onwards, this one-time country village has exemplified the story of many villages, not only all over England but in many other parts of the world too, that have gradually been swallowed up by great cities. Rivers, pack-horse routes, roads, great houses, inns, coaches, tea-gardens, flowery suburban idylls, railways and grimy inner-city streets all play their part.

In her long and varied career as a writer, Gillian Tindall has made a name for herself first as a novelist (Somerset Maugham Award winner), as a journalist for many years (*Guardian*, *Evening Standard*, *Times*), as a biographer and, increasingly, as a specialist in micro-history, the study of individual places or small groups of people that represent much wider historical truths. In addition to *The Fields Beneath*, two of her best known works are *Celestine, Voices from a French Village* (1995) and *The House by the Thames* (2006).

**Friday Lectures start at 7.45pm at St Albans School, Abbey Gateway, St. Albans AL3 4HB.**

**Please note this new venue**

**Tuesday Lectures start at 8.00pm at St Albans School, Abbey Gateway, St Albans**

Lectures are open to all members of the Society. Non-members may attend two meetings as guests.

**Tuesday 11th October 2011**

**Engines of War**

*Chris Wolmar*

The railways have often been celebrated for being responsible for the spread of economic development and industrialisation.

However, they have a darker side. In this lecture, Christian Wolmar explains how railways were responsible for the creation of mass scale warfare. By examining major conflicts between the Crimean and Korean wars, he argues that it was the advent of railways which made wars longer and bloodier. His talk will be illustrated.

Christian Wolmar is a writer and broadcaster specialising in transport. After graduating from Warwick University in 1971 he has spent nearly all of his working life as a journalist, and was at *The Independent* from 1989 to 1997, mostly as transport correspondent. Although he mainly concentrates on transport matters, he covers other social policy issues and has written on a wide range of subjects ranging from cricket to the Private Finance Initiative.

Christian has become one of the UK's leading commentators on transport matters and has won several awards for his work. He broadcasts frequently on radio and TV and is a regular pundit on the national news bulletins of terrestrial channels and Sky, as well as having appeared on virtually every radio news programme from *World at One* and the *World Tonight* to Radio One's *NewsBeat* and LBC. He has made several radio documentaries, including a recent Radio 4 programme on the Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham, 20 years after the riot.

**Tuesday 18th October 2011**

**Monastic Life in 13th Century St Albans - Another Look at Matthew Paris**

*Gill Harvey*

The talk will aim to present a picture of how St Albans Abbey functioned in the 13th Century, when it was approaching its heyday, drawing largely on the Great Chronicle (*Chronica Maiora*) of Matthew Paris, one of the foremost medieval historians who was a monk at the Abbey. Other sources will also be quoted, to hopefully give a picture of life in England's foremost Benedictine Abbey.

Gillian Harvey spent her working life as a librarian, and, (by way of a rest!) was for 25 years Hon. Librarian of the Surrey Archaeological Society, in Guildford! She is the author of two books on Surrey villages. For the past five and a half years she has lived in St Albans, and for most of this time has been a member of the Arc & Arc library team. Gillian is thoroughly enjoying getting to grips with local history in a new area.

**Friday 28 October 2011**

**The Verneys: A True Story of Love, War and Madness in Seventeenth-Century England**

*Adrian Tinniswood*

The 17th-century Verneys were a wonderful family: pioneers and pirates, soldiers and traders and crooks. Some were saintly, some were selfish; most were both. They were flawed, kind, scared by events beyond their control and eager to do the right thing as long as it didn't jeopardise their own chances of happiness. Above all, the Verneys remind us that no life is ordinary. And some lives are less ordinary than others.

Adrian Tinniswood is a native of Derby in the UK. Born in 1954,

he has combined work with heritage institutions such as the National Trust and the Heritage Lottery Fund with lecturing for English and American universities, including Bristol, Oxford, Nebraska-Lincoln and UC Berkeley. He was a member of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Committee for the South West from 2001 to 2010, and Chair from 2004 to 2010. He is the author of 14 books on architectural and social history and is known as an author, lecturer and broadcaster in Britain and America. *The Verneys* was shortlisted for the BBC4 Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction. Adrian lives in a quiet village outside Bath with his partner Helen and a comfort of cats.

**Tuesday 8th November 2011**

**The Cartoon Century: Modern Britain through the Eyes of its Cartoonists**

*Dr Tim Benson*

This lecture will look at the history of the political cartoon from the turn of the last century to the present day. It will be illustrated with a selection of cartoons which describe the story of those years, including cartoons which made their own history and a number which were refused publication because they either didn't mirror public sentiment or were against the wishes of the newspaper's proprietor.

Dr Tim Benson is the founder of the Political Cartoon Society and an authority on British political cartoon art. He has written numerous biographies of British cartoonists such as on Low, Illingworth, Strube and Butterworth. He has also organised many exhibitions including one on David Low at the Palace of Westminster in 2002. His present project is a history of the Cold War which will be published in November 2011.

**Tuesday 15th November 2011**

**St Albans' European Links and Its Twin Towns**

*Kate Morris*

This lecture will provide an overview of St Albans' five formal twinning arrangements. Town twinning is now quite an old idea – some might say an outmoded one, since travel is now so easy. But close relationships formed in this way, between towns which have something in common, still survive and promote cooperative working in many areas. Whilst local government does not have an international remit, the Government does positively encourage international links at local level to further education, international relations, the establishment of 'best practice' and in some cases trade. It supports through the Local Government International Bureau, and such links are also encouraged by the European Union. St Albans has five twin towns with a multitude of cultural, sporting and practical links, which have furthered peaceful cooperation since 1957.

Kate Morris, one of our members, is a trained linguist and university librarian. Living in St Albans since 1972, she now runs an English language service, offering tuition and cultural induction for foreign speaking professional people. Kate has served 12 years on the St Albans District Council, with roles in planning and heritage and one year as Mayor. She joined the committee which supported the twinning with Worms, our German twin town, charring it for five years. She also got to know the other St Albans twins, both on family exchanges and officially, on Council delegations. She has written on the history of St Albans European connections for *Herts Past and Present*, and put together an exhibition illustrating those links.

**Friday 25th November 2011**

**Queen Victoria: An Affectionate Portrait**

*Barbara Askew*

Queen Victoria was the longest reigning monarch in Britain's history and gave her name to its greatest age. She ruled over the largest empire the world has ever known and became a legend in her own lifetime. She was a prolific letter-writer and left her many children and grandchildren in no doubt as to her strong opinions. This affectionate portrait will bring to life the

character, likes and dislikes of our most remarkable queen.

Barbara Askew has a degree in History and a Diploma in Education. She has been the Windsor Castle Site Liaison Representative for the Guild of Registered Tourist Guides since 1990 and is the acknowledged expert among Blue Badge Guides on Windsor and Royalty.

**Tuesday 6th December 2011**

**Pictures in the Parlour: the Story of the Magic**

**Lantern**

*Kevin Varty*

**Tuesday 10th January 2012**

**St Albans Down Under**

*Dr Tony Crilly*

**Tuesday 17th January 2012**

**The Stones of London**

*Leo Hollis*

**Friday 27th January 2012**

**Printing and Publishing in St Albans before 1900: an Historical Excursion**

*Donald Munro*

**Tuesday 7th February 2012**

**An Engineer at War - The Falklands 1982**

*Roderick Douglas*

**Tuesday 14th February**

**Sir Christopher Wren**

*John and Jo Brewster*

**Friday 24th February 2012**

**St Pancras - Europe's Destination Station**

*Alastair Lansley CBE*

**Tuesday 6th March 2012**

**Banging the Gong for Britain - J Arthur Rank and Wartime Cinema**

*Stephen Barnard*

**Tuesday 13th March 2012**

**Royston: A 13th Century Planned Town**

*Douglas Plowman*

**Tuesday 20th March 2012**

**Royal Heraldry in St Albans Abbey**

*Stuart Whitefoot*

**Friday 30th March 2012**

**The Restoration of Alexandra Palace after the 1980 Fire**

*Richard Loren*

**Tuesday 17th April 2012**

**Kingsbury Barn**

*Roger Miles*

**Friday 27th April 2012**

**The Story of Adult Education: Hertfordshire in Context 1918-1939**

*Dr Mark Freeman*

**Tuesday 8th May 2012**

**Eleanor of Castile - She of the Crosses**

*Mollie Kennedy*

**Tuesday 15th May 2012**

**Department Stores**

*Claire Masset*

**Friday 25th May 2012**

**Time in St Albans and St Albans in Time**

*Prof. Michael Cooper*