



St Albans and Hertfordshire ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

'Events dear friends, Events'

Since December the Society has experienced an unusual concentration of events and issues which have kept the SAHAAS Council and Officers particularly busy. The upside of this has been a greater public profile for the Society, which must be to our general benefit. The downside, however, as this has run concurrently with a series of grievous losses and anxieties regarding the health of leading members, has been a straining of (in the modern parlance) Human Resources - of which more later. It has meant that several spring initiatives are less advanced than we might have hoped, but as the excitements of some of the more immediate events recede, we can look forward hopefully to a more ordered progress over the coming months.

Past-Presidents' Passings

We have all been deeply saddened by the losses in quick succession of two distinguished Past-Presidents of the Society. David Dean died only days before the EGM at which we intended to approve his being awarded Honorary Membership of the Society. Michael Cooper's deteriorating health and physical mishaps frustrated his hopes of leading our "Look St Albans" presence, and the unexpected suddenness of his death deprived us of his experienced head in the recent flurry of Museum issues.

Both these men in quite different ways made major contributions to the life of our Society. David Dean became steeped in

St Albans and its history, doing valuable work in preserving and listing historical materials, creating a considerable photographic record for the town, and in encouraging co-operative projects. Michael Cooper brought familiarity with digital processes from his distinguished surveying career to help push the Arc & Arc towards developing its own digital projects. A committed proponent of a New Museum for St Albans, Mike also focused our awareness of conservation and planning issues, making effective common cause with other local groups. He was also a notable scholar; a prime mover in the revival of interest in the 17th century polymath physicist Robert Hooke. Full appreciations are given in the obituary notices on pages 3 and 4.

It is a matter of personal regret that as a relative late-comer to the Society I did not get to know either of them better. David was a regular visitor to the Library when I first joined the team. A great pleasure of working with Mike in his later months was finding that we had a number of 17th century interests in common. Anticipation of future conversations is sadly nipped in the bud.

We do hope to welcome both Ann and Jennifer at many of our future lectures and events.

President's activities

The two main preoccupations over the past three months



Donald Munro

have been the *Look! St Albans* design codes exercise and MOSTA (Museum of St Albans) issues. In both these areas Mike Cooper was a prime initiator and our leader, but circumstances led to this novice's rapid immersion in the complexities of design codes and the labyrinthine intricacies of the Museums situation in St Albans. Both these exercises have been in some respects gruelling but I believe very worthwhile. Full reports are given on pages 4-5 and 8 below.

A distinct and pleasurable benefit has been the accelerated introduction these activities have given me to a very wide range of people and groups, "shakers and movers" in St Albans. The very sociable Clockateers party in early March was also very helpful in this respect.

The House Style Committee has spent some considerable time seeking a more contemporary logo for the Society. A new one has been agreed which is thought to be more impactful, and the real benefit will be seen in the forthcoming redesigned recruitment and publicity materials. It is also thought to be more suitable for use on future publications. Our thanks go to

PRESIDENT'S REPORT continued

Alison Baugh for her patience through our many mind changes.

Splendid Lectures

One highlight of the recent lecture programme was architect Alastair Lansley's talk *St Pancras – Europe's Destination Station*; a quite remarkable project, very engagingly presented. We all walk through St Pancras now with different eyes. In another outstanding paper Mark Freeman, author of the recent major study of St Albans (2008), gave an excellent thoroughly engrossing and enlightening talk on the development of Adult Education with particular reference to Hertfordshire. This was unfortunately very poorly attended. Please do not be put off attending when warnings about parking problems are circulated – as it happens they were not severe on that evening.

This was a first class paper by a professional historian and deserved a much larger audience.



Whilst on lectures let me draw your attention to a forthcoming paper on 14 May at 7.30 in the cathedral by Dr Busso Diekamp : *Peter Schöffner the younger, printer of the Tyndale Bible*, which forms part of the St Albans Worms Partnership programme.

Alastair Lansley CBE with the President
Donald Munro [Frank Iddiols]

Human Resources

As indicated already, this has been a problematic time for Officers and Council. We have of course lost Michael Cooper from Council. Just to complicate matters, our Web-Keeper Brian Bending has been seriously ill, and is on a slow road to full recovery. Both Council and a range of our activities are in need of reinforcement.

The main areas in which we need additional help are:-

- publications (editing, desktop-publishing, costing and marketing) and
- In IT : hardware expertise and database work
- we also could do with a book cataloguer in the Library, as I am finding it difficult to continue that whilst Presidential business remains at the level it has become.

Can I ask anyone who might be interested in helping us in any of these areas - in any way – please do get in touch with myself or Bryan Hanlon, Secretary. **We really do need this extra help – thank you.**

Donald Munro
President

SAHAAS FEATURE - THE *HERTS* ADVERTISER

Volunteer Authors Needed

The Society has been asked by the *Herts Advertiser* to produce a monthly series of articles - about 600 words, perhaps with an illustration, on subjects of local historical interest.

We are looking to assemble a team of 12 people prepared to do this once a year, so that it need not be too great a burden on anyone. The topic(s) would be of your own choosing, subject to some control to prevent duplication, and it would be a valuable publicity exercise for the Society.

Would anyone interested in being part of such a team please contact Gill Harvey on 01727-853415 or richardyo@aol.com

Gill Harvey
Library Representative

PUBLICATIONS: PRACTICAL HELP NEEDED

The Publications Committee is planning a series of short publications on *St Albans People and Places* and would like to hear from anyone with desktop publishing experience who can put text and pictures into a publishable format. The committee would also like to hear from anyone with expertise in costing items for printing and in marketing such materials locally.

If anyone thinks they can help us in this way please contact Donald Munro chair@stalbanhistory.org

Thank you.

PAST PRESIDENTS—MICHAEL COOPER



Professor Michael Cooper

Michael Cooper, Emeritus Professor of Engineering Surveying at City University, and immediate Past-President of the Arc & Arc, died on the 14th of March after a short illness. The most distinguished of our Presidents for some years, Mike was a deeply respected and much loved member of the Society.

Born in Norfolk in 1935, and educated at Norwich and at Bristol University where he read Physics, Mike went on to train as a surveyor at the Royal School of Military Survey at Newbury, Berks. It was at Newbury that he met and later married his wife, Jennifer. Initially working in Nigeria, he moved back to England where in 1975 he secured a post of Lecturer, at City University, London. He, Jennifer and their sons, Nicholas and Jonathan, came to live in Lancaster Road, St. Albans.

At City University, Mike specialised in surveying applications of photogrammetry, taking the techniques well beyond their original wartime aerial reconnaissance functions, and developing for him an international reputation in surveying circles. This included its use as an archaeological aid, most notably in the photogrammetric investigation of the shrine of St Alban before its restoration in the early 1990s, and later his similar investigation of the Tomb of Christ in Jerusalem. Both of these projects were done by Mike, now Professor, Cooper at the request of Professor Martin Biddle who led both teams. The findings provided vital evidence for the reconstructions.

Late in his career, and having taken early retirement, Mike developed a deep interest in the neglected Robert Hooke, polymath physicist and collaborator of Sir Christopher Wren. This resulted in a PhD for Mike and several publications, notably *"A More Beautiful City : Robert Hooke and the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire"* (2003). According to Prof. Michael Hunter of Birkbeck College, Mike was the driving force behind the re-establishment of Hooke's reputation alongside that of Wren and Newton. These studies gave him a more general interest in history, and that in turn led him towards SAHAAS and his so substantial contribution to the Society and St Albans thereafter.

Elected in 2008 without previous Council experience, Mike proved an exemplary President, embracing his position whole-heartedly from a standing start, and quickly making himself familiar with the workings of the Society and the various Groups.

He was instrumental in bringing the Society into the digital age, opening our eyes to what might now be possible, and organised the project to

digitise the 1849-1961 *Transactions*. He leaves us with a digital platform (ie the web site) that allows us to publish research, manage intra-society communications and promote ourselves to the outside world in an easy and efficient way. Compared with many of the Arc & Arc's peers we are in advance of what they offer their members.

Mike was also determined that the Society should be better known in the City. Partly in pursuit of this he became a leading campaigner for a new Museum for St Albans, and greatly developed the Society's involvement and co-operation with other bodies in planning issues, especially where heritage was involved. A particular coup was his last minute intervention which prevented the sale of the MoSTA garden. He did a prodigious amount of work in coping with and 'translating' the City Council's deliberations and voluminous documentation for the benefit of Arc & Arc colleagues.

Tony Cooper admirably sums up the views of so many members about Mike's impact on the Society:

"My perspective on Mike is very much from the sideline, but ... he re-energized SAHAAS as a serious organisation. He raised the Arc and Arc's sights by his interest in its scholarly past, digitising the *Transactions*; supporting high standards for publication of papers in *Herts Archaeology and History*; by example with his own research on Francis Bacon and Robert Hooke; and in fostering publication of research conducted by its members. More widely, he was able to secure the Arc and Arc's engagement with other organisations concerned with the history of the City and its built environment and to campaign for better provision of services. By doing so he raised the local profile of the Society from near invisibility to prominence."

Michael Cooper's three years as President gave the Society momentum into the 21st century. The Society's profile has been undoubtedly greatly enhanced as a result of his quiet but energetic leadership.

As well as all his achievements however, the Arc & Arc remembers the man - his courtesy, his friendliness, his sense of humour, his concern and consideration for people. It was a great pleasure and a privilege to know and work with him.

Donald Munro

President

With input from Council, et al.

"Michael Cooper's three years as President gave the Society momentum into the 21st century"

PAST PRESIDENTS—DAVID DEAN

David was born in London, in 1937, and completed his education there, culminating in the award of a degree in Electrical Engineering from Northampton College, London University. He also met Ann, a student from another college, and they were married in 1962, after his National service in Kenya, which no doubt helped to enhance his sunny disposition.

Their first married home was in London, near to David's research work at the Post Office Research Station in Dollis Hill. Fortunately for us, they decided to move to St Albans in 1965, and they lost no time in developing their interest in the history of St Albans. David was able to transfer to the intriguing Police Scientific Development Branch, Sandridge, where his skills in communications technology and photography were invaluable to their forensic research, and in due course also to the Arc and Arc.

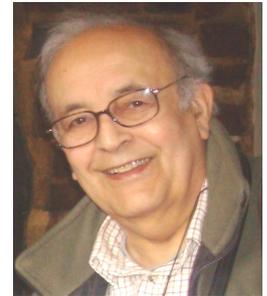
David soon joined our Society, and before long he was involved in a very different kind of research, leading a working group who were researching the history of St Albans in 1820, and were working on a detailed map to illustrate it all. Needless to say, Ann by then had also become an important member of the Society. When *"St Albans – the Town"* was pro-

duced in 1982, the British Association of Local History gave it their accolade as "the best local Society publication of the year". Another useful book was published in 1990: *"St Albans – the People"*, and no doubt all keen local historians will have a well-thumbed copy of both.

This is just an example of David's many and varied activities on behalf of the Society, which continued until very recently, and it would be quite impossible to describe them all here. The records show that he was Chairman of the Local History Group for four years, and he served twice as President of the Society, totalling another four years. He was also Vice-Chairman of the Herts Association for Local History, and a Blue Badge tour guide for St Albans. His illustrated talks were always a delight, and he was forever ready to help others who did not have his skills and knowledge.

We will long remember a very cheerful and talented friend, and we know that Ann and family will also have many happy memories.

Brian Moody



David Dean

**"the best local Society
publication of the year
[1982]"**

LOOK! ST ALBANS

Seeking design standards for St Albans developments

As announced in the last Newsletter, this very interesting but labour intensive community planning initiative took place in February, organised by a broadly based St Albans City Centre Steering Group in conjunction with the Prince's Foundation for Building Community. Through a series of public meetings and workshops on 27-29 February, steps were taken towards setting design code parameters for planning in the centre of St Albans. The Prince's Foundation report on the exercise, which includes contributions from SAHAAS and other local bodies, will be presented in later May or early June.

Michael Cooper was an early enthusiast for this exercise, the opportunity for which became apparent only in the later months of 2011. He greatly encouraged setting up the Steering Group which included SAHAAS, the Civic Society, the Cathedral, the Chamber of Commerce, St Albans Retail Forum, Hertfordshire Association of Architects, several St Albans Residents Associations, and councillors and staff

from the SADC. The Group's conduit to the Prince's Foundation was/is the energetic Vanessa Gregory acting through the Civic Society. A great debt of gratitude is due to Vanessa, who is also a member of SAHAAS for getting and keeping the show on the road. The agreement was that St Albans groups organised and encouraged participation, whilst the Prince's Foundation would give advice, provide specialist personnel, and would produce an illustrative Design Codes document setting principles and parameters for future development in the city centre, as informed by local participation.

Less than three weeks before the events, the Prince's Foundation asked the Arc and Arc to do a 15 minute PowerPoint presentation for the first open meeting and the first workshop telling *"... us all more about how St Albans has developed in urban settlement terms - important growth phases, proud moments manifested in buildings and places, etc."*

LOOK! ST ALBANS continued

Mike Cooper was at this time unable to get about much, but suggested that we involve Dr Mark Freeman who flew down from Glasgow University a couple of times for consultation and one of the workshops. The Society's presentation was put together by Mark Freeman, Jon Mein and Donald Munro.

Mark prepared the substance of the historical account, whilst Jon Mein manipulated the photographs and helped focus the texts. The closing section on "Safeguarding our heritage" resulted from conversations between Mike Cooper, Kate Harwood and Donald Munro. In this SAHAAS proposed as fundamental to the future vitality of St Albans the inclusion of a landmark cultural hub, including a Museum, Library and Garden, that would attract visitors both local and far-flung. The post-Roman museum should celebrate St Albans' historical and remarkable scientific heritage. An inspirational theme for a Museum/Garden complex and composite public sculpture might be *Bacon, Botany, Clocks & Cosmology* [Wallingford's clock; Francis Bacon – so important for the natural sciences; numerous pioneer botanical and horticultural enterprises (Sanders Orchids, Heath & Heather, Ryder, Rose Society, etc.); Mercer chronometers; and of course Steven Hawking, etc.]. Donald delivered the presentation at the Public meeting on 27 February, and Mark gave it at the first workshop the following morning. It was very well received and a version of it will be included in Prince's Foundation documentation. John Bethell also allowed us to run separately a show of his fine slides of St Albans splendid surviving domestic architectural fabric.

The workshops on Tuesday 28th and Wednesday 29th were brainstorming exercises, frequently intense, and the "Look! St Albans!" events rounded off with another public meeting on the Wednesday evening.

As President of the Arc & Arc, I found the *Look! St Albans!* exercise gruelling but very worthwhile with several encouraging outcomes.

1. The main benefit for the city is that we are on our way to having design guidelines for future development in the city centre, where there were none before. This is very important given the need to be mindful of the historic fabric of the town.

2. The second encouraging feature is the way so many bodies in St Albans came and worked together in the Steering Group. Although there were many disparate voices within the groups, the outcome will have a legitimate community voice that speaks for more than any particular interest. It gives the SADC a good sense of what the people of St Albans want for their city.

3. The third heartening feature is the constructive involvement in and welcoming attitude towards the design codes exercise shown by the SADC Representatives, particularly the Planning officers.

That said, the "Look!" design codes will not be prescriptive, and much more work will have to be done by the Council to flesh them out in an official policy document. We were assured, however, that they will take them very seriously.

The Steering Group is still in contact with The Prince's Foundation who will produce the finished "Look!" design codes guidelines document later this month. The Group will continue to talk to and work with the Prince's Foundation and SADC as the latter put flesh on official policy documents. That involvement should continue as future development plans come forward.

The Prince's Foundation have been very committed to the St Albans exercise seeing it as a highly innovative exercise in the approach to local planning in the 21st century - something which can be a pointer for other places. This exercise bringing council and local groups together to start the process of finding guidelines for future development in ways acceptable to the local community is a step towards establishing more coherent policies. But it is only a start of a long process.

Donald Munro

President

WORKSHOP—THANK YOU! Reading 17th Century Handwriting

One member of the Group, Jane Harris, ran a workshop on reading 17th century handwriting on Tuesday, 24th April. Six students and four experienced transcribers from our Group met together in the Fleetville Community Centre.

Jane took us through the alphabet, provided handouts and then set us a task of reading a probate document.

She was an excellent teacher and the session provided a useful introduction to transcription techniques. Above all it was a convivial and enjoyable morning.

Thank you Jane.

Pat Howe

LIBRARY NOTES AND QUERIES

Library News

Our journals index, including the Transactions, Herts Archaeology and a range of our other local journals - Alban Link, Herts Past and Present etc. is now on the website. Do have a look and tell us what you think – positive or negative comments welcome!

We also have a record of the holdings of the Abbey Muniment Room on our website – this is the first stage in what will be quite a long process – to give our members, and the world at large, a much clearer idea of the material on St Albans available in St Albans. Thanks are due to Jon Mein whose energy and enthusiasm have been largely responsible for making this happen.

Plans for uploading details of our extensive pamphlet files onto the library database are taking shape, as is our listing of possible sources for local research.

The *Herts Advertiser* has expressed an interest in having a monthly series of articles—500-600 words, plus a picture if possible on topics of local interest (see Page 2). If anyone else would like to join us, please let me, Gill Harvey know Rrichardyo@aol.com.

A Selection of New Books and other items in the Library

Collection of slides of St Albans School, Hillside Road,

St Peters Road, Clifton Street, Portland Street, Spicer Street, Verulam Road, Hazlemere Road, Lower Dagnall Street, Victoria Street,,Fishpool Street.

St Albans Own East End Vol.1 Outsiders, by Mike Neighbour.
Lord Grimthorpe and Other Dragons, the career of Walter Lawrance by Gillian Harvey.

An index of Gravestones and Memorial Slabs in the Abbey Church of St Alban, from inscriptions. Compiled by Wilton Hall – 1898, and Kelly Galpin – 1995.

The Village Baker (Harpenden) Geoff Ackroyd.

V Pritchard – English Medieval Graffiti Cambridge University Press 1967 (a number of St Albans examples)

From the Valleys to Verulamium memoirs of a soldier's life George and Corrie Dunn. History Press.2011.

A Selection of Journal Articles in the Library

Local Historian Feb 2012. Changing Fashions in Monumental Inscriptions by John G Hunter. Not particularly local, but an interesting article which explores the development of inscriptions on funerary monuments from the Tudor period to the early Industrial age.

Local History News. Winter 2012. Rededicating the Victoria County History by Elizabeth Williamson pp 9-10. The VCH and the Jubilee.

Current Archaeology April 2012. In Defence of Museums by Duncan Brown. pp 48-49. A fairly robust defence of museum curatorial values, as opposed to business enterprises,perhaps particularly relevant in St Albans at the moment.

Herts Past and Present Spring 2012. p.23. Response from John Savage to the articles about the" Abbey Flier" in the Sept 2011 issue.

Cartage in Jacobean Hertfordshire, the king's prerogative or an unfair tax? By Alan Thomson pp 16-22. Here we learn of one of the reasons for the County's sympathies for the Parliamentary side during the Civil Wars.

British Archaeology May/June 2012. Revealing the Full, Story of St Paul's Cathedral by John Schofield pp 18-23. St Pauls was already an exceptional place long before Wren's masterpiece. The Cathedral's archaeologist has been exploring. Once again not Hertfordshire but very interesting.

English Heritage Research News. Spring 2012. Luton Hatting Industry by Katie Carmichael and David McOmish.pp 28-30. An historic area assessment of Plaiters' Lea, Luton has placed the surviving buildings of the hatmaking industry at the heart of regeneration plans in the town centre.

Finally – another example of cooperation with the Abbey – we have digitised a very fine map from the Muniment Room of the Abbey parish in 1818. We are very grateful to have it in our collection, and I will leave it to Jon to tell you more about it .

[See p. 10]

Gill Harvey

Library Representative

THE LIBRARY TEAM

Gill Harvey 01727-853415

Anne Wares 01727-860705.

Donald Munro 01727-760808

Jon Mein 01727-865514

We also have a number of volunteers, who are equally part of the team, but would perhaps not yet feel very confident about fielding enquiries.

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

You can email us via the Society's website
www.stalbanshistory.org

CLOCK TOWER REPORT

The historic Clock Tower is once again ready to receive visitors and we hope that many more people will enjoy exploring the tower and the wonderful views from the top. It is perhaps only when we have surveyed the countryside which surrounds St Albans and the uniqueness of this historic gem so near London, that we realise how important it is to safeguard the green belt and preserve this fascinating place for future generations.

Last year 37,000 adults and 1,062 children visited the Clock Tower. We hope, by extending the season to the end of September this year, that we can increase that number. The Tower will be open every weekend, bank holidays and the Queen's Jubilee Tuesday in 2012, from 10.30am to 5.00pm.

It is unique in being the only remaining medieval town clock tower in England, built in the first decade of the fifteenth century. The clock, the third to have been installed here, is a fascinating example of a Victorian pendulum clock. Lord Grimthorpe, local philanthropist and villain (depending on your point of view) is worthy of greater acknowledgement. If you are interested in bells, there are two in the belfry, both with an interesting history. Did the large one-ton bell 'Gabriel' come from the Abbey as some have suggested?

The alterations which have been made to the Tower over its long history only add to the interest of the place and the climb to the top and the magnificent views are the crowning glory.

Much of the history of the Clock Tower and the part it has played in local affairs has been well documented. More remains to be written and many of the present residents of St Albans also have more recent stories to tell. One was related to me by Norman Oldknow, who has been a Clockateer for many years. He has memories of the connections that Diana, the late Princess of Wales had with St Albans and remembers

being present in the Abbey when she came to unveil the new coloured glazing of the Rose window, made by Laporte Chemicals of Luton. She also planted a tree near the Waxhouse Gate, as her ancestor, Countess Spencer, planted the old cedar tree in Sumpter Yard in 1803.



Clock Tower

[@iStockphoto.com/John Gomez]

Norman was one of the volunteers on duty at the Clock Tower on Sunday morning, 31st August 1997 when the whole country was shocked to hear of Diana's death. He was surprised when one of the senior bell-ringers came up from the Abbey to ask whether he could mark the solemnity of the occasion by tolling the great bell. As no objections were raised, the muffled striking of Gabriel went ahead, struck by hand with a muffled hammer.

I am sure that many other people have interesting tales to tell about the Clock Tower and I would encourage everyone to share them in the newsletter. You can write to me at my home address or ring me on 01727 730825. My answer phone is always on, leave a message and I will return your call.

Helen Bishop

Clock Tower Co-ordinator

COUNTY SOCIETIES SYMPOSIUM

SAHAAS have been invited to send two representatives to a one-day symposium on 15 September 2012 at Senate House, University of London. Convened by the Victoria County History in conjunction with the Institute of Historical Research, the British Association for Local History and the Royal Historical Society, the symposium will be a forum bringing together representatives of the county societies (archaeological, historical, antiquarian and natural history). It will provide an opportunity to learn about and discuss matters of mutual interest, such as improving county-wide communications, new opportunities in county publishing, and the latest publicly available historical resources.

As one of the oldest twelve or so of such societies (there are various ways of counting!) the St Albans & Hertfordshire Architectural & Archaeological Society will certainly be represented. Donald Munro, President, and Pat Howe, 17th Century Group, will attend on our behalf.

COPPED HALL VISIT

**A visit to Copped Hall has been arranged for
Tuesday, 26th June 2012**

Travel by own transport and meet
at Copped Hall at 10.00am

There **will be a charge of £7 per person
plus an optional £2 for Coffee**

Please contact Pat Howe by email:
pathowe@talk21.com

ST ALBANS MUSEUM : Hopes, Concerns and Aspirations

The future and state of MoSTA (the Museum of St Albans in the Hatfield Road) has been a matter of concern to the Society for many years. In view of the Society's leading role in the foundation of MoSTA at the end of the 19th century, and the close relations between SAHAAS archaeologists and historians with museum staffs over more than a century, we see the Arc & Arc as major stakeholders in the future of the Museum, even though (since the 1960s) SAHAAS is no longer a Trustee.

Recent developments and issues have much engaged the attention of Council over the past several months. The situation is very complex, but there are two distinct strands to SAHAAS involvement and concerns

- The need for a state of the art modern museum to bring up to date the recently rather neglected museum for post-Roman St Albans.
- Concern about the level of historically and archaeologically qualified staff in the light of the recent loss of experienced professional staff.

New Museum?

Michael Cooper was one of the chief proponents and an active member of the New Museum for St Albans Group which has been actively lobbying St Albans District Council (SADC) over several years for a landmark modern museum in the City. Several schemes have been mooted, none of which have come to fruition. But thinking continues, and as reported in the "Look! St Albans!" article (p. 4-5), a SAHAAS vision of a Museum/Garden complex with an historical scientific theme was publicly mooted at the end of February.

Just over a week later, the SADC proposal for moving MoSTA to the Old Town Hall appeared in the press. This came as a complete surprise to SAHAAS and, although there were a couple of briefings about that time where SAHAAS was by mischance not represented, the Civic Society and most others were also very surprised. The impression from October meetings with SADC was that the Civic Centre was under consideration as a possible home for MoSTA. From the SAHAAS point of view the failure of any councillors involved in "Look! St Albans" to intimate to Arc & Arc representatives that this might be on the cards was a reminder that despite the enthusiasms of councillors for the design codes exercise, things in local (or national) politics are not always as they appear. Consultations, access to information and stakeholder partnerships have variant definitions.

The Museum's future is of course a very complex issue. The current scheme has surfaced almost out of the blue, and superficially at least would seem to be racing ahead on multiple fronts. You will all have seen the coverage in the local press about the SADC proposal and the variant views on the suitability of the Old Town Hall site.

Donald Munro, SAHAAS President, attended the SADC Cabinet meeting where the proposal was taken forward. When invited to speak he gave it a qualified welcome, expressing SAHAAS's misgivings about whether the funding basis (proceeds from the sale of the MoSTA site) could be successfully achieved,

and the limitations on what might be permitted by English Heritage in a Grade II* building. He also expressed his personal surprise that the MoSTA site was now regarded as so unsuitable, and put his personal (not necessarily SAHAAS's) view that a refurbished modern Museum and garden could be developed on the existing MoSTA site at much less cost.

In fact it is still very early days. There are questions over basic funding, and proposals need to be much more detailed before English Heritage views will be known. On the other hand, there have been some regulatory changes that might make such a scheme more achievable, and expanding the basement for display area might be successful.

SADC is setting up an Advisory Group of specialists stakeholders (including SAHAAS) who will be consulted as the scheme is taken forward. For all that SAHAAS has voiced some misgivings about the Town Hall Museum project (with numerous historical and archaeological professionals in our ranks we are possibly better tuned to potential pitfalls) SAHAAS do hope that a satisfactory solution can be found for the Museum of St Albans, and we trust to being constructively involved in the development.

Donald Munro has taken Mike Cooper's place on the New Museum of St Albans Group. The group has broadly welcomed the proposed move of the St Albans Museum to the Town Hall building, seemingly pleased to have a firm proposal from the SADC at last. The group will continue to meet informally to monitor progress.

Museum Staffing

In the last Newsletter Roger Miles flagged up the adverse effect cutbacks at SADC were having on SAHAAS volunteers' access to materials at Sandridge Gate. Additionally many members have been troubled by the recent loss of experienced professional staff at the museums.

Donald and Roger met with Lesli Good, Culture & Heritage Services Manager, SADC, and Kate Warren, Museums Manager, to convey the Society's misgivings on the possible deprofessionalisation of staff and the loss of the Conservation Department in a frank exchange of views. Roger wrote to SADC asking for details of the qualifications of the Museums staff. This was treated as a Freedom of Information request and the details sought duly supplied. Other information asked for at the meeting re new job descriptions has not yet been forthcoming, although the meeting was the day after the press disclosure of the Old Town Hall proposal, which became the primary focus for the next few weeks. We intend to return to this.

Regarding the closure of Sandridge Gate, Ms Good said that this had not been an executive decision. Kate Warren agreed that new keys should be provided to allow access for SAHAAS. This was later amended to a commitment that the Unit at Sandridge Gate would be staffed on a specified day of the week, permitting SAHAAS access.

Donald Munro

President

NOTES AND DEBATES

KINGSBURY VAULT

Dr Isobel Thompson of the Historic Environment Record, Historic Environment Unit, Herts CC, has sent us this informative contribution.

In response to your column in the February Newsletter, I think I can provide Dr Jameson with some information about the vaulted basement in Verulam Road.

The St Albans Urban Archaeological Database, which I compiled for the City & District Council in the 1990s, examined all archaeological information in an area of 12 sq km in Verulamium, the abbey, and the town. It involved looking at every original source and putting all this data together.

From this work it became evident that 'Kingsbury' was in fact the Roman town. The area now known as Kingsbury was not called this until after Page wrote about the area at the beginning of the 20th century, and it was becoming built up. He had taken on ideas of previous generations of 19th century antiquarians, who had decided that Kingsbury must be north of the river because a) the Roman town was in ruins, and b) St Michael's Street was under water in Saxon times. This fairly bizarre image is because they assumed (without any evidence) that the fishpool which caused the trouble between the abbey and the men of Kingsbury was so enormous that it filled the valley along the whole north-east side of the Roman town, from the Chester Gate to the causeway. Neither of these arguments is tenable, and without them I don't think it would have occurred to anyone that Saxon 'Kingsbury' was anywhere else but Verulamium (and even in the medieval period St Michael's church was still called St Michael's at Kingsbury). And in 150 years of recorded archaeology no trace of late Saxon occupation has been found on the plateau north of the river.

The reasoning and the archaeological evidence for late Saxon St Albans are set out in the book which resulted from the UAD work, *Alban's buried towns: an assessment of St Albans' archaeology up to AD 1600*, by Rosalind Niblett and Isobel Thompson (Oxbow, 2005).

So what was the vaulted basement? This is an area full of Roman remains, as it was crossed by the roads leading out of Verulamium up the opposite hill to the great temple at Folly Lane. The remains are largely from Roman burials, but not entirely. No.179 Verulam Road is 50m east of the Branch Road bath house and only 20m east of the main highway from Verulamium to Colchester, and it is conceivable that there is a Roman structure here.

On the other hand, this is the edge of the hill, into which a cellar could have been built after Verulam Road was laid out in 1826. The 19th century 25 inch OS maps give the game away entirely, as this was Kingsbury Brewery, built in

1827 immediately after the road was opened. This is what the entry in the Historic Environment Record states:

The brewery was put up after the opening of Verulam Road and Branch Road in 1826, by Francis Searancke. In 1897 it was sold to Benskins and was closed in 1900. 'Cellars and vaults ran under what is now the adjoining car sales centre' (Fookes, Martin, Made in St Albans (1997), p48). The business probably had late 17C origins, but moved to these premises when Verulam Road opened. This is 'one of the best preserved brewery sites in the county' (Crosby, Tony, The brewing industry: a Brewery History Society project. Hertfordshire (2008) p40-41).

So the vaulted basement is probably still there.

Isobel Thompson

SECOND BATTLE OF ST ALBANS AND TOWN BOUNDARIES

Peter Burley, author of The Battles of St Albans (2007) has sent the following comments

There is no record of either Yorkist or Lancastrian troops being in Keyfield at any stage in the Second Battle of St Albans (17 February 1461), but the Yorkist army did camp there for a few hours prior to the First Battle in 1455.

I am not sure I understand the point about the crosses. The Tonman Ditch and rampart were the obvious boundary.

I do not think that the Earl of Warwick was "nasty", most accounts of him suggest an engaging and charismatic figure – otherwise he could never have achieved what he did.

Reconciliation was an issue after the First Battle, and was – briefly – achieved after the "Loveday Agreement" in 1458 whereby York and Salisbury (Warwick's father) had to pay out of their own pockets to install tombs for Somerset, Northumberland and Clifford in the Lady Chapel and endow a chantry for the souls of the Lancastrian dead. There was to be no reconciliation after the Second Battle as the viciousness of the conflict had been ratcheted up several notches by then. One of these "viciousnesses" was Margaret of Anjou's apparent willingness to condemn all the souls of the fallen to an eternity in purgatory. This was finally atoned for in 2011 when Father Peter Wadsworth – vicar of St Saviour's – celebrated a Requiem Mass for them after 550 years and righted that particular wrong.

I would be happy to try to address any focused queries about either of the battles.

Peter Burley

THE ABBEY PARISH MAP 1818

A benefit of researching the history of St Albans and the surrounding area is the survival of a good number of accurate maps and plans dating back into the medieval period. One of these is the large-scale and detailed Abbey parish map produced in 1818. The surveyor was Thomas Godman.

This map is part of the Abbey Muniment Room collection and has proved valuable to many researchers over the years. For example, it was one of the key foundation maps used by this society's award-winning project team, led by David Dean, which produced the c.1820 map of the town in the early 1980s.

For the purposes of conservation the Abbey's archivist, David Kelsall, and a team from Aecom recently scanned the document at high resolution so that David now has an electronic copy of the map. He agreed to provide a copy of this to SAHAAS and Aecom have also printed a full-size colour reproduction for us. These are now in our library.

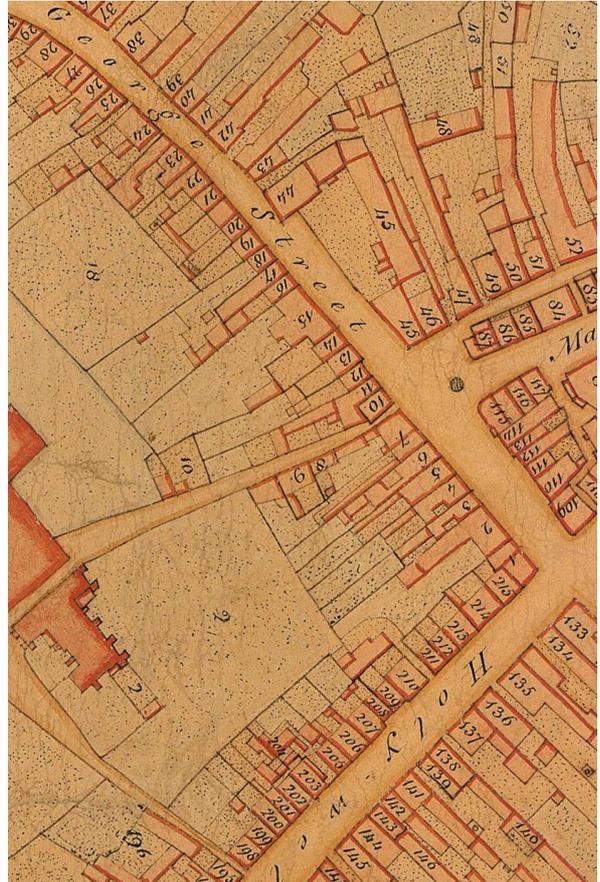
David has also given us a transcription of the accompanying reference book produced by Godman. This includes a list of the occupiers of each of the properties shown on the map with their names, description of the premises, the size of the plot and proposed rate.

Parish maps such as these were mostly commissioned by the parish vestry to provide revised assessments of who owed what to the poor rate. On the face of it this is likely to have had the same objective. However, the question of who paid for it is intriguing. A note in the reference book states that the map and book were "originally the property of Mr Small". (Rev. Henry Small was the rector of the Abbey parish from 1818 to 1835 and is remembered mostly for the national notoriety he achieved in the early 1830s through his extensive fraud on the St Albans Savings Bank). Did Small pay Godman? If so, this wasn't a cheap exercise and we know from letters written in 1819 that Small was complaining he could not support his family of seven children on his

income¹. Why he went to such expense is currently obscure.

Jon Meán

[¹HALS, Gorhambury, DE/V F570]



[Extract from the Abbey parish map showing the main road through St Albans before the Verulam Road was cut in the mid-1820s]

[The Society wishes to thank David Kelsall for providing these excellent materials for our use and also to Aecom for their support.]

ARCHAEOLOGY IN HERTFORDSHIRE

JULY CONFERENCE: WELWYN

On the 14th of July 2012 the Welwyn Archaeological Society is hosting a conference entitled "Archaeology in Hertfordshire: Recent research. A conference to mark Tony Rook's 80th Birthday." The conference will be held at the Campus West, Welwyn Garden City starting at 9am. Speakers (so far) include Isobel Thompson, Stewart Bryant, Kris Lockyear, Simon West, Keith FitzPatrick Matthews etc.

Contact Kris Lockyear for booking details and further information: cfacl@ucl.ac.uk

PEMBERTON SCHOOL BUILDING

Herts CC have appealed against refusal of permission to demolish the Pemberton Block. The appeal has gone for consideration by the National Planning Casework Unit in Birmingham. SAHAAS resubmitted their original objection, together with some additional points rebutting aspects of the appeal. The decision has not yet been announced.

BOOK REVIEW : *ST ALBANS' OWN EAST END* by MIKE NEIGHBOUR

The title of this new book might seem puzzling at first, giving cause to a little apprehension or anxiety in would-be purchasers. In fact these are the derogatory words of Councillor Ernest Townson expressed in an early issue of the Herts Advertiser: "down in St Albans own East End" (sic). It all concerned the extensions to St Albans' well-established boundaries. Townson later conceded that the wealth of the new suburb and its Fleetville industries added greatly in taxes to the town's coffers.

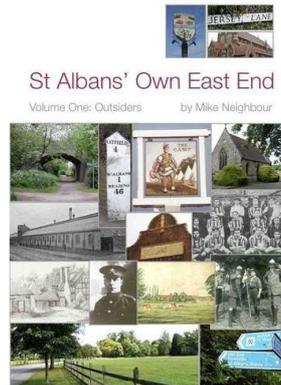
That said, here is a wealth of in-depth research, backed up by many archive and present day photographs of the highest quality. Mike Neighbour is uniquely qualified to write this book, having been brought up east of the city where the "mile of shops" still holds for him the utmost interest. As a lad he tadpoled in virtually every pond or stream in the recently developing fields, remembering the old farms of the eastern hamlets, and seeing the development of many new streets in The Camp and Fleetville. The wealth of knowledge so well presented here encompasses the new turnpike road and the whereabouts and descriptions of the various chain bars and toll huts along it to the first cated research over seven years. Mike noted every single edition of the Advertiser from 1870 to 1960 so that nothing of note is missed; the final 300-odd pages are presented annually from 1880. This itself is a mind-boggling feat that

not many would wish to emulate but gives a true measure of the depth of research packed into *St Albans' Own East End*. It adds very substantially to recently published books which have touched on this "east end" theme". The present volume (Outsiders) features the years to 1930 and its continuation to 1960 (Insiders) will be published next March.

The format is full A4 size, 368pp, hard bound.

ISBN 978-0-9571691-0-4.
The price is £29.50, which represents remarkable value.

The book is available from Mike Neighbour, 1 Stanstead Court, Hoddesdon, Herts. EN11 ORN.



www.stalbansowneastend.co.uk

Tony Billings

(author of *The Camp*)

QUEEN ADELAIDE PUBLIC HOUSE, ST. PETER'S STREET



Queen Adelaide Public House c.1915

— Christopher Padley

[Our thanks to Graham Marshall for allowing us to publish this photo]

I was interested to read Kate Morris' piece in the last newsletter about the former Queen Adelaide public house in St Peter's Street as our library has recently received several photographs of the pub in the early 1900s. These have been sent to us by Graham Marshall, great-grandson of Christopher Padley (senior), whose family were tenants there between 1910 and 1960 of first Glovers brewery of Harpenden and then of Benskins of Watford. The Adelaide was just one of several pubs down the west side of St Peter's Street, all now shut. It was first licensed as an alehouse in 1835 although it may have been open as a beerhouse before that under the terms of the Beerhouse Act, 1830. There's more about the pub on the society's web site in an article by Wendy Klein outlining the history of Adelaide Street. Graham is putting together some reminiscences of his family's time there with an eye to publishing them on our web site.



Jon Mein

'Queen Adelaide' 2012 [Jon Mein]

THE WHITE HART HOTEL – and a plea for help

At the end of March, the Society received an urgent plea from, of all people, Channel 5. They were recording part of a programme for the “The Hotel Inspector”, series, where Alex Polizzi helps hotels around the country to improve their viability by capitalising on their assets etc. The plea was “could the Arc & Arc please provide an audience to hear the owner of the White Hart hotel in St Albans present her knowledge of the building and its history, and offer suitable comments and/or suggestions?”.

Along with the crew and two cameras, some dozen Society members (with other Albanians) duly assembled in the Court Room behind the Old Town Hall to hear Jayne McBeath, joint owner of the hotel, tell us what information she herself had, with a rather impassioned plea to our Society to help please in researching the history of this famous landmark site. Such is the nature of this type of reality programme that the crew apparently gave her just 30 minutes notice to prepare her speech!

We received a further call for help at the end of April. Channel 5 asked us to suggest members who have specific knowledge of the history of the White Hart for a second filming session. Ann Dean, Gerard McSweeney and Jon Mein together with erstwhile member, Chris Saunders, met with Jayne, her husband Ross and the crew to separate the hotel’s history from the various myths and mysteries that they had heard. The conversation developed into a consideration of how the key elements of this history could be used to promote the White Hart both on-line and by more traditional methods of marketing.

Channel 5 may ask for further, more general help from the Society in the next month or so. Keep a watch on our web site if you are interested. The programme is slated for broadcast sometime in July or August, 2012.

Bryan Hanlon / Jon Mein



Film Crew [Jon Mein]



Deep in Discussion [Jon Mein]

VISIT TO CROMER MILL

On 5 May a party of 17 members, organised by Pat Howe, paid a visit to the last remaining post mill in Hertfordshire (Pitstone Mill, which some members may have visited, is in Buckinghamshire). Cromer Mill stands on the B 1037 Stevenage-Buntingford road, on an elevated site intended to catch the prevailing wind; on our visit it was a penetrating northerly. The present mill, using the latest wind power technology of the period, was built in the mid 19th century to replace a mill blown over around 1861, but incorporates timbers from its predecessors. Cromer Mill ceased to operate in the mid 1920s, and subsequently became derelict. Eventually the mill was conveyed to the Hertfordshire Buildings Conservation Trust, which arranged for it to be restored and opened to the public.

Volunteers from the trust showed us round in two groups. One group saw the “which the mill turns, together with the

exterior features, and the other group were taken into the “buck”, the main body of the mill, which contains the machinery, and can be turned to face the wind, either manually or automatically by means of the “fantail”, a miniature windmill located over the foot of the access ladder. The groups then swapped over. Although the biting wind was a nuisance, and



Cromer Mill [Richard Harvey]

some found the ladders in the “buck” difficult (I was not alone in going no further than the stone floor) this was a most interesting and enjoyable visit, and we are most grateful to Pat for organising it, and to the Trust for allowing it, and providing the knowledgeable guides.

Richard Harvey

LECTURE PROGRAMME 2012

Tuesday, 15th May 2012

Department Stores

Claire Masset

A place to browse, buy or simply relax, the Department Store has undergone many transformations over the course of its 200-year history. Its story illustrates the major changes we have witnessed in our lifetime – from innovations in retailing, advertising and technology to developments in fashion, design and working practices. But how did such ‘cathedrals of consumption’ come about? Was there a golden age of the Department Store? And what’s ‘in store’ for Department Stores now? Illustrated with evocative adverts, prints and photographs, this enlightening lecture will answer all these questions and many more, offering a unique insight into a fascinating and little-researched subject.

Claire Masset is a freelance editor and writer specialising in social history, architecture and gardens. She has an MA in Art History, an M. Phil in Decorative Arts and a Postgraduate Certificate in Architectural History. As well as writing for *Heritage Magazine* and many other publications, she is Gardens Editor of *The English Garden* magazine. She has written two books, *Department Stores* and *Tea & Tea Drinking*, both published in 2010, and is currently writing a social history of orchards, due to be published in 2012. She lives in West Oxfordshire.

Friday, 25th May 2012

On 25 May Prof Michael Cooper was to have given a lecture on "Time in St Albans and St Albans in Time". Following his untimely death Kate Morris will now speak on -

Who benefits from education? A view over time on attitudes and provision and how that was expressed in St Albans

Education has been a key feature in the life of St Albans since monastic times, but who was it for? Who provided it? And why? Was the story in St Albans typical across the country? I have considered the schools established in St Albans over the years and who provided them, leading up to the period of compulsory and free state education. Comparing the range of schools with other towns, it seems that our town shows a perhaps surprising paucity of provision. This work in progress addresses the question of why this may have been.

Kate Morris is a past President of the Society and has researched various aspects of the social and economic history of St Albans. She sees the role of micro historical studies popular today as providing a catalyst for research into the wider setting, which both her formal research training and natural curiosity allow her to do. Her work on some St Albans' schools has led to an interest in the wider picture of English education for the common people.

Could this be YOU?

Volunteers are needed to supplement our existing small team of two who look after the IT and AV for our Tuesday and Friday lectures. There must be someone amongst the membership who would be willing to spread the load.

Whilst it would be helpful to have someone with previous experience, our existing volunteers are willing to provide training and we also have an 'Idiot's Guide'.

The lectures are extremely well attended and many are enhanced by the illustrations provided by the PowerPoint presentations.

Please contact Roy Bratby if you can offer any help, however limited. Do come and join the team and you will be making a very worthwhile contribution to the life of the Society.

Tel: 01727 858050

Email: roy.bratby@bratbyonline.com

SADC DESIGN AND CONSERVATION SERVICES REVIEW

The president attended one of two Focus Groups on Conservation Service held as part of this review exercise. Misgivings were expressed over the drastic reduction in personnel dealing with conservation matters in the SADC Planning Office – five down to two. One suggestion receiving support in the focus group was the desirability of an improved and updated (extended) official list of historic buildings in St Albans. The original list was hurriedly put together c. 1960s. It was acknowledged that there is little staff currently available to carry out the work.

It is disappointing however that the bland press release on the Conservation Services Review

<http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/press-room/items/2012/April2012/Councilsdesignandconservationservicesreviewed.aspx?Print=yes>

skates over the staff reduction, and makes no mention of the listing aspiration.

SAHAAS Council will keep a watching brief on this listing topic and pursue it periodically with the SADC.

SUBSCRIPTIONS 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 1st June for the financial year 2012/13.

The level of subscriptions is currently:

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

For those of you who have direct debits in place, you 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 myself.

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, 1st 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.

For those of you that pay tax at the standard rate or higher, please can you pay your subscription under Gift Aid. Doing so will mean that the Society will receive an additional £3 on top of the individual subscription at no cost to the member. If you have not already signed a Gift Aid declaration please contact me (phone 07711 696 417) for the appropriate form.

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

John Thomson
Treasurer

THOMAS FOWLER SAHAAS NEWSLETTER 2005 NO. 157. ADDENDUM

Ms Rosemary Hendry has drawn our attention to the fact that the article on Thomas Fowler in the SAHAAS NEWSLETTER: APRIL 2005 No. 157 - pages 8-9 was written by Anthony Nixon and had previously appeared in the **Alban Link** of **September 1991**, pages 218-23.

Contact with Anthony Nixon had been lost when the SAHAAS lecture was delivered. Tony Billings read the paper, and Mr Nixon's original research was acknowledged, although no indication was given in the Newsletter of the earlier publication. The Newsletter version is only very lightly edited.

Ms. Hendry, whose mother helped in the research, believes Anthony Nixon worked for the company who owned Romeland, the house mentioned in the original article, and was researching the history of the building.

Donald Munro
President