

Hertfordshire Association for Local History

(Charity Number 280499)

News and Events

Autumn 2017



Dates for your Diary

Saturday 11 November 2017

Saturday 19 May 2018

Saturday 10 November 2018

Symposium: Women of Hertfordshire , Hitchin

HALH Spring Meeting and AGM, Tewin

Symposium: Saxon Burghs to Garden Cities

HALH Symposium 2017

Women of Hertfordshire

This year's symposium will be held on Saturday 11 November 2017 at the British Schools Museum, Hitchin. The subject will be 'Women of Hertfordshire'. The programme will include talks on a medieval prioress; two seventeenth-century women, one a prophetess, the other a diplomat's wife; two women who found themselves on opposing sides in the suffrage movement; and three 'forgotten heroines' of St Albans during World War One. The day will also be enlivened with a performance by the Chiltern West Gallery Quire, who specialise in researching and playing local music from the period 1750–1840, and a dramatic monologue by Dolly Shepherd, an Edwardian Parachute Queen and World War One car mechanic! Further details and a booking form can be found on page iv.

Christina of Markyate, c.1096 - c.1155/60

Jane Kelsall

Jane Kelsall was born and educated in St Albans. After what she describes as 'a wasted year' at art school (where she rejected the Jackson Pollock view of art), she eventually obtained a BA in English Literature and History, and lectured for NADFAS for 30 years. She has been a Guide at St Albans Abbey for 40 years and has written short books on the Abbey and its people.

In her talk Jane will be taking us back to the early twelfth century to tell us the story of Christina of Markyate. This is a classic tale of a woman born into a wealthy merchant's family who was imbued from childhood with a deep religious faith and who rejected the role expected of her as a pawn in her parents' marriage plans. In so doing, she was forced to flee from the family home and hide herself away, at first with a female hermit at Flamstead, and then in a hermit's cell at Markyate.

Her marriage was eventually annulled, after which she came out of hiding and went on to become a very influential figure in the locality, being made prioress of Markyate Priory when it was established in 1145.

Committee News

In the Spring 2017 issue of *News and Events* we announced that Linda Adams (now Linda Gilley) would be stepping down as Chair of HALH at the AGM on 13 May 2017. The new Chair of HALH is Dr Julie Moore. Julie lives in Welwyn Garden City and is a member of the University of Hertfordshire's Heritage Hub which supports local groups, museums and individuals in their research. She is also a volunteer with the team researching life on the home front in St Albans during World War One.

website: www.halh.org.uk

Two Colourful Seventeenth-Century Women: Lady Eleanor Davies and Lady Anne Fanshawe
Alan Thomson

Dr Alan Thomson has lived in Ware for the past 41 years and is now retired after teaching in higher education institutions in Hertford, Aldenham and Hatfield. He has written *The Ware Mutiny 1647: Order Restored or Revolution Defeated?* (Ware 1996) and *The Impact of the First Civil War on Hertfordshire, 1642–47* (Hertford, 2007). He is chairman of the Hertfordshire Record Society and the Hertford and Ware Local History Society.

In his talk Alan will look at two women who lived in Hertfordshire during the seventeenth century but who led very different lives. Lady Eleanor Davies, née Touchet (1590–1652), was the wife of the Attorney-General, whose home was at Pirton. Eleanor fell into disrepute through her role as a prophetess, which caused her to criticise government officials, the Church, Parliament and even the King. She was imprisoned on several occasions for her activities, including spells in Bedlam and the Tower of London.

This was in marked contrast to the life enjoyed by Anne Fanshawe, née Harrison (1625–80). Her childhood was spent in London and at Balls Park, Hertford. In 1644 she married Richard Fanshawe, Secretary of War to the Prince of Wales. The couple spent much of the Civil War and Interregnum travelling in Europe, while after the Restoration Richard served as ambassador to Portugal and Spain. Anne was widowed in 1666 and she later wrote a colourful memoir of their adventures and travels.

The Battle for Female Suffrage: Mary Augusta Ward and Lady Constance Georgina Bulwer Lytton
Elizabeth Eastwood

Elizabeth Eastwood is a member of the Welwyn Archaeological Society. She is a Blue Badge guide and a member of the St Albans Tour Guides, for whom she has been guiding since 1984. She is also qualified to guide in Windsor and Eton. She is interested in all aspects of history, but especially the Roman period, crime and women's history, and the architecture of particular churches.

The theme of Elizabeth's talk will be the women's suffrage movement. A key player in the movement was Lady Constance Georgina Bulwer Lytton (1869–1923), daughter of the 1st Earl of Lytton. She was drawn into the suffrage movement in the mid-1900s and eventually joined the Women's Social and Political Union. Though she sought to engage in militant activities, the authorities kept affording her special treatment owing to her aristocratic connections. She thus adopted the alias of a London seamstress and as a consequence suffered the full measure of the law in terms of hard labour and force-feeding.

A great many women were opposed to the suffrage movement. One such was Mary Augusta Ward, née Arnold (1851–1920), who came from to a family of prominent writers and educationalists. She married Humphry Ward, a fellow and tutor of Brasenose College, Oxford, and they came to live at Stocks House, Aldbury. During the 1880s Mary achieved considerable fame with her novel writing, and this led her to take up various public campaigns, including the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, for which she served as founding president.

Pioneering Women of Girton College
Val Champion

As a retired Primary School teacher, Val Champion has interests in history, botany, and above all, music. Apart from having written two books published by Hitchin Historical Society, she plays in a local orchestra and with several chamber groups here and in Cambridge, her main instrument being the viola.

In her talk Val will describe how, in the middle years of the nineteenth century, there was little opportunity for women to experience higher education, since they were barred from attending the universities. Emily Davies' self-appointed mission was to enable Victorian women to benefit from the educational opportunities open to their brothers, and to establish a College for Women affiliated to either Oxford or Cambridge. Cambridge proved the more sympathetic, but even so, the Cambridge authorities were not open to a college for women within the city itself. Thus a search commenced for an alternative location, and Benslow House in Hitchin presented itself as being ideal in the circumstances.

On 16 October 1869 five bright, excited and determined young women became the first students to arrive at Benslow House. After four years The College, Hitchin moved to specially built premises in Girton, three miles from Cambridge. Several of the 16 women who attended The College in Hitchin achieved remarkable success in later life, and became known to posterity as the 'Girton Pioneers'.

St Albans' Forgotten Heroines of World War One

This topic will be presented by three members of the World War One Biographies Project, run by the St Albans & Hertfordshire Architectural & Archaeological Society.

Lady Violet Grimston was a Red Cross VAD nurse and raised money for many good causes, including a creche and infant welfare centre in Shoreditch. A member of the National Union of Women Workers, she spoke out on issues affecting women, including food control. She also inspired the building of St

Michael's Memorial Hall as part of the commemoration of men who fell in the war.

Silvia Glossop came to the fore in December 1914 when Bricket House in St Albans was mobilised by the War Office as a Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) hospital, with 40 beds specifically allocated for troops stationed in the locality. Silvia immediately took on the role of organising the cooking. In May 1916 she transferred to a British Expeditionary Force hospital in France where she continued to cook but also to nurse, if necessary, until after the end of the war.

Edith Garrett promoted war savings schemes and was joint honorary secretary of the local fundraising committee. She was awarded an MBE in 1920 for her contribution to the city's successful sales of war bonds and certificates. She was also a member of the Food Control Committee. In 1929 she became the first female representative from St Albans to serve on the Hertfordshire County Council.

Future Events

The next **Spring Meeting and Annual General Meeting** of HALH will take place on Saturday 19 May 2018 at the Memorial Hall, Tewin.

The **39th HALH Symposium** will take place on Saturday 10 November 2018. The venue has yet to be confirmed. The theme of the symposium will be town planning and garden cities. This topic is thought appropriate since the centenary of the Garden City Movement is due to take place in 2020. It is also 70 years since the introduction of planning controls, and the advent of the New Towns in which Hertfordshire played a leading role. This theme, however, will be looked at in a broad historical perspective. The precise content of the day is still under discussion, but possible subjects could include Saxon burghs, planned market towns of the Middle Ages, and turn-pikes.

HERTFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

CASH ACCOUNTS SUMMARY, 2016

	Year 2015 (£ rounded)	Year to 2016 (£ rounded)
RECEIPTS		
Subscriptions	2073	2451
Donations	0	170
Interest	37	35
Events (net)	899	238
Total	3009	2894
PAYMENTS		
<i>Herts Past & Present</i> (net)	1674	1419
AGM / Membership	274	596
BALH subscription & insurance	65	65
Website, etc.	170	125
General administration	0	57
Donations	125	0
Total	2308	2262
Cash increase for the year	701	632

Further details on request

Chris Brimblecombe (Hon. Treasurer)

**HERTFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY
38th ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM**

Saturday 11 November 2017

10.00am to 4.30pm

The British Schools Museum, 41-42 Queen Street, Hitchin SG4 9TS

Women of Hertfordshire

The programme will include talks on:

- Christina of Markyate (*Jane Kelshall*)
- Two Colourful Seventeenth-Century Women (*Alan Thomson*)
- The Battle for Female Suffrage (*Elizabeth Eastwood*)
- Pioneering Women of Girton College (*Val Campion*)
- St Albans' Forgotten Heroines of World War One

Tickets £12 for members of HALH; £15 for non-members.

A simple cold lunch will be available for those who have booked in advance at a cost of £10.00. A vegetarian option will be available. Or bring a packed lunch.

To order tickets please complete the form below and send by 31 October with your cheque (payable to the HALH) and an SAE to:

Ruth Jeavons, 44 Necton Road, Wheathampstead, St Albans, Herts AL4 8AU
Tel: 01582 629516 Mobile: 07847 429492 email: ruth.jeavons@ntlworld.com

NB. Tickets, programme and directions will be posted in October. If you require a receipt before then, please supply an email address or a second SAE.

APPLICATION FORM

Name

Address

Tel. No. or email address

Name(s) for badge(s)

Please send tickets at £12 and/or tickets at £15

Please send tickets for lunch at £10.00 each

Tick this box if you require a vegetarian lunch

Tick this box if you have any food allergies or special dietary requirements
(please give details on a separate sheet)

Please book a display table for Society

Is your society involved in events or activities which you would like to see featured in *Herts Past and Present*? Do you have a website you would like mentioned?

If so, please contact either:

Ruth Jeavons, 44 Necton Road, Wheathampstead, St Albans, Herts AL4 8AU
(email: ruth.jeavons@ntlworld.com); or

Philip Sheail, 41 Cowper Crescent, Hertford SG14 3DZ (email: philip.sheail@gmail.com)
(Deadlines: third week of January, August)