

HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY

ALMANACK

The Newsletter of the Huntingdonshire Local History Society New Year 2023



First, let me wish you a very Happy New Year. Inside is our programme for the rest of the Winter and Spring 2023 with more detail than previously circulated. I hope you will find it interesting, and that you will join us for some or all of them

Philip Saunders, Chairman



www.huntslhs.org.uk

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Happy New Year and Subscription Reminder

I hope you have had a restful and enjoyable (not necessarily incompatible expectations, though the cooks among you may dispute it) Christmas. A big thank-you to those who helped and in their various ways with the Christmas social or contributed to a most enjoyable evening. How fortunate we are to have so talented a choir as *Tapestry Singers* available to us.

We have produced this additional *Almanack* mainly because some of the details of meetings were not ready when we circulated the usual Autumn issue, but of course it is also subscription time. Subscriptions are due on 1st January, £10 single, £15 double, indisputably good value. if you have internet banking, you can transfer this money direct to the society's Natwest bank account, **sort code 60-18-17, account number 72654848**, identifying the payment with your surname+2023. Alternatively, please send a cheque to the treasurer David Smith at **16 Dovehouse Close, Godmanchester, HUNTINGDON, PE29 2DY** or pay cash to him at our first physical meeting on 19th January (see below). Whichever you do, please renew promptly and make his job a bit easier. Even if, regretfully, you do not wish to renew, please let him know. We have been indulgent over the last couple of years due to the pandemic but with return to normality we shall be removing those in arrears from postal and email circulations, and *Records*, and will be asking for contributions from non-members at meetings.

If you are a UK taxpayer, he can arrange a Gift Aid declaration, thereby increasing the society's income. Conversely, please tell him too if you have you have made a declaration in the past but no longer earn enough (£12,570) to pay income tax.

Programme Winter/Spring 2023

This continues our most mixed programme for some years, so please pay attention to when and where things are taking place, enter them in your diary, and leave home or work, or switch your laptop on, in good time as appropriate. We feel sure you can cope, indeed welcome, the variety. Following the success of *Zoom* talks during the pandemic we are again sticking to that format for the talks in January and February, but experimentally have added in some daytime activities. We hope you will approve. Feedback is always welcome.

7.30 p.m.m, Wednesday 11th January 2023 (by Zoom)

Twigs Way, Garden Historian

Exploring Traditional Wildflower Names

Do you know your Keck from your Cow Mumble or your Pilewort from your Pigs Pettitoes? Who was Ragged Robin, what did Saxons use for their ale, and why did foxes steal the Fairy Gloves?. This talk by local garden historian and author Twigs Way examines the origins and meanings of traditional wildflower names and discusses why they were often spurned by the amateur botanists and antiquarians in the late 18th and 19th centuries.

Zoom link will be circulated to members a few days before the talk.



2.30 p.m., Thursday 19th January

Archive Sources for Landscape History

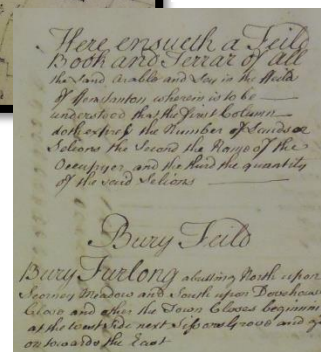
Afternoon visit to Huntingdonshire Archives (Huntingdon Library & Archives, Princes Street)

Huntingdonshire Archives possesses a fabulous collection of resources for the history of our landscape, including medieval deeds, Tudor surveys, beautiful estate maps and complete series of local Ordnance Survey maps. Whether you are looking for new resource for research or just want to know what documentary record exists there will be something for you. A display with introduction followed by tea and biscuits.

There is a small charge of £5.00 for this, payable on the day, but as numbers are limited we do need to know who is coming, so please book by emailing David Smith (info@huntslhs.org.uk) or phoning 01480-350127 by Monday 16th January.



Steeple Gidding
1648 (Map 120);
Fenstanton Survey
1584 (Acc 125); by
permission Cambs
Archives Service



**7.30 p.m., Wednesday 8th February
(by Zoom)**

Emma Harris

1-6 Muttongate: the Inside Story

Dr Emma Harris is Director of Studies at the Woolf Institute (Cambridge). Emma will be speaking about her late father Mark Harris' quest to discover the location of medieval Huntingdon's synagogue and ritual bath (*mikveh*), a remarkable discovery of a forgotten aspect of the town that led to the erection of the plaque on the new development off St Clement's Passage in 2016.

Zoom link will be circulated to members a few days before the talk.



2.30 p.m., Wednesday 22nd February, Huntingdon Methodist Church

Presentation and Workshop on small finds from the A14 Archaeology

Now the new road is open, the immense archaeological project, the amazing finds of which we heard about in 2018, may seem a long time ago, but the post-excavation phase continues, identifying and assessing those discoveries. Owen Humphreys, Senior Registered Finds Specialist and Michael Marshall, Principal Specialist – Team Leader (Finds) from Museum of London Archaeology (MoLA) will be bringing a selection of finds and other relevant research material to lead a workshop on them.

A *PowerPoint* presentation will be open to all, but the workshop that follows is for 20 only. If you want to attend the workshop you must book in advance, by emailing David Smith (info@huntslhs.org.uk) or phoning 01480-350127 by Monday 20th February. No charge.



© Museum of London Archaeology

7.30 p.m., Wednesday 8th March, Huntingdon Methodist Church

Sadie Macmullon

Fletton - Building the Brickopolis

Commencing with research into migration to supply the needs of the brick industry in Fletton 1841-1911 for her Leicester University PhD, society member Sadie has branched out into wider study of the community and has now both registered a 'One Place' study, published several articles and writes a monthly blog. This talk focuses on the development of the industrial suburb of Peterborough and the people who made it.



7.30 p.m., Wednesday 19th April, Huntingdon Town Hall

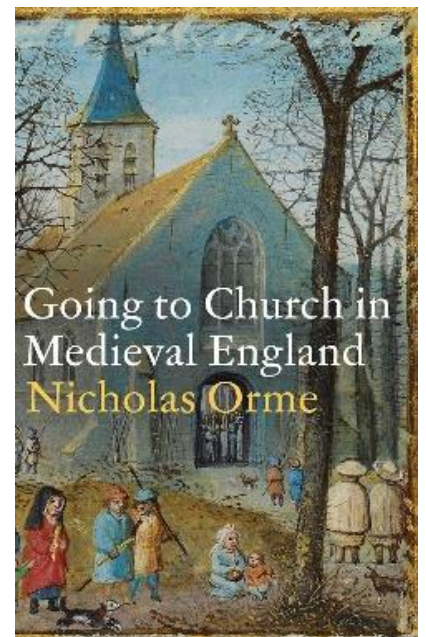
Ladds Lecture – joint meeting with Cambridge Antiquarian Society

Nicholas Orme

Going to Church in Medieval Huntingdonshire

Millions of words have been written about the architecture of our medieval parish churches but what when on in them largely remains a mystery. Professor Orme has written a ground-breaking study, praised alike by academic reviews and the press, including the accolade of 'Book of the Year' by the *Daily Telegraph*. He will be coming to talk to us with a particular focus on our own area.

With book-signing and opportunity to meet with friends in the Antiquarian Society that is generously supporting this meeting.



Wednesday 10th May, venue to be announced

Annual General Meeting with a short talk &/or display

Details to be circulated in the Spring.

Photographic Competition

A new joint venture with Cambridgeshire Association for Local History in 2022 was the photographic competition. We can now reveal the winner was our member Peter Flower for his picture on the cover of this issue, combined with the text below. Congratulations to him.

This shows a charming Victorian wrought iron boot scraper at the front door of Slepe House, Cromwell Place, St Ives. The house was built in 1848 on the site of an 18th century house, which itself had been built on the foundations of a much older building. A popular legend said that this was where Oliver Cromwell had lived as a tenant farmer between 1631-6 before moving to Ely. It is very possible that the face on the boot scraper depicts Oliver Cromwell.

The St Ives livestock market was moved in 1886 to a new site only 100 yards from Slepe House. With the dirt road outside covered in mud and animal droppings, a boot scraper was essential to ensure that visitors did not bring filth into the house.

From 1881 to 1948 Slepe House was the home and surgery of three generations of the Grove family who served St Ives as family doctors; it continues to be used by the Grove Medical Practice to this day. A blue plaque, commemorating the Grove family and its association with the building, sponsored by the St Ives Town Council and St Ives Civic Society, is being put up in October 2022 [now in place].