



**Hitchin
Historical
Society**

Registered Charity No. 280746

Newsletter

Issue number 58 – January 2022

Hertfordshire Local History Symposium 2021

Four members attended the HALH Symposium in Tewin in November: numbers were limited by current public health concerns.

The meeting focussed on Hertfordshire's relationship to water and water resources. First Alan Thomson talked about the New River 'Neither New nor a River'. This was constructed in the early 17th century with support from James I to bring water from springs at Amwell and Chadwell near Hertford to London. Next Tom Williamson described the many uses of flood plains in Hertfordshire ranging from transport, water mills, and watercress growing, to the making of channels through water meadows so they could be temporarily flooded to promote the early growth of grass in the spring. His study of Lidar images led him to suggest that there may have been such water meadows beside the River Purwell.

In the afternoon Anne Rowe described the many ways country estates made use of water, not just to create ornamental lakes and cascades in their parks, but also to provide power for pumps and in Hitchin Priory Park, a cold bath house. The final talk by Fabian Hiscock was 'Passing Through: The Grand Junction Canal in West Hertfordshire 1791-1841'. He argued that the canal, carrying mainly long distance trade, had relatively little impact on local communities. Discussion ensued on how water transport did affect Hertfordshire towns.

It was good to attend a 'real' meeting. As in past years the HHS mounted a small publications stall featuring this time the Society's latest book *More Glimpses of Hitchin*.

David and Bridget Howlett



The HHS Stall (Photograph Stephen Bradford-Best)

2022 Membership Renewal

Dear Member, subscription renewal is here again. **It would help the Society greatly if you were to renew by Bank transfer.** This ensures you receive confirmation and the annual visits programme quickly and saves us bank charges when processing a volume of cheques. If you joined late in 2021 you should receive your new membership card with this Newsletter; **there is no need to renew.**

We now offer Life Membership which you might wish to consider thus saving you renewing every year. The details are below.

There is no increase in the **Annual Membership** fee.

Single membership £6.00 or £6-66 if paying by Bank transfer

Joint membership £9.00 or £9-66 if paying by Bank transfer

Junior (under 18) £1.00

Life membership can be taken out at the following rates:

Single life member (Under 60 years old) £130

Two life members same Household (both under 60) £230

Single life member (over 60) £80

Two life members in the same household (at least 1 over 60) £140

Details for Bank Transfer are on the back of the renewal form. If you renew by bank transfer let the Membership Secretary know by emailing - membership@hitchinhistoricals.org.uk **Please also ensure that any changes of email, phone or home address are notified to the Membership Secretary.**

If you choose to renew by post, please return the enclosed membership renewal form to:

HHS Membership Secretary, 6 Bell Close, Hitchin, SG4 9NJ

Cheques should be made payable to "**Hitchin Historical Society**".

Please ensure you enclose a STAMPED, SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE, at least 6" x 4½" for the prompt return of your membership card and visits programme application sheet.

PLEASE NOTE - there will be NO facility to renew your membership at the CHURCH HOUSE meeting on 27 January 2022.

On behalf of the committee, thank you for your support in the past, and we look forward to your continued membership of the Society.

PROGRAMME 2022

We hope very much we will be able to offer a 'near normal' programme this year. Caution dictates that, for the time being however, we will not be offering refreshments at Church House meetings.

Meetings held at Church House, Churchyard, Hitchin on Thursdays at 8:00 pm

27 JANUARY	<u>IT'S YOUR ROUND: HITCHIN'S PUBS</u> – an illustrated talk by Mark Pardoe
24 FEBRUARY	<u>REVEREND NIBLOCK: CURATE OF HITCHIN AND MASTER OF THE FREE SCHOOL</u> a talk by Nic Wilson
24 MARCH	<u>AGM AND MEMBERS' EVENING</u> including updates on current projects
28 APRIL	<u>THE ORIGINS OF THE ENGLISH, c 400-700 AD</u> an illustrated talk by Dr Susan Oosthuizen
26 MAY	<u>MAURICE JOHNSON, THE SPALDING GENTLEMEN'S SOCIETY AND HITCHIN</u> an illustrated talk by Dr Dustin Frazier Wood
22 SEPTEMBER	<u>APSLEY CHERRY-GARRARD: HERTFORDSHIRE'S ANTARCTIC EXPLORER</u> an illustrated talk by Chris Bennett
27 OCTOBER	<u>ROMAN PURWELL</u> – an illustrated talk by Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews.
24 NOVEMBER	<u>HITCHIN'S TIMES AND SEASONS: Daily Life in a Country Town</u> an illustrated talk by Richard Field

VISITS 2022

Starting times and venues vary. A Booking Form (supplied on membership renewal) must be returned to the Programme Secretary in advance, Places are normally allocated about a month prior to each visit. A charge applies to visits marked with an asterisk (*)

<u>Sunday 3 April</u> at 2:00 pm	<u>DOWLANDS, WYMONDLEY ROAD</u> a guided visit to an Edwardian house with Helen Frost	[Limit: 10 members]
<u>Tuesday 5 April</u> at 2:00 pm	<u>EXPLORING HITCHIN'S HISTORY: the new museum Local Studies Room</u> a visit with Alan Fleck	[Limit: 10 Members]
<u>Wednesday 27 April</u> at 2:00 pm	* <u>THE LINNEAN SOCIETY</u> , Piccadilly, London W1 a guided visit with Dr Isabelle Charmentier	[Limit: 24 members]
<u>Sunday 29 May</u> at 2:00 pm	<u>GAPING HILLS LANE: a foot in town and country</u> a guided walk with Nafisa Sayany	[Limit: 15 members]
<u>Monday 30 May</u> at 8:00 pm	<u>THE PAST IN MINIATURE</u> a visit to Alan Clark, Hitchin model-maker	[Limit: 8 members]
<u>Tuesday 31 May</u> at 8:00 pm	<u>THE PAST IN MINIATURE</u> a visit to Alan Clark, Hitchin model-maker	[Limit: 8 members]
<u>Sunday 26 June</u> at 3:00 pm	<u>HIGH DOWN HOUSE</u> a visit hosted by Mr & Mrs Tim Dye	[Limit: 25 members]
<u>Tuesday 28 June</u> at 2:00 pm	* <u>THE SPALDING GENTLEMEN'S SOCIETY</u> a guided visit by minibus	[Limit: 20 members]
<u>Saturday 13 August</u> at 2:00 pm	<u>VERULAMIUM REVEALED</u> site survey explained by Kris Lockyear	[Limit: 10 members]
<u>Sunday 21 August</u> at 2:00 pm	<u>ALMSHOE BURY, ST IPPOLYTS</u> a visit hosted by Chris Titmuss	[Limit: 10 members]
<u>Sunday 25 September</u> at 2:00 pm	<u>SAXON HITCHIN AND THE SEARCH FOR CLOFESHO</u> a guided walk with Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews	[Limit: 20 members]

SPECIAL MEETINGS 2022

Starting times and venues vary: A charge (*) applies to these special events

Date in July to be announced at 8:00 pm	* <u>THE MISS LEWIS LECTURE</u> Details in the Hitchin Festival Programme
Date in July to be announced at 8:00 pm	* <u>THE SCILLA DOUGLAS LECTURE</u> Details in the Hitchin Festival Programme
<u>THURSDAY 1 DECEMBER</u> at 7:45 pm	* <u>CHRISTMAS MEETING</u> Details provided nearer the time

HHS Committee and Contacts

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* Co-opted committee members ** By invitation

This newsletter is published by Hitchin Historical Society, a registered charity dedicated to informing the public of the history of Hitchin and district and undertaking research into the origins and development of buildings, organisations, crafts, trades, and other aspects of historical interest, and to publish the results of such research.

HHS website: www.hitchinhistoricals.org.uk