



Hatfield Regis
Local History Society

President: Rupert Gosling Esq. Lord of the Manor

2012 Events Calendar

MARCH

Eleanor of Castile

Eleanor of Castile, Queen of Edward 1st. An interesting evening given by Richard Barnett following the route of her remains from Lincoln to Westminster Abbey. A cross being erected at each overnight resting place in her memory. Based on crosses in France marking Louis IX's funeral procession, these artistically significant monuments enhanced the image of Edward's kingship as well as witnessing his grief, only 3 survive, none in entirety. The best preserved is that at Geddington. Eleanor of Castile's Queenship is significant in English history for the evolution of a stable financial system for the King's wife.

Primary School Essay Competition

The Society together with Claire Jackman (Year 6 Teacher) had organised an essay competition entitled '*Hatfield Heath in the Second World War*'. Essays were of a high standard with both factual and imaginative entries resulting in two sets of prizes being awarded for each category. It is hoped that this initiative can become an annual event.

APRIL

Imperial War Graves

A talk and video presentation by Sandra Saban on the Imperial, later Commonwealth, War Graves Commission started with Fabian Ware, where under his leadership the recording and caring for all graves they could find was carried out. By 1918 some 587,000 graves had been identified and a further 559,000 casualties were registered as having no known grave. There followed a detailed description of work carried out by eminent architects, sculptors, stonemasons and garden designers creating the cemeteries covering a period to the 1920's when over 2,400 cemeteries were constructed in France and Belgium. Work progressed in many countries to erect memorials to their own dead and in 2009 the discovery of 250 Australian and British casualties from the Battle of Fromelles required construction of a new cemetery, unveiled in 2010. A poignant reminder of the sacrifices that were made and are still being made.

MAY

Cromer Windmill

A visit to the historic windmill at Cromer Post near Stevenage by members of HRLHS. The original building of 1681 was blown over in 1860, left to deteriorate after the first World War but restored in 1967 by Hertfordshire Building Preservation



Trust. The photograph gives some indication of its scale. An interesting guided tour including a view from the top was

conducted by two Honorary Mill Curators who are supported by local enthusiasts. The visit ended at Church Farm Tea Rooms in Ardeley.

AUGUST

Festival Display

Wide selection of medals, badges and trophies won by Bill Bruty the Heath born footballer. A goalkeeper for the Heath and other local clubs when his playing career ended he officiated as a Referee. Other old photos generated interest from those recognising themselves and previous team members.

POW Camp visit

A second visit to the POW Camp in Mill Lane proved to be popular and the tour was arranged through John Fish who also acted as a guide. An introduction by Robin Gurnett preceded the tour explaining a background to the camp, guards and prisoners from its formation in 1941 until the camp closed in 1946



OCTOBER

Hatfield Forest Presentation

The latest meeting of the History Society took place at St Mary's Church, Hatfield Broad Oak. A talk on Hatfield



Forest by Simon Cranmer, Property Operations Manager, covered historical and current activity of a Royal Medieval Hunting Forest.

Woodland management of established coppicing and pollarding is still carried out providing a range of

uses for cut wood. A local committee provides structural administration with independent finance generated rather than that from the NT general fund. The evening concluded with Simon answering a number of questions regarding the upkeep and practical management and conservation of the forest, deer control, grazing cattle and rare breed sheep.

NOVEMBER

Philip Hays

On 20 November Philip Hays gave the second part of his talk on the history of Sheering school. His last talk, in November 2011, ended at 1933. In opening he said that this was a difficult talk to write as a large part of it related to him. The new head teacher in 1933 was Bertram Copeland, from Barnsley. At this time the school had three classes: Infants, Intermediates and Seniors. Evacuees from Leyton in East London had an effect on the standard and after the war also the introduction of the 11 pus. In 1954 the school opened as a controlled Church of England primary school. Bertram Copeland retired in December 1960, and was succeeded by F T Armstrong followed by Anne Voss in 1978 and Philip Hays in 1981 until he retired in 2009. During his tenure the school role increased from 69 pupils to 112 in 1995. Philip spoke with interest on a range of activities and educational initiatives that were introduced during his Headship demonstrating the wide range of opportunities that existed for the Pupils. This presentation contributed to a thoroughly entertaining and enjoyable evening.

John Sly and Ivan Cooper