

## Dates for your Diary

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September**

7.15 for a 7.30 start

‘Life and Death of the Wicked Lady’  
a talk by  
Rowland Hughes  
a lecturer at the Uni of Herts.



Margaret Lockwood as the Wicked Lady. A still taken from the 1945 film of the same name, also starring James Mason

The story of Lady Ferrars, a noblewoman who had reputedly taken to the roads of 17<sup>th</sup> century Hertfordshire to commit robbery at gunpoint.

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December:** 2.15 for a 2.30 start. **Our Christmas Social Meeting.**  
Another chance to meet up and socialize over tea and mince pies.

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3<sup>rd</sup> Welwyn Hatfield Heritage Fair

## 4<sup>th</sup> Welwyn Hatfield Heritage Network Fair

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October

10am – 5pm

South Aisle of the Howard Centre WGC.

Come along and join us and other heritage organisations from the Borough for the 4<sup>th</sup> Heritage Fair. There will be interesting exhibitions and displays throughout the day.

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## Family Matters

One Family, Two Wars

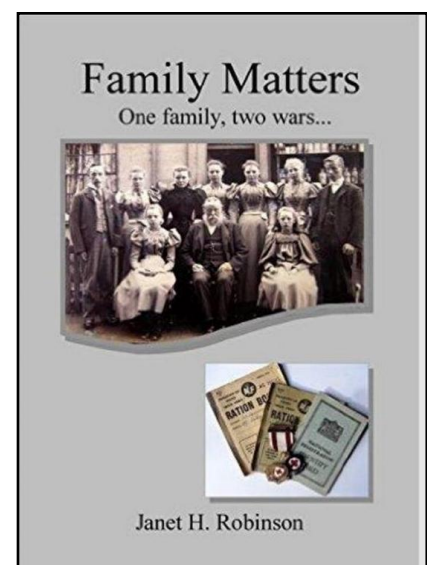
by Janet H Robinson (née Tingey)

Price £7.50

For those who were not at our last meeting here is another chance to buy Janet's fascinating book full of anecdotes and memories of a 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> century family from Hatfield and St Albans.

Available from - Amazon UK

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## Newtown School:Part 1, 1936 – 1939 by Jean West

I have little recollection of my first class at Newtown Primary School which was in Dellfield Rd. having come to Hatfield from Manchester. There was little play even in the youngest class although we were allowed to take a toy on a Friday afternoon; that was the only day my mother met me from school with my baby sister in her pram – usually I walked home with other classmates who lived in my direction.



This class photo was taken in 1937. Jean is sitting in the front row to the left of the photo. Jean is on the right & her best friend Doreen Smith on the left.

Newtown was a fairly new building; many Herts. schools were built in the same pattern all classrooms faced the same way overlooking playing fields, large windows outward, small ones on the corridor wall, hall sticking out into the playground but toilets were in the playground. Mr Cox was Headmaster and Mr Dawes his Deputy; most teachers were unmarried women who had to resign if they wed. Mr Cox was omnipotent and even the threat of ‘being sent to Mr Cox’ was enough to quell the naughtiest pupil. He may well have been the kindest father and husband but his word was law. Corporal punishment was widely used by some teachers, even the girls received blows on the hand from a ruler occasionally but some male teachers used various means of beating, including one who was well known for his use of a plimsoll (trainers of today). I do recall it was often the scruffier kids who got punished – grossly unfair but that was life.

A very important member of staff was the janitor or caretaker who fought a running battle against the cheekier boys but the older stronger ones were sometimes selected to help him stow the great piles of anthracite which was fed into the boiler heating the school. We were given a small bottle of milk at morning break and often in winter it would be frozen.

Classrooms were sunny and bright with two to a desk and colourful pictures on the walls. Teachers sat at a very high chair and tall desk but education was mostly chalk and talk; discipline was never an issue; if you got into trouble at school it wasn’t mentioned at home or there would have been double trouble and parents were not welcome at school then, no parent evenings existed.

Perhaps I didn’t care for games but I don’t remember anything organised, I think we had ‘keep-fit’ and playground games in break times were popular – whips and tops, skipping ropes, balls all made their appearance in season and chasing games were popular. Teachers taught all the subjects in the curriculum, simple arithmetic, writing composition, history, geography and plenty of poetry, singing in the hall, nearly every teacher played the piano, and speaking correct grammar was also important, we chanted out our times-table so rote learning was widely used.

**Newtown School: Part 2, 1939 – 1942 in the December newsletter.**