

### **Dates For Your Diary**

Monday 10th December 2.15 start

Our Christmas Social Afternoon

Bring along items of interest for members to see

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### **Meeting dates for 2019**

Monday 11th March, 2.15pm.

Monday 10th June, 7.15pm. AGM

Monday 9th September, .7.15pm.

Monday 9th December, 2.15pm.

All meetings held at Friendship House, Wellfield Close, Hatfield, AL10 0BU  
Members £1 non members £2

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### **Elocution Lessons in Hatfield** **Recollections by Jean West**

Madam Florence Collier lived in one of the several bungalows now demolished to provide entrance to Comet Road. She was a luminary of the Carl Rosa Opera Company and taught music, voice production and elocution. She was a short plumpish lady with a deep voice and plenty of presence and you had to address her as 'Madam'. With my newly acquired music case still in my possession and dated 1940, I was despatched each Saturday morning to learn elocution.

Several friends were there too and Madam had two burley sons – late teens I think - who were both musical and had nice voices and were brought into play to act as duettists or actors when we performed our end of term concerts for our parents. She also had a husband who took no part in all these activities but picked up his newspaper and hurried to some lair down the garden to escape. The front room was dominated by a rather lovely grand piano

I guess I was around 9 or 10 and of course WW2 was raging but these sort of activities took our minds off mundane things like bombs and war-news and we got on with learning poems, short extracts from mostly Shakespearian plays and songs too at times. I can recall acting a short scene from 'The Merchant of Venice' where I played Nerissa, maid to the leading role of Portia and my mother told me later that I was so intent on speaking my few lines, that in combing her hair—wig—I almost pulled it off her head!

I think these Saturday sessions must have ended when I changed to secondary school but 'Madam' taught us to 'Stand up, speak up and then shut-up' - an adage which came in handy 30 years later when doing teacher training. I do remember her fee for a term was half a guinea, 60p. in today's money. Anyway I did enjoy these sessions, lost some of my shyness and also my Manchurian accent having lived in that city prior to coming to Hatfield.

Jean West.

Does anyone else remember having elocution lessons with Madam Florence Collier? Please let us know.

## Armistice Day 2018

On 11.11.18 the people of Hatfield commemorated the centenary of the ending of WW1 with a day of remembrance starting at sunrise with a service at the War Grave Cemetery on the Gt North Rd. At 10.45am there was a parade from the Red Lion Pub led by Lord Salisbury to the War Memorial by the gates of Hatfield House where the service of remembrance was followed by a laying of wreaths.

From the Memorial everyone was invited to follow the clergy and colour parties to process into the grounds of the Park for a service at the North Front of Hatfield House, recreating the act of worship held there by the people of Hatfield on Armistice Day 1918. After the service everyone was invited to stay for refreshments at the Riding Stables. Here there was a WW1 exhibition, which included your Society's WW1 display, a display from Hertford Museum and items from the archives of Hatfield House.

In the evening a 'Battle's Over Tribute' was held at Hatfield house. Here a beacon was lit at the Cricket Pitch as part of a national tribute of commemoration and remembrance. There was entertainment from the 'Rockabillys' who had previously appeared at the 'Battle of the Proms.

Many thanks to everyone who organised and took part in this excellent day.



Service at the War Memorial

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Parade up to Hatfield House

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Service at Hatfield House

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Having refreshments—Riding Stables

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The Beacon

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The War Memorial

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