

HATFIELD THIS CENTURY

Hatfield People Explore Their History Since 1900

No. 23

NEWSLETTER

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-Disappointing Support

The illustrated slide talk on "Hatfield As It Was" held at Birchwood in October was well attended by local visitors, but the committee was disappointed by the small number of members present. Does this suggest that such meetings are not required? The range of photographs presented by Ron Kingdon included many not seen before and even included some from Salisbury Rhodesia with local connections.

Xmas Fair Display

A display of photographs, books etc covering group activities and Museum items was presented at St. John's Church on the 30th of November. Thanks to those who helped man the stall.

HADAS Workshop

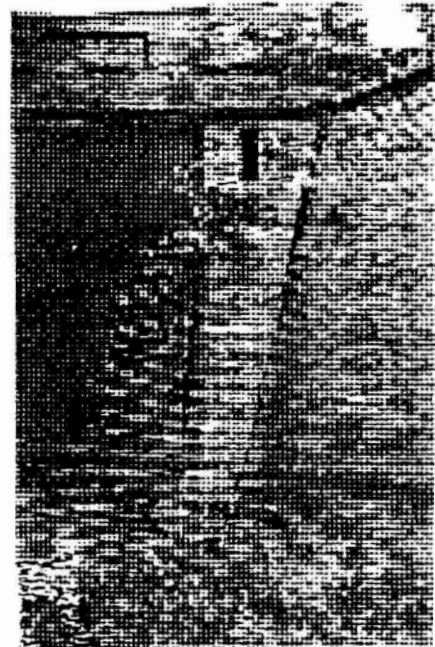
Six members of the Group attended the meeting on 21st November to hear about the work of the former Hatfield and District Archaeological Society. Formed in May 1968 under the chairmanship of Dr. Peter Kingsford, with Lord Salisbury as its President, its headquarters were at No 1 St. Albans Road. With the demolition and redevel-

opment of Old Hatfield underway at that time, the members of the new society enthusiastically began their excavations. They were sufficiently ambitious to start opening up their premises as a museum on Wednesday afternoons.

In 1973 HADAS moved their headquarters to the Old Mill House at Mill Green from where they continued their researches of excavations from various sites.

In 1977 the Old Mill House was officially opened as a museum by the chairman of the District Council, Dr. Dennis Lewis. In the following year the Museum's first curator, Sue Agate, was appointed and a new headquarters for HADAS was set up in one of the Mill Cottages.

During the session we learned about the various finds made by the society during their excavations in Batterdale, Park Street and in other parts of the district. Much more could be written about these, however Wendy has agreed to attend our 1997 AGM next May to give us the opportunity to hear more about the discoveries in the 1960s and 1970s. Make a point of being there!
B.G.L.



Barnet By-Pass Bridge

Hatfield to St Albans Branch Line

Ron White is researching the St. Albans branch line and needs some information on bridges along the track. One brick and steel bridge over the track (now a pedestrian-cycle path) built in 1927 to carry the Barnet By-Pass - now Comet Way- is of particular interest. If viewed from track level, there is a roughly cut aperture 9 inches wide by 24 inches high (east and west faces of the bridge), just below road level. This, it is claimed, was a war-time defence fortification- Ron needs to know if these

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Letters. . . .

War Memorial

Further to the article on the dedication of the War Memorial in Hatfield and the recording of the names of local citizens who lost their lives in the 1914/18 war, I think it would be appropriate to mention that during the years 1950/52 as clerk of the Hatfield Parish Council I was involved with the secretary of the Hatfield branch of the British Legion, the late Bob Howe, in compiling a list of those who lost their lives in the 1939/45 conflict. This list included both service personnel and those civilians who died as the result of the bombings in Hatfield.

Eventually after obtaining authorisation from the Ministry to raise an additional rate to cover the cost of all the work concerned, the extended memorial was dedicated on the 28th September 1952, a full report appeared in the Herts. Advertiser on 3rd October 1952

Fred Adams

P.S. Will we be known as Hatfield Last Century in 2001?

Gracemead

Gracemead was two rows of well built houses owned by the Great Northern Railway. They had three large bedrooms, a sitting room, dining room and kitchen with outside toilet. The

back garden had a six foot fence on either side. My parents moved into No. 27 in August 1914 when I was 16 months old, and had soldiers billeted on them using the sitting room.

The houses were modernised about 1939 when the toilets were brought inside.

The front row was renamed as part of St. Albans Road in line with the shops.

I lived there for 53 years until being rehoused for Woolco to be built. The Development Corporation took them over about 1965 until about 1978 when Welwyn Hatfield Council took possession of them.

I assume that 'Church Row', now St. Albans Road East, was called after St. Luke's Church on the same side of the road.

Dorothy Larkin

(But why Gracemead? Ed.)

Haseldine Meadows

John Francis Haseldine was born in Nottingham in 1886. His father was a lace manufacturer, co-founder of the firm Cuckson Haseldine and Manderville which survived both wars but eventually went into voluntary liquidation in the nineteen fifties.

He was educated at Nottingham High School and on leaving went to London where he trained as an engineer with John Taylor & Sons, Consulting Engineers specialising in water supply, drainage and sewage treatment.

He served throughout the first world war as an officer in the Royal Engineers in France and was awarded the Military Cross.

In 1924 he was appointed

Engineer and Manager of the Barnet District Gas and Water Company which position he held until his death in 1944. *(An agreement made on 14 Sept. 1938 between the Barnet & District Gas and Water Company by John Francis Haseldine their Engineer and General Manager and the Gascoyne Cecil Estates is in the archives at Hatfield House. Ed.)*

During the time of his appointment he lived at New Barnet, first at Station Road next door to the Company's offices and from 1934 at Lyonsdown Avenue.

I was born in 1923 when my father went to Bamet. Educated at Haileybury College and Cambridge University, I served in the REME before joining John Taylor & Sons. I was invited to become a Director of Lee Valley Water Company, successor to the Barnet Company in 1976 and remained a director of that company and its successors until I retired in 1976.

John Haseldine

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Branch Line

apertures were cut for the regular army, the Home Guard or possibly for the RAF Regiment.

Does anyone know whether these defence poets were ever used in war-time exercises?

Ron White