

April 18th 2024
The Gunpowder Plot
Richard Thomas

The background to the "Powder Treason" is examined and the involvement of those who laid the plot: Catesby, Percy, Guido Fawkes and ten other conspirators. The talk outlines the events of early November 1605 and the flight and fate of the conspirators, including the trial and executions of those who were captured.



May 16th 2024
AGM and a talk by our President Bill Hardy
Refreshments will be available
From Pig Barn to The St Barnabas Centre
In the early 1990s the Church of St James the Great, Thorley was proving too small for its growing congregation. In 1994 a large adjoining Tudor barn belonging to Thorley Hall Farm became available. After fundraising, plus a considerable donation, the pig barn was converted into the substantial church and community centre that we have today. This talk will focus on its year-long conversion, its timber-framed history and its present day uses.



Who are we?

The Bishop's Stortford History Society was formed in 1955 and has a growing membership of 50. We meet on the third Thursday of each month from September to May at St Joseph's Hall, Windhill Churches Centre; talks start at 7.30 pm.

What do we do?

Membership of the Society offers you a full and interesting programme of talks and access to books and magazines of local and general interest. Additionally, trips to local places of historic interest are organised.

If you have an interest in any aspect of history and would like to come to our talks, join us on our trips or begin some research of your own, we would like to hear from you. We also try to respond to queries on local and family history.

Publications

Bishop's Stortford: A Short History
The History of Warwick Road, Bishop's Stortford by John Rhodes
Heritage Town Trails (available from the Bishop's Stortford Tourist Office and South Mill Arts Centre)

Membership

The membership rates are currently:
Annual Subscription £15.00 Visitors £4.00

Members can borrow journals to which the Society subscribes as well as books from our library.

To join the Society or for any other enquiries please contact Tim Howard-Smith at:
bshschair@btinternet.com
Tel 07774 671328

www.bishopsstortfordhistorysociety.org.uk

Charity No. 299417



Bishop's Stortford History Society



Programme of Talks September 2023 - May 2024

All meetings to be held at
St Joseph's Hall
Windhill Churches Centre
Windhill
Bishop's Stortford
CM23 2ND

Talks start at 7.30 pm

September 21st 2023

Trent Park and the Secret Listeners of WWII

Dr Helen Fry

During WWII British intelligence bugged the conversations of thousands of German prisoners-of-war at three stately houses: Latimer House and Wilton Park in Buckinghamshire and Trent Park in North London. Hitler's Generals, housed in luxurious conditions and wined and dined at exclusive clubs, were lulled into a false sense of security. Not realising their conversations were 'wired for sound', they inadvertently gave away some of Hitler's most closely guarded secrets. For over 60 years 'secret listeners' did not speak about their work, not even to their families. They died, little knowing that they, alongside Bletchley Park, not only shortened the war but helped toward the victory on VE day.

October 19th 2023

Ukraine and the War with Russia

Dr Felix Schnell

This topical talk will summarise aspects of Ukraine's long and proud history while also addressing the historical and ideological narratives used to justify Russia's invasion.

November 16th 2023

Excavating Roman Stortford (Repeat & Update)

Daniel Firth MSc ACIfA - Fieldwork Project

Supervisor, Oxford Archaeology

Redevelopment of the Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre has led to a wealth of new information about the Roman settlement at Bishop's Stortford. This talk will present some of the initial findings of the excavations carried out on the site in 2019 and 2022 along with working theories about the nature of this settlement, its place in the province and the people who lived there.



December 21st 2023

A History of Easton Lodge: The Countess and Her Gardens

Gary Matthews

The talk outlines the history and development of Easton Lodge from the late 1500s to the present day. In 1865, three-year-old Frances Evelyn Maynard inherited the estate and the vast fortunes that came with it. Later, as the Countess of Warwick, her interest in the gardens grew, as well as her involvement with the wider community, including an intimate friendship with King Edward VII.

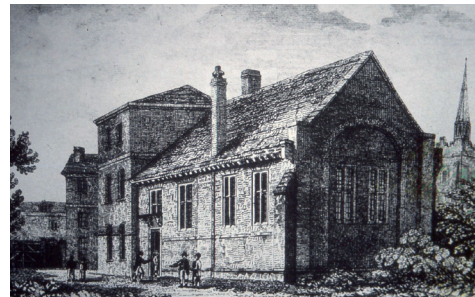


January 18th 2024

Tudor Education in Essex

Tony Tuckwell

The former chantry schools that emerged as endowed grammar schools in the mid-16th century, were intended to provide a literate governing class for the new Protestant Reformation. This talk by a former Head of King Edward VI Grammar School, Chelmsford demonstrates how politics, religion and education were powerfully linked but also how the classical curriculum offered by grammar schools for over 300 years became increasingly irrelevant, leading to enforced reform.



Today's teachers may have concerns but they are unlikely to include the events that beset Chelmsford Free Grammar School in its early days.

February 15th 2024

POW Camp 116, Hatfield Heath

Mark Ratcliff

Tucked away in Hatfield Heath are signs that the village harboured a prisoner-of-war camp during WWII. This illustrated talk describes the camp's history from its construction in 1942/3 up to the present day. It will include a brief overview of prisoners of war in the UK, life for the prisoners and what happened to the site at Hatfield Heath after they left. The site's future will also be discussed.



March 21st 2023

The Russian Revolution. Eight Months that changed the World

Dr Jonathan Davis

In February 1917, Russia began its first revolution of the year. The Romanov dynasty was overthrown and the people freed themselves from Tsarism. Two new governing bodies emerged and, amidst the turmoil of the WWI, a moderate democratic republic began to be constructed. But eight months later, a second revolution took place and a socialist state was declared by the new Bolshevik government. This talk will discuss how Russia passed from one revolution to the other, and it will show how Lenin's Bolshevik Party came to power during the October Revolution.

