

Harpenden Local History Day announced for April 20

With kind permission of the Eric Morecambe Centre, local charity the Harpenden & District Local History Society will be utilising the entire venue for Harpenden Local History Day, on Saturday April 20.

The event marks both the society's 50th anniversary and the official opening of the town's new museum, and will be presided over by Annie Brewster, High Sheriff of Hertfordshire 2024-25 (in Nomination).

Highlights will include exhibitions on the history of Harpenden and district, other local society exhibitions, a special children's competition, and history talks throughout the day. Further details will be released in due course.

Society chairman Roger Butterworth (*pictured*) said: "2023 was the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Harpenden & District Local History Society. It also,

in December, witnessed the first opening to the public of the new Museum, with roots going back 100 years. The first proper history of Harpenden was written, in conjunction with that of Wheathampstead, about 50 years ago and prompted the pioneers at the time to set up the Society, and later first museum. That museum came to an end in 2003, testing the resilience of the small band of enthusiasts.

"The continuing commitment and dedication of those enthusiasts, then without a publicly accessible repository for artefacts and archives, is most remarkable. We benefited from the generosity of Les Casey, a local history enthusiast and stalwart of the Society. He left a significant bequest to the Society, which enabled us to take out a lease on part of the lower floor of the Eric Morecambe Centre and fit it out as a museum and archive.

"This is not only significant in its own right, but gives us a platform to relaunch the Society in recognition of its wide charitable remit to educate the public on the local history of Harpenden and district. It can again, after artefacts and documents having been nurtured for 50 years, share with residents of Harpenden and surrounding communities the museum and archive of which the town can be proud."

