

**Hastings Local History Group** have been busy with new publications.  
**Hastings A -Z** by John Gilbert - a useful reference book @ £12  
**Answering the Bell** by Brian Lawes, a well illustrated book on the Voluntary Fire Service and major fires @ £5  
**Hastings Bygones Volume 9** with the usual mix of interesting topics – Tether cars, field systems at White Rock, Mrs Mason, The Crakes and their Highlands Estate, The Game of Bowls, Stills remembered, Opening of Battle Abbey to visitors- @ £7. All available from Hastings History House.

We were sad to learn of the death of Laurie Taylor on 31st December 2020.  
 Many of you will remember Laurie from Tamarisk Books and his work in the Local Studies Room at Hastings Museum.  
 He was for some years an honorary member of OHPS having been a benefactor in the early days of the History House and a member of the Society.  
 We remember him with thanks for his help, support and sharing his knowledge of Hastings History

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**At last it is possible to get a date by comparing tree rings from a master chronology with samples from the Old Town.** Dr Graeme Davis is researching 121 All Saints Street and has commissioned a dendrochronological survey which has come up with the date of c1648. It was said that Old Town houses were difficult to date but the development of master chronologies progresses and now this can be done.

It was in 1643 that Col. Morley and his troops chased the curate of All Saints, Mr Hinson ( a Royalist) from the church.

G Thomas-Stanford's book 'Sussex in the Great Civil War 1642-1660', records after the Kings confinement at Carisbrooke Castle in 1646, John Ashburnham "kept a barque in readiness off Hastings for some weeks". "Hastings appears at this time to have offered advantages to refugees".

In 1648 the Marquis of Ormonde escaped from Hastings to Dieppe. "He in disguise, and without being attended by more than one servant, rode into Sussex and in an obscure and unguarded port or harbour put himself on board a shallop which safely transported him to Normandy". This obscurity resulted in a 'Clerk of the passage' being appointed at Hastings'. Parliament had "information that dangerous persons pass that way into foreign parts."

Certainly John Ashburnham's service to King Charles is well documented. I understand the relics that used to be in Ashburnham Church are now in Hastings Museum.

In 'A Survivor of Storms, Hastings Old Town An Architectural History', the authors record the number of carpenters resident in the town 1642/3 was 8 rising to 13 in 1656/7, whereas the number of masons and bricklayers fell from 9 to 4 over the same period. Does this indicate a building boom? More dendro dates would be useful, so if you have 16th or 17th century house how about it?