



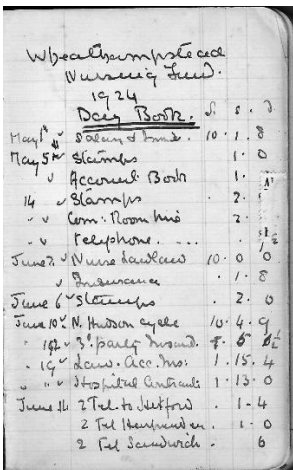
News and events

- Our **next meeting** will be on **Wednesday 19 March** when Ray Wilson will describe his research and latest findings about **"The Wheathampstead Saxon burial"**.
- **"George Bernard and Charlotte Shaw in Hertfordshire 1904-50"**. This talk will be at 7.45 on **Tuesday 18 March** at Dagnall Street Baptist Church, St Albans. Free to members of the Arc & Arc, £5.00 to guests.

Charities

A small black account book in the Society's archive has prompted research into the complex history of Wheathampstead's charities.

The book records the accounts of the Wheathampstead Nursery Fund from 1924 to 1952, with entries such as "Nurse Laidlaw salary: £10.0.0." and "Income tax: 17s.5d." which suggest that the Fund was run as a business. But what preceded the Fund and what came after?



The Victoria County History (1902) lists (in addition to the James Marshall Fund, of which

more later) four charities in Wheathampstead. The Edward Smith Charity, founded in 1632, distributed bread to the value of £8 (originally £10) to the poor of five local parishes. The Thomas Kentish Charity (1712) distributed 10 shillings a year at Christmas to poor families "in money and bread". The George Ephgrave Charity (1883) paid for coal to be distributed to poor and deprived widows. The Labourer's Gift (£4 a year paid by Westminster "since time immemorial") went to "the poor". A fifth charity raised funds for the repairs and maintenance of the parish church.

By 1938 the sums of money involved in the four charities were so small that they, together with the Cory-Wright Fund, were merged into a new charity, the Wheathampstead United Charities (WUC), which was registered with the Charity Commissioners in 1964. Four of its trustees were also trustees of the James Marshall Foundation.

The Wheathampstead Welfare Group was founded in 1967 and registered as a charity in 1975 to support local residents in need. While raising some funds itself, the Group regularly applied for grants from the WUC and the two

charities worked side by side for many years. The Group changed its name to the Wheathampstead Community Group in 2008. An offshoot, the Patient Participation Group, was set up later in the same year. For details of the Community Group and the support it can give to local residents, go to www.wheathampsteadwucg.org/

In the meantime, The Thursday Club for the Disabled (now The Thursday Club) had been founded in 1975 and registered as a charity in 1996 with the aim to "...relieve disabled persons ...by the provision of recreational activities and... assistance and relief to their carers". Having functioned successfully for many years, with some financial support from the WUC, it merged into the Community Group in 2021 and continues to flourish.

Following several years' discussion, the WUC transferred its funds to the Community Group in 2023 and closed as a registered charity.

The James Marshall Foundation was established by the will of James Marshall in 1719 and derives its income from its ownership of a number of properties in Harpenden. Originally set up to fund apprenticeships for the young people of Harpenden and Wheathampstead, it has amended its aims over the years and can now give financial support to persons under 25 in the local area in a wide range of ways connected with education and training at school, college and university, including extra-curricular activities. For details, see jamesmarshallfoundation.co.uk/ It has always been a separate charity, not to be confused with either the Harpenden United Charities (HUC) or WUC.

The aims of the James Marshall Foundation and the Community Group are complementary and they cooperate when help is requested.

So where does the Wheathampstead Nursing Fund fit into this? The fact that the account book was given to the History Society by the secretary of the Welfare Group suggests, though it is not firm evidence, that the Fund was a forerunner of that group and hence of the Community Group.

And a trace of the Labourer's Gift lives on.