

From Rise to Ruins – Programme

Sat 28 November 2020: Dr Richard Hoggett, 'The Abbey, the Antiquaries and the Archaeologists: Discovering the Abbey of St Edmund'

Abstract: This talk examines the ways in which antiquaries and archaeologists have approached the study of the abbey since the Dissolution, and reveals what recent archaeological fieldwork has told us about the development of the monastic site.

Biography: Dr Richard Hoggett is a freelance heritage consultant, writer and lecturer, with an academic background in Anglo-Saxon and medieval monasticism. In 2018, he completed a detailed Heritage Assessment of the former abbey site for the Heritage Partnership.

Sat 23 January 2021: Dr Abby Antrobus, 'The Relationship between the Abbey and the Town'

Abstract: This talk will examine how, focussed on the shrine of St Edmund, the abbey and town developed from their Anglo-Saxon origins into the Norman period. It will consider the archaeological evidence for the growth of the built environment as wealth was generated and expansion took place, in this period of cultural change.

Biography: Dr Abby Antrobus is a Senior Archaeological Officer at Suffolk County Council where she provides advice on the archaeological implications of development across Suffolk, particularly in the county's towns. Her doctoral thesis was on the development of Bury St Edmunds.

Sat 27 Feb 2021: Professor Sarah Foot, 'Patrons and Benefactors of St Edmund's Abbey, c. 900-1086'

Abstract: The origins of the first community of St Edmund remain obscure, but probably date back to the late ninth century. From the earliest surviving written records, we know that the leading families of Suffolk and Norfolk took a close interest in promotion of the saint's cult and support of the abbey. This paper discusses those patrons and benefactors, explores Cnut's re-foundation of Bury in 1020, and considers why William the Conqueror also chose to patronise Bury St Edmunds.

Biography: Sarah Foot is the Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History and a Canon of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford. She has written extensively on early medieval monasticism and the Anglo-Saxon Church and has, with Kathryn Lowe, prepared an edition of the pre-Conquest charters of Bury St Edmunds. She is currently working on an intellectual biography of the Venerable Bede.

Sat 27 March 2021: Professor Mark Bailey, 'The Abbey of Bury St Edmunds and the History of Suffolk'

Abstract: The abbey possessed vast landed estates and extensive judicial powers throughout Suffolk, and the ways in which it exploited its properties and its rights had a profound influence upon Suffolk life in the Middle Ages: and, indeed, the consequences of some of those decisions are still evident in the modern landscape. This talk considers the abbey's external relationship with the people of medieval Suffolk, including its stormy relationship with the town itself.

Biography: Mark Bailey is Professor of Late Medieval History, UEA, and President of SIAH. He went to school in Suffolk, and played sport for the county in his youth. He has just finished a period of nine years as High Master of St Paul's School, London, and returned to UEA. In 2019 he delivered the Ford Lectures in British History at the University of Oxford, and the book of the series will be published in February 2021 by OUP as 'After the Black Death: Economy, Society and the Law in Fourteenth-century England'.