

**BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
& HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



Newsletter 223

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*He's escaped!
BAHS at Ampert Church*

Churches Visit – Report Number 1

Nicola Turton

When I passed out the admin instructions for the churches trip, I knew it would be a sunny day, and so it proved, despite the foggy start.



Our friends David Hill and Mark Taylor, aka the Roman Glassblowers, very generously offered to host us at the start of the day, providing loos and refreshments, and incidentally allowing me freedom of their library of glass reference books). Leaving the Project Workshops, we drove to the church of St Michael's, Quarley (*left*), where we were ravished by the traces of Anglo-Saxon work, and admired the handsome 1723 Italianate east window, with square ionic pillars, and one of the first of its kind in the country.

Continuing to St Mary's at Amport, we overlapped with the choir who were rehearsing for their evening concert. I especially enjoyed the strains of *April is in My Mistress' Eyes*, one of my favourites. In fact, as we walked around the sunny graveyard, listening to the choir and with the spring flowers like jewels in the grass, Alan observed that it was like being in a 1950s travelogue film, but *in colour!* Due to choir practice, we were slightly restricted in our visit, but they kindly stopped for five minutes, thus allowing us to view the famous and truly wonderful 14th century alabaster altar-piece of John the Baptist. I plan to return and spend a lot longer inspecting it.



After lunch in Abbots Ann, we gathered at their church, another St Mary's. This 18th century church was well endowed with graffiti, and I commented that judging by the dates, they must have been chipping away pretty much as it was being built. A pleasing church, though not of great age, and one might argue that their most remarkable treasures are the Virgin's Crowns (*photo left*). Our guide, Tim

Taylor, explained that these crowns are in honour of people who were born and died in the village and were known to be virgins. Several are for children and some for boys. I found them slightly eerie, but compellingly curious, and they do add distinction to the building. There are over 40, and presumably still counting...



Our final visit was to St Andrew's, Nether Wallop. This elusive church is rather tucked away, and even the village map on the green failed to show us where it was. But it was very much worth the effort, as they have a wonderful display of wall paintings, dating from the earliest (c1020) to the 18th century painting of a bell. The

photo here shows St George slaying a dragon. The church is tucked into a hill and outside is an unusual monument, a mid-18th century pyramid remembering Francis and Anne Dowse.

This is by necessity a perfunctory report, and Mary Oliver told us much more of historical interest. But I don't have much room, so will close by thanking Mary for her organisation and research skills, David and Mark for hosting us, Annabel Stowe for tea in her garden, and the guardians of each church who were happy for us to visit en masse.

Editor's note: due to a communications error, two reports were written for this outing. I thought it would be interesting to show two examples of different styles and impressions, so I have chosen to print both mine and Peter Stone's versions. Peter's report may be found on page 5.

Trip to Silchester Excavations – Friday 20th July, 2pm

This year Reading University will be digging on the site of the Roman Bath House, and we have planned a trip to the excavations. Meet at the English Heritage car park at Silchester at 2pm, to walk across the site to meet Professor Mike Fulford.

The trip is free and if you are interested in going please email Steve Kirby at rikker@talk21.com with your name and contact details.

Fieldwork Report

Mark Peryer

On Friday 16 March, we brought the *Dig Basing!* project to a close with a public meeting at Lychpit Community Hall. The meeting was well attended, with good participation from Basing residents and those that took part in the various dig weekends. The project is being formally written up so that we can make sure that the findings from all the hard work are publicly available.

We will be giving test-pitting a rest this year, but we plan to start another project in another settlement in the Basingstoke area.

We presented an updated version of the Worsley Hall talk, which has already been given to the BAHS at the Candover Valley Club, Brown Candover, on the 6th April. Sue and Charles Marriot organised the evening and it was well attended with about 30 locals. Judging by the reaction to the talk we think that we will get some visitors this year.



Dig Basing proves to be popular



Detail emerges at the grotto site

We are in the process of drawing up plans for this year's excavations at Worsley Hall, which will run from the 2-16 June.

We are also planning a two-week excavation at the Stanchester site in August. Given the late spring, we are not sure of the progress of the crops which will impact access to the site. However, we hope to have more definite information in June.

Ian Waite has been leading a team investigating a Grotto at South Warnborough. The Grotto was originally found by Bob Goddard whilst metal detecting. The site appears to be part of landscaped gardens developed in the 18th century as a development of a former deer park, and consists of a small amphitheatre with the grotto at its focal point. Work is on-going when the weather is good and hands are available. If you would like to lend a hand, please contact Ian.

If you would be interested in taking part in either or both of our summer excavations, or the work at the Grotto, then please contact Ian Waite via email waite52@live.co.uk or by phone mob: 07963 372989.

Andover Area Church Visit 14th April 2018

Report Number 2

Peter Stone

After meeting at Roman Glassmakers and being suitably fortified with refreshment thanks to David Hill we began the tour proper at St Michael's Quarley. This church has a nave, which probably dates to the 9th century, with a blocked Saxon doorway and a 12th century font standing close to a 14th century coffin lid in the floor that is distinguished by a patterned decoration similar to that found on coinage of the period. Medieval structural change is evidenced by the south wall window which dates from the 15th century and interior fittings include 17th century rails baluster and pulpit timber which were saved from an early 20th century fire at nearby Amport House, then the seat of the fifteenth Marquis of Winchester. The chancel dates from the 15th century and has a Palladian-style east window which was paid for in part by a member of the Hoare banking family who were then lessees of the Manor. So here we have two families with Basingstoke connections represented.

Most remarkable are the three bells which have stood on the ground outside the church since 1879 when the bell tower was found to be unsafe. Two were recast in 2007 by the now defunct Whitechapel foundry after they were stolen but the third dates from 1686 and was preserved when the Marquis of Winchester met the cost of restoration after cracking appeared in 1905.

We then journeyed on to Amport whose manor connections with Basing begin with Hugh de Port following the Conquest and then passed by marriage to the Paulet family whose most notable member was of course William Paulet, first Marquis of Winchester, Lord Treasurer to Henry VIII and builder of Basing House.

The church of St Mary Amport is where the Reverend Thomas Sheppard, a former Rector of Quarley and Vicar of Basingstoke in the mid-eighteenth century, and his wife Sophia are buried. Both were generous benefactors of all three parishes. The oldest part of the structure is reckoned to be early 14th century but in 1866 it was in poor condition and substantially altered at the instigation of the then Marquis of Winchester during the rebuilding of Amport House.

Notable features of its chancel, which was not materially affected by the 19th century alterations, are the tracery of the east window and a piscina with an octagonal basin although perhaps of greater interest is the framed medieval alabaster carving of St. John's Head that was found in a blocked chimney recess at an East Cholderton cottage where it may have been placed to prevent destruction either during Reformation or the Civil War period. The south and north transepts are dominated by memorials to the Paulet family as is the nave where the 1866 alterations have all but eliminated anything that remained of a 14th century structure but the tower holds two bells, part of a ring of six, which date from 1662. It so happened that our visit coincided with rehearsals by a choir from Andover which, although access to the nave was restricted for a limited period of time, provided an unexpected but thoroughly enjoyable background throughout.

After lunch at nearby pubs we met up again at around 2.00 pm at St. Mary the Virgin Abbotts Ann. This church could not be more different from those at Quarley and Amport. The brick construction of about 1716 was financed by Thomas 'Diamond' Pitt a Dorset-born merchant whose dubious activities in India, where he became Governor of Madras, had enabled him to amass a huge fortune founded on the acquisition of a very large diamond. He is otherwise notable for being the grandfather of William Pitt the Elder and the great-grandfather of William Pitt the Younger.

General Augustus Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers was a remote descendent of 'Diamond' Pitt through female lines and there is another connection with archaeology in

the shape of a cast window in the chancel in memory of the Reverend Samuel Best who, while excavating the Roman Villa at Dunkirt Barn in the 19th century, discovered the important mosaic now held at the British Museum.

The church was designed by the 18th century architect John James who was the son of the parson Headmaster of Holy Ghost School, which he attended, and whose working life included association with Hawksmoor at Westminster Abbey and Wren at St. Paul's Cathedral. Unusual features of the design are a nave which is twice as long as it is wide and a tower that is unusually situated at the west end of the building. Interior fittings are contemporary with the construction period with seating arrangements reflecting the rigidity of 18th century society although the large chandelier, dating from 1790, comes from an earlier St. Mary the Virgin church at Andover which was demolished and replaced in the 1840s.

A collection of forty-nine hazel wood and paper "Virgins' Crowns" which commemorate the lives of those who were born, baptised and died unmarried in the parish hang in the nave. This surprising feature represents the continuation of a once widespread ancient custom which has somehow survived at Abbots Ann into modern times.

There is no connection with Basingstoke at Nether Wallop but the interior of the church provided a high point of our tour which ended there. The building itself probably dates from the early 11th century and before 1066 the manor had belonged to King Harold after which it became the property of William the Conqueror. It remained in the ownership of the Crown until Henry II gave the church to York Minster which has since retained the right to present its living.

Fabric alterations include the additions of a late 12th century south aisle and an early 13th century north aisle when the chancel was lengthened. Both aisles were widened in the 15th century when work included the re-use of 12th and 13th century capitals between the nave and the chancel. The tower dates from 1704 but includes material from an earlier structure.

The font is a modern piece in medieval perpendicular style and the memorials are interesting but the outstanding feature of the interior is a unique wall painting, probably by the Winchester School of Artists around 1020, of a Christ in Majesty with flying angels which has been partly lost due to Norman

widening of the chancel arch. Other paintings in the nave include a 15th century representation of the story of Sabbath Breakers and a depiction of St. George slaying the Dragon watched by the King and Queen. There is also a painting of a bell over the tower arch dated to the 18th century although the actual bells are from the mid-19th century with the oldest inscribed 1851.

There is much more to appreciate at every one of these churches not least their surroundings and it is difficult to find a favourite among them but if I had to choose it would be a very close call between Quarley and Nether Wallop. Nevertheless don't let that opinion deter anyone finding themselves in the area of these beautiful villages from visiting either of the others.

All in all an excellent tour, thanks to Mary Oliver and Nicola Turton, on one of the few bright days of this Spring.



Basingstoke YAC Update

*Penny Martin & Nikki Read
Co-Leaders Basingstoke YAC*

The Young Archaeologists monthly sessions are in full swing and we have a consistent attendance of 14 young people each month. This month we had our first outing and went to Basing House where we had our first taste of hands-on excavation in a mock test-pit, together with a session of finds recording and identification; despite the showers we were able to stay outside and complete the session. This exercise was planned as preparation for the members to attend a real archaeological investigation at our Worsley House excavation site in June. As you can see a great time was had by all.





Our last meeting for this year will be in June and preparation is already well under way for the next school year starting in September. We have space for around 10 children aged between 8 and 16 years and if you are aware of any young people that might be interested please ask them to contact me or Nikki Read and we can sign them up for next year.

We are also planning a fundraising event to raise money for the national Young Archaeologist Club and their admin unit who are responsible for our insurance, training and support. This is proposed for Sunday 15 July. Details are still to be confirmed, however if anyone has ideas or contributions they would like to make to the event please let me know. Donations of historical/archaeological artefacts would be most welcome.

A Short note from the Chairman

You will doubtless be aware of the updates to the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, which come into force on 25 May. The new regulations require us to ask you all to confirm that you are happy for the society to have your data on file. We are also responsible for ensuring that the data we hold on you is up to date and is deleted if you are no longer a member or if you no longer wish us to hold the information.

The easiest way for us to address all of this is to ask you all to fill in a membership renewal form for this year, ensuring that we have the correct information and that you are happy for us to use it. That is why there is a membership renewal form included with this newsletter.

Not Just Planning Permission...

David Hopkins, County Archaeologist

Much of my work involves ploughing through documents on planning web sites. You may or may not be aware that when an applicant is seeking permission for works which affect the heritage they will often submit a Heritage Statement. This should contain the information needed to help the planning authority make a well-informed decision. These Heritage Statements are a mine of information. For the most part the archaeological data comes straight from the HER [Historic Environment Record], but with historic buildings they often offer an insight in the surviving historic fabric, layout and evolution of a building.

Let me give you an example; the Heritage Statement attached to planning application 17/03659 (use the 'simple search' function on the BDBC planning web site to find it) by RMA Heritage about 21 Church Street, the Black Boy tavern. We learn that there may have been an inn here since the 17th century, and in sales particulars of 1850 it is described as 'one of the oldest established houses in the town'. There are deeds in the Records Office dating to September 1813 when John Attwood took out a mortgage and purchased no. 23 next door, which had been a hairdresser's. At some time between 1818 and 1825 no. 23 was pulled down and the site added to the Black Boy and 'there erected a stable and the remaining part formed the yard of the stable'.

John Attwood senior died in 1819 and left the inn to his son, also John Attwood. When John Attwood the younger died in October 1841 he left the inn to his widow Mary. She sold the pub in 1842 to William Curtis, but continued to manage the pub, later with William Klitz whom she married in 1843. In 1848 the Black Boy passed to Richard Curtis and an indenture of 21 June 1848 describes the site in some detail. In 1850 Richard Curtis, who owned several inns, sold the pub (which was still being run by William and Mary Klitz, and rented at £80 a year) and the sales particulars again describe the pub in detail, including stabling for 20 horses, a chaise house, a carriageway from Cross Street and a 4ft right of way out of Winchester Street. The census of 1851 show William and Mary were still running the Black Boy, but William died in 1857 aged 45 and Mary carried on until it was auctioned in July 1862 (she died in September 1864).

In 1864/5 it was bought by William Lodder and the 1860s newspapers indicate the Black Boy was used for auctions and inquests. William died in April 1869 and the Black Boy was sold at auction to George Tubb for £1,350. Again the sales particulars describe the property, including a 'soldiers room' and 'croquet ground'. On the 1871 census, George Tubbs is listed as a widower aged 50. In May 1886 sales particulars describe the pub in detail and in 1887, the Black Boy was sold to John May and Company, brewers of the town. In 1891 George Gatehouse is the licensee, and in 1911 it is Richard Whiterow. Some years ago the Black Boy inn name was changed to the Hop Leaf. It has been empty for several years.

If you want to know the details in the sales descriptions they are set out in the RMA Heritage report on line, but my purpose in writing is that Heritage Statements like this can be read online through the planning web site and can be a good source of information. If a building you are interested in has been subject to a recent planning application it might be worth adding the planning web site to your favourites.

The Saxon Plague

Author and long-time BAHS member Penny Ingham has just published her third historical novel. 'The Saxon Plague' is a compelling and action-packed story. Inspired by Gildas's near-contemporary account of the devastating Saxon invasions, and also by archaeological discoveries from around the UK, Penny paints a vivid picture of turbulent, fifth century Britain.

The novel continues the story of Anya, a Saxon princess exiled from her homeland of Germania. She sails to Britannia with her brothers who are to act as mercenaries for Vortigern, one of the island's most powerful high kings. But when Vortigern forces Anya to marry him, he unwittingly sets in motion a catastrophic chain of events. For both Saxon and British blood flows in Anya's veins, and as the island sinks into chaos and war, she must choose where her loyalties lie.

As historians knew so little about it, Post-Roman Britain was often referred to as the Dark Ages. But recent excavations at Tintagel in Cornwall (Dumnonia)

have unearthed a thriving, high status fortification there, dating from the fifth century. Cadbury hillfort in Somerset was also refortified during this period. Gildas wrote ‘a proud tyrant foolishly invited the ferocious Saxons into the island like wolves into the fold.’ Thanks to archaeology, we are beginning to catch glimpses of how the British responded to this terrifying threat. The so-called Dark Ages are giving up their secrets at last.



Penny with her book

The Saxon Plague is available from Amazon and copies are also sold at BAHS meetings at the discounted price of £5.99.

Early Photographs

Alan Turton

Some time ago, we bought some stereoscope photographs. Mostly of local sights, and from thanks to some Basingstoke views which were also for sale, we could date them to circa 1858. However, an historian friend then looked at the one of a soldier (right, below), and said, “The soldier can be dated precisely to 1856, since he’s wearing the double-breasted tunic ordered in the Crimea in 1855 but replaced by a single-breasted one after a year of issue.” That being the case, it helps to place this one (left) of Garrison Gate at Basing House as possibly the earliest known photographic image of the monument. Unless you know better...?



Working Men's Mission Hall, Basingstoke, 1905-1928

Roger Ottewill

From its opening in February 1905 until its transfer to the Methodists in 1928, the Working Men's Mission Hall in George Street, Basingstoke, served as a non-denominational place of worship for those living in the vicinity (Fig. 1).

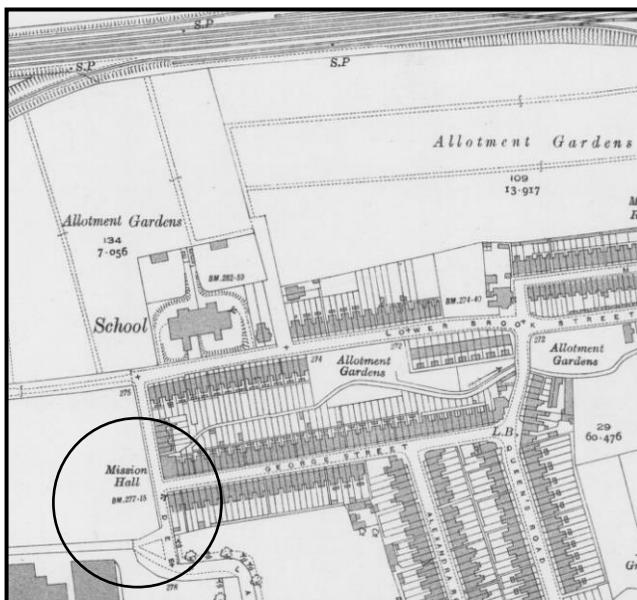


Fig 1. Location of Working Men's Mission Hall as shown on Ordnance Survey Map 1909/10.

In words used at the opening ceremony, it was the 'earnest desire' of those behind the enterprise that 'souls might be saved there and that the preaching of the Gospel in that Hall might be made a means of blessing to the neighbourhood.'¹

¹ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 18 February 1905.

The Hall, including the site, cost £220. Erected by Messrs. Hedderley and Purdue, it was ‘an iron building, capable of accommodating 250 persons.’ It was described as being ‘very comfortable and ... [presenting] a light and attractive appearance. The walls and roof ... [were] lined with matchboarding ... [and] fitted with incandescent gas lights.’ There do not appear to be any photographs of the Hall from this early period, but one is available from the 1960s/70s (Fig 2).

Since records relating specifically to the Hall have not been found, it is not entirely clear who were the moving spirits behind its construction and subsequent functioning. That said, newspaper reports indicate that it attracted a considerable amount of support from Nonconformists and well-wishers within Basingstoke and beyond. For example, the Hall was formally opened by Mr B.B. Pond from Andover and William Buckland, Basingstoke’s mayor, presided at the evening meeting. There were also contributions during the afternoon and evening from, amongst others, Mr Hathaway, ‘Mr Sayers another friend from Andover, Mr E. Andrews, Mrs Richardson and the Treasurer, Mr A. Bartlett.’ Interestingly, the latter felt the need to make clear that the ‘Hall had not been erected in any spirit of opposition to any other Church.’



Fig 2. Mission Hall George Street in the 1960s

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the mood at the Hall’s opening was buoyant and optimistic. The formal opening and afternoon tea, as well as the evening meeting were all exceptionally well attended. By 1910 the debt on the Hall had been cleared.²

On Sunday 15th July 1906, the Mission held its first camp meeting. As the following extracts from the report of the meeting illustrate, this enabled the Mission to make its presence felt within the town:

² *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 16 February 1910.

The services commenced at 7.00 am with a prayer meeting, which was well attended. At 10.30 the friends met together at the end of Essex-road, near Ford's Buildings, and service was commenced with a hymn and a prayer. While Bro. Rowell was giving a short address, the Tadley Temperance Gospel Brass Band, who had volunteered their services for the day, arrived. A march was then made for the camp ground, along Brook-street and George-street, to a spare piece of land. Here an open-air service was held at 11.00 o'clock ... At 2 o'clock the band and friends met in the Market Place, where a short service was held, the playing and singing again being very hearty. Short invitations to all that were not going anywhere were given ... and the Company then marched down Church-street, Cross-street, Flaxfield, Worting-road and Alexandra-road to the camp ground, where another service was held ... At 5.40 a start was made from May Street, and a large procession was formed, the route taken being through May Street and Deep Lane. Invitations were given at intervals ... The addresses at the evening meeting were given by Bro. Bartlett and Bro. Murrell, and afterwards the meeting was thrown open for short testimonies and singing ... The band gave one or two short selections, and themselves sang a round of choruses which was excellently done. The Mission Choir also sang a splendid piece before the close ... [at] about 8.30.³

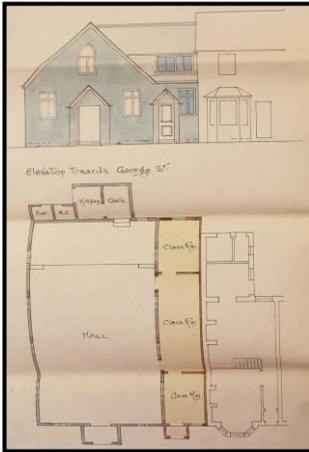
Clearly this was a very memorable, not to say exhausting, event in the life of the Mission. It is not known, however, whether any further camp meetings were held. It would seem from the press reports of anniversary celebrations in the years that followed that the Hall thrived. For example, in its first year the number of Sunday school scholars increased from 40 to 115 and the number of teachers from 5 to 11.⁴ By 1912 it had 140 scholars.⁵ In 1913, since 'the work had continued to prosper in every way and the Hall had become too small for the accommodation of the children', new classrooms were added (Fig 3). To celebrate, special sermons were preached on a Sunday in November and on the following Monday they were formally opened by Mrs F.A. Wallis.⁶

³ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 21 July 1906.

⁴ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 12 May 1906.

⁵ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 4 May 1912.

⁶ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 22 November 1913. The number of scholars was now 150.



*Fig 3: Plans for the New Classrooms 1913
(Hampshire Record Office: 58M74/BP620).*

In addition, the Hall sponsored a variety of other organisations including a branch of the Band of Hope and Christian Endeavour; a clothing club; and after a few years an orchestra. In addition, concerts and entertainments of various kinds were organised. Thus, the Hall served as a social as well as a spiritual centre for the residents of the area in which it was located.

In keeping with the ecumenical spirit which underpinned the activities of the Mission, support was received from most of the Free Church denominations. This is reflected in the fact that anniversary preachers had a variety of denominational backgrounds. In 1906, the Wesleyan Methodist minister, Rev Harold J. Chapman, gave a ‘stirring address’;⁷ in 1908 the minister of Immanuel Church, Rev William Schofield Thomson, gave a ‘most able speech’ on the theme of “The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchantman”;⁸ in 1910, Rev Frederick George West, ‘the newly appointed Pastor of Sarum Hill Baptist Church’, spoke;⁹ and in 1911, the Wesleyan Methodist minister, Rev. W.A. Chettle, gave ‘a most inspiring and earnest address.’¹⁰ While Mr Humphrey Williams, the evangelist attached to London Street Congregational Church gave an ‘excellent address’ at the Hall’s Sunday School anniversary celebrations in 1911;¹¹ and at the 1914 Hall anniversary the Rector of Eastrop, the Rev Edwin B. Brown ‘gave an excellent speech’.¹²

The Mission continued to thrive throughout the First World War and into the inter-war years. At celebrations to mark the Mission’s fourteenth anniversary in 1919, for example, ‘The Secretary’s report was very encouraging, also the Treasurer’s report which showed a balance on the right side.’ The Chairman,

⁷ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 24 February 1906.

⁸ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 23 February 1908.

⁹ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 26 February 1910.

¹⁰ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 25 February 1911.

¹¹ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 13 May 1911.

¹² *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 21 February 1914.

Mr S. Mogridge, preached at both services on the Sunday and gave ‘a stirring address’ at the Monday evening meeting.¹³

During the 1920s, the format of anniversary celebrations remained very similar to that of earlier years. On the Sunday there were morning and evening services at 11.00 and 6.30 respectively, while in the afternoon at 3.00 there was a service or entertainment with the Primitive Methodist orchestra often taking the lead. On Monday a public tea was followed by an evening meeting or entertainment, with the Worting Congregational Church Choir making a contribution in 1922. However, although details of the programme were provided in Forthcoming Events column of the *Hants and Berks Gazette*, usually there were no reports as there had been in earlier years. Given that anniversaries continued to be celebrated until 1928 it can only be assumed that they were reasonably well attended and that the efforts of the organisers met with some success. During this period, Sunday School anniversaries were also marked with special services, as well as harvest and other events.¹⁴

However, the Mission anniversary of 1928, its twenty-third, which included contributions from the Tadley Gospel Temperance Silver Prize Band and United Choir, proved to be the last.¹⁵ A few weeks later it was announced that: ‘The Trustees of the Working Men’s Mission Hall in George Street, which ... [had] heretofore been carried on as an independent religious organisation, recently met and unanimously decided to offer the Mission Hall to the Wesleyan Methodist Church.’¹⁶ Although no reasons were given in the report, it is possible that the decision had been prompted by the ‘heavy losses sustained by the lamented deaths’ of two key figures in the running of the Mission, Messrs Lane and Laney. At the 1928 anniversary they had been described as ‘devoted and generous workers in the Mission.’¹⁷

Postscript. Following its transfer, the building was shown in trade directories as the Methodist Mission Hall.¹⁸ Interestingly, in May 1928, the Hall hosted a

¹³ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 15 March 1919.

¹⁴ See, for example, *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 28 May 1927 and 24 September 1927.

¹⁵ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 10 March 1928. ‘On Monday evening the United Choir rendered a very successful musical service, the items giving great pleasure.’

¹⁶ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 31 March 1928.

¹⁷ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 10 March 1928.

¹⁸ The new deed recording the change of ownership was dated 23 October 1928.

sacred concert given by the Cliddesden Wesleyan Choir an indication, perhaps, of its changed denominational status. Writing in the 1960s a Methodist minister recorded that it had ‘been staffed by members of the Town Churches who ... [had] done excellent work through the years in ministering to what was regarded as a poor part of town.’¹⁹ In 1963 the Hall was formally closed as a place of worship but for the next few years under a new trust it served as a youth centre for organisations of which the Boys Brigade was major user. The Hall was demolished in the 1970s, a casualty of the Town Centre Redevelopment.

Visit to Picket Twenty Bronze Age Site, Andover

Annabel Stowe

On a wild, wet and windy January afternoon, a group of hardy individuals gathered in the car park at Picket Twenty, on the eastern edge of Andover, for a muddy but fascinating visit to a Bronze Age site being excavated by Cotswold Archaeology. Society members who visited the previous day had positively balmy conditions in comparison! We were welcomed by Emily Taylor (Heritage Consultant and Outreach Coordinator), and Oliver Good (Assistant Project Manager), before being escorted to the site. As is so often the case with prehistoric burial sites, this occupied a prominent position on rising ground, exposed to the prevailing winds. We all huddled cheerfully, backs to the blast, umbrellas in various stages of collapse, listening to an introduction by Oliver and Project Officer Joe Whelan.

As the Picket Piece housing estates creep ever further eastwards, Cotswold Archaeology was called in in November 2017 to carry out rescue archaeology ahead of further development. Aerial photography from the 1980s had revealed the circular outlines of what appeared to be Bronze Age round barrows, probably levelled, as far as the team can tell at the end of the 18th/beginning of the 19th century.

The sites of four Bronze Age burial mounds have so far been excavated, with interesting results. Though not all of the same size, they lie in a line roughly west-east, and have some points in common, as well as significant differences. Sections have been dug, by hand, through the ring ditches of each, and show

¹⁹ Hampshire Record Office Ref: 57M77/NMS243.

clear stratigraphy, including a dark brown deposit from the Roman period. All of the circles contained dark patches indicating cremations, between which we daintily picked our way, careful not to slip, and conscious of the ever-increasing mud sticking to our boots. There is no evidence of cremation urns, so possibly they were in leather bags which have not survived. Hopefully post-excavation analysis of what little remains of the bones will reveal whether they were all, perhaps, members of the same extended family unit. Here however, the similarities between the barrows seem to end. One had masses of Roman pottery in the ring ditch, suggesting the proximity of a villa, whilst others had very little; another had a pre-Roman inhumation thrown unceremoniously into the ditch, face down. The easterly burial mound is more oval in shape, perhaps of an earlier date than the others, and transitional between a Neolithic long barrow and Bronze Age round barrow. It also encloses an enigmatic horseshoe ditch, which the team thinks might be a late-Neolithic mortuary area. The site of the fifth barrow, yet to be dug, appears to be surrounded by evenly-spaced stake holes.

There are clearly plenty of questions still to be answered, and what a privilege it was to have a glimpse into this 4,000-year-old landscape on our doorstep, going back to a time when a row of gleaming white barrows on the skyline would have told those passing in the valley below: “This is our land, and the land of our forefathers”. It is interesting to ask oneself if the modern homes springing up in their place will leave the same proud, indelible mark on the landscape. One suspects not!

Our grateful thanks to Emily, Oliver and Joe from Cotswold Archaeology for giving their time, and for such an enjoyable and informative afternoon.



Photos courtesy of Cotswold Archaeology

2018 DIARY DATES



**BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL &
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

www.bahsoc.org.uk

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Registered Charity no. 11000263

MEETINGS *Church Cottage, Basingstoke at 7.30pm*

10 May **PREHISTORIC ROADS:
Mike Pengelly, BAHS**

17-20 May **Trip to Northumberland**

14 June **AGM & THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE
MALTESE ISLANDS:
Kay Ainsworth, formerly HCMS**

FRIENDS OF THE WILLIS MUSEUM

At 7.30 pm Willis Museum, Basingstoke

17 May **WWII HISTORY OF RAF ODIHAM:
Chris Perkins**

21 June **CHRISTIAN PILGRIMAGE TO READING &
CAVERSHAM: Lindsay and John Mullaney**

19 July **THE FIRST 40 YEARS OF THE HAMPSHIRE
BUILDINGS PRESERVATION TRUST: Bill Fergie**