

# BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER 115

MAY 1991

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## SUBSCRIPTIONS

The subscriptions for 1991-2 fall due on 1st May. They remain:

Single	£7.50
Family	10.00
OAP/Student	3.00

Please pay at the AGM or send them to the Treasurer, John Horrocks, 5 Oak Close, Oakley.

## THE ROSE THEATRE & AGM

Thursday, 13th June in the Conference Room

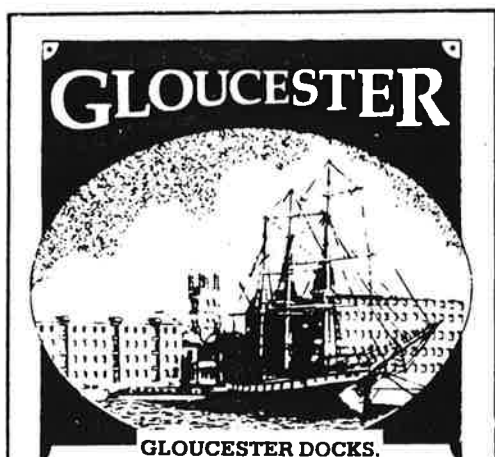
The talk on THE ROSE THEATRE, which had to be postponed because of the snow, will be given on 13th June. This means that we hope the AGM before it will go quickly and smoothly. Richard Dexter, our Chairman, will be glad to hear from any members beforehand if they have any strong concerns.

[Tel: Fleet 622755]

## GLOUCESTER & CRICKLEY HILL

Society excursion, Saturday 27th July

Please send the separate booking slip with your deposit to John Horrocks, 5 Oak Close, Oakley, Basingstoke as soon as possible.



There will be approximately 3 hours to spend in Gloucester, where the wide range of attractions includes:

- \* the Cathedral (which also has two exhibitions, and the crypt and cloisters)
- \* Eastgate, with a viewing chamber of the Roman and mediaeval remains
- \* the well-preserved Blackfriars Friary
- \* the Greyfriars ruins
- \* Llanthony Priory



#### A LETTER FROM ANDREW DUCKWORTH

I was pleasantly surprised by the GET WELL Card which appeared on my doorstep yesterday.

May I use the facility of the next bulletin to thank all those who signed for their best wishes.

I am now making steady progress, and am able to drive short distances. It will not be too long before I will be my old self again.

Sincerely,

ANDREW

#### AN INVITATION FROM ALTON

Coach excursion to AVEBURY & DEVIZES  
Saturday 13th July 1991

Alton History & Archaeology Society once again invite us to join them on their summer excursion; they can arrange to pick up in Basingstoke. The cost, including entrance fees to museums etc, but excluding refreshments, will not exceed £10.00.

Details from Mr Barry Duke, 19 Beech Tree Drive, Badshot Lea, Farnham, Surrey (Tel 0252 310335) or Paul Fenwick (Tel 0420 80470).

#### ORAL HISTORY

David Lee's talk on the Wessex Film and Sound Archives has inspired two of our members to plan a new project, making tape recordings of local people who have interesting memories - the history of the future. If anyone else would like to take part, please contact Paulline and John Williams (phone 683 201, but soon to be changed to 381 201).

#### THE KEMPSHOTT SKELETON

On 8th March human bones were discovered in Old Kempshott Lane. A new house is being built at the junction of Old Kempshott Lane and Lowlands Road, on a site that is terraced into the side of a sudden slope, so that the boundary is in effect a high bank. When this was being cut back, to build a retaining wall, the bones were discovered - and the police called in.

Once the forensic experts had pronounced some of the bones to be ancient, we were asked to investigate and remove the rest. We could see some bones in a hole that the workmen/police had dug into the bank; they lay about 1.3m down from the top of the bank, in a grave cut into the chalk. We were told that the police had removed some leg and foot bones, part of the pelvis and

an arm bone; they had covered the rest with a sheet of polythene, but as the grave fill was very loose much of this had fallen onto the polythene and the first task was to clear it away, and to see if anything had been left in the spoil below.

We exposed leg bones, part of the pelvis, the two lower vertebrae, the ulna and radius of an arm, and associated hand bones. Then we measured what we had found and took photographs. The police had already undercut the bank, so it wouldn't have been safe to go further. We took out the bones exposed so far, replacing them with a sheet of plywood and old bricks to fill the hole, so that the builder could now complete his retaining wall. Now it will be safe to tackle the remaining half of the burial in a more orthodox way, from the top.

The land on the other side of the boundary belongs to a different owner, but he has given us permission to excavate the remaining part of the burial, and we hope to organise that very soon.

Unfortunately, there is no indication yet of date. The site is very near the Roman road from Winchester to Silchester, and the orientation of the grave is NW/SE, so this may be a Roman burial - but if so, rather a tall Romano-Briton, possibly as tall as 6 ft.

One peculiar thing about the burial is that the leg bones we exposed were lying in a rather strange order. The fibula, which should lie next to the tibia, was lying beside the femur. The bones seemed to be still articulated, and the fibula didn't seem to have been disturbed, even by the police - but appearances must have been deceptive.

Unfortunately, despite all our efforts to block up the hole in the bank, we have been told that some more bones have been removed from it. But we hope to find most of the top half of the skeleton soon - and maybe some dating evidence.

BOB & BARBARA APPLIN

#### DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE IN PREHISTORIC BRITAIN

I recently attended a seminar on this subject organised by the Royal Archaeological Institute. It is difficult to summarise such a full day, but here are a few of the main points.

Mike Parker-Pearson began, aptly enough at a conference with "architecture" in its title, with a reminder of the complexity of the structures under discussion, not huts but houses. This applies not only to the materials used, and the resulting implications for the management of the landscape (e.g. a house the size of the Pimperne house reconstructed at Butser would require straw from 16 acres to thatch it) but also in terms of the activities carried out within and around it. The house was (and still is) the main area of social interaction, where cultural behaviour is transmitted from one generation to the next. Careful study of the excavated evidence such as grain spikelets / carbonised grain and pottery fine and coarse, and their distribution, can help identify the areas where specific tasks were carried out. It is still not possible to be sure of the full implications - distinctions may have been according to gender, not function. One piece of research on the orientation

of doorways of Late Bronze Age / Iron Age houses in Southern Britain found that the vast majority face E/SE, irrespective of such things as wind direction, so cultural as well as practical considerations were important.

Francis Pryor spoke about his site at Flag Fen on the western edge of the fens, where the wet conditions have led to the preservation of timbers. It is an unusual site - a settlement on a timber platform, with an associated post alignment and religious deposits. Some of the site has been reconstructed within a conservation area. One of the buildings has a turf roof at 35° pitch - it would be interesting to compare this with the buildings at Butser, though it is perhaps a bit too far away for a Society excursion! Francis Pryor stressed that he thought of his buildings as constructions rather than reconstructions because even with the quality of evidence recovered from Flag Fen, there were still many details of carpentry techniques and fixing methods which are not known for certain. One detailed find I particularly liked was an axe which had been dismantled from its mount. The shaft had been carefully made in two parts, the fore-shaft fitting into the head, with an adjoining 3' handle. So much for Bronze Age dependence on naturally angled timbers!

The Late Bronze Age site on the island of Runnymede described by its excavator, Stuart Needham, provided amongst other things some fascinating details of the internal organisation of a large round house. This 10 metre diameter building had a porch and three rings of post holes. The central space with the hearth was screened off by a partition in front of the porch, with an area of cobbling leading to it. Leading the other way, a trample gully between the first and second post rings gave access to a cooking area. The porch itself was interesting, with the inner posts being so deep as to suggest a heavy inner door or perhaps a canopy over. Burnt clay in this area may indicate that the porch was walled. This complex house had a clear area in front of it, with carefully positioned pits on each side, one containing a lamb and one a ewe, which could have been foundation deposits.

John Barrett, returning to the wider theme, stressed the change in emphasis already mentioned by Mike Parker-Pearson, away from "processual" archaeology - or explaining everything in terms of processes and economic exploitation - towards a more human approach with greater awareness of the value judgements made by our forebears. This approach makes archaeology less easy - but less boring, and I for one have a lot of sympathy with it! He cited the reinterpretation of Itford Hill as an illustration. This site, once seen as a nucleated village, is now seen as a developing settlement in which the growing complexity of the social hierarchy can be traced.

The chairman, Ian Kinnes, read a paper by C Richards, who was ill, on the Neolithic house in Orkney, which I particularly enjoyed (having visited Skara Brae etc). He felt that the full potential of these remarkably preserved stone houses with surviving internal features has not yet been fully realised. For instance, the full implication of the subtle stress on the right hand side of the houses, which at first sight appear symmetrical.

Malcolm Reid continued the northern theme with a discussion on radially divided and double ring round houses in northern Britain. The interesting house types of the Atlantic province - brochs, duns, wheel houses and aisled houses - seem to have started at the beginning of the Iron Age, coinciding with the changes in the structure of society at that time. There was evidence for a clear differentiation in function between the main central area and the peripheral zone, radially divided into cells, sometimes marked by a low stone kerb or a change in flooring. The finds indicate that some of the cells were

used for storage, some for grinding corn, some for processes using water. The development of the aisled house, which allowed some contact between the cells, but not actual movement, throws an insight into the people working in them. Some examples of the double ring houses in the Northern Province also had a main central area and peripheral zone, sometimes at a lower level (sunken ring-ditch houses) and, like some in the south, seemed to have access to the peripheral zone only from the entrance area.

Richard Harris, in charge of the reconstruction at Singleton's Weald and Downland Museum, brought the day to a close with reflections based on his experience there. Like many such conferences, it had been a most stimulating day, an opportunity to keep up with current thinking and to hear the details which flesh out the theories.

MARY OLIVER

#### DAVID KEYS

When planning next year's lecture programme, we thought it might be interesting to have some aspect of archaeology and the media. So I wrote to David Keys, Archaeology correspondent of The Independent, whose articles feature frequently on our cuttings table at meetings, to see if there was any chance of his coming to give a talk. Unfortunately, my letter did not reach him but he 'phoned in response to my follow-up letter and I was able to tell him about the Society's activities. Sadly, he does not undertake any lecturing, but he did express interest in us and made various suggestions.

He said he would be very glad to have follow-up from our members to any of his articles, perhaps requests for more details or suggestions of topics we would like covered. He gave me two numbers where he can be reached directly: 081 429 2099 and 081 868 2326. As a professional correspondent, he must have his finger on the pulse of the archaeological world, so this offer will be welcome to all members with particular interests and queries.

MARY OLIVER

ISRAEL WOODDES

Who was this? Find out at Hartley Wintney.

(see page 3)

FIELD WALKING SITE [MS/1/1990]

The site was reported on an aerial photograph (AP) of an unknown date which came into Mary Oliver's hands some time ago and the general features shown were those of a Romano-British period and back into pre-history. This site, however, was of a very distinct and unusual shape, with angular sides and a circle at one end.

The entrance was in the return side facing the circle, the whole size being approximately thirty by twelve metres. Jokes were made about it being a 'motte and bailey'.

I thought about this for a long time before making a drawing roughly measured from the AP. Interest in the site was again aroused after a recent lecture to the Society in which a new AP was shown. This was in greater detail and only showed the one feature.

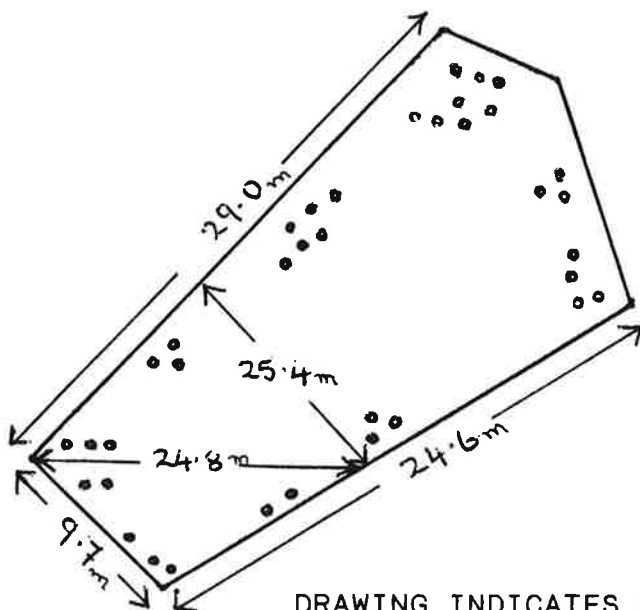
Mary contacted the landowner, Mr R Foot, who kindly gave permission to walk the field. The area had been studied from the road, showing a slight plateau feature and this was the most likely location.

Society members undertook field walking from the road up the slope in a westerly direction at ten metre intervals. The feature was located by the large scatter of knapped flints, roughly the shape indicated by the AP, although some imagination is required to fit the shape into the scatter plan. The location is right but there is now the need to explore the site further as there is still a mystery as to what it is. Still favoured is a shrine but there are other possibilities. I think one to be considered is an early (Christian) church but, as there is no date for the site yet, the mind has to be left open.

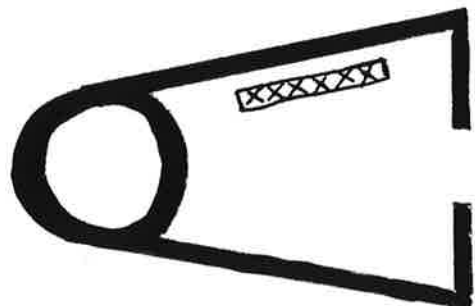
In conclusion, surely a dig on the site is a must as this is within the scope of the Society and could be undertaken between crops.

Eric E Robinson

SU 601548 SITE MS/1/1990 MONK SHERBORNE



DRAWING INDICATES SCATTER OF KNAPPED FLINTS



SITE OR FEATURE AS SHOWN ON A.P. (not to scale)



# BASINGSTOKE RECORDS

*For many years, Anne Hawker has been working on the extensive collection of historical records for Basingstoke (now in the Hampshire County Record Office). The Society published her book Voices of Basingstoke 1400-1600 and have now officially adopted her work as a Society project, inviting other members to help.*

*Here is Anne's first report of progress :-*

## The Project So Far

What I have been trying to do for the last twenty years or so is to pin down the sites of the properties listed in the Rental for 1400 to 1428. This was first printed in 'The History of Basingstoke' by Baigent & Millard (1889) and is apparently the oldest surviving rental for the Town. It still exists, but in a poor state, as a long strip rather dirty on the outside, rolled up and tied with pink tape. The information in this roll is small - just a name of the land and a sum of money - but the next roll (1434 to 1436) amplifies it slightly, including a few personal names. So it goes on, with each succeeding rental adding one more piece to the jigsaw. Unhappily, a lot of the pieces are missing, as the rentals are by no means a continuous series.

Our Committee has very kindly granted me a princely sum to help me to get a move on and also has found me some very welcome helpers.

With the money we are getting photocopies of maps and documents and we will also be going to the Hampshire County Museum Service headquarters at Chilcombe to look at some old photographs. The maps and photographs are to help us to decide exactly what is meant by descriptions like 'two tenements next the George' or 'the New House over against the Maidenhead', where it is necessary to know if the houses we see now are on one site or two, or a half of one. More of the jigsaw pieces are provided by later leases which say what is around the place leased to the north, east, south and west. The earliest map is 1762 which labels a few of the houses and fields and gives the owners or tenants of others.

Barbara Eastabrook and I have started with London Street. We have visited the George, Anchor Court, the Feathers, the Red Lion, the Bell and Deanes Almshouses. There are other old houses, too, in London Street on which we are planning to descend. So far, it seems to be only necessary to say that we belong to the Basingstoke Archaeological & Historical Society, and that we are interested in any old remains (!), to get a warm welcome; we have made some interesting discoveries. More in later editions of the Newsletter.

After London Street, we can try Winchester Street, Church Street, Wote Street and the Market Place, about which I have found out more since I wrote 'Voices ....'. Winchester Street had more fire damage than London Street, which is why there is more left in the latter.

## The George

We chose the George for our first visit as we heard that it might be going to be renovated. They plan to put a glass roof over part of the footpath and to move the loos upstairs, leaving the present one to be used by the disabled - there may have to be a ramp instead of the present access by 4 or 5 stairs. The records of the George go back to the 1400 Rental, where it is called 'Langredes land' and the rent for a half year is 7s9d. In the 16th C the rent was still 7s9d but, by then, the name was the George. It was never the George & Dragon, but presumably George was Saint rather than King as King George did not appear until the 18th C.

The 7s9d rent was due to the Manor (ie the town of Basingstoke). It was a Quit Rent, meaning that the tenant was 'quit' of any services that he might have owed before money became more use to landowners. The services could have been work in the fields or presents of food.

From early Court Rolls it appears that the buildings of the George were set on a long, thin piece of land. It had an opening off the Market Square that must have been a common footway, as there were often complaints that there was wood or firewood in the way of passers-by (larger pieces of wood could have been for building). Sometimes the only clue to the fact that a house was being rebuilt is a report that somebody had 'dugged a saw pit to the common nuisance', often in the highway so that the timber could be sawn up on the spot. Similarly, when clay was needed to plaster on the wattle filling the spaces between the upright timbers, it was just handy as churned-up mud in the road; so that there was one more hazard for the traveller. We know that there were enclosures near the house, as another complaint was that the hedges of the owner of the George were not kept close and his animals got into the cornfield - that would be the common field (Hackwood Field).

The present building is red brick and looks Georgian. The private entrance has a door that is definitely of that period, panelled at the sides with wood and deeply set into the wall. The end buildings are flint with brick corners. The traces of high, wide arches to allow waggons and coaches to enter from the Market Square can still be seen, and another has been bricked up in the wall of the house. Where there is now a long, new brick wall across the entry from the George there was once a yard with outbuildings.

Inside the George there are now two bars. Once there was a 'snug' that must have been very snug indeed, about the size of the old red telephone box. The bar nearest the Square has a fireplace which seems to have been the main fireplace for the house and the chimney is straight up from the cellar where there might also have been a fire, possibly for washing or even home brewing. There is another chimney to be seen on the east wall but this is not visible inside, where its place is occupied by a glass and shelves. There is no trace of a bread oven but this chimney is not quite the shape for one. We were invited to see the cellar, which has racks for wine and beer. We think the landlord was a bit doubtful that two ladies such as us could get down - and up - the steep ladder but it was quite simple.

The ceiling timbers are said to be 18th C but we were not able to see them. The music shop, which can be seen from the Market Square, is part of the building but has always been quite separately used. At one time it was 'the barbers shop to the George'

Baigent & Millard give the following timetable for 1889 :-

EXETER POST COACH stops at the George every night at 11 o'clock, returns 3 am every morning

TAUNTON WAGGON at the George Tuesday nights up and down.

EXETER WAGGON Tuesday and Thursday at the George up and down and one down on Friday.

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#### DEPOSITION BEFORE THE JUSTICES

The accompanying account of a tragedy, gleaned from Hampshire County Record Office, illustrates the different ways in which alcoholic drinks had to be bought in the 18th C - the spirits came from a separate shop but could not be drunk there. Also, nobody had any idea that acute alcoholic poisoning could result from downing a great deal of gin all at once - "he looked black but nobody attacked him, was the Juniper Water all that it should be ?" .....

Ralph Lavie Castler 18 Sept 1712

*Yesterday in the evening about seven or eight of the clock he did with the consent of William Aldridge & of him this Exaient. [examinent = person being questioned] & of Thomas Steele James Newell Richard Mitchener & William Cherry bring from the house of John Goodier of this town distiller a quart of Juniper Water which was paid for by all of the parties before named save only William Aldridge and he promised to pay three pence towards that quart And saith That the said quart of Juniper Water was brought to the George Inn in this Town & was there drunk up by Thomas Payce out of the Quart Mug at two draughts And saith that this Exaient. desired that he might drink a little of that quart before it was brought out of the distillers shop but the said Thomas denyed to permit him & would not let him drink a drop of it And saith That after the said Thomas Payce had drank of that quart he desired another might be sent for and he would drink it up by himselfe And saith That the said Thomas Payce before he drank of the first quart said if he did not drink it all up by himself he himself would pay for it And as to the second quart of Juniper Water he saith That all the parties above named joyned together to buy the same for the said Thomas Payce to drink the second quart himself & went with this Exaient. to the strongwater shop & he brought it from thence some part of the way towards the George Inn & soon as they came thither this Exaient. saith he was called away to goe unto the stable & did not see him drink the second quart but was told he did drink it all up & saw him goe away from the George & he went a little way & came back staggering & reeling & beleeves he fell downe and was afterwards lead home to his house in But Lane by Wm Aldridge & Benjamin Johnson the son of Ben Johnson of this Town labourer & he this Exaient. followed & went to his house with him & then returned home to his Masters house the George and saw him noe more but heard some say the next morning that he was dead & hath seen him this 19th day of September & beleeveth he is dead & looketh black but saith he is sure he had noe hurt nor was stricken or beaten by this Exaient. or any other who were then present with him.*

Anne Goodier the wife of John Goodier distiller 18 Sept 1712

Thomas Payce whom she hath heard is a servant in husbandry to William Neve11 Inholder (who died this day as is reported about ten of the clock) came to this informants house yesterday about seven of the clock in the evening with Ralph Lavy a servant to the same William Neve11 which Ralph Lavy had a quart Mug in his hand and spoke to this Informant for a quart of Juniper Water & this Inft. saith she drew it for him and delivered it to his hand which he carried away And saith That about halfe an hour after the said Ralph Lavy came to this Inft. house alone with a quart Mug in his hand and desired her to draw another quart of the same Juniper Water And saith she did draw & deliver to him another quart of Juniper Water which he carried away with him And saith That the said Thomas Payce would have drank the first quart of Juniper Water out of the quartt pot which she drew it into but she would not suffer him to drink it there And saith That there was when she drew it noe other liquor in it but Juniper Water only.

....That seems to be the end of the matter ....

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## CALENDAR

(Society activities are in CAPITALS)

An evening in June	Walk round St Mary Bourne	Friends of Willis Museum
13th June	THE ROSE THEATRE & AGM (see page 2)	
19th June	Evening visit to HARTLEY WINTNEY CHURCH (see page 3)	
21st June	Visit to SILCHESTER (see page 3)	
30th June	Tudor Living History for Henry's Birthday	Friends of Basing House
13th July	Avebury & Devizes (see page 4)	Alton History & Archaeology Soc.
27th July	GLOUCESTER & CRICKLEY HILL (Excursion, see page 2)	
3rd August	Children's Day - the Saxons	Friends of Basing House
8th Sept	Maze Day	Friends of Basing House
12th Sept	FAMILY LIFE IN BERKSHIRE FROM THE DEPOSITION BOOKS	(Joan Dills)
19th Sept	Jane Austen & Chawton (talk)	Friends of Willis Museum