

# BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER 128

AUGUST 1994

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## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1994/5

Those of our members who have renewed their subscriptions for this current year should have had their membership card issued separately or should find it attached to this Newsletter. Please let Tim Herrington know if you have not received the card. To those of you who have forgotten to renew your membership may we ask you, please, to do so now, otherwise this will be your last Newsletter !!

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## THE CALENDAR OF SOCIETY EVENTS FOR 1994/5

The green programme card should be attached to this Newsletter. Please let us know if it is not to be seen. We hope that you will agree that Mary Oliver has arranged a splendid programme for the Society. Don't forget to let her know if there are speakers or subjects which you think might take their place in the 1995/6 programme.

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### The September Meeting

Thursday, September 8th at 7.30pm in the  
Central Studio, Queen Mary's Centre

This is our prestigious lecture at the start of the new season and is entitled "The Archaeology of the Channel Tunnel Terminal" to be given by Paul Bennett, Director of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust Ltd. It promises to be of great interest. We shall be honoured, too, by the presence of the Borough Mayor, Councillor John L Shears.

We hope that you will be able to bring a friend with you to this event, bearing in mind that the Central Studio has a much larger seating capacity than our usual meeting place.

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## FORTHCOMING VISITS

### HOUGHTON ROMAN VILLA

Tuesday, August 23rd

An evening visit is planned to the excavations currently in progress on the Roman Villa site at Houghton, near Stockbridge. This is one of Barry Cunliffe's projects and we are lucky to have the opportunity presented to catch up with the story so far. Some of you have already let Barbara Herrington know that you would like to be included in the party. If you wish to come, please 'phone her on 0256 22090.

*[ Details of the time and exact meeting place for the visit will be communicated to members of the party as soon as we have them from our hosts !! ]*

## **OUTING TO CRANBORNE CHASE**

Saturday, 24th September

Mark Corney, of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England, has very kindly offered to guide us round some of the impressive sites of Cranborne Chase on Saturday, 24th September. We will be looking at Late Bronze Age settlement fields, and linear ditches, the northern end of the Dorset cursus, and the Bokerley Dyke. Lunch will be in a pub in Gussage St Michael, after which we will look at Neolithic and Late Iron Age remains from Gussage Hill. Mark has done a lot of work in the area, and we are lucky to have him as a guide for what promises to be a full and fascinating day.

Please make your own way to the car park at the Martin Down reserve on the A 354 from Salisbury for 10.30 a.m. The day will involve a fair amount of walking, so please wear strong shoes and bring waterproofs. It should be possible to arrange lifts and car shares at the September meeting, or ring Mary Oliver (24263).

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## **THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of BAHS, Held on June 10th, 1994 at QMC.**

There were 45 members and 2 guests present, warmly welcomed by the Chairman.

**Apologies for absence:** John Feuillade and Sandy Hall.

### **Minutes of the 1993 AGM (held on June 11th, 1993 at QMC).**

Proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true account: Anne Hawker. Seconded by Tim Herrington. Agreed unanimously.

Richard Dexter asked that the minutes of the 1994 AGM should be included in the next BAHS Newsletter. This was agreed.

**Matters Arising From the Minutes:** There were no matters arising.

**Chairman's Report:** Please see separate item in this Newsletter.

The adoption of the report was proposed by Tim Herrington, seconded by Albert Smith and agreed unanimously.

### **Treasurer's Report and Accounts for 1993/4:**

The Treasurer was not in a position to present the accounts for 1993/4. The Chairman asked the meeting to defer any discussion on the accounts until the October meeting of BAHS, at which time the audited accounts could be presented and discussed by members.

This was agreed. It was hoped that the accounts could, in fact, be ready to include in the August Newsletter for scrutiny before the meeting.

### **Election of Officers and Committee:**

The following Officers were returned unopposed -

Chairman: John Horrocks	Proposed Richard Dexter	Seconded Marta Cock
Hon.Sec: Barbara Herrington	Margaret Drury	Chris Horrocks
Treasurer: Jean Donohoe	Barbara Applin	David Miles

The following Committee members were returned unopposed on a bloc vote, proposed by Albert Smith and seconded by Margaret Harris -

Marta Cock; Mary Oliver; John Feuillade; Margaret Porter; David Miles; Les Fitzgerald.

### **Election of Auditor for 1994/5:**

Mr R J Startin, F.C.A was elected unopposed - proposed by Tim Herrington and seconded by Joy Needham.

### **Any Other Business:**

- + The meeting of BAHS scheduled for April 13th., 1995 was brought forward to April 6th to avoid Maundy Thursday by general agreement.
- + The Chairman invited interested members to consider joining our Publicity Sub-committee.
- + Richard Dexter emphasised the importance of welcoming new members, a sentiment taken up by the Chairman. In fact, a new member remarked on the warmth of her welcome to the Society.
- + Mrs Atherton Harrison remarked on the excellence of the Society Newsletters, and the Chairman thanked Barbara Applin and Tim Herrington for their efforts in editing and producing this publication.
- + Regarding the setting up of a Young Archaeologists' Group, Chris Elmer at the Willis Museum will be approached again.
- + In answer to a question by Margaret Porter, the Treasurer was of the opinion that non-members of the Society who attended Society excavations were not covered by our insurance, but this will be investigated.
- + Two life members remain following the recent death of Allin Verstage, who had supported the Society from its early beginnings. The two life members were Anne Hawker and Richard Searle.

**The meeting closed at 8 pm** and was followed by a timely illustrated talk on field walking by Steve Ford of the Thames Valley Archaeological Service. Coffee and socialising completed the 1994 AGM of the BAHS.

## The Chairman's Report for 1993/4

(The following is a précis of the report held on file)

Firstly, I wish to thank Richard Dexter, our past Chairman, for his efforts on behalf of BAHS, the scope of which have become evident to me as the year has progressed.

There are three strands which make up Society activities:

Firstly, the regular meetings which have maintained their high standard - for example, the talk on The Blue Coat School, held at Sun Life of Canada building and then Society member John Williams talk on the Maya: one local and one exotic! The imaginative programme itself, which has arisen particularly through the efforts of Mary Oliver, can present its own difficulties when speakers are not able to fulfil their engagement. In one case, Bob Applin stepped in with a splendid talk on Malta. His effort was much applauded, but we now have a range of contingency plans! Difficulties with the meeting room and with parking gave concern to the Committee: the members were most understanding, but we hope to overcome these problems by changing the dates of some of the meetings.

The second strand of our activities centres on the outings and last summer we had a trip on the canal boat Pinkerton, a visit to Avebury and a current dig in the area, town walks round Alresford and Newbury, and a visit to Hampshire Museum HQ at Chilcomb. Another good visit was to the new County Records Office in Winchester. My thanks to those of you who support these meetings through your interest and, of course, to the organisers.

The third, and most significant, strand relates to the work this year put to field activities. A combination of persistence and tenacity has led to successful and active engagement at The Vyne and Bramley Frith. Led by perpetual student Peter Heath, by David Miles and Margaret Drury, we have over 20 members involved and we have acquired new equipment such as the level (with help from HCC and Mike Hughes, County Archaeologist and Society member).

On the publications front, the Video is selling quietly and we captured the HCC Countryside Award in the Heritage section and thereby gained a cheque for £500! All these events are well chronicled in our Newsletter. Barbara Applin has continued to cajole members for contributions and Tim Herrington has raised the quality of the production. We need a steady supply of articles from willing contributors - will you help?

Membership this year exceeds 100. On Committee, Kathy Howarth was not able to continue after Christmas and Nicola Hawes has asked to stand down now. Our thanks to both for their valuable contributions to the Society. I wish to make a special mention of our Secretary, Barbara Herrington, who has given us another year of splendid service. The smooth running of the Society depends on so many people who work on its behalf and I would like to conclude by thanking them all - if we have had a successful year it is because you have made it so.

John Horrocks

## SOCIETY VISIT TO WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL

Atherton Harrison

A small group of Society members met at the West Door of Winchester Cathedral on Saturday, June 11th and were welcomed there by our guide, Denise Wilton, whose clear voice and expert knowledge made our visit a delight. I particularly admired the skill with which she adapted her talk to our special interests.

After paying homage at Jane Austen's tomb with its beautiful inscription, and having a quick look at the Tournai marble font with its Byzantine type figures, we then had time to examine in more detail the pillars of the nave and to understand how the mould of the Norman crypt determined the rebuilding of the nave in the fourteenth century. We visited the crypt, which was flooded, but our guide didn't mention William Walton the diver who saved the Cathedral from subsidence in 1900 by pouring in cement to underpin the fabric. I have an affection for William Walton but perhaps we were thought too highbrow to appreciate what is a favourite tale for tourists!

We admired the fine wall paintings in the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre and our guide had taken the trouble to get the key to Bishop Langton's Chantry where the Flemish tryptich from Basingstoke's St. Michael's Church is cared for. We were then able to see the few reconstructed tiles and marvel at the effect they must have had when all the floor was covered with their brilliance and the walls with paintings.

In the Choir, we looked at the fifteenth century screen with its modern figures (the originals having been demolished in the Civil War) and the choir stalls with their carved mediaeval misericords. We also looked at the roof of the nave reflected in the mirror - looking like a great ship.

We completed our tour in the triforium gallery and the library. The Winchester Bible with its beautiful illuminations by the "Master of the Leaping Figures" made a fitting finish to an enthralling afternoon, kindly arranged by Mary Oliver.



## **PUBLICITY SUB-COMMITTEE**

At their meeting on 15 June, the Committee formed a Publicity Sub-committee: the members are Marta Cock (Tel: 51506), Jean Donohoe (Tel: 464799), John Horrocks (Tel: 780537) and Margaret Porter (Tel: 56012).

The objectives of the Publicity Sub-Committee are :-

- 1 To attract new members and maintain contact with the membership.
- 2 To present an appropriate "image" of the Society to the community at large.

The activities of the Sub-Committee will concentrate mainly on publicising both the regular and special events of the Society by way of posters, leaflets, media events listings and publication of reports of meetings in the local press.

The Sub-Committee have now met on three occasions and publicity arrangements are now underway for the September meeting at the Central Studio, the Hammicks window display and the September Festival at Queen Mary's College on 11 September.

Members' comments or ideas on publicity would be most welcome. Please contact any of the above to discuss, or alternatively arrange to come along to a meeting to put your ideas to the Sub-Committee.

Specific areas where assistance would be appreciated are:

- 1 Please contact John Horrocks if you know of any suitable poster sites, especially if you have a contact name or can do the "posting" for us.
- 2 Please contact Margaret Porter if you know of a Parish magazine or other publication which may be willing to include an article on the Society.
- 3 We need some reasonably portable display boards for displaying material at Society meetings, conferences etc. Please contact Marta Cock if you know of anyone who may have any new or second-hand and not too expensive boards for sale.

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### **SEPTEMBER FESTIVAL**

Sunday 11th September

12.00 - 6.30 pm

£4 adults, A Quid a Kid

Our Society will be having a stand at this Festival at Queen Mary's College, Cliddesden Road. The Festival promises to be a good family day, with stalls by local societies, children's treasure hunts, Giant Puppets, Cavalier Marching Brass Band, world food, music

and real ale. And spectacular World Music and Dance with SUNDUZA from Zimbabwe.

Needless to say, the BENEATH BASINGSTOKE video will be showing at our stand, and we will put together a display and organise a small competition for children. Could anyone who is planning to go please give some time to take a turn on the stand? Please ring Margaret Porter (Basingstoke 56012) so that she can work out a rota - the more the better.

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## **EVENING CLASSES**

There may be some members interested to know that Mary Oliver will again be offering the 10-week class "Beneath Basingstoke" at Queen Mary's Centre, for those who would like to know a little more about our area's archaeology than could be fitted into a 90- minute video. Enrolment is on 13th September, the course starts 27th September, price £36.

In recent years, there have not been enough enrolments to allow the GCSE course on Archaeology at BCOT to run. It is being offered again this year, on Monday evenings, 6.00 to 9.00 p.m. There is no pressure to take the exam at the end of the course, which provides a good grounding in the subject. Mary Oliver and Theresa Hook are the tutors, and the course includes trips and the opportunity to make a special study of your own choice. The cost is £86 for all three terms and enrolment is on 5th and 6th September.

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**Basingstoke has just acquired a new and exciting Anvil, but ...**

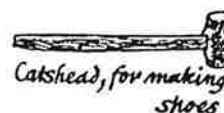
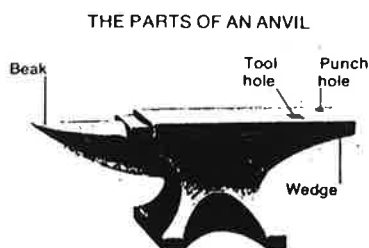
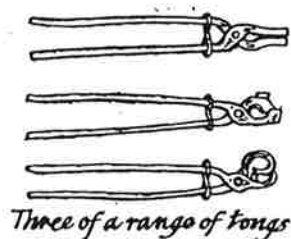
## **WHERE HAVE ALL THE ANVILS GONE?**

Eric Robinson

During the course of a very interesting lecture to the Friends of the Willis Museum on tools mainly connected with wood working, the lecturer made the statement that there are few, if any, anvils found on archaeological sites. This is rather an interesting thought, which seems to be true, although I know that some members will no doubt point me in the right direction.

I have found one reference to anvils and their use in the fields in connection with the straightening of scythes, when they were known as "mowers' anvils". The references are found in "Everyday life in Roman Britain" by M & C G B Quennell, which also illustrates an anvil set in a balk of timber.

Bearing in mind the amount of use such an item would have been put to since the Iron Age, where have they all gone? Such large items cannot just disappear and one would surely assume that, once cast, they were nearly indestructable. What is all the more surprising is





the fact that large quantities of tools have been found on sites like Silchester - but no anvils, to my knowledge. I have studied many excavation reports of sites in differing periods and no mention has been made of these bulky items.

Several years ago, whilst researching a project on blacksmiths working in this area, I found there were in excess of 30 smithies and each would have had at least one anvil. In mediaeval times it seems there were travelling smiths who only carried their tools; the anvils were in situ on the estates where they were to work. This seems very sensible, as the anvil would have been very bulky to transport.

Perhaps we are missing some very interesting items of previous ages.

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## THE MAN IN THE ICE

Richard Dexter

One late summer's day about 5,300 years ago, a man in his prime set out from a valley at the foot of the Alps and headed for a pass high above the snow line. It appears that he set off in a hurry, leaving behind him a personal disaster because not only was his equipment incomplete and broken, but he was in pain as evidenced by his broken ribs. On reaching the near summit his strength finally ebbed, he found a sheltered crevasse, carefully placed his incomplete bow and broken quiver beside him, ate his last meal and, overcome by fatigue, lay down on his side trying to forget the pain, and went to sleep. He never woke, because exhaustion and hypothermia overtook him. Within hours the first fresh winter snow covered him and all trace of him was lost.

There he remained until 19 September 1991 when two climbers spotted his body protruding from the melting snow. At first it was thought that he was a missing skier, so all the usual procedures were followed, the rescue teams alerted, the local coroner informed and the missing persons file searched, but it soon became evident that there was something very unusual because he seemed to have no recognisable equipment except a strange-shaped metal axe-head. By the time it was realised that this was a perfectly preserved Neolithic corpse, much irreversible damage had been done to both body and artefacts, but so too was it realised just how fortuitous was the discovery.

Firstly, the body had been immediately covered with snow - thus denying carnivores and carrion-eaters the opportunity of scavenging the body. It was then allowed to freeze gently without water and so natural waxing took place. Because it was in a hollow, later glaciers skimmed over the top, keeping it from re-exposure until it was found. And even then, when it was finally exposed to the air, it was found within only hours and in easy range of 20th century scientific laboratories. In spite of the initial archaeological disasters that followed the first discovery (such as rescuers' feet trampling on one of the birch-bark containers, and pneumatic drills carving the body out of the ice, luck continued to play a

part because a "rescuer" filmed the first crude attempts at retrieval on video, so the exact location of the finds was recorded for when a research excavation - if that is what you call it when portable hair dryers were used - was mounted the following year.

This fascinating story of Tutankhamun proportions has been told in a recently published book by the leader of the research team ("The Man in the Ice" by Konrad Spindler, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, pp 305, £18.99)

The first part is the story of the original find as one remembers it from the news stories of the day. It makes any archaeologist want to weep for the crude retrieval methods used. until one realises just how quickly the scientific machine was put into top gear when the potential was realised. The body which was found in Italy was in a cold store in Austria within 24 hours of retrieval and the finds at a conservation laboratory in Germany.

There then follows a clear detailed description of the corpse and finds in a very readable form, and a general discourse on neolithic man in the Alps.

This description I recommend to everybody, to archaeologist and general reader alike, because it covers so many of those personal possessions which have never survived at traditional sites. For example, there was a small pencil-like object, a wooden dowel with a bone centre. that puzzled the restorers until they saw that it was a flint retoucheur for sharpening microliths. His tie-on waist wallet also included his firelighting kit of flint and tinder of dried mushroom but the iron pyrites was missing; the glowing embers would have been carried in a round birchbark container. Indeed there was still ice keeping the items fixed together when they arrived in the lab. Shoes and overcoat were all made of woven grass. Small tattoo marks appear on the skin just over joints which show evidence of arthritis. And there was a small flint which would otherwise have been described as an arrowhead, except that it formed the blade of a pocket-sized dagger. Even the remains of a net were discovered - something that would normally be very ephemeral - and it has been suggested that this was used for bird-catching.

The coloured photographs and line drawings are of excellent quality and clearer than any museum case display.

The final chapters are interesting, for they describe the Neolithic period in central Europe, which differs from our country in that there was much seasonal movement of men and cattle up and down the mountains. Also, although he was "Neolithic", the man in the ice had a mighty fine copper axe-head.

Sadly, but it does not spoil the book, much space is devoted to correcting dis-information that charlatan writers published at the time of discovery, such as that the find was a huge fraud, and that the body was that of a eunuch, thus giving rise to all sorts of quirky and unsavoury theories about the similarity of ancient times and minority group cults of today.

This is only a preliminary report because no destructive anatomical research has yet been done. Moreover, because the body has to be preserved at a temperature below freezing

point, further research is very limited at present. The researchers are acutely aware of possible future advances in scientific techniques and the current limitations of today.  
.....And that surely is quite the most heartening part of the story.

PS *Since writing this article, Richard has sent in two newspaper cuttings. One from the Daily Telegraph claims that about 4 percent of people in Britain, Germany and Iceland are descended from the "Ice-Man".*

*Richard comments that he has read somewhere that provided you do not refer to someone obviously foreign, the chances are that anybody you see in the street is related to you no further than a sixteenth cousin. The second article from the Sunday Times of 19th June tells how scientists claim to have traced a genetic link across 200 generations between "the Ice-Man" and a woman in Bournemouth, after examining genetic material from 1,246 people across the world.*

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### **HAMPSHIRE FIELD CLUB**

Several of our members are individual members of the HFC, and we hold institutional membership, so if you want to go to any of their lectures, conferences etc, do get the details from Barbara Herrington (22090). Here are some items from the HFC programme:

CHEESE & WINE (Archaeology Section), 6.30 pm, Thursday, 22nd September at Chilcomb House, Bar End, Winchester + visit to the archaeological facilities of the Hampshire County /useum Service (prior booking by 19 Sept; cost including refreshments £2).

AGM of Local History Section, with various talks at Church Centre, Odiham (just off Odiham High Street) on Saturday 1st October 9.30 am; guided tour of Odiham town centre 11.30; guided tour along the Basingstoke Canal to Odiham Castle 4.15 (£3.50 members; £4.00 non-members)

#### ART & ARCHITECTURE OF THE LATE SAXON PERIOD

Historic Buildings Section AGM and Conference on Saturday, 22nd October at the Plaza Theatre, Romsey, (with Test Valley Archaeological Trust)

#### ARCHAEOLOGY IN HAMPSHIRE : A FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

CONFERENCE ON 29-30 October at Boldrewood Conference Centre, University of Southampton, Burgess Rd, Southampton, on the Saturday 10 - 5.30; Sunday 1 - 4; £12 per person; pre-bookable buffet lunch £8 per person. Speakers include John Wymer, Julie Gardiner, David Tomalin, Barry Cunliffe, Michael Fulford, Martin Welch, David Hinton, Richard Morris, Michael Allen, Dale Sarjeantson, Ben Ferrari and Stephen Trow, covering aspects of Hampshire archaeology from the Palaeolithic to Mediaeval; the archaeology of the Church, environmental and maritime archaeology and National framework

*Tickets for the Conference can be obtained from Archaeology Conference Secretary, County Planning Dept., Hampshire County Council, The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UE  
Tel: 0962 846737.*

## CALENDAR

Thurs 8 Sept ( page 1)	THE ARCHAEOLOGY of the CHANNEL TUNNEL TERMINAL by Paul Bennett	***
Sat 11 Sept (page 6)	SEPTEMBER FESTIVAL Queen Mary's College, Cliddesden Road, 12.00 - 6.30 pm	
Thurs 15 Sept	"Odiham Throughout the Ages" Jane Pratt	FWM
17 - 18 Sept	Vikings Living History Display, Basing House	FBH
Thurs 22 Sept (page 10)	Archaeological Section Cheese & Wine Evening, 7.30 pm, Chilcomb House, Bar End, Winchester (Hants County Museum Service Headquarters)	HFC
Sat 24 Sept (page 2)	OUTING TO CRANBORNE CHASE	***
Sat 1 Oct (page 10)	AGM, Local History Section & talks & Guided tour, Odiham	HFC
Thurs 13 Oct	TROY: NEW REFLECTIONS ON AN OLD SITE by Rev. Dr. Donald Easton	***
Thurs 20 Oct	AGM and "All you wanted to know about the Basingstoke Heritage Society - and perhaps more", Lawrence Nardi	FWM
Sat 22 Oct (page 10)	Historic Buildings Section AGM & Conference, Plaza Theatre, Romsey, "Art & Architecture of the late Saxon Period"	HFC
Sat/Sun 29/30 Oct (page 10)	ARCHAEOLOGY IN HAMPSHIRE : Framework for the Future	SU
Thurs 10 Nov	MEDIAEVAL MOATED SITES by Alan Aberg	***

\* = Society Event; HFC = Hants Field Club; FWM = Friends of Willis Museum  
FBH = Friends of Basing House; SU = Sot'on University