

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Registered Charity No. 1000263

NEWSLETTER 136

AUGUST 1996

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**TOP CHEF Bob Applin
gets our 25th Anniversary
Barbecue at Basing House
off to a really sizzling start !**



YOUR NEW COMMITTEE FOR 1996/7

As a result of the elections held at the Annual General Meeting on June 20th., 1996, the officers, committee members and co-opted members are as follows:

Chairman:

John Horrocks 5, Oak Close, Oakley, RG23 7DD.
tel. 01256 780537

Hon. Secretary:

Tim Herrington, 16, Scotney Road, Basingstoke, RG21 5SR
tel. 01256 22090

Hon. Treasurer:

Peter Good, 95, Cliddesden Road, Basingstoke, RG21 3EY
tel. 01256 22771

Membership Secretary (co-opted):

Julian Porter, 58, Minden Close, Chineham, B'stoke, RG24 8TH
tel. 01256 56012

Committee:

Mrs Linda Chapman, 41, Fountains Close, Popley 4, B'stoke, RG24 9GZ
Tel: 01256 467872

Mrs Marta Cock, 16, Soper Grove, Basingstoke, RG21 2PU
tel. 01256 51506

John Feuillade, 44, Heath Road, Pamber Heath, Tadley, RG26 3DS
tel. 01734 700761

Marten Harris, 3, Ramsholt Close, North Waltham, B'stoke, RG2 5DG
tel. 01256 397651

Les Fitzgerald, 10, Warbleton Road, Chineham, B'stoke, RG24 8RF
tel. 01256 812557

Mrs Margaret Porter, 58 Minden Close, Chineham, B'stoke, RG24 8T H
tel. 01256 56012

Co-opted:

Mrs Barbara Applin, 138, Old Kempshott Lane, B'stoke, RG22 5EN
tel. 01256 465439

Mrs Mary Oliver, 3, Milkingpen Lane, Old Basing, B'stoke, RG24 7DD
tel. 01256 24263

REFLECTIONS FROM THE CHAIR

In his annual review of the Society and its works, 1995/6, John Horrocks commended his officers and committee for their hard work and support throughout this busy time. Special praise went to our Secretary, Barbara Herrington, who retires from office at this AGM. In presenting her with a gift of flowers, he listed some of the several duties cheerfully undertaken by her - committee minutes, correspondence, answering queries from the public, letters of thanks, organising for special guests and for refreshments at meetings - to name but a few!

David Miles too, is retiring to the back benches for a while after a long stint with the committee and John thanked him for his dedicated work with the Society library and with his involvement in fieldwork. Barry Ennever, has been our Treasurer until recently, when his job has spirited him away to Paris. He took over at a difficult time but made a splendid effort to get our finances running smoothly again. Happily, we are fortunate that Peter Good has offered to take over as Treasurer and already has started in a positive way by working towards a goal of long-term stability for the Society.

John praised the standard of our lecture and visits programme, the burden for which falls on a few shoulders - notably Mary Oliver and the leaders of the visits we have made to Silchester, Lambeth Palace, Bignor Roman Villa, and local Churches. Additionally, we took a major part in the One-day Conference (The Art of the Civil War) at Basing House in the Autumn.

One great occasion during our 25th anniversary celebrations was the dinner at BCOT, attended by the Mayor, Arthur Attwood, our speaker Andrew Lawson and some 45 members and friends.

Our Training Dig at Easter attracted a total of 27 participants and was completed in good weather and in good style. Thanks are due again to Mary and her crew for taking on the burden of preparation and tuition. Our ongoing project with Thames Valley consisted of cleaning and analysing the finds, using a computer in this work for the first time for us. Our survey work undertaken by our regular team at the Vyne and at Bramley Frith continues.

We need to consolidate our arrangements for meeting places for our lecture programme. The combination of venues offered at Queen Mary's College seems the best in terms of flexibility to cope with increasing numbers for some events and the requirements for 'prestige' lectures. We shall use the Main Hall, the Central Studio and the Conference Room and clearly mark these on our programme card!

The Newsletter continues to maintain its standard of excellence and is our main contact with the members who have come to rely on it. As a record of our activities and as a source of reference it is essential. Barbara Applin and Tim are to be congratulated on its production.

Publicity and PR involved us in a number of ventures; for example, the Fort Hill School Family Days run by the National Trust in the Autumn. The burden for these aspects of the work of the Society to enhance its profile falls on the Publicity Sub-committee - especially on Margaret Porter, who has produced and distributed the splendid posters she has designed herself and who has sent meetings reports to the local press. And how about the Sweat Shirts!

In conclusion, John drew attention to the fact that our membership has increased over the past year which, in itself, is an indication of a healthy Society and, provided that we can maintain the interest of our present members and the dedication of our organisers - and attract new, keen to help, members to the fold - we shall prosper.

LONG & FAITHFUL SERVICE REWARDED

At the end of the business meeting of the AGM, our Chairman, John Horrocks, called the members to attention for a very special reason. He asked Barbara Applin and Mary Oliver to come forward and, to the great pleasure of the members present, traced the long and meritorious service that Barbara and Mary have given to the Society right from its very beginnings. He then invited them each to receive a scroll upon which was written that from this day forward they were honorary life members of the Society.

We were pleased to be told by both recipients that they were delighted to have this status conferred on them and that they were still as enthusiastic about the Society as they had been at its inception. Julian hastened to refund their annual subscriptions, these now being redundant!

Tim Herrington

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 1996/7

Those members who have not yet renewed their membership of the Society for 1996/7 are reminded that it fell due on May 1st (membership runs to April 30th., 1997). The rates for the coming year are:

Ordinary adult membership	£11
Family membership	£15
Over 60 or student	£7

If you have not renewed, you should find a form attached to this newsletter. Please complete the details required and post it, with your cheque made payable to **B.A.H.S.**, to our new Membership Secretary: Mr Julian Porter, 58, Minden Close, Chineham, Basingstoke RG24 8TH (tel. 01256 56012).

THE PROGRAMME CARD FOR 1996/7

Please check that the programme card for 1996/7 has been included with your newsletter. This year, we have included as many of the proposed visits as possible. Some will not have a specific date yet; this will be published later. We are now adopting a "tear-off slip" approach to visits whenever appropriate as this seems to give a more positive response from members and allows us to plan the visit more carefully. The inclusion of a stamped, addressed envelope with your request saves time and saves the Society, as a whole, postage expenses. May we have your comments ?

We hope that you will be satisfied with the programme on offer, which we believe presents a balanced look at the past. We invite you to make suggestions about future talks and events to help Mary in her prodigious task of unearthing new speakers !

SOME PROPOSED VISITS for your immediate attention!

WALKING TOUR OF OXFORD: Sunday, September 15th.

A WALK AROUND HAMPSTEAD: Saturday, October 5th.

KINGSCLERE CHURCH & VILLAGE: Saturday, October 12th

Insert sheets, describing these three events and including a tear-off slip to return if you are interested in any or all these walks, should be found with this newsletter. We look forward to a good response to start off our new season. Fill in the forms **now!**

WEA COURSES IN BASINGSTOKE 1996/7

We have received details of WEA courses in Basingstoke for this Autumn onwards. For further details, **please 'phone Tish Mason on 01276 681992.** Leaflets should also be available in local libraries. Courses of possible interest to our Society members include:

Art in 16th Century Italy: Ten evening meetings at the Vyne School, Basingstoke on Mondays, starting 30th September - 7.30 to 9.00 pm

Walks: Exploring the Hampshire Countryside: Five meetings on alternate weeks, starting Thurs, Oct. 3rd at the Village Hall, Newnham Lane, Old Basing - 10 to noon.

Jane Austen, the Novels & Their Background: Twenty weekly meetings at Chute House, Basingstoke, starting Friday, September 27th - 10.30 to noon.

Architecture Afternoons at Basing House:

Development of Vernacular Housing, AD43 to 1660: Sat 19th Oct., 2-5 pm

Churches & Cathedrals: Sat 23rd Nov., 2-5 pm

The History of the Fortified House: Sat 8th Feb., 2-5 pm

It is advisable to enroll before the courses begin. The first meeting may be attended free, without obligation, but the fee must be paid at the next meeting.

JANE AUSTEN IN HAMPSHIRE

Anyone who missed Atherton Harrison's lecture to the Society on this topic have another chance at Basingstoke Library on Thursday, 26th September at 7.30 pm. Tickets (£1.50) are available at the Enquiry Desk in Basingstoke Library.

EASTER DIG, 1996

by Eric Robinson

Operations began on a fine but cold day. The team was led by Mary Oliver and the dig was well attended by a rather enthusiastic group of Arch. Soc. members plus some of Mary's students. The decision of where to dig had already been made, so we laid out the trench area to the north side of the old orchard. The size was to be 10 x 1 metres, with the object of picking up one of the ditches that showed up on air photographs of that area. The top soil was excavated with trowel and hand shovels.

While the trench was being opened up by the digging team, Peggy and Les were busy showing at least three people at a time how to carry out surveying - which I understand was of great interest, if a little baffling. The aim was to give everyone some idea of the disciplines involved with a dig, including the plotting of the site and location of any finds. Some small finds were plotted at this stage.

Then a start was made on the subsoil. The trench was trowelled flat to give a better profile and to reveal the layers of soil, getting down to the "natural". In the course of this we discovered the line of the ditch, indicated by a flint filling just below the level of the sub-soil. This ditch was in the upper half of our trench (the lower half had proved to be sterile except for a section of jaw bone). Work commenced on the careful removal of the ditch fill, and items of bone and pottery were found. Mary found a particularly good flint with well-worked edges. Most of the bone tended to fragment on lifting and was very soft. So too was the pottery, which one could say was of Iron Age date and rather early, and not too well fired.

It was decided to open up another trench of three metres, leaving a small baulk between the trenches. This enabled more people to get to the sections of features, and gave experience of trowelling, keeping the sections straight-sided for recording purposes. Work went on, getting down to the natural chalk. The bottom of the ditch proved to be "V"-shaped, so the final part of the excavation was difficult owing to the lack of room and the steepness of the sides.

We began measuring and making drawings of the sections .

An interesting experiment was undertaken of going over the site with metal divining rods. Three people tried this, obtaining the same results, indicating that there are further ditches to be dug in future digs on this site.

The weather being kind to us all the time did make life on the small training dig quite comfortable, and with people of like minds the company was excellent.

DAY AND WEEKEND COURSES AT OXFORD

We have leaflets for the following courses offered by the University of Oxford, Department of Continuing Education:

1996

Records of Medieval Property 26-27 October

The Human Skeleton in Archaeology 16-17 November

The Archaeology of the Byzantine City 13-15 December

1997

Using Title Deeds 18-19 January

Pompeii: Some New Perspectives 25 January

Neolithic Landscapes in Britain & Beyond 22 February

Iron Age Britain 7-9 February

Records of the Old Poor Law 1 March

Paganism to Christianity 14-16 March

Historical Aspects of Childhood 5 April

Beyond Flint Typology 5-6 April

Archaeology & the Old Testament 18-20 April

The Changing English Village 1700-1900 25-27 April

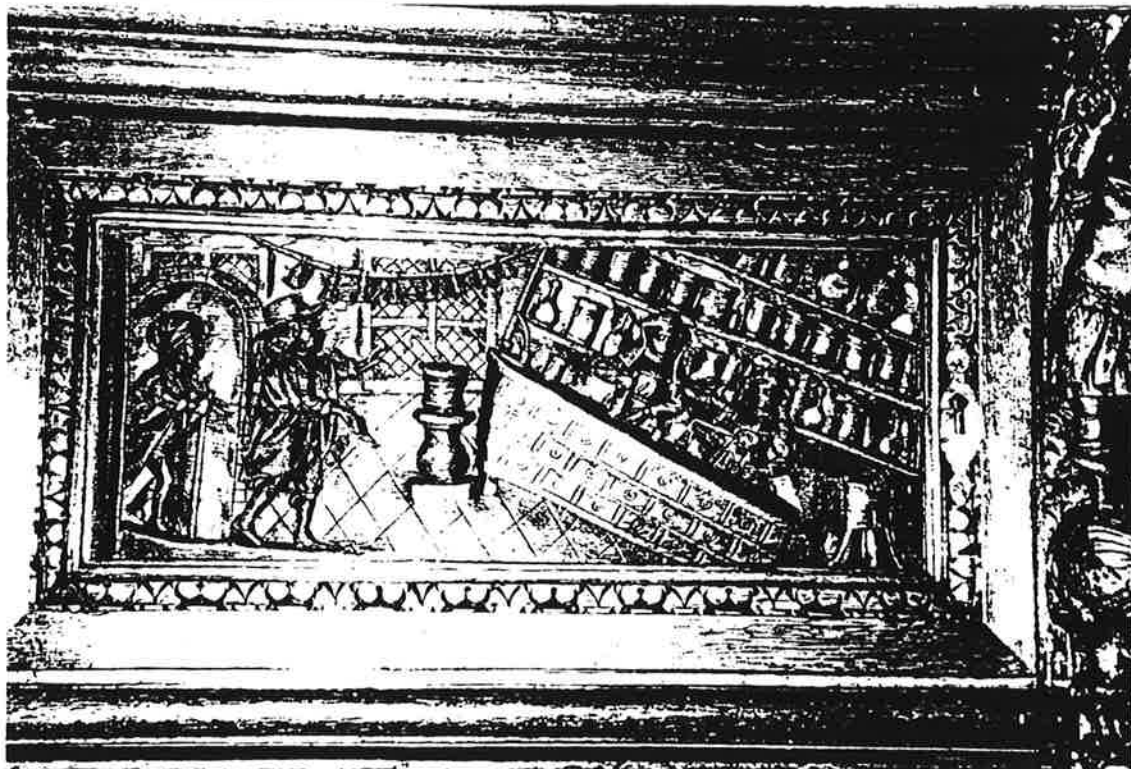
A WEEKEND IN BELGIUM

by Barbara Applin

You may remember seeing a leaflet at our Society meeting inviting members to join the Tyndale Society on this weekend organised by Graham Hall, a past chairman of our society. Bob and I took up the chance to join what turned out to be a select company of 11 in a minibus, and we crammed a great deal into a few days.

Some of us had a morning walking tour of Bruges - not walking exactly for our guide, who led us in an electric invalid chair. We thought that very enterprising and admired his fluent English, his knowledge and love of Bruges, and his sense of humour. He was full of information about the statues etc that adorn the exterior of the Chapel of the Holy Blood and the Recorder's House etc. One delight that is probably not seen by many visitors to Bruges is the courtyard of a convent, a building first owned by the Medicis. On the wall were superb medallion plaques of Lorenzo the Magnificent and his wife. A little nun came bustling out to show us something, opening a door to what we imagined might be a staircase - it turned out to be a loo which she thought we might need!

In the afternoon Bob and I spent a happy time in the Memling Museum, and also in the apothecary shop of St John's Hospital where an amazing bank of minute cupboards is exactly as it was in a 15th century painting; and where the portraits of Tutors give a wonderful sequence of faces from 1606 to the present.



Professor Guido Latré from the Catholic University of Leuven had sent us a sheet of historical background, and he joined us in the evening at a Banquet to celebrate the marriage in 1468 of Charles the Bold to Margaret of York, sister of our own Edward IV. The entertainment included dancers, tumblers, a fire-eater and a Russian eagle!

Next day we moved on to Vilvoorde on the outskirts of Brussels, to visit the Tyndale Museum which displays material relating to William Tyndale, whose translation of the Bible is the basis of all since, and who was "shopped" for heresy by agents of our Henry VIII and martyred at Vilvoorde. The Museum is attached to the Protestant Church, and we were delighted to be invited to attend the Sunday morning service there, followed by coffee with the small and very welcoming congregation.

Professor Latré joined us again in Antwerp to guide us round the amazing Plantin-Moretus Museum. I could have spent a week there! Christopher Plantin set up a printing business attached to his house, which passed to his son-in-law Moretus and flourished there till the 19th century. Treasures include Rubens portraits of Plantin and his wife; early manuscripts; a variety of books in goodness knows how many languages, with fonts devised by Plantin (the Plantin typeface was one of the mainstays of hot-metal type); wonderful rooms in the house, with richly decorated leather wall-hanging; a room full of printing presses, with banks of type waiting to be used; the type foundry itself (upstairs!); and, a touch that delighted me, the proof-correctors' room.

The following morning Professor Latré gave us a walking tour of Leuven, leaving us for lunch in the capable hands of a research student who gave us the low-down on university life there - different in so many ways from English universities.

Many thanks, Graham! - and we look forward to your walking tour of Oxford in September.

VENI, VIDI - GLUG, GLUG, GLUG

When Julius Caesar ruled the waves - or tried to

The wreck of a Roman ship on the seabed a mile off Hayling Island could help us rewrite more than marine archaeology. If carbon dating and dendrochronology of its foreign wood establish that this is a genuine *navis*, the find could revive interest in two fascinating questions. Why did the Roman Empire fall? Why did the British Empire rise?

Romans hated the sea. Because of this hatred, Rome was an absurdly inconvenient place from which to run an empire. Every army had to march long leagues to the top of Italy before making a sinister or a dextrous turn to do any conquering. Unsurprisingly, the Romans soon tired of this.

In his famous set-piece in *On the Republic*, Cicero praised Romulus for his wisdom in avoiding the coastal sites of Greek cities when he founded Rome. In this way he kept his capital city clear of all the corruption and danger that the sea stands for. Roman poets were plangent about the dangers of sea travel. When they had to fight at sea, Romans endeavoured to make it as like the land as possible with grappling-irons and drawbridges. Lucretius defined Epicurean happiness (and perhaps *Schadenfreude*) as standing on a cliff in a storm watching others in peril on the sea, and thinking "There but for the grace of terra firma go I."

Of course, for some tasks, like invading Britain, ships were unavoidable. In such cases Roman leaders believed, like Colin Powell centuries later, in the military doctrine of massive deployment of force. They insisted on the largest possible numbers of ships - they knew that a momentary caprice of jealous Neptune could turn a claim of Veni, Vidi, Vici into a cry of glug, glug, glug.

Romans may have feared the sea but there was the need for luxury imports. The Monte Testaccio (Broken Pot Mount) outside Rome was made up of 53 million imported olive oil amphorae deliberately broken after their contents were transferred into larger storage vessels. It is a kilometre around at the base and represents an oil lake of 6,000 million litres. The Roman plebs lived on imported corn, 150,000 tons a year shipped from Egypt, but twice as much again from Sicily and North Africa. This is a rare statistic from the ancient world.

The wealthy Roman dressed in wool from Miletus and linen from Egypt. His wife wore silks from China, decorated herself with pearls from India, and made up with cosmetics from Arabia. He seasoned his food with Indian pepper and sweetened it with Athenian honey, and had it served on dishes of Spanish silver by British slaves. He washed it down with Sicilian wine decanted from Syrian glass.

So hatred of the sea did not extend to hating imports by sea. This Roman shipwreck is a reminder that before Britain learned to rule the waves Rome had a good try at doing so. But it would still be interesting to find out in which direction the ship was sailing when it down, and who made up its crew. Perhaps they were Roman Britons, the first seadogs of Empire.

The Times have kindly allowed us to reproduce this article.

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CALENDAR

Thurs 12 Sept	A Room with a View? Stonehenge: Its Landscape Julie Gardiner	BAHS
Fri 14 Sept	Heritage Open Day, Basing House	FBH
Sat 15 Sept	Heritage Open Day + Garrison Life	
Sun 15 Sept	Walking tour of Oxford See insert	BAHS
Fri 20 Sept	Cheese & Wine, tour of Curtis Museum & new Ceramic Gallery, Alton	HFC
Thurs 26 Sept	"Jane Austen in Hampshire" Atherton Harrison, see page 5	B'stoke Library
Sat 28 Sept	"Aspects of the Geography of Hampshire's Landscape" (Landscape Section AGM)	HFC
Sun 29 Sept	Guided Tour of Basing House, 3 pm	FBH
Sat 5 Oct	Walking tour of Hampstead See insert	BAHS
Sat 5 Oct	Local History Section AGM at Havant	HFC
Thurs 10 Oct	The Vitality of the Medieval Church Dr Clive Burgess	BAHS
Sat 12 Oct	Kingsclere Church & Village	BAHS
Thurs 17 Oct	AGM + "Transport Museum Update"	FWM
Thurs 14 Nov	Current Archaeology - Coming up 30! Andrew Selkirk	BAHS
Thurs 21 Nov	"Restoration of Historic Buildings in North Hampshire"	FWM
Thurs 12 Dec	Wine and Cheese Christmas Party	BAHS

BAHS
FWM
HFC
FBH

Society Activity

Friends of the Willis Museum, Willis Museum 7.30 pm
Hampshire Field Club
Friends of Basing House