

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER 137

November 1996

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Barbara Herrington

I knew Barbara only in her later years. Those of us who heard her *valete* at her funeral will know of her pioneering work in the community in the field of family health care in the Basingstoke area and the work she and Tim undertook with our Society in its early years when Basingstoke was being built. She was efficient, respected for her professionalism and loved by all, both in her work and in the societies to which she belonged in her leisure time.

When I took my turn as Chairman of BAHS the Society had been well served by various secretaries in turn but unfortunately the time was coming when a replacement was needed.

It was then that I met Barbara; I do not know whether it was Barbara who saw the Society's predicament and gallantly volunteered to help or whether it was Tim, knowing Barbara's capabilities, who put her name forward. Either way she took over the files from a very relieved predecessor and a grateful Committee.

Working with her was a joy. Minutes were taken, written up, distributed, and submitted as usual at the following meeting. Pieces of paper were filed and produced again when needed and if any letter or telephone call or arrangement needed making she would give one of her enigmatic and whimsical smiles and say "That'll be all right."

But I suppose the greatest thing she did for the Society was never to say "No" when asked to make arrangements that went far beyond the call of duty or even love between friends. I am referring to looking after the inner man, yes, catering. Committee meetings, parties, barbecues, conferences, picnics and social evenings were all simply taken in her stride. "I've left it with Barbara" was something that was heard said time and again, after which everyone knew that all would be well and it would be done quietly, efficiently and, not least, reliably.

Never a short word, always approachable, for ever concerned and a mother to all with time to chat. Tim and his family are not the only ones who will miss her.

Thank you, Barbara.

Richard Dexter

We also send our condolences to our member Alex Martin on the death of his wife.

CHRISTMAS PARTY



Yes, it's nearly party time again! The Christmas Social will take place in the conference Room, QMS, on **Thursday, December 12th**. The evening's entertainment will start at 7.30 pm and a charge of £1.50 will help to cover the cost of the one free glass of wine (or soft drink) and the refreshments. Further drinks will be available by modest contribution to Society funds.

To pursue our successful format from last year we again invite members to volunteer a 5 minute talk on a subject of their choice which they think will interest our members. Please contact **Tim Herrington** on **01256 22090** now to book your slot!

The rest of the evening will be given over to socialising, indulging in a few light-hearted games, competitions and admiring the entries for the photographic competition - have you sent your entry in yet?

If you have an interesting artifact, document or mystery object to display, please bring it with you (this excludes strange relatives who are welcome anyway).

SEE YOU THERE!

SOCIETY DINNER AT BCOT



Bowing to popular demand, we have arranged a Society Dinner at Basingstoke College of Technology on the evening of **February 27th** next.

There will be a three or four course meal provided (details not yet settled) and we will engage a speaker to regale us for a short while after the meal. **We do need to know** how many members - and their friends, of course - are interested. We have included a reply form for you to complete and send back to **Tim Herrington**. The cost will be about £13.00. Further announcements will be made at Society meetings but this is the last Newsletter to reach all members before the date. So please respond soon so that we can make all the necessary arrangements with BCOT. Those of you who reply will receive all details personally as soon as they are available.

YORK NATIVITY PLAY, ALDERMASTON

This year is the 40th year of the York Nativity Play at Aldermaston Church. We would like to make up a Society booking and have requested tickets for either **Friday 13th or Saturday 14th December**.

The play is based on the York Cycle of Mystery Plays. These plays were performed and financed by the Guilds of York, on carts which progressed through the town, stopping at various places where the play was then performed. Each play presented an incident from the life of Jesus. The Aldermaston play covers the original plays based on the Nativity of Jesus and is performed in the church, using its features to best effect. The action, therefore, moves around the church and there are no "front seats". The actors are all recruited from Aldermaston and the surrounding villages.

This is a nativity play performed by adults for adults and is an experience not to be missed. Tickets will be limited, so if you are interested phone **John Feuillade on 01734 700761**.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

We are looking forward to a lot of entries to this year's photographic competition. The photos will be judged on the basis of the archaeological or historical interest of their subject matter, the quality of the composition, and their general presentation. The rules of the competition are as follows:

- The subject can be anything of historical or archaeological interest, or of interest to the members of the Society.
- Photographs should be taken by a Society member in the calendar year 1996.
- Prints only (colour or monochrome) are eligible, and can be up to 10" x 8", mounted or non-mounted.
- Each entry should have a title. This can be written on the back of the photograph or on the mount.
- The fee for each entry will be 50p. The name of the person entering the photograph must be written on the back of each entry.
- The final date for entries will be 2 weeks after the November 1996 meeting.
- The panel of judges will include at least one non-member.
- Modest prizes will be awarded.

Entries should be sent to **Peter Good: BAHS Photographic Competition, 95 Cliddesden Rd, Basingstoke RG21 3EY** **to arrive by 30th November at the latest.**

Update on Off Beat Walks for 1997

Julian Porter



- Due to popular demand, the **Off Beat Walk Around Hampstead**, which took place on October 5th, will be held again on **Saturday 5th February**.
- There is an additional walk planned from **Hammersmith to Brentford**, date to be confirmed, probably **late April**.
- Lastly, the **Winchester Walk** is still on for **Saturday 15th March**.

Anyone wishing to attend any of these should contact **Julian Porter on 01256-56012**.

BAHS Fieldwork

Report by Julian Porter

member of Field Work Committee

The BAHS Field Work Committee met on Tuesday 15th October to discuss future Society field work. The following is a résumé of up and coming issues :

☐ **Bramley Frith**

Surveying work has been ongoing at Bramley Frith for the past two seasons. This work is now almost complete and Peggy Drury is currently drawing up the site's paths and earthworks from the results.

☐ **Shothanger Farm**

This is the field behind what is now the stonemasons' on the Newbury Road. This was partially field-walked some time ago and hasn't been completed as the field was unavailable due either to weather conditions or crops etc. Because of the possible work at Worting and the Vyne, it has been decided to put this site on hold again.

☐ **Church Lane, Worting**

Following the very successful training dig here last Easter, it has been agreed to approach the landowner to undertake further work on this field. The planned events are :

Resistivity Survey - We have arranged the loan of equipment and an operator for it from friends at North East Hants Field Club, on 23rd November. Anyone interested should contact me (number below) or Mary Oliver (01256 24263).

Field Walk - The field has not been ploughed and, therefore, this may be difficult. However, if it can be done, then this will be sometime after the resistivity survey.

Easter Training Dig - A similar event to last year, Easter being March 28th - 31st 1997. By this time we should have some interesting information on the rings that are visible on the aerial photo we have of the field.

☐ **The Vyne**

There is a possibility of assisting the Vyne in archaeological work in the coming months, while the house is closed for restoration work. As soon as I know more I will keep everybody informed.

☐ **Society Field Work Help List**

We also need to update the society's list of helpers on these digs/field walks to ensure we cover everybody. I will be asking all members to confirm if they could be available for any of this work at the next meeting.

☐ **Tools**

The society has a large number of tools used for surveying and digging but does require some new items. These will be purchased in the near future.

☐ **Has anyone got an old frame tent?**

We could do with a frame tent to use as cover at the Easter Dig and any future events. Has anyone got an old one they wish to get rid of? If so, please contact me on 01256-56012 and I will collect.

Oral History

Barbara Applin

A small group of Society members are planning to start an Oral History project, and I would be glad to know of anyone else who is interested in taking part (ring me on 01256 465439). The starting point is the collection of tapes of oral history interviews held by the Willis Museum, which have short synopses but need full transcripts. They contain some fascinating memories of Basingstoke. For this part of the project we need members who are willing to give up time to listen to the tapes and to word-process/type (or write neatly) what is on them.

The second part of the project is to enlarge the collection by doing our own recordings - Paulline Williams and Margaret Harris have already started, and others are raring to go. If you know of anyone with good memories of Basingstoke who would be willing to be interviewed, let us know. And the third part is to do back-up research and collate the information we get - possibly with a view to publication.

We are hoping to arrange a meeting at the Willis Museum and ask David Lee of the Wessex Film and Sound Archive to give us useful advice. Please let me know if you are interested so that I can let you know the date and time..

Membership Secretary's Report

Julian Porter

The good news this year is that we have 26 new members. This can only augur well for the future of the Society and I hope we can continue this trend in the future. I have little doubt that the increase in membership in recent years has been as a result of a general increased awareness of Archaeology thanks to :

1. Recent finds like Boxgrove, to name one significant event.
2. Programmes like Channel 4's "Time Team" and "Down to Earth"
3. **Current Archaeology** (which we will hear more on at our next meeting).
4. Our own advertising of events.
5. Word of mouth of current members.

I personally must thank Mary Oliver and Teresa Hook for persevering with the GCSE Archaeology Course, of which I was a member last year. All those who took the exam (and all passed) are now members [*two A*; two A; three B; one C!!* - *Congratulations! Ed*] . This year there is another full class, hopefully we can welcome some of these to our fold soon.

I hope that we will not lose too many of those past members who have yet to renew their membership. Societies like ours regularly lose 10% of membership each year for one reason or another (one of our new members has already left the area). Thankfully, even if our losses this year are 10%, the 26 new members will keep the membership on the rise.

So let's all welcome the new members and hope that they all continue to find interest in the society's events and become regular faces at our meetings. Maybe one of these will become Chairman in years to come, or even Membership Secretary.

THREE WOMEN UP A TOWER

(with apologies to JKJ)

by Sue Headley

A gloriously warm and sunny mid-September afternoon greeted Mary Oliver, Joy Needham, myself (and a few other members of BAHS) as we entered Oxford on the Park and Ride. Our walking tour led by Graham Hall (a former Chairman of the Society) started at St Michael's, now so centrally placed that it is hard to imagine that it was once at the North Gate to the City. Part way up the tower (the only surviving part of the original Saxon structure) we visited the church's Treasury. In addition to some fine early plate and manuscripts we saw a "Bocardo" box, a cylindrical money-box which inmates of the adjacent debtors' prison (the "Bocardo") would lower in the hope that passers-by would give a coin or two for the purchase of food and other comforts. (Being in the "Bocardo" was something of a "double whammy"; the prisoner not only had to discharge his debts but he also had to pay for his keep!)

We emerged at the top of the tower (sunhats on) to a fabulous vista of roof tops and the famed spires and towers of the Colleges and churches. Graham pointed out other buildings of interest, such as the Radcliffe Camera and the Sheldonian Theatre, and outlined the associations between various buildings and important figures in the life of the Church in the City. He reminded us that the Chapel of Christ Church was the cathedral church of Oxford and England's smallest cathedral. And who would have thought that Oxford, with all its apparent antiquity, was formerly within the diocese of Lincoln?

Since our tour was essentially one covering the Church history of Oxford, we were fully versed in the martyrdom of Bishops Latimer and Ridley and Archbishop Cranmer before we saw the paved cross in The Broad (there is a commemorative plaque on the wall adjoining the residence of the Master of Balliol) which, as nearly as anyone knows, marks the spot, then in the town ditch, where the bishops were burnt at the stake. What I had forgotten was that the two bishops were martyred in November and the Archbishop in the following March; the gap accounted for by the Archbishop's recantation and his subsequent affirmation of his original position.

We were all greatly relieved to learn that William Tyndale was burnt only after death by strangulation! An interesting character, Tyndale, much persecuted and well-travelled in his efforts to translate the Bible into English. What a waste of his evident scholarship! Ironically, only two years after Tyndale's death his life's work came to fruition through a change of heart on the part of Henry VIII. We were privileged to see, at the entrance to the Chapel of Hertford College, the "Tyndale" window donated by the British Bible society on its removal from premises in London. The Chapel itself is wonderfully light - no stained glass here - and has particularly fine carved detail on and above the stalls. Here Graham reminded us that, unlike Anglican churches, the College chapels are nave-less, the premise being that those who attended were either priests or trainees for the priesthood.

Then on to the "University" church of St Mary the Virgin, so-called because of its former role as the place in which degrees were conferred and other University business was conducted. This was where Cranmer withdrew his recantation. Here we heard about the Assize sermon, preached every fourth year on the occasion of the installation of a new Vice-chancellor, and always attended by the presiding Circuit Judge. Here too sermons were preached by the Wesleys, though not from the present pulpit; a fine piece with a sounding-board.

A back-street dash to Corpus Christi College enabled us to see (albeit only through the gateway and obscured by vegetation) the gilded pelican at the top of its elaborate sundial. Here Graham told us of the image, now a little-known piece of Christian symbolism, of the pelican feeding its young by plucking flesh from its breast. How disappointed the "ancients" would have been had they been aware of the pelican's regurgitating mechanisms!

Just time after that to pause outside Lincoln College where, because we reached it after closing time, we could not see the window which is reputedly that of John Wesley's room. And so back to St Michael's, after an absorbing afternoon. A brisk walk down St Aldate's enabled us to catch the penultimate Park and Ride back to the Redbridge car park (last bus to Redbridge leaves the City at 5.48 pm on Sundays).

Finally, our grateful thanks to Graham for such an informative tour and to Mary who arranged it.

(The story of our search for the initially elusive public lavatories near the Martyrs' Memorial, and the despairing dash to the Randolph, is not for this, or indeed, any future edition!)

GUIDED TOUR OF KINGSCLERE

by Linda and Dave Chapman

Kingsclere is a Hampshire village surrounded by historic as well as pretty countryside, nestling in the shadow of Watership Down, with the Bronze and Iron Age settlements of Beacon and Ladle Hill close by. We met in chilly autumn sunshine at St Mary's Church, which stands in the centre of the village, where we were introduced to the four guides, Laurie Mills, Sarah Orr, Cyril Turner and Peter Bailey. Our visit started by being shown around St Mary's by Laurie Mills (who had broken off his holiday to be there). St Mary's stands on the site of a Saxon Minster and perhaps a site of worship back into the mists of time. This much altered church was built between 1130 and 1140 AD. The Victorians were responsible for many alterations, including flint covering of grey stone walling, alterations to roof, windows and doorways and the addition of a round turret. Despite this, some old features still remain, one of which is a 12th century font. The weather vane is unusual. It is supposed to represent a bed bug, many of which are said to have infested King John's bed when he stayed in the village. The vane could also represent a comet seen in 1744 whilst building the tower, or others say it is a fertility symbol??? We were also told that the village fire appliance was housed in one end of the church. The tour of the church came to an end and we said goodbye to Mr Mils.

Mr Bailey took over as guide, and we began a walking tour of the narrow village streets, starting with Newbury Road. No 1 is a 16th century timber-framed building whose front leans at a crazy angle, and was once part of The Golden Falcon Inn. On the wooden beams you can still see the original carpenters' marks. There were four water mills in Kingsclere, all fed by Kingsclere Brook (presumed to be the origin of the word "clere" in Kingsclere, i.e. clear water). We moved on to The Crown Inn and were told the story of the murders of the landlady and a military policeman in 1944 by American troops. Down into North Street, with its Victorian street lamps, past the old laundry and Priors Mill, then up Love Lane.

Mr Turner now took his turn as our guide. He told us of the Holdings, a land-owning family who made many gifts to the village, including the old cricket ground where cricket was played as far back as 1775. Now down past the George and Horn Inn built in 1611, into George Street, past the old Forge and Smithy. We stopped outside a building that used to contain a business that made ropes and sacks and was the origin of Carters Tents. Arriving back at St Mary's, we stopped for a well-earned cup of tea and cake.

After the tea, Sarah Orr took us along Swan Street, past the Swan pub and to No 18 which used to be a bakers and bacon business and is said to have a secret passage that led to the church. During floor refurbishment in No 20, a house first built in 1380, Saxon pits were discovered, also a Roman latch lifter and 9th century pottery.

We finished this excellent tour in Swan Street. Thank you to all the people who were our guides for a most informative tour.

VISIT TO BOXGROVE QUARRY, SUSSEX

Pleistocene hominid site

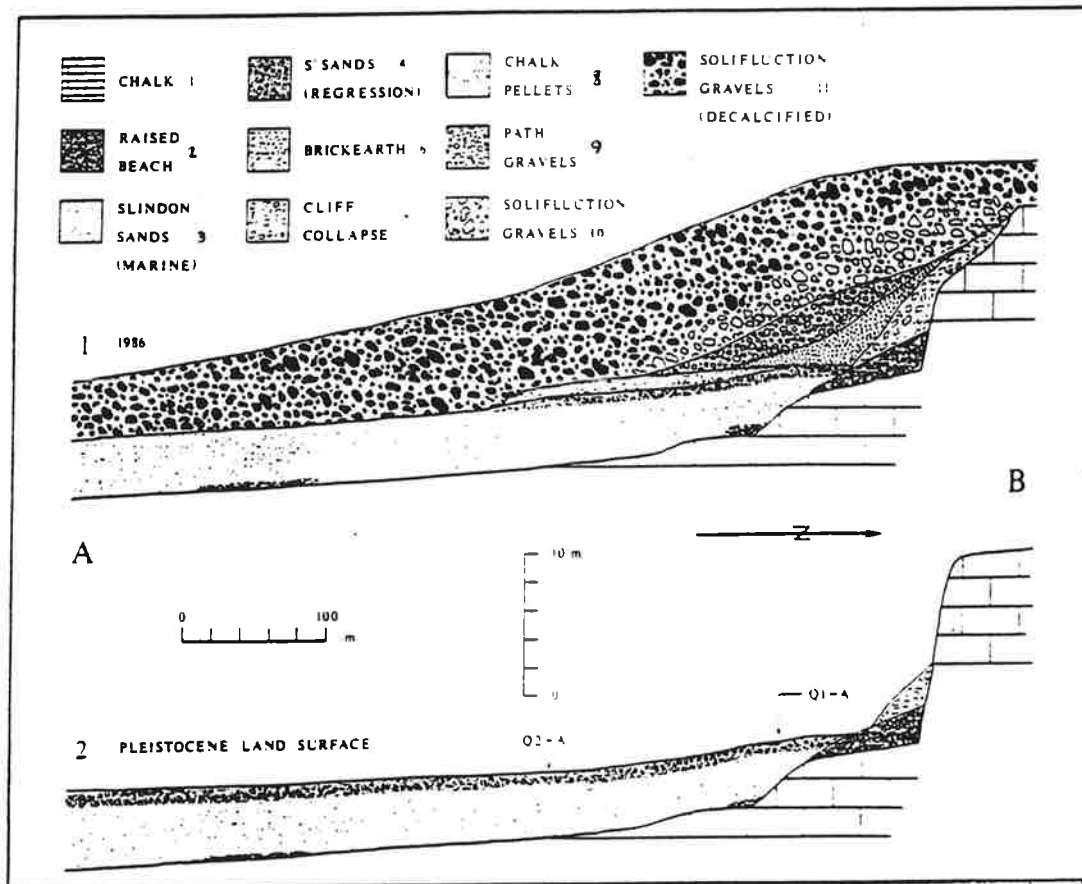
Katrina Slocombe

Five hundred thousand years ago (half a million years!) dense and almost impenetrable temperate forests stretched across much of the northern hemisphere landmasses. The forests cloaked the tops of the white chalk cliffs, some 80m high, which spanned the southern shore of what is today the British Isles. The sea constantly scoured the base of the cliffs, occasionally tearing away large blocks and tumbling them onto the storm beach of rounded flint pebbles, themselves already eroded out of the chalk. Further down the sloping beach, marine sands were being deposited and many metres of sediments built up, intercalated with collapsed chalk blocks.

Coastal uplift and a gradual retreat of the sea resulted in a shallowing of the coastal waters. Lagoonal muds were laid down and brackish waters gave rise to shallow pools and marshes. When these dried up, they were quickly colonised by land plants. As this process continued, a vast open plain formed between present day Britain and France. For a period of perhaps only a few hundred years this plain, moistened by seasonal showers and fed by rain-water streams, produced harvests of lush juicy grass. This attracted large herbivores: horse, rhino, deer, together with their attendant carnivores: lion, hyena, wolf and bear and one species of hominid: "Boxgrove Man".

But deteriorating climate soon impinged on this luxuriant scene. Permafrost gripped the earth: trees, low plants and even the vast forests disappeared. Freezing and thawing eroded huge quantities of debris from the chalk downs which flowed, first as fine silts and brickearth, then as vast swathes of gravels down onto the coastal plain, sealing in all evidence of this temporary "Garden of Eden".

This was the scene graphically described by Matt Pope of University College, London, as he patiently guided us around Boxgrove Quarry on a warm overcast day in August. Evidence for all the above exists at Boxgrove today due to the thick overlying gravels laid down in the Anglian Glaciation which began approximately 420,000 years ago (correlating to oxygen isotope stage 12). The modern commercial extraction of those same gravels has, ironically, resulted in the discovery of the original Pleistocene landscape. Beach pebbles, collapsed chalk blocks and deep, extensive marine sands evident in several of the excavated sections we were shown, attest to many thousands of years of deposition in the area of Slindon Raised Beach, near Chichester (see diagram below).



(Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, 52, 1986)

Composite geological section through the sediments

After an extensive survey of the quarry features, Matt led us down to the site of the 1995/6 archaeological dig. Here, across a series of rectangular excavation pits, he drew our attention to a dark horizontal band of sediment lying immediately above the Slindon sands and below the paler brickearths. This thin line, known as the Fe/Mn (iron/manganese) layer, was all that remained to indicate the original surface vegetation and debris of the open plain. This layer has been dated to a time between 470,000 and 420,000 years ago (Cromerian interglacial / oxygen isotope stage 13). In several of the aligned pits, however, the dark Fe/Mn layer dies out and the subsequent sediment is deformed to produce indistinct swirling structures. Using many techniques, including pollen and molluscan analysis, archaeologists interpret this as evidence for a small stream, rich in calcium carbonate, flowing off the downs. To this freshwater channel, which had often dried out producing evaporite deposits attractive as salt licks, came the herbivores, carnivores and hominids which ranged across the great plain.

Amongst a wide variety of animal remains discovered, archaeologists have been particularly interested in those of the herbivores: adult horses, rhino (mature and immature), deer. These are often found in a disarticulated state, sometimes bearing cut marks confirmed by research as being made by flint tools. Alongside the butchered parts as many as 300 oval flint handaxes have been found, yet discrete piles of flint debitage, from their manufacture, are found in profusion across distant parts of the quarry, suggesting that the hominid "butchers" prepared their tools in advance and carried them to the "kill" site. This feature suggests that the hominids engaged in "planning, for which there has been no previously recorded evidence.

Whether the hominids actually killed or scavenged these large animals for food is still a matter for debate but continuing research has indicated that the cuts on the bones are often overlain by later carnivore tooth marks, suggesting that the hominids had primary access to the dead or dying animals.

As we know, one hominid eventually came to the same end. The tibia of "Boxgrove Man" found in 1993 has evidence of post-mortuary gnawing, probably by wolf. Two teeth were also found in 1995. The solidly built leg bone was from a robust, rugged individual estimated to have been 1.8m tall. He was probably not the ancestor of modern man (*Homo sapiens*) but has been classified as *Homo heidelbergensis*, a species of hominid whose remains were discovered some years ago in contemporary deposits in Germany.

Sadly, unless "Boxgrove Man" quickly makes a further appearance, 1996 may be the last year of excavation at the quarry site. Parts of the older area of the quarry are already being landfilled and we were certainly lucky to include in our visit the temporary "museum" on the quarry farm in which the precious 1996 "finds" were housed. These included some finely worked handaxes and debitage scatters, and bones of deer which had been modified by flint cuts into a possible projectile.

Plans are, more happily, proceeding to publish a comprehensive monograph on the 14-year excavation and English Heritage also hopes to fund the establishment of a permanent visitor centre which will preserve the current excavation area and provide an information and educational resource.

This timely visit, which I personally had been anticipating with enthusiasm, was extremely informative and enjoyable, surpassing all my expectations.

Thanks to the editor of the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* for giving us permission to reproduce an illustration from Volume 52, 1986

TEN CHURCHES AND A WEDDING

Ralph Atton

Jump into car at 11 Roman Gate, Pamber Heath. Drive to St Mary's Parish Church, Silchester, a Grade 1 Listed Building, dating from about 1125, which is appealing for £35,000 for urgent repairs. Put up signs at approach roads and outside Church. Unlock Church, leave orange juice, water, stewards' rota, register of visitors. Return Pamber Heath. After five months' forward planning and many hours at the word processor, the

Transport by Mini to Ramsdell. Curious feeling of being abandoned in middle of nowhere. Proceed to Christ Church, built 1867. Array of drinks and biscuits offered - feel unable to partake as we have only just started. Next Church Pamber Priory, former property of an alien Priory, suppressed in 1417. Only the superb Early English Quire and Norman Tower remain. Path then passes Wyeford Cottage (16th century) and Wyeford House (17th), the manor first mentioned in 1166. Reach the oldest Church in Tadley, St Peter's, located close to the line of the Roman Portway, between Silchester and Old Sarum. Built 17th C., on earlier sites, St Peter's is suffering from wet and dry rot, woodworm and the death-watch beetle and urgently needs £10,000 for repair work.

Pass Tadley Place Farm, rebuilt 17th C., once the site of a windmill and medieval village. Footpath to Baughurst, St Stephen, built 1847, again on an earlier site, dating from at least 1167. Spire 100'. Tradition that Roman soldiers, stationed at Silchester and converted to Christianity, worshipped here. Proceed along series of footpaths, marvellously wooded views, pass what is thought to be oldest cottage in Tadley, on to Tadley Main Road Methodist Church (1931), recently completely restored. Nearby is Tadley Old Meeting, United Reformed Church (18th C.).

Reach Tadley, St Paul, on The Green. Built 1966, again on an earlier site, the modern structure is like an upturned boat, with planks of fir laid over ribs of the same timber. Coloured stained glass by Coventry Cathedral artist. Pause for lunch, replace boots with organ shoes, don tie, obtain music from Rector, play organ for wedding, choir in fine form. Friend continues for a further considerable distance, visiting five more Churches.

Resume walk. Visit Pamber Heath, St Luke, constructed 1876 and serving also as School until at least 1905. Again completely refurbished recently. Reach Silchester Methodist Church (1839). Turn round, home for cup of tea. Drive to Silchester, St Mary, for close of the event, remove notices etc. About 48 cyclists and walkers from a wide area had visited the Church during the day. Lock Church. Basingstoke Area had raised £1786 in 1995 - speculate on what we may have achieved this time. Half of the money raised goes to the Trust and half to the Church chosen by each cyclist or walker. Heard that organiser in Witney, Oxon, had visited all 60 Churches in that Deanery!

Next year's Walk/Ride will be held on Saturday, 13th September 1997. Anyone interested in receiving details next April (you don't have to be attached to a Church to take part) please let me know (0118 970 0825). You should have an interesting and enjoyable time!

Congratulations, Ralph! Have you got your breath back yet? Members who joined our visit to Tadley churches last year will recognise some of the descriptions. Those who visited Oxford recently may wonder if the intrepid organiser from Witney might have been Graham Hall...?

Editors

Amongst a wide variety of animal remains discovered, archaeologists have been particularly interested in those of the herbivores: adult horses, rhino (mature and immature), deer. These are often found in a disarticulated state, sometimes bearing cut marks confirmed by research as being made by flint tools. Alongside the butchered parts as many as 300 oval flint handaxes have been found, yet discrete piles of flint debitage, from their manufacture, are found in profusion across distant parts of the quarry, suggesting that the hominid "butchers" prepared their tools in advance and carried them to the "kill" site. This feature suggests that the hominids engaged in "planning, for which there has been no previously recorded evidence.

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Annual Sponsored Ride/Walk, in aid of the Hampshire Historic Churches Trust and held this year on 14th September, was under way. A nation-wide event, with 361 Churches taking part in Hampshire, including 30 in the Basingstoke Area, which was my particular concern.

Put on walking boots, check rucksack in order, join friend, proceed to Pamber Heath, St Luke's Church, for photograph. An encouraging number of cyclists from local Churches assembled. A gorgeously fine day, unlike two years ago, when the heavens opened, my map still drying out!

Transport by Mini to Ramsdell. Curious feeling of being abandoned in middle of nowhere. Proceed to Christ Church, built 1867. Array of drinks and biscuits offered - feel unable to partake as we have only just started. Next Church Pamber Priory, former property of an alien Priory, suppressed in 1417. Only the superb Early English Quire and Norman Tower remain. Path then passes Wyeford Cottage (16th century) and Wyeford House (17th), the manor first mentioned in 1166. Reach the oldest Church in Tadley, St Peter's, located close to the line of the Roman Portway, between Silchester and Old Sarum. Built 17th C., on earlier sites, St Peter's is suffering from wet and dry rot, woodworm and the death-watch beetle and urgently needs £10,000 for repair work.

Pass Tadley Place Farm, rebuilt 17th C., once the site of a windmill and medieval village. Footpath to Baughurst, St Stephen, built 1847, again on an earlier site, dating from at least 1167. Spire 100'. Tradition that Roman soldiers, stationed at Silchester and converted to Christianity, worshipped here. Proceed along series of footpaths, marvellously wooded views, pass what is thought to be oldest cottage in Tadley, on to Tadley Main Road Methodist Church (1931), recently completely restored. Nearby is Tadley Old Meeting, United Reformed Church (18th C.).

Reach Tadley, St Paul, on The Green. Built 1966, again on an earlier site, the modern structure is like an upturned boat, with planks of fir laid over ribs of the same timber. Coloured stained glass by Coventry Cathedral artist. Pause for lunch, replace boots with organ shoes, don tie, obtain music from Rector, play organ for wedding, choir in fine form. Friend continues for a further considerable distance, visiting five more Churches.

Resume walk. Visit Pamber Heath, St Luke, constructed 1876 and serving also as School until at least 1905. Again completely refurbished recently. Reach Silchester Methodist Church (1839). Turn round, home for cup of tea. Drive to Silchester, St Mary, for close of the event, remove notices etc. About 48 cyclists and walkers from a wide area had visited the Church during the day. Lock Church. Basingstoke Area had raised £1786 in 1995 - speculate on what we may have achieved this time. Half of the money raised goes to the Trust and half to the Church chosen by each cyclist or walker. Heard that organiser in Witney, Oxon, had visited all 60 Churches in that Deanery!

Next year's Walk/Ride will be held on Saturday, 13th September 1997. Anyone interested in receiving details next April (you don't have to be attached to a Church to take part) please let me know (0118 970 0825). You should have an interesting and enjoyable time!

Congratulations, Ralph! Have you got your breath back yet? Members who joined our visit to Tadley churches last year will recognise some of the descriptions. Those who visited Oxford recently may wonder if the intrepid organiser from Witney might have been Graham Hall...?

Editors

THE BIKINI STAR

by Ann Broad

Did you see me on the "telly"? No? I didn't either, but I was there with Alison Carter of the County Museum Service, being interviewed for the early evening Meridian TV local news programme, at the "Undressed for the Beach" exhibition at Andover Museum (which later travelled to Basingstoke). How did this happen? Well, it's a long story.

In 1956 my husband, then my fiancé, asked me whether I would wear a bikini if he bought one for me. I delightedly said I would and was soon the proud owner of a green and white striped, boned but strapless bikini. That year on our holiday on the Isle of Wight I proudly posed for a photo wearing my new bikini. As a keen swimmer the first thing I found out about it was that it was no good for swimming in. As soon as I swam using my fast breast-stroke, I realised the top had a tendency to flap downwards, leaving me in imminent danger of becoming "topless".

Having a bad memory, the following year during our honeymoon I dived, with gay abandon, into the outdoor swimming pool at Wookey Hole. This time when I surfaced, as far as I could see I was topless, until I realised that the top had flapped completely downwards with the force of the water as I dived in.

From family photos I can see that I was still wearing my bikini in 1962, but as the years went by I found we didn't look quite so good together and abandoned it to the bottom of a drawer.

Finding it again this year and seeing that it was still in good condition, I contacted Alison Carter who is in charge of the costume section of the Hampshire county Museum Service and asked whether she would be interested in receiving my treasured bikini, together with the 1956 photo. She was delighted to accept my offer as it pre-dated the oldest bikini she had in the collection by 2 years. It was a very appropriate year to offer this item as The Bikini was first designed and marketed by a Frenchman and named after Bikini Atoll in 1946. Did you realise it was so long ago?

For this reason Meridian TV wanted to film the bikinis in the Andover Museum exhibition and talk to Alison Carter as the organiser. I received a telephone call from Alison saying a young lady by the name of Sue of Meridian TV would be telephoning me to ask whether I would be happy to be interviewed about my bikini. "A new experience", I thought, and when Sue phoned I agreed to meet her at Andover Museum, complete with husband Michael, to be interviewed.

Michael has always said that he had seen the photo of the French girl modelling the first bikini and that it was made of a silver material and the bottom part of the bikini was only a triangle of material and thin straps. I didn't really believe him remembering the swimming costumes of 1946. But, in the exhibition, sure enough, there was the photograph, in a book, and exactly as he had described.

We were both interviewed, as was Alison, and believe me, it is not as easy being interviewed on camera as it may seem, especially when you lose the thread of what you were saying. However, it was an interesting and rather exciting new experience and we came home and carefully either watched or video-taped the programme each weekday evening for the next three or four weeks. Then we were busy packing on the Friday to go away camping for a week on the Saturday, during which time we wouldn't be able to see TV anyway. And perhaps we hadn't done well enough to have the item shown.

Then on the Monday after our return from holiday, I heard a voice behind me in Wote Street saying something about me being a "TV star". I spun around to see Alison Carter, who told me that the item had been shown on the Friday before we went away and that she had only seen it by chance and managed to get it on video tape.

But as yet I still haven't seen my moment of stardom and haven't found anyone else who has either.

CALENDAR

Tues 19th Nov	Recent Remains from Bitterne Manor (Clausentum) Andy Russel, Tudor Merchants' House, Southampton 7.30	HFC
Thurs 21st Nov	Restoration of Historic Buildings in North Hampshire Martin Smith, Willis Museum, 7.30	FWM
Sat 23rd Nov	FIELDWORK: Church Lane, Worting (See page 5)	*BAHS
Sat 30th Nov	Closing date of Photographic Competition (See page 4)	*BAHS
Mon 2nd Dec	Embroidery, Tapestry and Samplers (including the newly discovered Paulet embroidery), Ruth Smith, Basing House 7.30	FBH
Wed 4th Dec	Saxon Ships; How Well Did They Sail? Edwin Gifford, Lyndhurst Community Centre 7.30	HFC
Fri 6th Dec	Friends Christmas Get-Together , Willis Museum, 7.30	FWM
Thurs 12th Dec	WINE & CHEESE CHRISTMAS PARTY Conference Room, Queen Mary's College, 7.30 (see page 3)	*BAHS
Frid/Sat 13th/14th Dec	York Nativity Play , Aldermaston Church (see page 4)	
Thurs 8th Jan	PROTECTING SITES & MONUMENTS IN TIMES OF ARMED CONFLICT Prof Patrick Boylan, Queen Mary Hall, 7.30	*BAHS
Mon 13th Jan	The Reborn Shakespeare's Globe Michael Leveté, Basing House 7.30	FBH
Sat 5th Feb	Offbeat Walk Around Hampstead (see page 4)	*BAHS
Thurs 13th Feb	PLANT FOODS IN THE MESOLITHIC / UPPER PALAEOOLITHIC Sara Mason, Queen Mary Hall, 7.30	*BAHS
Tues 18th Feb	The Butser Iron Age Ancient Farm Petery Reynolds, Basing House 7.30	FBH

FBH = Friends of Basing House; FWM = Friends of the Willis Museum;
HFC = Hampshire Field Club **BAHS = US!!**