

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER 145
November 1998

CONTENTS

Page 2	FORTHCOMING EVENTS
Page 3	NOTES ON FORTHCOMING LECTURES
Page 4	BASINGSTOKE TALKING HISTORY - A REPORT
Page 5	VISIT TO SILCHESTER
Page 7	GEORGE LAMB, SOLICITOR, OF BASINGSTOKE
Page 9	THE FELGATE BOOK LAUNCH & A REVIEW
Page 10	PREHISTORIC EUROPE - A BOOK REVIEW
Page 11	GEORGE WILLIS - OLD BASINGSTOKE
Page 12	CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wine & Cheese Christmas Social

Thursday, 10th December 1998
Conference Room, QMC
for a 7.30 pm start to festivities



Playing safe, being pretty sure that you are happy with the usual format of our Christmas get-togethers, we invite you to deposit the sum of £1.50 (to help cover the cost of your first glass of wine, or soft drink, and the refreshments). After that, you are ready to take part in the familiar evening's entertainment. It would help if you purchase your ticket for the Social at the November meeting; failing that, we would really like to know how many to expect on the night, and a call to Tim Herrington on 01256 322090 would be much appreciated.

We are once again looking for volunteers to give short (5 minute) presentations - slides, too if you wish - during the evening. Please let Tim know if you would like to help.

The photographic competition results will be announced at the Social. If you have not yet sent in your print (up to 10" X 8", mounted or unmounted and with a title on the mount or the back, together with your name) please do so now. The closing date for your photograph, taken this year and featuring an archaeological or historical subject, is two weeks after the November meeting. The cost to enter is a measly 50p! Send your entries to Peter Good at 95, Cliddesden Road, Basingstoke (tel 01256 322771).

ANNUAL SOCIETY DINNER AT BCOT Thursday 25th February 1999



We feel justified to head this announcement as "annual" as our members have let us know that they look forward to the three-course dinner, the pleasure of one-another's company and the bonus of a guest speaker. This time, our Mayor, Councillor Derick Mirfin will be the guest of

honour and we hope to persuade him to talk to the assembled multitude after the meal. The cost is expected to be £13 - 14. We do need to know soon how many members and friends will be coming so please use the reply form enclosed with the newsletter to show your interest. Further details will be sent to you as soon as available (from Tim Herrington - tel. 01256 322090).

NOTES ON FORTHCOMING LECTURES

Mary Oliver

"Swanning Round the Med": Theatres and Temples

Thursday 14th January

We start the New Year with the perfect title for a cold dark January evening, with the promise of sunlit pictures of classical ruins. Following our policy of having one "home-grown" lecturer each season, this year it's the turn of our Secretary, **Tim Herrington** who, as you will have worked out from the title, went on a Swan's Hellenic Cruise some years ago with his wife, Barbara. We can look forward to lovely pictures of theatre and temples, among other sites, and to Tim's personal account of these famous and familiar places.

The Tudor Courtier

11th February

Some of you may have **Alison Sim's** recently published book on "The Tudor Housewife", with a wealth of information about everyday life for women in the sixteenth century. Her job as a guide at Hampton Court Palace must have provided the inspiration for that and also for her lecture to us. The Tudor monarchs and their Court often visited some of our local grandees at Basing House, the Vyne and Elvetham Hall, for instance. So Alison's lecture will enlighten our visits to these places, as well as to Hampton Court Palace, which may perhaps be a suitable follow-up visit next Spring.

"Drinking and Driving": Wealth and Power in the European Iron Age

11th March

Some members heard **Sara Champion** speak at the Ancient Textiles conference last year and suggested she should be invited to speak to the Society. Her subject, the Iron Age, is one which she has specialised in over the years. We have a wealth of Iron Age sites in our neighbourhood and it will be particularly interesting to see how their Continental cousins behaved. Sara will describe, among other things, some wonderful burial groups with their panoply of equipment for their afterlife - and all they needed for future "drinking and driving".

NB All 1999 lectures at Church Cottage, 7.30 pm

BASINGSTOKE TALKING HISTORY

Barbara Applin

As this Society project has been going for almost two years now, it is time for a report on progress. We have about 20 members and would welcome more.

Some members come to meetings at the Willis Museum to help to determine the shape of our work and to exchange experiences and advice. At the last meeting we watched Tim Herrington interviewing John Horrocks, and then Margaret Harris interviewing Tim. We learned a lot about the vagaries of a cassette recorder and of an interviewee, as Tim was instructed to wander off the point and Margaret to attempt to bring him back - in fact we learned that "off the point" memories can often be particularly interesting.

Some members are rarely seen but are happy to do interviews, write up a synopsis or even a full transcription of an interview - time consuming but a vital bit of archiving, and full of surprises.

And of course there is research to be done when a book is prepared - as with **GOING DOWN CHURCH STREET TO THE FELGATE BOOKSHOP**. Much of this was done in the Willis Museum Resources Room, the County Record Office and the County Museum Service headquarters, with a trawl through deeds held by the County Council and the Borough of Basingstoke & Deane.

We began by doing 19 synopses and 8 verbatim transcriptions of the 92 tapes already recorded for the Willis Museum, then undertook the following interviews:

Mr Tom Trenchard (Paulline Williams)
Mrs Dorothy Locke (Margaret Harris)
Mr Albert Farmer (Margaret Harris)
Mrs Joyce Coltman (Kate Mattock)
Mrs Kath Sanders (Barbara Applin)
Mrs Hilda Symes (Shirley Baker)

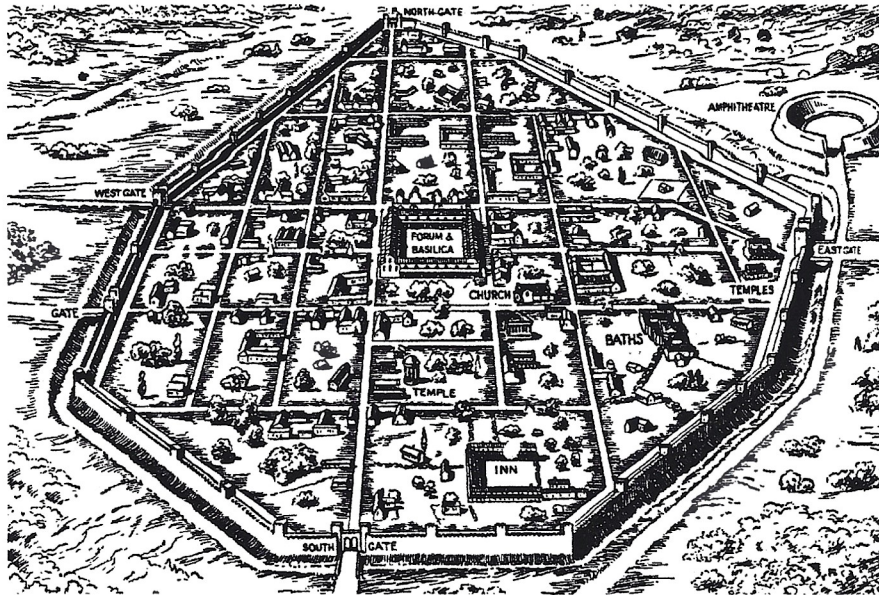
Our current project is a "scrapbook" of memories relating to Health matters before the formation of the National Health Service and immediately after. Appropriate extracts have been taken from 13 transcripts, and the following interviews have been done (more in progress):

Jeffrey Dodd (Derek Spruce)
Blanche Bunkle (Shirley Baker)
Beryl Wren (Shirley Baker)
Dr Smeaton (Shirley Baker)
Don Blisset (Jo Kelly)
Dr Tom Roberts (Jo Kelly)

We are awaiting a response to an appeal for financial backing for this book, as sales from the Felgate book won't have produced enough money yet.

VISIT TO SILCHESTER

A report by Richard Dexter



It was on a golden August afternoon (the second day of summer this year?) that the Society met at Silchester to be conducted round the site by the Director himself, the Society's friend of long standing Professor Michael Fulford.

Silchester, we were told, is the subject of a long term research programme funded by the University of Reading (with the active support of Hampshire County Council who has jurisdiction over the site) that will be running well into the next century. The University has been working there for a number of years at various locations but the present effort is being directed towards part of Insula IX which lies just to the north west of the known location of the Forum. This particular area was chosen because it had no public buildings and so would present an opportunity to excavate the more humble and everyday buildings. Moreover it could be seen that there was a prominent building which lay on a different orientation to the grid of the insulae, thus suggesting that it may be later in date.

Silchester, as the site of a Roman town, has long been known from antiquity, which is not surprising seeing the height of the upstanding walls that surround the site. It first attracted serious study at the turn of this century when the Duke of Wellington, who originally owned the land, arranged with the Society of Antiquaries to have it excavated. This involved hiring local labourers to place parallel trenches across the site and when they met any masonry to follow the line and expose the tops of the walls of the Roman buildings. This early excavation was somewhat crude by modern standards but it did provide the excavators, and posterity, with a Roman town plan that could be used as a reference when undertaking work elsewhere. The information gained, however, had one drawback in that it gave the Victorian excavators the erroneous impression that it was the only plan of Silchester. As Professor Fulford said, it was rather like taking a street plan of Basingstoke in 1998 and assuming that it was also a description of Basingstoke in

1398. However, it provided enough detail to enable Professor Fulford and his team to know where to start re-excavating.

The importance of the site today is two-fold. Firstly, it is the only Roman town in England (other than possibly Verulamium and Wroxeter) where there has not been later urban development and secondly, in spite of the earlier excavators having totally uncovered the site, they only exposed the tops of the walls of buildings; anything lower such as robber trenches, wells and pits still retained undisturbed deposits in situ. In consequence, since there is no commercial pressure for redevelopment, as there is in an urban environment, research can be conducted both methodically and at leisure.

Professor Fulford explained that much of last year's endeavour was spent on opening up the Victorian trenches and exposing their spoil pits from which it was possible to extract further information, like pottery type styles and dating, that was denied the Victorians because of their limited knowledge. Some of the work of the 1997 season was clearing the ground near to where the Ogham pillar had been found in the last century. (Ogham script is writing formed by cross hatched straight lines not unlike runes and is normally only found in the west of the British Isles, particularly in early Christian Ireland). To find Ogham as far east as Silchester was, he said, most unusual and will lead to further research.

This year's work involved cleaning up the top layers left by the 1900 excavation, from which it was now possible to recognise the traces of further buildings missed by the earlier workers. These were mostly the faint traces of buildings that fronted the original streets of the insulae. It was also becoming possible to see traces of a hard gravelled area associated with the late diagonal building that Professor Fulford tentatively suggested could be a stockyard for cattle. Close by was evidence of late Roman dark earth deposits that are found on so many Roman sites and are associated with end of fourth and early fifth century decline, when buildings within the town walls were decaying and when the ground reverted to agriculture. It was also possible to identify some of the building material for the later buildings as emanating from, or coming from the same source as, the upstanding town walls.

The highlight of the present season's work was, he explained, the discovery of various relatively shallow pits, not deep enough to be wells, close to or partially within the area of the diagonal building. A central object was the particular feature of each pit. Either an interred dog or an artefact such as the Ogham script pillar. The inscription on this, he reminded us, was a dedication implying it was used as a tomb stone. One would have expected it to have been sited outside the town, where Roman burials normally took place, but it seems that it had been removed in antiquity and reburied, purposefully, by the diagonal building. Professor Fulford was reluctant to be too specific in interpreting these finds and their location in relation to the building, but he could not help but feel that those who made the interments were aware of the location of the late Roman building. It thus provides us with evidence of continuity between the inhabited Roman town and the succeeding generation.

When he was asked at the end of the tour when the underlying Iron Age levels would be exposed, Professor Fulford replied, somewhat tongue in cheek, "Sometime around 2010", as there was plenty of work to be getting on with in the meantime.

GEORGE LAMB, SOLICITOR, OF BASINGSTOKE



Note: The following article was kindly offered to us by the author of the recently published book "Overton & Its National School", copies of which can be obtained at BAHS meetings or from the Hon.Sec. Alison Deveson has given us a welcome addition to the social history of our near-neighbour Overton. At the same time, she has developed a story which links the village with Basingstoke through the benefactor George Lamb, whose generosity allowed the building of the third National School in Overton, opened in 1868.

Now read on, and be sure that you obtain a copy of this splendid book !

George Lamb, solicitor, of Basingstoke was born in London on 23 November, 1793. He was the first of the seven children born to his parents, another George Lamb (whom we will call 'of Westminster') and Jemima Vaughan. George Lamb of Westminster was a Londoner by birth, though with antecedents in Overton, Hampshire, and retaining strong Overton connections; the Vaughans came from Benson in Oxfordshire. George Lamb of Westminster and his growing family moved around in London before coming to settle at Browning Hill in Baughurst, in 1812. He was an 'oil and colourman', that is, a dealer in artists' materials, with premises in Little Pulteney Street, now part of Brewer Street, just north of Piccadilly. He had probably inherited the business from his own father, since the firm of Lamb and Jones, later Lamb and Morrill, was in existence at least by 1782, when George Lamb of Westminster was only fifteen. The new property in Browning Hill was a substantial one, and by 1812 the 'oil and colourman' had become a farmer and a gentleman.

No record has yet been traced of George Lamb of Basingstoke's education, but we know that he was admitted as an attorney in the Inner Temple in 1814. By 1816 he was practising as a solicitor in Basingstoke, and in 1821 entered into his first partnership there, with John Cole and James Brooks, whose firm had been established in Odiham since the late-eighteenth century. George Lamb's youngest brother, Thomas, also became a solicitor, but in Andover. Another brother, Roger, joined the London family firm, which had diversified into the retailing of spirits by the 1820s.

In June 1820, George Lamb married Anne Workman, a member of a prominent Basingstoke family, and during the next thirteen years, four daughters and three sons were born to them, all baptised in the parish church of Basingstoke. It must have been a source of great sadness when their first son, proudly named George after his father, grandfather and great-grandfather, died in infancy. George Lamb and his young family continued to live in Browning Hill at least until 1831. George Lamb of Westminster had died in 1822, and George Lamb of Basingstoke, as the eldest son, inherited the property there. His brothers and sisters moved away, but remained in

north Hampshire, although one brother, John, followed a military calling, and met a premature death. Another brother, Robert, also died young.

During the decades following his marriage, George Lamb built up both his legal business and his property holdings, and formed professional and personal contacts with the most influential men then in Basingstoke. When the borough of Basingstoke was reformed in conformity with the Municipal Reform Act of 1835, he was elected as one of its first councillors, early in 1836. Residence in Browning Hill must have been proving inconvenient, for in 1835 he initiated the purchase of land in Worting, and sold some of the Overton properties which he had inherited from his father. The Worting land was associated with a pleasant house on which he must already have had his eye, but it was occupied by a sitting tenant. It was not until her death in 1842 that George Lamb was finally able to acquire it. In the meantime he and his family lived in Winchester Street in Basingstoke, very near if not actually in the premises still occupied by the legal firm which bears his name. By 1851 George and his family were all installed at Worting, with the exception of his elder surviving son, yet another George, who was probably himself married by this time.

Shortly afterwards, his daughter Ellen died, followed, in 1861, by his wife Anne, at the age of sixty-four. In 1870 he was further saddened by the death of his 'very dear child Sophia', and around this time he was engaged in several charitable causes, mostly educational, having retired from legal practice in 1859. His connection with Overton National School began at least as early as 1848, when he was listed among the subscribers. When a new school building was required twenty years later, he financed the project entirely on his own. In 1863 he had bought the site of the Poyntz Arms, a redundant coaching inn, on which the school was to be built, to a design of the Hampshire architect John Colson. When it finally opened in 1868, it bore a plaque in witness that George Lamb dedicated it in honour of his parents.

The donation was a combined act of philanthropy and filial piety, and a fitting memorial for a family whose connection with Overton can be traced back to the seventeenth century. The donation was followed in 1871 by the gift of land in Red Lion Lane, Overton, for an infants' school and the endowment of prizes in the form of Bibles, some of which are still treasured possessions of former pupils. A National School already existed in his home village of Worting, and he endowed prizes there also.

His will, made in 1872, reveals him as a man of strong religious faith and also of family affection, shown perhaps most tellingly in his concern that Sophia's 'cherished water colour drawings' should be preserved by his surviving children. There was also careful provision for family members, even the more distant ones, and mementos for friends and colleagues. Jemima Lamb, the 'revered mother' in whose honour the school was built, was still in his thoughts when he wrote his will. She had followed him to Basingstoke, she and three of her unmarried children occupying a house in Winchester Street in 1851, perhaps even the house vacated by George and his family. It was probably there that she died, at the age of eighty-three, having outlived her husband by about thirty years. They are both buried, not in their native or adopted parishes, but in the churchyard at Overton. Thomas Lamb, a highly-respected member of Andover society, never recovered from the early death of one of his sons, and predeceased his brother George.

George Lamb's will bears witness to his close association with Wyndham Spencer Portal, one of the most eminent men in the county at the time, whom he appointed as joint executor and to whom he left a sum of money with which to purchase 'any article of taste' in grateful remembrance of their friendship. George Lamb had been one of the leading members of north Hampshire society, but when he died in 1875, at the age of eighty-one, public recollection of him must already have been beginning to fade, for his passing was marked by the Hampshire Chronicle with only a simple death notice, and not the obituary one might have expected. He lies with his wife and five of his children in the churchyard at Worting, only a few yards from the house they once all enjoyed together.

The Lamb family continued to live there well into the twentieth century. On George Lamb's death in 1875, his two surviving daughters, Jemima and Eliza, were still living at home. Jemima died in 1878, and her sister went to live in Bournemouth. John Workman Lamb, the youngest son, did not long outlive his father, dying at the age of only forty nine, in 1883. He had succeeded both to the house and to the senior partnership of his father's legal practice, and his death was marked in the local paper by a handsome obituary and an affecting poem, in the Victorian manner. He left a widow, Margaret, six sons and a daughter. John Lamb's eldest son, Arthur, was also a partner in the family firm, and he too died young, in a fall from his horse in 1896. Margaret Lamb stayed in Worting until her death in 1911. She and her family were much loved and respected in the district, and no social or sporting event was complete without them. One of her sons saw distinguished service in the Boer War, another played cricket for Hampshire, and her daughter Winifred played tennis at national level for a time. Their grandfather would have been proud of them, and of the continued prosperity of Lamb Brooks.

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Compiled from genealogical and other information in documents available on microfilm, microfiche and transcript in Hampshire Record Office and in Westminster City Archives.

GOING DOWN CHURCH STREET TO THE FELGATE BOOKSHOP

by Mary Felgate & Barbara Applin

The launch of the first publication in the Basingstoke Talking History series duly took place on Monday 21st September in the presence of the Mayor and Lady Mayoress in the Willis Museum.

Right: Mary Felgate as a child (HCMS)

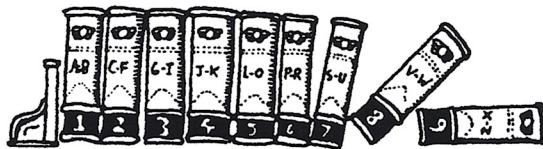


The Willis Museum was well populated by invited guests and friends, members of BAHS and Friends of the Willis Museum to hear Tim Evans, Curator, give a welcome to those assembled and to introduce the Mayor, Councillor Derick Mirfin. The Mayor congratulated the Society on its initiative in setting up the Talking History project and said how much he was looking forward to reading this first volume. The Society has the Mayor to thank for the support he gave to our successful application to the Borough for a grant.

As to the book itself, it has turned out to be much more than its title would at first suggest. The first part faithfully follows the recorded interviews with Mary as she details her memories of many visits to her Aunts' bible bookshop which entailed walking the length of Church Street in the 1920's - would that all of us had such an eye for detail and the ability to keep safe such memories! These have translated, with the accompanying sketches and pictures, into a fascinating glimpse of Church Street and its inhabitants, through the eyes of an inquisitive young girl, all those years ago.

But the second part of the book lifts it into a different category - that of a well researched, detailed study by Barbara Applin, ably assisted by Anne Hawker and Christine Hill, of the buildings and businesses in Church Street, sometimes as far back as the 1762 map will confirm. The format and layout are well structured and the printing of good quality.

In the words of the Chancellor at Budget time, I commend it to you !



PREHISTORIC EUROPE - An Illustrated History

Edited by Barry Cunliffe Oxford University Press 1998 £13.99 paperback

In a fit of rash financial abandon, I purchased the above recently, having seen it on my son Richard's bookshelf. I do not regret this untypical decision in the least, as the far-ranging overview of the people of Europe, presented by a number of celebrated individual contributors has come together in a remarkably coherent way. The styles of each chapter is different within the constraints of overall conformity, but that is quite OK for me as there is little time to become bored with any one author. The book is extremely well illustrated throughout in black and white pictures, diagrams, drawings and maps and having chapters on further reading plus a chronological table at the back. There are some 531 pages altogether so it is good value at 2.63p per page !

After an introduction from Barry, the story starts 700,000 years ago when

"Primeval men are now upon the scene - Short, thick-boned hairy beings of savage mien,
With ape-like skulls: but yet endowed with pride
And power of mind to lower brutes denied". ... So what's new ?

Subsequent chapters deal in turn with the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, First Farmers, the transformation of Early Agrarian Europe, the Minoans, the Mycenaeans, through the Iron Age societies in Western Europe, ... the impact of Rome and ending with Barbarian Europe in the centuries between AD300 - 700.

You are welcome to have a sneak preview of my copy at the November/December meetings before you put it on your Christmas list.

Tim Herrington

GEORGE WILLIS - OLD BASINGSTOKE - Part One

In 1963, the late George Willis gave a talk to the Basingstoke Natural History Society and, happily, this was recorded. From a transcript of this tape (in true Basingstoke Talking History tradition !) we present the first part of this talk in George's own words. The rest of the talk will appear in subsequent newsletters; we believe you will enjoy this first-hand account of long-gone Basingstoke.

My first early memories probably are of the market place in Basingstoke which has stood there for something like 400 years. I recall it in its early stages as a cold surface over which the iron tyres of carts, carriages and horse hooves rumbled. At a later date the surface was brought up to modern conditions as existed in London Street by paving it with wood blocks stationed on concrete. By some mischance there must have been a mistake made in the fitting because in wet weather the wood blocks filled and came up in long bales. This was subsequently followed, of course, by the ordinary asphalt more or less as it is today.

As regards to the use of the market place, apart from the markets which have existed for 400 years or more, I very well remember when it was covered with the guns of the Royal Artillery on their way down from Aldershot to Okehampton for the annual gunnery practice. It was a very great excitement for us schoolboys to see these lines of guns drawn up in the market place with the soldiers who were billeted in the local public houses, cleaning the guns at the end of the day and in the morning bringing the horses out of the pub stables, harnessing them up to the guns and moving off down Winchester Street on their way west.

The effect of the guns on the country roads was absolutely disastrous. On trying to cycle down to Overton on the day following, the roads from hedge to hedge were two inches thick in dust - the hedges likewise were anointed perfectly white. There was an episode of course of tarring roads in the market place and that also wasn't always successful.

I was too late to see the original 'Angel' inn because, in my day, the inn had become disused as licensed premises and had become a temperance restaurant, run by local benefactors - Edney, I know and so on. At the corner now occupied by Lloyds Bank, there was a fairly extensive grocer's shop which was later known as 'Tyrrels'. It is a curious comment on the importance of street frontage in a town that the front of the shop faced Winchester Street and front facing the market place was simply a blank wall. At a later date, of course, this was altered and the valuable frontage was made available for shop window purposes. One of the things I recall about this grocer's shop facing Winchester Street was that on going to school passing it daily, I saw the origins of lumped sugar. The sugar came in great cones wrapped in blue paper and these were subjected to a guillotine which worked at the back of the shop windows and these great masses of solid sugar were converted into more or less square lumps which was the original lump sugar.

The roads of the town were of course still untreated by any method of improvement apart from laying down flints and getting them worn in by the ordinary traffic. This sometimes could, in wettish weather, make a decent road surface, but in anything other than damp weather it gave rise to very considerable dust nuisance and water carts were in constant use - a big water tank with a horizontal spray at the back which paraded the town and converted very often the dust into mud.

The lighting arrangements of the town were, of course, very primitive and it is difficult to know whether the lighting of the time made the darkness more visible or cured it. This was by gas with ordinary square glass lanterns on posts or fixed to the corners of buildings and it was simply the naked gas flame which had to be turned on or off in the evening and the morning. This was done by the lamplighter, a very well known little figure, who trotted round the town at the appropriate times carrying the lamplighting mechanism which was a naked flame at the end of a long pole which was used for turning on or off the gas jet as occasion required, carrying a naked flame enclosed in a brass covering.

..... to be continued

CALENDAR

Tues 17 Nov	Recent Discoveries at the Tudor House Museum Andy Russel, Tudor Merchants' Hall Southampton 7.30 pm	HFC
Sat 21 Nov	Bronze & Iron: People & Places in Later Prehistory Conference, Boldrewood Centre, Southampton 9.30 - 5 pm	HFC
Thurs 10 Dec	CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING - <u>NB This is in the Conference Room, Queen Mary Centre!</u>	BAHS
Wed 13 Jan	Mediaeval Timber Framed Buildings Bill Fergie 7.30pm, Basing House	FBH
Thurs 14 Jan	"SWANNING ROUND THE MED": THEATRES & TEMPLES Tim Herrington	BAHS
Friday 15 Jan	The Time of My Life - A survey of recent Trends in Local History Work Prof. Alan Rogers, Hampshire Record Office, 7.30 pm	HFC
Thurs 21 Jan	The Paddle Steamer "Waverley" - the last seagoing paddle steamer in commission Ashley Gill	FWM
Wed 10 Feb	The Milestones Museum 7.30 pm, Basing House	FBH
Thurs 11 Feb	THE TUDOR COURTIER Alison Sim	BAHS
Thurs 18 Feb	Coppicing & Woodland Management in Community Woodlands Debbie Miller	FWM
Thurs 25 Feb	ANNUAL DINNER at BCOT	BAHS
Wed 10 March	17th Century Wills & Inventories Peggy Drury	FBH
Thurs 11 March	"DRINKING & DRIVING": WEALTH & POWER IN THE EUROPEAN IRON AGE Sara Champion	BAHS
Thurs 18 March	Lillie Langtry, the Jersey Lily Elsie Russell	FWM
Thurs 8 April	THE THRUXTON ROMAN VILLA AND ITS MOSAIC PAVEMENT Graham Soffe	BAHS
Thurs 15 April	Thomas Edmondson and his Train Tickets Michael Farr	FWM

BAHS = our Society; all except the Christmas Social Evening at Church Cottage, 7.30 pm

HFC = Hampshire Field Club

FBH = Friends of Basing House, 7.30 at Basing House

FWM = Friends of the Willis Museum, 7.30 pm at Willis Museum