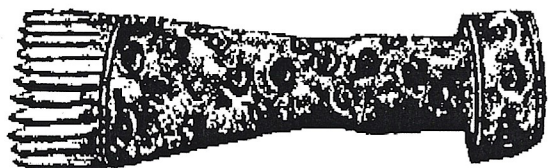


# BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER 149  
NOVEMBER 1999



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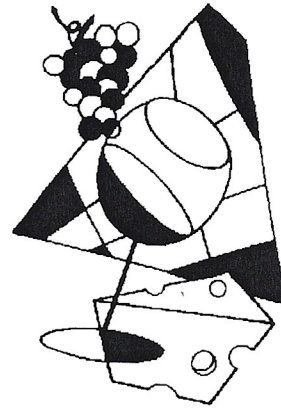
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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### WINE & CHEESE CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> December 1999  
Church Cottage, Basingstoke  
for a 7.30 pm start



Once again we invite you to join the Committee for a relaxed Social Get-together - this year at Church Cottage. For the meagre sum of £1.50 (to help cover the cost of your first glass of wine, or soft drink, and the refreshments) you are free to take part in the festivities.

We have decided give more time for members to circulate and to catch up with what your friends have been getting up to, so that there will just be a walk-around display quiz, and we will set out items of interest to view. We would be pleased if members would bring any "Links with the Past" - that is items of interest from your own treasures to show us or, indeed, to fathom out what they are! Any photographs, too, of historic or earlier sites would be welcomed for display (no competition this year).

Margaret Porter (01256 356012) would be grateful for any offers of help to prepare/supply finger buffet food for the supper (all expenses refunded, of course).

### ANNUAL SOCIETY DINNER AT BCOT

Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2000  
6.30 pm for 7.00 pm



A preliminary notice for you to enter this date in your 2000 diary. As usual, we shall enjoy a three course meal with coffee to follow.

We are delighted to have Brian Spicer as our guest of honour this time. Brian has virtually managed the estate at Hackwood for a number of years, culminating in the sad task of seeing the estate broken up and sold off following the deaths of Lord and Lady Camrose. He has agreed to give us a taste of life at Hackwood by way of a few well-chosen anecdotes.

The cost of the dinner will be £15. We do need to know soon how many members and friends will be coming. There is a reply form with this newsletter for you to show your interest. Further details will be sent to you in good time.

# PROGRAMME NOTES: JANUARY TO MAY 2000

by Mary Oliver

*(All the lectures are held at Church Cottage, Church Square and start at 7.30 pm.)*

## **Thursday 13th January 2000**

### **'The Reformation and William Kingsmill: the last Prior and first Dean of Winchester'**

We start the new year - and new century - with a lecture from one of our own members and past Chairmen, Richard Dexter. When he retired from the Bank of England, Richard was able to fulfil his ambition to study history, and in particular mediaeval ecclesiastical history, by reading for his degree at London University. The dramatic story of events at Winchester was the subject of his dissertation.

## **Thursday 10 February**

### **'A tale of two parishes: Rudgwick and Slinfold'**

Our next lecturer, Diana Chatwin, will also be known to some members. When she lived in this area, she was a founder member of the Society, committee member and an active digger. She now lives in the Sussex Weald, and has become interested in timber-framed buildings, of which there are so many splendid surviving examples, and is currently President of the Wealden Buildings Study Group. Her lecture will tell the story of two adjacent villages, which have developed in quite different ways, as revealed through Diana's work on the buildings and the records.

## **Thursday 9 March**

### **'Geophysics in Archaeology: its application to some local sites'**

One of the subjects we try to include in the programme from time to time is archaeological methods, especially as there has been so much progress in this field in recent years. Dr Kate Clark is a lecturer at Southampton University and has a special interest in geophysical survey. She has done a lot of work at Wherwell, where there was a large and famous convent in the early Middle Ages. As we are about to begin work with our own resistivity meter, this lecture should be particularly helpful.

## **Thursday 23 March**

### **'Henry III's disaster at the Tower of London: recent archaeological work'**

This lecture is additional to our usual monthly meeting, being a joint meeting with the Hampshire Field Club. The speaker will be Graham Keevill of the Oxford Archaeological Unit, who directed the recent work at the Tower. In the past, he led excavations at Brighton Hill, and has also visited us as a lecturer. Please add this extra lecture (no extra charge!) to your diaries, and come and find out about Henry's disaster!

## **Saturday 1 April**

### **Visit to Portsmouth Old Town and Dock area**

Last season we had a lecture from Dean Clark on 'Portsmouth and the defence of the realm' which was much enjoyed by those present. Dean Clark very kindly agreed to take us on a follow-up visit around some of the sites he talked about, and this has now been arranged, providing an opportunity to see some of the



buildings not normally open to the public. The plan is to meet on the promenade above the Grand Parade car park at 10.30am. Detailed directions in the next newsletter.

**Thursday 13 April**

**'Fishbourne Roman Palace: a reassessment'**

Those of you with a particular interest in things Roman will know that Fishbourne has been in the news recently as a contender for the landing place of the Conquest armies. David Rudkin, our lecturer, has directed recent excavations and will be able to expound this new evidence to us. This is the stuff that re-writes the text books, not to be missed!

**Thursday 11 May**

**'The Vikings: bloodthirsty warriors or peaceful traders?'**

It is a long time since we had a lecture on the Vikings, so it will be a pleasure to hear Dr Andrew Hobley rehearse the evidence for these two rival verdicts and their impact on Saxon society. Dr Hobley is new to us, but he is an experienced WEA and freelance lecturer, and I'm sure will give us a most interesting evening.

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## **AD : 2000 YEARS OF CHRISTIAN HISTORY**

On three successive Sunday afternoons - 28<sup>th</sup> November, 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December - there will be open lectures in Church Cottage, Church Square, Basingstoke given by distinguished church historians:

- Nov 28<sup>th</sup>    Reforming the Church - Then and Now: Protestant & Radical in English Christianity
- Dec 5<sup>th</sup>     Christian Socialism: From the Victorians to New Labour
- Dec 12<sup>th</sup>    Beyond Smells & Bells?: The Catholic Revival in the Church of England

Tea will be available for ½ an hour before the lectures. A £2 contribution at each lecture is invited. The lectures on Nov 28<sup>th</sup> and Dec 5<sup>th</sup> start at 4.30 pm and the last one starts at 5.00pm.

# SKELETON OF A SMALL CHILD UNCOVERED AT JAY'S CLOSE, BASINGSTOKE.

*A report by Peter Heath*

*At the beginning of October, some of our members worked on a site at Jay's Close, Viables, and Andrew Hunt uncovered bone that, subsequently, was found to be the skull of a young child. Peter Heath, assisted by Martin Dragoon, undertook the excavation of the skeleton.*

*Newer members of the Society may not be aware that on the discovery of human remains a report has to be made to the coroner through the local Police Station. Strictly, human remains may not be removed from the soil without a permit from the Home Office. However, practically, it is very often not possible to follow the letter of the law. The police must be informed so that they have the opportunity to satisfy themselves that no crime has been committed or that the remains are so ancient that any question of criminality is irrelevant. As is usually the case, the more interesting finds come to light at the very last moment and so it was at Viables; we were left with only a short time in which to remove the skeleton. A written report was prepared for the coroner (but not required) and an amended version appears below. :-*

Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust had been excavating a site at Jay's Close, Basingstoke, a continuation of the enclosure containing the Viables Double Burial excavated by our society in 1975. Topsoil had been removed by machine, over a large area, to a depth of approximately 40cm exposing the underlying chalk. A number of smaller areas within the site had been marked by Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust as suitable for further examination and BAHS members were working in several of them.

The skeleton lay in a crouched attitude some 40cm below the exposed surface in the trench; the skull was towards the east. The layers of soil above the skeleton contained potsherds having different fabrics but all were diagnostic of the late Iron Age/Romano-British period i.e. approximately 1st Century BC to 2nd Century AD. A layer of flint was found both above and below the skeleton but the immediately surrounding soil was free of flint. The skull was also resting on chalk debris. Two pieces of animal bone were found by the knees and a further piece under the pelvis.

The skull was badly crushed, probably by the weight of material above it, and was removed by lifting on a shovel together with some of the surrounding soil. Some of the ribs and vertebrae were lifted in the same manner. Femur, tibia and fibula were recovered individually. The bones were in a very fragile state and difficult to remove without being broken. The skeleton lay against the side of the excavation trench and although the side of the trench was undercut there was no trace of foot bones.

Examination of the side of the trench shows that the layers are continuous above the skeleton and there is no sign of a later insertion.

*Mary Oliver stored the bones until they were transferred to the Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust for further examination. The Coroner has examined the bones and is satisfied with the explanation given to him that they are ancient remains.*

*Tom Vaughan has promised us a report of the Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust's excavations for a future Newsletter. Meanwhile we are grateful to all those members who were able to take part in this dig at very short notice.*



# DEMYSTIFYING FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY

(Congress of the Council of Independent Archaeologists held at Sheffield,  
September 1999)

*Richard Dexter was our society's representative at this Congress and gives this report.*

The Council of Independent Archaeologists is an organisation set up about eight years ago by Andrew Selkirk (*Current Archaeology*) and others with a view to bridging the gap between "professionals" and "amateurs" in archaeology. With the advent of PPG 16, competitive tendering and the increase in ancient monument scheduling it was feared that the amateur archaeologist was going to be squeezed out of the archaeological scene, at least so far as excavation was concerned. The Council's eighth congress was held at Sheffield University over the course of a two day weekend. Over 22 presentations were made, some factual and serious, others more light-hearted. There emerged, though, two principal and underlying themes. They were that, notwithstanding the professionals' increased specialisation and access to expensive and complicated equipment, the gap between them and the amateurs is fast closing. Secondly the very nature of archaeology itself and the practice of recording of excavations is also changing.

Although the legislation surrounding the introduction of PPG 16 has given a wonderful fillip to archaeology, which is now taken seriously by central government, local authorities and developers alike, it is readily agreed that it has substantially reduced the scope for practical digging by amateurs. However, it was

pointed out that it is becoming increasingly clear that there is a role for local and amateur societies. The point at issue is where should they be directing their efforts? It was felt that the two important areas for amateurs and local societies' involvement are firstly in documentary research and secondly in non-destructive field work. The area of documentary research is already familiar to most societies but it may not be realised that this could include keeping an eye on the local SMR (Sites and Monuments Record) and the accuracy of both existing and new entries. In the case of non-destructive field work, it now includes not only field walking and aerial photography but also the new science of geophysical surveys, since the basic equipment is now well within the reach of the budgets of most amateurs. It was explained that soil resistivity and magnetometry surveys were exposing as many previously unknown archaeological features as aerial photography did when it was first extensively developed just after the last war. Indeed the discovering of new sites and features exceeds by far and away archaeology's resources to dig the new sites. Geomagnetic surveys are simple, non-destructive and relatively cheap: one can cut one's coat according to one's cloth so far as spending money on equipment is concerned.

The other main theme that came over was that, following the huge technical advances that have been made in providing back-up services and laboratory research facilities for excavators, there is now too much information to record if it is all to be given total resource treatment. The widely acclaimed new technique of area excavation, where ALL finds were recorded on a three-dimensional matrix, is no longer feasible because of information overload. It was a popular concept in the 1970s when technical and scientific advances were still only relatively modest but now it has become unrealistic. To become more discriminating in what is recorded is a somewhat controversial and a post-revisionist idea but it recalls the technique of the erstwhile great fathers of archaeology, namely Pitt-Rivers and Sir Mortimer Wheeler. Total destruction is no longer felt as being necessary and in its stead well prepared questions should be asked beforehand, followed by excavations with specific targets.

There are further roles for the amateur, not least the keeping of a watching brief on the professionals who rush into a contract dig from outside the area without having any idea of the local lie of the land. Examples were given where an outside contract excavator thought he knew what he was looking for on a medieval site and so missed many details that the local amateurs were on the look out for and which the main developer client was anxious to have preserved, since the remains were to be consolidated and incorporated as a feature into the completed building.

Some of the causes of slipshod work were seen to be a direct result of competitive tendering and the cutting of corners. On a more general level, though, it was agreed by both professionals and amateurs that there is nobody better placed to provide local intelligence than the good old local amateur society.

*The most important topic covered in the two days of the Conference included talks on Field Names, Archaeology and the Law, Recording a Dig, Pottery, Bones, Geophysics and Publications. If you would like to have a copy of the full report by Richard, please let Tim Herrington know (01256 322090).*



*Report by Barbara Applin*

David Lee, the Society's host at our November meeting, came to the BTH meeting to talk about equipment and techniques and gave us some very valuable tips. He also took away another batch of our original tapes, which are being held in the Wessex Film and Sound Archive, and will make copies for the Willis Museum.

Another archivist from Winchester, Adrienne Allen, is coming to our next meeting on 23rd November (7.30 pm at the Willis Museum) to tell us about the Hackwood archives held in the Hampshire Record Office, and Brian Spicer has agreed to give us an overview of how the Hackwood estate was run, as we are now beginning to interview people who used to work there. Anyone who would like to find out what the BASINGSTOKE TALKING HISTORY group are doing is welcome to come - but please let me know beforehand (01256 465439) so that we can decide how to arrange chairs.

We have been asked to provide some short extracts from our taped interviews for the forthcoming **OUR TOWN** exhibition (travelling to several venues in the town - more of this later).



## Bookshelf



**Books that will make good Christmas presents - if you buy them from us we save the discount!**

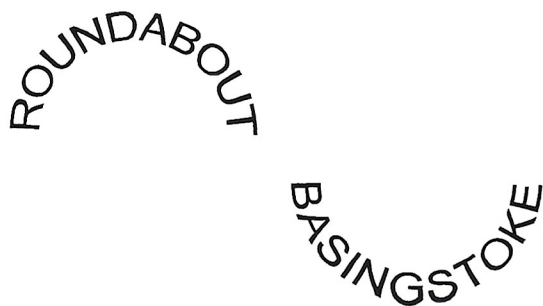
- **THE STORY OF BASINGSTOKE** by Anne Hawker (new edition) £6.95
- **GOING DOWN CHURCH STREET TO THE FELGATE BOOKSHOP** by Mary Felgate & Barbara Applin £7.50
- **THE KING ALFRED MILLENARY IN WINCHESTER, 1901** by Barbara Yorke £1.00  
(Hampshire Papers No 17, published by Hampshire County Council)

This is a well-produced commentary on the events leading up to the unveiling of the statue of King Alfred in Winchester in 1901, the culmination of the international commemoration of his millenary. Dr Yorke has carried out painstaking research to bring together a splendidly illustrated account of the story behind the setting up of the memorial. She tells us something about Alfred himself, his association with Winchester, and his several burials and transfers between resting places! The 1901 photographs are a delight.

- **AROUND TADLEY - Fact and Fable** published by The Tadley & District Society at £6.00

This book is due out on November 27<sup>th</sup> and will provide 'a valuable source of information across a broad spectrum' and is packed with interesting and unusual facts and fables relating to the Tadley area. We hope to be able to put it on sale in our society meetings bookshop soon.

- .... and another Society publication



**The new Christmas stocking filler  
by Barbara Applin**

Twenty five of Basingstoke's many roundabouts are illustrated and a little story told about their surroundings. A cute way of spotlighting some of the Town's features and history, this book is a must at just **£1.50**.

Two of our Society members tie

## The very best form of a Sealed Knot

Alan Turton and Nicola Hawes present a happy picture in 17<sup>th</sup> Century finery on the occasion of their marriage in Dummer Church on October 9<sup>th</sup> 1999.

We wish them a long and happy life together -  
with no signs of a Civil War!



## LAMB'S FIELD: AN AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

*by Richenda Power*



*(Lamb's Field in Church Lane, Worting is the site of our recent Easter Training Digs)*

The field has been placed under the Ministry of Agriculture Stewardship Scheme and the object is to re-establish the area as one of natural wild flowers and grasses. The first steps have been taken to broadcast the seed mix to promote this environment and it can be reported that there has been more than healthy competition from multiple thistles!

Fruit trees were planted in the Spring and have been quite productive despite the enthusiastic thistles and nettles. Land management has been exercised manually, except for use of the roller to help flatten the thistles. The next stage is to make the field stock-proof for some regular grazers - advice about and experience of sheep would be welcome!

We have spotted damsons, sloes, crab-apples and the ever present blackberries, but sadly there has been some vandalism too, some recently planted hedging plants and even an oak tree and its stake have been uprooted. Help with further planting this autumn will be welcome too. Rabbits have also attacked hedging plants and trees, though multiple rabbit guards have been put in place.

If you would like to help in any way, please contact me (Richenda Power) on 01256 322959.

## Web Site.

*Martin Dragoon.*

The Society now has an internet Website, the URL, or (address) is:- <http://welcome.to/bahs>

The Website is in it's early stages so if any members have any photos that they would like to see on the site or any ideas regarding it's content then please give them to Margret Porter.



# CALENDAR

Tues 16 Nov	MEETING THE ANCESTORS Julian Richards, Southampton City Art Gallery Lecture Theatre, 7.30 pm (booking necessary 01962 848269)	HFC
Thurs 18 Nov	THE HISTORY OF THE MOUSETRAP David Drummond, Willis Museum, 7.30 pm	FWM
Wed 24 Nov	LEGEND: THE GENESIS OF CIVILISATION David Rohl, Science Centre Lecture Theatre, Peter Symonds College, Winchester, 7.00 pm	HFC
Sat 27 Nov	WALK ROUND READING	BAHS
Thurs 9 Dec	CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING 7.30 pm Church Cottage	BAHS
Thurs 13 Jan	THE REFORMATION AND WILLIAM KINGSMILL: THE LAST PRIOR AND FIRST DEAN OF WINCHESTER Richard Dexter	BAHS
Friday 21 Jan	UNDERSTANDING HAMPSHIRE PLACE NAMES Prof. Richard Coates. Annual Local History Lecture: 7.30 pm, The Cinema, Hampshire Record Office, Winchester (booking necessary, HRO)	HFC
Wed 2 Feb	DACRE MEMORIAL LECTURE Mick Aston Cricklade Theatre, Andover (booking necessary)	AHAS
Thurs 10 Feb	A TALE OF TWO PARISHES: RUDGWICK BAHS AND SLINFOLD Diana Chatwin	
Thurs 24 Feb	ANNUAL DINNER AT BCOT 6.30 for 7 pm	BAHS
Wed 8 March	O G S Crawford Memorial Lecture, Science Lecture Theatre, Peter Symonds College, Winchester, 7.30 pm	HFC
Thurs 9 March	GEOPHYSICS IN ARCHAEOLOGY: ITS APPLICATION TO SOME LOCAL SITES Kate Clark	BAHS
Sat 16 March	Millennium Conference, Boldrewood, Conference Centre, Southampton	HFC
Thurs 23 March	HENRY III'S DISASTER AT THE TOWER OF LONDON: RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK Graham Keevill	BAHS/HFC
Sat 1 April	VISIT TO PORTSMOUTH OLD TOWN AND DOCK AREA	BAHS

BAHS = Our Society; all except the Annual Dinner at BCOT, 7.30 pm  
 HFC = Hampshire Field Club  
 AHAS = Andover History & Archaeology Society  
 FWM = Friends of the Willis Museum, 7.30 pm at Willis Museum