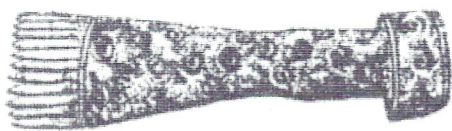


BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER 152

August 2000

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Mrs Mary Shelley, Birch Cottage, Hackwood Road, Basingstoke, RG21 3AF tel. 01256 322506

Andrew Hunt, 8, St. Patrick's Road, Basingstoke, RG22 6DN tel. 01256 476487

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2000/2001

Membership fees were due on May 1st and are unchanged this year at £11 for ordinary membership, £15 for family and £7 for over 60's and students. Occasional visitors are charged £1 per meeting. Please renew now if you have not already done so, sending your fee to our Membership Secretary, Garth George, 71, Camrose Way Basingstoke, RG21 3AW.

PROGRAMME CARDS

Mary Oliver, having weaved her magic once again, has allowed us to enclose with this Newsletter a full and balanced programme of events for the forthcoming year. If you have ideas for future events please let Mary know your suggestions.

PROGRAMME NOTES FOR AUTUMN 2000

Visit

BURSLEDON BRICKWORKS

Sunday 17th September

Meet there at 10 am (take the A 27 from junction 8 on the M27 and follow signs). This is a museum of the history of brickworking, with a splendid mural by Michael Laizans and with special exhibitions on house-building and photographs. There are usually activities to see (and a café).

Please ring Tim Herrington 01256 322090 by 1st September if you plan to go, so that we can arrange for a guided tour.

Lectures

A Thousand Years of Pottery

Roy Stephenson, Museum of London Special Services

Thursday 14th September

Our new lecture programme opens with a broad look at the development of pottery - that favourite tool of the archaeologist - over the last 1000 years. The talk will be illustrated by slides and Roy will, I am sure, bring into the story some of the local wares which were found and discussed during the Time Team dig at Basing House. Those of us who washed pot with him then will be pleased to renew Roy's acquaintance, and it will be good to start the new season with an expert in a subject which many prehistorians and Romanists find something of a mystery.

Bodies and Bronzes: the Langstone Harbour Project

Dr Julie Gardiner and Dr Mike Allen, Wessex Archaeology

Thursday 12th October

Both Julie and Mike have lectured to us in the past - so perhaps we can take it as a compliment that they both wished to pay us a return visit! We shall certainly benefit from having Julie to put across the archaeological and Mike the environmental aspects of this important research programme. Langstone Harbour, one of the best natural harbours on the South Coast, has an interesting story to tell and this should be a fascinating evening.

Hunter-gatherers in South Jordan

Dr Steve Mithen, Reading University

Thursday 9th November

The change from hunter-gathering to farming is arguably the most important step in the history of mankind's progress, and Dr Mithen is at the cutting edge of research in this subject. Some of you may have seen him in a recent television programme in the series on The Development of Money (Peter Jay, 8 pm, BBC 2, Sundays). His painstaking field-walking in the dusty hills of South Jordan was rewarded with the discovery of flint tools - and the rest of the story you must come and hear on 9th November!

Wine and Cheese Party

Thursday 14th December



Further details will emerge at the Autumn meetings and in the November Newsletter

Archaeological Investigation at Great Binfields Road, Chineham

Andrew Hunt



I was very fortunate to spend three weeks excavating with Berkshire Archaeological Services from 3rd July until 20th July in Chineham, Basingstoke at Great Binfields Road. The site is located near to the Centre Courts Tennis Club and the field in which we were excavating can be identified by a sign advertising its sale for the building of four houses.

The land is owned by Hampshire County Council who, suspecting that the site may reveal some interesting findings, put the job of excavating it up for tender. Berkshire Archaeological Services were awarded the contract and dug a series of trial trenches in the cold wet months of February this year in a number of fields around the location described.

One field revealed a number of finds and features to warrant a full excavation of this area and it was with this background in mind that Francis Reynolds and Roy Entwistle of Berkshire Archaeological Services contacted the Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society (publicised at the AGM) for help with the excavation.

Julia Trow and I were able to attend full time for three weeks and other members of the Society who popped in on a regular basis were Christine Thomas, Sheena Archer and Les Fitzgerald.

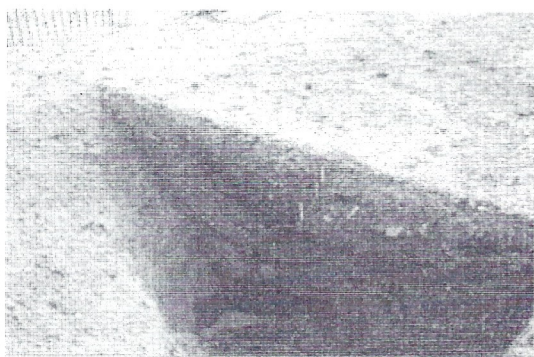
Part of the first week involved securing and setting up the site. This included establishing barrier mesh fencing around the field where the topsoil was to be kept and building a metal fence compound to contain our port-a-cabin, for our tools and equipment, and port-a-loo as well as the earth-moving equipment. The field that was to be excavated was about 0.5 hectares and was bordered on three sides by trees and hedgerow. For health and safety considerations the side accessible to the public needed to have metal fencing constructed along its length to protect the public from falling into any of our trenches. In all, I believe Julia, myself, Roy and Francis unloaded 8 tonnes of fencing and bases from an articulated lorry one afternoon; good for the muscles but tiring nonetheless!

With the basics in place, a contractor employed for the topsoil removal began to strip back the field we were to excavate, using a large mechanical digger and dumper truck. The site had on average a covering of 30cm of topsoil and Roy and Francis supervised the digger driver as he proceeded to strip the field, watching out for finds and features and getting him to dig shallower or deeper as necessary. Julia and I would follow on behind, cleaning up and labelling identified features and anything we felt had been missed. The field took about 3 ½

days to strip in total! One wonders how long it would have taken by hand. The remaining geology consisted of clay and gravel and a combination of the two. This proved very hard to excavate and, when sun-dried, had the consistency of concrete! The use of a mattock was often necessary, although on occasion this would often bounce off with minimal effect. In fact one passer by in all honesty enquired if we had laid the foundations for a car park!

What was revealed were a number of postholes and small pits and three ring gullies associated with the site of three Iron Age roundhouses. These gullies form when the water drips off the roofline of the dwelling, forming a distinctive circular feature.

Other features that were revealed were a well / water hole that contained several large well-preserved rim and base fragments of Roman Grey Ware, as well as parts of roof tiles, box flue tiles and brick. This signified the presence of a substantial Roman building close to this site, whose location is not known at present. It is possible that this was lost under existing housing in the area if developers did not report its location. Hopefully it is still out there somewhere undisturbed. I was fortunate enough to take part in the excavation of this well feature. Its shape in section resembled a funnel and was 3m in diameter at its widest point. At a depth of two metres the section became more parallel and appeared to go deeper. Unfortunately at this point we had to stop. To go further would have required a substantial amount of shoring and really the construction of an adjustable liner. This would have necessitated the use of a mechanical digger and also a large amount of sizeable timber as well as time and manpower. Excavating this feature was slow, sticky and at times smelly but strangely thoroughly enjoyable! One afternoon, on returning to the feature after lunch, we were standing admiring the stratigraphy when a large crack opened up and the section collapsed and fell in! Luckily I had taken a photograph earlier in the morning! Fortunately a road is planned over the site of this feature and, as it is has been dug to a depth of six feet already, what remains to be found should be preserved in situ for an investigation in a few hundred years time!



The well feature before collapse



...From a different angle after collapse

Another feature that was found was a ring ditch surviving to a depth of about 80cm that had been re-cut at least once. This ditch continued under Great Binfields Road and I estimate it was at least 30m in diameter. From pottery found, this dated to the Iron Age. There was also the remains of Roman field systems dated from pottery finds and also the discovery of a 'hollow' or 'sunken way' found with evidence of wheel ruts.

I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of excavating on this geology and was glad to be given the opportunity of helping with the recording of features, including section drawing. Most of the site is to be reinstated with the removed topsoil from the end of July and the excavation trenches filled in.

I have asked Roy if he will come and talk to us at the Society and give us an update on what was found.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to get involved on an excavation, then I thoroughly recommend the experience. Opportunities are advertised through the Society, archaeological publications and the Internet. Listen out for details of the Basing dig next Easter if earlier opportunities do not present themselves. No matter how young or old you are ... get involved if this is your thing!

The Odiham Society - Canal, Castle and Cruicks

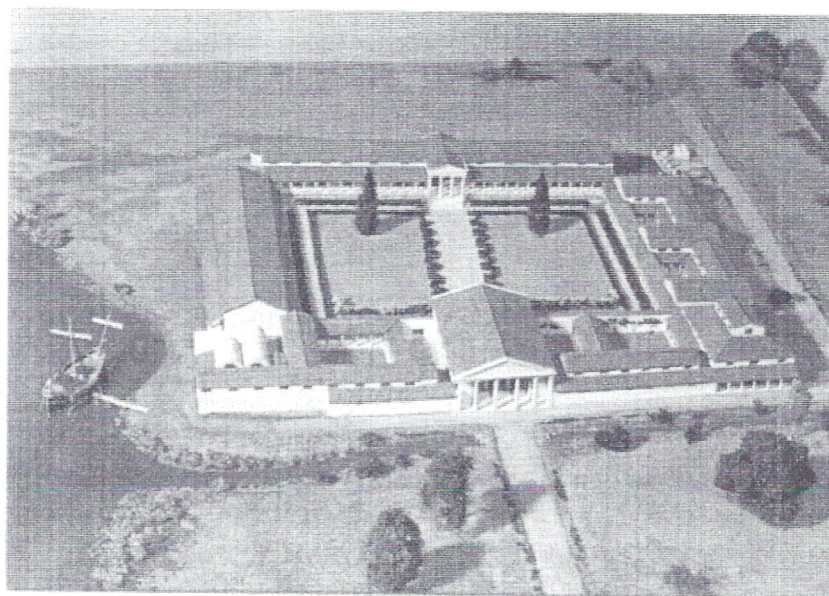
The Odiham Society is running a one-day local history workshop about North Warnborough and Odiham on Saturday 7th October 2000 at Robert May's School from 10.00 am to 4.45 pm. There will be talks about King John's Castle, the Water Mills of North Warnborough, the buildings of the parish and of Odiham in the 18th and 19th centuries – plus an opportunity to enjoy a guided walk around either North Warnborough or Odiham.

The fee of £5 includes coffee, tea and a ploughman's lunch.

To book a place, ring Sheila Millard on 01256 702493

VISIT TO FISHBOURNE ROMAN PALACE – 29.7.00

Erica Smith and Alan Harris



On a beautiful sunny morning, a group of about 17 members arrived at Fishbourne Roman Palace, near Chichester, to follow on from David Rudkin's fascinating talk, back in the Spring, with a tour of the site. After refreshments in the cafeteria (which included scrumptious home-made cake!) David met us at the entrance to begin the tour.

David built up the picture of events preceding the arrival of the Romans into Britain, with the flight to Rome of the ousted British king Verica, and his plea for help from Claudius, the

Roman Emperor. This is the foundation, together with the ease of landing in the Chichester area, on which David bases his theory that the Romans arrived in Chichester first, not Kent, when invading Britain. Also evidence has been found that Romans were peacefully trading with the Atrebates for some time before the invasion. However, there is still no concrete proof of the invasion theory at the moment and it is all speculation, but an interesting one!

He then explained the programme of building and the construction of the site, which included the garden, from approximately AD 43 to AD 270, by using the model of the whole site in the foyer. This included some anecdotes about the discovery of the site, which extended into the gardens of the houses built down the south side, and the 'excavation' by a young girl in the 1930s, who had been taught about the Romans that day at school. David recounted how, on returning home from school, she decided to dig in her back garden to find the Romans and unearthed three steps and a black and white mosaic! She was then told to cover it up and keep quiet about it, which she did, for about 40 years until the Sussex Archaeological Society bought the house to extend their digging in the 1970s. After a radio broadcast about its discovery, she phoned David to tell him that he had 'found her mosaic'. How many of us would love to discover something of this nature in our gardens!

We were then taken on a tour of the site, starting with the beautiful mosaics. David told us about the techniques and materials used to make the mosaics, as well as the method used to lift the floors for remedial work. He explained how they were re-laid using a muslin-type cloth and water-based paste and a lot of hard work slicing through the old lime and mortar base to lift manageable pieces. One interesting point he mentioned was the rubbish pit discovered under the mosaic of the Cupid on a dolphin, in the North Wing of the Palace. This dated from the first settlement when the wooden military buildings were in situ. Unfortunately English Heritage would not let them excavate, as it was not deemed as conservation - this might have filled in a lot of gaps. Maybe in the future they might change their minds.

During this tour, David had to stop to talk to Southern Counties Radio for their Treasure Hunt as one of the clues led to the Cupid on a dolphin.

We then went to the gardens which have been laid out on the original lines of the first gardens, plotted from the excavated lines of the bedding trenches, with box hedges, lawns and trained fruit trees to give 'an air of simplicity in surroundings of otherwise studied formality' (Pliny). Unfortunately there is no record of any flowers being planted so one has to leave this to conjecture. There is, however, a garden planted with typical Roman plants and shrubs with details of their uses, which was very pleasant to walk through in the sunshine with the fragrances they emitted.

David had explained to us at the beginning that the site had burnt down between AD270 and AD280, whether from invasion from the sea or a man-made disaster during the installation of a new hypocaust we do not know. However, this was when the site was dismantled and the masonry used in the foundations of the fortified walls of Chichester and the site fell into disuse. This might lead one into going with the invasion theory.

After thanking David for his fascinating talk, we then split up and explored the site on our own, ending up with the Museum - which was well worth a visit and brought into a more detailed perspective the everyday life of people on the site. It also included one of the four skeletons discovered on the site, having been buried after the Roman occupation had finished. One skeleton is still in the shallow grave in the flooring where it was found.

The whole morning was very informative, educational and amusing, bringing to life David's talk and the Roman way of life for the top people. Our thanks to both David, and to Mary Oliver who arranged it, for a wonderful morning thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The group then dispersed to go their own ways and we went down the coast to Porchester Castle (in the pouring rain by then!), which by chance we discovered was first a fortified area built around AD 280 by the Romans - could this be connected with the fall of Fishbourne?

But that's another tale, and another visit!

A report by Barbara Applin



We are continuing to interview people who were employed on the Hackwood Estate and the mention of this in our Chairman's Annual Report prompted a letter from Mr Oliver Lister, Estate Manager for Hackwood Limited, describing our enterprise as "a most worthy exercise".

He agrees, "It is certainly true that an estate and its life, once broken up, can never be repaired. In that sense the old era has indeed gone for ever." but he says, "However, all is far from lost." A major restoration programme is planned for the house and surviving parkland, enhancing public access. We hope to interview Mr Lister, on this next chapter in Hackwood's history.



NANCY POWELL

The Talking History Group has recently begun the task of contacting early interviewees in order to confirm their willingness for us to use the material from their interviews in our publications. One of the early interviews was with Nancy Powell who used to live in Frances Road. We found her memories particularly interesting and hoped to use them in the forthcoming book on the National Health Service.

Unfortunately Nancy has since died and when Mary Shelley contacted her executors to ask permission to include an excerpt from her tape, she received an enthusiastic response. Mary is now gathering much more material about Nancy's life and her researches into her family history. Some of this material includes a diary entitled "Nancy Powell's Escape", an account of a dramatic episode in 1940. Watch this space! One of the executors is planning to visit Basingstoke soon with "a suitcase full" of documents etc.

Nancy was born in France, where her father was buying and selling Percheron horses, and on our recent holiday Bob and I stayed overnight in the town where she had lived. I've yet to confirm whether the house I photographed was the right one, but we have several modern photographs now to compare with some old ones her cousin has sent us. This is promising to be a fascinating story.

Did any of our members know Nancy Powell? If so, please let me know as you may have some details we haven't come across.

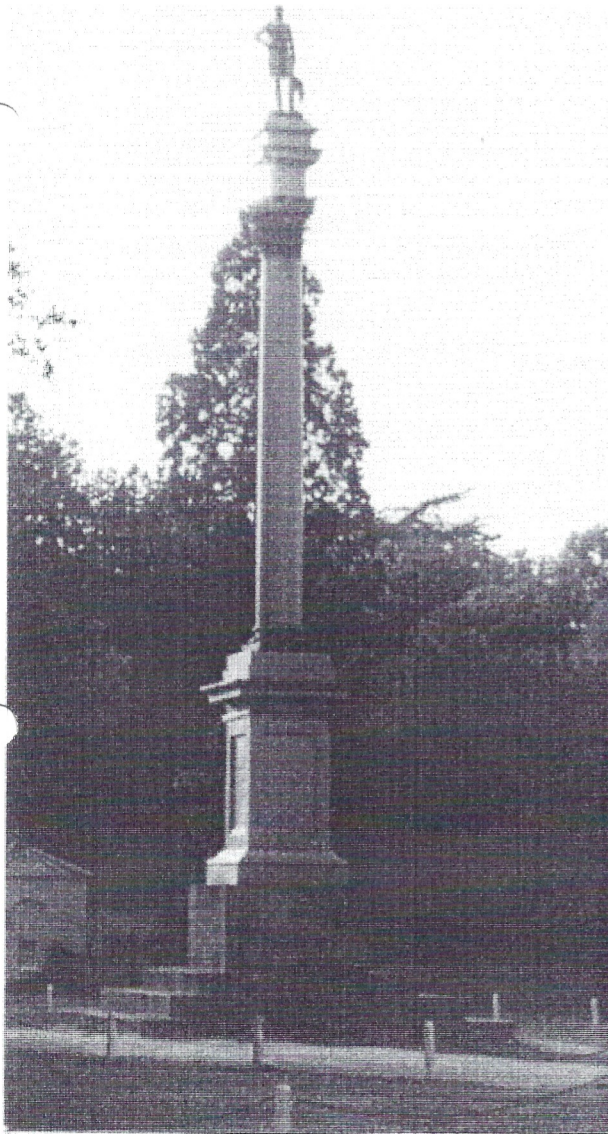
BASINGSTOKE OBSERVER

More of our members are now writing articles for this newspaper based on our BTH interviews, and we welcome this opportunity to make our project more widely known.

And once again, an appeal for anyone who would like to help with interviewing, writing synopses or transcriptions or with research - phone 01256 465439.

HIGH JINKS!

Susan Good



In the nineteen twenties, my father was one of a band of management apprentices at Thornycrofts. Not content with making their mark on the community by test-driving Thornycroft vehicles into people's garden walls and flower-beds, the apprentices achieved notoriety in out-of-hours activities as well.

One evening, no doubt fuelled by alcohol, they set off with ladders, ropes, a fishing-rod and a chamber-pot, and drove to Stratfield Saye.

My father tells me that they lashed the ladders to the column on which stands the statue of the Duke of Wellington.

The lightest, nimblest and most daring apprentice was selected and, armed with the fishing rod on which was balanced the chamber-pot, climbed up and hooked the pot over the Duke's head. The apprentices then dispersed in high glee.

Where are the audacious and amusing exploits of the youth of today?

IF ONLY I HAD TALKED TO MY GRANDMOTHER ...

By Tim Herrington

In the 1990's I began to look into the origins of my Mother's family. Her father was John Stephen Farmer, born in Bedford in 1854, who became a journalist and author, dying in 1916 in East Anglia. My grandmother was Mary Jane Dicker, known to me as Nan, who featured much in my early years.

Nan, together with my Mother and my Aunt May, formed the trio who 'brought me up' in our seaside house in Bognor Regis (beloved town of a certain King George!). My mother had met my father, Reginald Herrington, first of all in the Kursal roller-skating rink in Bognor and subsequently fell for him (sorry, she was a good skater, nevertheless). Father soon retired from family life, finding the three ladies at home just too much for him and he moved out to live with Aunt Annie and Uncle Harry in another part of Bognor; happily I was able see him as often as I wished.

Grandfather (JSF) had also met Nan in Bognor when he was visiting, and she was working in a tobacconist's shop in the Arcade. He chatted her up and eventually persuaded her to take up the post of maidservant back at the Farmer home. She fell for this line but unfortunately this was not really appreciated by Mrs JSF and she and JSF parted company – which one can understand as Nan soon produced Aunt May, Mother and Uncle Harry through the kindness of JSF!



Nan and young Tim



Mother complete with roller-skates

JSF was quite a mover: Aunt May was born in Headington near Oxford, Mother was born near Alton and Uncle Harry in Kings' Somborne (where JSF had a holiday cottage). Finally they all moved to East Anglia just before the outbreak of the Great War, from where JSF used to travel to London frequently to see his publisher. Now, most people had thoughts of moving away from East Anglia on account of the Zeppelin raids, rather than moving in, so they regarded JSF with some suspicion. The police were informed and he was interviewed as a potential German spy!

Not all that long ago my cousin, who had traced the cottage where JSF had lived and died, knocked on the door and told his tale of family research. He was rewarded by the excited comment of the incumbent "Oh! He was that spy in the Great War wasn't he?" --- the story had stayed alive all those many years. Anyway, when JSF died in 1916, Nan took the three children back to Bognor, where my great-aunt Ethel Kate Dicker was living, took a house and set up a boarding house business.

So, here is the dilemma. Nan was never married to JSF and consequently there is no marriage certificate to be examined, in which would be the details of her father and mother. Tracing Nan's family meant looking for a Mary Jane Dicker, not Farmer, but thanks to the 1881 British Census National Index I struck lucky. This census is the only one directly accessible from computer via a commercially available program on a set of 20 CDROMs. In no time at all I had two possible Mary Jane Dickers on the screen, one of which could definitely be discounted and the other one very interesting.

There was Mary Jane, aged 2 in 1881, and her baby sister Ethel Kate, aged 10 months (my great-aunt: see above). And where do you suppose they were living with their father (my great grandfather) Jesse Dicker and mother Elizabeth and brothers Maurice, Thomas and Jesse? Just up the road from Basingstoke at Clerkengreen, Church Oakley, in the Red Lion Inn (now known to us as the Beach Arms Oakley). I could hardly believe that I had come from Sussex to live in Hampshire to work for 39 years, not knowing I was just a few miles from one branch of my ancestors!!

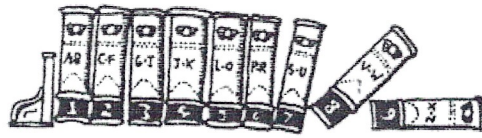
This revelation meant that I could now tootle down to the Hampshire Records Office in Winchester, just a few hundred yards from the Railway Station, and research the Hampshire Dickers *ad nauseum*. It is easy to telephone 01962 846154 and book a microfiche or film reader to peruse the Hampshire census returns for 1841, 51.... 91; the parish records of baptisms, marriage and burials in Hampshire; the GRO indexes for births, marriages and deaths for the whole of England and Wales; indexes of Hampshire places, people, professions, buildings, business and trade directories and much, much more.

I have now traced my Dicker family back from great-grandfather Jesse in the Red Lion back to g-g-grandfather Stephen running Southwood Farm just south of Oakley, near the old A30 and Roman Road from Winchester. And beyond him to his father also Stephen, my g-g-g-grandfather born in South Warnborough and lastly (so far!) to John Dicker, my g-g-g—grandfather who married Elizabeth Gaishford there in 1769.

The Dickers were thick on the ground in Hampshire in past times in the South Warnborough area as agricultural labourers, farmers and yeomen and I am now trying to connect some of the side branches of the family tree who lived and died there to my John Dicker.

If you think you may one day want to know about your ancestors then you'd better start that ongoing notebook now and start talking to your golden oldies. There are some good computer programs too, to help you log all your information, notes and photographs. Furthermore, if you are on the internet there is the web site FamilySearch which contains listings essentially of baptisms and marriages which could give you just the event you were looking for. I would be happy to talk to you about these if you are interested.

Tim Herrington 01256 322090



The Athenian Trireme

by J S Morrison, J E Coates and N B Rankow

(Cambridge University Press, £14.95 paperback)

ISBN 0 521 56456 5

Members who remember two splendid lectures putting forward opposing views on Greek Triremes, how they were built, manned and sailed, should look out for this recently published book. The first lecture we had was by Tom Hassall, then we came across an article giving an opposing view, by Alec Tilley (*Antiquity* 92) and invited him to talk to our AGM in 1993 – reported in our Newsletter 123 for May, 1993.

This book is the result of five seasons of experimental trials on the reconstructed Greek warship, *Olympias* under oar and sail, “supplemented by new archaeological discoveries and by historical, scientific and physiological research over the last fifteen years”. This is a second edition, with a new chapter describing the trials of the *Olympias*, and outlining the changes desirable in any second reconstruction.

The Palaeolithic Societies of Europe

Clive Gamble

(Cambridge University Press, £22.95 paperback)

ISBN 0 521 65872 1

Another second edition, by another of our past speakers! This has won the Society for American Archaeology Book Award 2000 (rather confusing, as this is an English author writing about Europe!)

Overton, Hampshire: A thousand years of history

Alison M. Deveson

(Alison M. Deveson, Whitchurch)

ISBN 0 9533335 1 5

A very readable and well-researched account of the development of Overton, with a thorough background of national history. It was delightful to buy this direct from “Sister Alison” in her mediaeval costume at Overton’s recent Medieval Sheepfair.

Overton: People and Places

Richard Oram

(Andover Advertiser)

Richard Oram too (one of our past members) was to be seen at the Sheepfair, pushing a wheelbarrow full of horseshoes he had found. Richard has made a wonderful collection of Overton photographs, from a sheepfair held in the 1920s to Mrs Gladys Berry and cow, Polhampton Farm 1914 and the Tour de France passing through Overton in 1994.



Richard Oram at the Overton Fair (this month) and, you are right, its Sue Headley above

WILLIAM RUFUS

(King William II)

To celebrate the 9th Centenary (1100-2000) of William Rufus there will be, on Thursday, 12th October, the following events taking place at the Cathedral:

- Choral Vespers in honour of King William Rufus by the Cathedral Choir at 5.30 pm
- An Anglo-Norman Supper in the Refectory at 6.45 pm
- Two public lectures in the Cathedral Nave:
 - “William Rufus- The King & the Man” by Dr Marjorie Chibnall
 - “William Rufus and the ‘Rufus Tomb’” by Dr John Cook

Suggested donation £2 (no tickets required)

For general information contact the Cathedral Office on 01962 857200

CALENDAR

Thurs 10 Aug	EVENING VISIT TO SILCHESTER	BAHS
Thurs 7 Sept	Fieldtrip to Roman site at Fullerton (no charge but booking needed)	HFC
Thurs 14 Sept	1000 YEARS OF POTTERY Roy Stephenson	BAHS
Sun 17 Sept	VISIT TO BURSLEDON BRICKWORKS	BAHS
Thurs 21 Sept	The Dowsing Phenomenon and how to use it Mr Alan Barsby	FWM
Fri 22 Sept	Cheese and Wine evening at Winchester City Museum , 6.30 pm (Archaeology Section)	HFC
Thurs 12 Oct	BODIES & BRONZES: THE LANGSTONE HARBOUR PROJECT Julie Gardiner & Mike Allen	BAHS
Thurs 19 Oct	AGM and Brains Trust	FWM
Thurs 9 Nov	HUNTER GATHERERS IN SOUTH JORDAN Steve Mithen	BAHS
Thurs 16 Nov	Wessex Peculiar Mr A Blackham	FWM
Thurs 14 Dec	Cheese & Wine Party	BAHS

BAHS =	Our Society Lectures at Church Cottage, 7.30 pm
HFC =	Hampshire Field Club; we are Institutional members and can send one representative on outings. The Secretary has forms.
FWM =	Friends of the Willis Museum, 7.30 pm, Willis Museum

(Antalis)