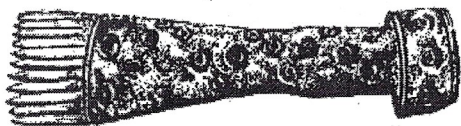


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BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER 156

August 2001

Celebrating 30 years of interest in Basingstoke's Archaeology
and History

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YOUR COMMITTEE FOR 2001/2002

tel.
(01256)

Chairman:

Tim Herrington, 16, Scotney Road, Basingstoke, RG21 5SR 322090

Hon. Secretary:

Mrs Margaret Porter, 58, Minden Close, Chineham, Basingstoke, RG24 8TH 356012

Hon. Treasurer:

Peter Good, 95, Cliddesden Road, Basingstoke, RG21 3EY 322771

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Mrs Barbara Applin, 138, Old Kempshott Road, Basingstoke, RG22 5EN 465439

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Miss Susan Strawson, 33, Alderwood, Chineham, Basingstoke, RG24 8TU 353077

Les Fitzgerald, 10, Warbleton Road, Chineham, Basingstoke, RG24 8RF 812557

Garth George, 71, Camrose Way, Basingstoke, RG21 3AW 464763

Marten Harris, 3, Ramsholt Close, North Waltham, Basingstoke, RG25 2DG 397651

Co-opted:

Mrs Mary Oliver, 3, Milkingpen Lane, Old Basing, Basingstoke, RG24 7DD 324263

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

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

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2001/2002

Membership fees will be due on 1st September 2001 (**note the new subscription year published in the May newsletter**). The rates are unchanged from last year for individual members (£11), family membership £15 and for over 60's and students (£7) but a new rate has been introduced for Over 60 family membership at £12.

PROGRAMME CARDS

You should find a copy of the 2001/2002 events card with this newsletter – our thanks once more to Mary Oliver for carrying out all the hard work in persuading our lecturers to come to Church Cottage at the appointed times; and more than this, Mary was responsible for thinking of most of the lecturers in the first place! She would be grateful for suggestions for future events, so please ring her on 01256 324263.

CHAWTON HOUSE VISIT

Saturday, 22nd September

This visit was reported in the May newsletter. If you haven't let Nicola Turton know that you would like to come, please 'phone her now on 01256 467294

LECTURE PROGRAMME

There should also be, enclosed with this newsletter, some details of the forthcoming lectures which we thought you would like to have separate from the main body of the newsletter.

HAMPSHIRE FIELD CLUB WEB SITE

www.fieldclub.hants.org.uk

This new, recently updated site is well worth a visit. In addition to telling you all about the various sections of the club, there is a most useful Directory of Hampshire archaeological contacts (societies, museums, trusts, County services, archaeological services, etc.). Have a browse!



REPORT by Barbara Applin

Our list of people to interview continues to grow – so, luckily, does our number of volunteers, but we still need more! Do ring me if you'd like to help (01256 465439).

Our interviews are giving us a fascinating picture of aspects of life in Basingstoke. I knew about St Michael's Twenties Club but not about the Youth Club that met at Brinkletts and had a Parliament, with Ministers for Sport, Entertainment etc. Our interview with a present-day Nursing Auxilliary at the Hospital contrasts well with the memories of a theatre nurse from the old Hackwood Road hospital, who tells of mending surgeons' gloves with a kind of tyre-repair kit, of the ferocious cleaning that went on, and of a nurse being knocked out by a dead man!

I've heard from another contact in France who remembers Nancy Powell and her family and promises to send photographs, so I hope before long to have more material for our planned book about Nancy. Mary Shelley traced two pianos from the Powell music shop, and Tim Herrington has taken photographs of them.

Our society is a member of the Oral History Society and I was our representative at their Conference on 22nd and 23rd June in London: "Talking Community Histories", where I gave a presentation on Basingstoke Talking History in one of the Workshops. I have a list of Abstracts of the plenary talks and workshop presentations, and have circulated a report to Basingstoke Talking History members – let me know if you want to see them. Some interesting people are being interviewed, including 85-100 year-olds in Holmfirth, victims of the Lewes floods, ex-circus performers and GPs. Many people at the conference were from universities, libraries or museums, but others were working in small groups or solo and quite a few had only just started interviewing. It was good to be able to exchange ideas and experiences, and I felt it was well worth attending.

FREE-CEN: BRINGING YOUR ANCESTORS TO YOU - FREE OF CHARGE

Chris Hill
County Co-ordinator for Hampshire (North) 1891 Census
Free-CEN Project

Have you ever spent hours searching through birth, death and marriage indexes looking for your long lost ancestors, and thought how much easier it would be if you could just find them at a click of a button?

So much time and money spent, sending off for certificates, and the disappointment you feel when you get them, because they were not the right ones after all. Endless trips to different records offices in search of those elusive ancestors, sometimes a whole day wasted with nothing to show for it at the end.

But all that could be a thing of the past.

A project has been started to index the UK Census Returns, called Free-CEN, this can be found on the Internet under <http://freecen.rootsweb.com> where an overall view can be seen. The aim is to provide a "free-to-view" online searchable database of the 19th century. It is designed not just to help us and other people who are researching their family history, but future historians. Great progress has already been made for the counties of Devon and Cornwall, and these should be on-line for viewing towards the end of 2001. Other counties have also been started, tackling the 1891 Census at this stage, but other census years will follow

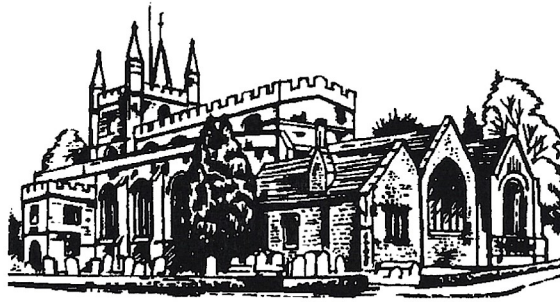
Of course a project as big as this cannot be done by just a handful of people, and the more people involved the quicker each census year will be finished. So volunteers are needed. We already have some volunteers based in Australia, America and other countries, who are searching for their English ancestors. Free software, procedures and all kinds of on-line help are available to volunteers.

Firstly the census information is transcribed from fiche (which is supplied on loan) either to a printed form or directly onto the census program on your computer. When the piece for that parish etc. is finished it is then returned to the area co-ordinator who then passes it on to a checker, who checks for any mistakes (and we have all made them, so there's no need to worry).

If you have a computer, a microfiche reader, and a few hours or so to spare each week, and you think you may be interested in helping out then please contact me at christine.hill2@ntlworld.com. As county co-ordinator for Hampshire (North), I am currently looking for volunteers to help with this part of the county's 1891 Census. At the moment this covers the areas around Alton, Basingstoke, Whitchurch and Kingsclere.

If there are any questions you would like to ask about volunteering for this project, please do so, and if these are not the areas you are interested in, but would like to know about other areas, then please ask.

OPEN DAY AT ST MICHAEL'S



The recent Open Day at St Michael's Church was a good opportunity to appreciate an important part of Basingstoke's history and current life. Plenty of people were around to explain things on show, and there were frequent guided tours of the church and the tower, and an organ recital by Nicholas Woods.

It was good to see the one Victorian stained glass window that survived the 1940 bomb in Church Square back home after its skilful restoration by Andrew Taylor. A fine array of vestments could be seen, not just the traditional ones but some beautiful modern ones designed and made by Betty Godden. Many books from the Parish Library and historical documents had been brought out of archives for the occasion, including the Basingstoke Vestry Minute Book of 1797-1841 open at a page listing households exempted from the Window Tax in 1810. It was also interesting to see the plans of the Basingstoke Parsonage (later Chute House) and documents relating to the re-seating of the church. Altar plate on show included the Winchester Goblet, presented to St Michael's by Miss Doris Croft; this was one of a limited edition commemorating the 9th centenary of Winchester Cathedral in 1979, with figures around the stem including King Alfred, William of Wykeham, St Swithun, Mary Tudor and the diver William Walker. The choir stalls held a selection of hymn books, and there was a thriving bookstall – you could buy a copy of the Rector's delightful book *THE RELUCTANT MOLE* and ask him to sign it! .



It was good to see Church Cottage included in the open day. There Arthur Attwood had plenty of room to show some of his collection of photographs and documents, second-hand books were on sale – and, of course, refreshments available.

BAHS DIG AT WORTING

Arrangements have been made to carry out an exploratory excavation at Worting over the weekend of Saturday and Sunday 29 and 30 September 2001. Please note that this dig is organised by the Society, therefore only members are covered under our insurance arrangements.

If you are able to assist on both or either day please contact Marjolein Musselwhite on 01256 325387.

THE SILCHESTER FIELD SCHOOL

On page 8 of the May newsletter we announced our sponsorship of up to three members of the Society to take part in the August Silchester Field School for a period of one week. You will be glad to know that we had four applications to take up our offer and we have awarded three places after interview and agreement within Committee. We look forward in the near future to sharing the benefit of these experiences with the participants. Good luck to all three!

NORTH EAST HAMPSHIRE HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (NEHHAS)

NEHHAS have had to re-schedule their planned annual excavation from May to the 15th to 30th September:

“Excavation at Heckfield of a post-medieval manor house: for further information please ring Don Woolhead, Field Secretary, tel. 01276 33056”

Interested people from outside NEHHAS membership are welcome. There are costs involved so check with Don Woolhead.

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 7-10 SEPTEMBER 2001

Note the dates for this year's Heritage Open days – the event includes free entry to many museums and historic sites, guided tours, visits to buildings not normally open to the public and many other special events, including guided tours of Basing House and the Roman town site at Silchester. For further information on events in Hampshire pick up a leaflet at the Library or the Tourist Information Centre or call 0800 028 0888.

Of particular interest to members will be the open days on Saturday and Sunday 8 and 9 September at the **Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Silchester**, there will be talks and guided tours, bellringing demonstration, display of church and village records and more. Please call Ralph Atton on 0118 970 0825 for information.

MARY FELGATE



Barbara Applin

Although Mary Felgate was never actually a member of our Society, we almost felt she was. So we were sad to hear of her death, and feel that Basingstoke has lost someone who knew and loved it so well.

I had known Mary when I was Assistant Curator at the Willis Museum and she was the Curator's Secretary. She used to give talks on her collection of valentines and other things, but I didn't realise then what talents she had – pianist, organist, artist, poet and writer of children's stories. You will no doubt have seen Arthur Attwood's obituary in the *Gazette* and the one Anne and I contributed to the *Basingstoke Observer*, while Beryl Kay wrote in the *Gazette* of Mary's contribution to the Basingstoke Field Society.

I thoroughly enjoyed working with Mary on the book **GOING DOWN CHURCH STREET TO THE FELGATE BOOKSHOP**, and the Basingstoke Talking History tapes contain many more of her memories, especially of her childhood and Christmases.

A tribute to Mary Felgate from her friend Anne Hawker...

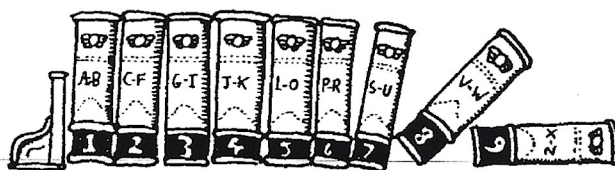
My friend Mary died early in the morning of June 18th, just as the first birds had begun to sing, an appropriate hour for Mary, who loved the birds in her garden, and even when she had to leave her home for Ashcombe House, asked for the door to her room and the one opposite to be left open so that she could watch the birds in the trees behind the house. I thought that Mary was rather like a bird herself, quick, observant and fond of little pretty things.

All of her interests seem to have been calm and civilised – music, photography, wild-life and flowers. She gave slide shows to many audiences, played the organ and piano for her church. Her memory was wonderful, especially of her childhood and the life in Basingstoke long before the changes here. Sometimes she drew little pictures for me when we were collaborating in the making of a model of her Grandmother's house in Church Street. She was very modest about these, observing that she really could not draw, but we all found them charming. She knew Mr Willis, and gave many gifts to his museum, some still to be seen in the case across from the Victorian Parlour there.

When she became too frail to live alone, she had to leave many of her treasures so gave them to friends who would appreciate them. To me, because she knew I enjoyed all the trappings of Christmas, she left some tree ornaments and some little angels.

Long ago I bought from her a tea service which had been her Dorking Grandmother's. It is, I think, not English, very thin white porcelain with a green design and gilt edges. I use it on special occasions, and always just before Christmas Mary and I had a ceremonial delicate tea accompanied by my Grandmother's silver teapot, jug and sugar basin, with the decorated Christmas tree on a table nearby.

She had a wide circle of friends – we shall all miss her.



BOOKSHELF

Two interesting books from the Hampshire Record Office

Charlotte Bonham-Carter of Hampshire, 1893-1989 by Mavis Coulson

This is a fascinating and very readable account of the life of a remarkable Hampshire woman, described from the start as one of England's eccentrics. Charlotte Bonham-Carter was originally a Wickham from Binstead Wyck, near Alton, and she kept her close interests in Hampshire throughout her immensely full

life. She attended finishing school in Dresden, "Came Out" in 1912, did War Office Work during World War 1 and worked at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 before marrying Edgar Bonham-Carter who had, among other things, been Chief Justice in the Sudan. In World War 2 she joined the WAAF, working in the Photographic Interpretation Unit. She was involved with Glyndebourne, the Ballet Rambert, and many other artistic ventures, as well as being a member of the Paddington and Alton Councils. She was well known for her parties and famous for seeming to be in many places at once.

At the founding meeting of the Hampshire Archives Trust at Bramshill, a bus met trains from London and Winchester. A little bent old "bag lady" could be seen at the front of the bus, with her plastic carrier bags – apparently she always had these with her. Then she began telling us of her youth when she would ride over from Binstead Wyck to Bramshill for a dance, her dance dress in her saddle bag. Her family archives are deposited at the Hampshire Record Office and her Will endowed a Hampshire Archives Rescue Fund.

THE FRENCH CONNECTION by Claire Skinner

In English and French, this catalogues documents in the Hampshire Record Office concerning Hampshire's relations with France over the years, from the Royal Writ requesting prayers for England's success in the Hundred Years War (1346) to accounts of the Grand Tour, letters about the execution of the King of France and the Battle of Trafalgar, records of Huguenots who fled to Hampshire (including the Portals) and much more.

ALEX MARTIN'S BOOKLIST

Those of you who were at the AGM will remember that we have been given, by Alex Martin, a substantial gift of books, formerly his private archaeology/history collection, for Society use. We now have a listing of these books which Richard Dexter has kindly compiled and we have enclosed a copy with this newsletter.

If you would like to borrow any of the items listed, contact Tim Herrington on 01256 322090, who will arrange to pass them on to you at the first convenient opportunity.

STOP PRESS

Tim Herrington

Saturday evening, July 21st saw some 60 members of BAHS enjoying our 30th Anniversary Celebration Barbecue in the magic setting of Basing House. The weather was kind to us and the friendly atmosphere we have come to love descended upon those assembled!

As (new) Chairman, I had the pleasure of welcoming and talking to the gathering but I was only too aware that any success resulting from the evening should be put at the door of others.

Firstly, my thanks to Alan and Nicola for allowing us to share Basing House with them once more and providing facilities to furnish the scene with barbecue, tent and chairs.

And then my heartfelt thanks to Committee members and friends for setting up the whole event – especially to Margaret who, with Barbara and Mary, selected and bought in the food, to Marten who took charge of the liquid refreshment in the tent and to Bob, assisted by Garth, who together worked their culinary skills over the hot coals; whilst Julian with Nicholas were satisfying the hunger pangs of the vegetarians. And how about that Stonehenge cake that Mary fashioned?

To all of these friends and to you all, thanks for coming last Saturday and a happy 30th anniversary year to all BAHS members.

CALENDAR

Thurs 16 Aug	VISIT TO SILCHESTER EXCAVATIONS 6 pm at the car-park.	BAHS
Wed 22 Aug	Fieldtrip to Roman site at Fullerton , 6 pm (contact Robin Iles, 01962 848269)	HFC
Thurs 30 Aug	Plague, Pox and Public Parks The records of public Health Reform: Stuart Bridges	HRO
Tburs 13 Sept	VISIT TO MILESTONES (NB at Milestones)	BAHS
Sat/Sun 15/16 Sept	Living History & Skirmish by English Civil War Society - from 2 pm., Basing House	
Thurs 20 Sep	London's Lost Railway: J Clarke	FWM
Fri 21 Sept	Cheese & Wine at Milestones (Archaeology Section) 6.30 pm	HFC
Sat 22 Sept	VISIT TO CHAWTON HOUSE LIBRARY	BAHS
Thurs 27 Sept	RIDDINGE THE ALTARS: sources for popular Religion in Reformation Hampshire: Margaret Cooke	HRO
Thurs 11 Oct	RECENT EXCAVATIONS IN BASINGSTOKE Roy Entwistle	BAHS
Thurs 18 Oct	AGM & Where in the World: Derek Wren	FWM
Thurs 8 Nov	THE DECLINE & FALL OF ROMAN BRITAIN Neil Faulkner	BAHS
Thurs 25 Oct	Was your ancestor a soldier? Heather Needham	HRO
Wed 21 Nov	Basing House and the English Civil War Alan Turton	TADS
Thurs 29 Nov	Taking History Home: the Wider Access to Historic Films Project: Tim Wearing	HRO
Thurs 13 Dec	WINE & CHEESE	BAHS

- BAHS** = Our Society (Lectures at Church Cottage, 7.30 pm)
HRO = Hampshire Record Office, Sussex Street, Winchester Last Thursday lectures
 1.15 – 1.45 pm, free
HFC = Hampshire Field Club; as institutional members we can send one
 representative on outings.
FWM = Friends of the Willis Museum, 7.30 pm, Willis Museum
TADS = Tadley & District History Society, 8 pm St Paul's Church Hall, Tadley