BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 179

May 2007

CONTENTS

NEXT SEASON'S LECTURES

See the Calendar for the 2007 details, while Jan-May 2008 will be equally tempting:

January	Rupert Willoughby	**A Mediaeval Household: Simon and Eleanor de Montfort at Odiham Castle**
February	Sir Barry Cunliffe	**The Danebury Roman project**
March	Amanda Clarke	**Broomend Crichie: a henge & stone circle**
April	Derek Spruce	**Basingstoke & other North East Hampshire towns: winners and losers**
May	Andrew Hutt	**Berkshire hillforts, their construction and use**

Secretary: Margaret Porter 01256 356012

Website http://www.bahsoc.org.uk **(Registered Charity No. 1000263)**

Items for Newsletter to Barbara Applin; e-mail 106441.3542@compuserve.com

*** **Any volunteers/nominations for Committee? See the Calling Notice for the AGM.**

Summer Picnic

We are planning a picnic at Basing House on 14th July from 3 pm. Bring your own food, drink, chair/rugs. We can go in by Redbridge Lane and park at the house.

Society Outings

Any queries contact Ginny on 01256 862165 or ginny@powntleycopse.co.uk.

Frilford Excavations
Frilford Near Abingdon

Sunday 15th July, at 11 am

The University of Oxford School of Archaeology has invited us to visit their annual training excavation at the famous Romano-British site at Marcham/Frilford near Abingdon.

The site has a long history of archaeological excavations. A late Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon cemetery was discovered as long ago as the 19th century, and subsequent discoveries have included a Romano-British temple, possible amphitheatre, and numerous other features.

An easily readable general description of the site can be found at:
http://www.berkshirehistory.com/villages/frilford_roman.html
and reports from previous excavations can be accessed via:
http://www.arch.ox.ac.uk/research/research_projects/marcham

Marcham/Frilford is located in the Vale of the White Horse (on the A338 between Oxford and Wantage). The best route is to take the A34 from Newbury towards Abingdon and then the A415 west to Marcham and Frilford. Meet at the excavation site which overlooks the River Ock (grid ref SU438962) for 11:00am.

After we have visited Frilford, there is the opportunity to visit North Leigh Roman Villa, which is managed by English Heritage. This site is permanently open and accessible but also has a near complete mosaic which is protected by a covered building, to which we are negotiating special access (fingers crossed). North Leigh is about 12 miles north of Frilford and can be reached by continuing along the A415 towards Witney and then taking the A4095 to the village of North Leigh.

There are also plenty of small market towns to visit and good walking in the general area which is rich in Romano-British and Saxon history.

Basingstoke Canal, Up Nately
Thursday 7th June at 7 pm

An evening outing to Up Nately for an amble along the Basingstoke Canal. The idea is to take a look at the Brickworks Arm, which was used as a loading wharf by the short lived Nately Brick & Tile Company in the 1890's. John Young will be our guide.

Although there are no pubs in Up Nately, the Fox and Goose at Greywell is not too far away and is suggested as a watering-hole after the walk.

Meet at the cross roads in Up Nately (grid ref SU698521) for 7 pm. The village is very small with very restricted parking, so please avoid parking in driveway entrances or gated lay-bys etc. There is a small lay-by by the crossroads which will take a couple of cars. There are more small un-gated lay-bys, which will take several more cars, along the lane going from the crossroads north towards the M3.

Visit to Silchester Excavations, Thursday 8th August
As usual, meet at the car park at 6 pm for 6.30 (remember it's quite a long walk to the site).

Advance notice of a date to put in your diaries

Visit to Longford Castle and gardens, Wiltshire, on the afternoon of Friday 28th September

By the kind invitation of the Earl of Radnor; a private tour of Longford Castle and Gardens, near Salisbury, Wiltshire. This tour will be bookable at £7.50 per head. Full details will be published in the next newsletter, but in the meantime please contact Ginny to indicate your interest. (NB this tour is only available on weekdays – apologies to those who have to work!)

If we can arrange a group visit to the TUTANKHAMUN exhibition at the British Museum in November, would anyone like to go? Tickets are not available yet but Ginny is looking into it, so please let her know if you are interested.

FIELDWORK REPORT

Mark Peryer mperyer@f2s.com *Tel: 01256 780502*

Our first Woodland Archaeology audits took place in Little and Great Deane Woods the week after Easter. We were given a short time window by the Malshanger Estate between their forestry management (risk of falling trees) and their deer management (risk of being shot) programs. As it turned out, the window was an excellent choice since we were blessed by warm and sunny weather. Everyone who took part over the five days of the audit seemed to enjoy themselves and grew to appreciate the serenity of the woods.

The end of day 2 and things are getting professional

Whilst Little Deane Wood was not very exciting, it did have a story in terms of its relationship with the landscape. Great Deane Wood was much more interesting and we found traces of a field system, possibly dating from the Iron Age. If you'd like to know more about our findings, then you will need to come along to the AGM, where all will be revealed.

For those of you who would be interested, I intend to run a Woodland Archaeology training course in Micheldever Wood some time in June (date to be advised). I have deliberately waited to run this until we had actually got some experience of running an audit and had tried the techniques out.

Over the summer there will be some further fieldwork activities:

- On the 5th May, we shall be conducting a divining investigation of Basingstoke Common to see if we can locate any traces of the parliamentary field works from the siege of Basing House.
- We intend to follow up the divining survey of the Common with a Magnetometry survey, possibly based on the findings from the 5th May.
- We have agreed to help the Jane Austen Society locate the site of George Austen's rectory in Steventon. A magnetometry survey will be carried out in order to locate this.
- There will be a training dig at Worting on the weekend of the 8th and 9th September. We will be investigating the upper ditch in the field, the aim being to get a section to compare it with the lower ditch. This dig is open to anyone in our Society, especially those who would like to gain some excavation and recording experience.

If you would like to take part in any of these activities, please feel free to contact me.

Lambs Field – Worting

There will be a repeat of last year's environmentally friendly picnic in Lambs Field on the 10th June. The non-mandatory rules are that you should arrive at the field using environmentally friendly transport and that your food should use locally sourced ingredients.

In July we shall be having a Ragwort pulling evening, more details to follow in an e-mail alert.

SOLENT THAMES RESEARCH FRAMEWORK
Hampshire County Seminar

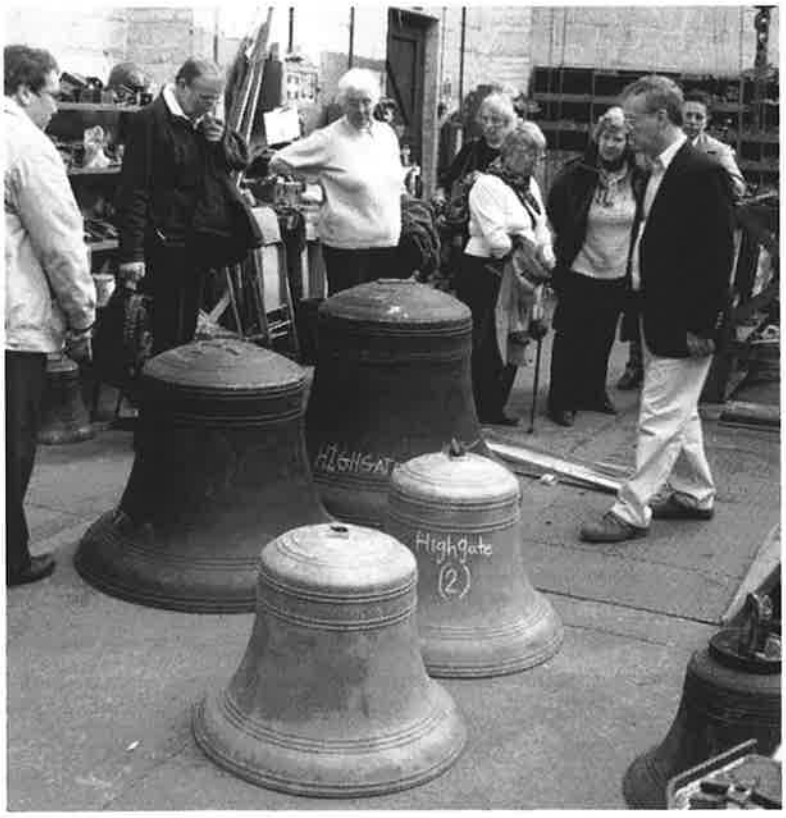
Peter Symonds College, Winchester
Saturday 16th June, 10 am to 4 pm

Mary Oliver is the Society's representative on this body and highly recommends this **free** conference, where you can hear the results of the resource assessments of our county from 500,000 years ago to the modern day and make your comments and contributions.. If anyone can't go and would like to express a view, please contact Mary (01256 324263; e-mail mary.oliver@talktalk.net).

To book your place contact Jill Hind: 01865 263800, e-mail ***jill.hind@oxfordarch.co.uk***.
Web addresses: ***http://thehumanjourney.net/strf*** and www.buckscc.gov.uk/archaeology/strf

THE WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY
Kate Mattock

In March a BAHS group was shown round Whitechapel Bell Foundry by its owner and director, Alan Hughes, describing himself as the "blacksmith's assistant".



The foundry is the oldest manufacturing company in Britain and continues to make, tune, overhaul and rehang bells that range in size from tower-bells (it made the bell for Big Ben) to concert handbells.

A 1570-1970 plaque at the foundry's listed old premises on Whitechapel Road commemorates its 400 years of bell manufacture: "They have neither speech nor language but their sound is gone out unto all nations".

Some of us also took in *London's Burning* at the Museum of London, on the Great Fire that destroyed 13,200 houses and 87 of the City's 100 churches. The then Mayor of London took no action when he first heard of the fire. "A woman might piss it out," he said.

SAVE OUR LIBRARIES!

On behalf of our Society our Chairman sent this letter to the Basingstoke Gazette.

Sir,

Members of the Basingstoke Archaeological & Historical Society are deeply concerned about the recently reported threat to Hampshire Libraries, with the proposed loss of specialist staff and the threat to the book fund.

It seems that specialist staff are thought to be expendable because they are not always seen by the public, so no-one will notice if they are no longer there! The staff we do meet are, of course, vital to a well-run service; we appreciate their welcoming approach, the friendliness and efficiency with which they give us a wide range of help, and we would not want to lose any of them. But the specialist staff who support them have a range of professional skills and expertise which we cannot afford to lose.

This decision will have a real effect on the quality of life in Hampshire. Young, middle-aged and old have many reasons for using libraries, sometimes borrowing books, using the reference section or asking for help at the Enquiry Desk. We use libraries for relaxation, for widening experience and gaining information on all sorts of things, whether for research or just for personal interest. Many people need help to find the information they want, from everyday themes to academic works. There is a great deal that the specialist staff can help us to find : not all people have access to the internet, and it often takes specialist knowledge to decide which items on it are reliable.

Our members have a wide range of interests, not just in archaeology and history, sometimes wanting to research a subject in depth, sometimes just interested in the latest discoveries and thinking. We strongly urge the County not to damage its invaluable library service.

Mr Mark Peryer,
Chairman, Basingstoke Archaeological & Historical Society

A copy was also sent to Mrs Maria Miller, MP for Basingstoke, who asked the County Council for further details of their intentions regarding specialist staff in our libraries. She has now passed us the reply she received from Richard Ward, Head of the Libraries and Information Service, saying that "the savings will inevitably have to come from the specialist, qualified librarian numbers [***numbers, not people!!!***] as they are not directly involved in keeping libraries open" and that "in Hampshire the transformation [in the library service] is going under the banner of Discovery Centres."

TRADE AND COMMUNICATIONS ACROSS SOUTHERN ENGLAND
Southern History Society Conference 2007
Hampshire Record Office, Sussex St, Winchester
Saturday, 9th June 9.30 – 4.15

Lectures include Mark Brayshaw on ***The 16th and 17th century development of the royal post-horse network from London to the West Country***, Win Harwood on ***The trading patterns of Southampton from the perspective of the Southampton Brokage Books***, David Harrison on ***The bridges of Southern England in the Middle Ages***, David Cousins on ***The development of the ball clay trade at Poole during the 17th and 18th centuries*** and Dorian Gerhold on ***London carriers and coachmen before and after the Turnpikes***. Registration fee of £12 includes coffee, tea and biscuits; applications by 30th May to Jean Morrin, History Dept, University of Winchester, SO22 4NR .

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE WEALD - BRIDGE OR BARRIER?

Mary Oliver

In February I ventured across the county boundaries to attend this conference, organised by CBA South East, and held at Gatton Park near Reigate. It was in fact a re-run of the identical conference held in the autumn, which was so over-subscribed that they decided to hold it again, a rare thing in the conference world; there were 50-60 people attending the second event, so they were well justified. I can see why it was so popular. It covered all the periods of human settlement up to the Middle Ages, and referred to a discrete area familiar to all those living in Sussex and Surrey. I went to support my friend Diana Chatwin (who has lectured to our Society in the past), who was giving a paper on the Saxon settlement of the Sussex Weald, and I had a most enjoyable day.

I cannot hope to summarise the academic content of seven papers, but I will share some of the points which particularly interested me. The first speaker was Richard Carter, from the University of Sussex, a Mesolithic specialist. He set the scene, describing the physical and climatic changes which followed the end of the Ice Ages, and resulted in the afforestation of the area and the rise in sea level. The Mesolithic was a very long period of time, with human occupation both before and after Britain became an island. He described the difficult, tree-covered landscape, with the rivers being the principal channels of movement. There is, however, good evidence of both Early and Late Mesolithic settlement, with one of the classic flint working techniques being named after their original findspot, near Horsham. There is sufficient evidence to propose a settlement model, based on the type of flint implements found at the particular site – the wider variety of tools implying base camps, and a more limited range suggesting task-specific, seasonal occupation (such as hunting and, for one coastal site in Kent producing many tranchet axes and sharpening flakes, possibly boat building). Certainly, the rock shelters which occur in the sandstone outcrops of the High Weald have shown evidence of occupation, and there are indications of forest clearance from several sites. Richard's colleague Chris Butler gave more detailed information on some of the sites. It would appear that the Weald was neither a bridge nor a barrier for these early people, but a resource which they used and settled in a variety of ways. I was struck by the contrast with Hampshire, where the evidence is less plentiful.

There was no lecture on Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement. The next period studied was the Late Iron Age and Roman, with fresh perspectives on ironworking from Jeremy Hodgkinson of the Wealden Iron Research Group. This specialist group works steadily in difficult circumstances to recognise new ironworking sites. A recent gas pipeline, a 44m wide strip running for 26 miles across the Low Weald, identified 19 new sites, of which 6 were ironworking sites. There are now 624 known, but the vast majority are undated. Of those which are dated, 63% are Roman, 13% are Iron Age (only distinguishable by C_{14} dating), 1% Saxon, 20% Mediaeval and 3% Post Mediaeval. The technology is the same pre- and post- Conquest; this was a native industry which flourished under the Romans. It is likely that most of the sites were seasonal, integrated into a pastoral economy. Most of the sites were small, producing less than 100 cubic metres (measurable by the amount of slag produced), but some of the Roman ones were extremely big, producing over 10,000 cubic metres. This handful of sites, mostly in the SE corner of the Weald, near the coast, produced 88% of the iron from the Weald. There was a connection with the Classis Britannica. The Roman road pattern crosses the Weald, serving the iron industry, and converging on London, where a major metalworking site has recently been excavated at Southwark. Work is being done to source the iron ore. One use for iron slag in the Weald was for road metalling – it has been calculated that 16.000 cubic metres has been used for this purpose. So again, the Weald was neither a bridge nor a barrier for the Romans, but definitely a Bounty! (the speaker's conclusion)

David Bird, formerly Surrey County Archaeologist, looking more generally at Roman settlement, did however think that the Weald was an obstacle, except to the local Wealden community. This was mainly because of the small amount of settlement evidence. The villas and religious sites are all on the edges of the Weald. Pottery distributions do not in general cross the Weald, unless the production centre is to the west. The main road, Stane Street, goes round the western edge too, and probably dates from 50AD, when the New Market (Noviomagus) of Chichester was becoming established. There is no evidence for the military in the Weald. The main Roman settlement along Stane Street – Alfoldean – had no Iron Age predecessor, and was typically sited, at the river crossing, to serve traffic along the road, and the area around it.

Other sites using the particular resources of the Weald were the tileries. Some of these specialised in decorated tiles, so it is possible to trace their distribution. From the Hartfield kilns, tiles went both north and south, but from the others, in one direction only.

Moving on to Diana's talk, she showed how much can be learned about the Saxon settlement of the Sussex Weald by careful study of details of the land-holding boundaries, place names and documents. She showed that it was settled from the south, with many place names having a parent settlement on the coastal plain or scarp slope of the Downs. The Wealden outliers were originally for animal grazing, especially for pigs, timber and other forest products, but later became independent settlements. The villages and farms with the 'fold' element in their name were early, as were the arc-shaped enclosures she recognised, also in the 'fold' area, which spreads across the county boundary into Surrey. She also identified three parallel land holdings, with linear lanes and fields, running 6 to 7 miles in length, but only ¾ mile wide. All three belonged to the Church, a stable institution, which explained their survival. Although not mentioned by name in Domesday Book, the entry for Ferring (the parent manor) can be shown to include Fure (in the Weald) as well, so this distinctive pattern was already established by 1086. It is difficult to summarise the detail of this work, but Diana's main point was that the Weald was developed in a number of different ways and at different times, and that some of the story can still be discovered.

The last paper chronologically was that given by Martin Higgins, the Historic Buildings Officer for Surrey. He studied the transfer of vernacular architecture techniques across the Surrey Weald, looking in particular at roof shape and construction, and the supply of materials. This study has been transformed since the advent of dendrochronology has given actual building dates. There were three roof styles: hipped, half-hipped and gabled. It seems that gables were adopted as a matter of show and status, e.g. churches. Martin showed there was a steady adoption of this style across Surrey from west to east, with all the early examples being Church properties. In Hampshire, half-hipped roofs were common, but the style did not reach the Weald before the open hall house plan was outdated. Crown post roofs were superseded by clasped side-purlin roofs, the style again moving west from Hampshire. Looking at building materials, there are several documented examples of big timbers for buildings in London being transported from the Weald, so it did not act as a barrier. Glass was made at Chiddingfold from 13th to early 17th century. Frieze fenestration, one particular high status use of this glass, again can be traced moving west to east. Horsham stone was also well used as a building material, but only in fairly close proximity to the production site.

I hope these notes are not too random to be of interest; my conclusions, driving back along the M25, were that the Weald was, and to some extent, still is, a very distinct area, but it would be a mistake to make too many generalisations about it. Detailed studies of specific periods showed that people recognised the natural resources of the area, and made as much use of them as they needed to. The geology precludes use of the Weald as fertile farmland, but that is not the only criterion for settlement. I think, keeping the alliteration, that it is too simple to say that the Weald was a Bridge or a Barrier, but that it was a variable Benefit!

RECOMMENDED FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

Available from the Willis Museum and Waterstones.

Basingstoke (Images of England series)

Malcolm Parker, Tempus £12.99

Malcolm, a volunteer at the Willis Museum, has made a fascinating new collection of Basingstoke photographs – not just the old favourites, he's really done his research as you can see from the captions.

The Making of A Maverick

Eric Macfarlane, Pen Press Publishers £6.99

Eric Macfarlane was the first Principal of Basingstoke's Queen Mary College; his autobiography is the basis for his "maverick" thoughts on education.

THE ENGLISH SLAVES

Peter Stone

The bi-centennial anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade within the British seaborne empire led me to look again at historical references to slavery as practised for many centuries in what perhaps was a not so Merrie England of the comparatively recent past – hence this article.

Slavery and the slave trade had been a part of life in the British Isles from time immemorial. 'Celtic' society had its slaves and long before Britain was brought under Roman rule following the Claudian conquest of 54 AD Strabo makes it clear that there was an export trade in slaves. The institution of slavery was still important at the end of Roman rule in the west when Honorius in 406 AD offered freedom to those slaves who joined with the *provinciales* in defence of the empire.

It is indisputable that Roman rule collapsed in Britain in the early 5th century, opening the way to Anglo-Saxon domination, but the course of events which led to the emergence of the petty kingdoms from which England evolved have long been argued. Modern historical research favours gradualism, rather than abrupt change, as the driving force over a period of about two hundred years. Evidence continues to mount that, although the Germanic ruling class introduced a different form of social hierarchy, a system of law and changes to land management such as the open field system, it pragmatically adopted what it found useful while disregarding what it saw as an encumbrance. The most notable casualties, apart from Roman law and administrative practice, were such Celtic tribal dialects as had survived the Roman Empire and any semblance of an early Romance vernacular that may have been in use. Latin eventually became the language of law and state business.

Slavery clearly had an economic and social use so, notwithstanding the adoption of Christianity by the English kings and the steady increase in church influence in public life, it appears that there was no principled objection to it and so it remained for more than six hundred years following the departure of Rome until the Norman Conquest, by which time Domesday Book 1086 shows that upwards of ten per cent of the population were slaves.

"The social terminology of Domesday Book shows little ambiguity in the terms that it applies to slaves and to men recently lifted from slavery. The *servi* and *ancillae* . . . .are undoubtedly male and female slaves. They are normally regarded as part of the equipment of the lord's demesne. The *coliberti* . . . can be no other than freedmen who have received holdings from the lord of the estate." [(1)].

Once again we have evidence, this time well documented, that the incoming rulers did not make any revolutionary changes to the structure of society and again for pragmatic reasons, not least of which was because the William I wanted it to appear that those to whom he gave lands did not hold a different legal position from the defeated English nobility, so buttressing his position as rightful king.

Slaves at this time were unevenly distributed across England (there being far fewer within the Danelaw) but in the aftermath of the Conquest many were emancipated, although the process appears to have affected some parts of the country more than others. The reasons for this are obscure but again the new king and his lords may well have been acting pragmatically by adding to the class of *bordarii* and *cottarii* and so increasing the tax base, possibly to make up for the loss of wealth of the *villani*. It could be significant that in contemporary Normandy slavery was rare [(2)].

The way thus slowly opened for change until St Anselm issued a canon at the London Council of 1102 against the practice of selling Englishmen 'like brute beasts'. At about the same time St Wulfstan of Worcester preached effectively against the Bristol-Ireland slave traffic (the Irish were great slave traffickers and the institution was important in Ireland until quite late in the 12th century).

Slowly but surely, over a period of about 150 years from the Conquest, slavery disappeared in England without the passing of new laws in a process that remained undocumented until Magna Carta 1215 defined the rights of serfs. Ironically this name, which came to replace the word 'villeins' for a class which represented more than half the population of rural England by the 13th century, was derived from the Latin *servus* meaning a slave. The lord was required by law not be so harsh as 'to bring his villein to ruin' and Magna Carta makes it plain that the latter's 'wainage' or 'tillage' was protected from 'amercement'- in other words the fruits of his labours could not be arbitrarily taken from him.

So freedom triumphed then and perhaps a glimmer of Merrie England might be discerned?

Some hopes! There were remarkable similarities between serfdom and slavery. The condition of serf was hereditary, passing from father to son. He remained the lord's personal property and as such could be dealt with as the lord thought fit although (unlike a slave) not killed, maimed or beaten. Usually he was *adscriptus glebae* (bound to the soil) and if the land was sold he could be sold with it. Alternatively he might be sold separately, together with members of his family, for a few shillings. The lord could tax him at will (*tallage*), exact a fine on the marriage of the serf's daughter (*merchet*), seize his best beast on death (by *heriot*), compel him to use the manorial mill to grind his corn and even to bake bread in the lord's oven at a price. He was forbidden to carry weapons and could not be sworn to arms before 1225.

But, looking on the bright side, the serf had the rights of a freeman against anyone save his lord, although he could only seek justice in the manorial court of the latter, being denied the freeman's right to plead in royal courts. Furthermore, the serf could hold land of his lord, usually in the form of a smallholding, *ad furcam et flagellum* (by fork and flail) in return for rent and services including labour services, he should 'not know in the evening what he shall do on the morrow'. In practice that meant the serf had to do whatever the lord required whenever it was required or risk losing tenure. The disadvantages of such requirements to female serfs are obvious and they were much more likely to lose rights over the lord's land.

For almost two centuries the situation remained unchanged although a serf might, under favourable circumstances, obtain his freedom by *manumission* (letting go by the hand). Although the numbers of free peasantry increased, the effect on the overall population mix was limited and it was not until the coming of the Black Death and the consequent shortage of labour that sufficient land became available for the number of serfs to decline noticeably. Many men took the opportunity to end the condition of serfdom by entering into an arrangement with a lord to obtain rights over land by copyhold, whereby land was held usually for three lives whose names were documented. Others simply fled their feudal obligations.

The population of serfs thereafter declined rapidly but did not entirely disappear. As late as the 15th and 16th centuries a minority of men remained serfs by inherited status, although not a few of these were prosperous farmers. The problem was overcome in a typically English way. With the complicity of his lord, a serf would bring a court action against the former, claiming that he could not be a serf because he was illegitimate and in law therefore had no father. The lord would then drop the argument, the court would certify bastardy and so the serf would become free! (I am not making this up.)

And so we reach the end of enslavement of the indigenous English?

Not quite!

Amazingly, the short lived Vagrancy Act 1548 of Edward VI sought to re-introduce it. As a result of serious economic problems, the early Tudor monarchs had brought in a series of repressive measures aimed at 'sturdy beggars'. The latest of these Acts, that of 1548, restricted the use of the gallows and the whip but provided for branding, forced labour and absolute slavery, depending on the attitude shown by an able-bodied unemployed person to work, and provided for the forcing of infant beggars into apprenticeship.

But this was the last gasp - after so many centuries a detested social institution was passing for the people of England. We should be completely clear on this point. Being the personal property of another, whether absolutely as a slave or close to it as a serf, was always considered a humiliating situation. Becoming a free man always meant something. If not, why did Honorius in the 5th century offer emancipation to those who would defend the empire? Being treated as a piece of personal property meant as much among the slaves of the Roman period as it did to those of the Anglo-Saxon and to those classified as serfs in medieval times. Again, if not, why did men contrive court actions more than a thousand years after Honorius to get rid of the status of serf when they themselves were at least as prosperous as any free tenant?

It does not matter that in a society based almost entirely on agriculture the work of a slave is often light, although usually very strenuous at harvest time, or that sometimes there is literally nothing to do, that the lord or master may be fair and never use all the draconian powers available to him to the limits, that living conditions are in general no worse than for the majority of the free population and might even be better – no-one ever knowingly prefers slavery.

Finally, I would bring you to the ancient countryside around us today. The only reliable record in summary form of the condition of its people in the distant past is Domesday Book.

So far as I can tell, this shows 372 households (I use 'household' loosely for want of a better word) in Basingstoke and the surrounding settled areas of Kingsclere, Hurstbourne Tarrant, Sherborne, Bramley, Old Basing, Tunworth, Nately (Scures?), Kempshott, Chineham and Winslade. Of these 59 (or about one in six) were designated 'slave' and it is interesting to note that reference to them is generally grouped with property rather than with the other population classes. Assuming five persons per household, about 300 slaves probably lived in the area about 900 years ago.

In total the number of slave households is somewhat greater than the average for the country but that is consistent with the accepted view that the further west one looks the greater the evidence of surviving Romano British place names and the thinner the archaeological evidence of Germanic settlement. The undoubted importance of north Hampshire in the Roman provincial economy, in which slavery was an integral part, is evidenced by a concentration of villa estates whose shadowy remains may well have been taken over by the incoming Anglo-Saxons – the Gewisse or the 'reliable ones' from the Upper Thames valley.

There is no identifiable pattern to the distribution of the different peasant classes across the settlements but in total there is near equality between villein (160) and bordar (139) numbers. Interestingly Basingstoke itself is the only place where *coliberti* (freemen who have received holdings from the lord of the estate), are to be found. Here there are fourteen such households along with twenty *villani* but only eight *bordarii*. Clearly there is something unusual here which I cannot explain.

So there you have it - much of the beautiful landscape around Basingstoke, as with the rest of the country, has come down to us in substantial part from the toil over many centuries of the slaves and near slaves among the ancestors of all of us. Not quite, then, the idyllic past that we sometimes imagine when stuck on the ring road system or the M3, but at least working on this short piece has provided me with worthwhile insights into aspects of English rural societies of the past that I had never previously seriously considered. I hope you are able to agree.

(1) Stenton *'Anglo-Saxon England'* pp. 476 *et seq.* The Oxford History of England series Clarendon Press 1987
(2) Poole *'Domesday Book to Magna Carta'* pp.40 The Oxford History of England series Clarendon Press 1988

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM HUMAN BONES?

For the poster for our March lecture by Simon Mays of English Heritage I used a photo I had seen in ***Current Archaeology 202*** about the Battle of Chester AD 616 and excavations at Heronbridge. Conscious of the copyright laws, I e-mailed the excavator to ask for permission to use it. Dr David Mason, County Archaeologist for Chester, willingly gave permission, as it was his own photo. He added "You might like to know that radio-isotope analysis of the teeth from the two skeletons was undertaken subsequent to the article and showed them to be Anglians from Northumbria, NOT British from N Wales and so warriors from Aethelfrith's army (not Welsh monks as so many readers wanted them to be!)" Thanks, David, for a useful footnote to Simon Mays' lecture. ***Ed***

CALENDAR

Sat 5 May	**Fieldwork, Basingstoke Common** ***(see page 4)***	**BAHS**
Thurs 17 May	THE MAN WHO MADE MECCANO, FRANK HORNBY John Hollands	FWM
Sun 21 May	Guided tour of Basing House, 3 pm from the Kiosk	FBH
Wed 23 May	AGM and OGS Crawford lecture AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY Sam Moorhead	HFC
Thurs 7 June	**Visit to Basingstoke Canal, Up Nately** ***(page 3)***	**BAHS**
Sat 9 June	TRADE & COMMUNICATIONS ACROSS SOUTHERN ENGLAND Southern History Conference: ***(page 6)***	
Sun 10 June	**Ragworting at Lambs Field, Worting** ***(page 5)***	**BAHS**
Thurs 14 June	**AGM and presentations by members (see Calling Notice)**	**BAHS**
Sat 16 June	THE SOLENT THAMES RESEARCH FRAMEWORK Hampshire County Seminar ***(page 6)***	
Sat/Sun 7/8 July	Meet a Tudor Servant. Basing House	FBH
Sat 14th July	**Summer Picnic** ***(page 2)***	**BAHS**
Sun 15 July	**Visit to Frilford Excavations (page 2)**	**BAHS**
Thurs 8 Aug	**Visit to Silchester Excavations (page 3)**	**BAHS**
Sat/Sun 11/12 Aug	Meet an English Civil War Soldier	FBH
Sat/Sun 8-9 Sept	**TRAINING DIG, WORTING (page 4)**	**BAHS**
Sat-Sun 8/9 Sept	Heritage Open Days: :Guided tour of Basing House, 3 pm from the Kiosk	FBH
Thurs 13 Sept	**THE BASINGSTOKE ADMIRAL** Michael Franks	**BAHS**
Thurs 20 Sept	NORTH HAMPSHIRE GARDENS THROUGH THE AGES Elizabeth Proudman	FWM
Fri 28 Sept	**Visit to Longford Castle & gardens (page 3)**	**BAHS**
Thurs 11 Oct	**THE PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME** Sally Worrall	**BAHS**
Thurs 18 Oct	AGM and THE MILLENNIUM BELLS Hector Goldsack	FWM
Thurs 8 Nov	**THE FIRST FARMERS, OR HOW DID THE NEOLITHIC REACH BRITAIN?** David Miles	**BAHS**
Thurs 15 Nov	TALES OF A WORKING WINDMILL Gavin Bowie	FWM
Thurs 13 Dec	**CHRISTMAS WINE & CHEESE**	**BAHS**

BAHS	**Our Society; lectures 7.30 pm at Church Cottage**
FBH	Friends of Basing House
FWM	Friends of the Willis Museum, 7.30 pm at the Museum
HFC	Hampshire Field Club; Science Lecture Theatre, Peter Symonds College, Winchester. We can send one representative; details from our Secretary