

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Newsletter 189 November 2009

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What is happening here ?

Christmas Party

7.30 pm. Thursday 10th December
Church Cottage, Basingstoke
£1.50 (includes first drink)



Our seasonal get-together with members and friends, with a glass of wine or soft drink and a finger buffet - followed by our special quizzes and a raffle.

Offers to help to prepare or supply buffet food will be very welcome (the Society will refund expenses). Ring Margaret (01256 356012) to offer help. You can collect your ticket at the door but please let Margaret know in advance.

STOP PRESS!! We have just heard that the January lecturer will be unable to come on that date. The change of programme will be announced at our meetings and put on the website. Or ring Mary Oliver (01256 324263) for an update.

Fieldwork Report

Mark Peryer

Although the Society itself did not hold any excavations over the summer months I am pleased to note that various members of the society were involved in excavations around the region. The projects that benefited from their services include the Reading University excavations at Silchester; the Southampton University excavations at Tidgrove Warren; the Winchester University excavations at the St Mary Magdalene Leper Hospital; Sir Barry Cunliffe's excavations at the Roman Villa in Brading, I.O.W; the WARG excavations at St Cross, Winchester; and these are just the ones I know about. I know that there are others who were inspired to volunteer for next year's excavations at Vindolanda after their visit there on the Hadrian's Wall trip. One particularly satisfying feature of this is the linkage to the local Universities, part of which comes about because we have members who are there, studying as mature students, and partly because the Universities do seem to be becoming more open to the advantages of exploiting what they refer to as the "Grey Army".

In keeping with this theme, a project with the unlikely acronym, QDAEP (Quarley Down Ancient Environs Research Project), has been started up by the part time archaeology students (PAS) society of Southampton University and we have been invited to join them. This project has grown out of an investigation of the find site of a Bronze Age Axe hoard by Cynthia Poole on the Cholderton estate. I have spent some days from my last two Christmas holidays joining Cynthia's small team of volunteers to work on the initial excavations and now this project has grown into an archaeological survey of the estate. The project is in its early stages but looks as if it has opportunities for field walking, woodland surveying and excavation. The landowner is very supportive and the area seems to be rich in unmapped round barrows and earthworks. The first activity under the new project was a field walk on the 11th October which went well until it started to pour with rain. I expect there will be other opportunities for field work over the winter months and most likely excavation work one weekend a month from Easter onwards next year.

In the same vein, there seems to be an opportunity for the Society to run a small scale excavation in the same general area, following a Saxon bucket find by a metal detectorist. The timing of this is dependent on cropping, but may be next September.

There will be a F.O.A.M. event on Sunday 15th November, targeting the Fish Ponds at Basing House. These are mostly hidden from public view along the banks of the Loddon close to the railway arch in Old Basing. The ponds are in desperate need of reclamation from nature. If you have a pair of waders, please bring them along.

For excavation and fieldwork we need qualified first aiders. If you are interested in attending a First-Aid course on 4th May, or if you would like to get involved with any of our field work activities, please speak to me after a Society meeting, email me (mperyer@f2s.com) or call me on 01256 780502.

2010 BAHS Trip To Malta

Mark Peryer

As a follow up to this year's trip to Hadrian's Wall, we have started to organise a trip to Malta that will take place from the 4th-11th of March 2010.

Malta is strategically situated between Sicily and North Africa and has some unique Palaeolithic Temple sites. It is also a place that has been touched by most waves of history since ancient times and there are Roman mosaics, remains of the Knights Templar and more modern history to explore. We are also proposing to spend a day visiting the nearby island of Gozo, which also has some interesting sites.



We would follow the same formula as before, which is to set up a series of tours and visits over a few days which you can dip in and out of as you like. You would be responsible for arranging your own flights and accommodation, although we would make some suggestions on accommodation so that people can choose to be with friends or not. Malta is relatively small in area and is served by a good bus service so the plan is to use that as the means of getting to and from the various sites.

The provisional itinerary is as follows:

Day – Time	Activity
Thursday 4 th March	Arrive in Malta
Friday 5 th March AM	Rabat – Domus Romana (Roman Mosaics) Mdina, Catacombs (Early Christian), 'Clapham Junction' cart tracks
Saturday 6 th AM	Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, Tarxien Temples

Sunday 7 th	Gozo – The Citadel Rabat, Museum of Archaeology, Ggantija (Copper Age Temple), Ta Kola Windmill
Monday 8 th AM	Haga Qim & Mnajdra – Fertility Goddess Cult
Monday 8 th PM	Valletta – Museum of Archaeology
Tuesday 9 th AM	Ta Hagra, Skorba (Stone Age temples)
Tuesday 9 th PM	Valletta - Palace Armoury
Wednesday 10 th AM	Ghar Dalam, Borg in Nadur
Wednesday 10 th PM	At leisure
Thursday 11 th	Return home

Note that this program is organised so that the most of the major sites are visited over a long weekend so that people who have a tight schedule can see most of the major sites in four days. The last three days are more relaxed.

Cost Guidance

Flights

EasyJet fly from Gatwick to Malta for around £70 return, if you book ahead. However, there is only one EasyJet flight a day and that leaves Gatwick at 7:15.

Air Malta have more flights per day and booking ahead should give you change from about £120 for a return flight.

Hotels

These are from around £300 per person week upwards. Depending on your preference there are some luxury and big chain hotels, and there are also some Apartment hotels which seem to start from around £85 per person week.

Admission and guide

A Heritage Malta Pass which gives admission to most sites costs Euro 30 (£30). Allow a further £30 for the services of a site guide.

Deadline

If you think you would be interested in coming on the trip, please let me know **by November 30th** because some of the sites need advance booking to get admission and I would like to give them accurate numbers.

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

The Society has recently become a member of this organisation and regularly receives its newsletter 'Local History News' and journal 'The Local Historian'. This and other most fascinating items such as The Hampshire Field Club's 'Hampshire Studies', English Heritage newsletters and so on are always on display at Society talk evenings, together with leaflets and information offering courses, events and lectures, etc.

Also on display are regular newsletters from our neighbouring archaeological and historical societies in the region - providing an opportunity to see what else is happening in the county.

Any of these items can be borrowed, so when you are next at one of our talks evenings come and have a look and see what you can discover!

HAPPY CHRISTMAS, BASINGSTOKE!

Ginny Pringle

Christmas came early to Church Cottage on Thursday 1st October, when amidst festive decorations and much tinsel town mayor Councillor Brian Gurden launched the Society's latest publication **Happy Christmas, Basingstoke!**



A large number of members and guests gathered to celebrate the launch and were well provided for with a Christmassy spread, of which pride of place went to Nicola Turton's Hampshire hog's head.



After making a suitable speech to launch the book, Councillor Gurden, with a ceremonial sword, cut the hog's head open to reveal a tasty mix of marzipan and fruitcake.

Thank you again to everyone who has contributed, both to the book and also towards making the evening a great success - and congratulations to Barbara for bringing off yet another coup... Atta girl!



Sales of the book look set to be good, with Waterstones already taking 200. A special discounted price of £7.00 for BAHS members makes this an ideal stocking filler for Christmas, so don't leave it until too late to purchase yours!



Has Nicola noticed anything unusual?

The logo for 'Basingstoke Talking History' features the words 'BASINGSTOKE' and 'TALKING HISTORY' in a serif font, stacked vertically. The text is enclosed within a diamond-shaped border that has a textured, mesh-like appearance.

Barbara Applin

Preparing for the launch has, of course, taken most of our time recently, and there is more work still to be done to publicise HAPPY CHRISTMAS, BASINGSTOKE! We shall be putting a display in the glass cabinet upstairs in Basingstoke Library for the second half of November and taking part in a signing session at Waterstones - though we don't expect the record numbers who recently turned out for David Attenborough! Some of the toys, games and cards given by Mary Felgate and illustrated in the book will be brought from the Hampshire Museum Service headquarters for display in a case at the top of the stairs (under "The Grapes") at the Willis Museum in early December.

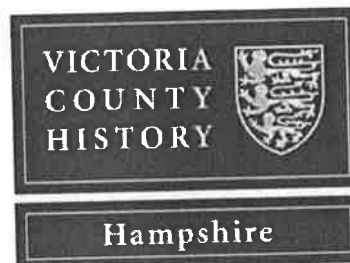
We have still found time to record several more interviews, notably with our own member, Garth George, and his wife, Elizabeth. We are always looking for more helpers with interviewing, transcribing and researching, and would love to have a volunteer who has expertise with sound. We are using digital recording equipment but are not skilled enough yet to improve the sound quality or edit the recordings - needless to say, the original recordings are untouched, preserved in Wessex Film & Sound Archive, but we do sometimes want to do "light editing" for displays, talks etc.

Garth is not the only member we have interviewed - we have interesting memories from Jo Kelly, Margaret Harris, Anne Hawker, Ann Broad and others. Would anyone else like to be interviewed? If so, ring me on **01256 465439** or e-mail barbara.applin@btinternet.com

We have quite a lot of material for the next book, on the Co-op in Basingstoke, but are having some trouble in locating the owner of copyright for an unmissable part of an autobiography, so watch this space.

An Update

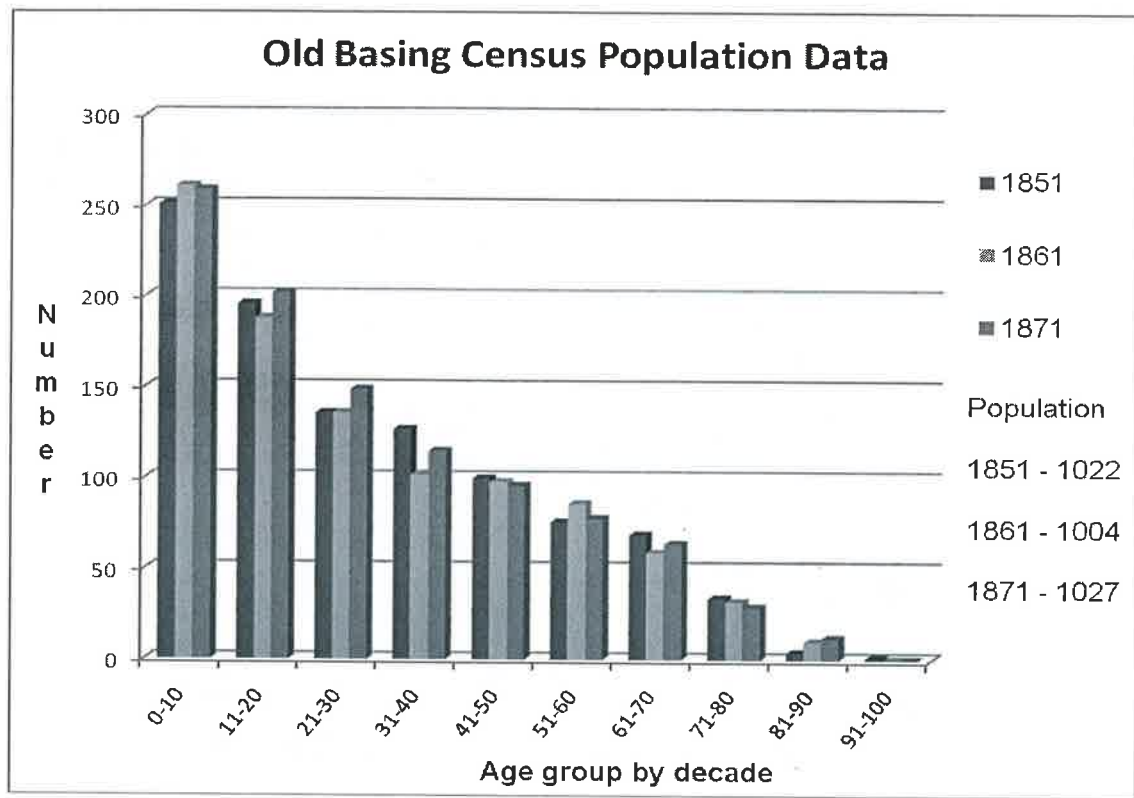
Bob Applin



Church Cottage was the scene of the recent official launch of the Hampshire VCH project - hosted by the Lord Lieutenant, Dame Mary Fagan.

Around 50 people, including Basingstoke's Mayor, County Councillors and invited guests, were given a briefing on the project. The local group put on displays of the work done so far. The centrepiece was the material that has been put on the VCH web site on Mapledurwell. This is at an advanced stage, due to the fact that Stan Waight has been researching the Corpus Christi (Oxford) Mapledurwell manorial records for many years. Lorna Cuthill, a former parish clerk, mounted an exhibition of the information that has been gathered from parish records, wills and inventories.

Similar exhibitions on Upton Grey and Steventon were mounted. Mary Oliver showed her and Daphne Reggler's work on the Old Basing census returns and the tithe award map. Barbara and I exhibited our work on the 1851 census of Basingstoke and information gleaned from 19th century trade directories and earlier records.



The group meets once a fortnight at Chute House, usually from 10 to 3 pm, led by Dr Jean Morrin of the University of Winchester. It is a friendly group that could do with more members, particularly those with an interest in researching Basingstoke itself, to work on the social and economic history.

Recently a great plus for me was a flight with Ginny Pringle, our Secretary, over the villages we have been working on, to photograph them from the air for the project. On a beautiful Autumn day a good set of photos was obtained.



Here are two examples. Can you name them?



Cliddesden



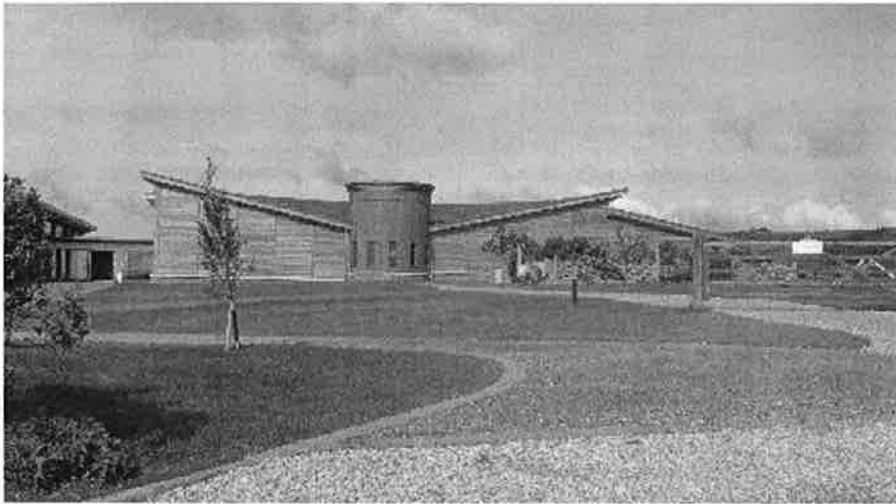
Mapledurwell

“Papa Porcupine”

The World Premier at **Central Studio, Queen Mary College, 7.30 pm on 7 - 9 December** of this new play by Rosemary Wisbey, performed by QMC students. It highlights many aspects of the diverse life of “local herro” William Cobbett. Tickets £.90 (concessions £3.90).

Visit to Brading Roman Villa on 15th August

Mike Pengelly



Brading's award-winning visitor centre

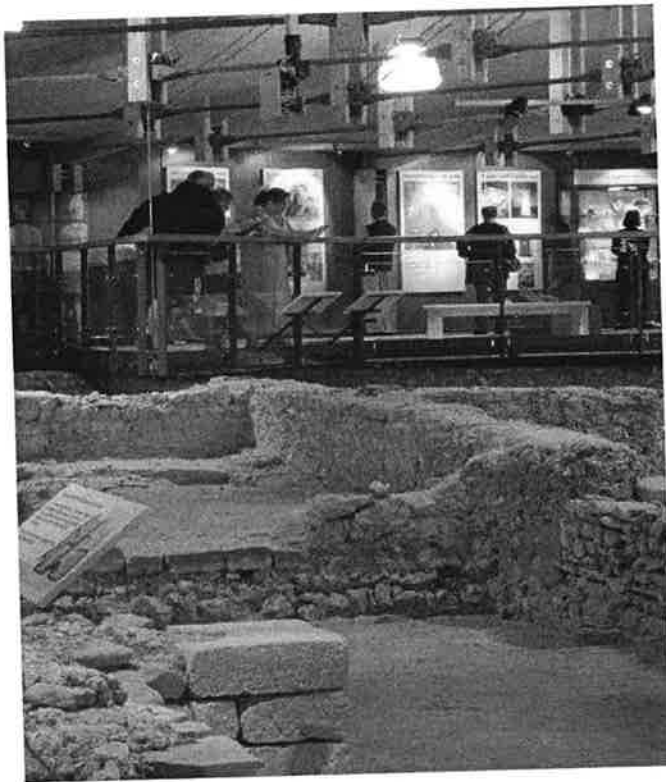
Thanks to the efforts of Mary Oliver and Jan Bristow, the Hampshire Field Club were able to obtain a grant from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation to cover the expenses of taking a coach party to visit Brading during this season's Big Dig conducted by Sir Barry Cunliffe. Of the 47 lucky individuals to benefit from this generous freebie there were a good half dozen BAHS members, including yours truly.

The day started at 7:45 with the coach pick up at West Ham Leisure centre followed by further pick ups in Winchester and Fareham before a bracing trip on the IOW ferry. We arrived at the Brading villa site around 11.15.

The first thing that strikes you is the magnificent cedar-clad visitor centre which covers the West wing of the villa complex. It is the result of a huge fundraising campaign that was organised by the Oglander Roman Trust which looks after the site.

The West wing is made up of twelve rooms and it is here that my group began our tour, where the walls still survive, in some places up to one metre high.

A number of rooms contain mosaics, some of which are unique, in particular a cock-headed man set into a Bacchus mosaic. As the West wing dates to around AD 250, this could be a cartoon of the serving emperor **Gaius Vibius Trebonianus Gallus** (251 to 253) since the word “Gallus” is also Latin for rooster. This might not be as unsafe as it sounds as the poor man was murdered by his own troops



in AD 253. Opposite "Gallus" there is a depiction of a fox in front of a building. Apparently this is the only known representation of a Roman building on a mosaic in Britain.

The largest room (12) is divided into two parts, linked by a central panel which shows an astronomer and his instruments. The purpose of this room is unclear but it was obviously a reception area as it faces the main entrance. The occurrence of a small swastika on the floor at the far end (classical symbol for power, strength and luck!) could suggest that it was situated under a curule chair, which would mean that the villa's very rich owner was also a magistrate.

Apart from the mosaics, there are interesting displays of artefacts, including some nice examples of Samian ware, which is my particular interest. Amongst the coins

on show, there is one depicting Allectus, a usurper who had a short lived reign as Emperor from AD 293 to 296. The reverse shows a war galley which was probably intended as propaganda to dissuade the legitimate Emperor, Constantius, from invading Britain. The associated display mentions that the Saxon Shore forts were strengthened at this time to repel Roman Imperial forces, which, as I'm studying Post-Roman Britain next year, struck me as an interesting slant on their actual purpose!

At this point we were ushered outside to hear Sir Barry talk about his current excavation of the South range of the villa complex. He explained that he had cut two slots into the early excavations by Price and Price (1903) to understand more about the structure. As yet they were still wading through the layers of cultivation, so not a lot to report. Of more interest was the fact that he had now virtually completely exposed the Baths complex contained in the range and this was where his main efforts were being concentrated. The exposure of the *caldarium*, *tepidarium*, *frigidarium* and plunge bath had enabled him to produce a provisional narrative which he was hoping to validate with dating evidence.



Sir Barry interpreting the Bath House, with HFC members at a safe distance

This was that the original Iron Age inhabitants of the site, who probably lived in the round houses currently lying beneath the car park, desired some of the luxuries in life following their exposure to Romanisation. Some time in the first century AD they arranged for the Bath House complex to be built - so, as it were, to put their toes in the water! So impressed were they that they went the whole hog and built a grand house in the Roman style in the North Range opposite. This, having been excavated by Sir Barry the previous year and now completely covered up, contained an aisled hall measuring some 15 by 44 metres. Apart from private suites and function rooms, it contained an impressive bath complex and the hypothesis is that the existing baths in the southern range were stripped to provide tiles and fittings for the new structure. Coin and pottery evidence suggest that this was around the end of the 2nd Century. The wealth of the estate and the importance of the family grew so much that they needed more space to entertain and perhaps discharge civic functions, hence the construction of the West range referred to above in the mid 3rd Century. Whether the old South range was levelled and landscaped at this time remains to be established. Later in the 3rd century the villa seemed to have been abandoned after a fire, although it was still used for farming purposes throughout the 4th Century. We were pleased to see Briony Lalor doing hard labour whilst we were listening to Sir Barry, so I'm sure she can update us if there are any further developments on this particular narrative.

Sir Barry also had excavation work going on in the visitors' centre. There were two archaeologists working on 'cleaning up' the walls that were as left by the Victorian excavators. The idea was to learn more about the context of each wall, for instance which one intersected the other, so as to get a better fix on the construction sequence of the West Wing.



*Excavations of
excavations*

*Cleaning up after
the Victorians
on the West Wing*

We left soon afterwards and, after a pleasant sea trip back to the big Island made our way back to Basingstoke. All in all a very interesting day and it was free! – many thanks to the Hampshire Field Club, and to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation!

NOTE

BAHS is a member of the Hampshire Field Club and one person from our society can go to events at the members' rate. Usually meetings are held at the Science Lecture Theatre, Peter Symonds College, Berewecke Road, Winchester, as is the Conference on 21st November (see page 16). For bookings for this event contact Robin Iles Weekdays 01962 848185. But the Annual Local History Lecture on 29th January will be held at the Hampshire County Record Office, and for this contact Sarah Lewin, HCRO Sussex St Winchester SO23 8TH.

Here is a message to our members from the Hampshire Field Club: www.fieldclub.hants.org.uk

The Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society was founded in 1885 to foster and promote the county's heritage and history. Although the society has changed a great deal over the decades, it continues to study and promote Hampshire through its four sections: Archaeology, Historic Buildings, Landscape and Local History.

We organise conferences, seminars, talks and lectures throughout the year as well as trips and visits to embrace all these four aspects of the county and its surrounding area. Two Newsletters per year are published for members, plus an annual journal, *Hampshire Studies*, and the occasional Monograph.

The Hampshire Field Club has close links with the County Council, Hampshire Archives and Local Studies (the Record Office) and draws on Universities throughout the UK for top-quality speakers and experts.

For further information about the Hampshire Field Club and all its activities why not visit the website and see why, if you have any historical or archaeological interest, you should join us. We welcome all ages!

OPEN DAY AT THE HOLY GHOST CEMETERY

Barbara Applin



Congratulations to Debbie Reavell and the Basingstoke Heritage Society for a really successful and fascinating day. Almost 400 people turned up, including the Mayor and three ex-Mayors. No graves opened (unless you count Mrs Blunden's, photo on page 1, as portrayed so cleverly by the Proteans, who gave a dramatic breathless account of the highlights of Basingstoke's history in about 20 minutes or so!) *So now you know the answer to the question on page 1.)*

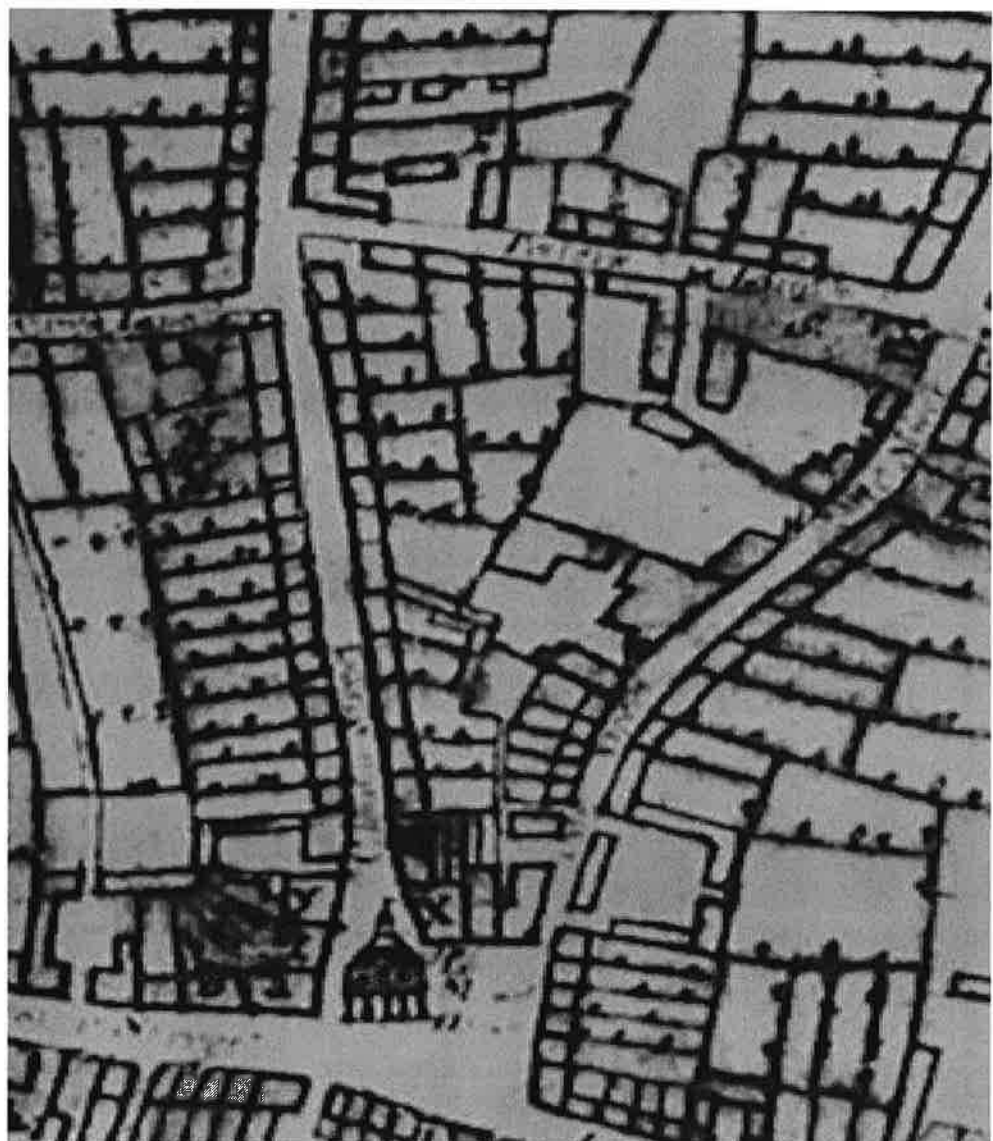
People followed the trail leaflet, with its plan of the cemetery and notes with “thumbnails” of the major graves and they looked at the displays in the marquee. They found the First World War re-enactors, heard Bill Fergie’s lucid and knowledgeable explanation of the ruins of the two chapels, and information I had culled from 16th century wills and 19th century billheads about burial practices in “The Litten”.

Several BAHS members helped out with the displays, as Stewards or manning the bookstand, and I am sure there will be more occasions when our two societies can work together. In fact, Debbie Reavell and I have often swapped information, particularly when advising the Borough on the information panels they have put up in the War Memorial Park and Glebe Gardens.

Also she and Mike Rice and I have been pooling our knowledge about people buried at The Litten (Mike has the plan and list of burials on computer.) This was very useful when John Hollands, in the Willis Museum’s Local History room, rang with a query about the Ring family. I met Marilyn Rouse, who is researching John Newton, the author of “Amazing Grace”, whose travel diary of 1790-1800 records that he came to stay with Thomas Ring and his wife Sophia in Basingstoke.

Marilynn knew that the Ring family owned several properties in Basingstoke, several of which could be identified by Anne Hawker’s records from rentals. Some were in Church Square and one of these in the Market Square is marked R on the 1762 Godson map (HRO reference 23M72/P1/1/2/1). It isn’t terribly clear, but it’s the property on the corner of Church Street and Winchester Street.

N
↑



You'll no doubt realise that the old Market Hall shown here is in a different position from the modern Town Hall, where X and the properties to its right are shown.

A trawl through Baigent & Millard's *History of the Town and Manor of Basingstoke* and directories gave lots more information about William, John and Thomas Ring and I was particularly pleased to discover that one of the Ring properties was 81-83 Church Street, now Office Angels (W45 & W46 in our book *Going down Church Street to the Felgate Bookshop*, page 59.)

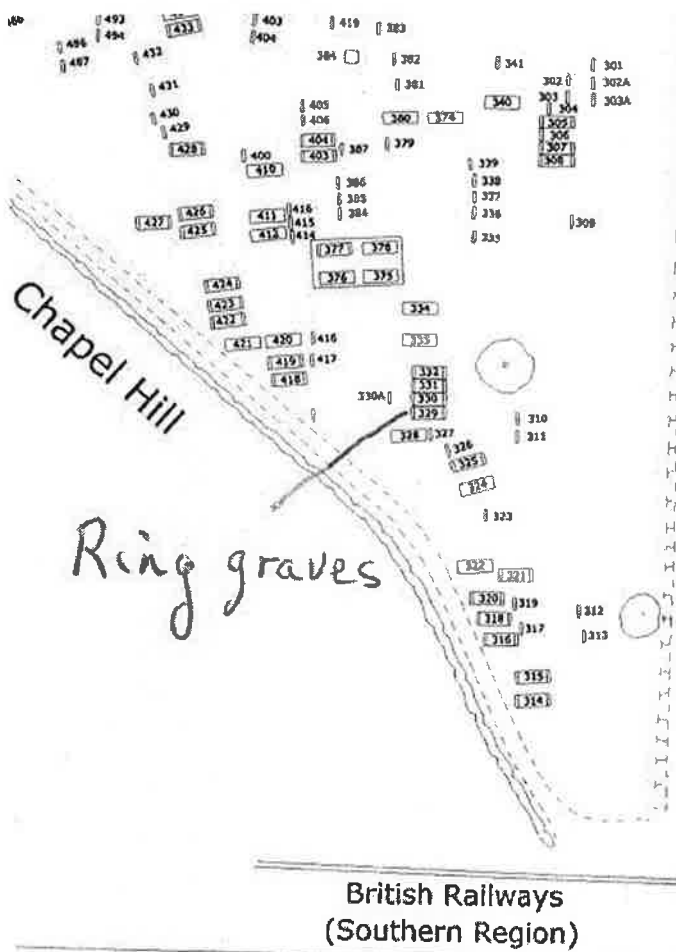


In this plan you can see where Mike located the Ring graves of John (1772), Anne (1757), George (1766) and another John Ring (1778) as plots 329-333 in The Litten.

But Thomas Ring was not buried there. He was a Pavement Commissioner in 1815, and in 1830 he was one of several people who moved or seconded motions at a meeting of the North East Hants Auxiliary Bible Society (*Reading Mercury*, 19 April 1830.) Marilyn told me that he moved to Reading, where he was connected with St Mary's in Castle Street, worked in medicine and was a founding member of Reading Dispensary. The Diary of Samuel Attwood (HRO 8M62/27) records that "Mr Thos Ring formerly of this town died at Reading 27 April 1840, aged 81."

So next time you sing "Amazing Grace", think of John Newton visiting Basingstoke. If you are interested you can contact Marilyn on the website:

admin@johnnewton.org.



“BEEN THERE YATELEY”

Jim Oram

For a second season I went to an archaeological dig in August on Yateley Common directed by Carol White, who teaches archaeology at several colleges in North Hampshire.

The sand and gravel heath landscape, which also contains Bronze Age burial mounds, has recently revealed evidence of flint knapping from hunter-gatherers who were sourcing flint for tools about 7000 BP in the late Mesolithic.

We continued our work from last year in the area where I had been particularly pleased to discover a beautifully made blade, now displayed with other finds in Yateley Library, and although I did not find a piece of the same quality this year, I was happy to discover a number of blades, debitage, rods and cores as in 2008.

The weather was good and there were about 5 to 10 people usually present. We were each given a small pit of about a metre square to excavate - and as we gently trowelled and recorded, we sieved every last ounce of spoil! When we uncovered worked material or debitage we used the Yateley Common site context record sheets, plans and finds cards, and plotted each piece using standard xyz coordinate measurements.

My next challenge is more study in archaeology, attending courses organised through BCoT in Experimental Archaeology and Landscape Archaeology.


Carol White has kindly vetted Jim's account, made a few amendments and adds the following background.

Since 1998, archaeological research has been conducted on selected areas of the Yateley Common plateau landscape. Through the meticulous recording of archaeological landscape features, and collection and evaluation of archaeological and environmental materials from within the Yateley Common heathland landscape, areas of prehistoric activity have been located, using field methods appropriate to the environmental setting (White in *Sanctuary* 2002, White in the *Newsletter of the Hampshire Field Club* 2004). Field investigations have involved mapping, surface collections, and trench and test-pit excavations, and revealed different forms of human land-use in a multiphase archaeological record. In particular, the investigations have uncovered extensive evidence of late hunter gatherer activity in small, discrete sites of Late Mesolithic flint tool manufacture. Research studies of the lithic finds, including microlith cores, rods, bladelets, and debitage from manufacture, suggest activities on the Yateley Common landscape relating to the procurement and utilisation of local flint gravels that appear derived from the surrounding materials within the soil and geological profiles. With few Late Mesolithic sites of human activity clearly identified within North East Hampshire, the archaeological evidence from these recent investigations has been considered a valuable contribution, from local and regional perspectives. Therefore, the continued excavations within the heathland environment of Yateley Common has augmented both the assemblage and knowledge, and provided the initial explication to a previously unrecorded landscape.

Carol White 2009

WINTER 2009/2010 DIARY DATES

BAHS (meetings at 7.30 pm, Church Cottage, Basingstoke)

- Sunday 15 Nov *FOAM fieldwork event* see page 2
- Thurs 10 Dec *Christmas Social Evening* see page 2 
- Thurs 14 Jan See *STOP PRESS*, page 1
- Thurs 11 Feb *Anglo-Saxon Northumberland* Prof. Barbara Yorke, University of Winchester
- 4-11 March *BAHS TRIP TO MALTA* see page 3

FRIENDS OF BASING HOUSE (meetings at 7.30 pm, The Bothy, Basing House)

- Tues 12th Jan *King Alfred* Kay Ainsworth
- Tues 9th Feb *Spies in Petticoats* Carol Brown

FRIENDS OF THE WILLIS MUSEUM (meetings at 7.30 pm, Willis Museum, Basingstoke)

- Thurs 19 Nov *The Swing Riots in Hampshire of 1830* Lecturer from Hampshire Record Office
- Thurs 21 Jan *Development of the British Sword from the Civil War to the Great War* Ian Williams
- Thurs 18 Feb *From Cream Teas to Clapperboards: A Local's View of Lacock* Sue Tapliss

HAMPSHIRE FIELD CLUB

- Sat 21st Nov *New Light on the Dark Age: Conference of the Archaeological Section at the Science Lecture Theatre, Peter Symonds College, Berewecke Rd, Winchester from 10. to 5. (see page 11)*
- Fri 29th Jan *'Roads Very Stony, Narrow and Steep' - Early Travellers to Hampshire: Annual Local History Lecture by Dr John Chandler at Hampshire County Record Office at 8.00 pm. Admission free. (see page 11)*

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY RECORD OFFICE 5.30 pm, Sussex Street, Winchester. Admission free.

- Thurs 3 Dec *Crime in the 18th Century* Esther Snell

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM SERVICE at Chilcomb House, Bar End, Winchester

STORES SUNDAY on 15 November from 10.00am to 5.00 pm. Contact: Alan Jacobs on 01962-826728 or alan.jacobs@hants.gov.uk

Peter Stone has joined me in editing this Newsletter, in particular in redesigning this back page, and we would welcome comments. Many thanks, Peter! Barbara Applin

BAHS SECRETARY Ginny Pringle on 01420 550028 or ginny@powntleycopse.co.uk

WEBSITE <http://www.bahsoc.org.uk>

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