

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BAHSOC

Newsletter 196

July 2011

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What was Ian doing at Down Farm? See page 16
And who was leading the Pembrokeshire party?
Answers invited



SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE 1ST SEPTEMBER!

Rates unchanged. Renewal forms enclosed for those who do not pay by standing order.

**PEMBROKESHIRE
PHOTOPAGE**
Members' photos of the BAHS trip, see page 4.

Pentre Ifan



Pembroke Castle



Castell Henllyss



Bluestones



Escape to the beach



OUR ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

40th 40th 40th 40th

40th 40th 40th 40th

'Archaeology Fortified'

The society marks its 40th anniversary in September this year, and there is something seriously wrong with your senses if you haven't heard me talking about the half-day conference and celebration we are organising to celebrate this milestone at the Grange Barn, Old Basing on the 17th September. The proceedings will start at 14:00 with our main speakers Prof Mike Fulford, Dave Allen, Derek Spruce and Tim Schadla-Hall, interspersed with anecdotes from past chairpersons giving a sense of the story of the society so far:

- **Professor Mike Fulford (Reading University)** – 'Callewa in fiction and film'
(With reference to Rosemary Sutcliffe's 'The Eagle')
- **David Allen (HCC Museum Service)** – 'A singularly complete collection of finds'
(Reflections on the work of George Willis and others)
- **Derek Spruce (Formerly of the OU)** - 'Eleemosynary endeavours in Basingstoke & beyond'
(Almshouses in Basingstoke and beyond)
- **Tim Schadla-Hall (Inst. of Archaeology, UCL)** – 'Basingstoke Archaeology and the public'
(Looking backward, looking forward)

At around 18:00, the celebrations will get into full swing with a Hog Roast supplemented with a specially commissioned cake, and a chocolate fountain. If you have not bought your tickets yet, then contact Margaret Porter on 01256 356012 or download an application form from the BAHS website (<http://www.bahsoc.org.uk>). If you miss this celebration, you'll be missing the fun and there's not going to be another one like it for a while!

Parking will be at the Basing House car park, off Bartons Lane by the Millstone pub. There is limited disabled parking at the entrance to the Grange courtyard from The Street opposite Crown Lane.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 9th June 2011

Warm thanks were given to Garth George who retired from the Committee as Membership Secretary after many years of service. The rest of the committee remains unchanged:

Mark Peryer (Chairman)
Ginny Pringle (Hon. Secretary)
Margaret Porter (Hon. Treasurer)
Barry Hedger (Membership Secretary)

Barbara Applin, Marjolein Butler, Deborah Charlton, Mary Oliver (co-opted), Alan Turton and Ian Waite.

Membership subscriptions remain the same as last year: Individual £12; over 60/student £8; family £16; over 60 family £13. £1 discount off all membership categories if paid by annual standing order. The committee urged more members to take advantage of the standing order scheme to renew their membership, - chasing overdue renewals each year is very time consuming, and with the £1 discount offer the standing order system is mutually beneficial to all.

A display of photographs showing memorable Society moments will be made at the 40th Anniversary Conference on the 17th September, and members are requested to send copies of any suitable images they may have to Margaret Porter.

After the AGM, presentations were given by Ginny Pringle on her recent dissertation and fieldwork at Holybourne, near Alton; Mary Oliver on her visits to Qumran (the Essene community) and Masada (the mountain fortress); and Mark Peryer on his voluntary fieldwork at Vindolanda.

Next year's AGM is set for Thursday, 14th June 2012.

Fieldwork Report

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

Those of you who have taken part in digs during previous years at Basing House will have no doubt have felt as if there was something missing during the second half of May. However, I'm hoping that your withdrawal symptoms can be alleviated by the opportunity to help out with some of the post-excavation work on the finds and records from previous year's digs. Dave Allen is preparing a number of self-contained projects and, starting on September 8th, these will be assigned to BAHS members who turn up at the weekly volunteer sessions at Chilcomb House which run from 10:00 to 16:00 every Thursday. Dave will get you going, but you will have the chance to make the project your own and to contribute towards the overall post-excavation result.

Some of you may remember a visit to the 'Brickwork arm' of the Basingstoke canal at Up Nately a few years back. An opportunity has arisen to do some industrial archaeology on the brickworks which were only active in any commercial sense for about four years at the turn of the last century. The work involves some desk-top research, which is already in progress, some recording of the structures that remain and some FOAM-like work to clear the site of the undergrowth that now covers it. Depending on what is under the vegetation, there may be scope for some limited excavation and some further recording. Once the works are complete, and an interpretation has been made, the site will be set up with some interpretative sign-boards so that walkers on the canal-side path will be able to visit and understand how this sleepy back water was once a hive of industrial activity. Exact dates for this project have yet to be finalised, but will be publicised via the fieldwork email list and at society meetings.

We have other projects in the pipeline, and depending on how they progress I hope to bring these to your attention. If you would like to be kept up to date with our fieldwork and are not on the mailing list, please feel free to contact me or talk to me at one of our meetings.

"In Defence of the Realm" Europa Nostra UK conference,
10/12 Sept, Portsmouth

Lectures and discussions at the University of Portsmouth, guided visits & day excursion to the Isle of Wight. Topics include the political concept of The Realm, historic alliances leading to armed conflict and the impact on social & industrial history of the Navy. Also the development of fortifications.

For more information and registration contact:
Dr Lester Borley CBE, 4 Bedford Place, Edinburgh EH4 3DH,
phone 0131 332 2364, e-mail: lesterborley@waitrose.com



LECTURE PROGRAMME 2011-12

Notes from Mary Oliver

2011

8 September 'Remarkable New Finds at Avon Fields (MOD Durrington)' *Andrew Manning*

Andy is promising some very interesting information about recent excavations on the new Avon Fields housing development (previously MOD Durrington). These include previously unknown Neolithic monuments and evidence of a surprisingly large Iron Age/Romano-British enclosed settlement and Roman road with a very big mystery! Andy is a long-serving archaeologist with Wessex Archaeology, but this will be the first time he has visited us.

17 September 'Archaeology Fortified' - details elsewhere

13 October 'Recent work at Marden Henge, and the Neolithic building' *Dr Jim Leary*

This must be one of the most talked about Neolithic sites at the moment, making the news in all the archaeological magazines, so we are very fortunate that Jim has agreed to come and talk to us. Marden has until now been one of the lesser known henges, but the recent excavations have added important new information, with 'the building' being the big surprise. A sauna? Come and find out!

10 November 'Celts from the West' *Prof. Sir Barry Cunliffe*

Sir Barry is a speaker who needs no introduction, especially here in Hampshire, which has been the scene of his best known excavations. As well as being a gifted excavator, he is a great communicator who is able to make us look anew at supposedly well-established facts. His latest research has been centred on the elusive Celts. Come along for a treat, and maybe follow it up by reading his latest book

8 December Christmas Social Evening

2012

12 January 'Sources for landscape and garden history at Hampshire Record Office' *Jane Harris*

Last year we started our programme with a visit to HRO HQ in Winchester, this year, one of the Senior Archivists is coming to us to tell us about some of their records on this popular subject. They say archaeologists are never gardeners – (the wrong sort of digging!) – quite erroneous in my experience, and we have some very fine historic gardens locally, so it will be interesting to learn more about them, especially for those working on the VCH up-date.

9 February 'The Staffordshire Hoard: Art, Wealth and Power in the 7th c. AD' *Hon. Prof. Leslie Webster*

Several people were very keen to have a talk on this amazing find, which has been saved for the nation by a combination of grants and fund-raising, and we have been lucky enough to get Leslie Webster, who has just completed a book about the hoard, to come and see us. It is early days yet in the comprehensive detailed restoration and study of this huge and precious body of finds, but I'm sure Leslie will share some of her theories with us. Her book should be published by then, so signed copies will be available for those who are especially interested in this period.

8 March 'Experimental Archaeology' *Jennifer Foster*

Many of us go back far enough to remember Peter Reynolds lecturing about this, and have visited his legacy in Hampshire – Butser Hill Iron Age Farm, - (and some of us saw 'one he made earlier' at St Fagan's Folk Museum this summer) – but there are always new ideas and experiments to learn about. Jennifer, who also has first-hand experience, will, I'm sure, have plenty to tell us.

12 April 'Castles in Wessex' *Alan Turton*

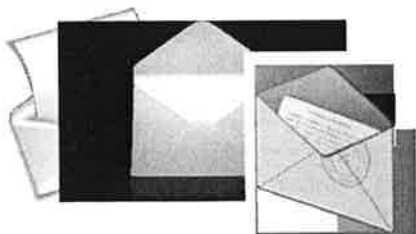
Alan is one of our own, but we welcome him on this occasion not as Curator of Basing House, but as an independent historian and author. Many of us have already bought and enjoyed his book of the same title, but Alan has a wealth of knowledge about the subject which he can share with us, and he never disappoints. I'm sure that Basing House will also get a mention!

10 May 'Writing the North Hampshire Pevsner: from Abbots Ann to Yateley' *Michael Bullen*

Michael is an architectural historian who had the huge but enjoyable task of helping with the re-issue of the Pevsner Guide to Buildings in Hampshire. This series of books, the first source for information on the architectural heritage of an area, has long been in need of an overhaul, as so much more can now be included. Michael's personal A to (not quite) Z should be a treat, especially for those interested in architecture.

14 June AGM

A POST-PEMBROKESHIRE POSTBAG



Mark Peryer is to be congratulated on planning an excellent BAHS Field Trip to Pembrokeshire - the itinerary was in Newsletter 194. Here is an assortment of letters from some of those who took part.

From Mary Oliver

It is hard to pick out one thing from a most enjoyable trip. I was personally thrilled, with my dodgy knees, that I made it to the top of the Preseli mountain to see where the bluestones came from, and feel the beauty and atmosphere of that lofty spot. I was impressed by the quality of the guides who took us round the sites and digs, arranged by Mark, and one of the main bonuses of going with a like-minded group rather than individually was that they didn't seem to mind however many questions we asked them! As I always enjoyed teaching the Romans, I would like to make special mention of our first day, visiting Caerwent and Caerleon, some of the best preserved Roman sites in Britain and beyond. That day was, you may remember, a day of strike action by public sector workers, so our guide at Caerleon sadly informed us that we would be unable to visit the site museum. Instead, he gave us the long tour, with plenty of information about the amphitheatre, the barrack blocks and the legionary baths, the last enclosed in an imaginative reconstruction including phantom swimmers! I shall hope to persuade him to come to tell the Society about the on-going excavations at Caerleon in the 2012-13 lecture season. A happy postscript – on the way home, Mark was persuaded to travel via Caerleon again, so Kay, Mark and I had the pleasure of seeing the finds from the site.

From Ian and Catby Williams

The Society visit to Pembrokeshire took us on a journey through thousands of years! We went down into caves and up into towers!

Using Kate, our borrowed sat-nav, gave us an exciting opportunity to travel the Welsh countryside!

The huge detailed knowledge shared by local experts went way beyond what is available in "tourist information". A special bonus to us tyros was travelling with 20 people who could give us background information for every era.

Although the slashing of support funding is beginning to bite, the extent and quality of the "interpretation" museums was a real eye-opener.

The mountains, villages and beaches are a joy – but we were lucky to have perfect walking weather. The whole area is so rich in heritage, but the visit was uniquely curated by Mark. Our thanks go to all.

From Mark Peryer

During the Pembrokeshire trip we paid a visit to an excavation at Nevern Castle where Dr Chris Caple of Durham University very kindly gave us a guided tour.

Readers may be interested in the published research papers which can be found at:

<http://www.dur.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/?mode=project&id=405>

From Nicola Turton

Others will write fully and knowledgeably about our trip to sunny Wales, but here are my highlights.

We started at 10am on the first day when we arrived on time at Caerwent (pretty much the only time we were on time - sorry Mark). We had a tour with a very laid-back chap, and I found various pieces of pottery (16th century salt glaze), a cattle tooth, and a bird skull. Oh yes, and the Roman Ruins - there were shops, a temple, a forum and splendid walls. Sadly, I felt a touch seedy, and slept through the trip to Caerleon, so all I can tell you is that over lunch Alan found a cat with a remarkably small head and fed it some milk.

The next day, *well*, imagine my surprise to find Alan agreeing to be a Norman at Pembroke Castle. The Normans were one of the worst things ever to happen to this country and Alan still takes it personally. Apart from the play-acting, the knowledgeable and enthusiastic guide took us round the castle and we marvelled at the utterly stunning 12th century keep. It is so vast that it simply wouldn't be built today, so what a treasure we've inherited!

A trip to the Pentre Ifan burial chamber found us admiring its wonderful position on a beautiful hillside with a view of the sea. I collected a giant puff ball, which Alan will use (dried) in his tinder box and coming from such a place is *certain* to have special properties. We were the last to leave, so I quickly lay down in the chamber. Please bear in mind that only the uprights and capping stone remain; it's not like West Kennet. It was extremely quiet, and quite relaxing, and I got up covered in dust, but without a mystical experience.

After a climb to the hill fort at Castell Henllys we were seated in the high status reconstructed hut, when a bird flew in and quickly out. I was delighted to have such a vivid illustration of that lovely Anglo-Saxon metaphor where the bird comes in from the dark. It flies the length of the brightly lit hall, and then returns to the night.

On our way home one evening, Julian Porter suddenly leapt from a lay-by. If we followed him, he promised, we'd see a very interesting church. Well, I never turn from the chance to see a good church, so off we went to Rudbaxton, where they have a 1680s memorial to the Haywards with five nearly-life-size people on it. Each of them carried a skull as if they were about to engage in a game of football, and they are painted in very bright, engaging (read inauthentic) colours.

At Nevern - can you hear my Clouseau accent? - we toured the 12th century castle excavations - at last a proper castle for Alan, who tires of too much pre-history. Then in the village church yard we admired a magnificent Celtic cross, and I made faces at an Ogham stone set in a window sill. I won't bother you with the details of what it supposedly said, for I don't believe in making text out of the marks made by sharpening one's slate pencil. Indeed one can see 'Ogham' in the wall outside Church Cottage. Bah.

For me and many of the group, the highest highlight was the walk up the Preseli Hills/Mountains (either is acceptable). The stretch alongside the modern patch of forest set the mood for us, as the trees ran off into the darkness of their uniform lines in a quite eerie and unnatural way. We skipped over wet areas, where possibly sacred springs seeped upwards, and finally reached the spotted dolomite, or Bluestone outcrops. Some (Alan) think that the stones were deposited near the Stonehenge site as a result of glacier action, but I prefer to think that the Bronze Age architects visited the quarry and took advantage of the 'Free Delivery Anywhere in the UK' offer. Of course we mustn't forget that large boulders of Alpine jadeite, used for the Neolithic jade axes, have been found 120 miles from their source, so people could transport large items.

It was a lovely trip, well and intelligently organised, and if you didn't come, you should come next time. We always have good weather. Except for that time in Sorrento...

From Alan Turton

Fishguard Fort

At the height of the war with Revolutionary France, in the afternoon of 22nd February 1797, four French warships, flying British ensigns, dropped anchor in the lee of Carreg Wasted Point, just two miles westward of Fishguard Bay. Later that day, one of the vessels sailed into the bay to reconnoitre the busy little harbour of Fishguard. It was greeted by a blank round fired from one of the nine pounder guns mounted on the tiny fort above Lower Fishguard. Whereupon the ship lowered the British flag, hoisted the tri-colour and returned to the French flotilla. At five o'clock, some 1,400 French troops landed in small boats on the Pembrokeshire coast. The last invasion of British soil had begun.

Two hundred and four years later, Nicola and I visited what remains of this little fortification. It is now maintained by the Pembrokeshire National Park Authority and is reached by a narrow cliff top path flanked by waving foxgloves. The Fort itself, built in 1781, stands on a small peninsula slightly lower than the main headland from which it is partly detached by a wide rock-cut ditch, now partly filled in. The stone from the ditch was probably used to construct the fort wall which stands mostly eight or nine feet tall, apart from where it is pierced by a single narrow gateway, where it is another two or three feet higher. Within the wall stands a simple stone vaulted building with a couple of slit windows and a single doorway. This almost certainly was the fort's magazine which served the original 8 gun battery situated on the tip of the isthmus within the wall. Four of the original guns still point out over the clear water of the bay, making a perfect spot for a picnic, which is exactly what Nicola and I did on a gorgeous warm clear evening, with the gulls squawking above, and oyster catchers hopping on the rocks below.

And in case you were wondering, the French invasion ended in fiasco, and their entire brigade surrendered to local militia on the 24th February, three days after their landing. The whole story is now vividly portrayed in the 'Last Invasion Tapestry', a wonderful 99 feet long embroidery commissioned to mark the 200th anniversary in 1997. The embroidery is housed in Fishguard Town Hall and is well worth a visit.

From Barry Hedger

Serendipitous experiences are always most enjoyable. I should have booked into the Travelodge at St Clears with other members of the Pembroke trip. Somehow I booked into the Travelodge at Cardiff Airport some 75 miles eastwards. During my journey I noticed a brown traffic sign displaying the words "The Boathouse". A sudden lurch to the left accompanied by much tooting of horns, I wended my way to Laugharne and within 10 minutes of arrival was gazing at The Boathouse, once the home of Dylan Thomas. Unfortunately it was closed, but I was able to squidge my nose against the window of the small wooden "garage" next to the public pathway above The Boathouse, where he wrote many poems amongst a disorder of manuscripts, books and other paraphernalia. My interest in Thomas' poems has been rekindled.

Adjacent to the Cardiff Travelodge was a Toby Carvery, which hosted St Austell Brewery's Tribute bitter, the king, queen, jack and ace of brews, at £2.40 a pint and 50 yards from my bed! Four pints later I retired to a blissful sleep. Can we go to Pembroke again, please?

Work on the Co-op book is going well, particularly since the Editor of the *Gazette* has kindly allowed us to search through the bound back-numbers in his archive. In the process we have discovered articles and photographs and adverts on many other interesting subjects, many of which Barbara Large has photographed - much easier to use than microfiche.

One of the non-Co-op themes we have been looking out for is the Workhouse, which Barbara is researching for the revision of the Victoria County History. We were intrigued to come across this letter in the Hants & Berks Gazette (the fore-runner of today's *Gazette*) in 1923.

Here you can see a group of us at work and Barbara with her camera.



FEBRUARY 10 1923

CORRESPONDENCE.

(TO THE EDITOR).

THE HUNGER MARCHERS.

Sir,—I shall look forward with interest to the next meeting of our Board of Guardians, as I trust some information will then be given to the ratepayers as to the meal supplied to and sleeping accommodation provided for the casuals who apply for food and shelter at the Workhouse. If I am informed correctly, the hunger marchers who visited this town on Sunday refused to accept the rations provided for them and were confirmed in their grievance by gifts of meat and jam from two of the magistrates of the borough.

It is argued that either the food provided by our Board of Guardians is suitable or is not. If it is not, then the dietary of the casuals who visit our Workhouse should be permanently altered; if it is, then I regret that the regulations of our duly elected Guardians should be brought into contempt by actions which would seem to be influenced simply by a desire to avoid unpleasantness.

One would like to know whether the gifts to the organised tramps on Sunday were shared with any unfortunate casuals who took refuge in the Workhouse as ordinary tramps.

The hunger marchers are avowedly out to give and make trouble. The party that visited this town on Sunday were not looking for work and did not remain long enough in the borough on Monday to have sought it, even if it could be found in Basingstoke. No difference should be made between these men and any out-of-work who, seeking employment, has to avail himself of the shelter provided by the Workhouse. Much as one may appreciate the kindness of heart which leads to the yielding to the protests of our visitors on Sunday, I trust we shall see no repetitions of such mistaken generosity. In these times of distress and unemployment I submit that no good is done by treating those who threaten, even if in a veiled way, better than our own unemployed and the "casuals" who have not formed a crowd of brawlers.

The Guardians are elected by the ratepayers; they were warned of the intended visit of the hunger marchers; they made arrangements which they thought proper, and for these arrangements to be over-ridden tends to the weakening of authority at a time when the hands of all properly constituted governing bodies should, if possible, be strengthened.—
Yours faithfully,

A MAN IN THE STREET.

Trip to Down Farm, Cranborne Chase

Julian Porter

On Saturday 9th July a group of 10 BAHS Members descended on Down Farm, situated a few miles from Sixpenny Handley, on the Dorset/Hampshire/Wiltshire Border, just inside Dorset.

Martin Green, our host for the day and the owner of Down Farm joined us soon after our arrival. Martin has been farming the surrounding fields for some 40 years, just like his father before him and his Grandfather before that, his Grandfather having originally bought the farm in the 1930s.



The morning was split into two, firstly we visited Martin's private museum. I cannot describe how wonderful the museum is. On entering, you are first confronted with a tightly contracted Bronze Age Burial. This is not only striking, in its own right, but has a strange story to tell. Items buried with the bones were dated some 200 years after the bones themselves. Martin believes that the family of the buried man may well have kept the tightly wrapped body for that period of time before eventually burying it. In some respects, this seems a bit unusual, but there also doesn't seem to be any other explanation.

The Bronze Age Burial

This burial, and two others nearby, were found on the edge of a barrow excavation we were to see later.

The rest of the museum was one of the best and most comprehensive collections of artefacts ranging from early Stone Age tools right up to a mock up of Bill Keats, the last blacksmith of Sixpenny Handley.

Beneath the Stone Age flint collection is a large stone carved with a series of concentric circles. This was found by a neighbouring farmer. It is clearly early Neolithic Rock Art. Quite fantastic.

To finish things off, at the end of the barn was a huge collection of fossils found in south Dorset on the Jurassic Coast.



Following this magnificent visit, we headed out into Fir Tree Field, a large rectangular field surrounded by fir trees. Our first stop was at the "Great Shaft" which is a pit about 13 metres deep. This showed up as a crop mark in 1990. At first Martin had thought it was a barrow, but on investigation, soon found it was a collapsed chamber, probably originally formed by water erosion, where the surface chalk and top soil had fallen in. Beaker pottery was found in the top layers, below this a small amount of Neolithic pottery. Martin thinks the chamber is approximately Late Mesolithic, and the contents could be between 5000 - 2000BC.

Next, we walked down the field to the Pond Barrow excavation, this measures 19m around with a clearly defined entrance and a series of post holes leading into the entrance. In this area, there were found 5 infant burials and several cremation burials.

Lastly, we walked on to the Bowl Barrow, dated at approximately 2000BC. This was where, on the edge of the surrounding ditch, the 3 constricted burials were found, the main one of which was depicted in the museum. In and around the site were 11 more cremation burials that are some 800 years younger than the mound itself. The outer ditch appeared to have been recut on at least two occasions. Martin has completed the reconstruction of the mound in the centre of the barrow and this can now be seen for some distance around.

We made our way back to the farm for lunch before setting off on a 3 mile afternoon walk of the surrounding fields.

The area around the farm is cut by the Dorset Cursus, which runs for some 6 ¼ miles across the fields. This is 5 times larger than the Stonehenge Cursus. The ditches on either side are about 3 metres wide and 1.5 metres deep and appear to have been constructed in two phases, the last extension adding 3 miles. Sadly, due to the farming needs during WWII, pretty much the entire Cursus and many barrows have been ploughed out. The line of the Cursus can be seen from time to time in the fields, but it's no longer visibly apparent close up.

We first walked up to Gussage Cow Down, from where you can see a Long Barrow. This is also the site of earthworks and a little further along the ridge, a Romano Celtic Temple. The whole area has some 80 burial mounds and ceremonial sites, but few are visible today.

We walked further along the ridge until we came to Ackling Dyke, the Roman road from Old Sarum to Dorchester. This feature is clearly visible for many miles across the fields. We followed its course for some distance downhill to where it is cut by the B3081. Here you can see the flint construction of the top layers. Most of the Roman road is some metres above the fields, which must have given a strategic advantage to the Romans travelling on it.

After leaving Ackling Dyke we circled a field and could see a number of burial mounds above us, up the hill and in the distance. Here also were Wyke Henges, two henges excavated by Martin, which he believes date from around 2800BC. While there are some visible post holes and local burials, there doesn't seem to be any proof of habitation or hut building. There clearly was nearby settlement, though, as there have been many bits of grooved ware pottery of 3 distinct types being found within the vicinity. It would appear to have been a Neolithic encampment of some sort.

This was the end of the walk and we then wandered back towards the farm for our final farewells to Martin and our trip home, after what was a fantastic day.

PORTALS LTD, PAPERMAKERS

Talk and Reception 7th July 2011

Bob and Barbara Applin

About 50 members of HAT (Hampshire Archives Trust) gathered at the Hants Record Office for a talk by Christopher Surtell, former Training Manager of Portals, and to view an exhibition of records of the Company held by HRO, curated by Dr Ann Thick and mounted by David Rymill.

The exhibition was a great success, at times it was not possible to appreciate the exhibits properly unless one hogged the front row of those examining the documents, artefacts and very informative background notes – being polite members of HAT, of course one gave way to those behind after a short period! The notes greatly assisted the writing of this review – thanks Ann and David.

There were two closely intertwined strands to the history of the Hampshire Portal family, papermaking and the establishment of a landowning dynasty.

Mr Surtell gave a chronological account of the rise of the family and their world renowned papermaking business. From 18 year old Henri de Portal (an apprentice papermaker, who was a Huguenot refugee from the Toulouse area of France, at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685) to the wealthy landowners and businessmen prominent in county and national politics of the 19th and 20th centuries. Henri's de Portal family had held prominent positions in the Toulouse area. Legend has it that Henri and one of his brothers were smuggled out of France in wine casks. Interestingly, Mr Surtell's wife Jill's ancestors also emigrated from France in the 18th century.

Papermaking

In about 1710 Henri was working in a papermill at Stoneham. He became a naturalised British subject in 1711.

Henri made friends with, or perhaps his family already had a connection with, the Heathcotes of Hursley Park and in 1710 William Heathcote helped Henri acquire the lease on Bere mill just east of Whitchurch. The pure water of the Test not far from its source was ideal for paper making. In 1718 the lease of Laverstoke mill was acquired and it was rebuilt for paper making. In 1724 through the patronage of William Heathcote, whose uncle Sir Gilbert was Governor of the Bank of England, Henri gained a contract to make paper for Bank of England notes. From then on, with a few setbacks on the way, the business prospered and became the major bank note and security paper maker it is today. The company was innovative, for example developing watermarking techniques, special waterproof dyes and, in 1939, the insertion of metallic thread into banknote paper. Many other techniques in use today in the security paper and related industries have been developed by the Overton laboratories. The company also diversified by exploiting water purification techniques such as reverse osmosis.

The business became a private limited company in 1920, Overton mill was opened in 1922. Control of the company passed out of the family in 1949 following the sale of shares to meet death duties when the then Lord Portal died. In 1995 the Portal group was acquired by De La Rue and papermaking continues at Overton Mill to this day.

Mr Surtell interspersed his account of the company's development with various anecdotes, some amusing, others more serious, but what came across was the Portal family's care and sense of responsibility for its workers and their families throughout their period of ownership.

Landowning and County Responsibilities

Henri died in 1747 leaving the business to his only son Joseph (born 1720). The Bank of England contracts must have been very lucrative, because in 1759 Joseph bought the Laverstoke estate and later the nearby Ashe estate. He was appointed High Sherriff of Hampshire – then a position with more responsibilities for the governance of the County than the ceremonial position it became later. When he died in 1793, aged 73, he left the estates to his two elder sons William and Harry and the business to his third son John (and to his widow the toll income from the Kingsclere and Andover turnpikes).

John eventually inherited the estates and died, aged 84, in 1848, having had 15 children by two wives. He had been a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire. He left the estate to his eldest son Melville and the business to the third son Wyndham who later became Chairman of the London & Southwestern Railway and was honoured with a Baronetcy. Wyndham died aged 83. He had left the running of the papermaking business to his sons William and Spencer. (The second son Col Robert Portal was a survivor of the Charge of the Light Brigade.)

Melville died without direct heirs and left the estate to Wyndham who was living at Malshanger near Basingstoke; on whose death it and the baronetcy passed to his nephew William. He died in 1931 having been High Sheriff and Vice Lieutenant of Hampshire. (Not mentioned in the talk: successive

members of the Portal Family took an active part in the local government of Basingstoke and the surrounding area.)

Sir William was scholarly and was happy to leave the running of the business to Spencer who was knighted and was the first chairman of the Trustees Savings Bank. He gave up management of the business in 1919.

Sir William's son, another Wyndham, was created baronet in 1935 and became an industrial advisor to the Government and then Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Supply and then the Ministry of Works. He made a major contribution to the war effort and post-war reconstruction. He died in 1949 with his uncle Spencer succeeding to the baronetcy.

A cousin, Viscount Monck, ran the business during this period. The final member of the family to be involved with the business was Sir Francis Portal and when he retired from the chairmanship in 1968 the family connection with the firm ceased. He also had been a High Sheriff of Hampshire.

The Laverstoke estate was sold in the 1990s to Jodi Scheckter who has established an organic farming regime on the land around Overton.

After refreshment we were shown a promotional film of activities at the Overton mill, made in the 1970s by the film maker Ron Eastman whose wild life films, particularly one on the kingfishers on the Test around Bere mill are highly regarded.

The evening finished with a short question and answer session and the audience departed having been informed and entertained by the story of 300 years of the Portal family in Hampshire.

A few of Anne Thick's captions to items in the exhibition

In this extract, Peter Saffree, Bank Officer from 1731 to 1737 records the details of paper made between 13 June and 23 August 1737. This amounted to 587016 sheets, of which 543933 were perfect and 43083 spoiled, making 1133 reams, 3 quires and 21 sheets. This was, he says, a true, exact account of every minute transaction material relating to the paper made at Mr Henry Portal's mill.

132M98/F2/1

Gratuities also figure in this staff payments memorandum book of 1844.

Apart from gratuities there were certain customs connected with the trade that survived at Laverstoke Mill until the early 20th century. Extra payments were made on all red letter feast days, and this table in the same book records paid half holidays and whole holidays.

132M98/E6/1

Another tradition was the Bank Officer's feast given to the work people at the time of making.

A memorandum in the mill book for 1755 records that the feast held in May was attended by some rather unfortunate circumstances when Mr Poole 'gave a treat at the White Hart to all the men, women and children that worked at both mills. This day was found inconvenient, for some of them got drunk and no work was done at any mill on Saturday. Next time to have the feast the Saturday before we begin making to avoid the like mischief again'.

132M98/F2/2

The staff for 1844 are recorded here. The most skilled jobs were those of vatman who dipped the mould into the vat and his assistant the coucher who reversed the mould containing the pulp onto a piece of flannel called a felt. Other workers, men, women and children sorted rags, the raw ingredient of handmade paper and broke and beat them into pulp. Both this list and the apprenticeship indentures show that the mills were a source of employment for whole families.

132M98/E6/1

Hampshire Archives Trust is the support organisation for the Archives and Local Studies service based at Hampshire Record Office, and for the other archive services in Hampshire. Anyone interested in Hampshire's history is welcome to join, and membership costs £10 a year. Members receive a newsletter twice a year containing news of events and activities at Hampshire Record Office, highlights of recently-received documents, and news from other archives in the county. A popular programme of outings is arranged for members, often offering the chance to visit an historic house or archive collection not usually open to the public, to join a walk led by a local historian, or to have a behind-the-scenes tour of a local museum. By joining, you will also be supporting other aspects of the Trust's work, including surveying archives in private hands and advising on their care, and acting as a voice for archives locally and further afield. For further details, visit www3.hants.gov.uk/archives-trust or contact the membership secretary Mark Pitchforth on 01962 846154 or at Hampshire Record Office, Sussex Street, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8TH.

TRELOARS: 100 YEARS OF CARE AND ENABLING

An exhibition in the foyer, now on, and a free half-hour lunch-time talk by Nicola Pink at 1.15 on Thursday, 25th August on the history of Treloar College and School, formerly Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital & College.

Treloars features in our own book **TAKING THE PULSE OF BASINGSTOKE**. A copy is available in the Search Room and the transcript of Tim Herrington's interview with Jo Kelly is included in the foyer exhibition and has already attracted interest, as Jo spent many childhood months at Treloars and tells of her experiences in her inimitable fashion.



WINCHESTER COLLEGE and the KING JAMES BIBLE A quatercentennial Exhibition at Winchester College 20 August to 25 September

An exhibition of Bibles and related material to celebrate the work of John Harmer (ca 1555-1613), and other Wykehamists in preparing the Authorised Version of the King James Bible.

Admission free but by timed ticket only at 10.30, 11.30, 12.30, 1.30, 2.30, 3.30 and 4.30. Wheelchair access by prior arrangement. Tickets must be reserved in advance: in person at the Cathedral box office; by telephone on 01962 857275 or at www.tickets.winchester-cathedral.org.uk



CONGRATULATIONS!



To Ginny Pringle on gaining a 1st Class Honours BA in Archaeology at the University of Winchester and on being awarded the University's Archaeology Department Dissertation Prize for 2011.

To Alan Turton on receiving the Arts & Entertainment Award and being short-listed for the Ambassador Award (Basingstoke: A Place to be Proud of)



David Johnston

Mary Oliver

I was very sorry to hear of David's death on my return from Pembrokeshire. I have known him for many years, latterly as a colleague on the Hampshire Field Club Archaeology Section Committee, but as an FE teacher and organiser he ran courses from the 1960s from which many of us benefitted. He was a devoted Romanist with a particular interest in mosaics. He travelled all round the Roman world with ASPROM to see them, and put his knowledge to good practical use in the making of small Roman-style mosaics, examples of which can be seen in Kingsworthy church. His best known excavation was the villa at Sparsholt, which formed the basis for the villa reconstruction at Butser (and for a smaller, humbler model made by his WEA class in Basingstoke!) The great pity is that he did not live to see the final publication of his work as a Hants Field Club monograph. Since his retirement from Southampton University he had been working on the post-excavation backlog, with help from colleagues, who will now bring this report to completion - a fitting memorial for David. We send our sincere sympathy to his wife Pamela, and their two daughters.



We too remember David's WEA lectures in Archaeology and in particular his challenge to the class to make models of villas. Tim Herrington made this model of the Sparsholt villa, using spaghetti for the roof tiles.

Barbara & Bob Applin



Mosaic of Woodhans Farm Roman Villa made by David and some friends from the local history group.

2011 DIARY DATES

BAHSOC

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEETINGS on Thursdays at 7.30 pm Church Cottage, Basingstoke (except for 17th September)

- Thurs 8 Sept** REMARKABLE NEW FINDS AT AVON FIELDS *Andrew Manning*
Sat 17 Sept **40TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE** -see page 3
Thurs 13 Oct RECENT WORK AT MARDEN HENGE AND THE NEOLITHIC BUILDING
Dr Jim Leary
Thurs 10 Nov CELTS FROM THE WEST *Prof Sir Barry Cunliffe*
Thurs 8 Dec Christmas Social Evening

Secretary: Ginny Pringle Tel: 01420 550028
Email: secretary@bahsoc.org.uk

www.bahsoc.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1000263

FRIENDS OF BASING HOUSE at 7.30 pm, Basing House Education Centre, The Street, Old Basing
11th Oct First winter lecture

FRIENDS OF WILLIS MUSEUM at 7.30 pm Willis Museum, Basingstoke
Thurs 15 Sept ENGLISH CARTOGRAPHY FROM THE 16TH TO THE 20TH CENTURY
Douglas Bancroft
Thurs 20 Oct AGM and "SHOW AND TELL"
Thurs 16 Dec CHRISTMAS PARTY and "CHRISTMAS REMEMBERED"

HAMPSHIRE FIELD CLUB www.fieldclub.hants.org
Sat 15 Oct LANDSCAPE SECTION CONFERENCE & AGM in the Science Lecture Theatre, Peter Symonds College, Winchester, 10 - 5.
Speakers who have researched & written extensively on Dorset or Hampshire. The conference will explore how what lies beyond Hampshire's western boundary differs from what lies within, and why, focussing on settlement. Details from Ginny Pringle (you can attend as the BAHS representative) or email hfc.landscape@talktalk.net or ring Mike Broderick 01256 351624 (after 7 pm)

HAMPSHIRE RECORD OFFICE www.hants.gov.uk/archives
Thurs 25 Aug TRELOARS: 100 YEARS OF CARE AND ENABLING *Nicola Pink*
half hour lunch-time talk at 11.15, free, in the cinema.



At Down Farm

When you see how steep and long the track was through the corn field you can understand why Kay needed encouragement from Ian (page 1).

