

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BAHSOC

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Where were these found?



FOAM PHOTOS
see page 4

**“Barry the Moat”
at Odiham Castle
and
Fire for FOAM
at Danebury**

*Photos: Marjoleine
Butler*



*A gun at
Pevensey
Castle
dating from
the Armada
emergency*

– see

**THE
CINQUE
PORTS,
(page 3)**

THE STEVENTON RECTORY PROJECT

After the AGM on Thursday, 13th June, our member, Debz Charlton, will be giving her talk on **THE STEVENTON RECTORY PROJECT**. Some of our members helped with the dig and finds sorting, and now we can find out how this complex and rather sensitive project was organised and what it unearthed. The project attracted Heritage Lottery funding and brought together a mixed team of diggers and varied archaeological resources to investigate the puzzle of the birthplace and first home of Jane Austen and, it was hoped, provide an insight into life in the house.

The photographs on the front page are, of course, of finds from that dig: © copyright D. Charlton

VISIT TO SILCHESTER



Once again Prof. Mike Fulford has invited us to visit the excavations at Silchester. **Allowing time to walk to the site from the car park, we shall meet in the car park at 1.30 pm on Sunday 4th August for the visit at 2 pm.**

THE CINQUE PORTS



Details were given in the last Newsletter. If you are interested in joining this trip, please contact Alan and Nicola NOW. Members need not attend the whole trip and can arrange to join it for one or two days.

If you're nearby and want to find out where they are, ring Alan's mobile **97938 870998** or Nicola's **077840 815472**.

Trip to OLD SARUM and SALISBURY MUSEUM

Saturday 6th July

Old Sarum has been in the news recently with some interesting experimental archaeology concerning the re-construction of some 'Neolithic' Houses as a trial for the revamp of the Stonehenge visitors' centre. Less newsworthy but of longer lasting consequence is the fact that the Salisbury museum has been going through a refurbishment and re-organisation of its collections. In order to catch up with these developments, we are organising a trip to Old Sarum and Salisbury Museum which will take place on Saturday 6th July.



We shall meet at Old Sarum at 10:00 am where we shall have a guided tour taking us through the history of the site, from Neolithic times up to its period as a 'Rotten Borough'. After the tour, there will be some time to take in the site, and its vistas. Sadly, the local planners will have ensured the demolition of the Neolithic houses by the time of our visit.

We shall then catch the bus into Salisbury from the nearby park and ride, have some lunch and afterwards visit the Salisbury Museum and its newly refurbished archaeological collections. If you've not visited this museum, it contains some important material from the Wessex Region, including the Pitt-Rivers collection. If the weather is good and you are feeling keen, then there is also the option of a walk into Salisbury following the river Avon.

**If you would like to come along on the trip,
please contact Mark Peryer either by phone (01256 780502),
or by email – mperyer@f2s.com.**

FIELDWORK REPORT

Mark Peryer

Tel: 780502 email: mperyer@f2s.com

During February BAHS members joined forces with local Scouts and other Friends of Ancient Monuments (FOAM) volunteers to do the annual tidy up of Odiham Castle and to finish off clearing the hollow way which forms the western entrance to Danebury Hill Fort (see FOAM PHOTOS, page 2). I always enjoy the opportunity to do some industrial scale gardening whilst helping to make something re-appear from the undergrowth, and other members seem to do so as well. Our thanks should go to Marjoleine Butler for organising these events through CBA Wessex.

The Archaeology Department at Southampton University have partnered with the County to do some excavation work **at Basing House from 22nd July to 11th August**. They will be investigating the area that was dug by the Aldermaston Archaeological Society about 50 years ago and would welcome volunteers from our society to come along and help out. One of the aims of the project is to provide a student training excavation, but other attractions include some leading edge research techniques including the use of laser scanners and computational photography. There is no cost to take part, but you will need to provide your own lunch (tea and biscuits will be provided). To find out more and to sign up for the dig you will need to contact nicole.beale@soton.ac.uk or you can visit the project website at <http://www.basinghousecat.wordpress.com>.

We are still hoping to organise an excavation to investigate a hill fort at Holybourne this summer, although the poor growing conditions over the last few months have adversely affected the Oil Seed Rape crop that was planted last summer, so there is uncertainty about what is going to happen. If we go ahead the excavation will run for about two weeks in late August and/or early September. It should provide a good opportunity for members to participate in all aspects of an excavation from trowelling, through recording to finds processing. The idea is to provide training to everyone and to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to try out something new, within the constraints of the project. Since we will be hiring in a digger to clear a large area trench and to back fill at the end, and also a portaloo, we will be asking for a contribution of £25 from each digger, or £5 a day to help with costs. If you would like to take part please contact either Mark Peryer or Ginny Pringle.

We recently interviewed the Mayor and Mayoress of Basingstoke & Deane, Cllr Martin Bierman and Mrs Chansopha Bierman as they come to the end of their term of office. Topics included Martin's varied career and growing participation in politics, Chansopha's coming to England from Cambodia and some of the high points and challenges of the Mayoralty.

We have also begun interviewing people connected with the art-foundry of Morris Singer which moved from Basingstoke to Lasham and after an interval has been re-established there. Their output includes works by Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth, the Battle of Britain Memorial on London's Embankment, an amazing bronze altarpiece in the Sacred Heart Chapel in Montreal Cathedral and, of course, the bronze plaques on the Triumphal Gates in Basingstoke's London Street.

We have an impressive collection of recordings and transcriptions. Do ring or e-mail me if you want to borrow any - and especially if you would like to help with what we do. Here is a short outline, and I'll be glad to give more details.

Interviewing Although we usually have a particular theme to target, we are quite happy to let speakers surprise us with other things they wish to tell us. We have 4 digital recorders and there is no problem about stopping the recording at any point to discuss off-record what to say next.

Transcribing This isn't as difficult as it sounds, though it's better if you can touch-type. We download the recording onto a computer which can be operated either by foot pedals or by 'hot keys' like F10 for play, F4 for stop and F7 for play back. The first stage of transcription includes all the hesitations, repetitions, even mistakes, but if we want to use any of it for an article, book or display we do tactful editing for the speaker to approve.

Research etc We are always glad of suggestions of people to interview. Some of our group like to do further research on matters covered by the recordings, or to prepare material for displays, talks, articles or books. This all becomes an enjoyable team effort and it's amazing how much background knowledge and expertise we discover.

Ian's course on Giving Presentations



Our own member, Ian Williams, has been interviewed for BTH, revealing that he has run training courses for a variety of organisations from RAF to Red Cross. He planned three sessions for our members on giving presentations. The logistics of getting interested people together on the same dates meant that this was reduced to one session, but those who took part found it very useful, giving plenty of ideas for improving skills.

If anyone is interested, Ian is willing to repeat or extend the session or to give individual advice, so do contact him **after 20th May on 01256 462688 or by e-mail ian.williams513@ntlworld.com**

JIM HUNT

Sadly we have to report the passing of Jim Hunt on 14th March at St. Michael's Hospice after a ten year battle with liver cancer.



Jim was born in Feltham in Middlesex in 1941 and had lived in Chelsea, London and served an apprenticeship as a toolmaker. He married in 1962 at the age of 21 and moved to Basingstoke in 1963. He had celebrated his 50th wedding Anniversary last September with his wife, friends and family.

Archaeology and history were great interests of Jim, something he shared with his son Andrew. He had been a member of BAHS for many years and when in better health had spent a wonderful week excavating at Silchester. Both Andrew and Jim used to enjoy spending time in each other's company on our BAHS day trips and despite his illness Jim was always cheerful and upbeat.

Jim enjoyed his work as a toolmaker and became a long serving first aider and member of the Health and Safety Committee in his workplace. He'd always wanted to be a teacher, so at the end of his career it was a great joy

for him to work at Fort Hill Secondary School as a technician in the Technology Department. He'd always enjoyed working with and encouraging young people. He had run a scout troop with his brother and taught cubs first aid and was given a long service award for scouting. When he retired from Fort Hill School he stayed on as a School Governor and exam invigilator. Even at St Michael's Day Hospice he got a lot of pleasure from working on an art project with children from the local schools.

Jim will be greatly missed and our thoughts are with Jim's wife Val, Andrew and the rest of his family

'Dwelling in Tents' and 'Drunk and Riotous'

The Basingstoke Riots: An afterword

Bob Clarke

After my book, *The Basingstoke Riots: Massagainsians v the Salvation Army 1880-1883*, was published, some of the descendants of the characters in the book got in touch, and told me, with a degree of pride, that they did not realise that their great-grandfather was such a reprobate. Some gave me details that I wish I had known when I was writing the book. Those details let me into further research.

Ernest Fitzgerald

I knew that Ernest appeared to have been abandoned by his family at a fairly early age because in 1871, when he was only 14, his mother and his brothers and sisters had returned to London, leaving Ernest living at Henry Goring's Eating House, where he was employed as an errand boy. According to Ernest's great-granddaughter, the family story was that he was much younger than 14 when the family left. This appeared to be substantiated by an entry in the diaries of Samuel Attwood (HRO 8M62/27) which records that Ernest's father, Joseph Fitzgerald, left Basingstoke in debt in 1868 and died on 28 September that year in a lunatic asylum. His death was registered that year in Lambeth. However, I think Samuel Attwood got it wrong. I've seen a copy of his death certificate. He died at his brother's house in Kennington of delirium tremens and effusion of the brain.

I was pleased to see that Ernest had been making a name for himself well before the riots. The *Reading Mercury* for July 17, 1875 reported that he was found guilty of riotous behaviour while drunk and assaulting Superintendent Hibberd and Sergeant Waldren. The *Hampshire Advertiser* for April 21, 1879 recorded a conviction for trespassing in search of game at Basing and being drunk and riotous in Winslade. (I didn't know it was possible to be drunk and riotous in Winslade.)

I knew Ernest died in 1910, but what I didn't know was that he died in the workhouse hospital as the result of injuries sustained by being hit by a motorcycle in Old Basing. In the report of the inquest in the *Hants & Berks Gazette*, October 15th, 1910, Ernest was described not just as a fish hawker but also as 'a well-known character in Basingstoke' – a splendid epitaph.

It seems that a little before 3 o'clock Fitzgerald, more familiarly known among his associates as 'Fitzie', was walking along the road from Basing towards Pyotts Hill with a companion named Frank Bradfield At the point where Barton's Lane enters the road to Pyotts Hill a baker's horse and cart was standing close by the side of the road. Henry Leavey, who was in charge of it, was delivering bread to a house close by. Just before the men reached the cart a cyclist named Frank Blackwell . . . came from Barton's Lane and turned into the road to go towards Basing village. Owing to the horse and cart being drawn up by the side of the road he took a wider sweep than he otherwise would have done, and he did not, for the same reason, see the men coming towards him until he had got past the cart. He rang his bell and the men separated, each going to different sides of the road . . . In the meantime Mr Edward Leavey, who was riding a motor-cycle, had been overtaking the two men. He was coming from the direction of the village but the engine was shut off and he was not going at more than about 4 or 5 miles an hour . . . he was going to get off and go into his house at Barton's Lane corner. In the ordinary way he would have dismounted at the spot where the baker's cart was standing, but not wishing to frighten the horse he decided to go just beyond the cart and then dismount. Fitzgerald appears to have been unaware of the approach of the motor-cycle behind him . . . Fitzgerald

went across the road to rejoin his companion, and in so doing stepped immediately in front of the motor-cycle, knocking against the handle bars. By some means at the moment of collision the switch communicating with the engine was touched and the engine started, the motor-cycle of course shooting forward. Both the motor-cyclist and Fitzgerald were thrown heavily to the ground, and the noise of the suddenly started engine caused the horse standing nearby to bolt. The horse raced along to the village and it had gone nearly half a mile before it could be stopped. Fitzgerald got up and, although it was obvious he was badly hurt . . . he made the remark to Bradfield that the accident was nobody's fault. P.C. Woodley soon came on the scene and arranged for Fitzgerald to be taken in a four-wheeled trap to the Union Infirmary. He then went on to Basingstoke for Dr Meyrick, who came at once and attended the injured man, who was by then unconscious . . . In the doctor's opinion the man had sustained concussion of the brain, and he never recovered consciousness, passing away about 2.15 pm the following Tuesday.

Frances Jones

By delving into the censuses and birth records I think I have managed to track down the elusive Frances Jones, and her illegitimate daughter that Ernest Fitzgerald fathered. In the 1901 census there is a family whose address is shown as 'Dwelling in Tents, Farleigh Wallop':

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Born</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
Job Peters	42	Burbridge, Wilts	Agricultural labourer
Fanny Peters	45	Newbury	Field hand
Hester Peters	26	Baughurst	Field hand
Ellen Peters	20	Basingstoke	Field hand
Walter Peters	14	Kingsclere	
Kesia Peters	11	Upper Wield	
Susannah Peters	4	Binstead	

Ellen Jones's birth was registered in Basingstoke in the second quarter of 1881. Without paying for a birth certificate, we can be pretty certain that Ellen was Frances's daughter who was born in Basingstoke in late

February, 1881. An Esther Jones's birth was recorded in the Kingsclere registration district in 1875, and a Fanny Jones's birth was registered in Newbury in 1854. It is therefore reasonable to assume that Frances Jones and Fanny Jones/Peters were one and the same. None of the family appear in the 1911 census, but an Ellen Peters married a John Bunce somewhere in the Alton registration district in 1915.

Daniell Goodall

Daniell was the Salvation Army's flagbearer, and remained an active Salvationist until his death at the age of 86 in 1928. Dan's great-granddaughter got in touch, with this wonderful photograph of Dan, which must have been taken at about the time of the riots. She told me that the family story was that Dan was saved by the Salvation Army from drink and violence. Encouraged by that information, I decided to trawl through the *Reading Mercury* archive and found several reports that indicated that Dan had spent much of the 1860s and 70s causing havoc in the *Barley Mow* at Oakley, to the extent that the *Reading Mercury* described Daniel and his brother George as 'two well-known characters'. In 1868 Daniel was sentenced to seven days' hard labour for being drunk and riotous outside the *Barley Mow*. Daniel had his shirt off and wanted to fight the bystanders. And in 1870 he was sentenced to three months' hard labour for violently assaulting Police Constable Hole at Church Oakley by taking his truncheon from him and beating him about the head.



*Colour
Sergeant
Dan Goodall
Promoted to
Glory
Dec 1928*



Following in Philip's Footsteps

Colin Williams

Having some years ago visited the site of Philip Chute's house, perhaps my gleanings from that occasion will add to Alan Turton's *An Overlooked Portrait* (February's Newsletter).

As Captain of Camber Castle, Philip was paid 2s a day. He lived at Hornes Place in Appledore Heath, about a mile from the village of Appledore; this, being on higher ground, was presumably a healthier location as the undrained land was plagued by 'marsh fever', akin to malaria. From Hornes Place to Camber Castle was about eight miles and one wonders how often he attended, although he could go by boat from Appledore to Camber as the river was then navigable. When visited, the typical Tudor Rose design Castle was found to be protected, with some restoration in progress. Because of a change of direction by the River Rother, the Castle is now a mile from the sea.

Our chance visit – pre-Google – found a Hornes Place and Chapel but the house appeared to be a private dwelling and a sign at the Chapel site – the Chapel is some distance from a right-of-way – stated that it could be visited on Wednesday afternoons after obtaining written permission from the Governor of Dover Castle. Not helpful on a weekend visit. Subsequent correspondence with the then owner of the house revealed something of the property's history, including the fact that only the solar and the Chapel remained from Philip's time. Both house and chapel remain in private ownership. The description in Pevsner's *Kent* indicates it is worth a detour. Excellent photographs of the Chapel can now be found on the English Heritage website, which may have to suffice as, at the time of writing, the site says, 'Opening times will be available nearer the time', presumably 29th March as shown.

When, in 1567, Philip died he left considerable property in Sussex and Kent, and 6d to any poor person attending his funeral! No later Chutes are known to have lived at Hornes Place although the lease and land continued to be owned, with the family connection with the area not ending til 1882.

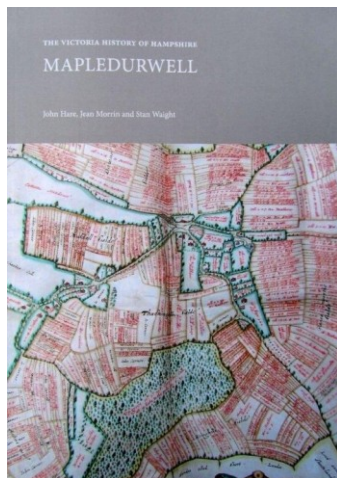
Finally, to continue the Chute connection: about twenty-five miles away is Herstmonceaux Castle, formerly the home of the Dacre family; and with, in

1650, Challoner Chute marrying Dorothy Dacre, widow of the 13th Baron Dacre, a reasonable assumption is that their association arose from the proximity of the two families' interests. Moreover, Challoner's son, also Challoner, was, in time, to marry Dorothy's daughter, Catherine. [The present castle is a 19th century construction but the visitor centre's family tree included the Chute marriages.]

Sources: *A History of Appledore by Sir John Winfrith*
 The Buildings of England: Kent by Nikolaus Pevsner
 The Vyne's newsletter: GrapeVyne, issue No 1

The Victoria History of Hampshire:
MAPLEDURWELL
John Hare, Jean Morrin & Stan Wright
(2012)
REVIEW
by Michael Whitty

The greatest publication in the field of local history is the still incomplete series of county histories collectively known as the Victoria County History (VCH) – or, more colloquially from their characteristic hardback binding, the 'big red books'. The first in the series was Hampshire, published in five volumes between 1900 and 1912.



Now, a century later, at the suggestion of VCH Headquarters in the Institute of Historical Research, London, the revision of the VCH has begun. The first 'spin-off' publication in this new venture is, appropriately enough, a Hampshire village.

The attractive village of Mapledurwell (the name means 'maple tree spring') has undergone great changes since it was first described in the original VCH volume in 1911. Though the lord of the manor is still Corpus Christi College, Oxford, the pattern of life in the village has dramatically changed over the last hundred years. There is now just one working farm, Garys Farm, and cereal production has replaced sheep as the principal

agricultural activity of the parish. The rapid development of nearby Basingstoke since the 1960s and the construction of the M3 to the north of the parish are two of the major factors in the changing employment pattern within Mapledurwell; most of the employed residents now commute to London or Basingstoke. There is no longer a school, a post office or even a shop within the village though recent years have seen the development of a small industrial estate, a garden centre and offices.

However, this new VCH publication is much more than a postscript to the original volume, bringing the story of Mapledurwell up to date. The original entry on the parish was just four pages (*VCH Hampshire*, Vol.4, pp.149-152); the current stand-alone book is some 85 pages long and revisits in detail the whole development of the area from the Palaeolithic period to 2012. Drawing on a rich range of sources, the authors have provided a much more in-depth study of the whole social fabric of the village. The 1911 publication focussed principally on ‘the great and the good’ – that is, the feudal aristocracy and the established church. Though this new book still outlines the history of the lords of the manor – such as the de Ports, the Despensers and the Beauchamps - it provides a wealth of detail drawn from census data and other sources about the lives of ordinary people. For example, we learn of the contents of the will of the rope-maker, James Canner, who in 1707 left ‘all my working tools and cartestwo pair of best scales, all my weights, two pair of my best scale beams with Furnace, Table, Frame and pair of Andirons standing in my kitchen’ We learn that in the eighteenth century among the agricultural labourers, innkeepers and blacksmiths in the parish there was one unusual occupation; John Drew was a horse collar maker who in 1763 left land, a shop, various goods and some £280 to members of his family. Evidently he had prospered. We are even given the details of the wine cellar (which included 42 bottles of Moët & Chandon champagne) of Joseph Addison, a landed proprietor who lived in the substantial Mapledurwell House at the time of the 1861 and 1871 censuses. In terms of the religious life of the community, the original VCH focussed exclusively (and briefly) on the Anglican church of St Mary’s. This new volume offers interesting insights into the lives of Quakers and Congregationalists in the community.

But the book is far more than a collection of ‘human interest’ anecdotes. Clearly organised in four principal sections – Settlement and Population, Economic History, Social History and Religious History – it provides an understanding of how the parish has changed and developed over the

centuries. The interesting facts which cram its pages are founded on an understanding of the dynamics of history. Moreover, as well as being beautifully written with a full apparatus of references, the book is also well illustrated with 28 black and white photographs and maps.

Three authors are named on the title page of the book: Stan Waight, a local volunteer, Jean Morrin of the University of Winchester and John Hare, a professional historian. However, the book is the product of the work of a wider team of volunteers supported by financial help from a range of sources, including donations from several villagers themselves. This model of a collaborative team, together with the structure of the book, provides an ideal template for other publications to follow. It is anticipated that the volume on another Hampshire village, possibly Steventon, will be published later in 2013.

Mapledurwell is a scholarly and eminently readable book which admirably fulfils the brief of a well-researched parish history in the modern style. It is highly recommended not just as a model of local history but also for the insights it offers into the processes of social and economic change. And at just £7 it is also a model of value for money.

Copies are available at our book table and soon, we hope, at Waterstones. Transcriptions of Mapledurwell wills and inventories, as well as many other items from Basingstoke and surrounding villages, can be found on the EXPLORE part of the Victoria County History website.

Rome Re-visited

Mary Oliver

Seeing Rome so much on the screen recently has reminded me that I intended to write this little piece to help anyone thinking to going to Rome this year. I re-visited with friends last autumn who had not been before, so I was ‘cicerone’ for them, and got to see most of my favourite sites again. We also found some new places together, and it is about one of these, not available when I was in Rome previously, that I wanted to tell you – the ‘Scavi’ beneath St Peter’s which revealed a Roman necropolis. The street of impressive mausolea was filled in to form a foundation for the Constantinian basilica dedicated to St Peter built over the site of his burial and it had remained hidden until excavations were begun just before WWII.

There has been much work to do to make safe access and to conserve the structures and their decorations, and to control the microclimate deep beneath the present St Peter's. The heat and air quality are noticeable factors in this visit. But the interest and beauty of the mausolea, surviving to full height with elaborate brickwork façades and beautifully painted interiors, often containing sculpture, mosaic, sarcophagi and inscriptions, more than compensate for any minor discomfort.

The decorations of the tombs give ample testimony to the affection and respect with which the dead were laid to rest. The Vatican Hill, just outside Rome, called after the 'vates'(augurs), was known to be a centre of the 'mystery' religions which rose in popularity in Rome in the later empire, so, as well as references to various classical gods, there is evidence of devotion to Egyptian gods in one tomb and of Christianity (before it became legal) in another. At the end of the visit, we were shown the slight remaining evidence of the Trophy of Gaius, erected about a century after the martyrdom of St Peter to mark his grave and directly below the high altar of the basilica. This moving experience made a fitting climax to a fascinating visit, which I strongly recommend.

There was much to see in the 'basement floor' below the basilica, as well as the massive basilica itself. I have to confess that it is not my favourite of the many wonderful churches in Rome – I find it rather intimidating rather than awe-inspiring, but since coming home, I have read a very interesting book about the building of St Peter's. It really was a saga, involving a variety of popes and the famous architects and artists of over a century, and having a profound effect on the history of the church as a whole. I wish I had read it before I went – but has given me more points to look out for if I am lucky enough to re-visit Rome again.

The Necropolis under St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican

Pietro Zander, Elio de Rosa editore 2010

Tuscany Off-piste

Sue Headley

If you think of Tuscany in terms of fortified hilltop towns amid rolling hills punctuated with red-roofed farmhouses and cypresses (and, of course, the cities of Florence, Siena and Pisa), be prepared to think again. The Tuscany that I enjoyed in September was more a cross between the beech

hangars of Selborne, the coniferous landscapes of North-West England and Scotland and the alpine meadows of Switzerland. They do winter sports here at over 3,000 feet above sea level. This is Tuscany off the tourist trail, though in July and August it is full of Tuscans escaping the heat of the plains.

My base for the week was Gavinana, a large village set at about 2,400 feet in the hills above the regional capital of Pistoia. Pistoia is well worth a visit for its typical central complex of Duomo (cathedral), octagonal Baptistry and medieval civic buildings, free of the crowds and bustle of Siena, etc. It's also of interest for its twice-weekly market and for its ancient hospital – one of the earliest, dating back to 1297. There is plenty to see for those interested in architecture and the development of settlements from medieval times.

But to the history: until I came to Gavinana I'd never heard of Francesco Ferrucci. He is to Italians rather like Nelson and Wellington were (or are?) to us. Ferrucci died in 1530, fighting for Florence against the superior forces of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, then under the command of the Prince of Orange. Ferrucci has become a byword for everything that is noble and patriotic, and the man from whom the expression "don't kill a dying man" derives. It was Ferrucci who, when already mortally wounded, was stabbed by the dastardly Maramaldo, a soldier whose name has entered the annals as a derogatory term for a villainous, treacherous person. Ferrucci's statue, an armoured warrior on horseback, dominates the square in Gavinana and is seen throughout the region on a range of souvenirs. (Unlike Wellington's Copenhagen, the name of Ferrucci's horse is unknown; he may not even have had one, given the difficult terrain and the nature of the campaign, but our guide called him Arthur.) It's been estimated that 10,000 men died in the fighting at Gavinana.

The Francesco Ferrucci Museum is just off the main square. It is a little gem of a place with just four rooms, but they are crammed with items of interest. One room is devoted to the armour of the period; you can place a variety of styles of 16th century helmet on your head, and be amazed that a man was able to do anything when wearing one, such is the weight.

As a complete contrast, a visit to a newly-opened museum in the nearby village of Campo Tizzoro is highly recommended. It's accessible from Gavinana by the wonderfully-named "Copit" bus or, for the more energetic,

on foot along the route of a disused railway line; the return trip is about 10km). Be warned: the museum is easy to miss; the guide – a young student with excellent English, who'd had an odd experience of life with an English family in Oxfordshire but was nevertheless very keen to live in London - was almost embarrassed by the lack of publicity, signage and materials in English. It was frustrating to see hundreds of copies of what seemed to be an excellent guide book, but not a single one in English. There was also a superbly-presented book of photographs but, at about £25 and of substantial proportions, it wasn't quite what my sister and I had in mind. These deficiencies were, however, beyond our guide's control; the only person who could take the necessary steps was based in the PR department in Pistoia.

The 20th century history of Campo Tizzoro is fascinating. The owner of an armaments factory at Livorno (on the coast about 30 miles to the west) was looking to expand and found that, at Campo Tizzoro, the mineral deposits and the water were ideal for his purpose. He bought a vast acreage of land and on it built a factory and everything that his workforce would need: houses, schools, a hospital, a canteen, a cinema and a church. The local farmers were signed up on exclusive supply contracts; it was a win-win situation. By the time of the outbreak of WWI there were thousands of people living and working in Campo Tizzoro. Because of the nature of the business, it was vital to protect the enterprise from enemy action, so an underground 'village' was built to house the workers. This is now the centre of the museum 'experience' and will be expanded over the coming years to reveal more of the extraordinary way of life of those employed at the factory. If you can cope with the 120 steps to get down (and the same number to get back up!), there are 4km of tunnel (only short sections are accessible now) where men, women and children would have sat or slept, taken their meals and been looked after at first-aid posts and on (segregated) hospital wards. There was an air-conditioning system and signs everywhere instructing the 'inmates' (for it did have the feel of an institute of correction) not to spit; the risk of TB was obvious. There were more sinister signs requiring the workers to obey the commands of their superiors at all times, with a scarcely-veiled threat of 'unpleasant' consequences for any breach. Closer to the surface there were rooms in which communications, fire-fighting and decontamination equipment was kept. I haven't been to Auschwitz, but my sister has, and said that Campo Tizzoro reminded her of that place. For me, the subterranean part of Campo Tizzoro was both fascinating and sad.

There is a lot to be seen above ground too; the factory's board room is particularly impressive, in 1930s wooden-panelled style. For those interested in the process of manufacturing bullets (of every size and various shapes), there are many wonderful Heath-Robinson contraptions with labyrinths of cogs, which the guide will operate manually so that you can see how it all worked. Some of the work was, of course, very dangerous; there are old photographs of those who took their lives in their hands by working with the chemicals that produce the 'bang'.

Ironically, the factory was never hit during either of the World Wars. The cynical explanation for this is that armaments are available to anyone who wishes to pay for them; both sides bought freely from the Campo Tizzoro factory and no airforce could destroy the factory because of its own side's dependence. After WWII, the demand for armaments diminished and the factory's production diversified into domestic objects, such as safety pins and electric light fittings. Apparently, there are still one or two locals who remember their childhood in the Bournville-like community of Campo Tizzoro.

If you like the sound of this area, my advice is to visit fairly soon. You'll know what has happened to other parts of Tuscany once the British moved in!

PHOTO ALBUM

Mausoleum under the Vatican



Francesco Ferrucci



2013 DIARY DATES

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*MEETINGS on Thursdays at 7.30 pm Church Cottage,
Basingstoke*

**Secretary: Penny Martin Tel: 01256
321423 secretary@bahsoc.org.uk**

www.bahsoc.org.uk

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Thurs 13 June **AGM followed by THE STEVENTON RECTORY
PROJECT** Debz Charlton (*page 3*)

14-20 June **TRIP to THE CINQUE PORTS** (*page 3*)

Sat 6 July **TRIP to OLD SARUM & SALISBURY MUSEUM**
(*page 4*)

4th August **Visit to SILCHESTER** (*page 3*)

*22 July to
August* **Southampton University & Hampshire County
Council excavations at BASING HOUSE** (*page 5*)

FRIENDS OF WILLIS MUSEUM at 7.30 pm Willis Museum

Thurs 16 May **THE RAILWAY TO BASINGSTOKE** David Brace

Thurs 20 June **THE PORTSMOUTH TO LONDON ROAD** Jennifer
Goldsmith

HAMPSHIRE FIELD CLUB www.fieldclub.hants.org

Wed 12 June **Visit to dig at St Mary Magdalene leper hospital,
Winchester 6.30 pm from Chesil car park**

Sat 15 June **Visit to The Hamble Estuary**

Sun 21 July **Historic Buildings Section AGM & Visit to
Whitchurch**

Items for Newsletter to barbara.applin@btinternet.com