

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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CALENDAR

- 8th January 'Excavations at Silchester' by Dr M. Fulford, 7.30 p.m., Andover Museum. HFC Archaeology Section. NB This lecture can also be heard at the meeting of Friends of Willis Museum, Thursday, 21st January, 7.30 p.m., Willis Museum.
- 14th January Winter Social at the Barn, Church Cottage, 7.30 - 11.0 p.m.
- 18th January Vintage Films - BIAG Meeting, 7.30 p.m., SEB Social Club, Bounty Road, Basingstoke
- 19th January 'Excavations at St Mary's Abbey, Winchester' by Miss A. Robinson, HFC Archaeology Section, 7.30 p.m., Tudor Merchants' Hall, Southampton.
- 27th January 'Present Archaeological Work in Egypt and the British Museum Expeditions' by Dr A. J. Spencer, 7.30 p.m., St Mary's Hall, Eastrop.
- 6th February 'Practical Flintworking, Past and Present' by Mr Chris Draper, 2.30 - 5.0 p.m., St Mary's Hall, Eastrop.
- 15th February 'The Bennie Rail Plane' by P. Smith, BIAG Meeting, 7.30 p.m., SEB Social Club, Bounty Road, Basingstoke.
- 24th February 'Members' Miscellany', 7.30 p.m., St Mary's Hall, Eastrop.
- 3rd March 'Aspects of Island Prehistory in the Mediterranean' by Prof. J. Evans at Physics Lecture Theatre A, Southampton University, 7.30 p.m., tickets £1.50 at door.
- 17th March 'The Great God Pan' by Prof. J. Boardman, Southampton University, as above.
- 27th March O.G.S. Crawford Memorial Lecture, HFC, 'Wolvesey: Palace, Castle and House for 1,000 years' by Prof. Martin Biddle, Winchester, 2.30 p.m., venue to be announced.
- 31st March 'Richard White of Basingstoke - the erudite exile' by Dr Dennis Rhodes, 7.30 p.m., St Mary's Hall, Eastrop.

Forthcoming Meetings

14th January, Winter Social

This is a reminder about our winter social on Thursday, 14th January, at Church Cottage, when our theme will be mediaeval - roughly! One of the highlights of the evening will be a re-enactment of the Basingstoke Court Leet - for background information, see Anne Hawker's article below. If you wish to join the fun please let Joan Heath (Basingstoke 27713) know to help catering arrangements. Cost £1.75 adults, 75p children. Latecomers will be welcome on the night but please bring a small contribution to the food so we do not run short.

27th January. 'Present archaeological work - Egypt' by Dr. A.J. Spencer, Assistant Keeper of Egyptology, British Museum.

We have been privileged on several previous occasions to have a speaker from the Egyptology Dept. of the British Museum and they have proved very popular meetings. Dr. Spencer has just returned from a season's excavation in Egypt so we shall be hearing about the expedition's latest discoveries, and how this new information fits in with the Department's programme of research. Dr. Spencer will be bringing slides, which should be just the thing to help us forget the severity of this winter, at least for one evening. 7.30 p.m. St. Mary's Hall, Eastrop.

6 February. 'Practical flintworking, past and present' by Mr. Chris Draper.

This meeting is an afternoon seminar, which the Society has not organised for a number of years, but it was felt that the subject might well appeal to some of the town's schoolchildren many of whom now cover some archaeology as an introduction to their historical studies, and an afternoon meeting, especially in winter might be more suitable. Flints - often the only evidence of man's activities in the area from certain periods - tend either to excite greatly or to puzzle those interested in archaeology. If you belong to the former, a demonstration of how the shapes and facets were created will obviously appeal: if you are a 'pits and pottery type' this is your opportunity to learn something about an important class of evidence. Chris Draper is well known in the county, is an active field archaeologist, and has given many lectures and demonstrations of flintworking to groups such as ours, but this will be his first visit to our Society. I am sure he will give us a most interesting afternoon. 2.30 - 5.0 p.m., St. Mary's Hall, Eastrop.

24th February. 'Members' Miscellany'.

Here is an entirely new departure for the Society; instead of inviting an outside speaker we have asked some of our own members to prepare short addresses on their special interests. There is a great deal of talent in the Society, and you will be treated to a variety of subjects. The aim has been to provide a varied programme and the possible speakers have certainly not all been approached as we hope that, if the idea is well received on 24th February, we can repeat it another year. Please come along and support your fellow members. 7.30 p.m., St. Mary's Hall, Eastrop.

Court Leet.

A Court Leet is defined as an annual or semi-annual court of Record. In our case, in Basingstoke it was called the court with a view of Frankpledge. It was really what we should call a review, a sorting out of the state of the town and surrounding villages. Basingstoke was the centre for the market for Chinham, Cliddesden, Eastrop, Hatch, Trenchott, Nately, Somershill, Stenenton, Tunworth, Winslade, Woodgarston, and 'titling'. They were also expected to attend from Bramley, Basing, Sherborne, Newnham, Upnately, Nately and Mapledurwell.

Original courts, called the Hundred Courts, were held on Saturdays every three weeks. As the market was also on a Saturday, anyone coming to the market could go to the Court too. The Frankpledge Court was held twice a year, spring and autumn, and payments were made at these courts from all the villages by the tithing-man, or chief pledge. Perhaps originally the groups were often men or households, with one as chief man, and he would be responsible for reporting the way things were going on and who had died, come of the age of twelve or broken any of the regulations. Each group of ten men would come together and ten would be the Hundred, consequently the Hundred Court. The name stuck even when there were more than ten men in the group and more than ten of the groups. With Basingstoke, there were twelve places that were to pay 'cert-money' and the people from Bramley etc. had to send a tithing-man even though they paid nothing. Basingstoke paid 13s 4d twice a year, Steventon 5s 6d in the autumn (the payments in the autumn court were more than those in the spring) Cliddesden and Tunworth 4s, Chinham 3s 6d, Hatch 2s 11d, Kempshott, Nately and Winslade 2s 6d, Eastrop 1s, Woodgarston 9d, Somershill 6d. Supposing that each group paid half a penny every six months it could be estimated that there were twelve houses in Somershill (we don't know where that was) and three hundred and sixty in Basingstoke, originally, when the tax was first decided on.

As each tithing-man paid his money, he was to state or 'present' any man who had been at fault. These faults were all relatively minor because theft over £2 or murder had to be sent to the Assize Court. Ditches uncleaned, so that water ran over the road or into crops, defective gates or hedges, animals straying and causing damage, as well as some cases of overcharging for labour or goods, came up to the Frankpledge Court. The three-weekly court dealt with many cases of debt or assault or damage to property, or breach of 'covenant' or agreement to do something, and if the tithing-man had missed any defaulter he was himself fined, and as everybody knew everybody's business, he probably did not miss much. If a boy had had his twelfth birthday and not come to swear loyalty to the King, his father was fined 3d. Women and girls and clerics were exempt!

Then, when the money was paid, or not paid, Basingstoke itself was presented, beginning with a long list of people who had brewed 'and broken the assize', i.e. made beer not up to standard. One offence cost threepence, and doing it more often could cost anything up to a shilling. After these came persons who had overcharged for their goods or labour, and in these cases the fines were linked to their trade. A miller paid a lot for overcharging and a labourer the least. A miller could have to pay as much as 6s 8d, while a labourer was fined 2d.

Bread had to come up to standard as well as beer. A loaf too light could cost the baker a great deal, sometimes as much as 6s 8d, if very under-weight.

The penalties were mainly fines, for the town was always short of money, and the fines went to make up the sum that was to be paid to the King as lord of the manor. Basingstoke should have paid about £80 annually, so money was more use to the town than somebody in prison. A pillory and a ducking-stock are occasionally spoken of, but I can't find a record of anyone actually suffering in either of these. The ducking-stool was a penalty for the female offender who was too free with her tongue.

The functions of the officials are not quite what we should expect. The top of the pyramid was the steward, and since he was only very occasionally referred to, he was very likely to have been in the position of a President of an association, and the Chairman (in our case, Chairmen) took charge of the meeting. These chairmen were called Bailiffs and two were elected annually. They were more or less magistrates, but they did not fix the fines. A separate official group did that, the 'affeerors', four of them were elected at a September court. The jury, who appear to have been sworn in at the beginning of the court, and picked from any eligible men who happened to be there, did not decide on the guilt of the offender, but were there mainly to advise on the custom of the manor, and to present anyone in default. They swore to the

position of a boundary, for example, or to the next heir to a property, and sometimes there were twelve and sometimes twenty-four. The clerk of the court wrote down the charges on his parchment roll, and when the fines were settled, the amount was written in above the name of the offender, and also sometimes at the side of the Roll, so that the total of the fines could be found quickly. If a man denied a charge, he was likely to say he would be at the next court with his sixth hand, meaning that he would find five others to swear that he was not guilty. Of course he would have had to be very sure he could actually find those five people. Other officials were the ale-taster, the swineherd and the hayward. The ale-taster tried the strength of the ale, he was elected yearly and could pay a fine not to take the job, which was not a popular one. The swineherd took care that the pigs of the town, which seem to have run around loose, did no damage and came to no particular harm, but at harvest time owners had to take extra care of their pigs, which got in the way of carts and if they were killed it was taken to be the fault of the pig rather than the carter. The hayward looked after hedges, not hay, and it was his duty to see that hedges were repaired and gates secure and to report men who left repairs undone.

The last check on crime was the citizen himself, for if a culprit was discovered, red-handed, he could be pursued, 'with hue and cry' by all the neighbours. Malicious assault was, of course, fined.

These are the bare bones, the facts from Basingstoke Court Rolls. We imagine that the actual courts were less formal than the record left by the clerk, and hope to illustrate our ideas in a fairly lighthearted way at the Winter Social but we do but jest

Anne Hawker

Rural Archaeology in Hampshire

On Saturday, 21st November, the Archaeological Section of the Hampshire Field Club held a conference on Rural Archaeology in Hampshire in conjunction with, and held at the Department of Adult Education of Southampton University. It is intended that this shall become an annual event and will cover all aspects of the archaeology of the county in its regional context.

The conference started with a paper by Martin Jones, Lecturer in Archaeological Sciences at Durham University, who spoke on the evidence of environmental archaeology. He explained how the development of modern scientific equipment and techniques has made possible a vast amount of information that can be linked into the evidence of the settlement pattern. The studies to which he was referring include the recognition of calcified plant and microfaunal remains, pollen analysis, land snails and carbonised plant remains.

Mark Maltby then gave a paper on the evidence on animal bones and the type of information that can be obtained from their examination. Remains from the neolithic and bronze age sites are very poor but a lot of work is now being done on material from the iron age, in particular the hill forts at Balksbury and Winklebury and settlements such as Old Down Farm, Winnall Down and Owlbury. The evidence was indicating that significant changes in animal husbandry had taken place as the iron age had merged into the Romano-British period.

The third lecture introduced a new word for the English language when Peter Reynolds spoke on the subject of 'The Agroscape' of iron age Hampshire. The speaker drew attention to the fact that during the iron age there were two sources of information, the archaeological evidence and documentary references. He emphasized the need for care to be exercised when extrapolating information from scientific studies of small sectors of the archaeological evidence.

Some questions on the Romano-British landscape were raised in a paper given by David Johnston. What was the physical and social impact of Romanisation on the landscape?

The impact made by the changing economic circumstances with the imposition of Roman taxation and an army of occupation was followed by the growing demands of urban consumers. The third problem area is the influence of new towns and their role as marketing centres. As Roman Hampshire reached its maturity what became of the villa estates at the end of that period and what evidence is there for continuity into the Saxon times?

Some of these questions were answered by John Collis, University of Sheffield, who spoke about the British settlement pattern from the iron age into the Romano-British period. His paper ranged from the hill fort, the iron age farm and the development of a more urban type at Hengistbury and Silchester through to the development of the Romano-British agricultural settlement based on villas which was paralleled with the development of luxury houses within the urban context and the subsequent decline both in the towns and countryside.

We got a little bit nearer the ground when Tony Light, a member of the Avon Valley Archaeological Society, talked about their field walking project in the Avon Valley. Members of our own society who have been involved in the recent field walking project would have felt really at home as he took us through the basic field walking methods and then into the identification and recording of finds and the utilization of this information to build a picture that had led to the identification of sites.

The next step in the chronological period was, of course, Saxon Hampshire and Mark Brisbane said that by 1961 some 40 Anglo-Saxon sites were known in Hampshire but today that figure had more than doubled and the vast majority of new discoveries had been rural settlements. This increased level of information was beginning to enable us to make a better assessment of the fluctuating settlement pattern between the fifth and eleventh centuries AD and to build a relationship between this rural settlement and the emerging towns of which Saxon Southampton was an outstanding example.

David Rudkin, Director, Roman Palace, Fishbourne, spoke about the excavations that were carried out on the site of Bevis Grave Longbarrow Campdown Bedhampton. This long-barrow dated from the neolithic period but the excavations in 1974 also uncovered 16 Anglo-Saxon burials and the two following seasons increased this number of 88. The indications were that the barrow was used as a focal point for a pagan cemetery and then this in its turn continued as a Christian cemetery probably into the seventh and eighth centuries.

The day concluded with Anthony King of King Alfred's Training College talking about Romano-British temples in Hampshire. Danebury and Hayling Island are proving to be the most important for our understanding of pre-Roman iron age temples and their architectural relationships with Romano-Celtic temples. He also suggested that the varied appearance of Romano-Celtic temples casts some doubt on the interpretation of the 'Silchester Church' as a Christian building.

Obviously there were lots of questions and not everyone agreed with all the points made by the speakers.

In conclusion I would say it was a long but very interesting day and although Saturdays are not easy for everyone I would have thought that many members of the Society could have thoroughly enjoyed themselves along with the three who actually attended.

M.G.B. Dixon

CBA Meeting at Winchester, 7th November.

On Saturday, November 7th, the CBA held its annual open meeting at the Westgate School in Winchester.

It was a very full day. Topics ranged from earliest man in Guernsey to Industrial Archaeology in the form of a pictorial record of the Old Courage's Brewery recently demolished in Alton.

Of particular interest for us in this area were first a report of this year's excavation of two mediaeval houses in Newbury by Julian Richards. Dr. Mike Fulford gave an up-to-date report of his excavations of the Basilica site and amphitheatre at Silchester. We then heard Tim Schadla-Hall tell us of the work at Basing House. He conjured up a splendid picture of the Duke of Bolton's garden complete with garden urns.

There were also various displays and a second-hand book sale, which proved expensive for some.

Refreshments were available at lunchtime and during the afternoon, the bread pudding and sponge cakes were excellent.

An instructive and enjoyable day. Do come along next year.

Ann Aves, Jo Kelly

Friends of Butser Ancient Farm

The Fifth Annual Meeting was held on Sunday, 6th December.

Many members of the Society will remember Peter Reynolds' lectures and some years ago quite a number of members of the Society visited the actual research farm.

The research farm is now virtually closed to visitors and the public face of the ancient farm is to be seen in the demonstration area close to the main buildings of the Queen Elizabeth Park.

The conference is held in the lecture theatre in the main buildings. It is always a very interesting day and brings friends up to date on the activities of the last year and plans for the year ahead.

Butser is now looked upon as a major scientifically based research project and undertakes specific programmes for many outside organisations. This is just as well as their major funding has ceased and the project is dependent upon a grant from the County Council plus the income from the demonstration area and what can be earned from research work for other bodies.

Two friends of the ancient farm, Peter Mason and his wife, have established an extensive herb garden in the demonstration area where visitors can see some 70 species and in many cases buy plants or seed.

One current project of general interest is the construction of a Roman cereal harvesting machine, which apparently works very efficiently. I understand that the television people have been down to Butser again and we may be seeing a programme in the not too distant future. Part of this programme involves the production and casting of metal objects and I gather they are finding quite a few problems, particularly in the manufacture of moulds. If any members have expertise in this area then a little help would no doubt be appreciated.

Membership of the 'Friends' costs £2.50 a year and anyone interested in the agricultural side of archaeology will no doubt find it a good investment.

M.G.B. Dixon

Among My Old Guide Books

When the long winter evenings close in, and the arm-chair calls; when there are no more odd jobs to do and the television distracts rather than entertains; it is then I turn to my old guide books with a sense of excitement at the pleasures in store in their pages.

I omit the Baedekers, the Murray and the Cook Guides from this game. They took the wealthy traveller by the best possible route to foreign places, and having recommended the finest hotels, proceeded to describe in great detail every major and minor

architectural, artistic and cultural attraction which the town or district could offer. I also omit the travel books, written by the egoist in order to tell the world what difficulties he met voyaging to some remote place in Asia, Africa, South America or the Antarctic, usually on some strange conveyance such as a rubber boat, bicycle or yak.

Yet the last sentence holds a clue to my game, for I like to pick up an old British guide book and browse through its pages with an understanding of the method of travel envisaged by author or publisher. It is then not difficult to become a traveller myself, and the guide books immediately take on a new meaning, and come alive in the imagination.

There is a further reservation, and that is not to go too far back in time. It is pleasant to read Celia Fiennes, or Arthur Young, Daniel Defoe, William Cobbett or Boswell, but they were not "tourists" as we understand that word today. In the 17th to 19th centuries, when they wrote, Britain was a different country. They travelled on horseback or on foot, and were observers. Country houses, agriculture, the state of the peasantry, the dirt and squalor of the towns, were the main subjects of their diaries. They did not write in order that other people would read and want to follow them. Even George Borrow, in "Wild Wales", knew that no-one who read his book would attempt his journey afterwards, and if they did, the characters who peopled his pages would not seem the same to the later traveller.

We have to arrive at the railway age before the commercial guide book appears in print. The best of these were the series produced by A. & C. Black, covering many counties and scenic areas of Great Britain, numbering over 50 volumes. With these to hand, the arm-chair becomes transformed into a railway carriage seat, and the whole of the British Isles unfold before the eye of the traveller at a steady 40 miles per hour.

I pick up the Hampshire Guide Book for 1872 and open it at random.

"A deep cutting now carries us through Shapley Heath and a short tunnel under the road to Odiham, two miles South. On the right lies Rotherwick (population 454) and beyond it Tylney Hall, which may remind the tourist of Tom Hood's humorous and characteristic novel. We are now flying through the exquisite valley which glistens with the ripple of the Whitewater, a stream issuing from the chalk hills and traversing the freshest of fresh green pastures. Now we enter the shadow of a deep cutting, nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long: now another leafy dell opens out before us: yet another cutting, whose green turfen sides effectively shut out the neighbouring country: and now we are in the beautiful valley of the Loddon, rolling on her way the "swell with tributary urn the flood" of the Thames below Shiplake - contributing her store to that mighty river"

"The railway from Basingstoke to Winchester runs through the chalk district, and occasionally opens up some charming views of scenery. At about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Basingstoke the entrenched peak of Winklebury Hill rears its lofty head upon our right, and through glittering chalk cuttings and upon pleasant green embankments we pass onto Church Oakley, lying between the Winchester line and the Andover and Salisbury branches the line now crosses the pleasant leas of Oakley Park, and enters the Oakley cutting, 1 mile long and in some places 50 feet deep."

And so on, to Winchester:

"We now reach the Hyde embankment, and before us the glorious old city of Winchester rises out of the valley of the Itchen with almost magical effect."

The railways opened up to the public view vast areas of the countryside to thousands of people who would have otherwise been restricted to the turnpike roads, and became a magic carpet for the traveller. If our commuters today could only see the countryside with the eyes of our Victorian forbears, how much more interesting their journeys would be.

"We now penetrate still further into the bosom of the New Forest, and as our rapid progress by rail continually introduces us to a fresh burst of rich woodland scenery, we are moved to a warm and increasing admiration."

When it is necessary to leave the railway to explore the villages remote from it, the traveller becomes a "sturdy pedestrian" and is expected to cover miles of lanes which would tax the stamina of the most experienced Rambler today. I have a theory that the guide book writer, always anonymous, wrote from his railway carriage seat, and when it was necessary to write about areas not close to the railway, did this in the seclusion of his study, surrounded by the new Ordnance Survey maps and books describing the stately homes, manor houses, and churches in the areas he was pretending to cover on foot! One reason for this belief is that he never mentions the condition of the roads, which in the remote country areas, even in late Victorian times, were often almost impassible for many months of the year.

At the end of each guide book there are 80-100 pages of advertisements, both amusing and fascinating. In particular the hotel advertisements are an absolute delight. Here are a few quotations, taken at random from these pages. "Self-acting hot water apparatus to supply the baths." -- "The building being of stone embedded in hydraulic lime, a residence has been secured which is cool in Summer and warm in Winter." -- "Hot, cold and shower baths, horses, gigs and droskies, etc." -- "N.B. Parties beware of being misled from this hotel by porters and others on the various routes to Callendar." -- "Is fireproof and connected with the platform of the Central Railway Station by a covered way." -- "Well-known for cleanliness, good attention, and moderate charges. Table d'Hôte at three and half past six." -- "Pianos in all the parlours and saloons." In addition, there are railway time-tables, steamers from Glasgow to the Highlands, still some coach advertisements ("The Royal Mail Coach leaves Fort William at 5 a.m. daily through the year."); pictures of paddle boats to the Isle of Man, steam and sail to foreign places, insurance, and those aids which no traveller should be without, such as macassar oil, pearl dentifrice, Fry's Cocoa, knapsacks and portmanteaus!

Finally, in more senses than one, bearing in mind the possibility of a fatal fall from a train, there is a full-page advertisement by Jays, The London General Mourning Warehouse, who will supply for three guineas "a black dress made up complete, sufficient print for a dress, also a bonnet, mantle or shawl, and gloves," and who are ready to travel to any part of the kingdom, free of expense to Purchasers, when the emergencies of sudden and unexpected mourning require the immediate execution of mourning orders".

After such an evening spent in 1872, can I be forgiven for imaging the sound of steam trains, guards' whistles, the clatter of horses hooves, the rattle of harness in the road outside, and perhaps the rustle of a crinoline in the hall, in the last few minutes of the evening, when the house is still, and I not over the closing pages of my book.

Andrew Duckworth

News and Notes

Exhibition of Conservation in Basingstoke and Deane at the Willis Museum, Basingstoke, until Saturday, 9th January. This exhibition has been prepared by the Basingstoke Planning Department and is of considerable local interest. It can be seen at the Willis, Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m to 5.0 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Heritage and Countryside publications offer

The County Planning Department are offering some of their publications at reduced prices to societies such as ours for a limited period. The publications are:

Hampshire Heritage.	£3.00
Countryside Heritage.	£1.25
Heritage Wallcharts set:	£2.80
Conserving the Heritage	
Prehistoric Hampshire	
Roman Hampshire	
Anglo-Saxon Hampshire	
Hampshire Treasures:	
Vol. 1 Winchester District	£4.00
Vol. 2 Basingstoke	£4.00
Vol. 3 Winchester City	£4.95
Vol. 4 New Forest	£4.95
Ancient Lanes and Tracks	£1.50

In order to qualify for a 20% reduction, our order must be £20 or more. If you are interested in any of the listed publications, please contact Mary Oliver (Basingstoke 24263) on or before Wednesday, 27th January, as our group order must be sent in by 1st February.

Field Walking

Weather permitting it is hoped to organise field walking again in the new year. As before please contact Peter Heath (Basingstoke 27713) for details of dates and locations.

From Dividers to Comb: our new symbol

We have been using up stocks of old letterhead since the amalgamation of the Basingstoke Archaeological Society and the Willis Historical Society. But now for this Newsletter we can introduce the new letterhead with our new title: Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society.

It seemed a good opportunity to change the symbol as well. The symbol on our old letterhead was the set of Roman dividers from our excavation at Ructstalls Hill - these were quite an unusual find, as Roman dividers are usually slender objects made of bronze; these were much stouter and made of iron, probably for use by a mason or carpenter. The new symbol is just as interesting and it too comes from a Society excavation. It is a comb made of antler, found at Viabes in a mid-Iron Age pit with two human burials and a group of other bone and antler combs, toggles and partly worked pieces. They form an interesting display in the new Archaeology Gallery at the Willis Museum (where the dividers can also be seen). Martin Millett and Duncan Russell have written a report on this unusual burial group, which will appear shortly in the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society.

We are most grateful to David Hurley for designing our new letterhead.

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Trail-end Notice A series of ten weekly meetings, organised by the WEA on 'Documents for Local History' starts on Wednesday, 13th. January in the Basingstoke Central Library.