

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

Number 73

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CALENDAR

Wednesday, 11th August

Society visit to St Mary's Abbey, Winchester
('Nunnaminster') 7 pm outside Guildhall

2nd August to end September

Excavations at Winnall Down, Winchester

Till 14th August

Excavations at Silchester (tours 2.30 pm,
Sundays)

Late August/early September

Eric Robinson's sponsored walk for "The
Mary Rose"

Sunday, August 15th

Hampshire Field Club visit to Butser Hill
- details from Annie Robinson, Winchester
62281 ext 291

Thursday, 2nd September

ASSYRIAN PALACES AND TEMPLES by David Williams,
7.30 pm, the Jackson Room, Chute House,
Basingstoke

Tuesday, 28th September

Hampshire Field Club visit to Salisbury:
cathedral including spire & St Thomas Church;
details from Annie Robinson as above

Items for the next Newsletter should be sent by the end of September/beginning
of October to Barbara Applin, 138 Old Kempshott Lane, Basingstoke

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Those who were members of the Society in 1981-2 are reminded that subscriptions for the year 1982-3 fell due on 1st May, 1982. If you have not already renewed your membership, please do so as soon as possible.

The current rates are:

Family £7
Adult £5
O.A.P. and Student. £2

Subscriptions should be sent to the Treasurer at 177 Pack Lane, Kempshott, Basingstoke.

When the lecture programme commences in the autumn the fee for non-members will be 50p per lecture.

ASSYRIAN PALACES AND TEMPLES

We begin our lecture season on Thursday, 2nd September with this year's "exotic" subject. The speaker, David Williams, is from the Education Department of the British Museum and he lectures regularly to adults and school children on subjects of the ancient Near East. He is also knowledgeable on prehistoric and Roman Britain.

NB This year our lectures will be on the first Thursday of the month, in the Jackson Room, Chute House, starting at 7.30 pm.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Those members of the Society who were unable to attend the AGM on 7th July may wish to have the following details of the Society's Officers and Committee for the year 1982-3:

Chairman:	Mr Graham Hall
Secretary	Mrs Sue Headley
Treasurer	Mrs Sarah Duckworth

Committee	Mrs Barbara Applin
Members	Mr Andrew Duckworth
	Mr Peter Heath
	Mrs Barbara Lovell
	Mr Eric Robinson
	Mrs Betty Waters

One consequential change is that the Newsletter, formerly edited by Graham Hall, will be edited by Barbara Applin. Andrew Duckworth will continue to be the Society's Publicity Officer and Barbara Applin will continue as Chairman of the Publications Sub-Committee. This Sub-Committee which at present also includes Graham Hall and Michael Jupe will be seeking the help of members in connection with the forthcoming publication of Anne Hawker's book; the advice of any member who has publishing or marketing experience will be particularly welcome.

Members will note that the Committee now consists of nine members, as opposed to last year's six. It was reported to the AGM that the burden placed on the six members was very great and that an easing of the load

by way of the addition of three members would be welcome. It would also enable more members to gain experience of the workings of the Society and thus enlarge the group from which the Society's Officers might be drawn. The proposal to increase the size of the Committee was approved by the meeting and the Society's constitution has been amended accordingly. The Committee will retain the power to co-opt members as and when the need arises.

The AGM also thanked the Committee members who were stepping down: Peggy Drury and Bob Mulla and especially the Secretary, Mary Oliver. It was also agreed that the Society's thanks should be conveyed to Iris Gregory who had maintained the Society's membership records.

SUE HEADLEY

'THE MARY ROSE' - appeal

Plans to lift the Tudor warship this autumn may be seriously in doubt unless the organisers can be sure very soon that they will have enough money. The executive director of the Mary Rose Trust, Richard Harrison, will be giving a lecture to the Society next April, but we obviously shouldn't delay until then any fund-raising we may wish to do on their behalf.

Members at the AGM agreed to donate that evening's coffee profit to the Trust, and the generosity of those attending made this £6. Further ideas for fund-raising would be welcomed.

At the end of August/beginning of September (date to be announced) Eric Robinson will be taking part in a 20-25 km walk through Windsor Great Park organised by British Airways, and he has offered to be sponsored on this walk for the Mary Rose Trust. As soon as exact details are known, we shall make out official sponsorship forms, so please apply to Eric (Basingstoke 28503), Barbara Applin (Basingstoke 65439) or the Secretary if you wish to support him.

EXCAVATIONS IN PROGRESS

St Mary's Abbey, Winchester ('Nunnaminster') - visit

Annie Robinson will be visiting the Society in December to give an account of the excavations at St Mary's Abbey, Winchester ('Nunnaminster'). This year's season has just begun, and Annie has kindly agreed to show members round the excavations on Wednesday, 11th August. Meet outside the Guildhall, Winchester, at 7 pm.

'Nunnaminster' is the third Saxon monastery in Winchester, probably founded by Eahlwith, wife of Alfred the Great. It was remodelled more than once before it shared in the general dissolution of the monasteries in 1539. Excavations continue till 21st August.

If you need a lift or can offer one, please let Barbara Applin know and she will try to match them up (Basingstoke 65439).

Silchester

Excavations have also just begun again at Silchester, and Mike Fulford invites members to visit the site any Sunday afternoon till 14th August; parties are shown round at about 2.30, starting at the Basilica and going on to the Amphitheatre. Volunteers who can offer at least a full day's work will be welcome. No excavations on Saturdays.

Winnall Down, Winchester

Dick Whinney is excavating from 2nd August to the end of September. If anyone wants to help Monday to Friday, starting 9 am, write to him at the City Archaeologist's Office, Hyde House, 75 Hyde Street, Winchester, saying when you are available and what experience you have had. He is hoping to find Bronze Age settlement evidence but is more certain of Roman material.

ADVANCE WARNING FOR DIGGERS

We may need to organise a short rescue excavation in Basingstoke in September. Please let Peter Heath (Basingstoke 27713) or Eric Robinson (Basingstoke 28503) know if you are interested, so that they can spread the word quickly when helpers are needed.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION TO BRITTANY - HOLIDAYS WITH THE CROWD

It may be of general interest to the Membership to learn of certain details of our late May/early June Brittany trip.

A minibus was hired with eleven seats, but fortunately only eight members participated, namely Bob and Barbara Applin, Peter and Jean Heath, Ken and Marion Evans, Joan Merryweather and Bob Mulla. The word 'fortunately' is used because on return the baggage was strangely increased due to lots of bottles!!! and there was just enough room for the people in the minibus.

The organisation was very well thought out and arranged by Barbara Applin and Peter Heath, who also took the responsibility for hiring, looking after and returning the minibus. Sealink were very helpful in arranging the transport and hotels in an agreeable and efficient way at short notice.

The atmosphere was very friendly right from the early start and it remained so throughout the seven days.

The places visited were spread all over Brittany, but Mont St Michel, Vannes, Quimper, Gavrinis and Carnac may need special mention. Those members who were fortunate enough to attend the last Annual General Meeting were given a slide show of the various places visited.

In true English style we insisted on our properly brewed tea and we had equipped ourselves with the necessary camping stove, kettle etc. and periodically stopped in pleasant surroundings in the countryside to refresh

ourselves. We shared the driving almost equally amongst five volunteer drivers of the team of eight. Some of us were faster drivers than others.

Geographical details of the places and the historical background are a matter of record and do not bear repetition here. However, the personal impressions of Gavrinis, Carnac and Mont St Michel are deep and vivid, especially Mont St Michel which is a beautiful spot. Unfortunately there are tourists there!

During the last two days the minds of some of our members were more occupied with ensuring that the correct shopping (!) got done rather than the correct sites visited.

The visiting members have brought with them local literature, post cards, snapshots etc. and these and the detailed itinerary may be made available to the members if they request them nicely.

BOB MULLA

HAMPSHIRE DIALECT

The article in the last edition of the Newsletter which mentioned some odd written examples of the Hampshire dialect prompted Miss Felgate, one of our members, to recall something that she had seen. An old man from this district said that he lived in "Anaton" and that he owned "orses an arnes". Think about it, say it out loud and then check the end of the Newsletter to see if you were right.

JOHN OLIVER

'A BRONZE AGE URN CEMETERY AT KIMPTON'

I'm sure members will remember with interest the lecture given last season, 25th November, by Max Dacre on his excavation at Kimpton. He told us then that the report was due to be published in the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society. It has duly appeared, and I'm pleased to report that Max has most kindly donated an offprint of that report to the Society library. It is a fascinating report, breaking new ground in the thinking about funerary practices in the Bronze Age, and I am sure members will enjoy reading about Kimpton as much as they enjoyed Max's lecture. Anyone wishing to borrow it can obtain it from me at 3 Milkingpen Lane, Old Basing - or I will bring it to the meeting on 2nd September.

MARY OLIVER

PARIS GREEN

A recent note in 'Building News' gave an interesting aspect of Victorian fashion. Apparently during the nineteenth century Paris Green was very fashionable for interior decoration. The problem was that when combined with condensation, which would be particularly likely in bedrooms, arsenic vapour would be given off, resulting at least in night sickness.

At one time the guest rooms at Windsor Castle were finished with the substance, until an alert chemist spent the night there.

JOHN OLIVER

"VIKINGS IN ENGLAND" EXHIBITION, YORK

Staying in York in mid-May for quite another reason, I took the opportunity of visiting the "Vikings in England" Exhibition at the Yorkshire Museum. I was not disappointed; it was in every way outstanding. Having been warned of long queues, I arrived in good time for the 9.30 am opening. As it happened, only about a dozen of us were waiting when the ticket office opened and we were cheerfully informed that we were half-an-hour ahead of the first school party.

The visitor is shown every aspect of Viking life. Beginning in Denmark, there then follows the first raid on Britain, generally accepted to have taken place on Lindisfarne, through the Viking/Saxon period to the virtual ending at Hastings in 1066. York was captured on All Saints Day 866 and for almost a century thereafter Danish and Norwegian rulers held court at Yorvik, as the city was called.

Over 700 objects from recent excavations and from national museums in Britain, Denmark and Sweden have been gathered together to tell the Viking story. There are richly decorated weapons, original manuscripts of the Danish King Cnut and a specially commissioned model of King Cnut's church at Winchester. There are original parts of great Viking ships and a full-scale replica. In such boats as these, Viking families sailed from Scandinavia to England with their livestock. There was much to see and linger over and it was perhaps a little unfortunate that by the time I reached the Coppergate section the first vociferous school party had caught up. Resolutely I joined in the fray, determined to see as much as possible.

The preservation of organic materials such as leather, textile and wood was due to the water-logged condition of the soil, the site lying as it does alongside the River Foss. It is difficult to believe that the lady's silk cap, the tiny silk pouch, the complete woollen sock and several leather shoes of varying sizes are possibly a thousand years old.

I had assumed that Coppergate indicated exclusively the metalworkers' area of Viking York. In this I was mistaken. Coppergate is from the old Norse, the "street of the cup-makers". A small workshop yielded a large number of wooden bowls and cups, which would testify to this. Next door was a jeweller, working in amber and jet, producing beautiful pendants and finger rings.

It would seem that all inhabitants possessed an antler comb and iron pocket knife and possibly dice and gaming boards. A unique set of wooden pan-pipes was also discovered, which are still playable.

The dominating feature of the exhibition is the full-size reconstruction of the Viking timber house from Coppergate, with its partly thatched roof and window shutters.

The whole picture is not one of rape and pillage, but of expansion and prosperity. This exhibition presents the opportunity of a lifetime. There is still time to see it before September 30th.

JOAN MERRINEATHER

TUDOR GARDEN

An intriguing project recently opened in Southampton should appeal to our members who are also interested in gardens. It is a reconstruction of a Tudor garden in the grounds of Southampton's Tudor House Museum, itself well worth

visiting, and will provide a chance to see garden features which have usually not survived from this period.

As one would expect, one of the main features will be a knot garden; this one has been designed from a pattern carved on one of the doors of the house. There will be herb beds surrounded by painted rails and containing the traditional Tudor garden ornament, heraldic wooden beasts on poles.

The plants will, of course, be species available in this country during the period and include musk roses, jasmine, honeysuckle and vines, this last formed into a vine arbour. There will be some Tudor artifacts on display and some copies such as watering cans and beehives.

The official opening for this garden was July 15th, which was the anniversary of the day Philip of Spain landed in 1554 on his way to Winchester to marry Mary Tudor.

JOHN OLIVER

SOCIETY OUTING, JUNE 1982

It was a lovely summer day for our trip backwards in time.

We boarded the coach at 9.30 in Basingstoke and were soon being gently propelled along the highways and byways to Hungerford, that delightful little Georgian town where the old Court Leet is still held (members competently re-enacted the Basingstoke Court Leet during last year's Christmas Party). Hungerford still has a Constable and we were fortunate enough to see him parading through the town in his smart ensemble, ringing his bell and announcing the Beating of the Bounds. This office has been held by members of the same family for the past 150 years and we were told that the staff carried by the present Constable is the one originally used by the first member of the family to hold this office. The main duty of the Constable seems to be that of a glorified Town Crier (and my, how he could cry!) and indeed the present Constable is a member of the Guild of Town Criers. He is still entitled to charge fees from street traders.

After we had strolled down this pleasant main street and had enjoyed coffee and home-made cakes at the little restaurant, we reboarded our coach for Littlecote, the gem of Tudor Manor Houses. Built 1490-1520, and occupied by the Darrell family, this must surely be one of the loveliest manors of its kind.

We were met in the Great Hall by our guide who conducted us through the house, allowing us to lean (oh, so lightly) against the long table where Charles II and Queen Catherine had dined, and later (who knows?) played the 17th century version of shove ha'penny for which the table was also designed.

We marvelled over the display of Cromwellian armour and examined closely the walls of the little parlour which had been painted by Dutch artisans. We admired the antiques and family portraits in the long gallery and counted the large collection of creamers (I have a weakness for creamers) and wondered at the hand-embroidered hangings and covers in the bedrooms - a far cry from cotton-covered duvets and candlewick!

We heard the gruesome story of dastardly Wild William Darrell who threw his newborn infant onto the fire, and shivered at the story of the ghost of the young mother who still seeks her child, and gave a mental cheer when we were told that the murderer had his come-uppance when he died as the result of a hunting accident, without legitimate issue. We sat for a while on the hard pews of the Puritan chapel and thanked Heaven that we were not condemned to sit and listen to the canting preachers of that date - decidedly hard on the rump.

After a pleasant picnic lunch at tables in the old stable yard, we walked across the field to the excavations of the Roman Orphic Temple - apparently the only one of its kind in Europe.

The mosaic alone was inspiring, completely restored, and the atmosphere of the whole area is terrific. The Romans certainly knew where to build ... One or two of us older ones, remembering long past school choir practices, were inspired to start chanting "Orpheus with his lute..." but nobody listened so we gave up.

The talk given by Bryn Walters was riveting. More and more surprises are being turned up and this site will definitely be worth another visit in two or three years' time.

Rather reluctantly we clambered aboard the coach and were driven even further backwards in time to Avebury. We passed the Sanctuary, drove alongside the Avenue for a while and fetched up in the car park alongside what is left of the concentric circles, banks and ditches. How these ancients must have worked - they were fantastic engineers and certainly knew where to put their henges! Although many of the stones are fallen, broken or missing, nothing detracts from the atmosphere. It was interesting to see (and hear!) three young girls trying to recreate earth power (they were "listening" to the stones - I don't think they heard anything, though).

Some members of the party visited the Alexander Keiller Museum and some visited Avebury Manor - another gem which has a particularly romantic herb garden and wishing well, and another ghost. The more greedy of us were content to visit the teashop and afterwards "mooch" among the stones. One stalwart shouldered his rucksack and made strides towards the Ridgeway ... I don't know how far he got but he was on the coach going home.

One of the Avebury guides likes to tell of the time when the BBC TV cameras were "shooting" Children of the Stones. To make the circles complete, huge papier mache "stones" were put on the sites of those which had been broken or removed. An American lady visitor, very tired and rather bored, eased her foot out of her shoe and leaned against a "stone" which toppled over ... "Oh, my God!" she went, "they've stood for thousands of years and now I have to come and knock them over!"

Perhaps the afternoon was too bright, for we didn't see or hear the ghost of the medieval barber surgeon whose body, flat as a kipper, had been found beneath one of the fallen stones ... the rustling of the grass was caused by the breeze - or a cow - wasn't it? wasn't it?

NANCY WILLIAMS

HAMPSHIRE DIALECT - answer

The man came from the village of Hannington and owned some horses and harness..