



Henley Archaeological & Historical Group

NEWS-
LETTER
NO. 133
March
2015

Chairman's Report: - At the AGM in December 2014 our Chairman for the last 3 years Valerie Alasia stepped down in accordance with our constitution and I was elected in her place. The election was a forgone conclusion as nobody else was standing and I accepted the position with some trepidation because in the past your Chairmen have researched and published but that is not who I am.

I have been a History teacher for 44 years and loved almost every minute. I was fortunate enough to teach at a time when technology was in its infancy and we used books, maps, artefacts, film and story to enhance our lessons.

I always say that I know a little about a lot and no one period of History is my 'favourite', as G M Trevelyan stated 'History is not in competition with other subjects, it is the foundation of them all' so there are many wonderful topics to be explored under this title of 'History'. There is never any need to be bored or to wonder what to do next.

The members of our Committee have already given me tremendous support and I hope that you too will bring your ideas and experiences forward, ideas for visits, lectures etc.

I can only promise to fulfil the role with enthusiasm and be very aware that it is a privilege to be Chairman of HAHG

Pam Syrett

Our next three Lectures till the end of the summer season

7th April 2015	David Moon	'The Prehistoric Guide to Oxfordshire'
5th May 2015	Rosemary Jury	'The medieval to C18 th landscape: the development of the English Garden'
2nd June 2015	Deborah Hayter	'The Poor Law in the C18 th The crisis in the parishes'

All Lectures are held at 7.45 p.m. in the old 'Kings Arms' Barn:

Entry from Kings Road Car Park. All welcome, members free; non-members £ 3

About our next three lecturers

David Moon is the curator of Archaeology for the Oxfordshire County Council Museum and Resource Centre. He intends to try and describe what a traveller might have found in Oxfordshire in the Neolithic/Bronze Age and might touch also on the Iron Age. He will look on ways of life, subsistence, travel and rituals through objects held in the County Collection. There is scope to talk about the Ridgeway/Ickniel Way, boats on the Thames, farming, stone circles and more to try and get a picture of the way of life in pre-historic Oxfordshire.

Rosemary Jury has an MA in Garden History; she worked for some years for the National Trust, latterly at Stowe Landscape Gardens; she co-ordinated Garden & Building Conservation Courses at the Architectural Association School. She has worked for the London Parks and Gardens Trust and now continues, in a voluntary capacity, to work with the Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust.

Deborah Hayter is tutor at Oxford University Department for Continuing Education and has taught many courses in local history. Her particular interest lies in how the poor were looked after, or not, as the case may be, and how the Poor Laws have developed over the past centuries.

OUTINGS

Dorney Court, 23rd April 2015

Pam Syrett, our new chair invites you to come and visit Dorney Court near Windsor with the opportunity to have lunch together first at the 'Palmer Arms' in the village. We intend to travel by individual cars, with car sharing or lifts if required.



The beautiful timber framed and early brickwork house dates mainly to the mid 15th C and has been lived in for the past 500 years by the Palmer family.

The house has mostly been remembered for its association with Charles II and the infamous Lady Castlemaine, Barbara Palmer, a courtesan of the restoration court and mother of several of the king's illegitimate children.

We will eat at 12 o'clock at the 'Palmer Arms' or at 1.45 pm. in front of the iron gate of Dorney Court, if you are not joining in the pub lunch, for the tour of the house starting at 2 p.m. The cost is £10 payable in advance when booking with Pam. The adjacent church of St. James will be open and is worth a visit; as are the grounds, tea rooms, farm shop and garden centre in the former walled garden.

Closing date for booking is 28th March. At the time of writing there are only three places left, but if more people want to go we will compile a waiting list and possibly arrange a 2nd visit.

A walk around Wallingford with Judy Dewey, 23rd June 2015

Following Judy's all encompassing 'virtual tour' of the town during her talk to us on 4th November on the 'History of Wallingford' we have accepted her invitation for a real, life tour around the town in the late afternoon ending with an evening meal at a local hostelry. There is a limit of 20 for the walk. We will meet Judy in front of the Town Hall at 5 p.m. There is a charge of £ 5 per head; money which will be donated directly to the Museum. For members who have not previously been to the museum or would like a return visit, there is an offer of an all in price of £ 8, which gives unlimited access to the Museum for a year. Please, put your name on the List at the back of the Barn, available at the April lecture.

The Churches of Bix – Saturday, 18th July 2015

You may have seen in the Henley Standard that the abandoned, medieval church of St. James at Bix Bottom is being repaired or rather made stable so that it can once again be visited. We are planning such a visit together with stopping at the site of the 'lost' Bix church of St. Michael's, which was rediscovered with the help of documentary research followed by excavations organized by the Victoria County History team and volunteers from Marlow Archaeology, SOAG and HA&HG. The discovery of Christian burials dating from c 1200 to 1600 in the Bix Bottom back garden of two long standing HA&HG members has solved the mystery of the lost church, last documented in Edward VI short reign in the mid 16th C. - A walk of c. 2 ½ miles for able bodied members from Bix Common (Roman villa site) to Bix Bottom and back up through beech woods and along a section of a possible Roman Road is planned. However, limited car parking is possible at both church sites and the outing need not deter those less keen on the walking part. No limit in numbers, but please, contact Ruth Gibson on 01491-572271 or put your names on the List at the back of the barn from April onwards if you are interested and for car sharing purposes.

Calleva Outing, 21st May 15 by Henley & Goring Ramblers.

There will be another opportunity to visit Roman Calleva for those of the HA&HG who had to miss it in 2013 and are happy to join the c 3 mile leisurely walk around the Roman town walls. We will be taking in sites of archaeological interest, the amphitheatre and medieval church (former temple site?), where we will be welcomed by the church warden for a talk and comfort stop. We will start at 11 o'clock at the Calleva Arms in Silchester village and end back there in time for lunch for those who want it. Members of HA&HG are invited to join the Ramblers walk led by Ruth Gibson. Please, ring Ruth on 01491 572271 for further details and the best way to get there, but no booking is required.



Magna Carta Caversham anniversary display 14/21st June 2015, Caversham Court

Magna Carta and Caversham – The Friends of Caversham Court Gardens are preparing a small exhibition about William Marshal and Magna Carta, which will be housed in the 17th century gazebo; open daily from 8am till 4pm, (no entry charge). On the morning of Monday 15 June, primary school children from Caversham will come into Caversham Court, bringing posters proclaiming some of the values that we have inherited from Magna Carta. The Caversham connection comes via William Marshal, whose seal was among those on the document, and whose many properties included the Manor of Caversham. Marshal, who was regent for the young King Henry III after the death of King John, is said to have richly endowed the manor house chapel. In 1219 William Marshal asked to be taken along the Thames to 'his beloved Caversham' to die. His body lay in state in Reading Abbey, but was buried as a Knight Templar at the Temple Church in London.

Contributed by Vickie Abel, Chair of Friends of Caversham Court Gardens

OUTINGS TO LONDON

Goldsmith Hall and the Guildhall - date for the visit to be announced

The goldsmiths received their first charter from Edward 3rd in 1327, which recognized that the craftsmen had already established the regulation of standards of gold and silver wares and had the right to elect wardens to enforce their authority.

The visit is a fascinating tour of the 3rd building on the site and lasts about an hour and a half. You will see magnificent interiors, opulence, and craftsmanship, learn about apprenticeships, assaying, hall marking as well as the historic times, which this Guild has passed through.

The Guildhall is a short walk away and is the area where the City of London has been governed for the last 800 years. The present Guildhall was built between 1411 and 1430.

The Great Hall is the setting for magnificent state banquets and ceremonies and is decorated with the Arms of England, the City and the 12 Great Livery Companies of the City of London.

Sir Giles Gilbert Scott Son and Partners in 1974 designed the precinct and you can have your own opinions about that. The Art Gallery shows about 250 paintings and ranges from Pre-Raphaelite to Oriental and the London paintings are a colourful journey into the City's past covering dramatic events like the Great Fire of London to everyday street scenes

In 1985 it was decided to re-develop the buildings and this is when the remains of the Roman Amphitheatre were discovered. It was a very important discovery and the exhibition is modern and exciting

The intention is to travel individually. Take the slow train to London, change at Ealing Broadway onto the Central line to St Pauls and Goldsmiths Hall is just a short walk

After the guided tour you are then free to find lunch and then proceed to the Guild Hall and have a short tour of the Hall before you visit the Art Gallery and Roman Amphitheatre yourselves.

We will not take names until we have a date for the visit to Goldsmiths Hall. We hope we do not have to wait until next year.

Pam Syrett

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—advance notice

We have also written to Mr John Howell MP to ask him to arrange a visit to Parliament. John Howell answered by return and will try to arrange a visit for a **Monday in August**.

We need to know numbers as soon as possible so at our March 7th meeting you will be asked to sign up if you are interested. If you are not able to attend the March talk and want to come, then please E-mail or ring Pam.

If enough people want to come then we hope to hire a coach.

Pam Syrett

1911 Census

The four transcribers who completed the transcription of the 1841 to 1901 census returns have started on the 1911 census. The summary documents for each of the six districts have been transcribed and loaded to the database, providing control data against which the transcriptions of the returns can be checked.

The procedure for the 1911 census was changed. The individual household schedules have been retained and were not copied into a book by the enumerator. This means that there are many more images to transcribe, typically 300 per district, each in the householder's personal handwriting. Fortunately we do have the database to refer to, helping to resolve doubts about names and ages etc.

The participation of two more people would be very welcome and would ensure completion of the project before summer. A good broadband connection, a largish high definition screen and some knowledge of Microsoft Excel would be of benefit. If you are interested please contact: Graham Jones on 01491 576102 or jgtjones@o2.co.uk.

Treasures from our Archive

The HA&HG has a large collection of members' research work, books, journals, maps, newsletters, photographs, transcriptions of probate material, census returns and much more.

To encourage members to become familiar with and make use of this accumulated knowledge it is planned to put brief articles in our Newsletters as well as continuing to put information on our Web site, such as the publication by George Peters on the '*Life and Work of Humphrey Gainsborough*'.

To start off here is a copy of the original photograph taken in 1894 at the time of the Great Flood as well as a view of today. Thameside south has changed quite a bit since the flood; most of the low house shown with the ladder and boats, to the right of what is now Granary Cottage, was replaced by what is now No.11, a much taller dwelling. Only one third (one timber framed bay of c.1600 date) remains of the old house; this now forms half of the Barry Keene Gallery at No. 12. The tall adjoining brick bldg. on the right we see below is a 1950s extension. It was built across the former access way to Toomer's coal yard at the back. No 12 served as a shop and tea room run by Mrs Jemmett, who lived 'over the shop' with her husband, who had worked at the coal yard until this closed and was moved to the railway sidings.



News from SOAG: Spring excavations planned at High Wood

High Wood Roman Site, Director: David Nicholls – 0118 947 4903 highwood@soagarch.org.uk

On 1st Feb, on a clear day but with a very cold wind, Roelie Reed and I, commenced organisation of site details for this Spring's digs at High Wood. We were measuring for perimeter fencing, placement of the site hut, checking site conditions and agreeing the first trench positions.

The digging schedule is as follows: Test pit 1: Thu-Fri **12-13 March**

Test pit 2: Sat-Sun **14-15 March**

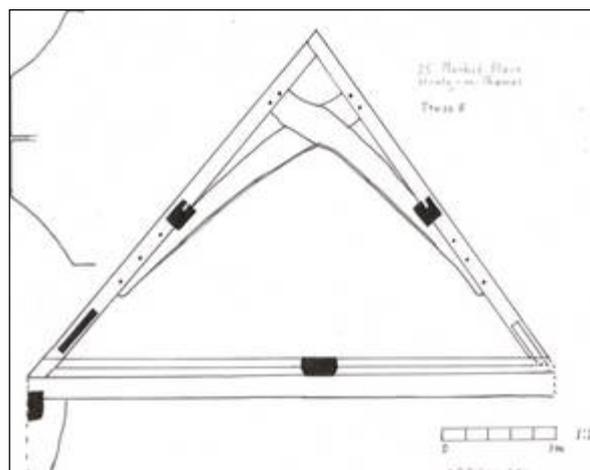
Trench 3: Fri-Mon **03-06 April**

Contact either David Nicholls (details above) or Project Administrator Mike Vincent (01491 644854) if you are interested in taking part.

The former Rose & Crown, 25 Market Place, Henley-on-Thames

Members who came to the February talk on 'Henley and its River' will already be aware of the fact that we now have a reliable dendro date for the magnificent roof structure in the rear wing of what was until recently known as part of Facy's ladies fashion shop. It was the year 1471 when the oaks for its construction were cut and shortly afterwards the carpenters would have prepared the still green timber for the many functions they were going to perform, such as rafters, wind braces, tie beams, collars, purlins and of course the magnificently worked and elegant scissor brace.

Only four other dated ones are known in Oxfordshire, all from the middle part of the 15th C. This was the century of the 'Wars of the Roses', despite these political upheavals it was obviously a time of prosperity when merchants were able and secure enough to embark on major building programmes. Incidentally, poor feeble minded King Henry VI, died in the same year, 1471, in the Tower, having lost his crown & throne to Edward IV (of York) in 1461. This showy timber framed building (behind the plain c.1800 façade) and the many other newly built dwellings dating to the 15th C tell us that the wars 'between the cousins' did not affect much of the population nor the general prosperity of the country.



Ruth Gibson

H.A. & H.G.

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Please visit our web site: for more information on our activities on
<http://www.henley-on-thamesarchaeologicalandhistoricalgroup.org.uk/index.php>

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