



Newsletter

Summer 2014

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Letter to Editor

I enjoyed Julia’s article, “A Fresco Visit” very much. I don’t know Treviso – though I would like to, now that she has whetted my appetite – but I do know that these northern Italian towns can be enchanting and rewarding. In 2000 we visited Verona, Vicenza, Mantua and Padua where we spent, I think, four nights. The jewel of Padua (closed, as Julia says, on Mondays) is the Cappella degli Scrovegni, with its entrancing frescoes by Giotto. This is – and was – also known as Madonna dell’Arena, because it was built on the site of the Roman amphitheatre. So I don’t think they have only just discovered that they have one, although they might only now be embarking on major excavations. If you go to Padua and want to see this jewel casket of a church, you will have to book, as limited numbers are admitted via, I seem to remember, an air-lock. Interestingly, it is largely thanks to the British that the chapel still stands, as the Italians wanted to demolish it, together with the Palazzo, in the 19th century, for road widening. It was a campaign by The Times which saved it. Another close call was when bombs destroyed the surrounding area in WWII.

Thank you for your very entertaining and interesting magazine.

Gerry Tuff

Chairman's Notes

After the last issue's marathon publication, we present a much slimmer summer newsletter. Well, you have better things to do with your time than read WARG News at this time of the year.

For example, if you are not digging this year, you should get down to the Big Dig open day, on August 10th. We are in St Elizabeth's Mead, next to Winchester College's New Hall, and welcome visitors from 10.00 until 4.00.

Author, Author

Due to editorial brain fatigue, the last issue's article on the Lepers on Magdalene Hill was wrongly misattributed. I got this email from Valerie Pegg

"Wow, what a bumper Newsletter, full of exciting and interesting articles.

The write up of Katie Tucker's lecture about evidence for Leprosy at St Mary Magdalene is really good. It is succinct, covers all the points, very informative and I love the way the scribe wrote out the questions and answers at the end.

However, you have put my name at the bottom of the article and although I would have loved to have written such a good account it is not my work!"

In fact the article was written by Edwina Cole, and I agree with every word that Val wrote, congratulations and apologies Ed.

Next year

On page 15 and the programme card you will find the programme through until this time next year. Since I have no responsibility for it, except to say, "Yes. That sounds interesting," I can praise it highly. As well as our normal programme of quality speakers we have two extra dates. On January 30th we welcome Christabel Pankhurst to a special meeting at the Record Office when she will tell us about her struggle for women's suffrage.

Then on February 13th we have our fifth June Lloyd lecture, when Lucinda Hawksley will talk on her book *March, Women, March: voices of the women's movement from the first feminist to votes for women*. Lucinda is a good speaker and her book has been very well reviewed. The application form will be in the next newsletter, but make a note in your diary now.

Dick Selwood

Saving Winchester: Voluntary Societies, Historic Buildings and Urban Development

The great antiquity of Winchester has led to a focus on the distant past at the expense of its more recent history, especially the story of the twentieth century development of the city. Michael Nelles made this the subject of his MA dissertation at the University of Winchester.

This story is the struggle between preservation of the historic environment and the needs of the modern world, particularly the impact of the motor vehicle on the road infrastructure of the city. It is also a story about the transformation of values and attitudes towards historic urban remains. The talk focussed on the events surrounding several threatened sites in Winchester.

Among the significant stock of ancient buildings in the city centre in the early 20th century was a jettied, timber-framed, medieval building in Brook Street. A 1910 photograph showed it still standing although it has a neglected appearance. It was demolished in 1912 but the event was not reported. "Nobody cared". By the late 1920's the first town plan was produced, emblematic of increasing concerns about the city environment. The loss of timber buildings was lamented in this plan and preservation appeared on the agenda. However, the power of local authorities to do much about controlling development was very limited at that juncture.

The contest between concern for ancient buildings and commercial interests can be illustrated by the twists and turns affecting the Kings Head Inn on Little Minster Street. It was surveyed by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and its age was variously estimated as dating back to the sixteenth or seventeenth century. (SPAB was one of a number of bodies that emerged in the post-war era to respond to the growing threats to the historic environment). The King's Head was threatened with demolition in the 1930's, allegedly so that a cinema could be built on the site. The City council was petitioned to prevent this but it only had power to influence the planned replacement. Although the threat of a cinema proved to be a sham, queries to the owner, Marstons Brewery, about future plans produced only evasive replies. Eventually, the site was bought by a local businessman, Mr Martins, who planned to demolish the Inn and build a motorcycle repair shop. Despite petitions from SPAB and others, the powerlessness of the council and the attitude of the

unsympathetic Mr Martins saw the Inn demolished in 1936. Ironically, the site was never built on and is now known as Kings Head Yard.

Pressure on the congested streets of Winchester from the growing numbers of vehicles continued in the interwar period. The Black Swan on the corner of the High Street and Southgate Street was a particularly prominent obstacle to traffic flow and in 1924 it was demolished following purchase by the council. Plans were made to follow this with the demolition of the George Hotel at the south end of Jewry Street, another large building blamed for traffic congestion. The outbreak of World War II stopped this plan but it was later reinstated and implemented in 1956.

Compared to the Kings Head there was relatively little protest about the George Hotel. It was regarded as a relatively recent building (only Georgian!), was a real obstacle to traffic flow and was thought by many to be unattractive. (The Georgian Society was only formed in 1937 to try and preserve buildings of that era.)

After the war, there were pressures for more comprehensive development in Winchester like many other cities. The first post-war plan published in 1951 called for significant demolition of existing buildings and wider roads. The area north of St Georges Street and Friarsgate was described as having mainly decaying industrial and storage buildings with some residential dwellings. However, among these were some buildings regarded as worth preserving such as Waldron House in Upper Brook Street, a supposed eighteenth century building (later found to be older). Among those who fought against the wholesale demolition of such properties was the Winchester Preservation Trust, founded in 1956. As well as lobbying, they set about planning to purchase and preserve some of the threatened listed buildings. They struggled to raise adequate funds and the unsympathetic council was able to block their plans by saying they lacked financial credibility. Despite setbacks, the Trust and other groups continued to fight proposals such as the creation of large car parks in the centre.

The conflicting issues of development and preservation continued to attract much debate, much of it conducted through two public enquiries. Neither of these succeeded in rescuing Waldron House which was demolished in November 1958 despite opposition from national and local preservation groups and the press.

These setbacks were significant but did not prevent a wellspring

of organised opposition across the U.K. Organisations such as the Civic Trust, which sponsored networking and mutual support among local societies, came into being and were able to lobby for new legislation such as the Civic Amenities Act and Conservation Act which gave legal weight to the case for preservation. The commercial pressures for redevelopment still remain today and the need for people to get involved in safeguarding the historic heritage of places such as Winchester remain as compelling as ever.

Steve Taylor

Guildford, A Fascinating Market Town

Driving on the A31 bypass, alongside Guildford Cathedral, I have always thought there was nothing in the town worth visiting. On 28th April 2014 Don Bryan proved that assumption to be very wrong!

Laying between two hills, the river bed of the Wey is sandy, hence **Gyldeforda** (Golden Ford) or Guildford. Palaeolithic and Mesolithic flint tools have been found on higher ground but absolutely no Iron Age or Roman sites have been identified. The first buildings were constructed by pagan Saxons in the 6th century, who utilised the cliff edge (on the site of modern Quarry Street) with the river lapping at their settlement. Their cemetery was on The Mount, on the other side of the river, with superb grave goods being excavated. Christian Saxons had laid out a town by 920 AD.

The Norman wooden motte and bailey castle on Pewley Hill was later replaced with the **Great Stone Keep** which was never attacked but was strengthened by King Stephen during the Civil War with Empress Matilda and again in the reign of Henry II.



There are magnificent views of Guildford from the top of the restored tower. By 1379 the castle was in disarray, although the keep was used until 1540 as the main prison for Surrey and Sussex. Only ruins now remain amidst the Castle Grounds, which were laid out as Victorian Pleasure gardens in 1888.

Little now remains of the magnificent medieval **Royal Palace**, constructed by Henry II and completed by his grandson Henry III, who visited on more than 100 occasions during his reign. By 1380 the palace was also a ruin as London rose in significance.

In 1868 **Charles Dodgson** came to Guildford looking for a house for his six unmarried sisters. He purchased "The Chestnuts," near the ruined castle, and spent many Christmas holidays visiting here, eventually dying of influenza in 1898. He is buried in The Mount Cemetery. Dodgson is better known as Lewis Carroll, author of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Alice Through the Looking Glass. There are two Alice related statues in the town.

Quarry Street was the main Horsham to Brighton road and the name reminds us of the important chalk industry of the town in earlier centuries. We had stopped in Racks Close, so named from the racks used to dry cloth on tenterhooks. A popular medieval cloth was Guildford Blue, dyed using woad. Situated in Quarry Street, **Guildford Museum**, opened in 1898, houses artefacts from the town's history. Further along is the **Old Dispensary**, opened in 1860, where the poor could get advice and treatment: it was the immediate forerunner of the town's Royal Surrey County Hospital. Opposite is **Rosemary Alley**, once an open sewer emptying out the castle's latrines to the river below. **St Mary's Church** is the oldest church in Guildford, originally wooden it served the 9th century Saxon population, a stone replacement being erected in 1050. The chancel was shortened in 1825 to allow George IV's carriage to pass along narrow Quarry Street on his frequent journeys between Windsor and Brighton.

The **Wey Navigation** Act 1651 made the river navigable from Guildford to Weybridge, with 12 locks being required. The canal to Godalming (4 locks) was finished in 1764. Barges carried corn, flour, timber, lime, coal and gunpowder. The last commercial cargo was transported in 1963, then the canals were given to the National Trust. The **Town Mill** dates from 1770 and was used for grinding corn and pumping the water supply. The **Yvonne Arnaud Theatre**, opened 1965, is named after a French born British concert pianist, singer and actress

who lived in Guildford for many years. Born 1890, she died in 1958 and her ashes were scattered at a church high on a hill above the town.

Further along the river stood **Artington Mill**, the earliest mill, dating from 1386 (now The White Horse Pub). The other Alice sculpture may be seen here.

St Nicholas Church, opposite the pub, was founded prior to 1066 but the Victorians “improved” it in 1875 when the Rector, Dr. John Monsell, author of “Fight the Good Fight,” slipped and broke his arm whilst watching the builders. Unfortunately infection ensued ultimately leading to his death.

The four span medieval bridge over the Wey was built by the monks of Waverley Abbey. In the floods of 1900 planks of timber from Moon’s Timber yard, just upstream, were washed under the bridge creating a dam which led to the collapse of the bridge. The current single span iron **Town Bridge** was built in 1902. At the **Town Wharf** the golden sand of the river bed can be seen along with the restored 1726 Treadmill crane, powered by men and used to load /unload cargo from the barges.

There is nothing left at **Friary Square**, except a plaque. Eleanor of Provence, widow of Henry III founded the friary in 1275 in memory of her grandson, Prince Henry, who had died aged 7 in Guildford the previous year. At the time of the dissolution in 1538 the Dominican Friary only housed seven black friars. Later a fine Jacobean House stood here, then an army barracks, a brewery (Friary Meux) and now a shopping mall. North Street, stretching uphill, was originally called the North Town Ditch or Lower Backside in Georgian times and was part of the Saxon town’s defensive ditches. There is a corresponding Upper Backside to the south of the town!

Looking across the road you can see **Rodboro Buildings**, the first purpose-built car factory in England opened in 1901 by the **Dennis brothers** of Guildford. Of great importance during both World Wars, 3500 employees built lorries, Churchill tanks and tracked personnel carriers. In peacetime the company built buses, fire engines, commercial vehicles, lorries and lawnmowers. In 1919 the factory relocated to Woodbridge Hill, a larger site, where it remained until 1990.

Important for trade and as a convenient half-way stopping point on several cross-country coaching routes, Guildford had seventeen **inns and taverns**, including The Angel, The Crown, The White Hart, The Three Tuns, White and Red Lion and The George. **The High Street** was cobbled in 1888 sand and sawdust was laid on top to help the



horses, which were changed every 12 miles, tired animals were tied to a post, hence a "Posting House." Cock horses were hitched to a carriage to help pull it up the steep hill. Properties nearby have undercrofts used to store luxury goods like fine wines.

The **Tunsgate**

Arch, built 1818 and standing on the site of the Three Tuns, formed the portico for the Corn Exchange. **The Guildhall**, where the Guild Merchants met to administer the town's affairs, had a new frontage, bell turret, balconied council chamber and famous clock added in 1683. One of the numerous pubs, The Three Pigeons, experienced a serious fire in 1908, it was owned by the Gate brothers who joined the Temperance movement, poured their stock into the gutter and started a dairy business, this later became **Cow and Gate**. **Holy Trinity Church** was Saxon but had to be rebuilt in 1761 after the original spire collapsed during alterations. Further up the High Street **The Royal Grammar School** was built in 1553 when Edward VI re-endowed the establishment.

The Abbot's Hospital was founded in 1619 by a local man, George Abbot, when he was Archbishop of Canterbury. He founded these Tudor-style red-brick almshouses for the benefit of 20 single, elderly Guildfordians, so that they could live out the rest of their days in peace and comfort. Passing through the Porter's Lodge you enter an Oxford-style quadrangle round which the inmates reside. Updated and enlarged over the ensuing centuries, now married couples may live here and all flats are now ensuite.

Don told us more than I can possibly include but I came to the conclusion that this historic Surrey market and coaching town offers everything from a castle and a palace, via the wool trade, canals, trucks and pubs to a fictional white rabbit!

Valerie Pegg

Site Visit to St Mary Magdalene Excavations

Dr Simon Roffey and Dr Phil Marter, from the University of Winchester, greeted WARG members on 17th June 2014 at their excavations on Morn Hill. For the past seven years this site has provided research and training for 2nd and 3rd year students plus those studying for their Masters or Doctorate.

Importance of the Site

St Mary Magdalene is the earliest excavated leprosy hospital site in Western Europe, with 85% of the burials showing signs of Hansen's disease. It covers a massive area and is of great benefit to archaeologists as it was never built-over as the city expanded. The excavations and research on the human remains have greatly advanced recent thinking about leprosy and its treatment. Leprosy originates from the Middle East; movement of people, the Norman Conquest, the spread of Christianity and the Crusades all led to a dramatic increase in the incidence of the disease, which has a 3 to 5 year incubation period.

Location, Location, Location

Location was paramount, there was land for cultivation, a well providing water, prevailing south west winds blew away smells and its position on the London to Winchester road ensured alms from passers-by and pilgrims. Two scallop shells pilgrim badges have been excavated here.

Early Beliefs

In Medieval times having leprosy was viewed as a "passport to Paradise," the dreadful suffering was preparation for the afterlife and victims would bypass Purgatory. Prior to the 14th century people had no idea of contagion, it was only with the rapid mortality rate of the Black Death in 1348 that the thought of "catching something" emerged. The Victorians were responsible for the stigma placed on those suffering from leprosy, stating that it was caused by the sinful behaviour of their parents, sufferers were seen as outcasts and of low status. Incidentally leprosy is also known as Hansen's disease and nowadays we do not use the term "lepers."

Chronology and New Findings

This is a multi-period site with the recent excavations pushing back the date



of the first leprosy hospital to the late 10th/early 11th century, this was probably a wooden structure as indicated by large post holes, and human remains in the cemetery have been carbon dated to AD 940-1040 proving it was **Saxon**, with the hospital running in a similar vein to a monastery.

Further new thinking suggests that the Bishop of Winchester, Henri de Blois, who owned the land, built a look-out tower during the Civil War between Stephen and Matilda in the **1140s**. Evidence has been found of a very large sunken structure with a lined floor, containing pottery sherds, this could be the tower foundations. The SW corner of the straight-sided tower was angled into the prevailing wind and written documents tell of Henri's "mighty tower."

At the end of this military period of big pits and large structures chalk was rammed over the features, cut-throughs were sealed with clay, painted plaster, possibly from an earlier chapel, was dumped in the holes which were then back-filled. Unfortunately there was no dateable evidence in this back-filling and the large scale pits and holes are not yet fully understood.

A new stone built hospital was founded on the site (**1150-1170**) by Henri de Blois. The back wall of the new 1160-1170 infirmary cut through the old features, interior walls were constructed in the building, a south aisle added and later a north aisle as more space was required with the increase in leprosy cases. A new chapel was built and the whole site consisted of buildings surmounting previous structures. By the **14th century** the site had changed in use into a general hospital.

In the **1470s** documentary evidence tells of fourteen cartloads of bricks which were transported from Marwell Palace to Morn Hill for the creation of almshouses which had brick foundations with upper walls of flint and recycled worked stone. Stone quoins gave strength whilst individual brick fireplaces gave some comfort to the inmates. The chimneys were at the rear to ensure that smoke blew away from the site. A Master's Lodge was built to the south and the end of the hall housed a large fireplace. Some of the almshouses were on top of the previous infirmary whilst an internal wall sunk into the tower pit!



The foundations of walls running north/south have been discovered this year, this was possibly a covered walkway giving access to the rear area where many

pits (4 to 5 metres deep) were dug into the chalk. These were Medieval as indicated from the pottery, some whole pots and even a horse's head being found. The pits consisted of successive layers of organic material capped with chalk, for dealing with unpleasant aromas perhaps.

Cleanliness

Careful management of the site ensured cleanliness, the two latrines were to the north and consequently downwind. One is rather small for the size of the site but was carefully dug and lined with flints, this may have had exclusive use, but by whom? Another huge pit, 12x5 metres and 4 metres deep is currently being excavated, this possible latrine is backfilled with a mixture of building materials and collapsed lining. The stratigraphy of this pit is very visible and it has produced several artefacts. This latrine was recut over time, so hygiene, sanitation and the organisation of hospital waste was being carefully controlled using the topography and wind direction of the area.

During the 17th century the almshouses were used by Royalist troops in the English Civil War and subsequently housed prisoners during the Dutch wars of 1660-1670. Decline ensued in the 18th century but the site had a new lease of life during the **First World War** when a very important troop base was constructed there.

Graves

There is a definite boundary gully between the buildings and the cemetery, a demarcation between the living and the dead who were treated with great respect, the graves are well-cut, anthropomorphic in shape and all orientated east-west. Grave markers must have been used as there is no spoiling of earlier burials by later cuts. Men, women, a baby, locals and outsiders have been identified.

Conclusion

WARG has had a long association with Simon and Phil, so for more information see articles in past WARG Newsletters : "The Lepers on the Hill" November 2009, "Winchester's Leper Hospital" November 2010, "Ancient Almshouses in Southern England " March 2012 and "Leprosy at St Mary Magdalene" Spring 2014.

More digs are planned for the next two years at least, in 2015 they wish to excavate the entire chapel and the rest of the main cemetery, I think the phrase is "Watch this space!"

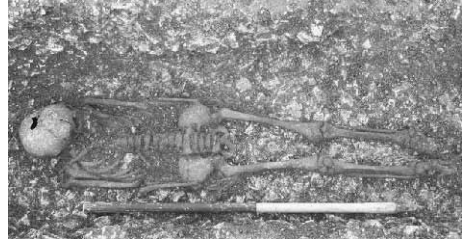
Valerie Pegg

Julia's Jottings

Interesting and unusual things that have caught Julia's eye in the last few months

Strange happenings

We often hear of skeletons found without their heads, but at West Knoyle in Wiltshire archaeologists recently uncovered the skeleton of an Iron Age woman without her feet. These were tucked neatly alongside her and on her head were the carcasses of 2 sheep or goats. Beside her were the remains of a child aged about 10, as well as 2 men with sword wounds on their hips.



We know little of the religious beliefs of Iron Age peoples but perhaps this burial points to something very unusual.

A unique Roman sanctuary in northern France

One should use the word "unique" sparingly but in this case it's correct. In the Picardy region, about 35kms from Paris, archaeologists have discovered a 2nd century sanctuary with no known equivalent in Roman Gaul. Measuring 70m x 105m it has 2 small pavilions at the rear, but in the centre visitors could ascend a staircase to a dramatic masonry platform. Here in the sanctuary's heart would have been the deity's statue accessed through a monumental entrance façade (10m high x 70m long) consisting of between 13 and 17 arches, topped with a frieze which probably had a bronze inscription. This frieze collapsed a mere few decades after its erection (surely unusual in Roman building?) so all the bits are available for the experts to piece together. Apparently coloured, the subjects include foliage, animals, divine attributes and of course the Gods themselves, such as Apollo, Jupiter and Venus. The standard of sculpture is considered to be a very high technical level.



Spectacular and varied finds

Whatever one thinks about the rights or wrongs of the new Crossrail project in England, it has given dozens of archaeologists the chance to excavate in 45 different places to uncover 55m years of

our country's history. Bones of a bison dating back 68,000 years were found near Royal Oak in north London, a prehistoric flint factory from around 9,000 years ago came to light at north Woolwich, 30 human skulls with cremation pots from the Roman period popped up near Liverpool Street station and 55m year old amber saw the light of day near Canary Wharf. More recent eras produced 25 skeletons from a 14th century Black Death burial ground in east London, a large piece of a Thames barge aged about 800 years was found on a shipbuilding site dating to between 1847 and 1912, not to mention a Venetian gold coin from the 1500s appearing near Liverpool Station.

Goodies indeed and varied enough to make one feel that Crossrail IS important after all! Lots more at <http://www.crossrail.co.uk/sustainability/archaeology/>

Update on a Speaker

It's always of interest to me to discover what the various speakers we've been lucky enough to talk to us at WARG are actually doing with the rest of their lives. Well, I can update you on Tony Wilmott, who you will recall spoke to us about Roman amphitheatres in Britain.

Tony's been with English Heritage for some years now but "gets about a bit" nonetheless. He's currently Site Director of the investigation by Newcastle University in its 4th year of a 5 year project around the Temples site of Roman Maryport for the Senhouse Museum Trust. This entails, amongst other things, trying to discover more about the large collection of Roman altars from the area. Their inscriptions provide much information about the commanders living in the fort there as well as about their postings across the Empire, their rituals and their offerings. How were these altars displayed, for instance? Apart from these artefacts, excavation is being carried out at the eastern edge of the settlement, north east of the fort, where at least one temple stood. It was originally excavated in the 1880s and it was re-examined by Tony and his team last year. Underneath the temple they found burned lamb and bird bones, as well as a mysterious circular structure which might have been another temple or perhaps a mausoleum. The Roman fort and nearby civilian settlement were a significant part of the coastal defences for the north western boundary of the Roman Empire for over 300 years, and the Museum's collection of military altar stones and inscriptions is the largest from any UK site, and well worth a visit if you're up in Cumbria.

2014/15 Calendar

2014

Aug 2nd- 16th **St Elizabeth's - Big Dig**

Aug 10th **Big Dig Open Day**

Sept 8th **Winchester & the Arrival of the Railway - Mark Allen**

Sept 15th **Chichester - Day trip**

Oct 13th **Lies, Damned Lies & Maps - Giles Darkes. And AGM**

Nov 10th **The Battle of the Solent & the Sinking of the Mary Rose 1545 - Dominic Fontana**

Dec 8th **Old School Ties: Educating for Empire & War - Martin Parsons**

2015

Jan 12th **Social Evening with Entertainment**

Jan 30th **A Suffragette Evening**

Feb 9th **Roman Work at Durrington - Andy Manning**

Feb 13th **June Lloyd Lecture: March, Women, March - Lucinda Hawksley**

Mar 9th **Initial Results from Recent Archaeological Investigations into Saxon and Medieval Oxford - Ben Ford**

Apr 13th **The update on 2014 excavations**

Apr 20th **Day trip to Marlborough and Ludgershall**

May 11th **Lost Monuments: Morn Hill Camp - Phil Marter**

Jun 8th **Walk tba**

Jul 13th **Visit tba**

August **Summer Excavation**

Carol Barnes



April 1943-July 2014



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The WARG Newsletter provides reports on the activities of WARG, the society for Winchester archaeology and local history. It also carries other information of interest to the WARG membership.

For more information on WARG, and to join, call 01962 867490, e-mail membership@warg.org.uk or visit www.warg.org.uk