

THE SOCIETY

THE SOCIETY 2004

The meetings of the Society's Council were lengthy during 2004 and one of the subjects exercising members' minds was the government plans to build vast housing estates in Aylesbury Vale and around Milton Keynes. Announcements and plans were watched keenly and the issues hotly debated, and the Society submitted suggestions and comments whenever possible. There was much concern for the historic landscape of the north of the County and the underlying archaeology, and Council's comments made sure that these would not be overlooked in the planning of the housing expansion. Another subject discussed was the possibility of digitising the back stock of Records, making the articles available worldwide, and plans to do this are ongoing. A Society website has also been under discussion: during the year it was agreed that the legacy left to BAS in Dr. Arnold Baines' will should be used to fund setting up a website, a suitable memorial to our distinguished former member. Another bequest from John Chenevix Trench was specifically left for the dendrochronological dating of buildings within the County. Some was spent looking at the Kings Head in Aylesbury, and some on dating medieval buildings newly located in the Whittlewood Project. While work continued to bring the "Historic Views of Bucks" to publication for the autumn of 2004, another project on the "Watermills of Bucks" was commenced. The Council decided to support the purchase of a Cubitt car from the 1920's by the Museum, and there were lengthy discussions about the building of a suitable garage in which to display it. The Society was represented as usual at the Bucks Family History Society Open Day on July 24th, and again at the Bucks Local History Network Conference at Aylesbury on October 9th. Both occasions were successful in bringing BAS to a wider audience: at the Conference the new "Historic Views" went on sale and in all more than £700 was raised through the sale of various publications. A new initiative to clear some of the back stock of off-prints by parcelling them up by subject, and selling packs of five for a £1 also went well.

MEMBERSHIP

During the year the Society was joined by two new institutional members: the Brill Society, and the Buckinghamshire Family History Society, significantly expanding our associated membership within the County. We also welcomed 22 new members, and were saddened to hear of the death of six members. There were 15 resignations during the year. Overall membership fell slightly to 440.

COUNCIL

The Council of the Society met four times in 2004, on January 24th, March 20th, July 3rd and October 30th in the County Museum at Aylesbury. Council members were : Professor W.R.Mead, President of the Society; Dr. A.J.C.Balfour; Roger Bettridge, the County Archivist; Maureen Brown, Hon. Sec.; Professor John Clarke, Hon. Editor of Records; Brian Davis, Hon. Treasurer; Mike Davis, Vice-Chairman of Council; Mike Farley; Dr Richard Gem; Sarah Gray, Museum Curator; Diana Gulland, Hon. Archivist and Librarian; Julian Hunt, Hon. Newsletter Editor; Cllr. Brenda Jennings from Bucks. County Council; Sandy Kidd, from the County Archaeological Service; George Lamb; Edward Legg, Chairman of Council; Gary Marshall from the National Trust; Mike Palmer, Hon. Sec. Natural History Section; Dr David Thorpe; Dr Ian Toplis; Bob Zeepvat. Helen Jones left Council during the year. The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at the Museum on May 1st when a sizeable gathering of members heard the President Prof. Mead recall riding around in a Cubitt car in the 1930's, part of an amusing talk after the business had concluded. New members were elected to Council and Alan Dell retired as organiser of the Society summer outings, a popular part of the annual events' programme.

Lecture Series 2004

24 January	Crime and Criminals in C19th Bucks and the Haddenham Murder of 1828. Bill Torrens & Alan Rose.
14 February	Religion in North Bucks in the C17th. Marilyn Lewis.
20 March	The Great Fire of Buckingham in 1725. Paul Poorman.
13 November	Penn Tiles. Miles Green.
11 December	Civil War exhibition. Museum Curators.

Outings 2004

8 May	Hanbury Hall & Charlecote Park.
12 June	Lavenham & Melford Hall.
17 July	Avebury & Lacock Abbey.
14 August	Walk Round Julian Hunt
25 September	Church Crawl with Michael Hardy to: Fenny Stratford, Clifton Reynes, Hardmead, Sherington, North Crawley, Chicheley & Berton.

Maureen Brown
Hon. Secretary

THE LIBRARY

ADDITIONS TO THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY 2004

- ALDHOUSE-GREEN, M. An archaeology of images: iconology and cosmology in Iron Age and Roman Europe. 2004.
- BEVINGTON, M. Stowe House. Revised edition, 2002.
- BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY. Historic views of Buckinghamshire. 2004.
- BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM, FRIENDS & PATRONS. Buckinghamshire in the Civil War. Catalogue to the Exhibition held in Museum 2004–2005. 2004
- BUNCE, B. & G. Thornborough: past and present. A history of the village. 2003.
- CARTER, I. & WHITLOW, G. Red kites and the Chilterns. 2004.
- CHENEVIX TRENCH, J.G. Original transcript of Amersham parish registers. Baptisms 1561–1812; burials 1561–1812. n.d.
- CLARKE, G. and others. English arcadia: the landscape and buildings of Stowe. 1992.
- CRITCHLEY, D.J. Addington church: an architectural and historical study. Buckinghamshire Paper No.4, 2004.
- DAVIS, E.J. & M.J. Aylesbury Quakers and their meeting house 1689–1933. 2004.
- FORD, S. The archaeology of the Aylesbury-Chalgrove gas pipeline and The Orchard, Walton Road, Aylesbury. 2004.
- FOXELL, S. & C. St. Mary's church, Chesham: an illustrated short history. 2004.
- FURNISS, J. Memories of Weston Underwood 1880–2002. 2003.
- GRIFFITHS, R.A. ed. The Household Book of Sir Edward Don: an Anglo-Welsh knight and his circle (Horsenden). Buckinghamshire Record Society, Volume 33, 2004.
- GURNEY, I. Waddesdon through the ages (includes Upper Winchendon). 2004.
- HALL, M. ed. Gothic architecture and its meanings 1550–1830. (Chapter 5 and appendices on Henry Keene and St Mary, Hartwell, by Terry Friedman). 2002.
- HIGHFIELD, M. Lacey Green windmill, Buckinghamshire. 2003.
- HUNTER, J. The story of a village Eton Wick 1217–1977. 2000.
- LEGG, E. Genealogical sources in the borough of Milton Keynes. North Bucks towns and villages. 2004.
- McCANN, J. Clay and cob buildings (Haddenham, Winchendon). 3rd ed. 2004.
- MARKS, R. Image and devotion in late medieval England. (Includes many Bucks locations). 2004
- PALIN, W. Saving Wotton: the remarkable story of a Soane country house. 2004.
- PRESTON, I.W. The churches of Iver. 1996.
- REED, A.J. Oh no! Not another book on old Aylesbury. New edition with supplement. 2004.
- REED, A.J. Oh yes! It's old railsbury. Station snapshots 1946–1996. 2004.
- RUSSELL, R. Discovering antique prints. 2nd ed. 2001.
- SCHUMER, B. ed. Oxfordshire forests 1246–1609, Oxfordshire Record Society, Volume 64, 2004.
- SMITH, G.J. A Jarvis (Jervis) tapestry: Tudor to Victorian. (Ashendon, Aylesbury, Great Brickhill, Haddenham, Soulbury). 2003.
- SMITH, G.J. & JARVIS, R.V. A Jarvis tapestry Part II. The story of an Edwardian family of Aylesbury and beyond, through the twenties and thirties to modern times. 2003.
- STONE WITH BISHOPSTONE AND HARTWELL PARISH COUNCIL. Stone & Hartwell village design statement. 2003.
- VENNER, A. Wotton Underwood 1881–1990. 1990.
- WALLEN, M. ed. Buckinghamshire bird report 2002. 2003.
- WETHERED, A. The power and the brewery. The story of a house and its people. (Marlow Brewery and Remnantz). 2004.
- WILKS, J. Walks into history: Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire. 2004.

ARNOLD BAINES BEQUEST

- ADKIN, B.W. Copyhold and other land tenures of England. 2nd revised edition. 1911.
- AUBREY, J. Brief lives. (Includes Sir Kenelm Digby, Venetia Digby, William Penn, Henry Marten, Sir Henry Lee). Reprint. 1998.
- CHAMBERS biographical dictionary. 5th ed. 1992.
- DEFOE, D. A journal of the Plague Year. Reprint. 1960.
- DOUGLAS, D.C. and others, eds. English historical documents 1042–1189. Reprint. 1968.
- EKWALL, E. ed. The concise Oxford dictionary of English place-names. 4th ed. 1989.
- FIELD, J. English field-names: a dictionary. Reprint. 1989.
- FOX, J. The book of martyrs: a history of the persecution of the Protestants. n.d.
- HART, C.M. The early charters of eastern England. 1966.
- HEWES, F. Spoils won in the day of battle. (Aldbury, Tring, Whaddon Chase, Northall, Eddlesborough, Littleworth, Dunstable). New ed. 1972.
- HOLT, J.C. ed. Domesday studies. Papers read at the Novocentenary Conference of the Royal Historical Society and the Institute of British Geographers, Winchester. (Includes Bucks). 1987.
- HOSKINS, W.G. English landscapes. Reprint. 1974.
- HOSKINS, W.G. Fieldwork in local history. 1967.
- MILNE, A.T. A centenary guide to the publications of the Royal Historical Society 1868–1968 and of the former Camden Society 1838–1897. 1968.
- MITCHELL, B. A guide to old English. 2nd ed. 1978.
- MURRAY, C. Oxfordshire to Buckinghamshire. 1994.
- ORDNANCE SURVEY.
Britain before the Norman Conquest. 1973.
Map of Britain in the Dark Ages. 2nd ed. 1971.
Map of Southern Britain in the Iron Age. Reprint. 1967.
Map of Roman Britain. 3rd ed. 1956.
- ORWIN, C.S. & C.S. The open fields. 2nd ed. 1954.
- PLUMMER, C. Venerabilis Baedae. Reprint. 1966.
- RACKHAM, O. The history of the countryside. Reprint. 1989.
- ROGER OF WENDOVER'S Flowers of history. 1993.
- SCOTT, Rev. Thomas (of Aston Sandford). Sermons on selected subjects. 2nd ed. 1954.
- SMITH, A. Sixty Saxon saints. Revised reprint. 1996.
- STEANE, J. Oxfordshire. 1996.
- STENTON, F.M. The Latin charters of the Anglo-Saxon period. 1955.
- TAYLOR, C. Fields in the English landscape. 1975.
- TAYLOR, E.G.R. An atlas of Tudor England and Wales. Forty plates from John Speed's pocket atlas of 1627. Reprint. 1953.
- THOMSON, J.A.F. The later Lollards 1414–1520. 1965.
- WHITELOCK, D. ed. English historical documents c. 500–1042. Reprint. 1968.

In addition to the books listed 83 smaller items were added to stock. These included articles from journals, church guides and newspaper cuttings.

Diana Gulland
Hon. Librarian/Archivist

THE NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

SUMMARY OF FIELD VISITS AND LECTURES ORGANISED BY THE SECTION DURING 2004

17th January: The Secret World of Rotifers. Eric Hollowday began by noting that it was 30 years since his last talk to the Society and 56 years since his first. Of the 14 members in attendance at this talk, some wanted to find out more about rotifers while other simply wanted to know what rotifers were? Eric explained with the aid of his own detailed drawings that rotifers were microscopic, aquatic animals, the biggest of which, in Britain, measures 1mm. A literal translation of their name is 'wheel animals'. Video footage helped to explain this, showing the animals with what appears to be a rotating disc. This, however, is an optical illusion achieved by sequenced movement of tiny hair-like cilia that move food towards the animal's mouth. Rotifers are found in all sorts of water bodies including gutters and the smallest of puddles and can survive drying out. When the water dries up the animals survive as resting eggs that hatch when the water returns. As proof of this, Eric told how he once re-hydrated a specimen of moss that had been in a museum for 57 years and found eight different species of living rotifer emerge! While some species attach themselves to plants, others move around and at least two species ride around ponds on the backs of water fleas. All in all, a most intriguing talk.

7th February: Winter Bird Watch at College Lake. Val Atkinson led five members around the reserve. Being a small group allowed those present to make the most of Val's relaxed but informative commentary while gaining some fantastic views of birds. A dozen shovellers were observed right outside the hide. Other highlights included the impressive solo aerobatics of a lapwing and the fishing skills of a cormorant viewed at close hand.

13th March: An Afternoon Badger Walk with Members of the Buckinghamshire Badger Group. Unfortunately this event did not take place due to the planned leader no longer being available.

3rd April: The Annual General Meeting was followed by two short talks. Firstly, Mike Palmer out-

lined his interest in Buckinghamshire's noteworthy trees, explaining that these were specimens that, for one reason or another, have achieved individuality. This could be through their great age, size or association with notable people or events. Amongst the many images of Buckinghamshire trees shown were Wesley's Elm in Stoney Stratford, Roald Dahl's Witch Tree in Great Missenden, the mysterious Shoe Tree near Studley Green and the County's oldest tree, the Ankerwycke yew (which although now technically in Berkshire is still within Vice-county 24). Mike mourned for the loss of many of the County's great trees such as His Majesty (one of Burnham Beeches' giants, blown down in the storms of 1987), Milton's Elm, lost to the ravages of Dutch elm disease and the former Coleshill veteran, Waller's Oak. Mike ended by asking for any stories or personal memories on both past and present noteworthy trees in the County.

George Taylor then presented an illustrated account of his time spent on Iona mapping its geology as part of his degree course. He noted the island contains some of the oldest rocks known in the British Isles and that, despite being only three and a half miles long and two miles wide, was geologically very rich. Slides showed the range of rock types to be found including Iona marbles, amphibolites and a number of gneisses along with different types of geological structures encountered including faults, isoclinal folds, mafic dykes and granitic sills.

14th May: An evening badger watch. Five members gathered in the early evening to follow local field naturalist Ralph Woodward along lanes and across fields to a wooded hillside in anticipation of seeing badgers. Once in location we sat in silence as darkness slowly fell, listening to cattle and birdsong. Unfortunately, one of the unavoidable risks of badger watching is that the animals don't always come out when you want them to and tonight that proved the case. Despite this, a pleasant and remarkably relaxing evening was had by all.

26th June: An afternoon visit to Priestfield Arboretum. Six members arrived for a tour of this secluded collection of trees. Despite the curator, Merelene Davis being unavoidably called away, we were left in the capable hands of our own Anna Blundell who, through her work with the Friends of Priestfield Arboretum was extremely familiar with the site. Trees seemed to be divided into two broad age groups, those mature specimens dating from the original plantings in the 1920s and the more recent plantings after the Arboretum's rediscovery and renovation in the 1980s. The site is particularly rich in conifers, although a number of interesting broadleaf trees are also present. Notable species included Cow's-tail Pine, Formosan Fir, Patagonian Cypress, Prince Albert's Yew, Weeping White Mulberry and Tibetan Cherry. I can also report that the *Zelkova* planted by BAS members in 1999 is doing well.

10th July: A morning walk at Grangeland's Nature Reserve. Three members joined Roy Maycock for a botanical ramble across the chalk grassland of this excellent BBOWT reserve. An initial surprise was the presence of Alexanders in the car park, a species more normally associated with coastal areas. Roy informed us that this was one of only two locations for this plant in Buckinghamshire. Along the woodland path we found Rough Chervil and Upright Hedge Parsley, both Black and White Bryonies (one belonging to the Yam family and the other to the Cucumber family) as well as a range of woodland grasses. Once on the Reserve proper a number of chalk-loving plants were found in flower including Pyramidal Orchid, Large Thyme, Wild Basil, Salad Burnet, Small Scabious, Common Rockrose and many more. In addition to the many species observed, Roy also imparted a number of useful tips for distinguishing similar species.

4th September: An afternoon walk on Ivinghoe Beacon (a joint meeting with the Buckinghamshire Earth Heritage Group). On a sunny September afternoon 10 people made their way up to the top of the Beacon where George Taylor described the scene some 500,000 years earlier when the glaciers of the Anglian ice advance reached as far south as the Chilterns. In addition to pointing out local features relating to the Anglian Ice sheet

advance and retreat, George also discussed the reasons for the occurrence of ice ages in general.

17th October: 'Mud, Sweat and Beers' (Joint meeting with the Buckinghamshire Earth Heritage Group). Michael Oates led 21 people along the muddy track to Ardley Field Quarry (thanks to Viridor Waste Ltd for access). On our visit here three years ago we had seen tracks of both a bipedal carnivorous dinosaur, thought to be those of *Megalosaurus*, and a four-legged herbivorous dinosaur, most likely a *Cetiosaurus*. Being located in an active landfill site, it was thought that their future was doomed. However, on this visit we found that a number of the footprints had been cut out from the quarry floor and were stacked neatly on pallets awaiting removal to an unknown, but presumably safer location. We then moved on to the mounds of Oxford clay in search of marine fossils. Finds included echinoids (mainly their spines), some pieces of ammonite, fish scales and a very nice, if slightly small (2cm) reptile tooth.

20th November: 'Island Continent, the natural history of Australia'. 14 members attended this last meeting of the year to hear Victor Scott's account of his visit to Australia. Victor was, once again, ably assisted by his wife Christine, who had taken most of the wonderful slides shown. He explained that Australian wildlife bore some similarity to that of South Africa and South America on account of all three having been joined together in the distant past. This similarity, however, was reduced by Australia's early break away leading to the evolution of a range of familiar and, sometimes, not so familiar, indigenous plants and animals. Victor talked about the range of habitats from mountains to vast deserts, noting that the heat and dryness experienced over large areas of the continent led to a high risk of forest fires. Interestingly, however, many of the native plants had developed ways to cope with such occurrences. Slides included many examples of the continent's bird and plant life and provided an excellent accompaniment to Victor's knowledgeable and enthusiastic commentary.

Mike Palmer
Hon. Secretary