

Bishop's Waltham Society



Past • Present • Future

Registered Charity Number 294433

Newsletter Winter 2015/16



A beautiful view of the South Downs

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The Society's Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM will be held on Thursday 18th February at 7.30 pm. Details are included with this newsletter.

Cheese and wine will be served after the AGM and there will then be a short presentation by Heidi Isa, our Market Town Development Officer, on Bishop's Waltham Town Team and its activities. Since the Town Team has two members who represent the Society, we hope members will find this talk of interest.

Plans for Members' Meetings in 2016

We have now finalised our plans for the year. Unless otherwise specified, meetings are at 7.30 pm at the Church Hall in Free Street on the third Thursday of the month. So here are some dates for this year's diary:

Thursday 18th February - Our Annual General Meeting followed by cheese and wine. See above.

Thursday 17th March - 'The South Downs Society'. The Society's mission is to protect the beauty of the Downs which cover an area of over 600 square miles. Robert Self will give a talk about how the Society's role has changed after the formation of the South Downs National Park Authority.

Thursday 21st April - Competitive Wine Tasting (with prizes!) Details to follow.

Thursday 19th May - 'The Bare Necessities', a talk by Ruth King on the history of underwear, with a display of her unmentionables! Some people collect stamps, Ruth collects underwear as well as fascinating facts about their history.

Thursday 16th June - 'Stopping Hunger in the UK'. A talk by a representative of the Trussell Trust, the founders, in 2004, of UK foodbanks. The Trust's aim is to give a minimum of three days' emergency food to people in crisis through a network of UK foodbanks. Between April and September 2015 over half a million emergency supplies were provided.



Thursday 21st July - 'Queen Elizabeth I's visit to Bishop's Waltham Palace'. A talk by Professor Caroline Adams on the 425th anniversary of the Queen's Royal Progress of 1591 which included a visit to Bishop's Waltham. She was the last reigning monarch to stay at the Palace.



Thursday 15th September - 'A King's Escape and the Monarch's Way trail'. A talk by Chris Billingshurst about Charles II's six week escape after the Battle of Worcester which brought him close to Bishop's Waltham on his way across Hampshire from Mottisfont to Hambledon some 365 years ago. Hear the talk, then walk the trail!

Thursday 20th October - 'What did the Normans ever do for us?' A talk by Tony Kippenberger, the Society's chairman, on some - possibly controversial - ideas about alternative origins for Bishop's Waltham. Was it really all down to Henry of Blois, as conventional wisdom suggests?

Thursday 17th November - 'The End of the Battle of the Somme'. General Sir Douglas Haigh's 'Great Push', which cost a million casualties, ended in November 1916. The details of this 100 year commemorative evening are still to be confirmed.

Thursday 15th December - The Society's Christmas Party. Mulled wine, mince pies, music and fun. Speaker to be confirmed.

Celebration of the Palace at the Palace



For the first time in a long time, Bishop's Waltham Palace ruins were properly celebrated in July with a four-day event, 'The Road to Agincourt'. Put on jointly by the Bishop's Waltham Town Team and the Bishop's Waltham Festival Committee, it commemorated the 600th anniversary of Henry V's ten-day stay at the Palace in 1415 on the way to his famous victory over the French.

To build up to and coincide with the event, the Society provided a day-to-day diary of events from June 1415 to the actual battle in October of that

year. These were kindly reproduced in the Parish News each month.

Bishop's Waltham Museum was open over the four days and held two exhibitions, one about Bishop's Waltham and some of its inhabitants in 1415. Much of this information was gleaned by new translations of the Pipe Rolls for 1415-16, conducted by Trish Simpson-Davis and some colleagues who are learning Medieval Latin. The Society provided funds to enable this work to take place.

The other exhibition, about Henry's preparations in Hampshire during the summer of that year, was prepared by the Society's chairman.

Research for the latter revealed that it was an amazing feat of organisation and planning - a medieval equivalent of D-Day! Some 1,500 ships assembled during the summer, seeking shelter in the creeks and inlets facing the Isle of Wight, as well as the harbours at Southampton, Portsmouth and Portchester. 20,000 horses had to be shipped to France. All had to be suspended on board in cloth slings to prevent harm to them or the ship.

In order to feed the thousands of men in his army, as they gathered in Hampshire, the King ordered the Sheriffs of Kent, Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Berkshire, Dorset, Somerset and Hampshire to send between 100 or 200 oxen each (1,000+ cattle). These large herds were driven to Lymington, Beaulieu, Romsey, Southwick, Alresford, Fareham and Titchfield, some no doubt through Bishop's Waltham.

Meanwhile, Henry assembled just under 12,000 men, of whom 2,500 were men-at-arms and 9,000 archers. In addition, there were 2,000 pages as well as cooks, clerks, chaplains and servants and 560 miners, smiths and carpenters.



Muster points for Henry V's army

Retinues of soldiers mustered at Swanick, Southwick, Titchfield, Christchurch, Canford, Poole, Beaulieu, The Wallops, Southampton Heath, Hythe, Romsey, Alresford, Candover, Portsdown and elsewhere. Research also indicated that at least one retinue mustered at 'Hampton Hill' which is most likely to mean that soldiers camped in Swanmore. It would be well worth while trying to follow this possibility up! Is anyone interested?

This part of Hampshire would have been abuzz as lords and knights from across England arrived with their retinues of men-at-arms and archers. And how silent it would have fallen when they all sailed in August!

Sainsbury's Decides to Sell

It all began seven (yes, seven) years ago when news seeped out in January 2009 that Sainsbury's had bought the Abbey Mill site from David Wilson Homes.

Since then there has been an almost continuous hiatus. The initial opposition by Bishop's Waltham Action Group (BWAG) eventually led to the formation of Sainsbury's sponsored Bishop's Waltham - Another View (BWAV) and a prolonged battle for letters of support or of opposition. The involvement of the Bishop's Waltham Surgery was perhaps the most controversial highlight.



Protest at the Guildhall as Pete Atkinson's 4,500 signature petition is handed in during 2010.

The actual Planning Development Committee Meeting took place on 7th April 2011 and many of the 400 opponents to Sainsbury's plans who attended were shocked when the Committee Chairman cast his second, crucial vote in favour of Sainsbury's. There then followed a brief fiasco when the Minister for Communities, Eric Pickles, decided not to call-in the decision. At which point, in mid-2011, everyone expected Sainsbury's to start work at the beginning of 2012.

In fact the Section 106 agreement between Sainsbury's and Winchester City Council was not signed until December 2011. So it was not until February 2012 that a Dept of Transport Stopping Up Order for Station Road was proposed and in retrospect this was a decisive moment.

John Hayter, a founding member of the Society, challenged this order in March 2012 and to almost everyone's astonishment was rewarded by a decision to hold a Public Inquiry. This was held in early October, but the Inspector did not give her judgement (that the objections were to be overruled) until the spring of 2013. This further delay of 12 months is probably the critical period for the changes to the nation's shopping habits to become crystal clear and for the leading supermarkets to begin to take stock of the implications. During 2013 and 2014 Sainsbury's repeatedly used the need to undertake 'technical surveys' as the explanation for lack of progress on the site. So John is to be congratulated on achieving this critical delay.

Although Sainsbury's 'implemented' its planning permission by building a length of acoustic fencing in November 2014, the writing was already on the wall. And so when Sainsbury's decision not to go ahead was publicised, on 10th June 2015, it came as little surprise. The Abbey Mill site was put on the market through Saville's in the summer with offers required by the end of October. It is understood that one offer was of sufficient interest for Sainsbury's to be following it up.

So What of the Abbey Mill itself?

For much of the second half of 2015, Trish Simpson-Davis has been working to put together a Steering Group that would consider what might be done to save the Abbey Mill itself.

In April 2015 she circulated a draft consultation report on the North Pond which ran to some 90 pages and looked at historical, hydrological and ecological perspectives of the pond. Although the focus was the Pond, and most of the many recommendations and suggested actions related

specifically to it, the future of Abbey Mill was one area mentioned, including a proposal to get it Listed (see Green Box below).

This formed part of her proposals to the Parish Council in July - which also included the need to find out what local public opinion felt about the need to preserve the Mill building and indeed what uses they would like to see it put to.

As a result, a public survey was conducted which closed on 30th September. The results of the survey were published by the Parish Council in October. A total of 476 responses were received, 350 online and 126 as paper copies. 51% of the respondents were "strongly in favour of restoration" and 31% would "prefer to see it restored", giving a substantial majority in favour of restoration. Most respondents wanted the Mill to be put to community use, particularly by families and young people, and/or as a tourist centre, with historical/environmental themes. Commercial use, or private residential housing, was seen to be less attractive.

There was a spread of responses suggesting how the community might persuade the new owner to preserve the Mill, with the majority supporting a community/commercial partnership and/or establishing a charity to purchase the Mill.

Well over half the respondents stated they were prepared personally to assist in preserving the Mill, the main proportion willing to contribute to a public fund and others volunteering practical help in some other way. The full BW Abbey Mill Survey is downloadable from the Parish Council's website.

Trish Simpson-Davis's current plans are to put together a Steering Group in February 2016 with a view to commissioning and producing a Feasibility Study for the Mill building by September.

The Bishop's Waltham Society's Executive Committee considered trying to get the Abbey Mill building listed in December 2013 when it was evident that it was slipping into a state of poor repair. Based on the experience of Pondsides Farm - which the developer demolished before the Listing process could be completed - it was decided to avoid such a risk with the Mill site.

Instead, Alan Inder, the Society's President wrote to Winchester City Council's Planning Officers drawing their attention to photographs of the building and requesting that they raise the matter with Sainsbury's. No response was received.



The state of part of Abbey Mill roof in 2013

A New Community Orchard

In late November the Bishop's Waltham Gardening Club planted a Community Orchard. It is sited on Priory Park Meadow, down the track beyond the football pitches, on land owned by the Parish Council.

A good deal of research went into selecting what varieties to plant and in the end the orchard consists of 25 trees - 13 apple trees, two crab apples, four pear trees, two damsons and two greengages, a quince and a mulberry. Some are local Hampshire varieties.



The Gardening Club and its volunteers are to be congratulated for planting an orchard for the entire community to enjoy for many years to come.

Thomas Penford - Halfpenny Token 1666

During the early part of last summer, the Society became aware that a charity in Romsey had been given a halfpenny token, dated 1666, issued by Thomas Penford, a grocer in Bishop's Waltham. It was available on e-bay, but the Society negotiated to buy it at a 'typical' price for such numismatic items.



Apparently, in the 17th century after the English Civil War the Royal Mint failed to produce enough low denomination coins. As a result, many traders were driven to produce their own 'tokens'. The inscriptions of these tokens commonly consist of the first name and surname of the issuer (**Thomas Penford**), the year (**1666**) and the town or village (**Bishop's Waltham** misspelt **Wallton**) in which he resided. Additionally, there is often the value (**halfpenny**) and a device or coat of arms (the **Grocer's Company**). The tokens were usually struck in copper or brass, the commonest denomination being farthings, followed by halfpennies and some pennies.

Penford is very much a local name and indeed the 1550 rentals from the Bishop of Winchester's Pipe Rolls (interpreted by John Bosworth) show a Gilbert Penford running two shops with stalls on the High Street where Bishop's Estate Agent and Hazel's Florist now stand. It would seem a descendant was also running a shop in the High Street some 100 years later. On the east wall of the South Aisle of St Peter's Church there is a memorial to Elizabeth Penford who died in 1844.

In November, the suitably mounted token was given on permanent loan to Bishop's Waltham Museum from the Bishop's Waltham Society as a token of continuing collaboration between the two organisations.

Bishop's Waltham Design Statement

Throughout 2015, a group of around a dozen local residents worked to produce a Design Statement for the town. The main contributors were Georgie Busher, Gill Frost, Robin Howe, Alan Inder, Gareth Morgan, Pauline Mousley, Melissa Newton, Robert Shields, Jonathan Simmonds, David Webb-Carter and Terry Wilson.

The Bishop's Waltham Design Statement is something known as a Supplementary Planning Document. Researched and developed by the local community, its purpose is to influence decisions on the design of new developments within the town through managing change, not preventing it. The Design Statement provides a background to the distinctive features of the town and its immediate surrounds which the residents value and wish to see protected or enhanced. The Statement provides policies to guide both developers and the local planning authority about how developments may be undertaken in such a way that respects the character of Bishop's Waltham.

The Statement builds upon the Bishop's Waltham community planning work already undertaken to identify sites for development which has now been incorporated into the Winchester City Council (WCC) Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2). This identifies the areas where future housing and industrial development should be located as well as identifying any additional supporting infrastructure.

The policies within the Design Statement define how best to manage the changes brought about by future developments whilst preserving the unique characteristics of Bishop's Waltham.

The Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 includes the vision for its market towns that they should support development that maintains their rural character and individual settlement identity.

The Bishop's Waltham Development Plan has been prepared with the following vision in mind:

All new development is to be situated as closely as possible to the town centre or existing developments in order to maintain the social ambience and vitality of Bishop's Waltham, a medieval market town within natural boundaries surrounded by farmed lands.

The Design Statement builds upon the vision by emphasising the key features of Bishop's Waltham: the rural character of the town, the heritage, and the town's economic and social self-sufficiency. The Statement identifies these as features that define the distinct nature of Bishop's Waltham which future developments should preserve.

Policies within the design statement cover the following 15 areas:

1. Settlement Edge - developments adjacent to the countryside
2. Town Approaches - roads entering the town
3. Views - to, across and from the town

4. Scale - size and uniformity of development
5. Mass - size, shape and height dominating the surroundings
6. Layout - the arrangement of roads and buildings within new developments
7. Trees and Hedges - significant plantings that enhance the character and setting of the town
8. Footpaths and Cycle Ways - non-vehicular routes for pedestrians and cyclists
9. Parking - garages and parking spaces
10. Roofs - material, pitch and line
11. Wall Materials - composition and rendering
12. Frontages and Boundaries - public aspects of the building
13. Rear Gardens and Boundaries - private areas of property
14. Commercial and Industrial Buildings - buildings giving employment
15. Sustainable and Innovative Design - high quality contemporary design

As part of the process Winchester City Council published the draft Design Statement for public consultation, which closed on 3rd December 2015. Having received and responded to comments, the Design Statement group are preparing a final version for submission to Winchester City Council for adoption by Cabinet. It will subsequently be printed and distributed.

The Society hopes that all this hard work will help to influence and manage the design of the new developments that the town will have to absorb over the coming years. The volunteer team involved deserve to be thanked by all of us.

A Tribute to John Grover



It was a great shock to many, many people across Bishop's Waltham when they heard in September that John Grover had died suddenly.

For most of us John was an indispensable part of Bishop's Waltham. Part of the weft and weave of the place. If you didn't meet him at St Peter's Church, on the allotments, at a Gardening Club

talk or a Bishop's Waltham Society evening meeting you'd come across him along the High Street, always cheerful, always welcoming - usually with a good story or joke to tell.

John was personally involved in many local organisations, including the Chamber of Trade, the Friends of St Peter's Church, Bishop's Waltham Gardening Club, the Men's Breakfast Club, Bishop's Waltham in Bloom, Bishop's Waltham Town Team and of course, the Bishop's Waltham Society.

To each he gave endless support and encouragement, especially if they were going through a bad patch. But he also played many other roles - as Father Christmas at the annual Christmas Fayre, as a great barbecue chef at all sorts of events for all types of organisations, and as Town Crier at the 2012 Street Party to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee - a role he loved.



John as Town Crier in 2012 from the painting in the Parish Council offices

In his address at John's funeral, Alan Inder quoted what people had said to him about John. He has kindly allowed us to quote from that speech:

"In putting together this tribute I spoke to a number of people who knew John well, to find out about their memories of him and seek their views about him.

Everyone mentioned his sense of humour: He had a great sense of humour, sometimes cheeky but never smutty or crude, always expressed with a gleam in his eye. Some say a wicked sense of humour that could wind up the naïve and gullible, then he would say "only joking!"

Regarding his other qualities, time and again, the following sentiments were expressed:

He was a pillar of strength in the local community. He was trustworthy and utterly reliable. If he promised to do something, he would do it. If he said he would be there at 8.30 he would turn up at 8.20.

He was willing to take on responsibility, and would quietly and effectively get on with the job. John was unflappable, and a steadying influence. He was a thoughtful and wise man, a sage. He never had a bad word to say about anybody. He was modest and self-effacing. Nobody could dislike him. He was always friendly, sociable and cheerful. He was a lovely bloke. He had great generosity of spirit. He helped newcomers settle into the local community.

Well that wide range of wonderful characteristics give us some indication of the esteem in which he was held, and why he was so admired, respected and loved."

As Alan went on to say, "Someone said it's as though a mighty tree has disappeared from the landscape, and for me that is a good analogy." His death certainly leaves a huge gap in many parts of Bishop's Waltham's life and especially amongst his family and closest friends. All our thoughts go out to Doris and all the family.

Chairman's personal tribute

I would like to add my personal tribute to John, who I first met when we lived in Droxford and he was running his butcher's shop in St George's Square.

I have been caught more than once by his 'wicked' sense of humour - including the moment when, in Andrew's shop, with concern all over his face, he jabbed a finger at the shopping bag slung over my shoulder and asked if I knew that I had a leak in it. Quickly pulling it off my shoulder I was suitably mortified by his laugh as I spotted the real leek in my bag, just bought at Hylands!

Although I knew John from days on the allotments and Gardening Club evenings, it wasn't until he acted as liaison between BWAG and the Society that I got to know just how much he cared about the High Street and the town. He was instrumental in persuading me to volunteer to be chairman of the Society and was the first and most responsive member of the Town Team when I first muted its formation. In that role I watched him revive the Chamber of Trade (yet again) even though he was representing Bishop's Waltham in Bloom on the Team. In 2014 we nominated John as our 'High Street Hero' in our bid for the Great British High Street Award in which we were a finalist. A fitting accolade.

We all miss him... John was and is irreplaceable!

Tony Kippenberger
Chairman BWS and BWTT

Working with English Heritage

For many people who live in Bishop's Waltham the fact that the Palace ruins had fallen into disuse as a venue for events was a source of disappointment.

Almost from its inception, the Town Team has wanted to find ways to win back use of our 'greatest hidden asset' and came up with many ideas for its possible use. However it was the serendipitous discovery by our chairman that 2015 was the 600th anniversary of King Henry V's stay at the Palace that provided the first golden opportunity. The whole point was that we would be celebrating the Palace itself (and its role in history)!

Our initial approach to English Heritage was cautious. Changed terms and conditions, and significantly increased costs, had meant that BW Carnival and the St John's Ambulance Garden Fair, as well as Bishop's Waltham Festival had all had to desert the site. Even though the upper floor of the Farmhouse that houses the Museum had been laid out for marriage ceremonies, weddings were no longer being held there.

However, the Bishop's Waltham Museum Trust had developed close contact with English Heritage and the Parish Council decided to bid to take on maintenance work. English Heritage itself was also changing - being broken into an independent charity that would have to self-fund (English Heritage) and a statutory body (Historic England) that would continue the role of looking after ancient monuments as a national asset.

In February 2015, joining forces with BW Festival, the Town Team presented to English Heritage (EH) and received a positive response. Much hard work went into developing this relationship to deliver the four-day event described on page 2.

But there was and is more than this. At that meeting in February the Society's chairman put the case to EH that Bishop's Waltham could become a case study of how the new charity could work with local societies to maximise the value of EH's historic assets.

The first example of this was an agreement between the BW Society and EH to update and reprint the Bishop's Waltham Palace Guide written by John Hare in 1987 and last printed in 1999. We saw this as an important piece of our purpose - to inform and educate people about our heritage.

As a result, a new full-colour 28-page guide to the Palace is now available (price £3.00) with the print

cost paid for by the Society. Once the 1,000 print run is sold - through the Museum and the Post Office - the Society will make a small return on its investment. Precisely what we should be doing.

The Palace Guide with the Society's logo suitably prominent on the back cover



It is hoped that a further agreement can be crafted between EH and the Society, the Gardening Club and maybe the North Pond Group to provide a small scale 'weeding/tidying' service for the Palace grounds. Low level ivy, small sapling seedlings, nettles and other invasive weeds could be carefully removed from the low lying flint structures. We will know more in the Spring.

In memoriam

Pat ApSimon died on 24th January 2015. She, like her husband Arthur, was a Founder Member of the Society.

In years gone by she took part in conservation work in the Moors with Peter Potts, she campaigned about water supplies, organising a meeting in the Jubilee Hall on the subject. For a decade or more she was countryside secretary for the Waltham Group of the Ramblers Association, scanning the weekly lists for planning applications affecting rights of way; she was actively involved in consultations and public inquiries relating to Local Plans and to the National Park (with Brenda Parker). Her response to the formation of the South Downs National Park was to strongly support the inclusion of the Moors within the authority's area.

Pat was buried at the South Downs Natural Burial Site and there was a memorial service in St Barnabas, Swanmore on 13th March 2015.

'Roaring Twenties' Street Party

To celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday Bishop's Waltham Town Team, supported by the Parish Council, will be holding a Street Party along the length and breadth of the High Street on Sunday 12th June from 11.30 am to 6.00 pm.

The theme is the Roaring Twenties - the decade in which the Queen was born. As part of the event we want to celebrate our own 90 year olds. So if you know someone who is 90 on the day (i.e. they have a birthday on or between 11th June 2015 and 12th June 2016) and live in Bishop's Waltham Civil Parish, then please let Georgie Busher know. She is co-ordinating this part of the celebrations and can be contacted on 01498 892543 or gbusher@hotmail.co.uk. Thank you!

Swans on the Ponds

After a year of rather bizarre weather, eventually the rains fell in late December and early January. And at last the water started to flow into the North Pond and we were delighted to see that the two swans were back in residence. Now that the North Pond has completely filled up they are often seen under the bridge, hoping for food!



25 YEARS AGO...

The Society was concerned about an application by James Duke & Son (Holdings) Ltd for a renewal of the planning consent that they had obtained (on appeal) four years previously. The consent was for the "construction of a lorry park and vehicular access" on the northern part of the North Pond - roughly the area north of the footbridge.

The Society had vigorously opposed the original application and did so again with the renewal - especially since the James Duke Brewery Mill itself had now closed down. The Society reported that "regrettably the City Council saw no objection to renewing the planning permission." We should all be very grateful that this planning consent was never implemented!