



Newsletter

Summer 2016

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Members' Meetings: Autumn 2016

When they were first publicised in late 2015, the autumn section of the 2016 programme for member's meetings was a little bit uncertain. This was particularly the case for the November meeting as well as the Christmas Party.

November

November 2016 marks the 100-year anniversary of the end of the Battle of the Somme - General Sir Douglas Haigh's 'Great Push', which cost a million casualties. It was one of the deadliest and bloodiest periods in British military history. We had hoped to mark the occasion with another talk by Geoff Watts who spoke about the 'March to Agincourt' last year. However we now know that he is unable to give a talk on Thursday 17th November.

So what we propose to do instead is to show excerpts from an extraordinary film.

It was made in 1916 by the British government and was the first time that newsreel cameras had been allowed anywhere near the Front. It was released across the country in August 1916 and the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, issued a message to urge everyone to visit their local cinema to see it.

One such location was the Portswood Palladium in Southampton, described when it opened in 1913 as 'the prettiest picture palace south of London.' Pictured below, it seated 150 in the balcony and 500 in the stalls.



A poster for the 'Battle of the Somme' film showing at the Portswood Palladium in 1916

The film has subsequently been painstakingly re-mastered by the Imperial War Museum and is available on DVD. The Society has bought a copy to show at the November meeting - and members can borrow it (free of charge) afterwards if they would like to. The original sound track (it predates the Talkies) has been lost, but the Imperial War Museum specially commissioned a new orchestral score to go with the new release.

For our November meeting however we will show extracts of the film with voice-over since this is less stirringly patriotic and more factual in its interpretation of the filmed events.

If you have relatives who were wounded or died during the Battle of the Somme, we will have a table available for any dedications, stories, medals, photographs, poems, candles that you may wish to bring. There is still time (just) to contact relevant sources (including the amazing Commonwealth War Graves Commission) if you want some detail to add to a family story.

Christmas

The last two Christmas parties have been sold out with all available chairs and tables taken. But we've found it surprisingly difficult to obtain a Christmas subject speaker this year. So we propose to have all the usual entertainment - choral music, wine, Fred's mince pies etc. - and to run one or two Christmas quizzes (with prizes) so that everyone can get involved. So do please make sure Thursday 15th December is in your diary for this year! Let's keep making it fun.

Just a reminder

The September talk (Thursday 15th September) is about the Monarch's Way. This 615-mile trail marks the six-week escape route used by Charles II after his defeat at the Battle of Worcester in 1651.



Hunted and hounded by Cromwellian troops his escape was remarkable because he variously tried to escape the country from Bristol and Dorset before crossing the southern counties to finally elude his pursuers at Shoreham in Sussex *en route* to France and safety.

This brought him within 2 miles of Bishop's Waltham on his way across Hampshire from Mottisfont to Hambledon. The modern trail, the Monarch's Way, which runs from Worcester via Bristol and Yeovil to Brighton runs alongside Stephen's Castle Down near Dean.

Chis Billingshurst will talk about the trail that has been created over recent years and its history. So come and hear the talk and then find a chance to enjoy at least part of the walk!

The October meeting

The talk at this meeting, by the Society's chairman Tony Kippenberger, was originally titled "What did the Normans ever do for us?" But it doesn't really say what it is. The talk may be better named "The Origins of Bishop's Waltham: Exploring the Unexplored" - though the point is essentially the same: we need to know more about our pre-Norman history!

The talk starts, but only starts, to draw back the curtain on the pre-Norman history of Bishop's Waltham. Most of the town's current story begins with the Palace and its builder Henry of Blois, grandson of William the Conqueror and brother of King Stephen. But is he really the founder, or are we missing something just as significant?

Working with English Heritage at the Palace

The Town Team negotiated with English Heritage (EH) in February 2015, in order to be able to celebrate Henry V's stay at Bishop's Waltham's Palace in 1415. During that meeting it became clear that because they were becoming a charity EH would be losing not only their public sector shackles but also their funding. As a result, in future they would want form new relationships with local communities. The Society's chairman rather hastily grabbed the opportunity to invite them to use Bishop's Waltham as an experiment/case study in how that might work.

Apart from their agreement on the Palace's use, the Society subsequently agreed a joint venture to co-produce the new 28-page booklet on the Palace that had been out of print for years. English Heritage revised the text and provided full colour diagrams and photographs, and we paid for the print. When all 1,000 copies are sold we'll make our money back and a small profit. A classic win/win.

At the same time, as the group were walking around the Palace grounds, it was suggested that keen local gardeners might be happy to help keep the ruins a bit tidier and weed free than they are. EH simply doesn't have the money to regularly maintain the grounds and as a result small saplings, briars and other pernicious weeds do the stonework no good at all.

As a result, a meeting with Roy Porter, Senior Properties Curator (South) for EH and Andy Turner, their Landscape Manager, was held at the Palace

on 30th August 2016. It was attended by Barry Jerome of the North Pond Conservation Group and Pauline Daniels from BW in Bloom as well as our chairman.



Plants, brambles and saplings grow amongst the stonework of the Palace ruins

The result of the meeting was that EH would be delighted to have the help of working parties to remove existing vegetation and then keep it under regular control. Priorities were discussed and some constraints explained (e.g. no ladders!). Details will be ironed out and then information circulated to a variety of groups, including the Society, to see how many volunteers would be available. We hope Society members will be amongst them!

The Society makes a donation to NPCG

In the last newsletter we carried an article written by Barry Jerome about the plans that the North Pond Conservation Group have to create permanent water in the North Pond.

We also said that your Executive Committee was thinking about making a donation to the funds being raised to undertake the necessary work.

You will, we hope, be pleased to know that the Committee voted to make a £1,000 donation to the fund which has been gratefully received by the NPCG. At the end of July they had raised just over £20,000 of the £25,200 needed to fund the project! Barry Jerome will be one of our speakers in 2017 - giving us an update on progress.

The End of a Fuel Station

In our Winter 2014/2015 newsletter we carried an article on the closure of the fuel station that was situated next to Budgens on the Winchester Road.

Both sites (the petrol station and the supermarket) are owned by Budgens Property Investments Ltd, part of Musgrave Retail Partners GB. The store is leased to Kavanagh and (according to the Land Registry) the petrol station was still leased to Chevron (owners of the Texaco brand).

The site has been used as a petrol station for many years. The photograph below from the 1950s shows the Glider Coaches Garage (centre) and Southwell's Petrol Station (left) in the position now occupied by Budgens and Chevron (later Texaco and Esso).



© BW Museum Trust

At the time of that newsletter, Winchester City Council had just turned down an application by Musgrave to demolish the service station on the grounds that since there were no suitable plans for developing the site, it amounted to a loss of facilities (and employment) for the local community.

It seems the critical factor was that there were absolutely no plans for what would happen to the site after demolition and tank removal. WCC's Historic Environment officer pointed out in their objection that: "There are no proposals in the application for any replacement structures or buildings on the site, nor are there any proposals for remediation of the land by landscaping or other works. In the absence of such proposals it can only be concluded that the site would be left as an empty site, with the remains of the arisings from the demolition works."

Anyone driving along the Winchester Road in recent weeks will know that the unsightly forecourt has now been demolished and the fuel tanks removed, but the main structure remains.



One of the large petrol tanks after its removal

So what has happened?

First, we know that in July 2015 a second application by Musgrave was granted planning permission for demolition. We have to believe this was possible because this second application did provide details of landscaping and 'other works'.

Second, we know that Musgrave Retail GB has been sold to Bookers. This means that Kavanagh, the local Budgens franchisee, now takes its franchise from Bookers.

Third, we understand that earlier this year the original lease taken on the service station by Chevron has now been passed to Kavanagh.

So we can assume that Kavanagh will now develop the whole site. What can we expect? Though there was very little publicity, Kavanagh applied for planning permission to change their existing store in 2011, after Sainsbury's had obtained planning permission for their Abbey Mill superstore. The plans were turned down on a small technicality.

What Kavanagh had proposed then was the opening up of the solid brick walls that face Winchester Road with a series of windows and a new entrance at the east (Malt Lane) end of the store.



View of 2011 proposals for new Budgens store from the Winchester Road. Showing timber cladding over brickwork to east and new windows to frontage

However, the larger site now presents Kavanagh with plenty of opportunity. The map below shows the relevant position of the current store layout (blue) and the service station site (red).



This illustrates both the size of the site as a whole and acts as a reminder that the current store building is at an angle away from the road.

In an early move our President, Alan Inder, contacted Noel Kavanagh about the possibility of creating a pathway from the Winchester Road along the east bank of the North Pond, with some seating. This would, of course, overlook the NPCG's planned permanent water. We understand that Alan's idea was met with a positive reception.

However, it seems we may have to wait some time to see what plans emerge. Repeated testing is necessary to ensure that all contamination has been completely removed. So there is now a landscaping proposal which specifies the planting of some 32 climbing plants (six honeysuckles and 26 ivy plants) in 16 carefully dug holes along the wired-off perimeter around the southern edge of the site, alongside the Winchester road. For the gardening-minded these will be *Lonicera japonica* 'Hall's Prolific' and *Hedera algeriensis* 'Gloire de Marengo', i.e. an evergreen, scented honeysuckle and a variegated ivy. How long they will grow there is obviously an unknown!

Rumour rebutted...

Over the summer, Bishop's Waltham's notorious 'Rumour Mill' have continued to grind out new stories. Popular amongst them was that Kavanagh had sold Budgens to a Co-op Society (interestingly, not the Southern Co-op who run our two High Street shops)! Noel Kavanagh, Kavanagh's MD, has given us a categorical denial: "I can confirm this is absolutely, totally untrue and we have not and are not selling the store." So there you have it!

The Malt Lane area

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Countryside Homes have purchased what was the site of the public toilets near Fox's and the Youth Hall. A recent conversation with them indicates that they are some way down the track to securing the whole site and finally resolving this perennial eyesore.

Their plans appear to be to use the remaining strip of Station Road (between Malt Lane and St George's Square) as a walkway and to construct a series of retail units along its line. Some housing and parking will be accommodated behind the row of shops.

No plans are available to the public but multiple conversations are apparently taking place. It is an interesting idea, reminiscent of the so-called 'master plan' promoted by Sainsbury's advisors Think Place.

After Sainsbury's initial plan for a typical superstore 'shed' had been dismissed in 2009 by Winchester City Council, Think Place worked with both WCC and Sainsbury's to come up with an

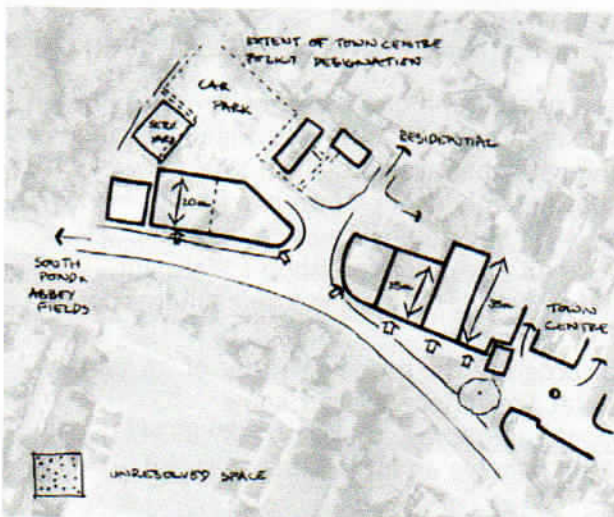
'Urban Design Framework'. This led to the complete redesign of the store itself and the ensuing plans for connecting the South Pond site to the High Street. The illustration below, from 2010, shows 4-storey buildings (with retail at street level) as proposed for a new development along old Station Road as it leaves St George's Square. To help you orient yourself, Budgens is in the middle background and the Bishop's Waltham Museum building is behind the wall on the left.

A future walk from the High Street...



The suggested 4-storey buildings would have been out of scale but Think Place was, after all, a London-based design company. Thankfully, the current Design Statement would make such proposals very unlikely to succeed today.

However, Think Place's overall plan for the Malt Lane area remains interesting. The map opposite on page 4 shows the site as it is now and the sketch below shows how it would have been if their masterplan had been followed.



Think Place's potential masterplan for Malt Lane

There would appear to be space for perhaps 6-8 new retail outlets that would lead into the High Street and show that the town has a significant range of shops. New signage that suggests this, as opposed to the current signs that just say 'Local Shops', would also have a significant impact. The

Parish Council is currently considering a Signage Strategy.

It will be interesting to see how close Budgens and Countryside Homes final plans come to this 2010 proposal. There is, perhaps, reason to believe that WCC may well see this as a valuable conceptual approach to an area that has defied solution for years.

From the Society's point of view, we would welcome resolution of this eyesore but a big concern for us is the archaeology of the area since it sits close to important Saxon and Norman sites, as highlighted in the last newsletter.

Housing developments in Tangier Lane and Albany Road

During June, developer Crest Nicholson applied for detailed planning permission for the site off Albany Road and outline planning permission for the site at Tangier Lane.

The Society has written to object to both sets of plans because of the increased use of the existing junctions with the Winchester Road. Taken in isolation each development might appear to have relatively little impact, but our concern is that the string of developments from the Albany Farm site in the west - Albany Road, Tangier Lane and Martin Street - to Coppice Hill in the east will inevitably have a cumulative effect on the daily level of traffic using the Winchester Road. So no one site should be viewed in isolation - a problem with a planning process that seems to take each application individually rather than within a wider context.

In the case of the Tangier Lane development, the Society's objections paid specific attention to the plans for widening the southern stretch of Tangier Lane that provides the final 130+ metres of access to the site. The current roadway is described by the developer's own Traffic Consultant as a "single carriageway rural lane". The original development plan had proposed that The Avenue should be the access route to what was then called the Vineyard development. However, there is a legal covenant that means that access from Albany Road to the development site is impossible.

It seems the developer is caught between a rock and a hard place. Unable now to use The Avenue, this rural lane has to become the main access point for a development of 66 houses. This should mean a width of 5.5 metres, but the distance between the oak trees to the west (covered by Tree Protection Orders) and the property boundaries on the east (Mallard Close) is about 4.8 metres - the proposed new road width.

This may be satisfactory for 'normal' traffic (the arrival of lorries on housing estates is treated as rare since they usually only involve removal vehicles). But this takes no account of the daily flow of the large agricultural vehicles, operated by the Agricultural Contractors J & ST Gregory based at Tangier Farm, on this lane. These large pieces of equipment are hired by other farmers across Hampshire for seasonal use and are the width of a normal lorry - 3 metres. Since the average family saloon is 2 metres wide this would make a 4.8 metre road impassable if a farm vehicle was also on the lane. The single pedestrian footway is another problem.

For more detail, the Society's letter(s) are posted on the WCC Planning website.

Correction: The Society has subsequently written to WCC's Planning Dept to correct the wording in our letters. We originally stated that a southern by-pass "would be" a better alternative to the Winchester Road. We now have changed this to "might be". In either event we invited WCC to "revisit" the concept of a new bypass rather than choose it.

This reflects the fact that we now understand that Botley had to accept 1,500 new houses in order to get its new bypass. We would not wish to commit Bishop's Waltham to the same scale of development to achieve that end.

Bishop's Waltham in Bloom's Wildflower 'Meadow'

Further along the Winchester Road at the Tangier Lane turning there has been a beautiful wildflower patch created by BW in Bloom. Many whizzing past on the main road may have missed it, but it was well worth turning off into Tangier Lane to enjoy.

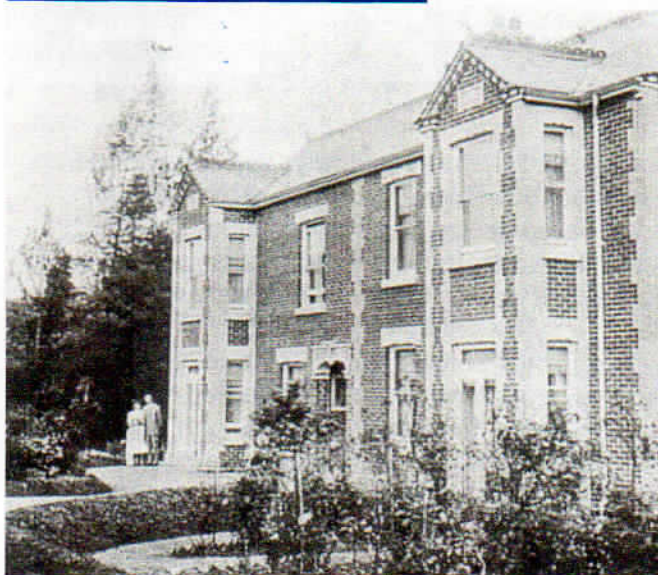


Roped off to stop it being mown, the patch has been a glorious piece of long-lost countryside brought into an urban setting. A blaze of different colours that has been, of course, alive with bees and other insects.



Apparently WCC are very keen that BW in Bloom should extend this experiment around the town. Since 'in Bloom' rely heavily on sponsorship, the Society will consider whether to extend its current sponsorship of a single flower bed to cover other wildflower patches. Do let us know what you think.

Do you recognise this house?



This is a photograph of a house believed to have been taken around 1933. It was originally called 'Northleigh' when it was built in 1904. However it was subsequently divided into two houses in around 1954 and one half was called 'Landfall'. It is believed to be close to Bishop's Waltham, possibly in one of the neighbouring villages.

If you recognise the house or either of its names please let Tony Kippenberger know (tkippenberger@csbs.co.uk or 01489 893473). You may help to solve an interesting mystery!

The Clayland's Re-cycling Centre

In the early summer of 2016, Hampshire County Council (HCC) ran a consultation exercise about the county's re-cycling centres. As interest gathered, the Society put together a guide for completing a survey that seemed loaded to achieve the closure of the Claylands site amongst others.



Running to six pages it went through the online survey question by question. Unfortunately, because we don't have a 'clean' email list of members yet we had to just send it out to as many as possible asking them to pass it on. Our apologies if you didn't receive an emailed copy of it.

12,000 people completed the survey and HCC announced in July that all the sites in the county will remain open. From January 2017, sites will open later in the morning (at 11.00 am) and all will close on Thursday each week. New charges will apply for soil, rubble, plasterboard and asbestos from October 2016. Stronger tactics are being developed to deal with fly-tipping which is already a problem.



Some typical fly-tipping in Station Road in August 2016

The Rout of Winchester: 1141

Now for a bit of history!

Within a hundred years of William the Conqueror's victory at the Battle of Hastings, England was in a state of civil war. Called 'the Anarchy', the 14-year period from 1139-53 saw the country suffer widespread disruption, death and devastation as the different fortunes of two rival claimants for the English crown rose and fell.

The two were cousins, both grandchildren of the Conqueror. Matilda, the daughter of his third son

Henry I, and Stephen of Blois, the son of his daughter Adela. The stories behind the rival claims are too complex for this newsletter, but suffice it to say that when Henry I died in 1135, Stephen quickly seized the crown. His rival Matilda had been married to the Holy Roman Emperor and so was known as Empress Matilda. This helps to differentiate her from King Stephen's wife, Queen Matilda.

Stephen quickly achieved the three essentials that a King of England needed to gain power. He was greeted by the citizens of London, crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury and royally received in Winchester (where the Royal Treasury was still kept). All of this aided by his brother, Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester. The same Henry who built Bishop's Waltham Palace.

But within four years Stephen was fighting for his crown against rebel nobles, led by one of Henry I's illegitimate sons, Robert of Gloucester. Between them, the rebel leaders held most of the West Country and the Welsh Marches. Although initially slow off the mark, Empress Matilda arrived in Arundel in 1139 and Robert and the other rebels proclaimed her as the legitimate queen. From then on civil war intensified in an episodic fashion as one side or the other tried to gain ground by taking each other's castles. Pitched battles were seen as too decisive and therefore risky, so it became a war of steady attrition - castle warfare.

At Lincoln in February 1141, in a rare pitched battle, King Stephen was captured and taken back to Gloucester where he was imprisoned. Empress Matilda seized her chance. By March, with the King imprisoned, Henry of Blois had little choice but to deliver Winchester and the Royal Treasury to her. She then marched to London to claim the throne. Initially well received, she was soon made aware of her unpopularity - a change in fortune she blamed on Henry of Blois who she believed had stirred up the Londoners against her. His forces had also laid siege to Winchester Castle - which was being held by forces loyal to the Empress.

Determined to retake Winchester, Empress Matilda left London. As she did so the capital was recaptured by the Royalists, this time led by Stephen's wife, Queen Matilda.

Although King Stephen still languished in prison in Gloucester, Henry of Blois now issued a call to arms to Royalists across the country and hired mercenaries to help create a force to meet the Empress's army as it headed toward Winchester in late July, 825 years ago. In August, Queen Matilda left London with a force of 1,000 men and made haste to Winchester to support her brother-in-law.

On 2nd August, having left a strong force in his own recently fortified Wolvesey Castle, Bishop Henry timed his retreat from the city to perfection. As Empress Matilda and Robert of Gloucester entered Winchester through the East Gate, Henry left, with his own forces, though the South Gate. From there he travelled south to visit his recently built castle at Merdon (Romsey), then headed east to his new castle at Bishop's Waltham. Finally he headed north to meet up with Queen Matilda and the rest of the Royalist forces, probably at Farnham, as they approached Winchester from the east. Such was the strength of the Royalist forces that they soon surrounded Winchester and cut off all supplies to the city. Empress Matilda now found herself besieging Wolvesey Castle while her own army was itself beleaguered within the city walls.

Controversially, Henry of Blois's men at Wolvesey Castle set fire to the surrounding houses in order to clear the ground their attackers could use to reach its walls. Unfortunately the fire spread and much of the northern part of the city perished in the flames. The fire even swept over the walls, setting fire to Hyde Abbey, the final resting place of King Alfred.

But it was the risk of starvation that finally compelled the Empress and the rebels to attempt a break out. A probable feint was made at Wherwell to distract the Royalists and on 14th September Matilda and Robert of Gloucester, with their main force, escaped through the West Gate. For speed, the Empress rode her horse like a man (in an age when women rode side saddle) while Robert of Gloucester commanded the rear-guard.

He was eventually engaged in battle at Stockbridge, defending the river crossing, and after a short fight was captured by the Royalists. Matilda escaped first to Ludgershall and then Devizes before being put in a bier carried by horses to reach the West Country. Shortly afterwards, Robert of Gloucester and King Stephen were exchanged through the 'Treaty of Winchester' negotiated by Bishop Henry of Blois.



A detail from John Speed's 1611 map of Hampshire purporting to show the Empress being carried in a bier as she escapes after the 'Rout of Winchester'

And so the civil war resumed after what became known as the 'Rout of Winchester'. The conflict

continued until 1153 when both sides had effectively exhausted themselves. In another treaty negotiated by Henry of Blois, it was agreed that Stephen would remain monarch but would be succeeded by the Empress Matilda's son, Henry II.

The New History Project

Around 1138, Henry of Blois had built a series of castles to defend his lands. These were at Taunton, Farnham, Merdon, Downton (in Wiltshire), Bishop's Waltham and Winchester itself. Both Merdon and Downton were at some point captured by rebel forces before being retaken by Henry's own men. There is no evidence that the fortifications at Bishop's Waltham (wherever they were - see below) became subject to attack.

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, the Society is supporting a new project to investigate Bishop's Waltham's earlier past.



One prompt for this are doubts raised over the conventional wisdom that Henry of Blois's castle at Bishop's Waltham was built on the same site as the later Palace. Since the Normans built castles to dominate the landscape, it does seem unlikely that he would have built one in a valley bottom, out of sight of the road that it was meant to be guarding. But perhaps more about this in the talk on Thursday, 20th October (page 2).

25 YEARS AGO...

The Society was clearly very exercised by the fact that Hampshire County Council (HCC) had suddenly, without consultation, erected a good many bollards along the High Street and in Cross Street.

Referred to as 'Those Bollards' it would appear there was some considerable uproar both about their unannounced arrival and the nature of the bollards themselves. The Society, along with others, protested and HCC subsequently acknowledged the lack of consultation and then agreed to halve their number and replace them with cast iron ones - those that are still here today.

The Bishop's Waltham Town Team, of which the Society is a member, is currently looking at the possibility of painting these and other bollards around the town with a variety of colourful designs. Discussions about how this might best be done are still going on.



They could do with cheering up!