

THE SOCIETY IN 2017

The Hon. Secretary's Report

BAS Council Meetings were held on 7th January, 4th March, 3rd June, and 7th October 2017.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 6th May 2017.

Officers of the Society: Richard Gem was re-elected as Honorary President and Doug Stuckey was elected as Hon. Secretary in place of Sarah Gray. Julian Hunt was re-elected to the post of Hon. Librarian and Roger Bettridge to the post of Hon. Archivist, with Sarah Gray on the Library Team. Peter Marsden continued as Chair of Council, Harry Ball as Hon. Treasurer and Bronwen Lee as Hon. Membership Secretary. Having brought new ideas and energy to the position of Hon. Secretary, Sarah Gray relinquished that position but continues to be in overall charge of the summer excursions programme.

Councillors: Newly elected members of council are: Sarah Gray, John Dodd and David Hillier. Pauline Hey, Sandy Kidd, and Charles LeQuesne were re-elected for a further year. The three-year period of service on council expired for George Lamb, Kim Biddulph, and Nigel Wilson who were all thanked for their service to the Society. Nigel was co-opted on to the council to serve with special responsibility for planning liaison with local authorities.

Finance and Membership: The Hon. Treasurer reported the Society was in a healthy financial position. The accounts were audited by Ms Dharamshi and published in the spring edition of the BAS Newsletter. Bronwen Lee, the Hon. Membership Secretary, reported a small decline in membership. This was in part the result of the mortality of an ageing membership and an insufficient level of recruitment from the younger generation. The 170th anniversary of the founding of

the Society falls in 2018: planning has begun for a series of talks, stands and lectures at various venues throughout the county that hopefully will raise the profile of BAS and perhaps encourage the recruitment of new members.

Planning Matters: The continued advance of suburban and exurban development across the county confronts BAS Council with a constant reminder of its stated objective of preserving and recording the architectural heritage, historic landscape and archaeological remains of Buckinghamshire. Council is fortunate to include among its members Eliza Alqassar of the County Archaeological Service, who has given regular and valuable updates summarising investigations and excavations at development sites around the county to the Council. Meanwhile, as the Council member for planning, Nigel Wilson has been diligent in maintaining a watching brief on planning matters.

The construction of the HS2 rail line south to north through the county, plus the promised East-West rail link Oxford-Cambridge Expressway across the county will in effect provide opportunities for archaeological fieldwork that promise to yield a wealth of artefacts and remains. If correctly managed, the results from these works may greatly enhance our understanding of the county's history and archaeology. Council continues to work towards the mitigation of the impacts of these projects and the recording and preservation of all material of interest that is raised from the ground.

The Library and Archives: The Library and Archives Team of Roger Bettridge, Sarah Gray and Julian Hunt have ensured that the BAS Library has been open every Wednesday throughout the year. The computers in the Library have been replaced and are now connected to the County Museum's network. Whilst the number of readers using the library and archives has been modest but growing,

it is thought worthwhile keeping the service going, especially as local authority provision in this area may well diminish further in coming years. Meanwhile, Garry Marshall has been listing uncatalogued collections in the Muniment Room, and Peter Longden updated the database catalogue of books in the BAS Library.

The Society was very fortunate to have received a very generous bequest of £5000 from its former President, Professor William (Bill) Mead. It was thought that a fitting use of this legacy would be to digitise the collection of estate maps held by the Society, so Roger Bettridge organised this project in co-operation with the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS). This is now nearing completion, and shortly the final digitised versions of the maps will be available for researchers in the Library and the CBS and later online.

Lectures: Following the 2017 AGM, Sarah Gray entertained the meeting with an enlightening and informative talk entitled *A Century of Unexpected Treasures: The Society's Museum Collections*. Julian Hunt organised a series of talks given at the County Museum that invariably were well attended and much appreciated. Gary Marshall of the National Trust spoke on recent investigations on the south terrace at Cliveden, Julian Hunt lectured on 'Addington and the Hubbards' and Dr Haydon Bailey talked to a joint meeting of BAS and the Bucks Geology Group on 'The Geology of the Chilterns and the Possible Impact of HS2'. In the final meeting of the series, various speakers covered aspects of BAS between 1847 and 2017. The Bucks Local History Network conference was held at the Aylesbury Vale District Council Offices, the venue in the geographic centre of the county that is most accessible from both Chiltern and Vale.

Excursions: A very full programme of excursions was organised by Sarah Gray in 2017; in one case jointly run with the Bucks Gardens Trust. These

proved as popular as ever. Visits were made to Compton Verney, Medieval Oxford and Boughton House, led by Sarah Gray, also to Addington House and Hanbury and Hagley, both led by Julian Hunt. Michael Hardy's 'Church Crawl' went to the south, around High Wycombe.

Active Archaeology Group: The group has been busy around the county and sometimes neighbouring counties, more especially at Buckland, Hogshaw, Cholesbury, Quarrendon, Soulbury, Ivinghoe, Wing, Maids Moreton, and Verulamium. In addition, there was a programme of talks and practical sessions held in the County Museum. These included a practical session, led by Mike Farley, on 'Identifying and dating pottery finds', 'Wulfhere's People' given by BAS Associate Editor Bob Zeepvat and 'History and archaeology in the Chiltern woodlands', by John Morris, Director of the Chilterns Conservation Board's Chiltern Woodlands Project.

Publications: Professor Mead had very generously left to BAS the rights to a number of his publications. The Society has published a second edition of Professor Mead's translation of the diary of Pehr Kalm, a visitor from Finland to Little Gaddesden in the Chilterns in 1748. Michael Farley produced a short booklet, *Quarrendon, Aylesbury's Lost Medieval Village* and Peter Gulland's comprehensive account of the planning and building of the county's turnpike roads was published in September; sales have been very positive. Bob Zeepvat oversaw the editing and printing of Records of Bucks which was posted out to members in the spring of 2017, and the BAS Newsletter edited by Michael Ghirelli appeared in spring and autumn, printed by Waddesdon Church Of England School.

*Doug Stuckey (Hon Secretary 2017–2018)
(with contributions from Michael Ghirelli
and Sarah Gray)*

The Library

ADDITIONS TO THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE 2016

- ALCOCK, N.W. *Cruck Construction: An Introduction and Catalogue*. CBA Research Report 42, 1981.
- ASTON, M. & BOND, J. *The Landscape of Towns*. 1976.
- BARGER, ROBERT. *The Amateur Artist: Sketching the English Country House* [includes watercolour of Denham Place, 1826]. 2016.
- BAYLEY, MICHAEL H.H. *Ancient and Holy and Healing Wells of the Thames Valley and their Associates: pictorial map*. 1978.
- BECKETT, IAN F.W. *The Safe Duke: Selected County Correspondence of Richard, Third Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, 1861–1889*. Buckinghamshire Record Society, vol. 37, 2016.
- BECKETT, IAN F.W. *Wanton Troopers: Buckinghamshire in the Civil Wars, 1640–1660*. 2015.
- BEESON, C.F.C. *Clockmaking in Oxfordshire, 1400–1850, part 3 addenda* [includes references to Chilton and Ludgershall].
- BOURNE, GEORGE. *Change in the Village*. 1912 (1966 reprint).
- BUCKINGHAMSHIRE BIRD CLUB. *Buckinghamshire Bird Report*, 2014. 2016.
- BUCKS LIFE. *Special Vale of Aylesbury issue* [includes articles on Nether Winchendon and Wotton]. 1970.
- CROUCH, WILLIAM [d. 1928]. *Reminiscences of a Retired County Official*. 2010.
- EUREKA PUBLICATIONS. *Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard Wesleyan Methodist Circuit: Historic Roll, 1899–1904*. 2008.
- EUREKA PUBLICATIONS. *Aylesbury Wesleyan Methodist Circuit: Baptisms, 1892–1940, Burials, 1844–1956*. 2008.
- GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH (translated by Lewis Thorpe). *History of the Kings of Britain*. 1973 reprint.
- GRAY, EDMUND. *The British House*. 1994.
- HADDENHAM MUSEUM TRUST. *The Haddenham Chronicles*, 14. 2016.
- HADFIELD, JOHN (ed.). *The Shell Book of English Villages* [includes article by Elliott Viney on The Chilterns]. 1986.
- HAY, DAISY. *Mr & Mrs Disraeli: A Strange Romance*. 2015.
- HOSKINS, W.G. *Provincial England: Essays in Social and Economic History*. 1965.
- IREDALE, DAVID. *Discovering Local History*. 2nd edition, 1977.
- MAYOU, RICHARD. *Shabbington: A Thousand Years of Village History*. 2015.
- MERCER, ERIC. *English Vernacular Houses*. 1979.
- MONUMENTAL BRASS SOCIETY. *Portfolios of brass rubbings: Vol. V, part 10* [includes Anne Englishe, her daughter and granddaughter at Ludgershall, c.1600].
- MONUMENTAL BRASS SOCIETY. *Portfolios of brass rubbings: Vol. VI, part 5* [includes Roger Hunt and his wife at Linslade, 1473].
- OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY. *In Touch*, 35: Review, 2014–2015. 2015.
- OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY & MARSHALL, GARY. *Archaeological Survey of the Ashridge Estate, Vol. V, Area D: Clipper Down, Crawley Wood and Down Farm (East), Duncombe Farm, Stocks Farm, Wards Hurst Farm (South)*. 2015.
- OXFORDSHIRE BUILDINGS RECORD. *Oxon Recorder*, 65, Winter 2015 [includes report on Lane End Conference, with visits to several Buckinghamshire farms]. 2015.
- ROGERS, ALAN. *Approaches to Local History*. 2nd edition, 1977.
- ROTHSCHILD ARCHIVE. *Review of the Year 2013–2014*. 2015.
- RUTHERFORD, SARAH. *Capability Brown and his Landscape Gardens*. 2016.
- SAMSON, VIVIEN and DEBORAH. *The Rabbi in the Green Jacket: Memories of Jewish Buckinghamshire, 1939–1945*. 2015.
- SAWYER, GEOFFREY. *Seer Green Then and Now* [stories to accompany exhibition]. 1977.
- STAMP, GAVIN. *Gothic for the Steam Age* [biography of G.G. Scott]. 2015.
- THROSSELL, ERIC. *Joseph Bonomi's Secret Histories: The Egyptianised Enigmas*, Hartwell. 2009.

YORKE, Trevor. Arts and Crafts House Styles. 2011 (2013 reprint).

BAS Active Archaeology Group Reports

LOCKYEAR, KRIS. Beside the Boundary of Cholesbury Camp: a geophysical survey report (with Chess Valley Archaeological and Historical Society). 2016.

Sale Catalogues

Bulstrode (remaining contents of mansion), 1958, Old Mill, Chalfont St Giles, 1963, and Savay Farm, Denham, n.d. [?c.1960], all from the E. Clive Rouse papers; Sotheby's sales of MSS, 1939 (including Hartwell deeds and documents, with pencil annotations of prices), and 1949 (including calendar referring to John Schorne); 'Palaeography, Genealogy and Topography' from the collection of H.R. Moulton (including many Buckinghamshire deeds), 1930.

Archives

FARLEY, MICHAEL. File re-establishment of the Quarrendon Trust, 2004–2008, including copy papers from 1991, and 2013.

GULLAND, DIANA. Research materials relating to the history of Aston Clinton House.

MEAD, W.R. Personal archive, mainly diaries, 1928–30 and 2008–13 [20-year closure period applies].

MILLS, COLIN. Local history notes, mainly

relating to Chesham Bois.

PUGH, HERBERT. Commonplace book containing poems and pictures. 1820.

ROUSE, E. CLIVE. Miscellaneous correspondence and papers.

Theses/Dissertations (unpublished)

HARDING, P.J. The Furniture Industry in High Wycombe: Industrial Expansion and Survival to 1913. 1984.

Unpublished articles

CAKEBREAD, FRANK INGRAM. History and Description of Savay Farm [Denham]. 1993.

CROSBIE-HILL, BILL. The Quainton Salt Road. 2015.

Additional Items

The usual journals, magazines and newsletters were added to stock, together with 51 smaller items. These included articles, leaflets, pamphlets, transcripts of records, postcards, photographs, sale catalogues, parish, church and historic house guides and histories, heritage trail leaflets, a letter, a press release and a funeral order of service. A list of all the periodicals held in the Library was published in the Society's Newsletter, Spring 2017.

*Roger Bettridge, Hon. Archivist
Julian Hunt, Hon. Librarian*

Publishing On-line and in Print

Times have changed in publishing. Digital technology has brought new opportunities for the Society – but it is not always easy to keep up with this fast-moving animal.

The Society's **website** came first, created in 2010 by Kevin Quick with the help of a legacy to the Society by Arnold Baines, a long-standing member and vice-president. Since then the website has expanded every year, with new pages added about the history and archaeology of our county, usually generated by the activities of members of the Society.

Email was not far behind. Individual members had email long before 2010, of course, and email had been used as a means of individual communication. But Marian Miller, as Librarian, first set up an emailing list for the Society: by 2017 this had become a weekly way of alerting members to news and activities – not just our own, but from other societies across the county.

At about the same time **document scanning** enabled out-of-print editions of *Records of Bucks* to be digitised, so that they could be read on-screen through the website, or even printed at home. More recent issues are of course produced in digital format. One of the first to be scanned was volume 1, published in 1854. By December 2017 thirty annual volumes were accessible through the website, a total of 237 articles ranging from 'Antiquities of the Chiltern Hills' (1854) to 'Buckinghamshire pots, potters and potteries' (2015). Thanks to work by John Dodd, another 125 annual volumes have been digitally scanned. These too will become available to readers through the website, though the work to do this is time-consuming and will take some years to complete.

In 2016 the Society also put a toe in the rushing water of 'social media' when Marian Miller opened a **Twitter** account. Although Twitter has since been made notorious by US President Trump, this was a useful way for the Society to provide anyone interested – not just members – with short news items about Buckinghamshire's history, archaeology, natural history and historic buildings and

activities in support of this heritage... for a while. The life of each 'tweet' proved short, and the work of feeding this 'twitter stream' took up too much valuable time.

Also in 2016 the Society's Active Archaeology Group started a **web log**. This is a running diary of the group's activities, ranging from a survey of the Knights Hospitallers manor site at Hogshaw to investigation of a former pumping station on the Wendover Canal arm. Again, this could prove a useful way of attracting new members to our activities, though again keeping it up-to-date takes time away from the activities themselves. The lesson, perhaps, is that the daily demands of social media are not well-suited to the longer timescales of history and archaeology that are measured in centuries. As they say, time will tell.

But let's not forget the value of old-fashioned paper. Printed publications are still the mainstay of the Society. Every year in May **Records of Buckinghamshire** publishes historical research and archaeological investigation reports of a high academic and professional standard thanks to the editorial team of John Broad and Bob Zeepvat, while twice a year the **BAS Newsletter** goes to members with details of recent and planned activities.

Both publications have gained from changes in printing technology. In the past five years digital printing has reduced the cost of publishing across-the-board. At **Records**, this saving has been used to improve quality, introducing the full-colour maps, plans and illustrations that have become an essential tool of today's archaeology. Similar changes mean editing and designing the **Newsletter** can be done on a home computer – its editor, Mike Ghirelli, has also added colour as a bonus.

Book publishing too has been transformed. Not long ago it was uneconomic to print fewer than 1,000 copies of a book. This meant that a small society such as ours, with around 300 members, risked being left with hundreds of unsold copies. Today this is no longer true. Digital printing is today more akin to photocopying, though on a

larger scale. Gone are the days of large letterpress or offset litho machines with expensive set-up costs. And the result is that short print-runs are economically viable.

Since May 2013 the Society has published three books and two pamphlets. The longest print-run was 400, the shortest only 60 copies. Of the three published in 2017, our pamphlet on **Quarrendon** in July and Peter Gulland's **Toll Roads of Buckinghamshire** in September had both repaid their costs before the end of the year. Only our reprint of Bill Mead's translation of Pehr Kalm's diary,

The Chilterns in 1748, was short of this target: we need to sell just 19 more copies to break even. Remaining stocks of all five publications are below 50 copies, and with digital printing a short-run reprint is easy if we need more.

These digital advances give the Society more opportunities than ever to emphasise the unique value of Buckinghamshire's heritage of local history, archaeology, historic buildings and natural history. Hopefully, more people are also listening.

Peter Marsden