



Andover History and Archeology Society Newsletter



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LAST YEAR saw the Asking Andover project running at Andover Museum and some of our members contributed their memories of living in the town and countryside around – the schools, the shops and the social life. Andover Museum is wanting to take the project forward by using the memories and artefacts it was given, as the foundation for a series of exhibitions in its Weyhill Room. AHAS has offered to be involved and you will be sent more details when they are known.

The material given to the society by the late Derek Tempero's family has been listed and passed to the Hampshire Record Office for it to select the items wanted for the county archives. Any unwanted material will be returned and your committee will decide its future.

While work is progressing on a new AHAS website, our present website continues to do a good job in connecting us with people interested in our local area and in providing information about the varied programme of talks we have to look forward to. Looking at everything on our website also brings home how important AHAS is in capturing, recording and telling people about the history of our local area.

Our society must continue to thrive and, to do that, we need more members to be involved in its day-to-day running. Please consider putting yourself forward to serve on the committee where no special knowledge of local history or expertise is needed. If you think you might help, do email or have a chat with me, or any other committee member. We also need volunteers to help on days when we need some extra pairs of hands, such as the Dacre or the December meeting, or with other things that pop up during the year. If we can call on you for that help, please do let me know.

I am looking forward to our 2020 programme which is full of good things and I hope you will enjoy it too.

Erica Tinsley

AHAS Upcoming events 2020

- January 24 Amport
Bill Gore
- February 28 The Rise and Fall of Henry Barnes - Horse Dealer
David Snow
- March 27 The Old Lady and Hurstbourne Park: The Bank of England
in Wartime Hampshire
Alison Deveson
 also **AGM** will be held on March 27
- April 24 **Dacre Lecture** at the Weyhill Fairground Hall
Winchester Cathedral and its Associations
Prof Michael Wheeler
- May 22 Red Rice
Dianne Rawlings
- June 26 Village Walk - Barton Stacey
- September 25 Rails Around Andover: 180 years of north Hampshire
railway history
Dave Allen
- October 23 A History of Bells and Bellringing
Jane Tarrant
- November 27 Policing Andover and District during WW2
Clifford Williams
- December 11 Members Talks

Regular meetings are held in the Andover Guildhall, at 7.30 p.m. and visitors are always welcome.

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Meeting reports

Wells, Pumps and Fountains

In October, Dr Jill Hind spoke about Oxfordshire's water supply from 1540 which covered wells, pumps and fountains in the county. Jill explained that she had been working for Oxfordshire Archaeology and that her particular interest was in the water supply over the past five centuries.

She showed a very interesting and attractive collection of slides illustrating the sources of water and the various means by which succeeding generations have devised methods of obtaining and using it.

Oxfordshire is blessed with the upper reaches of the Thames (or the Isis!) which supplies London with much of its water. Elsewhere in the county there are other sources such as ponds, springs and streams from which water can easily be obtained, but in some places the water is really low down in the limestone rock and wells have had to be dug to a depth of 300 ft or more.

By the fifteenth century many monasteries had their own water supply, and some pipes can still be seen in Thame, Eynsham and Oxford Castle. In a rare mention of Hampshire she said that in Southampton, where the monastery shared its supply with the town they still have a 15th century "waterhouse".



Over the years all sorts of ways have been devised to supply, process and store fresh water and to deal with wastewater. Beautiful buildings have been provided as well-covers, some of which are listed. A very special one is the Maharajah's Well at Stoke Row in the Chilterns. (pictured left)

In the mid-1800s the Maharajah of Benares in India heard that a little boy living in the poor village of Stoke Row, was beaten by his mother for drinking the last of the water in their house during a drought.

He decided to fund a well for the village and it opened in 1864. It was dug by hand by two men. It is 368 ft deep (about the height of St Paul's Cathedral) and has a 4ft in diameter. It is capped by a decorative golden elephant and the whole edifice is covered by a dome.

There are holy wells and springs at various places in Oxfordshire and in other counties. There are waterwheels for grinding corn and fountains for giving people pleasure in parks and gardens. The Industrial Revolution started by heating water and using the steam for energy.

Often quite imposing waterworks were built which used engines to do the work of penetrating the ground to obtain and process water.

At Andover there is a spring called St Ann's Well which at one time fed the watercress beds alongside The Folly. The watercress has gone but maybe the spring is still there close to the river!

So in answer to that:

Electricity and Water do not mix...

Dr Jill Hind, raised a local question about the present state of *St Ann's Well*, which she showed on the 1874 OS map as being near Mead Hedges. A member of the audience rose to the challenge and located it near old watercress beds. A later OS map sanctifies it *St Ann's Well* and now a lot is made of *St Ann's* nearby: *St Ann's Hall/House/Close*.

So, what has been made of this historic Andover site, a holy or, indeed, an unholy well?

It is now an electricity sub-station, number 1254, on the corner of the site of the empty and very derelict *Babbage House*. And misspelt! (that is: Anne with an "e"!)



Defenders of the Realm

At the November meeting one of our own members, Tony Raper, gave a talk on the history of the **1st Hampshire (Andover) Battalion Home Guard**. His talk outlined the reasons why a Home Guard was necessary and how a 'volunteer' army was made ready and able to protect the country should an invasion happen.

In the early months of 1940 it was abundantly clear that the German army had the upper hand in Europe and were pushing the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) back to the sea at Dunkirk. Luckily the majority were rescued, but they were a defeated army and this left Britain exposed and an obvious target for invasion. The British Government decided it was necessary to have a secondary line of defence and tasked the Royal Engineers to provide 'stop-lines', build coastal defensive batteries, pillboxes etc. A radio appeal by Anthony Eden, Secretary of State, appealed for men between the ages of 17 to 65 to come forward and sign up for a volunteer force called the **Local Defence Volunteers (LDV)** to support the British Army. Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister was unhappy about the name and insisted it was changed to the Home Guard.

The Hampshire Home Guard was split into areas, based on the large towns, based on the old Territorial Army areas set up after the First World War. The 'Andover' area covered approximately 360 sq. miles and was eventually named the 1st Hampshire (Andover) Battalion and members wore the H1 insignia on the upper arms. For LDV, weapons and uniforms were in short supply and many had only an LDV armband, and were armed with a broomstick or shotgun, but as time went by they were fully equipped with an army uniform and issued with a rifle and ammunition.

The job of the Home Guard was to try to slow down the advance of the enemy even by a few hours to give the regular troops time to regroup. They were also to defend key communication points and factories in rear areas against possible capture by paratroops or fifth columnists. A key purpose was to maintain control of the civilian population in the event of an invasion, to forestall panic, and to prevent communication routes from being blocked by refugees, to free the regular forces to fight the Germans. The Home Guard continued to man roadblocks and guard the coastal areas and other important places such as airfields, factories and explosives stores until late 1944, when they were stood down. They were finally disbanded on 31 December 1945, eight months after Germany's surrender. although the upper-age limit was not

Service was unpaid but gave a chance for older or inexperienced soldiers to support the war effort.

Tony explained the organisation of the Home Guard, showing that Andover was served by three platoons and most villages in the area had their own 'section' and all ended up fully trained and able to defend themselves and the citizens.

Tony Raper has written a book about the subject which will be published this year, in time for the 80th anniversary on May 14, of the formation of the LDV/ Home Guard.



Recognise anybody in the above photograph?

It is part of H Company, photographed at the TA Hall in East Street in 1944.

It has become traditional for the December meeting to be devoted to members' talks and this year there were two talks to enjoy.

Social Services in Pre-Victorian Times

The first was by **June Harris**. She explained that religious organisations had been the main source of charity for those who could not support themselves but Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries removed that help. Parishes tried to help their own poor but drove away the increasing numbers of vagrants and those in dire need from other parishes. Eventually, Elizabeth I's government passed the Poor Relief Act of 1601 which obliged each parish to collect a parish rate to support people who could not work and this system was the basis of relief for the next 230 years. She spoke about the operation of poor relief in Andover, based on her own study of vestry records, until the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834 brought in the harsh workhouse system and the building of the infamous Andover Workhouse.

June's talk was followed by a lively question session. An article based on her research amongst vestry records will appear in the next edition of *Lookback*.

Some More Musical Notes

The second talk was by **Phil Farlow** who gave us ***Some More Music Notes*** very enjoyably introduced and illustrated by a number of carefully selected extracts of music and other recordings.

He began by explaining how television had arrived in the Andover area back in the 1950s. BBC Television had been broadcasting since 1936 but local reception was rare until a new transmitter came on stream in the mid-1950s. In 1955, Associated Rediffusion started the first commercial television broadcasts in the London area and some local people could get fringe reception from its Croydon transmitter but commercial television reception for everyone had to wait until 1958 and the arrival of Southern Television.

Southern Television operated from studios in Southampton and used a transmitter on Chillerton Down on the IOW. The composer Richard Addinsell, who lived for a time at Chute Lodge, wrote the short orchestral piece *Southern Rhapsody* which was played every morning at the start of the company's broadcasts.

We were reminded of some of its popular programmes and some local connections. Richard Davies, better known as Dickie Davies, started as an announcer for Southern Television and then became well-known as a presenter for ITV Sport. He ran The Globe in Andover High Street with his wife Liz and her mother Dorothy. The presenter Muriel Young also lived locally in Longparish for a while.

Before the arrival of television, the Andover area had been host to many broadcast radio programmes, some of which had been highlighted in previous *Music Notes* talks. New information was always being discovered. For example, the Rev Ivor Machin had made a number of broadcasts in the 1950s and in WW2 part of a variety show had been broadcast live from the Upper Chamber of Andover Guildhall. It was surviving recordings that were harder to find.

We were treated to a recording of BBC Radio's Gardeners' Question Time broadcast from Andover in July 1977 when the panel was asked when peonies should be planted. Society members were delighted to hear the question posed by the familiar voice of the late Harry Parris.

In 1948 two local gardeners from Nether Wallop, Jack Dacre and James Dymott, were using a portable disc recorder to make metal based, acetate disc recordings. Judy Maynard's 2011 book *Behind the Scenes: A History of Nether Wallop* gives some information about them, especially Jack Dacre who with 'his banjo boys' provided entertainments in the area. It would be good to discover more surviving recordings and know more about their interest in the recording technology of the time.

A world famous musician who, in 1972, came to live locally at Plane Farm, Nether Wallop was the English conductor Leopold Stokowski. He was then aged 90 and still conducting in public, and he would continue to make recordings until June 1977, just a few months before his death at the age of 95. Despite his age and his busy life, he still found time to be an honorary member of the Danebury Players. During his long career, he had conducted the music for several Hollywood films, and as a tribute we heard an extract from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite which was used in *Fantasia*, the most notable of those films.

As a finale, we heard musical excerpts from 1949 and 1950 to remind us (ed's note: those of you who were old enough!!) what was on in the smoke-filled warmth of our local cinemas that winter, on our radios and in the records shops, plus an extraordinary fun version of Gershwin's *I've Got Rhythm* produced from all sorts of sounds by 'techies' at the BBC which was quite a feat in the pre-digital era.

Thanks

Sincere thanks to all who have contributed to this newsletter, Erica Tinsley, June Harris, Tony Raper and Martin Coppen.