



## Henley Archaeological & Historical Group

**NEWS-  
LETTER  
NO. 141  
October  
2017**

Dear Members

The Henley Archaeological and Historical Group has existed for over Forty years and our Archive is evidence of just some of the research undertaken by our members. The past record of the Group has been superb and I hope that the future will be bright as well. I am in this reflective mood because the AGM will soon be upon us and we are urgently looking for new members to join the Committee; Viv Greenwood and Graham Jones are standing down. Both have been very active members, Viv involved and reporting on Archaeology and has been responsible for the research and design of the important Plaques to be seen around the town and Graham has been our Web Master. He has moved away from Henley and will no longer look after our Web site. We need somebody to step forward to look after it. The person need not join the Committee if they rather not but it would, in this day and age be very sad if Henley on Thames did not have a web page. People all over the world look at it and very often contact us for information. Please will somebody from the Group be our Web Master?

To be honest I joined the Committee very much on the spur of the moment but it has made me become involved and interested enough, not just to turn up for the monthly Lecture. I have reached the end of my 3 years and it would be good for somebody else to take over and bring along new ideas. We need new Committee members, ideally with financial and/or internet skills and access to a computer is essential. Above all they need to be willing to be involved, able to organize and get stuck in.

That sounds formidable but we are a friendly group and usually people go out of their way to help and being on the Committee can be fun and it is good to make new friends. Please think about this, talk to a Committee member if you have any queries, or just fill in the form and give it to a Ctte Member to get elected at the AGM.

See you all on December 5<sup>th</sup> . Best wishes. Pam

## Lecture Season: January, February, March 2018

All lectures are held on the 1st Tuesday in the month, at 7.45 p.m. in the old 'Kings Arms' Barn; entry from Kings Road Car Park. (NB this may have to change during the construction works at Mkt. Place Mews) - All welcome, members free, non-members from January £ 5

The 2018 lecture season starts on the first Tuesday in January

2 <sup>nd</sup> January	Colin Berks	'Saxon Cookham'
6 <sup>th</sup> February	Michael Redley	'The Boer War: A forgotten Conflict'
6 <sup>th</sup> March	Graham Twemlow	'Art & Design in the Chiltern'

### About our first three Speakers

**'Saxon Cookham', 2.1.2018** by Colin Berks

Following the Viking invasions that commenced in 870AD, Alfred the Great built a number of "emergency" fortifications, or "burghs", to defend Wessex. It is believed that one of these was at Cookham but the site is not yet known. Marlow Archaeological Society has for many years been investigating possible locations around the Thames islands of Sashes and Odney. Further excavations were undertaken in November 2016.

**The Boer War; 'A Forgotten Conflict' 6.2.2018** by Michael Redley

Michael Redley's doctoral work at Cambridge University was in the colonial history of Africa. He has researched and published articles on British and imperial history. He also has a Masters Degree in Economics from the London School of Economics. He currently teaches history and politics in the Department for Continuing Education at Oxford University. His recent research into Sir Charles Rose, of Hardwick House near Whitchurch in South Oxfordshire, whose four sons all fought in the Boer War, was published at the end of last year under the title *The Real Mr Toad: Merchant Venturer and Radical in the Age of Gold*.

**'Art & Design in the Chilterns' 6.3.2018** by Graham Twemlow

Designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Chilterns has played host to many artists and craftsmen. Graham's talk will focus on some of the 20<sup>th</sup> century artists who either made the Chilterns their home or found inspiration here – and sometimes both. Works by artists such as, Paul & John Nash, John Piper, Eric Gill, Clare Leighton, E. McKnight Kauffer and the textile designer Marion Dorn will be discussed and include their contribution to the applied arts in its many forms

A retired University academic Dr Twemlow writes and lectures on design history and decorative arts subjects. He has given talks at numerous institutes and venues including Christie's South Kensington, the Royal Society of Arts and the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

## **Renewal of membership**

Your committee decided to change our Group's financial year to run from January – December, ending with the AGM, rather than from October as now. This makes sense on administrative grounds.

Therefore your subs will not be due until the first lecture meeting in January. This means that you are getting the 3 autumn meetings (October to December) free ! but – and of course there always is a but – we have also had to put the subs up, as lecturers expenses have been going up.

A single membership will be £15 and a family membership £ 25; this will have to be ratified at the AGM.

Visitors will be charged £5

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## **HENLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL GROUP AGM 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

### **Expression of interest for:**

Nomination for ordinary Committee member .....

Nomination for officers: Chair;

Hon. Secretary: (*NB. Charlotte Colver already expressed an interest to take over the position of hon. secretary*) .....

Your Name: .....

Please, send/give completed form to: Pam Syrett, 54 Makins Road, Henley, RG9 6PR

## For your Diaries: Our Outings planned for next Spring and Summer

- 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018:**                    **Kelmscott and Buscott Park,**  
Organizer Pam Syrett - by coach
- 16<sup>th</sup> June 2018**                    **Blewbury & Blewburton Hill** (*date to be confirmed*)  
Organizer Ruth Gibson - individual cars. 15 members max.
- 15<sup>th</sup> September 2018**           **Portchester village, Roman Fort and Norman Castle**  
Organizer Ruth Gibson - by coach

Whilst you have already received a flyer for the **Kelmscott/Buscott** visit organized by Pam Syrett, more details for the other two outings are being prepared and will be sent out early in the New Year. Meanwhile, do register your interest with Pam, as a group large enough to make the coach hire worthwhile is needed.

The common theme of both the **Blewbury** and **Portchester** visits will be looking at signs of continuity of human occupation. Standing buildings, historic documents as well as archaeological finds provide evidence of human presence over centuries on both sites, although they are very different with regard to location and time spans. In both cases a fascinating story, which our local experts and guides will tell us about and hopefully help us to enjoy and understand a little better.

In the case of Portchester it starts with the Romans who fortified the shore against the invading Anglo-Saxons in the C3<sup>rd</sup> A.D. However, the invaders promptly settled inside the fort after 410. The story continues with the growth of the medieval village outside the walls and gates of the Norman fortress, which had been built in the C12<sup>th</sup> within a corner of the Roman fort. Making use the massive protective walls for the Norman castle ensured their continued use and survival to this day.

Blewbury's human occupation starts further back with the evidence of Bronze and Iron Age occupation on near-by Blewburton Hill. The village site below the Downs, close to the Lower Icknield Way, must have always been a magnet for early settlement with its numerous springs, streams and ponds. Its historic buildings, tofts and crofts and narrow winding lanes still reflect the organic growth of this village. Recent excavations carried out under the heading of the Big Dig by and in villagers' back gardens are beginning to find evidence of early Anglo-Saxon settlers on this fertile land; whilst excavations within the hill fort show that it was used as a burial ground by the Anglo Saxons, who however preferred to live and farm in the fertile, well watered vale below.

# H.A. & H.G.

President Ann Cottingham 01189 403276

## Officers and Committee members

Chairman	Pam Syrett 01491 574983 <a href="mailto:pamsyrett@gmail.com">pamsyrett@gmail.com</a>
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Documentary Research	Hilary Fisher 01491 575216 <a href="mailto:kpfisher@compuserve.com">kpfisher@compuserve.com</a>
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Please visit our web site: for more information on our activities on  
<http://www.henley-on-thamesarchaeologicalandhistoricalgroup.org.uk/index.php>

Editor Ruth Gibson