

Henley Archaeological & Historical Group

**NEWS-
LETTER
NO. 142
March
2018**

Report from the Chair

A big thank you to those members who turned out on cold, dark, windy nights to attend our first two lectures of the new season. I am sure they would agree that it was worth their efforts but also very encouraging to have such excellent support.

I had hoped that a new Chair would be appointed at the AGM but as this didn't happen I must point out that I am in my fourth year and we need to find somebody who will bring fresh energy and ideas and take over next year. It is a rewarding, honorable position, making new friends, learning and keeping active. Please seriously consider this.

The Group now needs to prepare for the new General Data Protection Regulation {GDPR} coming into force on May 25th 2018, which will require us to obtain your explicit consent to our holding your personal details and contacting you. An important form which must be returned to us is attached to this newsletter. Your completed form can be brought along to our next meetings and given to our Membership Secretary John Whiting when you check in. We must have your completed form by May 25th, so that we can continue to contact you.

The visit to Kelmscott and Buscot Park on May 17th is viable with 23 people signed and paid to go. Kelmscott requires 25 people for the guided tour and 25 people for lunch to be provided, so we need at least two more people. There is plenty of spare room on the coach and I hope that more people will decide to come along.

Our new voice enhancer seems to be working well provided we remember to tune it and most importantly – put up the aerial. It is good to see that it does make a difference for those who find it difficult to hear when among a crowd of people. It doesn't look much but it was £40 well spent.

Talking about money, I have been asked to remind you that there are still some outstanding annual subscriptions. Renewal was due at the beginning of January. So please let John Whiting, our Membership Secretary, have your £12 per member or £20 for a family membership.

I hope you too are looking forward to the summer as we have other visits for June and September in preparation.

Best wishes.

Pam Syrett

P.S I have a special request; having been asked to talk to the Brownies about Henley in the 1960s I am looking for pictures and anecdotes of Henley people to share with this young generation. If you can help, please give me a ring on 01491 574983. Thank you.

Lecture Season April, May, June 2018 All lectures are held on the first Tuesday of the month, at 7.45 p.m.in the old 'Kings Arms' Barn; entry from Kings Road Car Park. All welcome, members free, non-members £ 4

3rd April	Sophie Ridley	'Anne Damer: Sculpting Society
1st May	James Mather	'The Watlington Hoard'
5th June	Jack Ogden	'Invincible no Longer: Diamonds in the Medieval World
2ndOctober	Jill Eyers	'Boudicca: Warrior Queen or Rebel
6th November	Phillada Ballard	'Culham Court'
4th December	AGM: Refreshments and brief member's contributions	

About our next three speakers

Sophie Ridley: Sophie Ridley is an Assistant Curator at the River and Rowing Museum. She has a background in archaeology, having studied BA Archaeology and Anthropology at Oxford University, then went on to do MA Museum and Artefact Studies at Durham University. She has a particular interest in craft production methods and in visitor perceptions of replicas in the museum setting.

The content of the talk will cover Anne's early life, Anne as a socialite, Anne the sculptor (including a look at some of the people she associated with and took likenesses of) and contemporary reactions to her.

James Mather: 62 Years Old/Retired/Detecting for 25 years; Member of Maidenhead /Wessex Metal Detecting/Archaeology in Marlow Clubs; Archaeology Training Courses attended with Oxford Continuing Education; Numerous Finds recorded with PAS, and 8 Treasure Items to date; TV (Digging For Britain - Prof Alison Roberts) and Radio appearances (Mike Read on radio Berkshire)

Metal Detecting Context: Some local Treasures (Present day finds back to Bronze age/Lower Palaeolithic - eyes only!); The Watlington Hoard (Discovery/Excavation/Conservation/Significance). There will be an opportunity to handle some finds, including some replica hoard items

Jack Ogden: Jack Ogden is an archaeologist and historian who focuses on the development of jewellery and technology. He is an acknowledged authority and has written and lectured widely on the subject for more than forty years. He has a PhD from Durham University, is a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, and an elected Fellow & hon. Life Member of the Gemmological Association of GB.

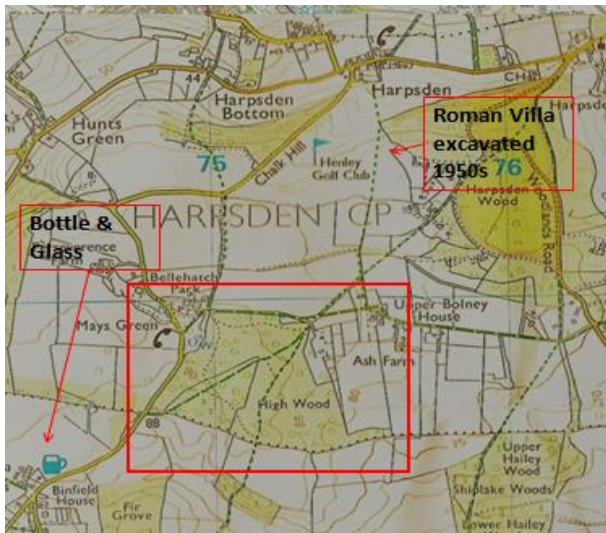
This talk will look as the early history of diamonds with a particular focus on the medieval European world where there was increasing trade in diamonds from India and the first steps in the development of diamond cutting.

There had been some use of diamonds in antiquity, first for working other gems and then set in jewellery, but these extraordinarily hard stones could not be cut or polished and were seen as 'invincible' and surrounded by myth. Then gradually, rudimentary polishing developed and by the end

of the medieval period we have true diamond cutting and the birth of the diamond industry. The speaker's book *Diamonds: An Early History* is to be published by Yale University Press in April 2018 and copies will be available at the meeting.

News from the SOAG dig at High Wood

Digging will start on the Roman site at Highwood again on Friday March 16th. From then on there will be a session every second week and each session will last for five days. The site is to the South-west of Harpsden near the Bottle and Glass public house. The site itself is wooded and quite uneven.



This year there will be two main trenches: one near to the path through High Wood, and one near the mound that was excavated by HA&HG between 1977 and 84. The first trench will seek to further explore a range of buildings that have been under investigation for the past two years. They appear to be workshops of some kind. The second trench will explore a corner of the enclosure wall. Expectations for this year are high as there are known walls and building materials in both areas.

Fig 1 -Map showing High Wood



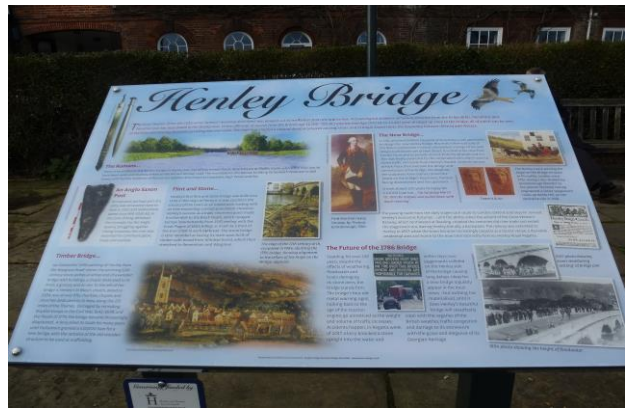
Fig 2 –From the East - Enclosure wall and mortar floor of Room 2

There are opportunities for members of HA&HG to take part: whilst diggers are always needed finds processors are equally necessary, this may suit members who are not as agile as they once were. Equally, if you just want to visit the site it is quite normal for people walking through the wood to be invited into the site. If you park in Woodlands Road it is a level walk to High Wood. The main footpath through the wood goes past the site.

Anyone wishing to take part should contact Mike Vincent secretary@soagarch.org.uk. Mike as well as being the Secretary of the society also runs the administration of the High Wood dig.

For members without e mail call Andrew Allum on 01491 578993.

Another information panel, No. 4, about Henley's past was unveiled at Singers Park in December 2017.



Unveiled in early December, this latest visitor information panel, recording the history of the river crossing here in Henley was researched by HA&HG member Viv Greenwood. Of special local interest, is the comparison between the wooden bridge, as shown in the 1698 painting of Henley from the Wargrave Road by Jan Siberechts, with the view of the 'new' Henley Bridge which was completed in 1786.

Other panels include the life of Henley's brilliant Minister, inventor and engineer, the Revd. Humphrey Gainsborough at the entrance to the Gainsborough Estate, at the top of the town and a plaque recording the many contributions made to Henley by the Makins family, sited at Makins Recreation Ground. The third plaque tells the story of the unlikely survival of the Henley Obelisk and the fifth, now in progress, will focus solely on the Siberechts painting of Henley as seen from Marsh Lock, the original of which is on permanent display at the R. & R.M.

Finally, the deep pink damaging masonry paint will go!



This is a view of the rear yard of the Catherine Wheel in Hart Street. The brick wall on the right belongs to the lodging range of the adjoining Old White Hart, built in 1530 and Grade II* listed. For reasons unknown to the writer a large section of this Tudor brick wall was painted on the Catherine Wheel side, perhaps in an unfortunate attempt to 'brighten up' the view from the hotel windows and out-door guest seating area?

At long last SODC conservation have achieved agreement on '*removal of painted finishes and making good of boundary wall*'. Let's hope the almost 500 years old Tudor bricks of the Old White Hart will be treated with great care and the expertise they deserve, as getting cement masonry paint off bricks and the traditional lime mortar pointing is not an easy task!

2018 HA&HG Outings

17th May Coach Outing to Kelmscott and Buscot. Departure 9 a.m. from the Roman Catholic Church in Vicarage Road. Organized by **Pam Syrett** (see above *Report from the Chair*)

16th June Visit to Blewbury village and Blewburton Hill, by shared cars. Start at 10.30 with a guided walk around the village by local historian Audrey Long looking at all aspects of this medieval village and its connection with the Bronze & Iron Ages of Blewburton Hill and the first Anglo-Saxon settlers in the fertile, water rich vale below. There will be time for a lunch break at the Red Lion Inn and for those feeling still energetic, the opportunity for a walk up Blewburton Hill.

Because of the narrow lanes and foot bridges over the many streams that make up the village our guide can only take 15 visitors round, so please book sooner rather than later. There will be a sheet on the table at the back of the barn for you to put your name down. Or if you cannot attend the evening lectures please, send me an E-mail on ruthgibson@hotmail.com or ring me on 01491 572271 as soon as you have decided.

Costs: Apart from the petrol and lunch costs I will ask you for a contribution of £ 2 p.p. so that we can give Audrey a cheque for £ 30 for one of her village fund raising projects. **Ruth Gibson**

15th September Coach Outing to medieval Portchester village, Roman Fort and Norman Castle; four distinct periods of history on one site, if one includes the Anglo-Saxons, although the latter is less visible, but plenty of archaeology has confirmed their early presence within the protective Roman walls.

If you are interested, please put this date for an all-day outing with a pub lunch in you diaries. More details with regards to costs for the coach and guided tour, as well as lunch arrangements (probably in The Cormorant) will be forthcoming. Entry to the Roman fort and church are free; the Norman Castle belongs to English Heritage and those who are not members will have to pay. We will qualify for a Group tariff and it will be around £ 6, to be confirmed nearer the time. **Ruth Gibson**

And here is some very personal information on Portchester by membership secretary John Whiting:

Later this year a trip to Portchester Castle and village is being organized. Portchester, on the South coast a few miles west from Portsmouth Harbour, is where my ancestral roots are, with its big focal point, the castle at the head of Portchester Harbour.

The original builders of a defensive nature were the Romans who constructed a large fort, of which the walls still remain today. They were followed in the fifth and sixth centuries by Saxon invaders from Germany, under their chief Wihtgar; up to forty generations of Whitings succeeded each other having settled here. Some were laid to rest in the graveyard of the little church within the Roman walls, where you can still find some of their grave stones.

The Normans built the main body of the castle within the Roman fort and added extensions into the Middle Ages. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it was used as a launching point for invasions of France but in later years it was overshadowed by the rise of Portsmouth Harbour and reduced to acting as a prisoner of war camp and latterly a hospital.

Eventually it was returned to the original owners, the Thistlewayte family, who in 1920 placed the site under guardianship of the Ministry of Works and English Heritage. **J.W.**

Francis Sheppard 1921-2018: A Henley Historian

A number of our members will remember Francis Sheppard, who died peacefully at Tower House, Shiplake, on 22nd January, at the age of 96. You may even have a copy of his book about Brakspear's Brewery on your shelf, but may be unaware of the extent of his achievements as a historical scholar.

Francis studied at King's College, Cambridge, and developed an enduring passion for local history. In 1954, he chose Henley as the ideal place to build a house and commute to work, initially to the Museum of London. After the tragic death of his first wife, he remarried happily to Elizabeth, his family grew to include three children, and he became closely involved with the life of the town. Francis was a founder member of the Henley Society, leading the campaign to save the Catherine Wheel in 1964. He was a town councillor for 10 years and became Mayor in 1970. He was also a founder member of the Henley/Falaise Twinning Association.

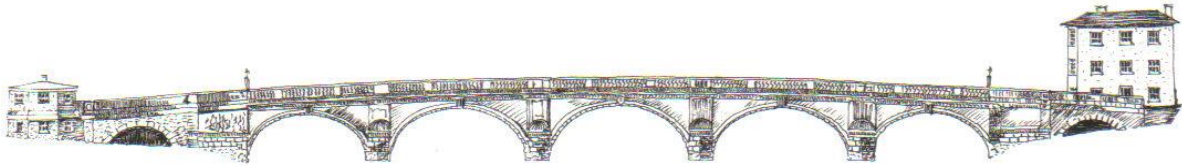
Although he was very active in local affairs, his working life was devoted to the history of our capital city. In 1964, he was appointed by the London County Council as general editor of the Survey of London, which gives a detailed account of the London boroughs, providing a general history of each one, with descriptions of notable streets and individual buildings, based on primary sources. By 2017, this had run to 52 volumes. Francis was editor of 16 of these, published between 1956 and 1983. John Betjeman greeted the publication of the first volume "Lambeth: Southern Area" with the words "This great work" in a review. The Survey acquired a worldwide reputation, and was noted for its accuracy and interesting style.

In the 1990s, Francis and the biographer and historian Christopher Hibbert became neighbours in Albion Place, West Street. They shared a keen interest in the history of London, both being biographers of the city, and walked the length of the Thames together. "London: A History", Francis Sheppard's book for the general reader was published by Oxford University Press in 2000 and he was celebrated by the author Roy Porter as "the great authority to whom we all look up . . . I suspect there's no one in the world with so full a knowledge as he of sources, physical fabric and all manner of details".

Obituaries of Francis Sheppard can be found on the websites of The Guardian, dated 12 February 2018, and The Telegraph, dated 16 February.

The Survey of London can be accessed online at: [http: www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk)

Jackie Fortey



Dear Member

The **Henley Archaeological & Historical Group** needs to prepare for the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming into force on 25 May 2018, which will require us to obtain explicit consent for holding your personal details and also to our contacting you. Each family member needs to fill out a separate form.

In order that we can continue to hold your personal details on file, and also communicate with you, please complete this form, ticking against the means by which you are happy to receive communications from us.

The form will then need to be signed and dated and returned to us at:
HAHG Membership Secretary John Whiting
4 Orchard Close, St Andrews Road, Henley on Thames, Oxon RG9 1HR

Your personal details are kept safe and secure and are only used by our volunteers to allow for the collection of subscriptions, the distribution of our Newsletter, Journals and for sending you news about ours and other Groups' activities.
Your details will not be shared with any third party.

***mandatory fields**

*Full name

*Full postal address

Email.....

Telephone(s).....

Declaration

I am happy for the Henley Archaeological & Historical Group to hold the above personal information about me for the purposes stated above only, and am happy to be contacted by: (please circle your choice against each item)

*** POST yes / no * EMAIL yes / no * PHONE yes / no**

* Signed

* Dated

If we do not receive your completed and signed form we will be obliged to assume that you no longer wish to receive information from the HAHG. The personal details we currently hold for you will therefore be deleted from our systems.

hahg/ RG 23.2.18

H.A. & H.G.

President Ann Cottingham 01189 403276

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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>

Edited by: Ruth Gibson