



East Dorset Antiquarian Society

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NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2006

PERSONALIA

We are pleased to report that Martin Green has been awarded a Doctorate of Science, but we don't have any more details yet. Congratulations, Martin!

Programme Date Change

"DARK AND MYSTERIOUS DORCHESTER"

THE EDAS WALK FOR SEPTEMBER IS NOW ON SUNDAY 24TH

See information sheet at the end of this Newsletter

RECENT EVENTS

Saturday 22nd July – Walk led by Peter Walker from Corfe Castle

Seven members (plus dog) met at the NT car park at Corfe at 10:00am on Saturday to follow a walk originally devised by the late Mike Fryatt. The morning was hot and humid but we were all looking forward for an interesting 5 mile walk in the Purbecks. Our first stop was at the Castle Rings just to the west of Corfe Castle. The Rings consist of two joined circular areas surrounded by earthen banks and are believed to be the remains of a siege castle built by King Stephen in 1139. There is also a suggestion that it was reused during the Civil War by the Roundhead forces during the later siege of the castle.

We rejoined the path and walked along the underhill bridleway heading west, pausing briefly to view and explore the remains of a Lime Kiln which has been restored by the Ramblers. Carefully avoiding a small herd of cows with calves and a bull we then headed towards Church Knowle, the temperature dropping a few degrees and the air becoming much fresher (a sign of things to come!). At Church Knowle we stopped to visit the interesting church of St Peters. The church is claimed to date from around 1225 although the list of clergy starts in 1327. A church was mentioned in the Domesday book with an incumbent priest. The guide book says that the church was "a perfect little cruciform church, with chancel, nave and western tower, and with north and south transepts and a south porch." Pevsner says that the west tower had been rebuilt in 1741 and in 1833 a new north aisle was constructed. The east window shows Jesus walking on water while Peter sinks. The church has interesting painted decoration around the arch through to the nave and a balcony with a display of historical photographs of the village.

Having left the church we headed past the animal sanctuary and across fields in the direction of Kingston, all the time under a darkening sky. Just as we crossed back onto a minor road the thunder started and the heavens opened!! Unfortunately not all of us had been pessimistic and carried waterproofs so we got wet; Very wet! After a few minutes sheltering in the hedge it was decided to abandon the walk as we were not quite half way and head back to the cars as quickly as possible. As always

happens in these situations, just as we got back to the cars the rain stopped and the sun came through again! It just goes to show that not all EDAS walks go fully to plan but we all had an enjoyable and interesting morning and thank Peter, and remember Mike, for organising the walk.

Saturday 29 July - BBQ at Down Farm

The 2006 BBQ was an amazing success. Amazing because it required a lot of hard work and took place in wet weather, about the only wet evening we had for a long time and one of the first that we have ever had on a BBQ night. Fortunately, though wet, it was damp and occasional steady drizzle, but not a downpour.

The supply of food, BBQed and otherwise, appeared with delightful speed and expertise. Haydn and Henry looked professional chefs in their apparel and one wonders if they are to join the television gourmet cooks.

Once again Karen Brown's Band was in attendance, the weather seemingly making no difference to their enthusiastic playing, which was a treat for all of us.

We thank Martin for the use of his property, not being able to envisage anywhere that could be better, and once more he gave us the opportunity to visit the museum. We are in appreciation of Haydn, Wendy, Henry and Gail for master minding the event and coming up trumps with the food, we say thank you to the members who helped make the sweet dishes and with resounding clapping say to Karen and her entourage, well done.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Shaftesbury Abbey Lecture

Prof. Mick Aston will give a lecture about Shaftesbury Abbey at 7:30pm on 8th November at Shaftesbury Art Centre, Ball Street. Tickets are £6 (£5 to EDAS members) and will be brought to our meetings in September and October.

BOOK REVIEW

To Partake of Tea. The Last Ladies of Kingston Lacy. Geoffrey Brown. The Hobnob Press. £9:25. July 2006

Members who attended Geoffrey's talk on Henrietta and Hilary Banks will know the passionate and detailed interest he has in the Banks family, especially the two ladies written about with expertise in this book.

His opening chapter gives a background not only to the family itself but to the national events in which they lived. This theme continues throughout the book. Sensibly the bigger picture comes in small doses but successfully helps to put the family in perspective, retaining Henrietta and her daughter-in-law Hilary as central features. Much of the description is of what I suppose one could call mundane matters, but is written with warmth and attraction. It reveals Henrietta's involvement in local affairs and her care of the estates workers and their families. She gave Christmas parties for hundreds of local children, all being well served with victuals and presents. Garden Parties were attended by over a thousand people.

The descriptions of the Banks family show considerable insight into their personalities and one feels that one is getting to know real people and not just figures in a book.

There are many more things that could be written about the Banks family, such as the way they made their money, particularly in the Graphite industry, and how smallpox entered the estate, affecting the family as well as workers. However, Geoffrey had no

intention of writing a family biography; instead we have a book that is easy and comfortable to read, giving a tantalizing glimpse of longstanding local dignitaries, and stopping on the way to enjoy the trials and tribulations of two delightful ladies who played an important part in the history of Wimborne and district: more important than I guess most of us realised.

Congratulations to Geoffrey who has joined the band of EDAS authors.

John Day

Fontmell Magna Village Archive Society

EDAS has been sent an e-mail by the above local society:

“Dear colleagues,

You may be interested in visiting our website fontmellmagna.net, and going to the article - Was there a Roman Villa in Fontmell Magna?

You might be interested in looking at their web site.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The dates for EDAS events are underlined. The monthly evening lectures start at 7.30pm. Walks and field visits usually meet at 10.30 am at the published Grid Reference. Ring the leader if the weather is doubtful or if more details are required.

2006

- Wed 13 Sep First EDAS lecture of the new season: “**The Wreck of the Earl of Abergavenny**” with David Carter
- Sun 24 Sep **** Date Change **** (was 17th September)
Walk with Karen Brown around Dorchester town. More details overleaf.
- Wed 11 Oct EDAS lecture: “**The Milestones of Dorset**” with John Tybjerg of the Milestone Society.
- Sun 22 Oct **Walk** with Steve Smith. More details later.
- Wed 8 Nov Lecture at Shaftesbury Arts Centre from **Prof. Mick Aston about Shaftesbury Abbey**. See earlier for details.
- Wed 8 Nov EDAS lecture: “**Hands-on Osteo-archaeology**” with Mark Maltby of Bournemouth University.
- Wed 13 Dec EDAS lecture: “**Exploring the seabed of the Solent and Wight: Marine archaeology and aggregate**” with Rebecca Causer of Hampshire & Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology.
- Wed 10 Jan EDAS lecture: “**Industrial Archaeology of Wessex**” with Dr Peter Stanier of the Industrial Archaeology Society.
- Wed 14 Feb EDAS lecture: “**A Mill on the Stour**”, with Colin Cope, custodian of the White Mill at Sturminster Marshall.
- Wed 14 Mar EDAS lecture: “**Treasure and the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Hampshire**” with Robert Webley, Portable antiquities officer for Hampshire.

IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE
THE EDAS WALK FOR SEPTEMBER IS NOW ON SUNDAY 24TH

DARK AND MYSTERIOUS DORCHESTER
Sunday 24th September 2006

Henges & Heroes
Friars & Fires

Martyrs and Murderers
Ruins and Romans

Another entertaining and informative day with Karen Brown and Pauline Clenshaw.

Follow in the footsteps of Mary Channing as she makes her way to Maumbury Rings to be burnt to death at the stake and try your hand at dowsing this ancient Henge and Amphitheatre, if you dare!

Stand in the dock where the Tolpuddle Martyrs were sentenced to transportation and explore the side streets where so much of Dorchester's fascinating past still remains

Highlight of the day. In the afternoon we will be joined by the one and only **Bill Putnam**, university lecturer, author, archaeologist and the leading authority on Roman Dorchester.

Bill will be leading us around the archaeological sites of Dorchester; telling us about past and recent excavations and the current work being undertaken at the Roman Town House and other sites. Bill never ceases to amaze with his vast knowledge, which he imparts in such a pleasing and entertaining way. This is definitely an opportunity not to be missed.

We will meet at the Top of Town car park at 10.30 and start our day, as before, with the customary cup of coffee and introduction to Dorchester. There are numerous places to eat at lunch time but you could bring a packed lunch if you prefer.

For directions and further details phone Karen on 01305 812876