



East Dorset Antiquarian Society

www.dorsetarchaeology.org.uk

mail@dorset-archaeology.org.uk

NEWSLETTER - MAY 2008

PERSONALIA

It is with regret that we learn that Connie Fields died last December. She had never really recovered from the death of Norman, her husband. Norman had taught at Poole Grammar School, was one of our honorary members and one of Dorset's leading Romanists. He advised us on several excavations and wrote a well known book on the Romans in Dorset - "Dorset and the Second Legion". Connie was herself a very active person and for a long period a volunteer at Priest House Museum. We extend our sympathy to her family.

Recent Events

AGM

In the last Newsletter there was a typo in the list of current EDAS Committee members. Keith Allsopp's name was incorrectly still shown, when of course it was reported that he has stepped down. The Committee members for 2008/2009 are:

Chairman:	John Day	Membership Secretary:	Della Day
Treasurer:	Peter Walker	Programme Secretary	S. Smith / D. Stewart *
Secretary:	Gill Broadbent	Special Advisor:	Martin Green
Ordinary Members:	Graham Adams, Helen Brickell, Brian Maynard, Bryan Popple, Phil Roberts and Dave Stewart.		

(*Steve and Dave will work together in the Programme Secretary role for the current year).

Last EDAS Lecture

Our last EDAS Lecture was given by Bob Bewley of English Heritage talking about: "Understanding the past: new approaches to our heritage". Bob is well known to EDAS, having given us a number of excellent lectures in the past. He is now a senior manager at English Heritage, which adds to wide experience of archaeology from many view points. He is a qualified and experienced archaeologist with a special interest in aerial photography; he has travelled widely looking at, and trying to record and safeguard, prestigious sites abroad. He has had professional roles on both sides of the archaeological problem: arguing for best preservation, but also having to make difficult decisions about the best, prioritised use of limited funding. He gave us a very depressing statistic: it would take an estimated £200 million just to 'stand still' with the many listed sites known just in Britain. The answer had to be a change in public attitude to our heritage. If people could become interested in our heritage then they would become more knowledgeable; the result would be a desire to support and protect our monuments. In turn, this could encourage others to become involved. Without such a change in our attitudes the preservation of many of our monuments might be threatened.

We thank Bob very much for another very interesting, entertaining, and thought provoking lecture.

Tour Discount for all EDAS Members.

Peter Sommer Travels are offering a 5% discount to all EDAS members - which equates to about £100 per person on their two week tours. So go sailing, cruising, or exploring in Turkey, and see some of the very finest temples, tombs, and theatres. Discover a Turkish archaeological paradise full of Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman treasures!

In 1994, Peter Sommer walked 2,000 miles across Turkey, following in the footsteps of Alexander the Great, and in the process fell in love with the country, its ancient civilizations, and the Turkish people. For the past 11 years, Peter, a British archaeologist and award-winning documentary maker, has been running Peter Sommer Travels, a specialist tour operator, offering expert led archaeological cruises and land-based tours around the ancient sites of Turkey. They take only small groups (max 16 on land, 14 by sea) of like-minded people,

travelling in an easy-going, friendly, and informal style. In addition to their historical tours, Peter Sommer Travels also charter gulets, traditional wooden sailing boats, for private groups.

Peter Sommer Travels - Tel 1600 888 220, e-mail info@petersommer.com, or see web site www.petersommer.com

Walkaround Southampton with Andy Russel on 20th April



17 members and 5 guests met Andy for his guided walk around Medieval Southampton. Andy explained that Hamwic, the Saxon town disappeared about 850 AD and the town then moved to its present site. Prior to that, the Roman town was on yet another site. We started at the Bargate Tower which was the northern entrance into the medieval town. This was built by the Normans and has been added to over the centuries. Its final embellishment was the erection of a statue of George III, dressed as Hadrian, placed in a niche at first floor level. The room over the Bargate was the guildhall, which became the town hall in the Tudor period. Much is known about life in the medieval town as records exist showing the tax paid on each cartload passing through the Bargate. Similar records exist for the cargoes being landed.



We then moved to the town walls and the Arundel Tower. This has arrow slits at the lower level, but gun ports were added at a higher level after the French raid in 1338. The sea came up to the quay at the foot of the walls where boats discharged their cargoes, including much wine. From the walls we could see all the land to the west which has been reclaimed from the sea and built over. The next tower on our walk was appropriately called Catchcold Tower as it was a windy spot. The tower was still used for defence as late as WW2 when a Hodgkiss machine gun was placed on the roof to fire on planes attacking the nearby Pirelli factory.

Behind the wall was a cliff so that if medieval attackers did manage to scale the walls they would still have to climb down to the bottom of them and then climb the cliff. The area between the cliff and the walls was backfilled in the early C19th and houses built partly on the cliff and partly on the infill shows signs of subsidence. Andy took us to the site of the castle which James I sold off in the early 1600s and which was then demolished and the stones recycled. We moved to the outside of the walls to where the quay originally stood and saw the merchants' house fronts. When the town wall was built, the walls of these houses became part of the town wall and their windows and wine vault entrances were blocked up. We were able to access the king's wine vaults that were built 1160-1180. The

king received a tun for every 10 tuns of wine imported. This vault was used as an air aid shelter during WW2.



Andy then took us into the undercroft of an early C14th house where we saw the stone vaulted ceiling. This room was also used as an air raid shelter. The council is planning to plant trees down either side of the High Street and Andy and his colleagues have dug 2 trial trenches. In one we saw the lead conduit from a spring outside town, which provided water to the friary lower down the High Street. Our final visit was to the ruined church of the Holy Rood in the High Street. It originally stood in the middle of the street, but was demolished and rebuilt on its current site in the 1320s. The church was hit by a bomb on 30 November 1940 and has

been left as a ruin. It contains several monuments to merchantseamen as well as one for the Titanic disaster.

Andy is very knowledgeable and easy to listen to and we thank him for a most absorbing guided walk. We will make arrangements for a further walk with him to look at other historical buildings and also the wall on the east side of town

Peter Walker



Forthcoming Events

Steve Smith has provided a 'flyer' for this Newsletter which provides details of three EDAS events over the summer period. You will also find a separate sheet about this year's EDAS BBQ, together with an application slip.

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.

2008

- Wed 14 May EDAS Lecture: **Reviewing the Roman invasion of Britain - why everything you thought you knew about AD 43 could be very wrong!**, with Dr Miles Russell of Bournemouth University
- Sun 29 Jun **Walk around Wimborne town** looking at the buildings with Bob Hill of the Historic Building Advisory Service. More details in with this Newsletter.
- Sat 5 Jul **EDAS Summer Barbecue at Down Farm** More details in with this Newsletter.
- Sun 31 Aug **A guided Walk around Sherborne** and group **visit to Castleton Waterwheel Museum** with Steve Smith. More details in with this Newsletter..
- Wed 10 Sep EDAS Lecture: **The Results from a large scale excavation at Staple Gardens, Winchester** with Ben Ford, Oxford Archaeological Unit.
- Wed 8 Oct EDAS Lecture: **Life in a Medieval town** with Nick Griffiths.