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A Warm Welcome to New Members

Dr J Berrow, Birmingham
 Mr J Comber, Malvern
 Mrs R Kirke, Great Comberton
 Mrs S Payne-Lunn, Worcester
 Ms R Roseff, Malvern
 Mr O White, Feckenham
 Miss K Whitehouse, Stourport

Neither the Committee of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society nor the Editor is responsible for any statements or opinions expressed in the Worcestershire Recorder, the authors of the contributions alone being responsible for the same.

Cover illustration: 33 High Street, Droitwich. Exterior front view, courtesy of the Historic Droitwich project (see p9)

Chairman's Letter

After three years it is already time for my last letter to you as Chairman; by the time the next issue of the Recorder is with you, the AGM will have elected a new Chairman. I would like to thank committee members and others for their work, help and support over this period, during which a good deal has been achieved. This is also a testament to the constitution, revised in 2012, which has enabled the subcommittees in particular to focus on the jobs which they do so well rather than on the bureaucracy of the Society itself. But I also thank all the members of the Society who have supported and helped with events. The Society's strength is in its membership and its activities – including publication of the *Transactions* and the *Recorder* as well as lectures and excursions – and in both respects I believe it is strong and can remain so. Whatever the Society does, however, it is important that it continues to be done well. In this respect, we are very aware that we are struggling with aspects of the lecture programme; although we were unlucky on several occasions last year (including the power cut during the Berkeley Lecture), it has been increasingly clear that St George's hall, regardless of its qualities, is no longer the best venue.

Thanks are due to those members who responded to my request for views on future venues for lectures. We are looking for a fully-equipped lecture theatre rather than a hall, as portable projection equipment is not really suitable for the larger numbers who often attend. This does limit our options, as there are relatively few lecture theatres in Worcester – most respondents would like most if not all lectures to remain in Worcester, though not necessarily in the city centre. Car parking, preferably secure and free, was the main request, with public transport much less important. Opinions differ on the need to be able to provide tea and coffee, but many members value the opportunity to socialise after the lectures. There is still some more work to be done here before decisions can be made, but we do have a few possibilities to consider.

With this year's lecture programme now well underway, thoughts are turning to future events and publications. Planning for the excursions programme for 2016 is almost complete (a reminder that we are still looking for excursion organisers to take over from the current subcommittee when they finish their term early next year). The contents list for volume 25 of the *Transactions*, due out at the end of 2016, has been agreed, and the papers are starting to come in. This should certainly match the high standards of recent volumes, and marks half a century since the *Transactions* was relaunched with the Third Series in the 1960s.

As well as excursion organisers, there will be plenty of other vacancies on the committee next year. Anyone interested in helping the Society in this way can talk to me or any other member of the committee about what is involved.

Finally, we had hoped to be able to mark the return of the Habington chest to the county after repair with an event at Hartlebury. However those plans have been put on hold until dates and locations are clarified as it seems that the chest will be on display in Worcester before long.

James Dinn

News from the County

Worcester Cathedral roundabout excavations, aka Dig Lich Street

Many of you will be aware of our excavation at the Cathedral Roundabout this spring, part of the Cathedral Square development, one of the most high profile digs for a number of years. Hundreds of people came along for site tours, thousands followed us on social media, and many

more saw the work as they walked or drove past this prominent site. When we took off the turf we uncovered, as expected, the remains of Lich St and the cellars of the buildings which stood on the site, which gave a fascinating insight into an ordinary city centre street.



Above: remains of fireplace in basement of 1 High Street, with pot hook. Below: Redcap badge



We had three roles. The first was to help advise the County Highways (our customer) to minimise impact on the archaeology and to work with engineers to ensure a safe project (quite a task when the site is in the middle of one of the busiest roads in the county), ensure planning conditions were met and act as Principal Contractor for the site in this first phase. We worked with engineers to ensure that when the cellars were infilled it was done in a way which protects the stonework and other deposits for future generations.

Our second role was the traditional archaeological role of excavating the roundabout and uncovering and recording a very complex area of cellars, yards, and Lich Street itself. We also got a glimpse of the earlier deposits which are also now protected. Memorable finds included a well (10m deep and which needed to be made safe), identifiable parts of St Michael's Church, a military police cap badge, a bone condiment spoon, cellars containing reused stone from former buildings (including churches and perhaps the city wall), and Roman and even much rarer Saxon pottery.

Our third role was to deliver an outreach programme to enable people to find out more, and we were overwhelmed with interested people which was fantastic. Over 700 came on tours over to the site and the same number came to open days, where we brought together maps, photos and archives as well as finds and dig information. We kept people up to date via our blog, Facebook and Twitter so we could share news and photos. For more information and photos please visit our blog <http://diglichstreet.blogspot.co.uk/>.

Paul Hudson

Understanding, characterising, and advocating local historic environments through Neighbourhood Planning

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service is working with Historic England to support communities undertaking Neighbourhood Plans, to better understand, record and champion the historic environment of their parish. National research, undertaken by Locus Consulting in 2014, indicates that even though 93% of Neighbourhood Plans are engaging with the heritage of their areas, the use of heritage information varies significantly, with many communities only taking into consideration designated assets.

With support from Historic England's Regional Capacity Budget the service has delivered a programme of training workshops for Neighbourhood Planning groups to;

- build awareness of the local Historic Environment resource;
- empower communities to champion their local historic environment – buildings, landscapes and archaeology – and better appreciate how historic environment features relate to a wide range of local agendas, from biodiversity and amenity value to the economy;
- consider both the constraints and opportunities associated with development so that communities and developers can work together to ensure that new development better responds to the character and local distinctiveness of a place.

A second phase of workshops will be undertaken in the autumn/winter of 2015.

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service is also developing a practical step-by-step tool-kit, with supporting guidance, that will enable communities to broadly assess, interpret and articulate (within the context of a Neighbourhood Plan) the diverse range of rural buildings found within a parish, in their settlement and landscape context. Stakeholders were invited to a consultation workshop in March 2015. A second round of online consultation is due to be undertaken in winter 2015 with full publication expected in early summer 2016.

Understanding the character and significance of the diverse range of rural buildings, from the medieval to the 20th century, will help to strengthen the status of rural buildings in local decision making and enable an informed understanding against which proposed changes can be measured. This approach is not intended to fossilise places or encourage imitation but rather nurture opportunities to promote broad settlement patterns and building types, following the principles of constructive conservation.

If you would like to find out more about how the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service can help support Neighbourhood Planning in your parish please contact the Historic Environment and Advisory Team on 01905 822866 or archaeology@worcestershire.gov.uk

News from the City

The Cathedral Roundabout excavation was mentioned in the *Recorder* in the spring, and there is a short report with links to further information elsewhere in this issue (pp 3-4). This was one of the largest excavations ever in Worcester by area, but only very limited actual excavation was carried out, and the work was largely confined to clearance and recording of cellars. After consideration of the probable extent and depth of archaeological remains on the site (which would include an Anglo-Saxon and medieval burial ground, as well as prehistoric and Roman occupation and a substantial part of the medieval Lich Street), careful and detailed work with the highways engineers led to a design which left almost all of the archaeological remains on site *in situ*.

Small-scale archaeological evaluations have included work at St Martins Gate, where an early post-medieval ditch contained glazed medieval floor tile fragments, and Harrow Croft (Grove Farm, St John's), where the finds indicated the probable presence of a post-medieval tile or pottery kiln. A larger evaluation on London Road (the site of a new Waitrose store) found evidence for a large pond, thought to have been open in the prehistoric period (probably Neolithic or Bronze Age) due to the presence of heat-cracked stones (so-called 'pot-boilers') in its fill. Next to Old Powick Bridge, a watching brief recorded deposits associated with the 18th-19th century iron forge.

A housing development has been proposed for a site at Rose Bank, off London Road. This is in an area which was built up with large houses with appropriately large gardens in the early 19th century. Several of the houses had walled gardens and part of one of these survives on the site, along with a group of unusual Italianate polychrome brick outbuildings. No archaeological excavation has yet taken place on the site, but it is believed that one of the siege works from the 1646 siege of Worcester is in this area.

Two building recording projects in Foregate Street have produced new information. 19 Foregate Street, previously thought to be mid 18th century, may in fact be one of the earliest buildings in the street, dating from the late 17th century, not long after the area had been devastated during the Civil War (when the suburbs were cleared by the Royalist defenders to avoid giving cover to any attackers). Significant features include a very fine staircase of late 17th century type, early doors and windows, and a simple and potentially early timber roof structure.

The 1920s building at 36 Foregate St was mentioned in last autumn's *Recorder*. It is an anomaly in this mainly Georgian street. However it does form part of a significant grouping of inter-war car showrooms in the street, many of which have distinctive Art Deco shopfront windows; most were converted from large Georgian houses. 36 Foregate Street was designed by the Worcester architects Yeates and Jones (plans dated 1927) and had a ground-floor carriageway and a small showroom, with flats upstairs. The showroom did not last long and the building was sympathetically adapted as offices for the Royal Insurance Co in 1935.

James Dinn

Sheldon Tapestry map of Worcestershire

The Sheldon Tapestry map of Worcestershire, handwoven from wool and silk c1590, is one of four large tapestries based on Saxton's maps of 1579 that were originally hung in Ralph Sheldon's home near Long Compton. The Worcestershire and Oxfordshire maps both came to the Bodleian Library in 1809 as part of a large donation, which included the Gough Map, by the antiquarian Richard Gough. The Bodleian also owns parts of the Gloucestershire map; Warwickshire, the only intact map, is on display at the Warwickshire Museum. Incomplete but fascinating and beautifully conserved by the National Trust's tapestry conservators, Worcestershire is now on view in the Blackwell Hall in the Bodleian's Weston Library.

The Worcestershire map is clearly of immense interest to the Society, and members have good opportunities to learn more about it. Nick Millea, Map Librarian at the Bodleian Library, has kindly agreed to write about the Sheldon Tapestry map for the next issue of the *Recorder*, due out in April 2016. The Berkeley Lecture on 18 April, 'Weaving Elizabethan Worcestershire: The Sheldon tapestry maps', will be given by Hilary Turner, who has researched extensively on the

Sheldon tapestries; and later a visit is planned to see the Worcestershire map on display at the Bodleian.



Sheldon Tapestry map of Worcestershire, detail. © Bodleian Libraries, (R) Gough Maps 262

Award for Internet Archaeology

The CBA's Internet Archaeology, the premier e-journal for archaeology, hosted by the Department of Archaeology at the University of York and digitally archived by the Archaeology Data Service, has been publishing on the web since 1996. An open access, independent, not-for-profit journal, it publishes quality academic content and explores the potential of electronic publication through the inclusion of video, audio, searchable data sets, full-colour images, visualisations, animations and interactive mapping. Internet Archaeology is to be congratulated on joining some 100 other academic journals, being awarded the Directory of Open Access Journals Seal for 'journals that adhere to an exceptionally high level of publishing standards and best practice'. The DOAJ is a service that indexes high quality, peer reviewed Open Access research journals, periodicals and their articles' metadata. Internet Archaeology is currently the only open access archaeology journal to be awarded the Seal. Internet Archaeology can be found at www.intarch.ac.uk.

Shrub Hill Station Waiting Room

It is excellent news that the Grade II* Shrub Hill Waiting Rooms are finally off the At Risk Register and back in use, officially re-opened by HRH The Duke Of Gloucester on 9 September. The *Recorder* (78) reported in 2008 that hopefully 'the repair works and the reuse of the rooms will be complete by the new year'. Seven years later Mike Napthan, who undertook the archaeological recording and heritage management issues, takes up the story:

The Grade II* Victorian Waiting Rooms at Shrub Hill Station were originally constructed circa 1864 against the pre-existing brick arcade of the station shed, which supported a glazed over-roof. The building is unique in that it consists of a cast iron façade inset with polychrome tiled panels. It was cast at the nearby Vulcan Ironworks (Lowesmoor), and the tiles are by Maws, originally also a Worcester company. The waiting rooms were extended to the south in the late 19th Century, and this portion (now the kitchenette – originally a washroom) was built in rendered brick, painted and stencilled in imitation of the tiling of the earlier portion. Circa 1938 the glazed station over-roof was removed, and a lower platform canopy installed. To accommodate the lower canopy the upper part of the Waiting Room façade (a cast iron and tile panelled parapet wall) was removed, and the original roof removed.



In the mid 20th century the portion of the Waiting Rooms beyond the coverage of the original over-roof were exposed by the removal of the adjacent Carriage Sheds building, and re-roofed with a substantial reinforced concrete slab. By the mid 1990s the platform canopy was leaking in several places, and the Waiting Rooms were in a state of decay. Following disuse the Waiting Rooms decayed further and became a pigeon roost, with extensive vegetation growing from the roof. In 2007-8 a major programme of repairs was initiated, including underpinning and restoration of the tiled facade. Unfortunately continued leaks in the platform canopy damaged the restored plasterwork and finishes soon after completion. The Waiting Rooms remained disused until a further programme of works in 2014-15 completely refurbished and brought the northern Waiting Room back into its original use, whilst the southern Waiting Room has been adapted as office accommodation.

Mike Napthan



Left. Shrub Hill waiting room interior

Note: Mike Napthan has also just completed recording of the former Goods Bridge at Shrub Hill Station. This is due to be dismantled shortly and re-built to provide new lifts and disabled access between Platforms 1 and 2.

Heritage At Risk Register

Excluding Shrub Hill, which is still showing although removed, the 2015 Heritage At Risk Register for Worcestershire lists 51 entries:

2 in the Registered Park & Garden category – Hewell Grange and Westwood Park;

4 Conservation Areas: Bromsgrove; Gilgal, Stourport; Lowesmoor, Worcester; and Tenbury Wells;

14 Scheduled Monuments including the moated monastic grange and fishpond complex at Middle

Battenhall Farm, Worcester and other moated sites at Wythall, Feckenham, Dodford, Alvechurch and Hanbury; enclosures at Grimley, Charlton/Crophorne and Wick near Pershore; settlement sites at Fladbury and Charlton; the Roman settlement at Bays Meadow, Droitwich; and the remains of Evesham Abbey;

and 31 Listed Buildings, of which 19 are churches. For full details go to <http://risk.historicengland.org.uk/register>

Historic Droitwich: Its Streets and People

One of the listed buildings on the At Risk Register is 31 High Street, Droitwich, the solar wing of what was originally part of the same building at 33 High Street. The latter, the subject of a detailed study initiated by the Dodderhill Parish Survey Group and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, has been found to contain substantial remains of a major early 14th century house, with much of the medieval frame of the former open hall still visible inside the building. Dendrochronology has shown that the oak trees used in its construction were felled in the winter of 1339, which dates the building's first phase to 1340. It is thus one of the earliest domestic timber-framed buildings in the county.



Left: Staircase turret added 1594, courtesy of the Historic Droitwich project

Dendrochronology also revealed that a first floor was inserted into the former open hall in 1594, as happened to many former open hall-houses. This would have been when the timber-framed stair turret built on to the back of the house was erected, in order to give access to the new first floor. 31 High Street has been dated on stylistic grounds to the early 15th century, suggesting that this part was rebuilt later; English Heritage has carried out

dendrochronology in that property and the results are awaited. A number of other buildings in the High Street and Friar Street were also timber-framed buildings with later modifications, and we look forward to further news of the surveying and dendrochronology carried out by the Historic Droitwich project.

News from Croome Court

Croome Court is to be congratulated on the re-instatement across its man-made river of the Chinese Bridge, incorporated into Capability Brown's landscaping and seen in Richard Wilson's 1758 painting. It fell into disrepair and collapsed into the river in the late 19th century. The new bridge, thanks to a significant donation from the Monument 85 Fund, is based on the designer William Halfpenny's detailed notes and drawings, published in 1754. Creating a dry working area necessitated the rescue of a large number of tench and rudd, as well as some eels and fresh water mussels. The bridge was constructed offsite by Green Oak Carpentry Company, using green oak for the main span of the bridge and greenheart, suitable for use in water, for the piers. As the oak dries, cracks known as 'shakes' will inevitably appear in the wood. A decision as to whether the new bridge should be painted is yet to be made.

Ongoing Research on the 1552 Worcester Diocesan Inventory

The English Reformation is best known for its suppression of the monasteries. However, it is sometimes overlooked that during 1547-53 changes in doctrine dramatically affected the liturgy of church services, and therefore the contents of parish churches underwent a radical alteration too. In 1547 and 1549 the Privy Council had ordered surveys of church goods; officially this was to protect church property from private embezzlement as valuable goods were sometimes being disposed of by concerned parishes to prevent their confiscation, while other goods were being seized by local people or sometimes stolen.

However, in March 1551 the Privy Council ordered that, 'for much as the King's Majestie had neede presently of a mass of money', all remaining church plate in England was now to be confiscated. This process did not start until 1552, when commissioners were appointed to make inventories of all church plate, vestments, ornaments and hand bells for the Privy Council. The confiscation of these church goods was intended not only to enrich a cash-strapped government, but also to ensure that parishes followed the new Protestant doctrine. When the Diocese of Worcester was surveyed in 1552, it included a number of parish churches and chapelries which are now within Gloucestershire. It also appears that a number of parishes were omitted when the diocesan inventory was drawn up for the Commissioners. Possibly these omissions were simply errors, as many of these non-inclusions occurred in the Evesham area, implying that at least one part of the survey was mislaid during its compilation. This inventory provides a unique snapshot of the liturgical contents of the diocese's parish churches and chapels during a period of dramatic religious change, shortly before most of this material was removed.

The Worcester Diocesan inventories have already been published twice, first by M.E.C. Walcot, 'Inventories of Church goods, Certificates of Chantries, temp Edward VI in Worcestershire from the Public Record Office' *Associated Architectural Societies Reports and Papers*, 1872, vol 11 pt 2, 308-42. This publication, though detailed, was not strictly verbatim and some details, such as the names of churchwardens or missing property, were omitted. Secondly, H.B.

Walters' 'Inventories of Worcestershire Church Goods (1552)' was published in five instalments in the Society's *Transactions*: (part 1) 1940 vol 17, 11-21; (part 2) 1950 vol 27, 47-62; (part 3) 1951, vol 29, 38-49; (part 4) 1953, vol 30, 54-71 and (part 5) 1954, vol 31, 20-38. Sadly, neither publication includes a glossary (without which many of the fabrics and some of the items listed are quite hard to identify), any discussion or analysis. So the importance of this material has consequently been overlooked. My aim over the next few years is to make good this omission by producing a spread sheet summarising the key data on a church-by-church basis, then produce an analytical discussion and glossary of the dataset for submission to the Society's *Transactions*. I have already published a verbatim publication and discussion (including a glossary) of the ten Worcestershire entries that are now within Gloucestershire; see *Glevensis* 2013, no 46, 50-57.

Bruce Watson

Evenlode

'Meethinckethe', wrote Habington in his *Survey of Worcestershire*, 'I see our Shyre as mounted on a Pegasus flyinge over the neyghburinge Countyes, and ... coasting to the confynes of Oxfordshyre ... he caryethe the authority of our County about and over Coteswould ... as at Emlode ... which altho' seperated with parishes not attending our county yet is wholly ours.' No more.

Evenlode is one of the ten former Worcestershire parishes covered by Bruce's *Glevensis* article, the others being Alstone, Chaceley, Cutsdean, Daylesford (see below), Icomb, Little Washbourne, Mitton, Redmarley d'Abitot and Teddington. The Counties (Detached parts) Act 1844 was intended to eradicate exclaves or 'islands' by absorbing them into the surrounding county; Worcestershire however, still possessed outliers, and it was not until the Provisional Order Confirmation (Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire) Act 1931 that Redmarley, Daylesford and Evenlode were transferred to Gloucestershire.



Above: Evenlode church, with right 'the curious combination, seldom met with, of Norman vandyked toothing with a pointed arch'

(Memorials of Old Worcestershire ed F.B.Andrews, 1911).



Left: pulpit of carved oak, probably c1400, with tracery in low relief and little heads in the 'coving' (Pevsner, 2000).

The Society's *Transactions* include three articles on Evenlode. In 1925 it was included in Part 2 of H.B.Walters' six-part 'The Church Bells of Worcestershire', commenced in 1900 and running annually between 1924 and 1932; six bells are noted, including a Victoria Jubilee Bell inscribed 'Many years may I tell/Victoria reigned well'. In 1936 it appeared in Mary Green's remarkable survey of the county's medieval stained glass, with a drawing by her of a crowned and bearded head; and in 1953 H.B.Walters' article, 'Inventories of Worcestershire Church Goods, 1552', included 'An Inventorye Indented taken of all juelles plate & ornamentes bylonging to the Church of Evynlode presented by John Walker Clerk parson there Edward Wallforde and John Rock paryssheners' (see Bruce Watson's *Glevensis* article for details).

Daylesford, St Peter's

The future of this Grade I listed church, 'an intense creation of 1859-63 by J.L. Pearson church' (Ancient Monuments Society *Newsletter*, Summer 2015), is seemingly being secured by a charitable trust set up by the Daylesford Estate. The Heritage at Risk register records its condition as poor, and places it in Priority Category A, as at immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric. The cost of repair was estimated as £700,000 in 2006, and for insurance purposes it is open to visitors only when accompanied by members of the PCC. The present church replaced one, on the site of a very much older church, commissioned in 1806 by Warren Hastings of Daylesford House, first Governor General of India, who is buried in the churchyard and to whom there is a Coade Stone monument. Pearson, described by 1897 *The Times* newspaper in 1897 as 'the founder of the modern school of Gothic architecture', was noted for meticulous attention to detail and use of top quality materials and artists.

Back in Worcestershire, the Grade II listed church of **St George the Martyr, Redditch** by Frederick Preedy, a 'fairly standard but dignified and serious design in Early English and Early Decorated Style' (AMS *Newsletter*, Summer 2015), which was closed in 2012, is to become a school of dance.

The Medieval Abberley revealed project:

1. 2014-15 fieldwork

The Abberley Hills Preservation Society has been undertaking a HLF-funded community archaeology project with the assistance of the Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service, and with the focus on investigating the medieval landscape and history of the parish. This has involved excavating test pits at two locations (October 2014 and April 2015), fieldwalking (November 2014), a finds identification day, and the conducting of mock archaeological excavation sessions for pupils at Abberley Parochial VC Primary School (April 2015) in a purpose-made facility, as well as the feed-back on results at public meetings.

The fieldwork has revealed:

- the first systematically recorded evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in Abberley. This was located by fieldwalking in the south-west of the historic core of the village, where an impressive 1,388 artefacts were recovered (12,000m² walked), including prehistoric worked flint, and Roman and medieval pottery;
- brick-built structural remains and building debris in the vicinity of a steeply falling stream just north of the church, and which coincided with a building on the 1841 tithe map. A few medieval and early post-medieval finds were also found in this area pointing to much earlier activity;



worked flint on the ridge to the south of Wynniattes Way south of the village centre. This has suggested the possibility that ridgeways in this area may have functioned as primary route-ways in the prehistoric period, as has been demonstrated by detailed research in Shropshire.

Left: A finely worked flint scraper from fieldwalking in Abberley

The final report on the archaeological elements of the project is available in the Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service online reports library, and the project is also prominently featured in <https://abberleylives.wordpress.com/tag/medieval-abberley/page/2/> and in <https://vimeo.com/album/3366965>.

Derek Hurst, Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service

2. An Analysis of the Historic Fabric of Medieval and Post Medieval Buildings by Duncan James

Another part of the Abberley project, carried out between October 2014 and May 2015, was the exploration of the ‘standing archaeology’ in and around the village centre. This involved investigating and analysing some dozen houses to understand their age and early development and to see if they retained evidence of medieval structures. Each building was photographed inside and out to record details and evidence for the development of the building and to assess the date of each phase; sketch plans of the layout were prepared; and a detailed written description and analysis produced for each house. Presentations of the findings were given in Abberley in January and May.

There were surprises, and it was noted that the Brooks & Pevsner’s *Worcestershire* (2007) entries were mostly based on external inspections. Duncan James’s report aims to enrich the understanding of the buildings and prompt further investigations, especially through documentary research concerning occupants, to explain the changes and developments of the buildings. Duncan noted also that, apart from occasional pools of water marking the sites of coalmines and possibly clay extraction for brickworks, almost all trace of Abberley’s industrial past has vanished. He points out that this must have been a significant source of income, and the reason for the building of some of the houses, possibly for mine owners combining this activity with farming.

Before the 17th century, houses in the Abberley area would, despite local sources for stone, have been timber-framed structures. These survived only when well maintained and adaptable to new uses or, possibly in fragmented form, subsumed by a later build; the walls may be replaced with or hidden by brick while retaining the original footprint and elements of the roof structure,

Poolhouse Farmhouse being an example. In several instances there is evidence that a cruck frame or other early structure may have preceded the present building. Components from a cruck open-hall house of 14th or 15th-century date reused in the roof structure of 17th-century Field Farm suggest that this was built on the site of an earlier house. 17th-century Town Farm also reuses timbers from an earlier house, and incorporates a single bay from the upper-end cross-wing of what was probably a hall house on the site. Duncan suggests that the existence of a cellar here and at The Old Village Stores, where the upper bay of a solar wing from an earlier building of high quality on the site has been incorporated into the present 17th-century brick range, may have been the key for their retention. An early upper (solar) cross-wing survives at The Old Rectory, with the rest of the building almost certainly on the footprint of a two-bay hall and service bay.

Looking at the common threads that link buildings of a wide range of dates and styles and provide information about the area, Duncan notes the dominant theme as being brick, both its manufacture and use. Local geological formations provided access to suitable clay and coal to make brickmaking an industry of some significance in Abberley. The brickworks have gone, but the bricks are abundant. The earliest use seen so far is in the walls of Tump House where the ceiling beams suggest a late 16th or early 17th-century date. Brick buildings of 17th-century date in the region tend to have been high status; by contrast, in Abberley early use of brick is associated with relatively modest houses such as the Old Village Shop, Field Farmhouse and Poolhouse Farmhouse. The last two began life as four-room houses with attics.

These houses are built from good quality brick, fired at a high temperature, presumably in coal-fired kilns as opposed to wood-fired field clamps. Were any of the brick houses once occupied by owners of brickworks or coal-pits? Poolhouse Farm and Field Farm are both close to the sites of former coal works. Beehive Farm, close to Field Farm, may indicate a beehive kiln rather than beekeeping.

There can be little doubt that an early settlement developed around the church but there is no evidence to indicate that this was extensive. The Abberley area is typified by dispersed farms and small cottages scattered here and there. The major development seems to have taken place in the mid to late 19th century on and around the Common; apart from Churchfield Terrace, even these buildings are dispersed. Duncan suggests this growth was to house workers in either the brickworks or the coalpits.

The listed building descriptions of ten properties are appended to Duncan's amply illustrated report, of which a 95-page pdf copy is available from duncanjames1066@btinternet.com.

Recent Publications

The Diary and Papers of Henry Townshend, 1640-1663 ed Stephen Porter, Stephen K. Roberts and Ian Roy, Worcestershire Historical Society (NS 25, 2014) hardback, 351pp, £32. Copies available at The Hive, The Commandery, or by post from Robin Whittaker at 14, Scobell Close, Pershore, WR10 1QJ (plus p&p £3.50)

With this volume, the WHS is making available a corrected text of what is probably the single most important source for the study of the civil war in the county, the so-called 'diary' of Henry Townshend. Willis Bund's multi-volume edition, published a century ago, is poorly organised

and contains errors. To facilitate the process, the text of Willis Bund's edition was digitized into a workable format, thanks to generous grants from the Society of Antiquaries of London and the Aurelius Trust. Publication was made possible by a grant from the Scouloudi Foundation in association with the Institute of Historical Research.

The list of Contents is remarkably detailed, breaking the text down into 58 sub-headings, starting with 'Diary, 29 April 1640 to 24 February 1641'; 'Ship money'; 'Trained bands'; and 'Taxation' which, not surprisingly, has 13 entries. An excellent Introduction has sections on 'The Document', 'Editorial Method', 'Henry Townshend and his Family', 'The Diary and Papers', some 20 pages on 'Worcestershire and the Civil War', and finally 'After the Civil War'.

'The Document' provides a brief analysis of the eight independent parts of the original manuscript, brought together at a later date, and not all in Townshend's hand. It then follows the history of the manuscript through to its deposition in the Record Office by Dyson Perrins in 1954. In order to provide 'an accurate, accessible and easily navigable text', it has been placed in chronological order as far as possible and headings introduced as indicated in the Contents. Spelling has been modernised and contractions expanded.

The section about Townshend and his family shows how, although disadvantaged as a younger son, Henry rose from modest beginnings to prominence and high status, with connections to leading families such as the Clares and Berkeleys. He was, according to the WHS editor Dr Hunt in 1967, 'one of the most active members of the Worcestershire bench, not only in quarter sessions, but also in his out-sessions work and at the assizes'. His 'diary' is 'the principal source of knowledge of the sessions from 1643, when the official record ceases'. Townshend's fortunes suffered with the Civil War but he managed to rebuild them in the 1650s.

The volume includes details of the royalist administration of the county and a vivid eye-witness account of the siege of Worcester in 1646. It also contains an account of the early months of the Long Parliament of 1640, and journal material on national events in the 1650s and early 1660s. The frontispiece provides an illustration of Townshend's original manuscript, and there are maps of Worcester in 1646 and 1651, the latter 'An Exact Ground-Plot ... as it stood fortified'. An excellent Glossary is appended to the text, along with comprehensive Indexes of Persons and Places. The detailed nature of the Contents obviates the need for a subject index.

***William Forsyth: Sculptor and Ecclesiastical & Domestic Decorator* by David Patten (2015)**
On 5 June this year, Worcester Civic Society celebrated the 100th anniversary of the death of the sculptor William Forsyth with a walk around the city taking in many of the buildings which his work embellished. In the same week, another sculptor, David Patten, published *William Forsyth: Sculptor and ecclesiastical & domestic decorator*, a print-on-demand book bringing together the results of several years of research into the man and his work.

William has often been neglected by comparison with his brother James, with whom he worked on the magnificent fountains at Witley Court. Yet his work is pervasive in late-Victorian Worcester and Malvern, as well as elsewhere in the county and beyond, and he was adept at working in many materials – wood, metal and terracotta and even salt, as well as stone. Both brothers were the subject of an article in the *Transactions* for 1984 by Fred Grice, which included a short list of their works. Now David Patten has trawled through Forsyth's papers in the county archives, as well as contemporary newspapers, to add many new works to the list – yet the book is already in some respects out of date. During the recent heritage at risk survey in Worcester, one of the

project volunteers brought in a bag of papers which included one of Forsyth's notebooks as well as several drawings. Some of these were of carvings known to have been by Forsyth, but many were not, and will allow the attribution of other works to him. It turned out that her father had bought Forsyth's workshop and kept the papers he found there. Patten is already working through the implications of this and no doubt a second edition will be forthcoming. This is a reference work, not a book to be read from cover to cover.

The reader could visit some of Forsyth's work, much of which survives. In Worcester, readily accessible sculptures include the hop picker's frieze, adorning a former hop merchant's office



in Sansome Street; Lloyd's Bank in The Cross; the terracotta work on Compton Buildings in the High Street (Peplow's); the Beauchamp gates at Pitchcroft; and the extraordinarily elaborate shopfront at Forsyth's workshop, 5-6 The Tything.

In Malvern, visit Great Malvern Station, where Forsyth contributed not only carved stonework but also the design of the iron pillar capitals (*The Builder* in 1863 referred to the 'cast-iron columns with extraordinary foliage capitals by William Forsyth, boldly three-dimensional, vividly coloured ... cleverly introduced the foliage of the plants of the neighbourhood'), the Imperial Hotel (now Malvern St James School), Priory Park (the district council offices), and St Ann's Well (the marble water basin). Elsewhere in the county his work can be seen in many churches as well as at Chateau Impney and Witley Court, and (just outside) at Eastnor Castle.



In both Worcester and Malvern William Forsyth's influence was profound, and he was one of a small number of people who shaped the character of both places in the late 19th century.

William Forsyth: Sculptor and ecclesiastical & domestic decorator is available from Amazon at £26.22 (price at time of going to press).

Left: Foliage capital by Forsyth at Great Malvern station.

James Dinn

Shropshire Taxes in the Reign of Henry VIII: The Lay Subsidy of 1524-1527, the Lay Subsidy of 1543-1545 and the Benevolence of 1545, ed M.A. Faraday (2015) 727pp. £34/£29 incl p&p, from M.A. Faraday, 47 York Gardens, Walton on Thames, Surrey, KT12 3EW; email f2594255@gmail.com

Michael Faraday is author of *Ludlow 1085-1660: A Social, Economic and Political History* (1991) and editor of *Worcestershire Taxes in the 1520s: The Military Survey and Forced Loans of 1522-3 and the Lay Subsidy of 1524-7* (WHS NS 19, 2003), amongst many others. His latest volume contains transcriptions or abstracts of the surviving papers (assessments, enrolled accounts and certificates) relating to the lay subsidies of 1523-27 and 1543-45 and the benevolence of 1545. Records included in his earlier volume, *The Lay Subsidy for Shropshire 1524-7* (Shropshire Record Series 3), have been augmented by those of the later taxes (covering a larger area) and assessments for two hundreds in the 1520s. All have been re-formatted to replicate the lay-out of the original documents and to make for easier reading.

Most of the documents are in the form of nominal lists, usually set out by township. Lists of the taxpayers of each small locality with their assessments according to wealth provide a picture of society and of social structure at the critical time of the mid-16th century inflation. The valuation figures probably did not represent the true measure of individual estates, but did reflect socio-economic rankings. Here may be seen the beginnings of the modern income tax system.

Many of the original documents are in poor condition; some have not survived. Whilst the reader is helped to read and understand the texts, it is clear what is in the originals and what is editorial intervention. The text is accompanied by an Introduction, several tables of analysis, lists of officials, three facsimiles of original documents and a map showing the hundreds making up the county as it was both before and after the 1536 'Act of Union'. Although not transferred from Montgomeryshire to Shropshire until 1546, Clun hundred has been included for comparison with later records. Halesowen, then in Shropshire, is also included.

There is a comprehensive and cross-referenced index of personal names and place-names, spelt as they appear in the underlying documents; place-names are also given in the modern form. There are some 11,000 personal names. In the 1540s most inhabitants of the newly added parts of the county bore traditional Welsh names with the Christian name followed by the father's name, itself often followed by the grandfather's name, or even more remote forebears. Many townships had larger populations in the 1540s than they do today; some have disappeared. The dominance within the county of the town of Shrewsbury and a few other towns, such as Ludlow, Bridgnorth and Oswestry is apparent.

These documents were created before most of the earliest surviving parish registers and few will survive from this period. These tax-assessments are therefore of very great importance, and of interest to historians of Henrician taxation, to social historians and to family historians.

Worcester Cathedral Pocket Guides

Three more of these valuable little guides have been produced, each priced at £2.99. More guides are under consideration, including the Cloister windows and some of the Cathedral monuments.

The Benedictine Priory of Worcester Cathedral. A Short Guide

Prepared by Worcester Cathedral Library assistant Deirdre McKeown, then a Heritage Lottery funded graduate trainee employed as part of the ‘Nurturing Worcestershire’s Treasures’ project, and Chris Guy, this is a brief guide to life for the community of Benedictine monks that was here between 964 and 1540. It discusses the Layout of the Cathedral, the Size of the Community, the Structure of the Priory in the Middle Ages, Servants, Aspects of Everyday Life, the Dissolution, and the Cathedral’s Benedictine Heritage Today. Illustrations include St Wulfstan’s seal, and a detailed plan and glossary are included.

The Stained Glass in Worcester Cathedral. A Pocket Guide

Prepared by Richard Barnes, a City of Worcester Decorative and Fine Arts Society (CoWDFAS) Church Recorder, and Chris Guy with assistance from external experts, this remarkable little guide gives a detailed description of each window in the cathedral, plotted on a plan and summarised in the Contents. One may wish that the colour photographs were larger, but Chris’s excellent photography means all windows are readily identifiable, and they encourage one to look more closely at the mainly Victorian glass. Tracery lights sometimes referred to as ‘medieval’ are shown to be the work of John Hardman; only the Arms of the Dean and Chapter of 1595 are completely pre-19th century.

King John and Worcester Cathedral. A Pocket Guide

Produced again by Chris Guy, with acknowledged assistance, this booklet looks at John’s connection with Worcester and the circumstances of his burial in the Cathedral, with the subsequent history of his tomb. The splendid photographs include a thumb bone, the sole of one of his boots, a fragment of his hose and another of his shroud, all removed from his tomb in 1797, as well as his will. The Cathedral Archaeologist has the advantage of access to places other photographers cannot reach, to produce enviable images such as that of John’s effigy taken from the south quire triforium.

Worcestershire Archaeological Society *Transactions*. Third Series Volume 25 (2016)

The Editorial Sub Committee has just approved my proposals for the contents of the next volume of the *Transactions* and, subject to a satisfactory quotation from the printers, the contents will be as follows.

The general history articles include a piece by Stephen Price on the Habington Chest; a study of the Wyre Forest and the people of Bewdley in the seventeenth century by Prof Stuart Davies; a study of a little-known Worcestershire antiquarian, Prebendary Nathaniel Tonkins, by Don Gilbert; a study of the topography of parts of fifteenth-century Worcester by Dr Pat Hughes; a collection of short studies of place-names in Worcestershire with Celtic origins by Dr Breeze

of the University of Navarre; and finally my own study of the origins of the Worcestershire Historical Society.

The archaeological content includes a piece on the Bredon Henge by Dr Jodie Lewis of the University of Worcester; and a series of reports by the Archive and Archaeology Service on a wide range of sites they have been involved in, including the City Campus of the University, the City Arena, Church Farm West, Earl's Court Farm, Bengeworth School, Three Springs in Pershore, Upton upon Severn and Kempsey. These will follow the pattern established in the last volume of shorter reports with supporting details being available via the Service web site. Derek Hurst is offering short pieces on Droitwich Town Mill and the 3-D underlying geology of Droitwich.

The proposals cover a wide date range and varied sites and locations across our county.

Robin Whittaker
Hon. Editor

Dates for your Diary

On **4 November** Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service is starting a new six-part **Introduction to Archaeology** course. Led by Justin Hughes, it will introduce participants to some of the basics of archaeology. Many people have enjoyed workshops and walks over the years, or have helped on community digs, and WAAS has had requests for a short course to understand how archaeology works.

The course lasts 6 weeks and covers:

- Locating Archaeological Sites: maps, photos, Historic Environment Record
- Non-invasive archaeology: geophysics, LIDAR
- Archaeological excavations
- How do archaeologists record information?
- Worcestershire & the Midlands: Prehistory
- Worcestershire & the Midlands: History – Romans, Medieval and Modern

The course costs £45 and runs on Wednesday afternoons 2-4pm in The Hive. To book go to <https://eservices.worcestershire.gov.uk/LibraryEvents/EventDetails.aspx?id=134> (or www.thehiveworcester.org/events.html). For more details please email explorethepast@worcestershire.gov.uk or ring 01905 766352.

On **Saturday 7 November** there is a Simon de Montfort Society Day School, '**Remembering the Medieval Past**', to be held on at Prince's Henry's High School, Evesham. Cost £45 for non-members including lunch. Further details & booking form available from Clive Bostle – bostle@waitrose.com or 01386 765572.

Friday 13 November, 6.30pm at the Shirehall, Hereford

The Woolhope Club in association with Logaston Books is launching two new books on Herefordshire, both at reduced prices for those attending on the night:

Keith Ray *The Archaeology of Herefordshire*, pbck, 448 pp, 230 col ills, RRP £15. A new study in which Herefordshire's former archaeologist describes what is known of the county's archaeology, assessing the work and discoveries of past and present.

Philip Weaver *A Dictionary of Herefordshire Biography*, hdbck, 480 pp, 300 largely colour ills, RRP £25. The county equivalent to the *Oxford DNB*, this volume provides outlines of the lives of 1600 people born before 1900.

If you are able to attend, please email david.whitehead.hafod@care4free.net

Wednesday 18 November, at The Hive studio and Rooms 1 & 3, 10am to 4pm.

Continuing the World War centenary celebrations, an Activity Day, '**Not all Jam and Jerusalem: the WI in the First and Second World Wars**' to demonstrate the range of activities undertaken by the WIs such as knitting and needlework. To enjoy a host of activities come for the whole day, half a day or just drop in. Admission free. Details at <https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/LibraryEvents/EventDetails.aspx?id=116>

Worcestershire Archaeology Day School 2015

Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service's popular event will take place **Saturday 21 November** 10am-5pm at the University of Worcester's St John's campus. Once again there will be talks on a wide range of projects and work we are involved in, as well as talks by a couple of guest speakers. Topics include:

- Fascinating Finds
- Copcut Excavations
- Managing Rural Buildings & Landscapes
- Dig Lich St
- Bromsgrove High St
- Manorial Documents
- Worcester's Civil War Siegeworks
- Latest HER Volunteer Projects

Places are £20 each including tea/coffee but not lunch. You can book online through www.thehiveworcester.org/events.html. If you would like a booking form to send with a cheque please email explorethepast@worcestershire.gov.uk or ring 01905 766352.

Paul Hudson

Also on **21 November**, and also at the University of Worcester, but at the City Campus in Castle Street, Worcester WR1 3AS (Charles Hastings Building), there is a **Conference on The First World War: Nursing**, organised by the Women's History Network, Midlands Region. The cost is £15; further details from Dr Wendy Toon, w.toon@worc.ac.uk, or 01905 855305.

And also on **21 November**, the Centre for West Midlands History is holding a **Birmingham History Day** at the University of Birmingham, 10.00 am to 4.30 pm; fee £20, including lunch this time; details from k.iles@bham.ac.uk, or 0121 415 8253.

To commemorate the 800th anniversary of his death and burial here, an academic conference, **King John Conference: The Worcester Connection**, is being held on Friday & Saturday, 8-9 April 2016, organised by Stephen Church, Professor of medieval history at the University of East Anglia, and the Cathedral. The nine lectures will be:

- Prof Stephen Church, 'Who was King John?'
- Prof David Carpenter, emeritus professor of medieval history at King's College London, on 'Henry III's perceptions of his father';

- Nigel Baker, 'Worcester in the Thirteenth Century';
- Ann Williams, 'St Wulfstan of Worcester';
- Philippa Hoskins, 'The Bishops of Worcester in the early Thirteenth Century';
- Sophie Ambler, 'The Bishops of Worcester in the late Thirteenth Century';
- Chris Guy, 'The Rebuilding of the Quire in the Thirteenth Century';
- Malcolm Thurlby, 'The late 12th century rebuilding at Worcester Cathedral'; and
- Ute Engel, 'The Architectural and Sculptural Setting of King John's tomb'.

For further information see http://worcestercathedral.co.uk/King_John_Conference.php or contact the Cathedral Chapter Office at visits@worcestercathedral.org.uk or 01905 732900.

Worcestershire Archaeological Society Study Tour, 2015: Western Cornwall

Following the AGM, Michael Goode will give an illustrated report on the Study Tour to Cornwall that took place early in October. The party was based at an excellent hotel on the outskirts of Falmouth, and explored the extreme west of the Cornish peninsula, including a number of typical churches, many of which were apparently built on sites originally settled by Welsh or Irish hermits. Other highlights included a cruise around the Fal estuary, which emphasised the strategic importance of the harbour from the earliest times right up to the last War; exploring a tin mine, dramatically situated on a cliff above the sea; and of course, St Michael's Mount. The central area of the peninsula, West Penwith, is full of standing stones, stone circles, ancient crosses, quoits, and other indications that this, like Stonehenge and Avebury, is best understood as a 'sacred landscape'.

So we had lots to see and do, and thanks to benign weather (in contrast to the forecast), we never had to unfurl our brollies! We look forward to sharing our experiences with the rest of the Society, and, indeed, to our next Study Tour, from 3-8 October 2016 to the Menai Straits, when we will be based at Beaumaris.

Michael Goode

Worcestershire Archaeological Society. Excursions Programmes 2015 and 2016

Following a very successful programme of excursions and study tour, Muriel Tinsley and Michael and Jenny Goode have decided to step down, leaving vacancies for the Excursions Administrator and other members of the Excursions Sub-Committee. They are to be thanked for their sterling service over several years.

They are also to be thanked for putting in place provisional arrangements for 2016 when the summer excursions will include visits to Chedworth; Honington Hall and Alscott Park; the Sheldon Tapestry map of Worcestershire in the Bodleian (see p6); Leicester Cathedral and the Richard III Visitor Centre; an evening meal at Hanbury Hall; and Tim Bridges' customary evening church tour, in the west of the area to balance the other excursions. See above for details of the 2016 Study Tour.

Worcestershire Archaeological Society. Lecture Programme 2015-16

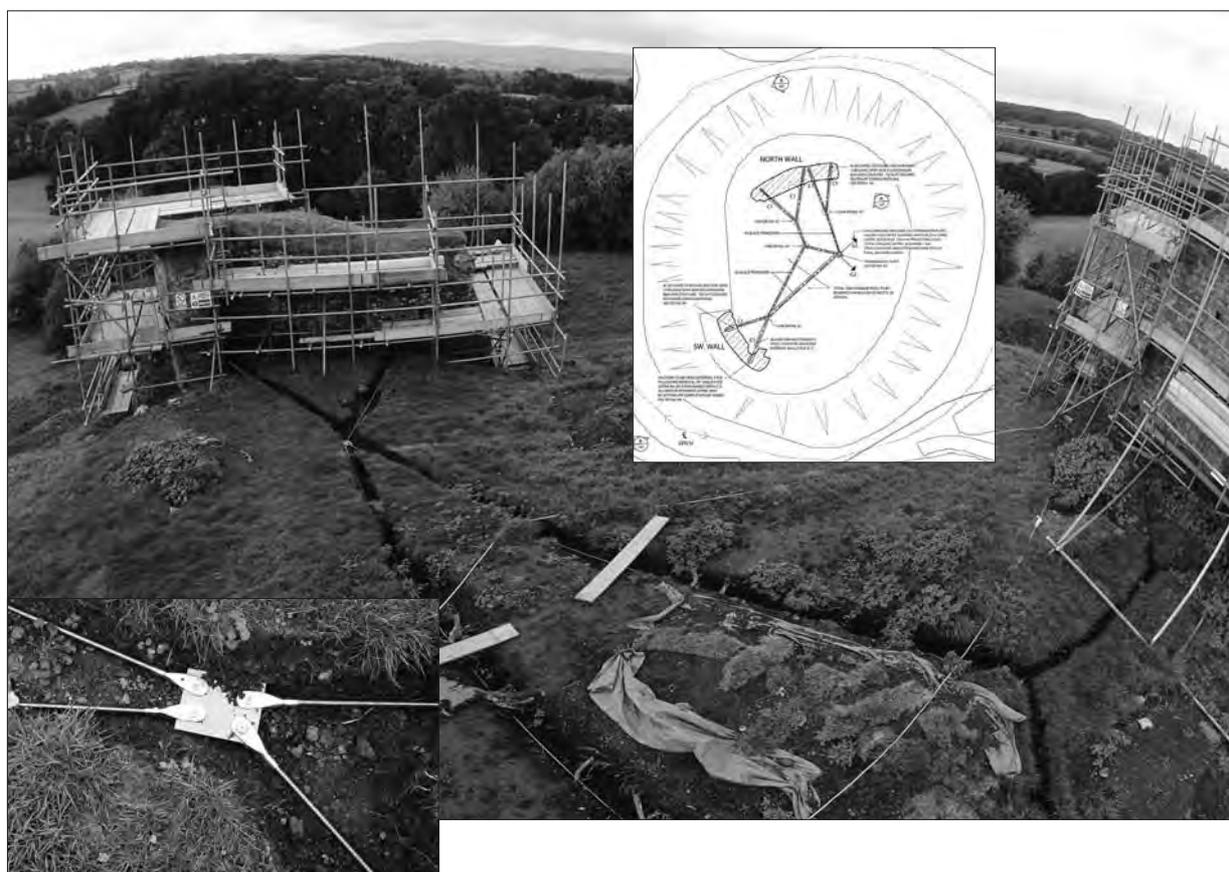
As this season's lecture programme gets under way, we must thank **Peter Walker** for providing and setting up the projection equipment for our lectures, as well as for the technical help he offers. It is on his rare absences that his generous services are fully appreciated!

Members who attended Dr Heather Gilderdale Scott's Berkeley Lecture '**A Community in the "companie of heaven": the fifteenth-century "donor" figures at Great Malvern Priory**' in April (and those who didn't), may be interested to know that the illustrations from the lecture are available via the Society's website, www.worcestershirearchaeologicalsociety.org.uk; a copy

of the text of the lecture is available from Bob Ruffle on request, at bob.ruffle@tesco.net or 01684 578142.

Victoria Bryant opened the 2015-16 lecture programme on 21 September, challenging some of the assumptions and interpretations made by archaeologists by ‘Talking Rubbish in Worcester’; the full title was ‘**The Mystery of the Missing Miskins: Rubbish Disposal and Dispersal in Medieval Worcester**’. A miskin, we learned, is a medieval and early post-medieval word for a midden or dunghill, unglamorous and unloved, but playing an important role in the lives of the citizens and city of Worcester and fundamental to our understanding of the deposition of archaeological remains and how we can, and cannot, interpret them. Victoria’s talk looked at both the documentary and archaeological evidence from Worcester, paying credit to Pat Hughes and Hal Dalwood, via a short excursion to the medieval city of Qasr Ibrim in Egyptian Nubia. From the Deansway excavations she argued persuasively that the contents of the holes hitherto assumed to be rubbish pits did not reflect that usage, apart from one which contained the remains of a house fire and was the exception that proved the rule. What, then, happened to the city’s rubbish? Comparison of the archaeological and documentary evidence was used to trace the convoluted story of rubbish from creation to final resting place on archaeological sites often via the large miskins outside the city walls. Giving the vote of thanks our Chairman James Dinn acknowledged that his ‘cherished preconceptions had been elegantly but comprehensively demolished’.

On 12 October **Bill Klemperer**, Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Historic England, gave a fascinating talk on ‘*Border Castles: Conservation and Research*’. In his introduction he noted that the castle is distinguished from the burh by always being a home.



Kilpeck Stabilisation Grid, inserts showing grid plan and detail of link. Images courtesy of Jon Avent, Conservation Engineer with Mann Williams

The Marches, as we learned, have a great concentration of castles, mainly dating from the Norman period following the invasion of 1066; of some incredible 249 castles in the study area (Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire) 84% survive, 68% as earthworks and 24% retain masonry. In describing some of the work undertaken in the past 20 years or so, Bill took us on a tour which included Longtown, Ludlow, Goodrich, Wigmore, Wilton, Whittington, Hopton, Acton Burnell, Clun, Stokesay, Clifford, Snodhill, Eardisley, Ewyas Harold, Richards Castle, Kilpeck, and Alberbury, where Historic England is currently in discussion with the owners. Conservation has presented both technical challenges to save the fabric, stabilise and protect the monuments, and questions of conservation philosophy. HE works in partnership with owners, Natural England, the HLF and Preservation Trusts such as have been set up at Hopton. Agreements are set up under Section 17 of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Much has been done, but much remains to do.

The programme continues:

2 November *Bordesley Briefing: Some Further Lines of Enquiry*
Professor Grenville Astill

Professor Grenville Astill and his fellow director of the Bordesley Abbey Project, Dr Susan Wright, gave the 2008 Berkeley Lecture on the Project, subtitled ‘an overview of 35 years excavation and research’. This talk offers a review of the extended archaeological work at this Worcestershire Cistercian monastery and will concentrate on those aspects of the Bordesley Abbey Project which have challenged received opinion about monastic life in the Middle Ages and cause us to rethink how we might approach the study of medieval monasteries in the future.

23 November *Palaeolithic Worcestershire: The Original West Midlands Safari Park*
Nick Daffern

The talk will give an overview of the results of an Historic England (formerly English Heritage) funded project to enhance the Palaeolithic data held by the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record and to make this information and the period more accessible to specialists and non-specialists alike. It will look at the fascinating Ice Age history of Worcestershire covering its climate and landscape over the last one million years and the animals and humans (both archaic and modern!) who lived and hunted here.

14 December *Roman Rural Settlement in Worcestershire*
Tom Brindle

The Roman Rural Settlement Project (a collaboration between the University of Reading, Cotswold Archaeology and the Archaeology Data Service) has amassed detailed data for over 3500 excavated Romano-British rural sites in England and Wales, incorporating data from published site reports and unpublished ‘grey literature’. The mass of new excavation data created over the past 25 years is allowing us to develop a far more nuanced understanding of the Romano-British countryside, and this talk will provide an overview of the project’s recent research, focussing on the settlement pattern in Worcestershire and placing it within the national context.

2016

11 January *The Iron Trade on the River Severn*
Peter King

The Black Country was the greatest iron manufacturing area in Britain by the 1610s. Local iron production was inadequate for its needs. The lecture will explore the role played by the river Severn in providing iron from the Forest of Dean and even further afield. This was processed

in the Stour valley before Black Country ironmongers had it manufactured into nails and other useful goods.

1 February *Excavations at Newport Street, Worcester, 2005*
Peter Davenport

The excavations at Newport Street in 2005 showed activity from the Roman to the post-medieval and early modern period. Evidence was revealed for a Roman road running on the approximate alignment of Newport Street on makeup consisting largely of iron working waste. From the 13th or 14th century substantial stone buildings as well as early timber construction over stone-built cellars appeared along Newport Street. Major property boundaries changed little once established, and the street frontages of both Newport Street and Dolday continued to be occupied throughout the post-medieval and early modern periods. Analysis of finds and environmental evidence has helped to link some of these structures to trades associated with the occupants of properties known from historical records. The results complement those of previous major investigations of the Roman and medieval town, in particular the excavations at Deansway, and have been valuable in achieving an understanding of the site in later periods, providing the first major archaeological study of the post-medieval development of the city.

22 February **The Making of Henry Townshend's Diary and Papers, 1640-1663**
Stephen Roberts

The new edition of this staple text on the civil war in Worcestershire has raised questions about Townshend's reasons and purposes for creating and collecting the documents we know as his diaries and papers. This lecture will set the Townshend text in its political, parliamentary and administrative context, and will also explore the question of what it tells us of Townshend's character, interests and social networks.

14 March **AGM**

This will be followed by an illustrated talk on the Study Tour to Western Cornwall (see p21).

18 April *Weaving Elizabethan Worcestershire: the Sheldon Tapestry Maps*
Berkeley Lecture **Hilary Turner**

Weaving a picture of the county was the idea of the Worcestershire JP, Ralph Sheldon, around 1590. This tapestry, and its three companion pieces, brought to life information on Christopher Saxton's county surveys, the earliest mapping of England and Wales (1574-79). Hills and woodland contrasted with open ground, filled with the fenced parks and houses of the gentry, bridges, beacons, mills and even antiquities. Towns were often depicted with accurate detail, though villages were formulaic.

The designer's skill made Sheldon's house amongst the most imaginatively decorated in England. Yet he and the weavers remain anonymous, the place of weaving unknown and the tapestries' impact on their viewers unrecorded. (see also p6)

Items for the next issue should be sent to the Editor, email
recorder@worcestershirearchaeologicalsociety.co.uk by **1 March 2016**.



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