

## REPORT ON THE YEAR 1993

### HISTORIC BUILDINGS SECTION

Our programme for the year began with three winter evening meetings: two lectures and a members' evening with refreshments, at Hyde Historic Resources Centre, Hyde House, Winchester. Francis Green spoke on the immense and challenging problems facing conservationists and archaeologists in dealing with medieval buildings in the "New Germany", particularly in urban centres such as Stralsund, Rostock and the former East Berlin. Huge numbers of fine ancient buildings are decaying after 40 years of neglect and poor quality repair. Surprisingly, many were built of brick from the 13th century onwards, including great churches presiding over streets of merchants' houses and warehouses. Since reunification, outside consultants, such as our speaker, have advised on the way forward. Grahame Soffe's lecture described the continuing research by himself and John Brushe on the history and architectural development of an important Hampshire country house and its estate. Cranbury Park stands today in a lovely setting between Winchester and Southampton, and was the focus of one of our recent summer meetings (see Report for 1990). Our speaker showed that a fascinating history could be traced from the Iron Age hillfort (from which the name is taken) through medieval hamlet and hunting lodge to Tudor mansion. During the 18th century the house and gardens can now be shown to have undergone two major remodellings, the latter by George Dance the Younger, set against the intriguing history of several families notable for their roles in the life of both nation and county.

Our summer meetings were all blessed with fine weather and high attendances. The first, on 22 May, was a tour and discussion of the medieval Hospital of St John the Baptist, Winchester, now 'St John's Winchester Charity'. Our guide-speakers were Michael Jackson (Director) and Barbara Carpenter Turner, doyenne of

Hampshire historians, whose book on the hospital had recently been published. Rodney Hubbuck discussed the medieval hall and chapel on the north side of the Broadway after our visit to the courtyard of buildings on the south side designed by Garbett in archaic Tudor style in the early 19th century. Following Robyn Burgess's lecture at our autumn conference, Alan Stoyell (RCHME) led the tour of the City Mill, which lies next to the hospital and has recently been surveyed by RCHME.

Our country house visit on 19 June took members to Eversley village and Warbrook House in the far north-east of the county, where we examined two houses and St Mary's parish church, in the company of John Brushe, Revd Graham Fuller, Rector of Eversley and his wife Rachel. Mr Brushe, who is researching the 18th-century architect John James took us first to the surviving stable-block at Herriard Park where the present owner Mr J Jervoise showed James's wooden model of the original house (now demolished). At Warbrook House, also designed by James, for his own use, in 1724, the party were entertained by Mr N Hibbert of Style Conferences before tours of the house and grounds. In the afternoon we visited the church, of medieval origin, but remodelled by James, where we received a first taste of Charles Kingsley, well known author and Christian Socialist. As rector, Kingsley had resided at the Old Rectory (1842-75), a fine 17th and 18th-century house. The tour of the house was led by the owner Mr Ian Sutherland. Mrs Sara Beer spoke on Kingsley and Mrs Sutherland, Mrs Fuller and members of the local society provided a fine cream tea.

On 8 July, Prof Martin Biddle gave a fascinating illustrated lecture at the Milner Hall, Winchester, on 'Recent Work at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem'. He had been leading an archaeological and photogrammetric survey of the Edicule, the Shrine of the traditional Tomb of

Christ, first erected around the rock-cut tomb in 326 by Constantine. After many reconstructions, and an earthquake in 1926, the shrine is in danger of collapse and is to be restored again on the basis of the accurate record provided by the survey.

The study visit to the historic buildings of the medieval town of Downton, Wiltshire, on 17 July, was heavily over-subscribed and will be repeated in 1994. It was led by John Brushe and Edward Roberts who first showed the fine medieval parish church of St Lawrence and then took us on a preambulation of the High Street and the Borough – the new town created in the early 13th century by Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester. Lunch was provided at the White Horse Inn and we are grateful to Jeremy Pope, Mr M Tapley and Mr Thrift of Eldridge Pope & Co for making the visit so enjoyable. In a study by our guides the inn has been found to be composed of two distinct late medieval timber-framed buildings. The first was a good-quality merchant's house of hall, service and cross-wing. The second building was exceptionally large, of very high quality and not planned as a dwelling house. It had three kinds of roof truss over a first-floor great chamber which may have served as a market hall. The group then visited the Old School House and the Moot. The grounds of the latter contain the extensive earthworks of Downton Castle, the history and topography of which were described by John Hare. Later post-medieval garden modifications included remains of a temple and 'theatre'. Finally, we toured the Manor House, again with important medieval survivals, recently recorded and repaired under John Brushe's supervision. These included an open arch-brace truss roof, a chapel wing and elaborate stone mullioned windows. The manor was an endowment to Winchester College by William of Wykeham in 1380 and later leased by Elizabeth I and occupied by Sir Walter Raleigh's brother. The owners, David and Deborah Chapman, provided a magnificent tea in the garden, and members made a donation towards the church restoration fund.

Due to the illness of the programme secretary the autumn conference and 1993 AGM were postponed until 19 February 1994, when they

were held at King Alfred's College, Winchester. The conference, entitled 'Out of the Ashes', centred on current reconstruction and conservation projects involving major historic buildings in southern England. Particular attention was paid to work carried out after recent spectacular fire damage. Our distinguished speakers had been directly responsible for or involved in this work. John Eyre (National Trust) spoke on Uppark, Sussex; John Thorneycroft (English Heritage) on 'Comparative Disaster Management – Hampton Court and Windsor Castle'; Simon Thurley (Historic Royal Palaces) on 'Hampton Court Palace; what happened next' and John Brushe on the Queen's House, Greenwich, 'Inigo Jones or Peter Jones!'

At the AGM the following committee members were re-elected: Francis Green (chairman), Dily Hall (secretary), Grahame Soffe (programme secretary), Edward Roberts (*Proceedings* and *Newsletter* editor), John Stott (publicity), Audrey Sutton, Ann Jones and Jude James. Peter Davies our treasurer resigned during the year and we thank him for all his work. Elizabeth Birkett took over as temporary treasurer but later resigned herself, and Michael Bullen, who had joined the committee during the year was confirmed as our new treasurer at the AGM. 1993 also saw the resignation of Pamela Moore from her task in monitoring Listed Buildings applications to local authorities in the county, and the Section committee and the Council moved to find ways of continuing this vital function – it was one of the main reasons for establishing the Section originally. In carrying out this work, the Field Club acts as agent for the Council for British Archaeology, one of the statutory bodies specifically required by law to carry put this role. For several years a team of committee members covering most of Hampshire were co-ordinated by John Crook with costs being covered by the CBA. It is important that this work should continue and the Field Club be involved in it.

Contributions to the *Newsletter* included reports on surveys of buildings carried out in their official capacity by RCHME, staff and on 19th-century church restoration. All our events were reported in the *Hampshire Chronicle*.

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