

The Yateley Society

Newsletter

Issue 110 February 2013

www.yateleysociety.org.uk

Yateley Society Annual General Meeting

8pm

Thursday 21 February 2013

Join us for a glass of wine and have your say.

Red Cross Centre,
Monteagle Lane, Yateley, GU46 6LU

Everyone is cordially invited to attend Yateley Society Chair's Dinner

7.30pm

Friday 1 March 2013

Whealers Restaurant at the Casa Hotel,
Handford Lane, Yateley

£21.95 for 3 courses

To book, email

chairman@yateleysociety.org.uk or call Roger
on 01252 879103 by 18 Feb please

A lovely evening, with pleasant company and
lively conversation.

A positive development from the course of three planning seminars which the Society ran in conjunction with the Farnborough and Fleet & Church Crookham Societies in 2011, has been regular communication within a cluster of local civic societies. The initial group of three has been joined by the Aldershot and Farnham Societies. Representatives of the five societies now meet every six months to share information and compare experience in areas of common interest. The exchange of ideas and good practice should benefit the way we work in Yateley.



Roger Coombes
Chairman

Following on from that, I have recently received the latest newsletter of the Odiham Society and I was struck by the list of its Executive Committee (EC) and other members who have active roles. I totted these up and found to my amazement (and envy) that there are 28 different people actively involved in running the Odiham Society. How fortunate we would be if that were the case in Yateley! Odiham is a much smaller town/village and although I don't know the size of either its population or of the membership of its Society I am certain that a higher proportion of its residents belong to the Society than is the case in Yateley. The fact that their EC is no larger than ours demonstrates that you do not necessarily have to be a committee member in order to be involved in doing things.

With that in mind, I am pleased to say that after a hiatus of six years there is a strong possibility that this year we will be welcomed back into the Library to reinstate our annual exhibition and lecture. For this to happen the EC would really need some help. In the early years of the Society's exhibitions over 20 members were involved in a variety of ways. We have already been kicking around a few ideas for subjects or themes, so if this interests you **please** contact Trudy Boothby for more information or just to say "I'd like to be involved". Email vicechairman@yateleysociety.org.uk or call her on 01252 409262

As I am writing this Ann Knott is talking with staff at Wheelers Restaurant at the Casa Hotel about this year's Chairman's Dinner (see box to the left). I hope to see many of you there.





LOCALISM and the COMMUNITY

Gerry Silverstone, of the National Trust, gave a talk on how the National Trust presented its views to Government during the

consultation stage of the Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The general thrust of those views centred on preventing unacceptable development and supporting the connection of beautiful places with people.

Gerry said that a major part of the government's strategy was to create the 'Big Society', essentially to transfer more powers from central government to local communities. The Localism Act has changed the way that Councils work and the introduction of the NPPF is intended to simplify the planning process by turning 1000+ pages of planning guidance into 50+ pages.

The National Trust was not initially supportive of many of the changed policies especially those

placing development before sustainability. The National Trust stance was not anti development but to support the need for the right development in the right place and supporting the three dimensions of Sustainable Development,

- an economic role,
- social role
- and environmental role.

The National Trust also supported affordable housing of good design. Eventually Government accepted many concessions before the Localism Act and the NPPF were passed into law in April last year.

Following Gerry's talk there was a lively question and answer session with plenty of interaction from those present. The items discussed ranged from "What is Sustainable Development?", the problem with developing Farnborough Town Centre and the future of the old police building, now being used by the Archeological Society, in Bagshot. There were no magic solutions to these issues but plenty of advice and opinions expressed.

Barry Moody

YATELEY MORRIS MEN

We were promised four Morris Men for our meeting, but in the event we got *seven*. What a fun evening it was as we were informed and entertained for almost two hours.

We learned about the possible origins and history of Morris dancing, the formation of the Yateley group (in 1975), the role of dancing and folk music in the English school curriculum (c.1909 to the 1960s), references to Morris in Shakespeare, Mummers plays, costumes, music and musical instruments. And that semi-mythical local rogue parson Darby put in an appearance, as he often does when local legends are discussed.

All this historical and cultural information was interspersed with *seven* dances and jigs. Excerpts of several folk songs were played and members were invited to join in, some with more success than others, as we heard remembered and half-forgotten tunes. To conclude, a few brave souls (Chairman included!) were coaxed into participating in the final dance of the evening.

There were smiling faces all round throughout the evening. If you have never seen the Yateley Morris Men perform you should try to do so ... it is an unforgettable experience. And if you are tempted to join them please do so and help to keep this piece of traditional culture alive. Their website is www.yateleymorrimen.org.uk



Yateley Common—Castle Bottom—Archaeology project

Carol White has long organised archaeological research projects on Yateley Common and many sites have revealed stone tool manufacture, primarily with evidence of a 'narrow blade' microlith technology of the Late Mesolithic period dating to around 7000 years ago. Landscape features have also been studied, with some from the Bronze Age, including a 'bell barrow' burial site on the military section of the heathland. Castle Bottom was the subject of further archaeological investigations assisted by students and local societies, including the Yateley Society.

The feature lies on ancient Pleistocene river deposits that cap the Tertiary sands and gravels over Yateley Common. Although the mound is situated in a prominent position on a small ridge with aspects across the area, it was hidden for many years by surrounding vegetation, to be rediscovered by the rangers after the storm of 1987, when several trees in the vicinity were felled by high winds. After clearance of trees around the feature, claims were made by local residents of the mound being previously known as a landmark given the name the 'Twelve Apostles' after twelve Scots Pines planted in the mound at some time in the past. In subsequent years, the landscape around the feature has been managed by the Yateley Common land management team, and during 2002, Carol and David Hopkins – the Senior Archaeologist for Hampshire County Council, visited the feature, and agreed that it could potentially, be a small Bronze Age burial monument, or a burial site from a later period, but as the construction patterns and content was unknown, an accurate classification was not possible.

The mound has an east-west diameter of approximately 16 metres, and a north-south measurement of 18 metres, including the surrounding outer ditch and bank, often a characteristic of Bronze Age barrow construction. Numerous mounds of this form have been discovered in Hampshire. As little was known about the archaeological nature of the mound on Castle Bottom, there were several research questions to be addressed.

Prior to the commencement of the excavations, ground surveys and a topographic survey were conducted. All invasive research was by hand trowelling, removing sediments in sequential order and in stratigraphic relationship to the primary structure, as it is important to return all sediments, as natural or cultural deposits, in succession to re-establish the approximate construction processes and original shape after the excavations. All deposits and small finds were recorded, including a more recent gravel fill from a rotted tree stump situated within the boundary of the trench, presumably, the remains of one of the 'Twelve Apostles'.

Based on the extent of the ditch following excavation, the mound itself was possibly no more than 9 to 10 metres in diameter. This was encircled by a 2 metre wide ditch, and 1½ to 2 metre wide bank, although the bank had clearly been eroded over time.

From the construction methods observed and using evidence from other known barrow sites, the mound at Castle Bottom seems indeed, to be a small Bronze Age bowl barrow, of a technique of building most frequently used in the Bronze Age within the Hampshire/Surrey border areas. Building materials were utilised from the landscape by a local community who were familiar with the qualities of the fabric for construction of earthworks, and had the knowledge and skills to exploit the discrete components of the sedimentary materials across the Yateley plateau area

More about Castle Bottom

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/countryside/castle-bottom.htm>



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Our monthly meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at the Red Cross Centre, Monteagle Lane, Yateley, GU46 6LU (Unless otherwise stated) Members and non-members welcome, admission free.

Thursday 21 February 2013	It's our AGM! Come along for a glass of wine, lively discussion and make your opinion count.
Saturday 9 February 2103 BVCT Event	Bird Box Building 10am - 1pm at Rowhill Nature Reserve, Cranmore Lane, Aldershot, GU11 3BD (SU 849 499) Drinks will be available to purchase.
Friday 1 March 2013	Chairman's Dinner 7.30 at Wheelers Restaurant at the Casa Hotel, Handford Lane, Yateley. Email chairman@yateleysociety.org.uk to book
Saturday 2 March 2013 BVCT Event	Bird Walk A bird walk at Tices Meadow led by Richard Horton which will take you around the restored woodland to the viewing area over the wetland landscape full of birds and wildlife. Meet 10am at Pea Bridge, Badshot Lea Road, Badshot Lea, GU11 3RD (SU 867 490)
Thursday 21 March 2013	Basingstoke Canal Roger Cansdale will tell us about the replacing of the much loved John Pinkerton and the latest developments in the maintenance of the canal.
Thursday 18 April 2013	Yateley Library Sally Garner, Assistant Library Manager for this area of Hampshire (and specific responsibility for Yateley Library) will talk about the Library Service in Hampshire - how it's been affected by cuts, how it's adapting, future of Yateley Library, etc
Tuesday 30 April 2013 BVCT Event	Spring Chorus Up early for the Spring Chorus! Something you should do at least once in a lifetime! Come and hear the cacophony of spring! From blackbirds and warblers to woodpeckers. Meet 5:30am Rowhill Nature Reserve, Cranmore Lane, Aldershot, GU11 3BD (SU 849 499)

The Heritage Gallery has found a New Home

The Heritage Gallery (which is run by the Surrey Heath Museum Action Group *SHMAG*) has found a new home at 31 Obelisk Way, The Mall, Camberley, GU15 3SG (opposite Argos). The Mayor, Bruce Mansell, opened the Gallery in a ceremony on 29th January.



EXERCISE THE BODY AND CONSCIENCE!

The Conservation Group normally meets at Wyndhams Pool, Cricket Hill 10 am— last Sunday of each month.

Everyone is welcome to join in the fun. The aim is to help the Yateley Rangers in all sorts of tasks in the upkeep of Yateley Common. To find out more, please call Mike Mann on 01252 877741

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