



January 2012

No. 91

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

February 15 **THE AMESBURY HISTORY DVD**

A viewing of this new project, solely for members. This is the only notice members will receive, so please make a note in your diaries! There will be a public viewing later in the month

2.30pm at Wyndham Hall

March 13 **LADY FLORENCE ANTROBUS** by David Boulton

Based on his recently published book: 'Wealth, Controversy and Tragedy: Lady Florence Antrobus and her family', David will address all of these themes as they impacted on Lady Florence (1856-1923) and on her immediate family, particularly Lieutenant Edmund, who was killed so tragically and so early in the First World War. His talk will be illustrated by some of the splendid collection of early photographs which are owned by the Trustees of Antrobus House.

Entrance is free. Please note the venue, which is being provided by courtesy of the Antrobus Trustees. The talk will be followed by discussion during which wine (£1 per glass) and soft drinks (50p per glass) will be available.

7.30pm at Antrobus House

March 21 **REINTRODUCTION OF GREAT BUSTARDS TO THE UK**

By Lynne Derry, Visit and Retail Manager for the Great Bustard Group. The illustrated talk will give a brief history of the birds, how the project started, bringing birds back from Russia to their release on Salisbury Plain, plus any updates of things that are happening.

2.30pm at Wyndham Hall

April 18 **THE HISTORY AND DAY TO DAY OPERATIONS OF LIFEBOATS**

By John Nelson, Royal National Lifeboat Institute

7.30pm at Wyndham Hall

THE ANTROBUS HATCHMENT IN ST MARY'S CHURCH

Hatchments, or funeral escutcheons, contain the arms of a deceased person within a black lozenge-shaped frame, and were usually placed over the principal entrance to his or her house for a period, usually a year, when they were often placed in the local church. It was a custom that was popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but all but died out during the early twentieth century.

The background is of immense significance when considering a hatchment, for it makes it possible to tell whether it is for a widow or widower, husband or wife, or bachelor or spinster. The vital clue is that the ground of the hatchment is black that surrounds the arms of the deceased and white around the arms of the survivor. Married couples have two sets of arms on their hatchment, bachelors have just the one while spinsters have their arms on a lozenge. In the case of married couples, a hatchment that has a totally black ground tells us that the widow or widower has also died. If it is a widower, his arms would be on a shield, if a widow, hers would be on a lozenge.

The first Sir Edmund Antrobus acquired the Amesbury Abbey estate in

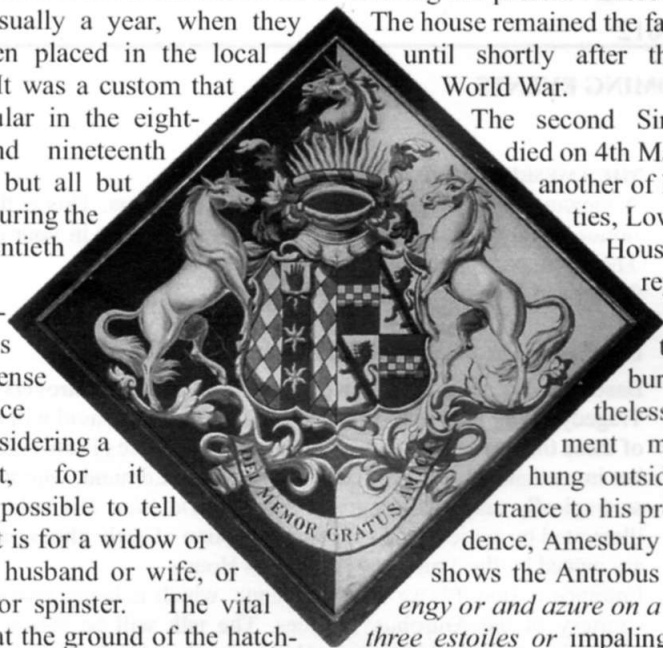
1824 and the second Sir Edmund, whose hatchment hangs on the north wall of the nave, inherited the estate in 1826 and was largely responsible for creating the present Amesbury Abbey.

The house remained the family's seat until shortly after the Second World War.

The second Sir Edmund died on 4th May 1870 at another of his properties, Lower Cheam House in Surrey, and it is in Cheam that he is buried, nonetheless his hatchment must have hung outside the entrance to his premier residence, Amesbury Abbey. It

shows the Antrobus arms, *lozenge or and azure on a pale gules three estoiles or impaling the arms borne by the family of his widow, Anne Lindsay, quarterly 1st and 4th gules a fess chequy argent and azure, 2nd and 3rd or a lion rampant gules over all a ribbon sable.* A glance at the illustration opposite will probably be enough to make sense of the heraldic terminology.

Sir Edmund's arms occupy the black side of the hatchment, Lady Antrobus's are on the white, thus making clear that she was the survivor. The arms are further embellished by the addition of two horses, which act as supporters,



and a unicorn's head, the Antrobus family crest.

Lady Antrobus herself died on the 1st December 1885. There is no hatchment in the church to commemorate her passing but if there had been one it would have displayed the joint arms on a black field and contained within a lozenge.

Stephen Tudsbery-Turner

THE AMESBURY WAR MEMORIAL PROJECT

As many of you may be aware by now the war memorial has finally been restored to its previous and more elegant design thanks to the excellent work of stonemason Colin Avery. On the 11th November a re-dedication ceremony was held and conducted by Cannon Gill followed by the customary two minutes silence at 11 a.m. to honour the people of Amesbury who gave their lives for us in both world wars.

At the time of writing just £287 needs to be raised to reach the cost of the project. Those who have contributed so far are the War Memorials Trust (£2,500), Co-operative Community Fund (£2,000), Anonymous (£250), Richard Crook (£198), Amesbury Society Members at the AGM (£120), The Amesbury Society £100, Stonehenge Chamber of Trade (£100) and John Russell (£50). A big thank you goes out to all the donors. The amount needed has been reduced because of the lower than expected invoice from stonemason Colin Avery with the final target for fund raising now being £5,605.



Attempts are still being made to recover the outstanding balance so if any other members would like to contribute they can do so at the next meeting in February or contact Bill Dunn by telephone on 01980 622512 or by email at:

wtdunn9@gmail.com

Amesbury Society members at the re-dedication ceremony.
Photo: John Russell

Bill Dunn

WYNDHAM HALL

Wyndham Hall, situated opposite Amesbury Abbey Church, was opened, with great celebrations, as a new church and community hall on Saturday 29th October 2011. Formerly, it had been the Royal British Legion Club, and is a building with an interesting history.

The first building on the site was a Church Army hut opened on Easter Monday, 9th April 1917. Newspaper accounts described it as 'a spacious and well-constructed building....much appreciated by the crowds of soldiers who frequent it.' The Church Army ran many social clubs in France during the Great War, for serving soldiers.



1928: Mrs Cockle's School outing, with the forerunner of Wyndham Hall in the background

The hut, and its furniture, was given by Lord and Lady Glenconner, of Wilsford Manor, in memory of their son, Edward Wyndham Tennant (born 1st July 1897), who had been killed at the battle of the Somme, in September 1916.

'Bim', as he was affectionately known, was allowed to roam the nearby countryside freely, and visited Amesbury on a number of occasions. From an early age he wrote poetry. He became an officer in the Grenadier Guards and served in France from August 1915. His letters to his mother provide a vivid account of conditions at the front, and towards the end, there is a definite sense of foreboding. Two days before his death he had written: 'Tonight we go up to the trenches we were in, and tomorrow or the next day we go over the top....I am full of hope and trust, and pray that I may be worthy of my fighting ancestors...I

have never been prouder of anything, except your love for me, than I am of being a Grenadier.' He was killed by a sniper's bullet, and was buried at Guillemont Road Cemetery.

In a ceremony on Wednesday 28th July 1920, Lord and Lady Glenconner gave the 'Wyndham Tennant' hut to the Comrades of the Great War, which represented the rights of ex-servicemen and women who had served during the First World War. Presumably the Church Army no longer needed it, and it was of more use to the veterans' association, which amalgamated with other associations to form the British Legion on 10th June 1923.

In the early 1950s the Legion replaced the wooden hut with the present building. It was known as the Royal British Legion Club after the Royal Charter was granted in 1971, and was purchased by the Church in 2009. The spacious and high standard accommodation in the new hall was evident at a lunch attended by Church and, most appropriately, British Legion members on Remembrance Sunday 2011.

It was, in a number of ways, an auspicious occasion. The Remembrance ceremony had been observed in the morning for the first time since 1973; the war memorial had been repaired and restored; and by a fine numerical coincidence, the time and date of the armistice commemoration could be represented by 11.11.11.11.

It was a finely appropriate link with April 1917, when the original hut was opened for serving soldiers.

Michael Nottage

YOUR CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The past year, has been for the Society a particularly notable one, so much has happened during 2011 all to the credit of what in fact is quite tiny society. Plea for new members and most importantly members prepared to serve on our committee. This has become very important with the loss of three stalwarts to our committee: Bill Dunn, and Christine and Peter Goodhugh.

The society is now in regular contact with David Jacques and the members of his team who have made such momentous discoveries on the Blick Mead site behind the Abbey. resulting in a claim that Amesbury has become the second oldest site of habitation in Britain and the way things are going, we could well become the oldest. When the two stone axes were found near the traffic lights as The Corner Garage was built in 1938, it was a fair indicator of the potential of Amesbury's past when they were dated around 8000 BC, Blick Mead is continuing to support that evidence, most of which has been recovered from just one pit some four metres square. What else is to be discovered, only time will tell.

The highlight of the year's lectures was David's talk on his excavations. This was a special occasion for the Society, an expensive departure from our usual

talks held in the Melor or Wyndham halls but fully justified by the 90 odd attendance which covered our expenses, profits going to the continuing support for his excavations. Which brings me to another achievement in 2011. We applied for and gained a £5000 grant from the Area Board to support his work with particular reference to a written and published report on the work so far, a vital part in establishing the rightful recognition of this important work. The name of Amesbury has become known world-wide as a result of David's work, an article in the Independent newspaper was translated and published in 14 languages. the latest being in Mandarin and published in China. Note:- This is all about Amesbury and some 4000 years before Stonehenge.

The excellent meetings programme for the past year also had an archaeology theme, taking in new discoveries at Netheravon, the story of Avebury, and the archaeology of the Salisbury Plain training area.

The Amesbury War Memorial has now been restored to its former glory thanks to the Society, It has long been a pet project of mine but thanks to the efforts of Bill Dunn's fund raising campaign, the restoration became a reality. The project was aimed at completion in time for the Armistice celebrations, the contractors Colin Avery and his son, completed the project in time for a dedication service to be held on Thursday 10th. of November and what a superb result, it is all and more than we could have hoped for.

But before I go, tribute must be paid to the superb devotion to the Society given unstintingly by Bill and Peter. Bill returning to us after his illness and giving us back our War Memorial and more much more, thankfully he is remaining in the Society and will continue to support us in the background. Peter and I were responsible for the birth of the Amesbury Society in 1975, since when he with John Chandler wrote the two Amesbury books, has produced the newsletter for many years and this year produced the Amesbury Town Trail and Historical Guide book, an update of his previous edition. He too will be remaining in the Society. Their efforts will be sorely missed but immensely appreciated.

Finally, the Amesbury DVD. This is now in its final stages, it runs for an hour continually or in separate time scales via the menu. When finalised, we will arrange for a formal showing at a special meeting, either at the Bowman Centre or the Wyndham Hall towards the end of February. Lookout for the posters for details.

Norman Parker

<p>A WORD FROM THE TREASURER: Subscriptions were due last November. Some are still outstanding, and can be paid to Linda Smith, at 5 Harvard Way, Boscombe Down, Amesbury SP4 7XE. An early response would be appreciated.</p> <p>Subscription rates are:</p> <table><tr><td>Persons aged over 65:</td><td>£2.00</td></tr><tr><td>All others:</td><td>£3.50</td></tr></table>	Persons aged over 65:	£2.00	All others:	£3.50
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THE BLICK MEAD PROJECT

The Blick Mead/Vespasian's Camp project continues in the background. The project, which is centred on a natural water-feature to the east of Vespasian's Camp, could be said to be re-writing the early history of Amesbury and its environs, and is even gaining international status. A series of test pits, a geo-physical survey, and field-walking have combined to identify human presence and settlement evidence from the Mesolithic period onwards.

Aerial photographs provided by the Amesbury Society, augmented by the above surveys, revealed that much of the area had been covered by chalk dumping when the A303 Amesbury bypass was constructed in the late 1960s.

Findings have included over 7000 flint tools and worked flint, along with 2000 pieces of burnt flint and 200 pieces of burnt aurochs bone. In addition to these was a broken Bronze Age dagger and chisel fragment, a lead object – possibly a Roman curse – an Anglo-Saxon brooch, medieval staves and other artefacts all found in the vicinity of the spring.

Field-work in the south-east part of the camp has also brought to light some significant features in the form of an unrecorded Bronze Age barrow on the east side of Stonehenge Road, close to the one on the west side, and a hollow-way on a north-south alignment leading on from the Wittenham path area and running roughly parallel to Stonehenge Road.

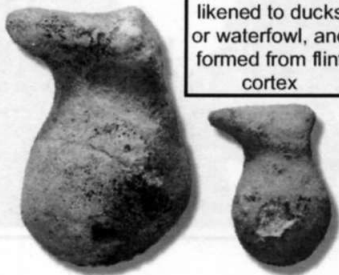
Other recent surveys within the Vespasian's camp area have found evidence that extends occupation of the camp from Iron Age to 50BC. The overall evidence points to the site and immediate area being a highly important place from the mid-Mesolithic period onwards – pre-dating Stonehenge by around 3500 years!

The Ely Weekly News of 22 December reports that artefacts from the project are on display at Ely Museum in an exhibition titled *Stonehenge, Before the Stones*, until the end of January. It states that the museum is the first in the world to exhibit some of the finds. Amesbury's Town Council and the Amesbury Area Board have provided significant funding for the project, so it is perhaps a little disappointing that a local exhibition for this unique occasion could not have been arranged at Salisbury Museum – the designated museum for this area.



20 mm

Fragment of an early Anglo-Saxon disc brooch possessing evidence of gilding and late Roman stylistic influence



Two artefacts, likened to ducks or waterfowl, and formed from flint cortex

20 mm

Peter Goodhugh

WHERE WAS IT...?



The last newsletter showed the photo on the left, taken around the end of the 19th Century, and asked readers to guess the location of the cottage. Two people guessed correctly. You will see in the 1947 picture immediately below (kindly supplied by Jim Fuller) that the cottage was at the corner of Church St and Church Lane. At the bottom is a photo of the same site taken in 2011. The one common feature is the chimney on the front wall! One other interesting feature is the 'rising sun' decoration on the front porches, seen also on other estate dwellings. Could it be a symbolic representation of Stonehenge sunrise, or solstices..?!



THE AMESBURY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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