



B&DAS NEWSLETTER

www.bridgwaterarchaeology.org.uk

January 2020

Dear Member.

Happy New Year.

Apologies that this is my first newsletter to be dispatched since January 2019. This means that I will have to cover the whole of 2019 in this one.

In January Yvette Staelens, folk archaeologist gave a presentation on 'Cecil Sharp and Somerset folk music' which attracted members of the folk fraternity as well as our own members. Yvette told us that Cecil Sharp had collected songs from five different Bridgwater working men. She showed photos of some of them and brought the songs alive by singing and playing her recorder.

At our AGM in February four members agreed to join the committee and were duly elected. Many thanks to them. Following the business meeting, Paul Upton gave a talk on the history of Watchet which was thoroughly researched and most interesting.

In March Jo Pentney explained the origins of our place names which were derived from many different languages; Celtic, Latin, Old English, Norman French, Norse and Danish and other origins such as rivers and hills, which have very ancient names and personal names etc. She helped us with some local names, e.g. Enmoor means Duck Pool, and she gave us all a useful handout as an aide- memoire. We apologise for the late notice of the change of date for this meeting.

In April Brian Wright told us the story of Green Man carvings: carvings of heads with plants growing from them, which are often found in churches. These do not derive from pagan beliefs but from the Roman god Bacchus adapted by the Christian Church to represent death and resurrection. Originally found in Mediterranean countries they spread all over Europe and are now found even in secular settings.

Our Spring Excursion in May was a well-attended tour of Watchet with Paul Upton to follow up his talk in February. In fine weather the history of Watchet was shown to us while exploring its ancient streets.

Apologies for missing out on my October newsletter because I was cruising the Danube. In June we visited Weston-super-Mare to view the revitalised museum. After an introductory talk members were able to explore the museum at their own discretion.

Before our annual dinner in the Green Olive Restaurant in July, Chris Sidaway showed us the castle Watergate in West Quay and the extraordinary vault behind the castle wall where goods were held in bond. The dinner was well attended and much appreciated.

Our day long excursion to Exeter in September, led by Chris Sidaway and me, including Roman, Mediaeval and later survivals, was blessed by fine weather.

In October Miles Kerr Peterson's lively talk about Wembdon Road Cemetery covered other burial grounds in Bridgwater.

"The Dodgy Duke and the Crumbling Castle" was Val Bannister's title for her highly entertaining talk in November on James Brydges, first Duke of Chandos and the fate of Bridgwater Castle.

Members enjoyed our Christmas event held in the new rooms at Wembdon Parish Centre. The buffet provided by those who attended was particularly excellent and the talk given by Chris Webster about his research on Taunton Castle and its grounds was much appreciated.

The January 2020 meeting had to be cancelled so our next one will be the A.G.M. on February 20th which includes a talk by Lesley Sutcliffe on Dr. Jonathan Toogood, founder of Bridgwater Infirmary.

You will have received the preliminary Programme of Events for the year (the remaining arrangements will be firmed up soon. Details for your diary are also below.)

Best wishes, David Baker

FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2020

All at 7.30 p.m. at the Blake Museum unless stated otherwise

January No Meeting

20th February BDAS AGM with "Dr Toogood, Founder of Bridgwater Infirmary"- Dr Lesley Sutcliffe

19th March "Romans in Somerset" - David Elkington, WEA/FOSA

16th April "The Stuckeys & Stuckey's Bank" - Seatrobe Research Partnership

21st May Cannington Bypass Excavations - Andrew Mudd, Cotswold Archaeology

SATURDAY 20th June - - p.m. Excursion Details to be Advised

16th July 6.00 p.m. to view C14, Grade II listed Building for 7.00 p.m. dinner at the Old Vicarage, 45, St. Mary Street, Bridgwater, TA6 3EQ. BDAS Annual Dinner Booking essential.

SATURDAY 12th September, 11 am - 4.30 pm. Meet at the North Porch, Church of St. Mary Redcliffe, 12, Colston Parade, BS1 6RA (own lunch e.g. in Corn St. area) Excursion to Historic Bristol with David Dawson. Own or public transport or share

15th October "Population change, land use and environment of Exmoor over the past 6000 years" - Prof Ralph Fyfe Plymouth University

19th November "Life & Death in Bronze Age Somerset: Discoveries at Bridgwater Gateway" - Stuart Foreman, Oxford Archaeology

17th December 7.30 p.m. at Venue TBA BDAS Christmas Party with Update on Avalon Marshes, the Quantocks and local digs - Richard Brunning, SWHT. (Items for buffet please)