

# Friends of the Willis Museum Newsletter

## January 2012



*Basingstoke Ambassador Alan Turton's career as a film actor, and the Empress Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III who lived the last 40 years of her long life in Farnborough are just two of the topics covered in this year's exciting programme of talks presented by the Friends of the Willis Museum. Admission is open to non-members who may obtain a programme from the museum or see it by visiting [www.friendsofwillis.hampshire.org](http://www.friendsofwillis.hampshire.org).*

**'The Friends' was founded in 1978 to promote, support and improve the Willis Museum. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month except in August, with other events on occasion.**

**Annual Subscription £10, Visitor for one meeting £2. Registered charity no: 280406**

**This newsletter was edited by Derek Anthony and John Hollands**

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## **Chairman's Jottings, by Derek Anthony**

First of all, on behalf of the committee, I would like to wish all our readers a very Happy New Year.

Cathy Williams, our Programme Secretary, has put together a very interesting programme for the next twelve months, with subjects as varied as Alan Turton, retired curator of Basing House, talking about his experiences in the film world and Diana White talking about Eugenie, Empress of France, during her exile in England.

If anyone does not have a copy of the programme or would like extra copies to give to friends please telephone me on 01256 322073 or pick up copies from the Willis Museum.

In November last your committee held another meeting with Janet Owen, the County's Head of Museums and Arts, who explained how further cuts in County Council budgets were likely to affect the Museum Service. At about the time this Newsletter goes to press elected members of the County Council will be making decisions about the shape of the Museum Service for the period starting in April 2012.

Even though the County Council is applying, where-ever possible, for government grants to further support Museum and Arts Services many more volunteers are going to be needed to help the staff at the Willis Museum to keep the Museum open five days a week. I urge everybody to consider whether they might be able to give some time to the Museum by becoming a volunteer. If you think that you might be able to help please do telephone me on 01256 322073 and I will arrange for you to meet one of the staff to learn more about what is involved.

I do hope that you enjoyed the autumn 2011 meetings, including the talks by Douglas Bancroft and David Stone, the members "show and tell" and the Christmas entertainment led by Barbara Applin. A particular "thank you" is due to Patricia Broadrick who donated the lovely hamper for the December raffle and to Doris Roach for running the December raffle in the absence of Adrian Moring.

Before I go I must mention Bob Clarke, who will be talking to us in November about the history of British newspapers. Bob appeared on the Mark Steel Show on BBC Radio 4 in December. The whole show took a satirical look at Basingstoke and Bob's excellent contribution covered the Salvation Army riots at the end of the nineteenth century. Well done, Bob!

Bob is also to be thanked for providing interesting copy for this newsletter, as also is Paul FitzPatrick. As joint editors John Hollands and I look forward to receiving many more contributions for future issues from the wider membership. As well as articles we would welcome letters commenting on any issue relating to the museum or to the Friends.

Finally I thought it might be helpful if I listed the members of your committee and their particular responsibilities:

Chairman: Derek Anthony, Vice-Chairman: Ian Williams, Secretary: Leslyanne Hatt, Treasurer: Howard Ray, Programme Secretary: Cathy Williams, Minutes Secretary: Briony Hollands, Outside events: Bill Fergie, Publicity: John Hollands, Committee member: Maurice Dyer, Ex Officio Member: Jenny Stevens (Curator).

## **The Basingstoke Salvation Army Riots, by Bob Clarke**

The Salvation Army arrived in Basingstoke in September 1880, announcing that they were there to "open fire on Sin and Satan."<sup>1</sup> The Army's campaign against drink, which was supported by the *Hants and Berks Gazette*, nonconformist churches and various teetotal societies, was seen by the brewers and publicans and their employees as a threat to their livelihood, and by their customers as a threat to their enjoyment.

Within a week of the arrival of the Salvation Army, some of the workers threw a mixture of stale beer and froth over a group of Salvation soldiers who were singing outside May's brewery. From October 1880 to March 1881, attacks on the Salvationists and their supporters by the self-styled Massagainians intensified.

On the morning of Sunday 20 March 1881 the Salvation Army and the Massagainian processions clashed head on in New Street outside the Mechanics Institute. Charles Elms, described in Court later as a "muscular Salvationist", managed to capture the Massagainians' Union Jack, and in the struggle to

recapture their flag, Elms's arm was broken. In the chaos that followed, one unfortunate was pushed through the plate-glass window of the Little Dustpan furniture shop in Church Street, and another was knocked down and trampled upon.

That afternoon, the so-called Battle of Church Square took place. Elms, the unfortunate Salvationist who had his arm broken in New Street in the morning, had his head cut open in the afternoon. The *Hampshire Chronicle* reported that "sticks were freely used, and blood flowed from many a head and nose, and hats, particularly high ones, were demolished in a most reckless manner." General Booth, in a memorandum to the Home Secretary, said: "One man had his arm broken, another his jaw broken, and one had his head broken open. Many were brutally kicked and seriously injured." The police and other witnesses estimated that there were about 3,000 people crowded into the Square, many of whom were involved in the fighting.

When the Salvation Army announced that it would be parading through the town as usual the following Sunday, the Mayor asked the Commanding Office of the Royal Horse Artillery, who were billeted in the town, to stand his men in readiness. He also appointed 100 of "the principal tradesmen of the town" as special constables.

On the morning of 27 March, the Salvation Army and their sympathisers marched round the town, four abreast, singing hymns. The Special Constables marched with them, sullen and embarrassed, protecting the Army's front, rear and sides. Behind them marched the Massagainians, playing a variety of instruments, including tin whistles, trumpets, "one or two brass instruments that appeared to have been dug out of the earth", fog horns, saucepan lids, old kettles beaten with sticks, a clarinet and tin cans full of stones. Those without instruments helped to drown the hymn singing by hooting, yelling and laughing, and singing obscene songs.

When the morning's procession was over, around three-quarters of the special constables told the Mayor that they would not continue to protect "such a set of damned hypocrites". Some even joined forces with the Massagainians that afternoon.

Just before 2 o'clock the Salvation Army assembled outside their factory, four deep and ready to march again. At the same time some 3,000 Massagainians and their supporters were pouring down Church Street and into Brook Street, headed by the Massagainian band.

The Salvation Army procession had only got as far as May's Brewery when they saw the Massagainians coming towards them. The Salvation Army turned round towards their barracks and stood two deep against the wall, waiting for the Massagainians to pass. Instead of heading straight on, the Massagainians marched backwards and forwards in front of the Army, playing their instruments and shouting insults, preventing the Salvationists from moving either way. When a minor scuffle broke out, the Mayor read the Riot Act and asked the Royal Horse Artillery to clear the streets.

News of the riots made headlines in the national and provincial press and led to a parliamentary question.<sup>ii</sup>

Further incidents included smashing the windows of the *Hants and Berks Gazette's* office, and an attempt to throw the Captain of the Salvation Army into the River Loddon.

Following advice from the Home Office, the magistrates issued a proclamation forbidding all processions and open-air gatherings. However, three new magistrates were appointed in June 1881 who persuaded the other magistrates, with the exception the Mayor and one other magistrate, to allow the Salvation Army to parade round the streets again, which resulted in further episodes of riotous disorder.

Reports of the proceedings of the Town Council, the Watch Committee and the Magistrates, showed that the arrival of the Salvation Army had created bitter arguments within those bodies. In fact the whole town was divided. In August 1881 the Magistrates were presented with two petitions: one signed by the Vicar of Basingstoke and 498 others, calling for the Salvation Army processions to be banned as they were disturbing the peace and quiet of the town; the other, signed by the Minister of the Congregational Church and 613 others, calling for the processions to be properly protected.

Later that month, the Captain of the Salvation Army took out a private prosecution against a group of Massagainians, ten of whom were sent to Winchester gaol for 14 days. When their sentence was over, the ten Massagainians were collected from Winchester in a coach and four, escorted by outriders "dressed in gay scarlet" and a band of musicians brought in from Reading playing *Hail the Conquering Heroes*

*Come.* Winchester Street was festooned with strings of flags and bunting in triumphal arches from one side of Winchester Street to the other. The decorations were in such profusion that the *Gazette* commented that a stranger would have believed that nothing short of a royal entry to the town was about to take place.

The Town Corporation let the Corn Exchange for a great banquet to welcome the “Massagainian Martyrs” home. Along with vast quantities of meat, fowls, ducks, and bottles of wine, the brewers had donated six 36-gallon barrels of strong beer labelled “Massagainian Stingo”. This led to further headlines in the national press<sup>iii</sup> and questions in Parliament.<sup>iv</sup>

In November 1881, Basingstoke hit the headlines again when a group of about 200 Massagainians went on the rampage on the night the Municipal Election was held. They smashed the windows of the old silk mill and those of the homes, shops and factories of the Salvationist’s supporters.

In 1882 the Mayor read the Riot Act again when a mob tried to storm the Town Hall trying to rescue a Massagainian who had been hustled inside after hitting a policeman.<sup>v</sup> In another incident that year, the Massagainians ducked six Salvation Army lasses in the Town Brook.

However, when it became obvious that the Salvation Army posed no real threat to the beer trade, the attacks on the Salvation Army gradually petered out, and by the end of 1883 any organised harassment of the Salvation Army in Basingstoke had ceased.

*For a fuller account (and a very good read) there is Bob Clarke’s book, The Basingstoke Riots, Massagainians v the Salvation Army (Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society 2010)*

### **In memory of R T Gee, by Paul FitzPatrick, written in November 2011**

*The subject of this poem is one of Paul’s former contacts in the newspaper business. Reg Gee ran a delivery service from his own home. His father Thomas Gee kept a tobacconist’s shop in Chapel Street.*

Yes, it’s around this time of the year we remember the fallen,  
For me, a newspaper man with the name of R T Gee,  
(Died not long ago).

Two years in India, and Persia bound,  
Then two years in Burma, and what a hell he found.  
Taking a part in the British army’s longest retreat,  
Rangoon to the hills of India.

Stuck on one of those mountain roads  
Required by some other stubborn island race,  
For what may one ask? But to get the tanks through.

Gave in? NOT HE WITH THEM!  
Yes, they could easily be smashed with artillery  
THEN that would have left a busted road.

So there they stopped; it was that or the box  
So said their colonel, I think

## **The Basingstoke job scene in 1911: juveniles, by John Hollands**

In the last newsletter I wrote about the employment of males in Basingstoke in 1911, using the published report on the census of that year in the county of Hampshire as a source. (You can see copies of parts of this report in the Resources Room). As a sequel this is a brief article on the employment of juveniles aged 10 to 14, based on table 26 in this report.

Table 26 lists “the number and proportion per 1000 children aged 10 and under 14 years engaged in occupations”. It tells us that 13 out of 417 Basingstoke boys and 3 out of 436 Basingstoke girls in Basingstoke came into this category. The proportion per thousand worked out at 31 for boys (or 3.1%) and seven for girls (or 0.7%). We are not told what jobs these children were employed in and there is no further break down of their ages. As I have already written, however, the report tells us much about the employment of males aged 10 and over, and the same applies to females as I hope to show in a future issue. I can therefore tell you that the top three categories of employment for males in Basingstoke were “general engineering and machine making”, “building and works of construction” and “food, tobacco, drink and lodgings, whilst for females the top three categories were “tailoresses”, “domestic indoor servants” and “dressmakers.” It therefore seems very probable that 10 to 14 year olds in employment were doing work of these kinds.

The numbers for Basingstoke were about average for the county, the lowest number of 10 to 13 year old boys per thousand being 6 in Christchurch and the highest 196 in the Isle of Wight Rural District (strongly suggesting that many were employed in agriculture). In the case of girls there was none of this age in employment in Aldershot, whilst the highest number per thousand was 17 in Sandown, Isle of Wight. The fact that this table exists at all suggests to me that the employment of children this young was (then as now) considered undesirable; I thought it quite surprising that the percentages were so low.

Fourteen was the statutory school leaving age, but in prescribed circumstances children could leave school at 12 or be permitted to attend part time only from a younger age. I recently catalogued a memorandum issued by the Hampshire Director of Education in 1906, which makes the circumstances clear. It states that a child aged between 12 and 14 who had reached “standard 5” was entitled to leave school, and that a child who had reached standard 4 “being beneficially employed to the satisfaction of the Local Authority” would be allowed to attend school part time.

These regulations were still in force, I believe, in 1920, when the father (now passed on) of a close friend of mine left school on his 13<sup>th</sup> birthday. Having reached the approved standard at school, and with his family in straitened circumstances, Mr Shrubbs left school on his thirteenth birthday to become an apprentice at the International Stores. Later he became a branch manager.

## **It Pays to Increase Your Word Power: useful words from Bailey’s Dictionary, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn., 1726, by Bob Clarke**

### **Warning! Do not read this article if you are of a nervous disposition.**

Bailey’s Dictionary, which went through several editions in the 100 years since it was first published in 1721, was the most popular dictionary of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It sold more copies and had more headwords than Dr Johnson’s famous Dictionary of 1755. Unlike the English dictionaries that preceded it, which were dictionaries of hard (uncommon) words, it was the first English dictionary to try to capture and define all

the words in the English language that were used at the time, and, therefore, for the modern reader, can provide a window into the mindset of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, as well as serving as a warning not to get stuck in a lift with a feisty woman. Here is a brief selection of words we have lost, or that have changed their meaning.

<b>Arscarides</b>	Arse-worms
<b>Blowze</b>	a fat, red-fac'd bloated Wench, or one whose Head is dress'd like a Slattern
<b>Brimming</b>	the act of Generation between a Boar and a Sow
<b>Clicketing</b>	a Fox is said to go a Clicketing, when he is desirous of Copulation
<b>Cloven Pizzle</b>	a Disease in Sheep
<b>Constupration</b>	a debauching of Women, or deflowering of Maids
<b>Closed Behind</b>	an imperfection in the Hind-quarters (in Horses)
<b>Cotquean</b>	a Man who is too busy in meddling with Women's Affairs
<b>Crotels</b>	the Ordure or Dung of a Hare
<b>Dandeprat</b>	a Dwarf or little Fellow
<b>Doundrins</b>	afternoon's drinkings
<b>Feist</b>	a Fart without Noise
<b>Fizzle</b>	to break Wind backwards without Noise, to Feist or Foist
<b>Furfuration</b>	the falling of Scurf from the Head
<b>Gravidation</b>	a getting with Child
<b>Gropers</b>	Blindmen
<b>Hercosi</b>	salacious Persons of a Goat-like Disposition
<b>Hopper-Ars'd</b>	one whose Buttocks stand out more than usual
<b>Horripilation</b>	the standing up of the Hair for Fear
<b>Indian Mouse</b>	a little Creature that creeps into the Mouths of Crocodiles, and eating up their Entrails, kills them
<b>Lentiginous</b>	full of Freckles
<b>Libya</b>	that Part of the World commonly called Africa
<b>Manticulate</b>	to pick Pockets
<b>Meridiation</b>	taking a Nap at Noon
<b>Monorchis</b>	a Person that hath but one Testicle
<b>Mucculent</b>	full of Snot
<b>Mulierosity</b>	an unlawful Desire of Women
<b>Muricide</b>	a Mouse-killer
<b>Nostril Dropping</b>	a Distemper in Cattle
<b>Nuciferous</b>	bearing Nuts

<b>Pernoctation</b>	a staying out all Night
<b>Retromigents</b>	Animals that piss backwards
<b>Testudinous</b>	belonging to a Tortoise
<b>Yard</b>	a Man's Privy Member; a Measure of three Feet in Length.

### **The funeral of John May: recent additions to the archives collection**

Reproduced below are two picture postcards that were recently added to the Willis's Archives collection. Like the "May silver tray" which the Friends purchased for the museum in 2010, they make an interesting addition to the museum's records of one of Basingstoke's most generous, interesting and flamboyant characters from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

As can be seen from the postcard captions the date was March 22 1920, and the location, as you will easily recognise, is Chapel Hill where the funeral procession is approaching the entrance to the cemetery. From the top right hand corner we learn that the postcards were produced by Terry Hunt and Co, Basingstoke, and that they were numbers 2 and 5 of a series. Number 2 appears to show the head of the funeral procession, and number 5 a section towards the rear, whilst numbers 3 and 4 presumably show middle sections. Perhaps no 1 was a portrait of the deceased, and maybe the series continued beyond no 5.

The three clergy heading the procession presumably included Canon Harry Wilson Bousted, Vicar of St Michael's and two of his three curates who officiated at All Saints Church to which John May had given the bells. The Union Jack bedecked coffin is being pushed along on a bier by men in military uniform reminding us of John May's association with the Basingstoke volunteers, as do the military guard of honour with bowed heads and reversed rifles on both sides of the road. The horse drawn and motor vehicles that follow are of considerable interest as are the somberly dressed onlookers and figures in the procession shown in postcard no 5.

No doubt the procession would have been received at the entrance to the cemetery by John Arlott the Cemetery Registrar and father of the famous son of the same name. The editors would like to hear from you if you recognise anyone in these photos. You are of course welcomed to arrange to see the originals.



**What's on at the Willis, January to April 2012**

**Now until 13 February: Snapshots in time: Images from Basingstoke's past**

*A century and a half of scenes from Basingstoke daily life captured by professional and amateur photographers.*

**Community Gallery**

**Now until March 3: Veolia Environnement Wildlife Photographer of the Year:**

*An astonishing internationally acclaimed annual exhibition of work by some of the world's best wildlife photographers. Exhibition co-owned by the Natural History Museum and BBC Wildlife Magazine, and sponsored by Veolia Environnement.*

**Sainsbury Gallery**

**16 February, 7.30 pm: 60 years of AWE by Kate Pryne, AWE Technical Historian**

**Friends' presentation, Archaeology Gallery**

**11-18 February: Half Term wild art: a family activity**

*Be inspired by the Sainsbury Gallery Exhibition and by exhibits from the Museum Service collections, and create your own masterpiece using craft materials provided – or join in another wildlife related activity. There is no charge for the activity but a donation is requested for materials.*

**Ellaway Room**

**18 February until 17 March: Traditional England and France in watercolours and acrylic.**

*Work by Basingstoke artist Vivienne Ballson*

**Community Gallery**

**1 March, 2pm to 4.30pm: Wild words writing workshop with poet Andrew McMillan.**

*Explore the Wildlife photography exhibition with Basingstoke's poet in residence and respond in verse. For **anyone** who likes words. Let us print your poem in the next issue of this newsletter! **Admission £3, pre-booking essential, 01256 465902***

**10 March to late June: Tea tales: the story of Britain's favourite drink.**

*The story of Tea, drinking it, growing it, trading (or smuggling) it, and celebrating it, showcasing Hampshire's collection of teapots, cosies, caddies, tea-related social history and photography.*

**Sainsbury Gallery**

**15 March, 7.30pm: My life in films, by Alan Turton**

**Friends' presentation, Archaeology Gallery**

**24 March to 21 April: Material girls**

*A wide variety of work completed over the last three years by a group of embroiderers and textile artists working around Tadley.*

**Community Gallery**

**19 April, 7.30 pm: What the butler saw: the story of downstairs life in a large country house, by John Pitman**

**Friends' presentation, Archaeology Gallery.**

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