

REPORTS ON THE YEAR 1982

THE FIELD CLUB

President's Report

This Annual General Meeting completes my three years as President of the Hampshire Field Club.

Under my predecessor, Dr Edwin Course, the Council had shifted the emphasis of the Club from one of a loose amalgam of interests to Sections with specific interests, having their own organisation under the auspices of the Council. This idea was beginning to work well when I became President and I must pay tribute to Dr Course for this.

However, there were three problems that required urgent attention and these were: membership, a top-heavy Council and the identification of the Field Club as a Hampshire body rather than a Winchester or Southampton club.

Membership responded to the growing confidence in the sections and the energetic work of 'HAC' Collinson who has done so much over the years for our Club.

The reorganisation of the Council was a slow business until Dr Michael Hicks, the new Secretary, turned his attention to the problem. The new, efficient and slim-line Council and Executive are clear from his report.

The new Council then received the results of the Secretary's exhaustive researches into the Club, which confirmed overwhelming support for *Proceedings* and the sectional policy. The desire to broaden the contents of *Proceedings* to reflect the sectional interests became apparent and this is now being pursued by the Editorial Board.

It was suggested that the geographical imbalance be corrected by the creation of regional studies to cover the whole of the County, commenting with Portsmouth and its region. The finance for each study is to be raised locally so as not to put a strain on the Club's funds. *Portsmouth and Its Region* is now well under way.

If this brief report appears a success story, it is

due to the efforts of all concerned and I would particularly like to pay tribute to Dr Edwin Course, the outgoing Chairman of the Editorial Board; Arthur ApSimon, the Editor of *Proceedings* for many years; Margaret Cash and Ken Barton, past Vice Presidents. The progress of the Club would not have been so purposeful if it had not been for the great efforts of the Secretary, Dr Michael Hicks. Our new Treasurer, Paul Caudell, has reorganised our accounts and cash flow and by tightening up measures has greatly improved the finances of the Club. This brings me to the one disturbing and sad matter that it is my duty to report.

Our Honorary Auditors discovered some irregularities concerning the final year in office of our former Honorary Treasurer in 1982. The Treasurer, who suffers from a medical problem, had expropriated £1,500 (in round figures) for his own use. The Council asked that I do all I could to recover the debt to the Club. With the help of our solicitors and the advice of Mr Caudell, a formula, which should prove satisfactory, has been agreed and more than £1,200 has already been recovered. The Council has also taken appropriate steps to ensure this cannot happen again.

We have survived some sad days and the Club faces the future with a new and growing confidence that it will be able to perform a real service to all those who are interested in the geology, archaeology, history and natural history of our County. M.D.

Secretary's Report

Business in 1982 was dominated by financial problems arising from overspending on *Archaeology of Hampshire* and by the speculation of funds. There were unusually many meetings of Executive Committee and Council, five in each case, before the difficulties were overcome by the

President, Treasurer and Auditors (Messrs Taylor and Webb), to whom we all owe a great deal.

Constitutional changes have streamlined Council and will give the sections a majority on Executive Committee. Reorganisation in 1979 gave greater scope for specialist interests within a large federal society. Sections receive resources to fund their activities in return for serving their captive membership. From time to time this obligation irks every section, but compromise is the price of voluntary association and the alienation of existing members would thwart the success of the sections as much as the parent society. Differences in priorities between sections and even within sections are substantial and it is hoped that co-operation on Executive Committee will facilitate inter-sectional understanding as well as ensuring more sympathetic treatment by the Field Club – if such a separate institution now exists!

Membership has grown from 475 at Michaelmas 1980 to 597 at Michaelmas 1982, but numbers remain too small if subscriptions are to be pegged, more resources provided for the sections, and newsletters and *Proceedings* are to benefit fully from economic print-runs. Too many members fail to renew, often by oversight, and too many wanting *Proceedings* prove, on complaint, not to have subscribed. Members are urged to pay by banker's order and to take out covenants: both expire on resignation from the club and both cost the member nothing, whilst saving the cost of reminders or (with covenants) bringing in extra income to fund activities.

Thanks to the efforts of the Editorial Board and the generosity of grant-making bodies, *Proceedings* is self-financing and subscribers receive double their investment – a real bargain for members, who are urged to subscribe. The contents are better balanced and these reports are the first evidence of a more popular approach. Do you approve?

The main administrative development has been the acquisition of a new addressing system, which should relieve Karen Parker and Mark Wingate, our indispensable Membership Secretaries. Both the Field Club and the sections

require a constant flow of new officers, committee members and helpers, whatever their background, to maintain services. To produce our own newsletter off our own press, which is highly desirable for reasons of finance and convenience, we require helpers who are simply not available at present. Complaints have diminished, which we optimistically treat as evidence that we are doing better: members with grievances against club or sections should complain – we cannot remedy faults we don't know about and the Field Club is your society.

On balance 1982 was a good year with substantial achievements but, as always, problems loom ahead: we need a better way to meet the escalating cost of newsletters and we shall have to rethink some of our assumptions and activities. Reappraisal is no bad thing and it is a process in which members can help: their views count and nothing can be better for the Society, however much complacent officers like myself may groan, than to have a flood of new ideas and new talents as the basis for future expansion! M.A.H.

Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting at Broadlands, Romsey on 15th May 1982

The conference met in the Orangery, where warm, sunny and historic surroundings compensated for technical problems with the slides. Apart from visiting the house and other areas normally open to the public, the 50 members present saw parts of the private grounds and even glimpsed passing royalty. The three sessions of lectures illustrated the variety of Hampshire's past and the inescapable relationship between local interests and government. An opening lecture on Broadlands and the Palmerstons was followed by four shorter talks on the work of the sections and finally, in recognition that 1982 was Maritime England Year, Captain Webb described the campaign to save HMS Warrior.

Mrs Carpenter Turner concentrated on Broadlands under the Palmerstons, especially Victoria's Prime Minister. Efficient household management and everyday routine was inextricably entangled with national and even international affairs. Many distinguished guests seldom saw their host. Palmerston's daily

reports to the queen and his understandable desire to delay the royal messenger as long as possible ensured that dinner was always late: when eating out, the Palmerstons were said never to see the soup. In those leisured days, however, a Prime Minister could still write his own correspondence, generally in the convenient writing room added to the library at Broadlands, and Palmerston also fitted in pheasant shooting, fox-hunting and three games of billiards each evening. A great sportsman, reader and philanderer as well as a statesman, Palmerston remained amazingly energetic right to the end. In 1864, when over 80, he made a daytrip to Palmerston's follies, the new defences of Portsmouth, returning none the worse except for the loss of colour from his whiskers caused by the wind! His so-called stepson, probably his bastard, threw out the so-called bachelor wing of 27 rooms, which was demolished in 1954.

Dr Max Barton then established the geological framework. Stressing the natural boundaries of the Hampshire Basin, he traced geological developments throughout the county, illustrating them with the woolly mammoths and extinct dinosaurs beloved by our Victorian ancestors.

In contrast, Anthony Passmore concentrated on one area of the Hampshire Basin – the New Forest – and recounted the archaeological activities of the New Forest section over the last twenty years. Mysterious enclosures, potteries, ironworks and the large site at 'Church Green' have been excavated, often only one jump ahead of development, but now the use of metal-detectors makes publication of results a hazardous business. Another important facet of the section's recent work has been its opposition to oil exploration in the New Forest.

Mr Passmore's archaeological emphasis was particularly appropriate, since Dick Whinney concentrated on government proposals to hive off the Ancient Monuments Board, Historic Buildings Council and Historic Monuments Commission into a self-financing super-quango. There was a real danger that excavation would cease or would be seriously curtailed. The Archaeology Section had joined many other bodies in objecting to government, but the minister's mind was made up. This controver-

sial paper provoked a lively discussion, which continued in the Archaeology newsletter.

National changes were also affecting the Local History section, the local representative of the Standing Conference for Local History, which had been replaced by the new British Association for the Local History. Whatever its role, it would affect Hampshire. But in the meantime the Local History Section would continue its successful task of popularising and co-ordinating local history in the county.

In the afternoon attention focussed on Victorian Britain's defence measures against the French. HMS Warrior of 1859–61, a revolutionary warship, was the first British ironclad and the largest, best protected, most powerful and fastest battleship afloat. While regrettably not built in Hampshire, she was deployed mainly in the Channel and based on Portsmouth, under the shadow of Palmerston's follies. When restored, she will be exhibited permanently at Portsmouth – a worthy fate for the sole surviving and most important warship between HMS Victory and HMS Belfast. The case for preservation, the co-operative work, the large resources and the specialist skills required for restoration struck chords familiar to archaeologists, historians and naturalists alike.

The final session was the Annual General Meeting. 1981 had been a year of growing membership, when novel activities had been successfully launched and the Society had published *Archaeology of Hampshire*, the first such survey since 1915. Unfortunately this monograph had cost double the estimate, the fault of the Society and not of the printers, and had precipitated a severe but short-lived financial crisis, which had been overcome by its buoyant sales. Amendments were made to the Rules to produce a more streamlined and efficient decision-making process. Tribute was paid to two long-standing editors of *Proceedings*, Dr Course and Mr ApSimon, and the meeting looked ahead to the projected Historic Buildings Section and other future developments. The meeting ended with general appreciation, once again, to the skilful organiser Adrian Rance.

OES Crawford Memorial Lecture 1981

Professor Biddle delivered his second such lecture to over 100 people at King Alfred's College, Winchester on 27th March 1982. A past Professor of the University of Pennsylvania Museum and currently Visiting Professor at Christ Church College, Oxford, Martin Biddle is the man who put Winchester on the archaeological map during 10 years of excavation and subsequently as Director of the Winchester Research Unit and of *Winchester Studies*. Excavations completed in 1971, and scheduled for publication in about five years time, were the basis of his talk 'Wolsey: Palace, Castle and Home for 1,000 Years', which thus gave a foretaste of the eventual report and featured a number of drawings never before shown in public.

Remarkably little was known about the overgrown site in 1960, but by 1971 three-quarters of the site had been exposed and only that portion under the present house and lawn remained untouched. Since 1971 ever vigilant archaeologists have seized opportunities to excavate the lawn and to rummage behind panelling and beneath the floor of the existing palace and chapel. The result was a staggering survey by Professor Biddle of the site and successive palaces, which achieved a precision never before possible. Apart from breaking much new ground, the lecture was a textbook of archaeological technique, notably in the reconstruction of the upper parts of buildings of which only foundations or lower walls survived. The precision, of course, owed much to the unique Winchester Pipe Rolls, and the paper was also an exemplary model of the complementary roles of excavation, standing buildings and documents in the study of the past.

The lecture was preceded by presentations to Miss Elizabeth Lewis, a former club Secretary and Treasurer, and Mr Victor Emery, the former Newsletter Editor. After paying tribute to their long and devoted service, the President presented each with an inscribed copy of *Archaeology of Hampshire*, a particularly appropriate gift in view of the valuable contributions of both recipients to the archaeology of Winchester and its area. M.A.H.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION

The section committee comprises Dick Whinney (chairperson and newsletter editor), Annie Robinson (secretary and publicity), Tony King (treasurer) and Mark Brisbane, Stephen Cooper, Mike Hughes, David Johnston and Barbara Turnbull. This year Tim Schadla-Hall, former chairperson, moved to Hull and Mary Oliver stood down due to transport difficulties.

The section has enjoyed a generally successful year. We are particularly satisfied with our second season of field trips and second annual conference. The winter programme of evening lectures on a range of topics at different venues met a mixed response, some being well, but others appallingly attended. Among remedial measures the most obvious is a less ambitious programme of lectures. We are trying to reinforce links with local societies and will hold in future a spring mini-conference instead of some evening meetings.

Field Trips

On Saturday 5th June, a delightful summer's day, 37 members visited the Isle of Wight. Led by Mrs Vicky Basford, they visited Carisbrooke Castle in the morning, the fascinating medieval town of Newport after lunch, and finished at Bradley Roman villa, where the curator talked about the site and its mosaics. Further visits to the island are projected.

On July 17th 60 members were guided around St Mary's Abbey and Wolsey Palace, Winchester by Kenneth Qualmann. Until recently the least known of the Winchester abbeys, the Nunnaminster has benefited from recent excavations, which continue in 1983, and a picture of the main monastic building is now emerging. The party moved on to Wolsey Palace, where recent restoration by the Department of the Environment of the above-ground remains has enabled part of the site to be opened to the public. Here extensive excavation by Professor Biddle has established the history of its construction, mainly by Bishops William Giffard and Henry of Blois. Featuring a Norman hall second only to that at Westminster, the palace was a great courtyard house that cer-

tainly rivalled and perhaps surpassed the nearby royal palace in the city.

On Sunday 1st August 50 members were conducted around Silchester by Dr Fulford. The wall circuit and associated earthworks, particularly in the south-west corner, were inspected before lunch, new discoveries under the forum-basilica were explained after lunch, and the visit ended at the amphitheatre outside the north-west corner of the city where impressive earthworks and structures had been exposed by excavation.

On Sunday 15th August 20 members were guided around the Butser Ancient Farm Project by the director, Dr Peter Reynolds. At the demonstration area a wide selection of prehistoric and modern wheats, plants and herbs were inspected. Attention was drawn to the erosion pattern of experimental earthworks and on Butser Hill the party viewed the linear bank and ditch and barrow groups.

Annual Conference

Our major event was our second Annual Conference on the theme 'Urban Archaeology in Hampshire' on Saturday 20th November. Again held in conjunction with the Department of Adult Education at the University of Southampton, it was organised by Mr David Johnston, to whom the section is most grateful. Over a hundred people heard some stimulating, informative and sometimes controversial papers.

The morning session on Towns and Origins was introduced by Professor Martin Biddle. His paper, entitled 'Urban Origins in the Channel Region: Hypotheses and Evidence', concentrated on new Roman and Saxon towns and explored both the influence of the later Antique town on subsequent developments and the emergence of trading centres in the eighth/ninth centuries. Among the questions picked up by later speakers and vigorously debated, Professor Biddle asked: is there a pattern of riverine/coastal trading places with complementary hinterland consumption centres (eg Winchester/Southampton, Canterbury/Wantsum)? Are trade networks controlled by market economies or political decisions? What are the differences in the nature, activities and function of seventh

to ninth century places and those of later date?

Dr Michael Fulford, speaking on 'Silchester: Origins of the Roman Town', examined the evidence for a major pre-Roman settlement and then looked at first-century developments. Current excavations in the forum-basilica are revealing a complicated sequence from the late Iron Age to a great public building of the early second century. Serious questions have been raised about the nature of the Roman town and when it first became a *civitas* capital. Political decisions rather than natural economy apparently explain the development of Roman *Calleva*.

Dr Barbara Yorke spoke on 'Winchester and Southampton in the Ninth Century: A Historical Perspective', examining the nature and rôle of major administrative centres in the late Saxon period. Written sources relate mainly to Winchester, which apparently became a major administrative centre in the early/mid-ninth century. In the late-ninth century, despite a different political context, Winchester was the king's choice as a major administrative centre and acquired new defences, a mint and the New Minster.

Session II reviewed current archaeological investigations in Winchester and Southampton. Mr Mark Brisbane summarised the excavation evidence from Saxon Southampton in 'Hamwic: the Structure of a Middle Saxon Port'. Among the points covered was the size of the town, the high density of occupation, the regular layout of streets and buildings, the character of the periphery, the even distribution of wealth and industry, and the date of the town's decline. Finally he discussed Saxon Southampton's relations with its hinterland and Winchester.

Mr Kenneth Qualmann reported on Winchester, especially the excavation programmes on the defences, roads, suburbs and cemeteries of the Iron Age and Roman periods. Excavations have elucidated the size, location and entrances of the 'Oram's Arbour' middle Iron Age defensive ditch. Roman cemeteries outside the defences have helped chart the growth, prosperity and decline of Roman *Venta*.

Mr Bob Thompson spoke on medieval Southampton, concentrating on the defensive circuit south of the castle, perhaps the ninth/

tenth-century burh, and the castle site itself. Recent discoveries include a large structure, probably a twelfth-century hall, and a limekiln used for boiling pitch. The castle vault probably supported an upper hall house attached to the castle in the twelfth century.

Session III, Plans and Buildings, looked at later developments in Hampshire towns. Mr Mike Hughes dealt with the less fortunate medieval towns, some of which reverted to villages whilst others failed completely, and drew comparisons with failed Gascon *bastides* in south-west France. The programme ended with Mr David Lloyd's discussion of post-medieval buildings, in which a case was made for a local 'Great Rebuilding' in the late-sixteenth or early-seventeenth century. After some discussion of building materials, he focussed on the development of Portsmouth.

Altogether the conference was most enjoyable and stimulating and again well-supported. We look forward to the next in the series on 'This Life and the Next'.

A short AGM held over the lunch break heard the chairman's report and re-elected the committee and officers. A.M.R.

THE GEOLOGY SECTION

The Hampshire Basin contains some classic geological material and is distinctively different from other parts of the UK. Although its beds are generally restricted to the younger end of the stratigraphic scale, it does not lack spectacular structures, particularly on the Isle of Wight. The richness and complexity of the Hampshire Basin has been increasingly recognised as more professional geologists have touched on it or even concentrated on it in their work. Their activities embrace not just the well-publicised search for oil, gas and hot-water but the requirements of civil engineering and water supply. The amateur geologist, always important and sometimes internationally famous, can go without the wide recognition he deserves unless there is a suitable local forum.

A local geological group for Hampshire was thus long overdue in 1979, when the Hampshire

Field Club was clearly best fitted and most capable of satisfying the need. The interest in geology within the club since its foundation emerges from the important papers in its *Proceedings*. The principal aims of the new section were to: (i) encourage research and facilitate the investigation of the Geology and Geomorphology of the Hampshire Basin, including the adjoining areas and the Isle of Wight; (ii) establish a forum for the exchange of information and ideas; (iii) seek to promote and disseminate a wider knowledge of local Geology.

The inaugural meeting on Friday 9th November 1979 was attended by 70 people. A lecture by Professor Curry on 'Geology and the Hampshire Basin' was followed by the election of a steering committee under the Chairmanship of Mr Paul Clasby. Dr M E Barton was chosen as Secretary and Mr David Carter Newsletter Editor.

Over the first three years the section has held six to seven meetings a year, usually consisting of three to four lectures and two or three field meetings. Topics covered in lectures have included Stratigraphy, Geological Surveying, Water Supply, Engineering Geology, Geomorphology, the Museum Services, Remote Sensing, and the link between the Archaeology and Geology Sections illustrated by the Hampshire Gravels. Our field meetings have included visits to south-east Hampshire, to Selborne, the Chalk inlier near Fareham, the Southampton area, the Gravels in the Milford-Beaulieu-Cadland triangle, and the Isle of Wight. The wide range of topics covered in the three newsletters revealed considerable local interest and activity and certainly gave the lie to any notions that Hampshire Basin geology is a restricted field. The main problem has been the shortage of geologists, professional or amateur, with time for running the section.

It is to be hoped that in future lectures and field visits will be held to explore such interests as the regional changes in the Bracklesham Beds, to investigate the Chalk and its overlying Clay-with-Flints, to hear about geological education in Hampshire and to combine with the New Forest Section in exploring that area's geology. Activities in Engineering Geology and

Geomorphology could be examined such as the development and stability of the shingle spits at Hurst and Calshot Castles and the findings of the geothermal energy programmes at Marchwood and Southampton. Much has been learned in the past from temporary sections revealing Hampshire geology opened during engineering works: in future it is hoped that such opportunities will receive proper attention and full records will be kept. M.E.B.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS SECTION

The Inaugural General Meeting of this new Section was held on Saturday 2nd October, when its objectives were set forth. It had become clear that there were within the Field Club a number of members interested in the county's architectural heritage, some of whom were working on individual projects in this field and it was thought that the interests of such members, hitherto served by the Archaeological and Local History Sections (under whose aegis articles on historic buildings were from time to time published in *Proceedings*), could best be served by a specialist group, whose aim would be to complement, rather than challenge, the work of existing Sections. Secondly, Mr Peter Blakesley, who was responsible for examining threatened buildings throughout Hampshire on behalf of the Field Club, felt that it would be more efficient for planning application to be vetted, in the first instance, by knowledgeable members living locally, particularly in the more distant parts of the county.

Consequently, a group of people known to be actively interested in historic buildings were invited to a meeting in June; a steering committee was elected which formulated the policy of the new Section and drafted a Constitution which was approved by Council on 22nd September. It was decided that in furtherance of its aims the Section would organise lectures, exhibitions and field trips, publish a newsletter and organise a training scheme for members interested in recording buildings, notably threatened structures for whose development planning applications had been received by the

Field Club.

The Inaugural General Meeting of the Section followed the annual OGS Crawford Memorial Lecture, held this year in the Pilgrims' Hall, Winchester, when Mr John Crook gave an illustrated talk on the structure of that building, describing the discoveries he had made there (and published in Vol 38 of *Proceedings*). While the well-known hammer-beam roof of the Pilgrims' Hall itself was of exceptional interest as the earliest surviving example of this type of construction, the remnants of the roof structure of the other half of the medieval building, now encased within the seventeenth-century walls of the adjoining Pilgrims' School were no less exciting, including a hitherto unrecorded 'base-cruck' truss. Mr Crook was able to show that the original building consisted of two 'halls' of the same build, of three and two bays respectively, with a further service bay at the south end. It was difficult to imagine any other original function than a monastic guesthouse as suggested by Milner in 1798: the conjecture which gave the 'Pilgrims' Hall' its present name. Mr Crook is continuing his research on this aspect of the building.

At the Inaugural General Meeting, Mr Frank Green, Programme Secretary outlined the aims of the Section, and Mr Graham Soffe, Treasurer, and Mr Nicholas Molyneux, Newsletter Editor, gave details of the programme planned for the remainder of the winter season. The Steering Committee was elected *en bloc* as the first Committee of the Section, under the chairmanship of Mr Peter Blakesley. P.M.J.C.

THE LOCAL HISTORY SECTION

The Local History Section was already established as the main co-ordinator of historical study in Hampshire by its second birthday in 1981, when three of those most responsible – Miss Cash on retirement, Mr Davey on promotion and Mr Barber – vacated the key offices of President, Secretary and Treasurer. Only Miss Rushton, Newsletter Editor, remained. At such short notice no permanent replacements were to be found, but a caretaker administration

of Mr Whittaker (President), Mr Taylor (Treasurer), Miss Rushton and later Mr Haydon (Secretary) kept the section ticking over. At the 1982 AGM Miss Dunhill was elected President and Mr Haydon and Miss Rushton were re-elected; only a Treasurer is required to complete the team.

With such a turnover in personnel, some dislocation was to be expected, but continuity was provided by the Newsletter, which remained as regular in production and as high in quality as ever. More contributions from those working on the history of Hampshire would be warmly welcomed.

The chief disappointment of 1982 concerned the spring day conference. For a variety of reasons the Symposium on the History of Education in Hampshire was moved to the late spring, but, regrettably, the number of applicants to attend was so small that the event was cancelled. Furthermore, because of the lateness of the symposium, it had already been decided to hold no summer outing. However, the section's Annual General Meeting at Selborne was a great success. In the morning, members visited The Wakes, the beautiful home of the eighteenth-century clergyman and naturalist Gilbert White and the subject, coincidentally, of an article in this *Proceedings*. The Curator of the Museum, Dr June Chatfield, gave a lively talk on White and his work. The section also saw the memorial exhibition to Captain Oates of the 1912 Antarctic expedition, which is also housed at The Wakes. Following this, the AGM was held in the village hall: the officers reported on the year's activities and helpful suggestions were made from the floor about future events. In the afternoon two excellent lectures continued the theme of Selborne and its history. First, Miss Le Faye gave a fascinating talk on the medieval priory and then Dr Yates spoke informatively on the pattern of settlement at Selborne during the Middle Ages.

1982 was thus a mixed year, in which successes and failures were balanced, but, with a new team of officers, 1983 offers hope of further development. The committee are rightly re-thinking their role and that of the section. It is hoped that in future activities can be expanded

in directions sought by the members and that the new Field Club constitution, whereby the Section President becomes a Deputy President of the whole Society, will prove beneficial. C.H.

THE NEW FOREST SECTION

Programme and Business

At the AGM in March Mrs J Irvine was elected Chairman and Miss J Livock Hon Secretary, other officers and members being re-elected. After the meeting Mr Tony Light gave a most interesting talk on 'The Church in Medieval Breamore', which traced much of the parish's history.

A one-day conference organised by Mr J F James was held in Lyndhurst in April, which was well attended and attracted non-members. Dr C R Tubbs, Dr C Tuckfield, Mr R Jackson and three other speakers talked on various topics of New Forest and general conservation interest.

Members were able to attend the Flower Festival at Cadland in June and were led on a walk over Forest wetlands in July by Mrs A Bolton. In September a visit was paid to Salisbury Cathedral, including the spire.

The building of the railway line through the Forest in the nineteenth century, known as Castleman's Corkscrew through the devious plans of one of its instigators, was the subject of a lecture in October by Mr J F James, and the venue, the Crown Hotel, Lyndhurst, proved to be popular with members.

On three Sunday afternoons a summer tea party was held in the homes of Mrs Allin, Mrs Renshaw and Mr Collinson as a means of gathering members together informally and hearing their views and ideas on the section's activities. Much of interest emerged; one of the principal themes was that members wished to be better informed about the Forest itself. It is hoped that, as a result, future programmes can be made more attractive, particularly to family members.

New Forest Affairs

A number of matters were considered by the

section's committee through representation on the consultative panel and presentments to the Court of Verderers. The Minister's mandate (published together with the section's comments and the Forestry Commission's paper in the 1981 Report) has been endorsed. Several areas of Inclosures are to be de-fenced where no longer totally necessary in order to allow other areas to be fenced, the total area at any one time being limited by statute. The section shares the concern of other bodies that broad-leaved regeneration is being badly affected by grazing, both on the open Forest and within Inclosures, where ponies are frequently found.

A plan of treatment for part of the lawn area of Dockens Water has been agreed. Plans for the junction of Picket Post have been approved, but those for Stoney Cross have met with considerable opposition. The section committee has consistently expressed the view that a simple underpass should be built, without allowing the fast traffic to turn on to unfenced Forest roads.

Proposals for a bypass for Lyndhurst have been put forward. The section's position remains the same as in 1975, namely that the route chosen should have as little effect on the Forest as possible.

A new committee was formed by the Forestry Commission, being an amalgamation of the two dealing previously with burning and drainage, in order that all open Forest matters be considered by a single body. The section's representative on the consultative panel, Mrs J Irvine, represents the panel on this committee.

The Chairman of the panel, Sir Dudley Forwood, has retired and the new chairman is Mr Maldwin Drummond.

Oil drilling in the Forest

The inquiry into Shell UK's application to drill an exploratory well in Denny Inclosure was held at Lyndhurst in two parts. In January the submissions by Shell and by the objectors were made to the Inspector regarding the application. The New Forest Section, as reported briefly last year, joined with all the voluntary Forest bodies and many of the local societies in co-ordinating objections and briefing a solicitor. The section's own submission was made by Mrs J Irvine, and,

since the scientific and amenity evidence against the application was given in detail by other specialist bodies, was confined to emphasising particular points: archaeological features near the site and access roads, noise, pollution and the danger of precedent in allowing such developments to add to the growing pressure on the Forest.

A short programme of slides was given to illustrate points made, to avoid the necessity of taking the Inspector on a lengthy tour of the site.

The second part of the inquiry was held in May, to consider the implications of the South-west Hampshire Structure Plan. In this the Secretary of State for the Environment has laid down that there shall be a strong presumption against oil-drilling within the New Forest.

The Inspector's Report and the Secretary of State's decision are still awaited.

Field Work Group

In 1982 the New Forest Section Field Work Group celebrated (or, more accurately, ignored) its 21st birthday. The group was formed in 1961 under the leadership of Alan Aberg, then of Southampton's Museums Department, and comprised a handful of members who were interested both in pure field work and excavation within the New Forest. Since then its fortunes have fluctuated with excavation being undertaken at irregular intervals until 1976, when the programme of work at Church Green was instituted. The search for and recording of new sites within the Forest, on the other hand, has continued throughout the years with a degree of success which is only now being matched by the organised fieldwalking in the Avon Valley and elsewhere. Fieldwork in the New Forest is by definition a solitary and informal business, without the grids and regimentation used in searching ploughed land. It is, moreover, directed more to the discovery of field systems, occupation sites and small pastoral earthworks than the recovery of scattered small finds. Successful recording of such features requires an intimate knowledge of the Forest's topography, an understanding at least of its history and detailed study of previous fieldwork. Because of this, there have never been

more than two or three people actively engaged at any one time in this lonely, but rewarding quest. The past year, has, however, proved particularly productive of newly recorded earthworks in all parts of the Forest. Following the discovery of an early Romano-British site in 1981, remote from the northern pottery kilns, another large fourth-century (and probably earlier) settlement and associated earthworks have come to light this year. This again is in the south of the Forest.

Despite the introduction of some limited legal controls on metal-detector operations in the Forest, the section's committee has confirmed its view that it is no longer possible to publish grid references for finds recorded on land which is open to the public. The inconvenience of this ruling to those with a genuine interest in the

Forest's history is undeniable, but the risk to very vulnerable sites is considered unacceptable.

The other branch of the group's work – excavation – has also made good progress during the year. The continuing programme of research at Church Green was blessed with ten days of fine weather at the beginning of September. Attendance was well up to the standard of recent years and several new members were recruited. A full report of this season's excavation appears in the New Forest Section Report for 1982. It may be worth noting here that work on the site will continue for ten days from Saturday 27th August 1983. Members of the Field Club (or others) who are interested in helping on this beautiful and interesting Romano-British site should contact Mrs R Cook, 14 Barton Court Avenue, New Milton, Hants BH25 6NP. J.I.