

NAILSEA AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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LOOKING BUT NOT SEEING

As I write this Newsletter, I have just returned from a two week Mediterranean cruise visiting some eight countries and islands. Shore excursions most days with some early morning starts, and the constant need to keep up with the tour guide in crowded venues such as Rome, Florence, Pisa, Pompeii, and Tunis, meant that it was not altogether the restful holiday people imagine a cruise always to be.

How much of it I took in is debatable, since most of the tourist sites were viewed through the lens of a 35 mm camera. I took 11 x 36 exposure slide films in all, kept a notebook throughout the two weeks and carried home a number of hastily purchased guide books. Sometimes I envy those who do not feel compelled to record anything - even local history!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY N&DLHS

January 2005 will be the 30th Anniversary of the formation of our Society, and recently the Committee was discussing how best to mark the occasion - suggestions included the official launch

of our Web Site, a barbecue, a commemorative booklet and even a LH umbrella! Please come up with more ideas, otherwise the Committee may be tempted to have a celebratory night out with Society funds!

N.E.A.T

At the September meeting (few of us will forget Chris Howell's talk on the Somerset L.I. and Coldstream Guards in the Great War), I publicised the inaugural meeting of the Nailsea Environmental and Archaeological Team.

"The Aim of NEAT is to record important elements of the present and historic environment of Nailsea and area by means of a multi-interest survey"

At this meeting on 27th September, Vince Russett, Community Archaeologist for North Somerset Council, emphasised that NEAT would in no way detract from N & DLHS or be in competition with it. Rather it would complement our Society and seek to work in conjunction with Nailsea Wildlife Wardens, Nailsea Tree

Wardens, The Footpath Group, etc. He believed that the study area should embrace not only Nailsea but also Backwell, Wraxall and Tickenham.

NEAT would be a community archaeological project steered by him as part of Somerset's Community Archaeological Strategy, and he had considerable experience in aiding similar teams in Charterhouse, Bleadon and Yatton. He himself could provide help in many ways, such as access to maps, aerial photographs and geophysical equipment. It was essential that all previous work, both published and unpublished, should be collected and combined with new information to create an archaeological and historical archive of use both locally and by North Somerset Council. As a matter of courtesy, the results of any off-road surveys should be shared with the relevant landowners - permission having first been obtained to enter onto their lands.

There followed a most interesting 40 minute PowerPoint presentation by Vince illustrating the work already done by CHERT (Charterhouse & Environs Research Team), BLURT (Bleadon, Lympsham & Uphill Research Team) and YCCART (Yatton & Congresbury). This emphasised the value of aerial photographs which could reveal features previously undetected even by experts on the ground. Maps were vital documents - even crudely drawn ones gave valuable hints about ancient land marks. Boundary surveys - walls and hedges - gave important information, as did for example, wood anaemones of ancient woodlands. Earthwork surveys could be carried out with equipment costing very little.

It was evident from Vince's presentation that there was something here for everyone - stone walling, hedges, significant trees, biodiversity, industrial remains, archaeology (including landscape archaeology), pre 1939 built environment, maps and aerial photographs, photography, etc.

Those attending the meeting were invited to register their interest, and from these a small steering committee led by Cllr. Phil Barclay was formed. The area around Bucklands Batch and Youngwood Lane would form the basis of a pilot survey and the Committee would meet to sort out the practicalities before the next Meeting held on 25th October.

If you are interested in joining NEAT, please contact Cllr. Phil Barclay, Mrs. Betty Brooks or myself.

(I am grateful for Betty Brook's notes upon which this report is based. Ed.)

WWW VIEWFINDER

*English Heritage
has an archive
of some 30,000
historic photographs,
all for free at*

www.english-heritage.org.uk/viewfinder

NEW BOOKS

A small sub committee has been formed to decide the order in which the many new items of research are to be published. In the meanwhile the following information about books by Peter Wright may be of interest to Members.

NAILSEA - A LINK WITH NEW ZEALAND

The text of this has been prepared by descendants of the COOMBS family of Nailsea who are now resident in New Zealand. Peter hopes to publish this in the next two months. The proposed print run will probably be less than 50, so if any member wishes to reserve a copy, please contact Peter as soon as possible.

ROADS AND TRACKS OF OLD NAILSEA - Part 2 - Nailsea North

This has been long awaited and work has commenced with the hope that it will be published by March 2005.

A THIRD BOOK ABOUT WORLD WAR 2 - by Peter Wright (as yet untitled) - Pennant 37

Readers are reminded that a new book to be issued about April next year will be made available free to members only as Pennant 37. For full details, see note on the last page of Pennant 36.

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*Requests for help with these projects have been answered by only a few.
If you can help with proof reading or by typing (computer almost
essential), please contact Peter on 01275 852993).*



THE JONES FAMILY RE-UNION

Walter Jones was teacher and headmaster at the school in Silver Street for many years around the turn of the 19th century. Details were set out in Christine Milton's book - "Nailsea at School".

His descendants, and those of his brothers John Percival and William Henry, recently met at Church House. This reunion was mentioned in the local press.

Peter Wright was pleased to be there having been invited as a small reward for the work he has done in helping the family in the past. Arriving about 1.30 pm he found that 31 were there for lunch in Church House.

