

Speaker Programme 2025

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at the Catholic Church Hall in Martin Street (off Victoria Road in Newtown). Meetings start at 7.30 pm so please arrive earlier to be seated.

20 February – The Society’s Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be followed by cheese and wine and a talk by Ali Naylor of English Heritage.

20 March – “The Future of Bishop’s Waltham”

A talk by Ritchie Latham, a Parish Councillor and a Winchester City Councillor for the town. He will consider the recent big changes to the town and then look to its future, and explain how residents can help shape it.

24 April – Bishop’s Waltham House Histories

10 years ago the Society launched a House History project that proved over-ambitious. Trustee Steve Forrest will explain a more gradualist approach as he launches a new and revised project, starting this year.

15 May – Hidden in Plain Sight: Reminders of WW2 in the New Forest, Marc Heighway.

During the Second World War the New Forest area saw a huge amount of activity. This presentation takes the form of a photo tour and talk on areas of the New you will be familiar with but showing you things left over from the war you might not have noticed before, and the stories behind them.

19 June – “Winchester: Boom to Bust”

Blue Badge Guide Don Bryan returns, this time to tell the tale of Winchester’s decline. When King John died (1216) it was a great and prosperous city with a population second only to London, but by 1400 its population had halved, its coffers

were empty and 11 of its streets were de-populated!

17 July – Titchfield Abbey

Behind the façade of this Tudor Palace lie the remains of a 13th century Abbey. David Moore-Kelly will explore the story of its foundation by the Bishop of Winchester, Peter de Roches, and its occupants – the Premonstratensian Canons.

21 August No meeting

18 September – Wolvesey Palace, Winchester

The Bishop’s Palace in Winchester and the Palace at Waltham are contemporaries – both started by William Giffard and added to by Henry of Blois. Nicola Dyer of English Heritage will recount Wolvesey’s story.

16 October - “The Austin & Wyatt Project”

In 2019 the Society and the Museum worked together to save all the documents held in the company’s former offices in St George’s Square. Penny Copeland will give a taste of life in Hampshire since the 1830s, based on the more than 50 boxes of documents and 1,500 maps that were saved.

20 November - “Who was Henry of Blois?”

Tony Kippenberger will talk about this 12th century Bishop of Winchester, grandson of William the Conqueror, brother of King Stephen and builder of the first Palace in Waltham. A fascinating figure who looms large in our heritage.

18 December - The Society’s Christmas Party

Our own Christmas Party – members and their guests only.

BWS: Celebrating the Past • Enjoying the Present • Safeguarding the Future