

Archaeological remains of the Hamble River

27th January 2009 - Roy Underdown Pavilion

The Roy Underdown Pavilion was full to capacity to hear Julie Satchell, of the Hampshire & Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology, talk about the 'Archaeological remains on the Hamble River'. A few years ago, Julie had visited the Society to speak about her work on the 'Hamble River Project', which investigated the importance of the maritime archaeology of the river.

The Hamble River has a long maritime history including the wreck of the 'Grace Dieu', a much older and larger vessel than the 'Mary Rose', which Julie spoke about on her previous visit.

This time, Society members heard about the history of some of the remains in Badnam Creek, such as the Thames Sailing Barge 'Five Sisters' which was built in 1891 and the former Gosport ferry 'Sandringham' built in 1900. Other wrecks on the river mentioned were the sailing barge 'Wessex' (1918) at the top of the river near Fairthorne and the Thames Sailing Barge 'Kimberley' (1900) close to the motorway bridge.

Of most interest to Hamble residents was information about the wrecks of 'Flash' and 'Fortuna' by Satchell Marsh, 'Fortuna' previously being a hospital ship for Training Ship 'Mercury'. Originally it is believed they were North Sea fishing vessels built in the late 19th century.

Details of the modern wrecks by Bunny Meadows were related, as well as the hulked vessel which can be seen by walkers from the path on the eastern side of the river (opposite Badnam Creek). This was originally a Second World War Admiralty MFV which was later converted to a trawler.

Other interesting wrecks include the 'Norseman' at the Swanwick bend of the river. This was once a fine yacht built in America (1881) and eventually came to the Hamble River to be converted to a houseboat. For a while, around the Second World War, she may have been used as a 'house of disrepute' and in the end she caught fire and this sealed her fate. Near the motorway bridge are the remains of a First World War Seaplane Towing Lighter, only one other exists.

Information about old docks, quays and hards/slipways was also told. If you want to find out more, including about the seaplane slipways at Hamble Point, download the full HWTMA report.