

Lecture Reports

Brian Little et al.

Thursday 9th September 2004.

***Banbury Plush* – Christine Bloxham.**

Christine is a familiar friend, and her returns to Banbury are always welcome. As long ago as 1980, for the Oxfordshire Local History Competition and Exhibition, our Society mounted a display of Banbury and Shutford Plush, which earned us third prize against a multitude of excellent entries (see *C&CH.8.3*, Summer 1980). Christine was one of the sub-committee organising it, and joint author with Vera Hodgkins of the booklet of this name. Long unavailable, it has now been reprinted and was first on sale at the meeting. Thus a description of the talk is superfluous, which in addition to matter covered in the publication was very much a hands-on walk-about in the upper museum gallery. Here was the Museum's own display of a plush weaving loom and examples both from this and from exhibits brought from the Museum store at Standlake (itself the location for a Society visit some years ago). J.G.

Banbury and Shutford Plush, Vera Hodgkins and Christine Bloxham, B.H.S., 2004 reprint, A5, 32pp., illustrated. £3.75 (incl. p&p) from B.H.S., c/o Banbury Museum, or J. Gibson (address on inside cover). Cheques payable to Banbury Historical Society.

Thursday 14th October 2004.

***The New Globe Theatre, London* – Margaret Thomas.**

This was a very comprehensive account of the history of past and present Globe Theatres. It ranged from issues about the original building to the realisation of a dream concept for a modern replica of Shakespeare's stage and auditorium.

The earliest mecca of playgoers was called 'The Theatre' and was located in Shoreditch. Some acting also happened in Blackfriars, but this did not appeal to the city fathers, who were afraid that theatres encouraged immorality and absenteeism and felt that gatherings of large numbers increased the risk of plague. They wished to push all entertainment onto the south bank of the Thames.

When the lease ran out for this first theatre, Shakespeare's company carried its main timbers across London Bridge and used them in building the first Globe, the site of which is still marked by a now restored bronze plaque.

Watching performances in the old theatre was not without its hazards. These included too close contact of actors with the audience, foul smells arising from buckets which served as lavatories and the ever-present risk of fire. In 1613, flames spread rapidly yet only one person was injured. People used beer in an attempt to relieve the condition known as burnt posterior.