

The Gordon Hendy Memorial

A fitting memorial for a respected archaeologist and dear friend

Les Hayes

When Gordon Hendy of Upper Row Farm sadly died last year after a long and painful illness, BACAS lost a good friend. It was Gordon who called us in over 8 years ago having found significant evidence of Roman and Medieval occupation at his farm. Since then we have worked together to unravel the archaeological conundrums presented at the farm, particularly at Blacklands and Homefield.

Gordon welcomed the presence of the Society who over the years conducted detailed investigations including geophysics, surveying and excavation and instigated the annual six week training dig based at Blacklands. Thanks to his and Jess' continued generosity, BACAS has been able to enjoy the facilities at the farm itself and base the logistic and administrative centre at Blacklands.

It has been agreed with Jess that a permanent memorial be erected in memory of Gordon. A site at the top end of the Roman Garden enclave was chosen which has far reaching views to Salisbury Plain, Cley Hill and the wooded ridges stretching to the west. It is a vista that would have been familiar to Gordon on a daily basis and presents a tranquil backdrop to the farm and the surrounding fields. It has been decided to construct a mound revetted by a low curving stone wall with a number of water-worn limestone boulders placed behind and above the wall. A wooden shelf bearing a suitable plaque will be placed within the curvature of the wall.

An appeal to the Society membership has so far raised over £500 and once the weather has warmed up work will begin. A path suitable for wheelchairs will be established from the miniature stone bridge to the memorial. Trees will be planted as indicated on the site plan.

The Roman Garden

The Memorial will be associated with and adjacent to the Roman Garden which was originally constructed as a project during the Time Team visit in 2006. It was designed by Claire Ryley, an expert on Roman Gardens and has been tended by Brenda Rogers and Julian Back ever since. It shares the same stunning view as the memorial and features an authentic design using plants introduced during the Roman occupation, all within a formal setting.

It is planned to double the existing size of the Garden and to incorporate a water feature; a miniature rectangular pond. Paths, again suitable for wheelchair access, will be established, the whole area levelled and a stone seat built at the top of the Garden. The landscaping is planned to include hardened weed resistant surfaces and further planting of shrubs and fruit trees. A bid for funds is underway and if sufficient money is forthcoming it will provide an electrical supply to power a small fountain.

Figure 1
The plan for the Gordon Hendy Memorial Garden incorporating the Roman Garden.

