



ARCHAEOLOGY

The Newsletter of the Berkshire Archaeological Society

Winter 2022

Vol. 24, No.4

Dates for your diary

Please note that unless otherwise advised all Saturday lectures take place at RISC, London St, Reading, RG1 4PS with refreshments from 2pm. Lectures will start at 2:30pm and will also be streamed live on Zoom. The Zoom link will be emailed in advance and the Zoom session will open at 2:15pm unless advised otherwise.

Non-members are welcome to attend lectures. If wishing to attend online, they need to email lectures@berksarch.co.uk by the end of the Wednesday before the lecture.

Wednesday 7th December 2022: BAS Study Group: Cancelled

Thursday 8th December 2022: BAS Outreach Group: Cancelled

Saturday 10th December 2022: Members' Talks: *Excavations at Ankerwycke and Cookham Paddock* by James Peddle; *Graffiti of the Palatine Paedagogium in Rome* by Keith Abbott

Wednesday 4th January 2023: BAS Study Group: 2:30pm at Woosehill Community Centre, Emmview Close, Wokingham RG41 3DA, and on Zoom

Thursday 5th January 2023: BAS Outreach Group: 7:30pm on Zoom

Wednesday 11th January 2023: BAS Study Group Lunch – TBC

Saturday 21st January 2023: Lecture: *Neolithic Malta* by Tim Lloyd

Wednesday 1st February 2023: BAS Study Group: 2:30pm at Woosehill Community Centre and on Zoom

Thursday 2nd February 2023: BAS Outreach Group: 7:30pm on Zoom

Wednesday 8th February 2023: BAS Study Group Lunch – TBC

Saturday 18th February 2023: Lecture: *Test Pitting in North Warnborough* by Carena Lewis

Wednesday 1st March 2023: BAS Study Group: 2:30pm at Woosehill Community Centre and on Zoom

Thursday 2nd March 2023: BAS Outreach Group: 19:30 on Zoom

Wednesday 8th March 2023: BAS Study Group Lunch – TBC

Saturday 18th March 2023: Lecture: University of Reading PhD Candidate – Details TBA

Saturday 1st April 2023: BAS Day School - The Cornerstone, Norreys Avenue, Wokingham, RG40 1UE

From the chair

The three months from September to November 2022 have seen a number of developments.

The 2022 Annual General Meeting

This event went smoothly and as a result I am delighted to welcome Jean Curran, James Peddle and Paul Seddon on to the BAS Council. James and Paul have been actively involved in archaeology for many years,

IN
BERKSHIRE

and Jean's introduction to archaeology has included geophysics in the fields of West Berkshire and several discussions. I look forward to seeing how their enthusiasm and interests take the Society forward.

Working with the University of Reading

Over the summer, Keith Abbott carried out a geophysics survey of Cookham Paddock, and several people worked on the University's field school. More recently, Historic England has agreed to fund the Unlocking Old Windsor project, where the University and the Society are partners. Working this close to the university is new to the Society and offers us new opportunities.

The Study Group is meeting face to face

On 4th January, 1st February and 1st March 2023, the Study Group will be meeting face to face from 14:30 to 16:30 at the Woosehill Community Centre for discussions on what the Roman archaeology across the Berkshire Region tells us about the people and the communities and society in which they lived. A calling notice will be sent out in December.

Going forward in 2023

I hope you have enjoyed being members of the Society.

The Society aspires to be a learning organisation, where people with all levels of archaeological knowledge and skills enjoy each other's company and work together to learn more about archaeology and the archaeology of Berkshire.

Archaeology is a very deep and wide but simple subject; everything is based on evidence. Don't be shy! There are no silly archaeological questions! If you don't understand something, ask!

I encourage you to join in the Society's activities by joining a workgroup, or a fieldwork or an outreach project.

Andrew Hutt

BAS AGM Report

The Society's AGM was held on Saturday 15th October 2022 with more than 45 members meeting both in-person at RISC and virtually on Zoom. The meeting papers had been circulated for members to read beforehand. The Chair's report and the Treasurer's report were presented by Andrew Hutt and Anne Harrison respectively and were unanimously accepted along with the minutes of the 2021 AGM. Our Chair, Andrew Hutt, recognised the contribution to the BAS Council made by Anne Helmore and Alison McQuitty who had resigned from the BAS Council during the year, and were warmly thanked for their hard work during their time in office. The Officers of the Society were agreed as Andrew Hutt as Chair, Keith Abbott as Secretary and Anne Harrison as Treasurer, and the Trustees were agreed as Ann Griffin, Tim Lloyd, Catherine Petts, Jean Curran, Paul Seddon, James Peddle, and Griselda Truscott Wicks.

The AGM was followed by a fascinating talk on the history of the De La Beche family of Aldworth given by *Professor John Blair*, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Keith Abbott

Archaeology on Saturdays

Georgian Reading, Berkshire's Bath Spa

A talk by John Missenden on Saturday 17th September 2022.

John's interest in Georgian Reading began after he made a visit to Bath to look at the Georgian architecture there and he noticed the similarity between what he saw in Bath and what he could see in Reading.

There are over 800 listed buildings in Reading and when towns are rated by the number of listed buildings Reading is comfortably in the top 10%, having more listed buildings than several cathedral towns. Most of these listed properties date from the Georgian era.

The style of design that is so immediately recognisable as Georgian arose from the renewal of learning and flowering of arts starting in Italy, which we call the Renaissance. Italian renaissance architects looked back to Roman architects like Vitruvius, who in the 1st century AD published a treatise on architecture. The earliest architecture to arise from this study of the ancients was the more ornate baroque style, but in the hands of the 16th century Italian architect Palladio a simpler more refined style became popular. The Palladian, Georgian style, became the dominant architectural style of the British Isles, particularly after the Glorious Revolution when William of Orange became King.

As an interesting aside, the Glorious Revolution was achieved with only two battles on English soil. The Battle

of Reading and the Wincanton skirmish. The Battle of Reading took place on the 9th of December 1688. James II had posted 600 Irish Catholics in Reading to stop the march of the Dutch towards London. Wild rumours said the Irish were planning to massacre the townsfolk, so the inhabitants asked William for help. A relief force of 280 of William's dragoons was sent. Warned of the Jacobite positions, they attacked from an unexpected direction, and got into the centre of Reading. They were supported by Reading men shooting from windows. James' forces retreated in confusion, leaving an unknown number of dead, with reports varying widely from twelve to fifty, depending on the account. William IV preferred a simpler architecture and was a patron of Christopher Wren. It was during William's reign that brick began to be used extensively in British buildings.

Looking around the Reading area there are several large houses which epitomise the Palladian style of architecture.

The first is Basildon Park, just outside Pangbourne. With its rusticated stone basement and raised piano nobile (main floor containing the main entrance and principal rooms), its division into three blocks, the main house and two pavilions, one each side, harkens back to Palladio's original designs. The interior reflected changes in house decoration. The ceilings are flat and with delicate plaster decoration.

Calcot House is another Georgian house, although the top storey was added in the late 19th century. It has a magnificent Venetian window.

A later Georgian house is Prospect Park, built in 1810, and finished in a white stucco.

John then discussed some of the many Georgian houses in Reading, too many to include in this report. But many from all periods of the Georgian era can be found in Castle Street and Castle Hill. The Royal Berkshire Hospital was built in 1836.

In several places estates of Georgian houses were built, such as Albion Place, Southampton Street, Russell Street, Queens Road, and Eldon Square and Street.

List of buildings discussed:

1751-1800

Basildon House near Pangbourne

Calcot House Reading

Watlington House Watlington Street, Reading

St Mary's Chapel Castle Street, Reading (portico 1836)

Cadogan House Church Street, St Giles

1801 – 1830

Prospect Park Reading

1830 – 1840

Not strictly Georgian, but the building style remained Georgian - Royal Berkshire Hospital

Most of **London Street** and **Castle Street** are Georgian and date from 1750 – 1840.

In the early 19th century small 'suburbs' were built around central Reading and terraces of Georgian houses can be found in **Queens Road, Castle Hill, Southampton Street, Albion Terrace** (off London Road, on corner of Sidmouth Street). Much of the **Russell Street, Castle Hill** conservation area consists of early 19th century terrace houses.

Catherine Petts

Knightly magnificence and marital drama: Margery de la Beche and the Aldworth effigies

A talk by Professor John Blair, Queen's College, Oxford, on Saturday 15th October 2022.

It is believed that the de la Beche's were a family from Flanders who probably came from humble beginnings, (the name means "of the spade") and who crossed the Channel in the wake of the victory of Duke William of Normandy at the Battle of Hastings. They were granted permission to build a castle at Aldworth. Sir Robert de la Beche was knighted by Edward I in 1278 and the family started to rise to prominence. Sir Robert had a son, John, who had a son, Philip, who in turn had six sons, John, Philip, Nicholas, Edmund, Robert, and Edward. Nicholas and Edmund became very important in the reign of Edward III.

Nicholas was extrovert and gregarious but not organised. He became very close to the royal family, even becoming custodian of the king's first son, Edward, Prince of Wales, and Edward III made him very wealthy. He was given the moated manor house called Beaumys (pronounced 'Beams'), on the River Loddon at Swallowfield and parkland, where he could fulfil his passion for hunting. Sometimes this wasn't enough for him, so he used to trespass on other hunting grounds. But as a favourite of the king, he was always pardoned.

In 1335 Nicholas became Constable of the Tower of London. In 1339 he married Margery de Poyning. A lady of high breeding from an old family, and who was also well in with the royal children. In 1343 Nicholas went to be the Seneschal of Gascony. He never returned and died there in 1345.

Margery, having previously been married to the late Sir Edmund de Bacon, was now an extremely wealthy widow and based at Beaumys in which she retained a life interest.

In 1346-7 Edward III and his knights besieged Calais leaving their spouses waiting for them at home. During this time Margery is believed to have become involved with Gerard de l'Isle. He claimed she had married him, but Margery always denied this.

In the early hours of Good Friday morning 1347 there was a violent raid on Beaumys where the royal children,

except for Prince Edward but including the Keeper of England, Prince Lionel, Duke of Clarence, were staying as the court was meeting in Reading where there was no palace. Margery's brother Michael was killed, and Margery was abducted by Sir John de la Dalton along with some goods and chattels. Given the latter there is some question as to whether the abduction was forced or collusive. However, Margery married Sir John de la Dalton quickly afterwards. There was an uproar and as the royal children had been exposed to violence and were very frightened, Edward III was enraged. But everyone who survived this episode by two to three years was rehabilitated and the court reluctantly recognised the marriage.

Either Margery failed to recover from these events, or she contracted the Black Death for she died in Calais just two years later in 1349.

A very detailed inventory survived, in French, of the contents of the house, although none of the actual contents did, so we were shown examples. There was no furniture in the inventory as it was always left behind, indicative of a household always on the move. Apparently, Margery's bedroom was very opulent, with silk hangings on the wall. Other items included some of opus anglicum embroidery, huge quantities of towels, napkins, fire irons, pokers, marsers (which were ceremonial cups), wooden and leather pitchers and jugs, and a large bronze pot for cooking known as 'Brown Robin'. But no pottery was mentioned. The speaker jokingly suggested that this was a "medieval picnic set"! Twelve books were listed at the end, these were mainly devotional or on The Crusades - maybe this was to instil values into the reader. An example of one, a courtly romance novel, still exists in the Bodleian library in Oxford.

Many of the family are commemorated in Aldworth Church, where there are tombs, topped with very large effigies, lying in stately splendour either under richly carved canopies, or upon tombs in the nave. These are collectively known as the "Aldworth Giants". There are no names on them, but the project can probably be dated to the 1340s, by the styles of the military uniforms, because the "fashion" in armour was changing rapidly and it is probable that no work has subsequently been done. They are unusual in that they have no brass plaques, but it is assumed that they contain the remains of Philip and his sons and wives. Very sadly the family became extinct because latterly no more sons were born.

The Beaumys manor house no longer exists, but there is a very overgrown footpath all the way around the grounds. A suggestion was made that an excavation there would reveal more secrets and that perhaps it could be a future project for BAS!

Liz Jackson

Kindred: Neanderthal Life, Love, Death and Art

A talk by Dr Rebecca Wragg Sykes on Saturday 19th November 2022.

This lecture takes its title from Dr Rebecca Wragg Sykes' first book, a critically acclaimed best seller. Rebecca started her talk by reminding us of the very recent news of Neanderthals 'winning' a Nobel prize, thanks to Svante Pääbo's work on ancient DNA. Rebecca briefly described the early history of the discovery of Neanderthals, who got their name from bones found in the Neander Valley, Germany, in 1856. However, Neanderthal bones had been found earlier, elsewhere in Europe, but not identified.

Fast forwarding to 2022, Rebecca went on to explain how, with modern technology such as ancient DNA analysis, Neanderthals fitted into the human evolutionary tree. Thus, *Homo sapiens*, Neanderthals and Denisovans all had a common root in Early *Homo* species, about 3-2 million years ago, with the split into the three separate groups occurring around 765-550 thousand years ago. We learned how similar Neanderthals were to modern humans, being fully upright, a little shorter, but with flared ribs and thicker bones giving them a strong, stocky build, perfect for their hunter-gatherer lifestyle.

During the 400,000 years Neanderthals existed in Eurasia, they lived through four different warm periods, not just the Ice Ages with which many people associate them. Rebecca pointed out that Neanderthals had lived during a time when the earth was hotter by 1-2 degrees than it is today. Neanderthals had simply moved away from areas where they could not hunt, and had lived wherever there was food; mountains, coasts, plains, and woodlands.

Moving on to archaeology, Rebecca showed a photograph of a 1908 excavation that looked like a bomb site and described today's very careful archaeological analysis. Looking at Neanderthal hearth sites in Spain, at El Salt and Abric Romani, we saw how the different layers of the excavated site were fitted together, showing how hearths were used and re-used, often over many years, and by many generations of Neanderthals. Stone tools and chips, burnt wood, burnt bones and other remains were analysed, dating the different layers, and demonstrating how Neanderthals had lived at these sites.

Neanderthal teeth have been analysed and reveal much about their lives, including their rapid development when compared to modern humans. Tooth wear suggests that teeth were used as a third hand, and scratches from stone tools, held by right- or left-handed Neanderthals, show how tough food was cut when held by the teeth. Meat and fibrous plant food left identifiable scratches on teeth. A splinter of wood was found in tooth calculus (hardened plaque), suggesting that Neanderthals cleaned their teeth with wooden toothpicks, as do chimpanzees today. Starch found in calculus has been analysed to show the

vast range of plants, such as water lily roots and wild grasses, eaten by Neanderthals.

Neanderthals also ate a wide range of animals; mammoths, deer, horses and boars, and smaller animals such as rabbits, beavers and even carnivores. The hearths at Abric Romani gave evidence of seasonal hunting; horses in summer, red deer in autumn, with the Neanderthals returning to the site at different times of the year. Primary butchery sites gave evidence of the careful selection of the 'best' parts of the animal; fat, large marrow bones, etc., which were removed and carried back to the rest of the group. Meat may have been eaten raw, but there was definitely some cooking, with dripped fat residues found in hearths.

Birds were eaten, and Rebecca described the finding of a carefully butchered swift, with the tiny bird possibly having been used to teach youngsters how to catch prey and then butcher it. Another unusual find was the remains of a wild cat, which had been butchered and its bones burnt, indicating that it had been eaten. The lack of toe bones with the remains suggested that the fur skin of the wild cat had been removed. Neanderthals ate seafood, with evidence showing they ate cooked mussels, knowing that the shells opened when heated.

Neanderthals were extremely efficient stone tool makers. They made specific flake tools for every purpose; cutting, chopping, scraping hides, boring holes, etc. Large Levallois and Quina flake tools were particularly good for re-sharpening or re-purposing.

The process of re-fitting flakes back onto the core was described, with the finding of all the different pieces showing first where the tools were made, usually near hearth sites. Then, how the tools were used and moved around the environment with time, as well as where and when they were re-purposed. For example, blades blunted to re-use as scrapers were found at skin processing sites, and re-sharpened cutting blades were found at primary butchery sites. Neanderthals were capable of making composite tools. They made an ochre-coloured birch resin adhesive, blobs of which have been found stuck onto stone points, with their probable wooden shafts or handles long decayed.

We looked at possible Neanderthal art. We saw dark green cobbles used for tool-making that had been chosen by Neanderthals over stones of other colours. Neanderthals appear to have liked rich colours; tiny fossil shells have been found with red pigment on them. Elsewhere, larger shells have been found coloured with two different pigments and with artificially enlarged holes, possibly for hanging. We looked at spaced vertical scratches on a bone, and geometrical scratches on the floor of a cave on Gibraltar, which may or may not have been 'art'.

Deep in Bruniquel Cave, France, about 174,000 years ago, when only Neanderthals inhabited the area, stalactites and stalagmites were smashed and built into circular constructions, with traces of fire also found. From this enigmatic site, we went on to look at mortuary practices of the Neanderthals, who intentionally buried their dead. Skull analysis shows that Neanderthals sometimes removed thick bone pieces, useful for retouching flakes, but also small bone pieces with no obvious practical use.

Rebecca described the end of the Neanderthals about 40,000 years ago. Studies of ancient DNA show that Neanderthals and *Homo sapiens* were interbreeding at this time. On a map of the world, we saw *Homo sapiens* dispersal routes, both early (120-60ka), and later (60-30ka), and also where the genetic admixtures had occurred in Eurasia. In the light of Neanderthal DNA continuing to exist in modern humans, the rethinking of 'extinction' was suggested.

In the Q&A session, Rebecca explained that Neanderthals had continued to evolve during their 400,000 years on earth, with noticeable body changes between Mediterranean and Northern European Neanderthals. She also told us that childbirth would have been somewhat easier for Neanderthals, with the birth canal not so much twisted as now, but that babies would still have been a tight fit and help with childbirth needed.

Joan Burrow-Newton

From the field...

Excavations at Cookham Paddock - 2022

Editor's note: For a report on the 2021 excavations see the autumn 2021 edition (Vol 23.3) and for a report on the 2022 geophysics survey carried out by BAS and MTAP volunteers see the autumn 2022 edition (Vol 24.3) of this newsletter. Both editions are currently available on the Society's website: <https://www.berksarch.co.uk/index.php/newsletters/>

In August 2022 Dr Gabor Thomas of the University of Reading, Department of Archaeology led a team of staff/students (supported by volunteers from societies affiliated to the Middle Thames Archaeology Partnership (MTAP) - including the Berkshire Archaeological Society, Berkshire Archaeology Research Group, Maidenhead Archaeological & Historical Society, Maidenhead Search Society, and Marlow Archaeology Group) in further excavations at Cookham Paddock.



Photo: Keith Abbott

Amongst the key objectives were to build on the post-excavation analysis of the 2021 evaluation and the geophysics survey carried out in May 2022 by BAS (and MTAP) volunteers, by opening two large trenches: trench 1 - at the north of the Paddock 35m x 35m in area; and trench 2, positioned to the southwest of trench 1 and 20m x 10m in area. When the topsoil was removed a significant amount of well-preserved archaeology was revealed in both trenches:

Trench 1 was positioned against the northern eastern boundary of the Paddock. The current course of the river Thames is heavily channelled, so it is likely that the river in the 8th and 9th centuries would have been broader and shallower, flowing much nearer to the settlement at

Cookham Paddock (and trench 1) than it does today. Trench 1 contained a dense spread of well-preserved archaeology of a Mid Saxon settlement that was abandoned at some point during the 2nd half of the 9th century AD. Trench 1 revealed a gravel trackway running north-south before turning to the east. Along this trackway were tightly packed buildings on either side, with individual buildings divided by smaller roads that can be seen as offshoots from the main thoroughfare. Within the buildings, floor surfaces were revealed that featured hearths, remains of ovens and a large number of timber post holes. The high level of preservation of the site revealed objects that were dropped on these floor surfaces found in situ, which offer a unique insight into the life within a Mid Saxon monastic settlement. Numerous samples from these floor surfaces were taken for X-Ray Fluorescence and Environmental Sampling, from which it is hoped that further detail of the functions carried out within these buildings (e.g., evidence of metal working, grains etc.) will be revealed.

Across the northern end of the trench, a heavily engineered cambered road surface running east-west robustly constructed from chalk, flints, and the remains of a nearby (yet to be located) Roman building was uncovered. It is thought that this may have served as a loading/unloading point for goods entering and leaving the monastery by river, further illustrating the role played by the monastery as a hub for commerce and trade. Finds from trench 1 included loom weights and a bone pin beater, evidence that textiles were being produced nearby. Also found were pieces of stained window glass and fragments of black glass interpreted as remains of inkwell, both of which are evidence of a high-status ecclesiastical presence. Also, items were found from the daily life of the inhabitants of the settlement such as fragments of local pottery and imported fine ware, an iron knife, fragments of an imported quern stone, a lamp holder, a fragment of a bone comb and bronze strap ends from belts.



Photo: Julie Worsfold



Photo: Keith Abbott

Trench 2 featured an east-west v-shaped ditch curving to the south interpreted as marking the boundary of an enclosed area. This ditch was intersected by a later (11th-12th century AD) north-south running ditch thought to have been dug to mark the bounds of Medieval Cookham that were laid out at this time (long after the monastery had ceased to exist). Trench 2 was found to contain an 8th-9th century AD cemetery most likely linked to the monastery, which is cut by the later north-south running ditch. The graves found within this cemetery are aligned east-west indicating that these were Christian burials. Two graves were found to have been cut by the later ditch, and a fully articulated skeleton was also discovered which was taken to the University for analysis and radiocarbon dating. It is likely that the monastery would have contained separate cemeteries for the monastic brethren and the lay community. It is also known that monasteries at this time contained multiple churches - so an objective future excavation of this area of the Paddock is to determine the focus

of this cemetery and insights into the lives of the people who are buried there. This trench also contained domestic pits indicating that there were timber buildings located close by. As well as the Mid Saxon finds, lots of worked flints were found suggesting that the Paddock was also occupied during the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods.

The 2022 Field School was a huge success, with the initial interpretation of the assemblage of finds and archaeological features discovered adding considerably to earlier work carried out. As well as the insights gained into life within this busy monastic settlement, there is now growing evidence of the presence of its high-status ecclesiastical inhabitants. The discovery of the cemetery and the extensive sampling of areas of domestic occupation will enable researchers to piece together a much more detailed picture of how the inhabitants of Mid Saxon Cookham lived. Further work is needed to expand the understanding of the chronology and spatial organisation of the site.

A key objective of the 2022 Field School was to provide training for University of Reading students, who benefitted immensely from the experience gained at this unique site. It is hoped that the strong collaboration between the University of Reading and the MTAP affiliated societies' volunteer archaeologists, local historians and metal detectorists working together to share their diverse knowledge, experience and resources will continue in future years. The excavations at Cookham Paddock this year also drew an unprecedented amount of interest from local residents, with more than 1000 people visiting the site for tours.

Due to its unique level of preservation, the work carried out in 2022 only scratched the surface of the archaeology at this site. It is estimated that there are 3 to 5 further seasons of work still to be done. In the meanwhile, the Friends of Cookham Abbey will be arranging lectures, community events and fieldwork in the surrounding area carried out by MTAP volunteer archaeologists to maintain the momentum built by the 2022 Field School in advance of another season of excavation at Cookham Paddock led by the University of Reading in 2023.

Keith Abbott

Geophysics on the Sutton Estate

Geophysics fieldwork carried out by BAS volunteers at the Wormstall Estate near Wickham in 2021 failed to find any evidence of the Roman Road to Bath (Margary 53) along the road's projected route (Toller 2013) close to the supposed location of its intersection with Ermin Street (Margary 41). This result suggests that either its remains have been completely lost, or that it followed a different route towards Ermin Street from its last known surviving remains on Radley Farm. A second BAS fieldwork project at Radley Farm revealed new evidence suggesting that the earthworks visible in Stibbs Wood and Three Gate Copse are indeed the remains of the Roman road to Bath and demonstrated that the remains of the road between these two points could be located using modern geophysics survey methods across the intervening agricultural landscape. The Geophysics on the Sutton Estate project aimed to undertake a further series of geophysics surveys following the alignment of the earthworks visible in Three Gate Copse heading towards Wickham and Ermin Street to determine if further remains of the Roman Road to Bath could be revealed.



Figure 1. BAS members carrying out the gradiometer survey on the Sutton Estate

Given the uncertainty of the route taken, even though only 2km from Ermin Steet, the arc of possible routes of the Roman Road to Bath amounted to an area of >100ha which was not feasible to survey in its entirety. Although faint linear anomalies

could be observed in various orientations and locations in this search area using satellite, aerial and LiDAR images, none were definitive, so work started in early September 2022 to undertake the first North-South traverses across the areas of interest with the gradiometer to see if evidence of the Roman Road could be observed. Unfortunately, the area immediately to the east of Three Gate Copse where the road's earthworks are still visible showed no anomalies associated with the road as shown in figure 2.



Figure 2 Three areas of gradiometer survey east of Three Gate Copse showing no evidence of surviving remains of the Roman Road to Bath

Surveys in the large field further to the east were more productive, where a 130m long linear anomaly was observed at the extreme east of the field leaving New Copse on Church Hill as can be seen in figure 3. This linear anomaly lies to the north of a longer highly magnetic linear anomaly, which was one of several observed across the survey area and were interpreted as possible modern day utility service lines. No other anomalies were observed that were suggestive of the remains of the Roman Road.

The enlarged view of the 130m linear anomaly as revealed by the gradiometer is shown in the top-right insert on figure 2. This anomaly is shown again in the bottom-right insert on figure 3 in yellow box highlighting the earth resistance image of this anomaly, which shows a wide high resistance linear anomaly slightly to the south of the gradiometer anomaly. The high resistance linear anomaly is estimated to be 10m-12m wide whereas the agger of the Roman Road in Three Gate Copse is 8m wide, however this is interpreted as possible being due to the modern service utility trench having been dug along the southern ditch of the Roman Road destroying the southerly remains of the Roman road and creating an extended area of high resistance with infill of the service utility trench.

Whilst this is not conclusive proof of the route of the Roman Road, it does suggest that it is likely that the Roman Road to Bath took a more northerly route from Three Gate Copse to Wickham than previously thought and may have intersected Ermin Street close to the centre of modern-day Wickham Village near to where the 10th century AD St Swithun's Church is situated. Further work will be required to compare the cross section of the 130m linear anomaly with records of a section excavated through the Roman Road to Bath in 1968 in order to assess if this is indeed the surviving remains of this part of the Roman Road.

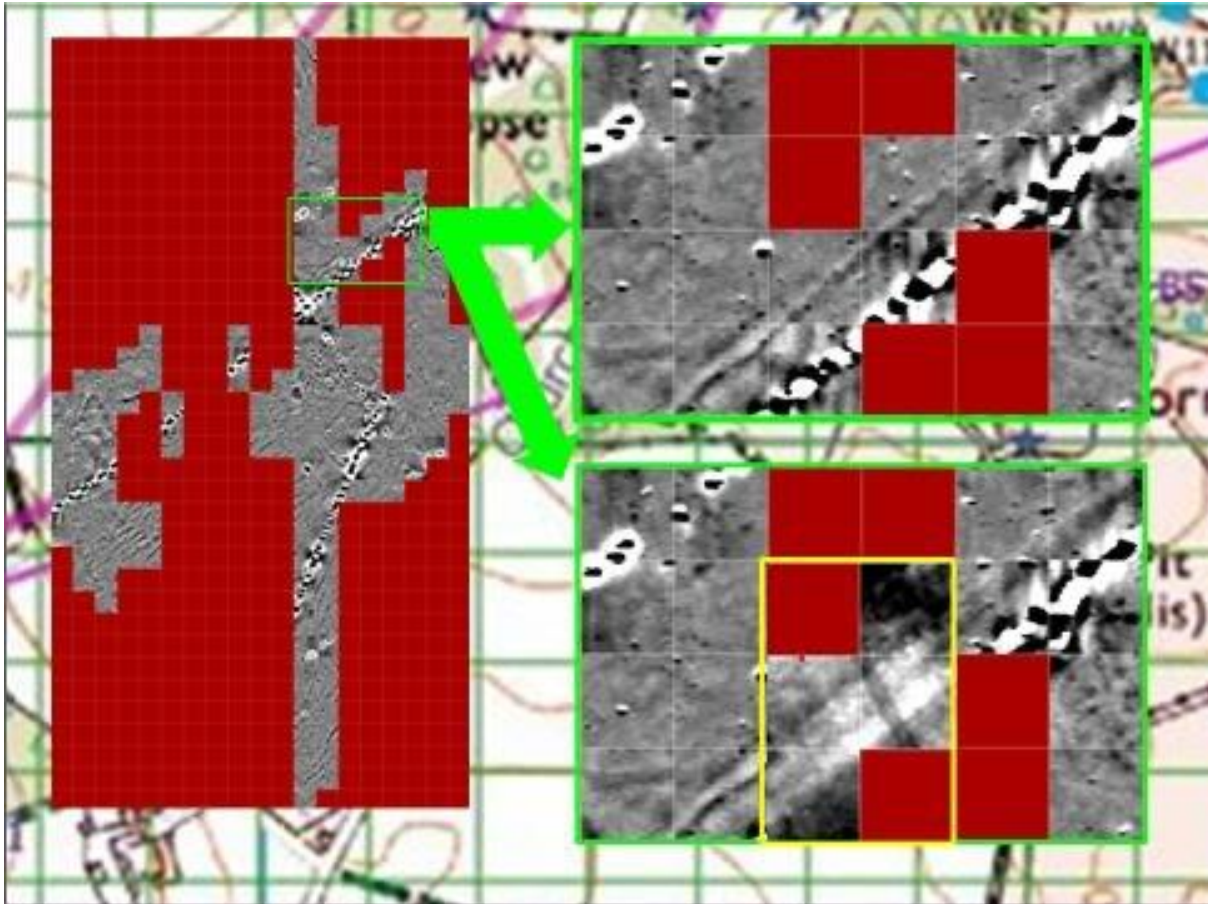


Figure 3. Area of gradiometer survey east of Three Gate Copse showing a 130m linear anomaly in the insert

Given the wide area to be surveyed on this project in just over 3 weeks, the BAS project team demonstrated a high level of proficiency in geophysics surveying. Thanks to Martin Labram, Nigel Spencer, Tony Bakker, Philip Rawstron, Jean Curran, Tony Fenton, James Peddle, Jill Oseman, James Allen, Geoff Anderson, Tim Lloyd, Margaret Boltwood, Rod Sharp, Peter Clifford, and Harry Johnson for their support in undertaking this project.

Keith Abbott

The BAS Study Group

The Study Group held meetings in September, October, and November 2022. These were all on Zoom, so they were essentially presentations on a variety of subjects including:

- *Geophysics surveys at Inkpen* by Andrew Hutt
- *Excavations at Ankerwycke and Cookham Paddock* by James Peddle
- *Geophysics surveys on the Sutton estate* by Keith Abbott
- *The Archaeology Skills Passport* by James Peddle
- *Integrated Archaeological database* by Andrew Hutt
- *Berkshire Archaeological Journal volume 86* by Andrew Hutt
- *Berkshire Romans Projects* by Andrew Hutt

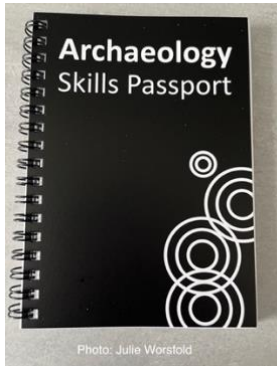
Some of these matters are presented elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Study Group meetings; January to March 2023

Over the last few years, a team in the Society has been recording Iron Age and Roman sites in the BAS Gazetteer and is now planning to use the system to gain insights into how society developed and changed in the period from Caesar's invasion in 55 BC to AD 410, when Britain was left to manage its own defences.

In the New Year, from January to March, the BAS Study Group will be meeting face to face at the Woosehill Community Centre to discuss Roman society in Berkshire. I have drafted a project proposal for this work. It has a reading list so if you want to read up on an area that interests you, please ask me for a copy.

The Archaeology Skills Passport



This passport has been introduced by the archaeology industry to provide a common standard for recording an individual's archaeological skills. The passport is aimed at people who have just started doing archaeological work. It records three levels of archaeological skills: Core which records excavation skills; Secondary which records surveying and finds handling skills; Tertiary which records report writing, outreach and knowledge of relevant legislation. Skills are recorded at 3 levels: Novice who can operate under guidance; Competent who can operate with minimal supervision and Proficient who can operate independently and support others. If you have a passport when you work on a project or site, you ask the project leader to sign-off the work you have been doing.

If members of the Society want to develop their skills in a way which is widely recognised across the archaeological industry. This may be a way forward for you.

Andrew Hutt thanks James Peddle for putting together this presentation.

Andrew Hutt

Blounts Court and the Integrated Archaeology Database

One of the results of partnering with Gabor Thomas of the University of Reading has been that the Society has been given access to the Integrated Archaeology Database (IADB). This is an IT application which was developed by Mike Raines at the York Archaeological Trust and has been used by Mike Fulford and Amanda Clarke to record and interpret the excavations at Silchester Insula IX and the Silchester Baths.

Over the coming months, the Society expects to be using the IADB to record the work at Blounts Court which revealed the Roman wall, the 16th to 18th century barn and the Georgian wall and gardens. The main objective of this work is to tidy up the way that the Society records, interprets and reports finds by linking the find records to the context records.

The Society will also be using the IADB on the Unlocking Old Windsor project (see below), so if you would like to gain experience in this work come and join us.

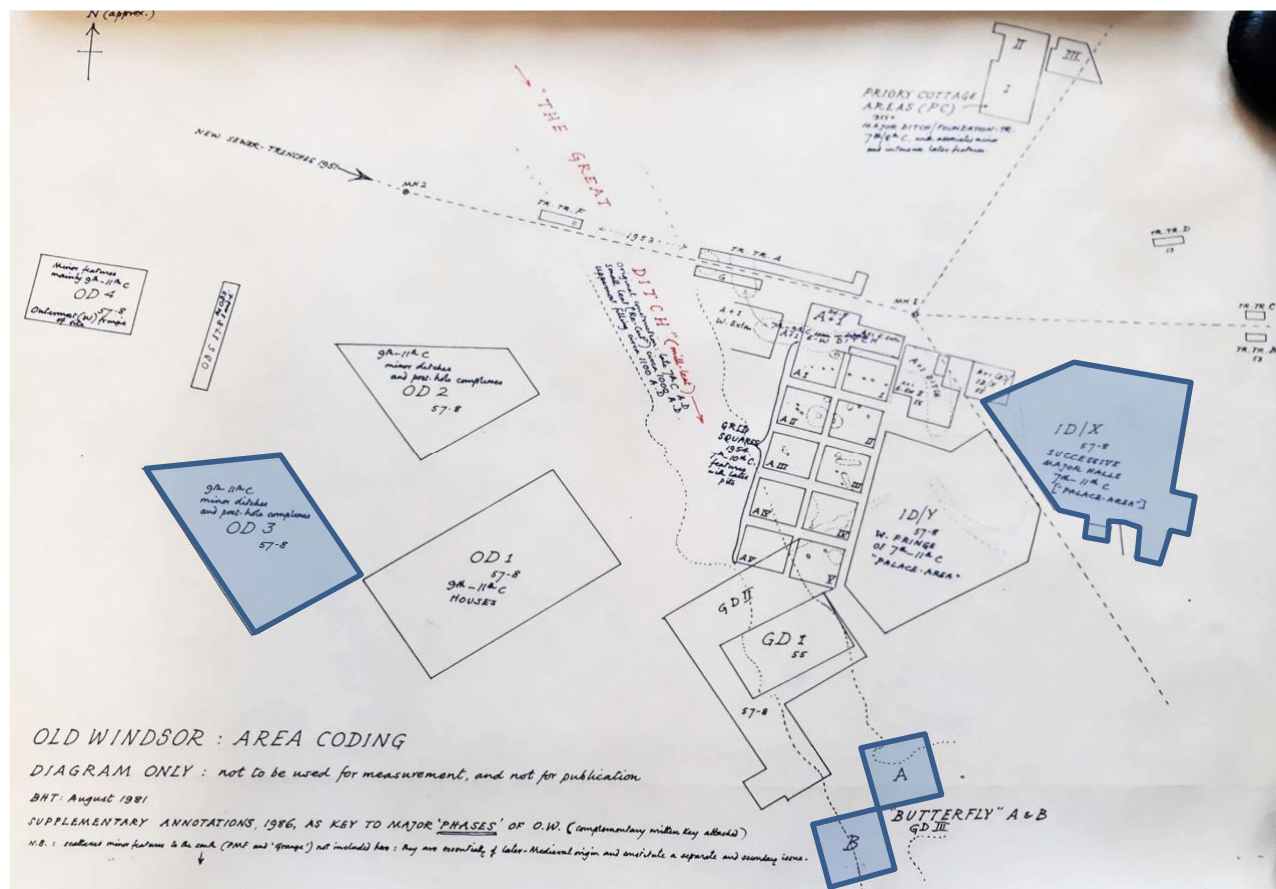
Andrew Hutt

Unlocking Old Windsor; a new opportunity for BAS members

In the late 1950s Brian Hope-Taylor carried out excavations in Old Windsor to investigate the possible site of a Saxon Royal palace which had preceded the Norman castle in Windsor a mile or two upstream. The excavations were not reported at the time and have not been properly reported since then, a task made more difficult by the separation of the finds in Reading Museum (RM) and the documentary records with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in Edinburgh. Members may remember weighing and counting finds in the Reading Museum store in 2018 (over 38,000 pottery sherds were recorded) as a prelude to setting up a project to complete the work for a site that is deemed to be of national importance as it is a Scheduled Monument. The project, driven by Gabor Thomas, of the University of Reading, and Roland Smith, of Wiltshire Council, has now been granted funding by Historic England.

The first stages of the project are to digitise the plans, sections, notebooks, photographs etc., held in Edinburgh, and to digitise the documents held by Reading Museum, which include the Context List, a number of finds reports and the complete primary photographic record of the 1950s excavation, although only selected negatives will be scanned. Once this stage is complete and the archive available online a dedicated researcher will be able to undertake stratigraphic analysis on a sample of the eleven major trenches. No doubt those who worked on the finds in 2018 will remember GD1/GD11, the Great Ditch, which is one of the three trenches selected for study (see below). At the same time a finds expert will work on the finds from the same targeted trenches.

BAS was closely involved in the project proposal through offering volunteer input in the early stages and community outreach later on. Note that this is all post-excitation activity, and our participation will enable BAS itself to improve its own post-ex reporting on future BAS projects.



Hope-Taylor's Trench Plan Showing trenches ID/X, GDI and OD3 proposed for assessment. Licensed Copyright content from www.historicscotland.scot. Used with permission.

As members will have guessed, volunteers will initially be working on the digitisation of the Reading Museum materials using its scanners in the store, which is located on the same site as we used before. I expect this to be a reasonably straight forward task - training will be given and RM staff will be present to help with any problems. It is difficult to estimate how long the exercise will take as access to the store research room is in demand, but I hope we will be able to arrange one or two dedicated days a week. As there are just two scanners available there will usually be two volunteers involved, though it will also be possible for someone to work with a buddy during familiarisation with the software.

Once the Context List has been digitised, the information it holds must be transferred to an Excel spread sheet, and this can be done at home in volunteer's own time. As the project progresses there will be other opportunities to help with the recording and interpretation, and towards the end we will be looking for help with disseminating the results to local and Berkshire communities.

If you are interested in taking part in this project or would just like to know a bit more about it, then please contact me. The RM work is not expected to start until the new year, but I would like names before then, so please volunteer even if you are not sure at this stage, and if you are not sure but interested in the archaeology of Old Windsor, then I would encourage you to pair up with somebody who is happy using the IT applications so that together you can become confident in their use and help to further progress on this important project.

Anne Harrison
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 0118 978 5520

The BAS Outreach Group

There have been meetings of the BAS Outreach group in September and October 2022. The main focus of these meetings has been to establish a method for initiating outreach projects based on the work of Nigel Spencer in Arborfield and Simon Caines in Piddington.

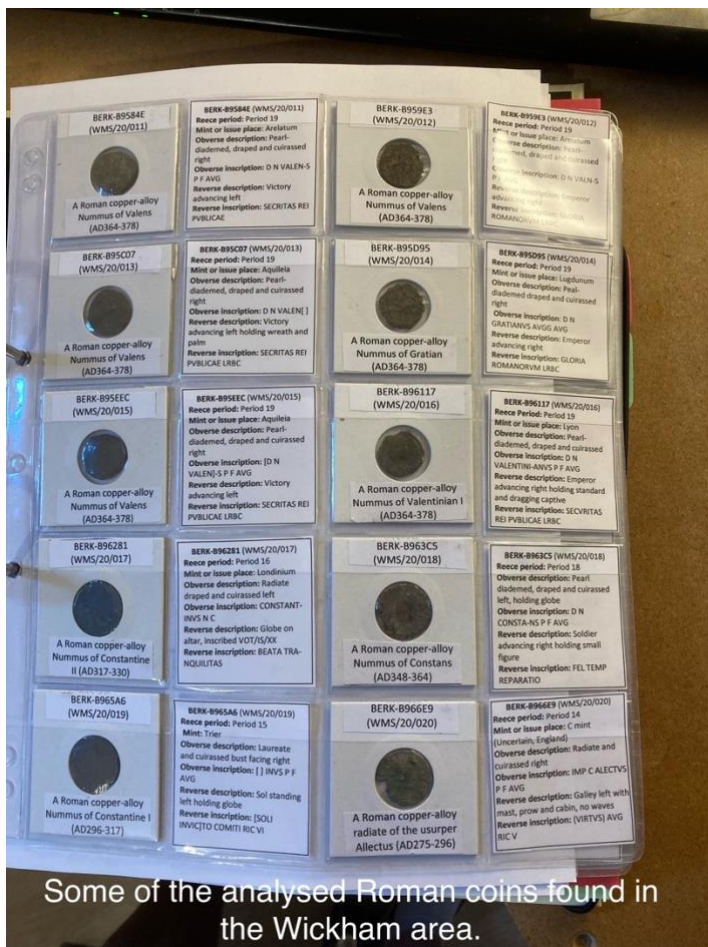
We are now in a position where the Society has an approach to promoting a sense of place to people living in the towns and parishes of Berkshire. Furthermore, we are starting to develop an inventory of towns and parishes so we firstly understand what is currently happening to promote a sense of place and secondly the contribution that the Society could make to either start such as effort or add to the existing efforts.

Needless to say, taking this forward needs your help so if you want to give your fellow parishioners or townsfolk a sense of place, call me.

Andrew Hutt

What did the Romans do for Wickham?

BAS was invited to give a lecture presented by Keith Abbott to the residents of Wickham on 10th November 2022 both to raise funds for 'The Friends of Wickham Church', and to update local residents on the research and fieldwork that BAS has been undertaking around Wickham over the past couple of years. BAS has undertaken three projects in the area in 2021/22



Some of the analysed Roman coins found in the Wickham area.

at the Wormstall Estate, on Radley Farm and on the Sutton Estate, with a fourth project analysing the assemblage of Roman coins found in and around the village still ongoing. The lecture was held in the beautiful 10th century AD St Swithun's church close to the Ermin Street Roman Road and was attended by over 65 people.

The current HER records the village of Wickham as having been the site of a Romano-British domestic dwelling or low status farmstead located on Church Hill from the late-1st century AD through to the end of the 3rd century AD, and locates the intersection of the Roman Road to Bath with Ermin Street as having been approximately 1.5km to its south-east.

However, the research and fieldwork carried out by BAS members to date suggests a more prominent role of Roman Wickham, with the intersection of the road to Bath (Margary 53) and Ermin Street (Margary 41) now thought to be located close to the centre of the present-day village. The assemblage of Roman coins concurs with Roman Wickham as having been occupied from the late 1st century AD, but suggests that occupation extended through to the end of the Roman Period with a significant peak in economic activity during the late 4th century AD. Together this suggests that the domestic dwelling/farmstead previously excavated on Church Hill was probably associated with a larger settlement close by that flourished during the late-4th century AD.

Further fieldwork and research are now underway in Wickham with the help of some of the residents who attended the lecture, and further phases of fieldwork are being planned for 2023 with the continued support and engagement with local residents, landowners, and BAS members.

Keith Abbott

Obituary – Edna Goodburn 1925-2022

Edna was born and grew up in West London. She was evacuated to Newbury during World War II. Later she went to teacher training college in Cardiff where her passion for archaeology first developed. In 1949 she married her teenage sweetheart, Ray. They had two daughters, Elizabeth, and Mary. The family moved to Bracknell in 1958 due to Ray's work. Edna found work as a teacher, eventually becoming the head of Swinley County Primary School, South Ascot, a role she held for many years before retiring in 1986. Liz and Mary fondly remember family holidays in France, Italy, and Yugoslavia where Edna was always very keen to visit as many local archaeological sites as possible.

Mark Harvey, who became a good friend, remembers first meeting Edna in the mid 1970s as a co-passenger on archaeological observational flights arranged by Chris Stanley, also a BAS member, flying out of Denham airfield in their Cessna 152 piloted by Wing Co (ret'd) Leslie Banks. These covered Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Hampshire including the Isle of Wight and even the barge off Portsmouth excavating the Mary Rose. This led to a book, 'The Thames from the Air', authored by Leslie Banks and in which Edna was credited.

Edna was a member of the Anglo-Jordanian Society. In retirement she worked for Jasmine Tours leading many trips from the UK to the Middle East. Griselda warmly remembers one such trip to Syria and Jordan where, apparently, Edna knew someone everywhere they went.

Along with former BAS member and Curator of Reading Museum the late Leslie Cram, Edna was one of the founders of the Berkshire Outdoor Education Trust which gives grants to assist Berkshire schoolchildren to participate in outdoor education mainly at Rhos y Gwaliau Outdoor Education Centre in North Wales. She remained a trustee for many years.

More recently within BAS Edna is remembered for instigating the much-loved spring tours. During the 1990s and early 2000s she arranged tours to places such as Caerleon, Durham, the Isle of Wight, Yorkshire, the Ironbridge Gorge, Skipton, and finally to Cirencester in 2003, the later trips being co-organised with the late Leslie Cram.

Edna also served on the BAS Council for many years and continued to attend meetings, always in her trademark hat, until she was too frail to do so. She will be remembered fondly and with thanks by all those who knew her.

Julie Worsfold with thanks to Liz Goodburn, Mark Harvey, Mary Pike, and Griselda Truscott Wicks



Photo with thanks to Liz Goodburn and Mary Pike

Do you take notes at meetings?

This might sound like a really strange question. We all enjoy reading the reviews of the Society's lectures, Day Schools and visits either in the newsletter or online, especially when we have not been able to attend them. These reviews are written by a small group of members of the Society. Sadly, one of these members is moving away. Consequently, the Society is now looking for more members who are willing to take notes during lectures and write them up into a review to be published through the usual channels.

If you are interested in making a contribution to the Society in this way, please contact me via newsletter@berksarch.co.uk.

The more members this group has the less frequently you will be requested to do this!

Thank you,

Julie Worsfold

Talks by other groups

Berkshire Archaeological Research Group (BARG)

BARG holds quarterly evening meetings in person at The Cornerstone, Norreys Ave, Wokingham RG40 1UE. £3 fee for non-members. None are listed at the time of writing, but if interested please keep an eye on: <http://www.barg-online.org>

Maidenhead Archaeological and Historical Society (MAHS)

Talks are usually on the last Wednesday in the month on Zoom - 7.50pm for start at 8pm.

£3 fee for non-members. For the list of forthcoming talks and to book:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/maidenhead-archaeological-and-historical-society>

For more information please email: paul@c21networks.co.uk

Marlow Archaeology Group (MAG)

Talks are once a month on varying Thursdays and start at 8pm. For more information and to book those on Zoom: <https://www.marlowarch.co.uk>

South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group (SOAG)

Talks run from September to April (except December) on the fourth Thursday in the month starting at 7.30pm and are either in-person at **Sonning Common Village Hall or on Zoom**. Talks are open to all although donations at the door are appreciated. For more information:

<http://www.soagarch.org.uk/events.html>

West Berkshire Museum

Offers talks and courses. Information at:

https://booking.westberks.gov.uk/heritage_events.html#!?location=West%20Berkshire%20Museum

It is also possible to sign up for event information on this page.

Input to the quarterly newsletter and monthly e-newsheet

My thanks to all the contributors to this newsletter and to Anne Harrison for proof-reading.

If you have an archaeological story, you feel would interest the Society, please email it to Tim Lloyd, who produces 'What's On', the society's monthly e-newsheet, at webmaster@berksarch.co.uk and to me at newsletter@berksarch.co.uk by the 27th of the month.

Please submit your text and images separately as this makes them much easier for Tim and me to handle than when the images are embedded in the text.

The copy date for the next edition of this publication, the society's quarterly newsletter is Monday, 27th February 2023.

Thank you,

Julie Worsfold

BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Patron: Her Late Majesty The Queen

President: Professor Michael Fulford
CBE FBA FSA

The Society was founded in 1871 and for over 150 years has encouraged and supported archaeological activities in Berkshire.

Everybody with an interest in archaeology is welcome to attend our meetings and join the Society. It does not matter whether your interest in archaeology is newly found or long standing, the Society offers activities from regular lectures, an annual Day School (conference) and visits to excavations and research.

All members receive a monthly e-news sheet with news of the Society's events and other events in Berkshire, this quarterly newsletter and a free copy of The Berkshire Archaeological Journal published by the Society.

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Treasurer: Anne Harrison
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For more contacts and more information about the Society visit:
www.berksarch.co.uk



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