



ARCHAEOLOGY

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Winter 2007

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ARCHAEOLOGY IN BERKSHIRE ANNUAL DAY SCHOOL 1 MARCH 2008

After the huge success of the last two day schools the next is to be held on the west side of the county. This time the venue is Saint Nicolas Church Hall, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5HG from 10.00 a.m. Admission is £10 per person (no concessions) and you pay at the door!

PROGRAMME

10.00 – 10.05	Welcome by the Chairman (Dr. Andrew Hutt, Berkshire Archaeological Society).
10.05 – 10.30	Cultural heritage at AWE Burghfield (Andrew Holmes, Atkins)
10.30 – 11.00	Silchester: the town life project 2007 (Professor M. Fulford, The University of Reading).
11.00 – 11.30	COFFEE
11.30 – 12.00	Archaeology in West Berkshire 2007 (Duncan Coe, West Berkshire Heritage Service).
12.00 – 12.30	From the Mesolithic to Roman ovens at Kintbury (Roy Entwistle, Berkshire Archaeological Services).
12.30 – 12.50	Excavation at Shaw House, Newbury (Julian Munby, Oxford Archaeology).
12.50 – 2.00	LUNCH
2.00 – 2.30	Archaeological investigations at Rag Hill Farm Quarry, Aldermaston (Andy Manning, Wessex Archaeology).
2.30 – 3.00	The Peasemore Landscape Project (Steve Clark, Berkshire Archaeology Research Group).
3.00 – 3.30	TEA
3.30 – 4.00	Iron Age settlements and communities in Berkshire (Dr Andrew Hutt, Berkshire Archaeological Society).
4.00 – 4.30	Overview: Archaeology in East Berkshire 2007 (Berkshire Archaeology).
4.30 – 4.35	Chairman concludes (Dr Andrew Hutt, Berkshire Archaeological Society).

Trevor Coombs

Annual General Meeting

The Society's Annual Meeting took place on Saturday 15th September 2007. The business of the meeting is best summarised as being: a) Andrew Hutt, Chairman, gave a brief summary of the work of the society over the year starting March 2006 and thanked everybody who had contributed to running of the Society; b) the accounts for 2006/7 were approved; c) Bob Bywater-Lees retired as Treasurer of the Society and the Society was pleased to give him a vote of thanks; d) the Council for 2007/8 was elected; and, e) John Butler was appointed as independent examiner of the accounts for 2007/8.

At the close of the AGM, the Society has: Andrew Hutt as Chairman, no secretary, Catherine Petts as Treasurer, Trevor Coombs and Barrie Randall as Trustees, and Edna Goodburn, Jo Graham, Anne Harrison, Luke Over, Griselda Truscott-Wicks and Julie Worsfold as Council members.

Should anybody be prepared to take on some or all of the responsibilities of Honorary Secretary then please contact Andrew Hutt (see contact details on the last page of this newsletter).

Andrew Hutt

Spring Tour 2008

There are only 1 or 2 single rooms and still some other places left on the above which will take place from Friday 18th to Monday 21st April and will be to South Wales. The trip will include visits to prehistoric burial sites and landscapes, an Iron Age Hillfort, a Bishop's Palace, abbeys, a church, a Roman Town, castles and two industrial archaeology sites. If you are interested and have not yet reserved your place please contact Barrie Randall on 0118 983 2607 or at banda.burghfield@hotmail.com.

BERKSHIRE

Meetings

The AGM was followed by a talk by Professor Tom James on Clarendon Palace outside Salisbury. He explained how archaeological events during the 20th century showed that Clarendon was used as a deer park from the 13th to the 15th centuries and that King John and his successors developed a large and well appointed palace which fell into disuse in the late Middle Ages. The most recent work by Professor James reworked the spoil heaps of previous excavations to find tiles and other materials which demonstrate that this was an elite and sumptuous establishment; his team also cleared scrub and debris from the site to reveal the nature and use of the extant buildings.

All in all, this was a most interesting talk which has motivated several of us to consider organising a Society visit next year.

Andrew Hutt

Our October meeting had to be cancelled at very short notice due to a booking error. Members of the Council tried to contact all regular attendees of meetings. Apologies to anyone affected by this.

At our November meeting Dr Zena Kamash of Oxford University spoke about the Romano-British Temple Complex at Frilford/Marcham. The site is to the west of Abingdon, just off the A338.

The earliest excavations on the site were made in the late 19th and early 20th centuries on late Roman and Saxon cemeteries. In 1937-8 Bradford and Goodchild excavated in the garden of the Noah's Ark Inn. They found a classic Roman-Celtic temple and parts of the associated pathway. To the south of the temple they found a circular building known as a 'rotunda'. This had been constructed on top of a curvilinear ditch which had been cut in the Iron Age. As it is difficult to identify late Iron Age activity in the Upper Thames Valley it is difficult to prove continuity between the sites, but even after a break of time this Iron Age structure would still have been visible in the landscape. Bradford and Goodchild also found Iron Age roundhouses, pits and ditches.

In 1976 aerial photography conducted during a crop-spraying trip revealed a circular structure, now known to be a 'semi-amphitheatre', in a paleochannel in the field to the east of the garden of the Noah's Ark Inn. In the 1980s Richard Hingley

conducted small scale excavations here. He dug a trench through the banks, exposing the stone arena walls and another at the southern cardinal point exposing a rectangular stone structure. Through field walking and other keyhole excavations he identified other sites within the complex.

Further excavations have revealed a large pit with burnt animal bones. Such large pits associated with temple complexes were commonly used for items offered to the Gods. It is thought they were buried separately since as offerings they had become other worldly and may have been perceived to have wielded undue power as a result. The siting of the finds suggests limited movement inside the temenos by the pathway.

The large number of finds outside the temenos indicates lots of activity there. Samian Ware and glass vessels indicate signs of feasting. There are also signs of metal working, but it is thought this was for the production of temple money for offering to the gods rather than real money.

On route to the 'semi-amphitheatre' a building was unexpectedly discovered. This is thought to be a linking building indicating which way people were supposed to move through the temple complex. This supports both the argument that structures were specifically placed in a landscape for continuity and Dr Kamash's theory that the route to the semi-amphitheatre was from the south and not east/west, although the original entrance was in the west.

The interior of the 'semi-amphitheatre' is about 40 metres in diameter. Its banks have been constructed from spoil from the further excavation of a natural hollow. From radio carbon dating its wooden stakes have been shown to be broadly Roman.

So what is the 'semi-amphitheatre'? Is it an amphitheatre? Well it is oval not round and significantly its banks do not go all the way round. There are other Roman structures like this at Grand, Lutece (Paris) and Lillebonne, in Northern Gaul and Verulamium I & II in Britain. Interestingly these are all associated with a temple complex.

There is still much to do at this interesting site. Excavations, which it is possible to join, are conducted during July. Individual and group visits are welcome. There is also a site open day. More information is available at: www.arch.ox.ac.uk/research/research_projects/marcham

The Editor

Roman Berkshire Project

On 7th November, 8 of us met at RISC to start the Roman Berkshire Project. As this was the first meeting, we confirmed that the objective of the project was to re-interpret the archaeology of Roman Berkshire for the public and to present our findings in a book, a public exhibition and pages on a web site. The main outcome of the meeting was that we agreed to work in pairs to review Roman settlements and villas, industrial sites, ritual sites and roads.

The next meeting is on 5th December in Conference room 2, RISC, 35-39 London St, Reading RG1 4PS starting at 7:45pm.

It will be devoted to discussing the chronology of Roman Britain and Roman sites in and around Berkshire.

Dates for the New Year are: Wednesday 2nd January 2008, Wednesday 6th February 2008 and Wednesday 5th March 2008. If this interests you; please join us but contact me first because accommodation is limited in the meeting room we are currently hiring.

Andrew Hutt

Digitising the Berkshire Archaeological Journal

One of results of our library leaving the Department of Continuing Education is that Trevor Coombs, Sylvia Chumbley and I are digitising the back copies of the Berkshire Archaeological Journal in order to make them available on the Internet. This work has revealed all sorts of interesting articles. In addition to excavation reports of sites such as Reading Abbey, the Iron Age hillfort at Blewburton Hill and the Roman temple at Weycock Hill, there are a large number of articles on church and vernacular architecture, and the social history of Berkshire.

There are some 80 volumes of the journal and, to date, we have scanned 33% of them and expect to have completed all those published since 1945 by the end of the year. The Archaeological data Service in York will be making them available on their system. We have currently reached the point where they have created an interface to the new system and we are evaluating it. If you would like to have a look at this interface and maybe download an article then email me for the details of the site username and password.

There are still more than 40 volumes of the journal to scan so if you have a computer and scanner and would like to help please contact me.

Andrew Hutt

Bond Memorial Lecture

Tim Tatton-Brown, gave this year's lecture on Windsor Castle before 1348. His talk focussed on the origins of the castle and the area of the lower ward.

So why is Windsor Castle situated on an isolated chalk mound in the flood plain of the Thames? In late Anglo-Saxon times Old Windsor was frequented by members of the royal family for pleasure, specifically in the form of hunting in Windsor Great Forest. Excavations of Old Windsor by Maurice Bond in the 1960s revealed a late Anglo-Saxon royal palace, watermills and an urban centre. It was then the third most important town in Berkshire, but whilst the site was raised up it was still often flooded by the Thames.

In 1070 as the Normans secured their hold on England a mot and bailey castle was erected on the isolated chalk mound a little upstream from Old Windsor. The bailey was part of the middle ward. William I, William II and Henry I all spent the major holidays at Old Windsor, but for Christmas 1110 Henry I moved to the new Windsor Castle. The new residence around the courtyard was developed for him. This was the beginning of Windsor Castle as a royal residence. With the exception of Lambeth Palace, built at the end of the 11th century and just a bit older, no other residence in the UK has been in continuous occupation for so long.

There is evidence of the building of massive stone walls in the 1170s during Henry II's reign. Then during Henry III's long reign in the 13th century there was more building work including a chapel and the Great North-West of Curfew Tower. This is only one of three sally hall systems in the UK; the others are at Dover and Winchester. In 1965 a re-building programme uncovered a chimney and a scissor brace roof both originals dating from this time.

Then in 1295-6 fire gutted the royal lodgings in the north-east corner of the lower ward and for some time this was no longer a royal residence.

One of the mysteries of the castle is the location of the great hall in the lower ward. This would have been a public hall used to feed the large numbers of people in the castle at this time. Excavations for Time Team's 'Big Royal Dig' did not find it in its anticipated location. The Buttery and Pantry are under the current cloisters and the kitchen is under the nave of St George's Chapel.

The Editor

South East Historic Environment Forum

In early November, I attended a meeting of the South East Historic Environment Forum at Shaw House in Newbury.

The Forum exists to represent all those concerned with the historic environment in the South East and embraces some 19 organisations from across the region with a wide range of interests including archaeology, historic gardens and buildings, libraries and archives. Talks during the meeting covered a range of topics including the Shaw House restoration project, the restoration of historic gardens and the participation of schools in south east museums.

By far the most significant talk was a presentation, by Roger Bowdler, Head of Heritage Protection, South Territory, English Heritage, entitled *Heritage Protection for the 21st Century*. He outlined proposals, to be enacted by Parliament in around 2010, to improve heritage protection by updating rules governing the management of historic buildings and archaeological sites and requiring each local authority to manage a register of historic buildings and sites which will be made available to the public via the internet. These registers will replace the existing sites and monument records and other registers kept by local authorities and English Heritage.

This meeting was also an opportunity to discuss the archaeology and historic buildings in Berkshire and the South East with elected councillors, heritage professionals and representatives from voluntary sector organisations from across the region.

Andrew Hutt

Berkshire Archaeological Research Library

On 30th August 2007, Andrew Hutt, Trevor Coombs, Colin Hennell and Sylvia Chumbley cleared the Society's library in the Department of Continuing Education, threw the remaining unused boxes into a skip, swept the floor and left.

As a result I have in my garage boxes of books which are gradually being sold and journals which are being donated to academic organisations.

During this final clearout we found many interesting items, for example the reports on the earliest excavations at Silchester, which I expect to put into library boxes in the coming months, so if you have space for a library box please contact me.

Andrew Hutt

ADULT EDUCATION – PART-TIME COURSES SPRING TERM, 2008

READING UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

Morning Courses

Washing and waste: the archaeology of hygiene.

Hoplites and heroes: ancient Greek warfare.

Afternoon Courses

Roman Britain.

Identifying artefacts from the last 10,000 years.

Evening Courses

Berkshire's ancestors: tracing your community through time.

From wine docket to 'women's lib': Ancient Egypt through its writings.

The Vikings and their past.

An introduction to forensic archaeology.

Dayschools

Hittite and Neo-Hittite Anatolia: an introduction.

Bronze Age barrows in West Berkshire.

Practical Archaeology

Geology and topography: keeping your feet dry and living on the hill.

Exploring a Mesolithic landscape: the geology of the Marlborough Downs.

Details from: The School of Continuing Education, University of Reading, London Road, Reading, RG1 5AQ. Tel: 0118 378 8347. E-mail: continuing-education@reading.ac.uk

Web site: www.reading.ac.uk/conted

OXFORD UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Morning Courses

A new look at the Dark Ages.

Prehistoric art.

The making of the English urban landscape.

The mythology of Herakles.

Afternoon Courses

Soldiers, the army and frontiers in Roman Britain.

Evening Courses

Prehistory of the Upper Thames Valley.

The Neanderthals: an archaeological perspective.

Day and Weekend Schools

Desertion and decline in medieval and later towns.

Human skeletal studies in British Archaeology – An introduction.

Megalithic monuments from Orkney to Brittany.

Pompeii: excavations past and present.

Sacred landscapes of Crete.

Sir John Evans (1823-1908) and the beginnings of prehistory.

Online

Exploring Roman Britain.

Origins of human behaviour.

Ritual and religion in prehistory.

Details from: OUDCE, 1, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JA. Tel: 01865 270360; Fax: 01865 270309 email: enquiries@conted.ox.ac.uk Web site: www.conted.ox.ac.uk

LOUDCE – Outside Oxford

Archaeology: The Chilterns. (Venue: Stokenchurch Adult Learning Centre).

Elementary Ancient Greek. (Venue: Methodist Church Hall, Allenby Road, Maidenhead SL6 5BQ)

Greek Myth (Venue: United Reformed Church, West St, Maidenhead SL6 1RJ)

People of Roman Britain. (Venue: Waingels Copse Adult Centre, Denmark

Avenue, Woodley, Reading). **Enrolments:** College Information Centre, Bracknell &

Wokingham College, Church Road, Bracknell, RG12 1DJ. Tel: 0845 330 3343.

Web site: www.bracknell.ac.uk

BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Patron: H.M. THE QUEEN

President: Professor

Michael Fulford FBA FSA

The Society was founded in 1871 and for over 100 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 new found or long standing, the Society offers activities from regular lectures and outings to opportunities for fieldwork and excavation.

All members receive a regular newsletter, full of news about events in Berkshire. The Berkshire Archaeological Journal is also free to members.

Officers of the Society

Chairman: Andrew Hutt

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Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Catherine Petts

Programme Organiser:

Vacant

Day School Organiser:

Trevor Coombs

Excursion Organiser:

Barry Randall

Newsletter Editor:

Julie Worsfold

Librarian: Andrew Hutt

For more information about the Society and membership details contact the Chairman: Andrew Hutt on 0118 973 2882.

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