



# ARCHAEOLOGY

The Newsletter of the Berkshire Archaeological Society

Winter 2008

Vol 10, No 4

## ARCHAEOLOGY IN BERKSHIRE ANNUAL DAY SCHOOL 7<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2009

After the huge success of the recent day schools the next is to be held on the east side of the county. This time the venue is The Cornerstone Hall, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1UE 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 | Reading Abbey (Fiona MacDonald, Berkshire Archaeology)                                                                   |
| 10.30 – 11.00 | Silchester: the town life project 2008 (Professor M. Fulford, The University of Reading).                                |
| 11.00 – 11.30 | COFFEE                                                                                                                   |
| 11.30 – 12.00 | The Silchester Mapping Project (Dr. John Creighton, The University of Reading).                                          |
| 12.00 – 12.35 | An early Neolithic House and its landscape context: Kingsmead Quarry, Horton (Dr. Alistair Barclay, Wessex Archaeology). |
| 12.35 – 1.00  | Romano-British Frilford (Professor Gary Lock, Oxford Institute of Archaeology).                                          |
| 1.00 – 2.00   | LUNCH                                                                                                                    |
| 2.00 – 2.25   | Archaeology in West Berkshire 2008 (Duncan Coe, West Berkshire Heritage Service).                                        |
| 2.25 – 3.00   | Archaeological investigation at Caversham Court (Charlotte Matthews, Wessex Archaeology).                                |
| 3.00 – 3.30   | TEA                                                                                                                      |
| 3.30 – 4.00   | The Kennet Centre, Newbury cinema site (Damien de Rosa, Wessex Archaeology).                                             |
| 4.00 – 4.30   | Archaeology at Jennett's Park (Edward Biddulph, Oxford Archaeology).                                                     |
| 4.30 – 4.35   | Chairman concludes (Dr Andrew Hutt, Berkshire Archaeological Society).                                                   |

## Visit to Shaw House Newbury is re-organised to 13<sup>th</sup> December 2008

Our programme shows that on the 6<sup>th</sup> December we were going to visit Shaw House. Unfortunately, Newbury Council have told me that they cannot accommodate us on that day so **the visit Shaw House will take place on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2008 starting at 14:00.** – meet inside the house after 13:45.

According to West Berkshire Council the rooms in the house we are going to visit are fully accessible to wheel chair users.

The full postal address of Shaw House is Church Road, Newbury RG14. If you are travelling by car, leave the M4 at Junction 13 and drive down the A339 to Newbury. At the junction with the A4, turn left into Shaw Hill and then first left into Church Road, the house is on your right, drive through the imposing gates in front of the house and park.

The entrance to the house is round the back on the north side.

Please book your place on this visit by phoning me on 0118-973-2882 or sending me an email at [andrew\\_hutt@talktalk.net](mailto:andrew_hutt@talktalk.net) by Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

Should you need to contact me on the day please call my mobile: 07973-155-101

Andrew Hutt

## The Spring Tour 2009

Enclosed with this newsletter is the prospectus for the Spring Tour 2009 to North Wales to a set of sites which I am sure you will find interesting. Unfortunately, this is slightly later than usual so please could you pay your deposits as soon as possible and make final payments by 14<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

I look forward to seeing you on the tour.

Barrie Randall

BERKSHIRE

## Meetings

After our A.G.M. in September Andrew Hutt and Trevor Coombs spoke about some of their recent work.

Andrew spoke about the Blewburton Hill Geophysics Survey. Blewburton Hill is an Iron Age hill fort protected by English Heritage. The site is known to have had 3 phases of construction; palisade; box rampart; dump rampart. For the purposes of the survey the site was divided into 20 metre squares on an east-west alignment and readings were taken every 25 centimetres.

Plough lines were discovered. The survey also revealed a circular feature, thought to be a round house, in the south-west corner of the survey area. This was on an alignment across the ridge at the top of the hill. A structure with 2 wings on a north-east, south-west alignment was revealed. Another structure was also revealed on the fort, although the latter only showed up on the gradiometer, not on the resistivity. It is thought to be a ditch. These results have been discussed with Paul Smith, the Oxfordshire County Archaeologist. Andrew advised that he has more survey information. If anyone is interested please contact him.

Trevor spoke about the 150 year search for the 25 mile long Roman road between the north gate at Silchester and Dorchester-on-Thames, possibly being routed via Pangbourne, Streetly and Upper Basildon.

In 1836, some members of Sandhurst Military College surveyed and took some trigonometric readings. In 1837 investigations centred on Ufton Nervet church, where the Roman road was believed to run to the west of the main door. But unfortunately the main door had previously been moved from the west to the south. In 1961, Manning explored Iron Age activity by the Kennet Canal on the A4 towards Theale. Aerial photographs showed buildings which appeared to be Roman and earlier. The 1973 BAJ refers to an excavation which revealed a one deep cobble road with ditches on either side, but this only went for 200 metres. Trevor and Janet Sharp have reviewed aerial photos and found traces of the Roman road on Margery's alignment north of the Kennet. Isambard Kingdom Brunel found Roman skeletons on the top of Shooters Hill, Pangbourne. There has also been a positive showing in the vicinity of Streetly Garage where 2 small hobnails were discovered. As these were small they could have been used in summer footwear.

At our October meeting Katie Meheux spoke about burials on the Iron Age/Roman boundary. Traditional interpretations focus on the Romanisation of the Ancient Britons through the Roman military. There is a dense network of Roman forts across England and Wales, but not much evidence of them in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Hampshire and none in the central Thames Valley. Roads are the most outstanding feature. This suggests a lack of military activity and that the Atrebates agreed to a negotiated peace.

This being the case burial offers a key way to patch the evidence of how the transition from the Iron Age to the Roman period occurred in this area. However, burial data is problematic in as much as it is not deemed to be representative of the population in general, only 5% in the Iron Age. To date no large cemeteries from either period have been discovered. The largest known Iron Age cemetery at Mildenhall, Berkshire contains 8 burials. Findings indicate that cremations tended to be buried together in groups of 2 or 3. We also know very little about the cemeteries of large towns, e.g. Silchester and Dorchester.

Much of the burial data comes from Antiquarian reports, but this is vulnerable to mis-interpretation and mis-dating especially with cremations. Iron Age and Saxon material, particularly weapons, were very confusing to the Antiquarians.

Cemeteries emerge in the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., and in Berkshire cremation is well established by the middle of the same century. Burials are predominantly to the south, north and west of our area, possibly indicating ethnic markers or personal preference. Burial also seems to have been for people of status with a passion for imported Roman goods.

Water was important in the Iron Age for ritualistic purposes. Iron Age artefacts and human bones have been discovered in Staines, Cholsey and Datchet. Coins have been discovered at the confluence of the Kennet and the Thames. Evidence of cremations has been discovered next to the Thames at Cookham and Padworth. However, gravel working and changes in the Thames have possibly destroyed more evidence. Silchester was originally the site of a cemetery in the mid-Iron Age. There could have been a status barrow or a barrow field there. Excavation revealed a later high status burial in the temple complex. This is one of the largest in Britain and could indicate the burial of a native ruler such as Cogidubnus. However, recently a warrior burial has been discovered near Bognor Regis and dated 40-60 A.D. This is late for a warrior burial, but if correct it puts a different complexion on Cogidubnus.

At our November meeting Richard Massey spoke to us about 'The Archaeology of the Atrebatian Kingdoms: A Social Geography of the Late Iron Age'. What we know about Iron Age tribes comes from what the Romans have told us, not from the archaeological evidence. A dedication to Hercules by the Saegontiaci tribe was uncovered at Silchester by an Antiquarian in 1744. This tribe was mentioned by Caesar but it, along with other tribes identified by him, has vanished from the records.

Due to the enormity of the data set Richard's research and analysis has been done on the chalk lands of Hampshire using aerial photography, pottery classification, field walking and coin distributions. The latter particularly shows the positioning of tribes and their areas of influence, clear evidence of economic and social activity.

The Late Iron Age was a period of change. Larger enclosures such as banjo enclosures were begun and other enclosures collected around them. Banjo enclosures were usually on high ground, not in the valleys and were usually on a north-east – south-west alignment which is solstitial. Multiple ditch boundaries also date from this period. There are many unanswered questions relating to these enclosures and multiple ditch boundaries. What was their purpose? Were they used to hold stock? Or were they social displays of power or prestige or ownership? It is important to remember that the past also has a past. Some aerial photos, such as that of Rowbury Farm, Fullerton, have revealed settlements which had links with Bronze Age barrows. This is evidence of re-inhabiting ancient settlements and staking a claim to ancestral lands.

Flinty hand-made pottery is more Middle Iron Age in date, whereas pottery made using a wheel is Late Iron Age. There is no uniform material culture in pottery. It varies from area to area. Consequentially different forms of pottery are evidential for social identity. The sand tempered wares have complemented other evidence of settlements and social groupings around Basingstoke, Andover, and the heads of rivers Itchen and Test.

After the Roman invasion there is some evidence of continuity of use of Iron Age sites. Aerial photographs have revealed Roman villas by banjo enclosures. However, about 55% of the Iron Age sites in the chalk lands of Hampshire had been abandoned by about A.D. 70. Those being further distant from Roman roads and towns were those which were deserted, showing the economic and social effects of the Roman invasion.

**The Editor**

## Annual General Meeting

The Society's Annual Meeting took place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2008. 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 2007 and thanked everybody who had contributed to running of the Society; b) the accounts for 2007/8 were reviewed but not approved because of a difference in the balances; it was agreed that the corrected would be approved at the November meeting; c) Luke Over retired from the Council and the Society was pleased to give him a vote of thanks; d) the Council for 2008/9 was elected; and, e) John Butler was appointed as independent examiner of the accounts for 2008/9.

At the close of the AGM, the Society has: Andrew Hutt as Chairman, Trevor Coombs as Secretary, Catherine Petts as Treasurer, Barrie Randall as a Trustee, and John Chapman, Hugh Davies, Edna Goodburn, Jo Graham, Anne Harrison, Griselda Truscott-Wicks and Julie Worsfold as Council members.

**Andrew Hutt**

## Berkshire Historic Environment Forum

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November some 40 people from across Berkshire met at The Cornerstone, Wokingham for the inaugural meeting of the Berkshire Historic Environment Forum. This Forum is a Berkshire-wide organisation convened in response to proposed changes in government legislation governing the recording and protection of historic assets – a term which embraces listed buildings, and scheduled monuments recorded by English Heritage, and everything which is recorded on the sites and monuments records maintained by Berkshire's Unitary Authorities.

The meeting was opened by Councillor Mrs. Pauline Helliard-Symons, Mayor of the Borough of Wokingham and attended by councillors and staff of the Unitary Authorities, town and parish councillors and representatives from local history and archaeological societies. They heard presentations from: Chris Welch, Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, on the proposed new Government legislation; Duncan Coe, Archaeological Officer, West Berkshire Council on the Council's heritage services; Trevor Ottlewski, on surveying historic buildings; and Matt Edgeworth, Leicester University, on the Wallingford Burg to Borough research project where some 40 townsfolk have been involved in the archaeological work.

During the meeting, it was agreed that the objects of the Berkshire Historic Environment Forum are: to help Local Authorities meet their responsibilities under the new legislation; to establish collaborative projects, involving councils, local history societies and archaeology groups to investigate parts of their historic environment; and to develop a series of travelling exhibitions to explain interesting aspects of Berkshire's heritage.

This meeting was organised by the Berkshire Archaeological Trust; the Society has agreed to run the Forum and to organise another meeting next year.

**Andrew Hutt**

## The Roman Berkshire Research project

The first part of this research has focused on the Client Kingdom of Cogidubnus which was founded in AD 43 and lasted until circa AD 75. Geographically it extended from Chichester and Winchester in the south to Abingdon and Dorchester-on-Thames in the north. So far we have described how it was founded and how it came to an end. The next step is to complete a description of the Early Romano-British settlements and Roman military installations in and around Berkshire dating from this period.

The next area of work is looking at how Roman villas developed from around AD 75 to AD 400; we are hoping this will give us an understanding of how the Roman economy changed over time.

In the future we are expecting to study: development in Roman technology and agricultural practice and what it was like living in Roman Berkshire.

If these subjects interest you; contact Andrew Hutt.

**Andrew Hutt**

## The Society's website

Over the last month, Sylvia Chumbley has been reorganising the Society's web site. As a result, there are now pages on the website for: the lectures, the visits and walks, the newsletter, membership applications, the spring tour, the day school, the Berkshire Historic Environment Forum, the research programme, the two libraries, the journal, the officers and an interesting set of links to other websites.

I recommend you take a look at the new-look site, the URL is at <http://www.berksarch.co.uk>. If you cannot access the Internet from home I encourage you to visit your local library and have a look at our site.

Many thanks to Sylvia for giving us this new look website.

**Andrew Hutt**

## Cliveden: the archaeology

Gary Marshall, Archaeologist for the National Trust Thames & Solent Region will give an illustrated talk on the fascinating findings from the extensive archaeological survey of the Cliveden Estate, carried out this year by Wessex Archaeology.

The talk will take place on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2008 at 8 p.m. in the Holy Trinity Parish Centre, Church Gate, Cookham Village. Tickets are £3.50 at the door (MAS members £2.50). Refreshments are included.

This event is being run by Marlow Archaeological Society (MAS). Further information is available from Joy Blake, Marandellas, High Road, Cookham, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 9HR.

## ADULT EDUCATION – PART-TIME COURSES SPRING TERM, 2009

### READING UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

#### Morning Courses

The Age of Stonehenge

#### Afternoon Courses

An introduction to the Roman Empire

#### Evening Courses

Tutankhamun in context

From the Thames Valley to the Tiber Valley: the archaeology of Roman rural society

#### Dayschools

Magic and medicine in the ancient world

#### Other courses

Environmental archaeology in action

**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](mailto:continuing-education@reading.ac.uk)

Web site: [www.reading.ac.uk/conted](http://www.reading.ac.uk/conted)

### OXFORD UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

#### Morning Courses

Stonehenge Updated

The Norman Empire

Troy – Myth and Archaeology

#### Afternoon Courses

Colonies, Cities and Towns in Roman Britain

#### Evening Courses

Human Evolution

Mesopotamia: Cradle of Civilisation

#### Day and Weekend Schools

An Introduction to Architecture for Archaeologists

Archaeology of the Holy Land: The contribution of British Scholars

Characterisation: Current Approaches

Environmental Assessment and the Cultural Heritage

From Mycenaen Palaces to Greek City States – A Dark Age Illuminated

Health & Safety for Historic Environment Professionals

Information Skills and Resources for Historic Environment Professionals

Military Archaeology: An Introduction to Current Professional Approaches and Practices

Post Excavation Assessment

Public Enquiry Workshop

Stone Tools in Archaeology - A Practical Introduction

The Great War: The archaeology of the first of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's great conflicts

Towns in Britain AD 300-700 – ideas of Late Antiquity

#### Online

Exploring Roman Britain

Ritual and Religion in Prehistory

Vikings: Raiders, Traders and Settlers

**Details from:** OUDCE, 1, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JA.

Tel: 01865 270360; Fax: 01865 270309 email: [enquiries@conted.ox.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@conted.ox.ac.uk)

Web site: [www.conted.ox.ac.uk](http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk)

### OU DCE – Outside Oxford

#### Evening Courses

Ancient Greek: Term 3

Greek Myth Revisited

**Enrolments:** Liz Crathorne, 35 Allenby Road, Maidenhead, SL6 5BE Tel: 01628 632208

#### Evening Courses

Towns, Cities and the Romanization of Britain

**Enrolments:** College Information Centre, Bracknell & Wokingham College, Church Road, Bracknell, RG12 1DJ. Tel: 0845 330 3343.

Web site: [www.bracknell.ac.uk](http://www.bracknell.ac.uk)

### The Workers' Educational Association (WEA)

#### Afternoon Courses

Rural life in Tudor and Stuart England

**Details from:** Sue Blest, 'Pinewood', Gipsy Lane, Wokingham, RG40 2HP.

Tel: 0118 978 7003

Web site: [www.wea.org.uk](http://www.wea.org.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 post excavation research.

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:

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