



ARCHAEOLOGY

The Newsletter of the Berkshire Archaeological Society

Autumn 2008

Vol 10 No 3

A.G.M. - Reminder

The Annual General Meeting will take place before the meeting on Saturday 20th September. Please come along at 14:00 for refreshments; proceedings will start at 14:30.

Nominations for Council, duly seconded, must be received by the Secretary, Andrew Hutt, 19 Challenor Close, Wokingham, Berks, RG40 4UJ, at least 14 days before the AGM.

The A.G.M. will be followed by a talk on the Chalgrove to East Ilsley pipeline by Tom Wilson.

The Berkshire Historic Environment Forum

At a national level changes are being made to bring all central government functions relating to the historic environment under one banner, led by English Heritage. This includes a common listing system for sites or buildings of special architectural or scientific merit.

There is already a forum for the South East region which had a successful launch at Newbury in 2007. A similar forum has now been set up for Berkshire.

The Berkshire Historic Environment Forum is a group of organisations which appreciate and protect Berkshire's historic environment and are working together to improve it. Specifically:

- To review the existing and planned provision being made to support the historic environment and to encourage constituent organisations to make informed comment.
- To encourage and support activities carried out by individuals and public, private and voluntary bodies to enhance the historic environment.

Rather than setting up a new organisation the forum aims to work through individuals and existing organisations to add value to their activities through a co-ordinated and co-operative sharing of views, skills and intelligence.

Organisations being invited to support the forum include: Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, Slough Borough Council, The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham Borough Council, English Heritage, The Berkshire Archaeological Trust, The Berkshire Record Office, The Berkshire Local History Association, The University of Reading and The Berkshire Archaeological Society.

The Editor with thanks to Andrew Hutt

Progress on digitising the Berkshire Archaeological Journal

We are working to make all volumes up to BAJ 70 accessible via the Archaeology Data Service for free and volumes BAJ 71 onwards available via the Council of British Archaeology and paid for by readers.

Against this objective, we have reached the point where all the volumes have been scanned, except for Berks Bucks and Oxon Journal volume 1 parts 1 and 3, because the Society has no copies.

9 volumes have yet to be checked, indexed and sent to the Archaeology Data Service.

I still have to negotiate a contract with the Council of British Archaeology. Once this has been done, 7 volumes need to be checked, indexed, priced and sent to the Council of British Archaeology

I have yet to sort out a safe haven for the paper copies.

Andrew Hutt

Bond Memorial Lecture

This year's Maurice and Shelagh Bond Memorial Lecture will be given by Professor Nigel Saul (Royal Holloway, University of London) on The King of the Castle: Edward III, the Order of the Garter and Chivalric Kingship.

The lecture will take place on Wednesday 22nd October 2008 at 7.00pm in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

Admission is free although guests are required to apply for a named ticket, and to bring a photo I.D. with them to the event. Applications for tickets to: The Chapter Office, Windsor Castle, Berkshire SL4 1NJ With s.a.e. by Wednesday 15th October.

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Archaeological Walks

Theale Village 4th June 2008

On Wednesday 4th June, 16 people assembled in the car park of the Lamb Inn in Church Street with Roy Townsend, who then led us on our walk. Starting at the north of the town we viewed large council houses built between the wars. Next we visited the Church built in 1820-32 in the style of Salisbury Cathedral and the adjacent rectory a stone classical building built in 1830. The perambulation down the High Street visited a variety of shops, inns and houses many dating from the Georgian and Victorian eras, with the occasional house dating from Tudor and earlier times. The weather was warm and at the end we all thoroughly enjoyed a pint in the Lamb. The group thanked Roy Townsend for leading an informative and enjoyable evening.

Andrew Hutt

Caesar's Camp, Easthampstead 18th June 2008

A group of 15 assembled at the Lookout and were led through the woods to the south gate of the Iron Age hillfort at Caesar's Camp by Andrew Hutt. We paused here to examine the ramparts and then Andrew led us through the interior, past the site of the excavations in 1995 which produced pottery dating from the Early and Middle Iron Age and then along the western ramparts. This hillfort is contoured by a long sinuous dump rampart. Bracknell Forest Council has protected this by putting logs in the ditch to deter cyclists and skate boarders. Andrew explained how in the Middle Iron Age, Caesar's Camp lay at the centre of a number of settlements which specialised in various forms of production, for example: iron smelting and working at South Farm, Lightwater; pottery making and iron working at Whitehall Brick and Tile Works, Arborfield; keeping sheep and textile manufacture at Park Farm, Binfield; and cereal

production in Fairclough Farm, Bracknell. At the northern end of the site we walked down to the north gate entrance way where we overlooked the line of a later hollow way, probably created in the 18th century when the site was used to train troops. The evening concluded with a walk back to the Lookout in a light drizzle.

The Editor with thanks to Andrew Hutt

The Lower Pang Valley 16th July 2008

The group met in front of the village hall in Pangbourne for this walk led by Andrew Hutt, based on Dick Greenaway's book, "Around the valley of the Pang". We walked through the village and out into the fields by the Pang. In the 12th century, the land between Pangbourne and Tidmarsh was swamp belonging to Reading Abbey. The Abbey drained it by digging ditches and it is now a large common meadow area. Halfway down this are Pill Boxes, remains of a Second World War stop line between the Kennet and Pang rivers. Eventually we came out onto the main road in Tidmarsh by the toll house. This is the only part of the planned toll road from Basingstoke to Dorchester ever constructed. We passed 16th century Greyhound public house and then Tidmarsh Mill where Lytton Strachey of the Bloomsbury Group lived in 1920. Returning to Pangbourne we passed more Pill Boxes before climbing a hill into some managed coppiced woodland. From this point we observed terracing, the remnants of a medieval field system. In the wood we found pit features, evidence of quarrying for lime. The evening concluded with a pint in one of the hosteleries in Pangbourne.

The Editor

Spring Tour to South Wales

We left Reading Station on April 18th and headed for Caerwent where we met Paul Goodenough, who gave us a tour of the remains of the Roman Town in the Welsh mist. At nearby Caerleon we were free for an hour or so to visit the Roman Baths and Legionary Museum before meeting Paul for a tour of the amphitheatre and the Roman barracks. On route, further west, we stopped at the medieval fortified priory and priory church at Ewenny and then the substantial remains of the Cistercian Abbey at Margam. Having previously been the site of a Celtic Monastery, the latter houses a collection of Celtic stones which Paul Goodenough toured with us.

The next day, we toured the Gower peninsula with Paul as our guide to the Neolithic long barrow at Parc Le Breos and the megalithic tomb of Cefn Bryn (Arthur's Stone). Some of the hardier braved the Welsh mist to visit the Bulwark Iron Age Hillfort, joining the rest of the group at the smallest church on the Gower in Llanmadoc. We also visited the remains of the Tudor castle at Oxwich and the medieval castle at Kidwelly.

Continuing the theme of castles on estuaries, the next day we started at Laugharne, which is perhaps best known for its associations with Dylan Thomas. Some of the more venturesome took advantage of the smiles of the weather god to walk round the cliff to see his former home and the famous boat house. We stopped on the road to view the Second World War control tower at the former RAF Carew Cheriton and then continued to Carew to visit the magnificent Celtic cross, Tidal Mill and Castle. We then toured Lamphey Bishop's Palace before returning to our hotel via St Nicolas' Church at Penally.

On route home, we visited Aberdulais waterfalls and tinsplate works, the famous ironworks at Blaenavon and the remains of the 15th century Raglan Castle, all in some good Welsh rain. A dry tour of the Neolithic standing stones and excavation of the medieval town at Trellech by Paul Goodenough brought four very interesting and busy days to a close.

Our thanks once again to Barrie Randall, Paul Goodenough and all those who helped to make this another successful and enjoyable Spring Tour.

The Editor

Spring Tour 2009

Next year's Spring Tour will be to North Wales from Friday 15th to Monday 18th May inclusive. The tour will be based at the Hydro Hotel, Llandudno.

The programme is not yet finally decided, but the aim is to include a mixture of sites from all archaeological periods. As usual Barrie Randall is ensuring that those with limited mobility will enjoy the tour just as much as the more active by providing alternative activities where appropriate. Members will be advised of precise details through a separate mailing sometime during the autumn.

The Editor with thanks to Barrie Randall

BOB BYWATER-LEES

It was only last year that Bob resigned as Treasurer and Council member, we knew he was unwell but his death came as a shock to all of us. He was one of our most long-standing members and, from first to last, took an active part in all our activities. He joined the Council of the Society only a few years after he joined and his advice was invaluable both to Cecil Slade, when he was chairman, to me, in the same position, and to our current Chairman Andrew Hutt. For the last five years he was Treasurer. It was a sign of his commitment to the Society that he took on this job on at a difficult time for the Society and after we had been without a Treasurer for six months. The Society was in the midst of change. We were undertaking the transfer from voluntary society to registered charity and we also had changes in the organisation of our activities. Bob took this on and did all his work meticulously.

But Society membership was not all work. He regularly attended lectures and in the days when the Society had a Christmas Social event at the Museum he is remembered for his enthusiasm in joining other members in dressing up for the event. I understand he made a very convincing monk. Edna Goodburn, once our Spring Tour Organiser, remembers that Bob and Enid never missed a tour and this year must have been the first one they have missed.

If we remember Bob we must also remember Enid, his wife, who also was a member and attended events with Bob. Our sympathies go to her and their family.

Catherine Petts

The Next BAS Annual Day School

The next Day School will be held on Saturday, 7 March 2009 at the Cornerstone Hall, Wokingham. The programme is at an early stage of development but we shall have speakers talking on: The Newbury Cinema excavation; the magnetometer survey of the whole of the town of Calleva Atrebatum; the latest news from the religious site at Frilford; some restoration work at Caversham Court, Reading; and on a rectangular Neolithic house found in a quarry in Berkshire.

There will be a full programme prepared by the end of October. Details will appear in the next newsletter, and we shall publish the leaflet in January 2009.

Trevor Coombs

First century bling and Iron Age roads at Silchester

Amanda Clarke, Director of the Field School of The University of Reading, gave a guided tour of the excavations on Insula IX to a combined group from the BAS and BARG on 19 July 2008.

After 11 seasons of digging on the 'Town Life Project' the excavation is revealing structures from AD 40 – 80. Some of the features, however, are distinctly Iron Age, such as the well found under the East-West Roman road.



The Silchester excavation in July 2008 showing metal working hearths [AD 40-70] in the foreground. Photo by Andrew Hutt.

The South East corner of the insula contains a collection of mid-first century workshops constructed of timber with wall plaster applied to their interior walls. The multi-coloured hearths of furnaces indicate that iron and copper alloy were being used to make implements and jewellery. Some of the six

copper alloy brooches found this year may well have been moulded here.

This year, the junction of the N/S and the E/W roads is being examined. The substrates of each road are in marked contrast to each other. The packed gravel of the N/S road is more than 1.5m thick, testimony to the maintenance that its surface received over a period of 230 years. The E/W road was not as important as the road between the North and South gates, since the substrate is much thinner. When this road was constructed an Iron Age roundhouse in its path was demolished, and under the roundhouse, a large well is now revealed, which is yielding Iron Age pottery.

At Silchester there appears to have been an Iron Age road network that first appeared in Mike Fulford's excavation of the basilica area. It has now appeared in Insula IX suggesting a rectangular grid, since it has a 90 degree turn just within the western boundary of the dig. In the South West corner the road was lined with a series of rubbish pits on its southern side. Amongst the artefacts emerging from the pits is a baby's skeleton which had been deposited completely in a large ceramic pot. This is not thought to be a ritual act, but more of an undignified burial.

Small finds have been fewer this year, but they form the evidence for the social life of the community. A copper coin of Cunobelin, king of the Catuvellauni [from north of the Thames] has been dated to AD 20. It is a reminder that the people from north of the Thames had invaded the Atrebatian kingdom which was the cause of king Verica's appeal to Claudius to invade Britain. An elaborately designed catch for closing a box and a finger ring with a small key represented the 'bling' jewellery of the first century. Finally, a socketed iron spear head is heading towards the X-ray machine enabling it to be properly investigated.

The last three objects are indicative of a social elite living in Silchester in the mid-first century AD.

Trevor Coombs

ADULT EDUCATION – PART-TIME COURSES AUTUMN TERM, 2008

READING UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

Morning Courses

Stones, bones and people: an introduction to archaeology

Evening Courses

Investigating how people lived: an environmental archaeology of settlement

The archaeology of the ancient Greek myths

The glorious Middle Kingdom of Ancient Egypt

Dayschools

Archaeology in your own backyard: a toolkit for discovery

The afternoon of Empire: the Ramesside period in Egypt c1265-1070BC

Online

Interpreting archaeological evidence

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

The Archaeology of Hygiene

Latin: Term 5 (*Maidenhead*)

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Evening Courses

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Day and Weekend Schools

An Introduction to Environmental Archaeology

The British Iron Age: New Perspectives

The Persian Empire: Art and Archaeology

Online

Exploring Roman Britain

Origins of Human Behaviour

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 Web site: www.conted.ox.ac.uk

OUDCE – Outside Oxford

Evening Courses

News Old and New from Neolithic Britain

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

Web site: www.bracknell.ac.uk

The Workers' Educational Association (WEA)

Morning Courses

The Romans in the Upper Thames Valley

The Vikings: Heroes or Villains?

Day School

The Georgian Age

Details from: Sue Blest, 'Pinewood', Gipsy Lane, Wokingham, RG40 2HP.
Tel: 0118 978 7003

Web site: 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 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

0118 973 2882

andrew_hutt@talktalk.net

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Catherine Petts

01235 831 463

catherine@petts.co.uk

Programme Organiser:
Vacant

Day School Organiser:

Trevor Coombs

01491 873 166

t.coombs1@btopenworld.com

Excursion Organiser:

Barrie Randall

0118 983 2607

banda.burghfield@hotmail.com

Newsletter Editor:

Julie Worsfold

0118 926 2270

jlw@imagesmad.co.uk

Librarian: Andrew Hutt

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

www.berksarch.co.uk