

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



N E W S L E T T E R 1 0 3

August 1988

CONTENTS

| | |
|--------|--|
| Page 2 | VISIT TO DANEBURY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1988-89 PROGRAMME |
| Page 3 | WELCOME BACK TO HAMPSHIRE COURSES, TRIPS & DAY SCHOOLS |
| Page 4 | THE PITT-RIVERS MUSEUM, OXFORD |
| Page 5 | PROMOTING BASINGSTOKE - THEN AND NOW |

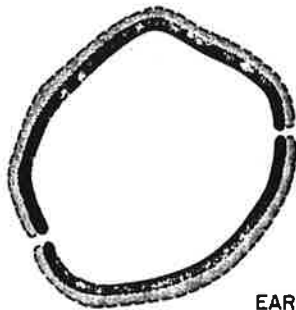
CALENDAR

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Thurs 18 August | <i>VISIT TO DANEBURY</i> (NB change of date - see page 2) |
| * Tuesday 6th Sept (W) | <i>The History and Dating of Buildings in Whitchurch</i> , Edward Roberts |
| Thursday 8th Sept | <i>ROMAN IRONWORKING IN THE WEALD</i> Henry Cleere |
| * Friday 16th Sept | Cheese & Wine evening in Winchester College HFC Archaeology Section; numbers limited |
| Thursday 18th Sept (F) | <i>Local History and the Work of the Hampshire Record Office</i> , an Archivist from the HCRO |
| Wed 21st Sept (T) | <i>Photographic History of Thatcham</i> , Mr & Mrs Butler |
| Thursday 13th Oct | <i>THE CHALLENGE OF SUBURBIA</i> , Martin Doughty |
| * | |

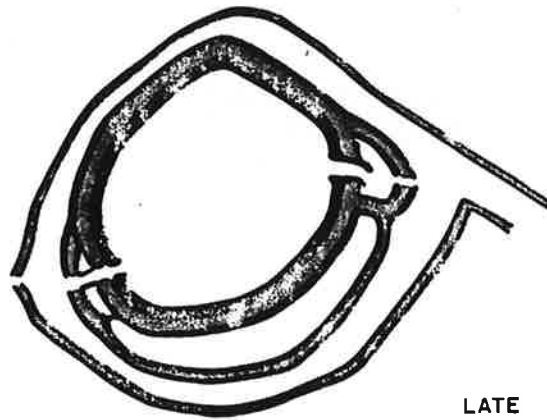
- * Society meeting (lectures 7.30 pm Chute House, Basingstoke)
- (F) Friends of the Willis Museum, 7.30 pm, Willis Museum
- (T) Tadley & District Society, 8pm St Paul's Church Hall, The Green, Tadley
- (W) Whitchurch Local History Society, 7.30 pm, Parish Hall, London Street, Whitchurch

VISIT TO DANEBURY

NB



EARLY



LATE

Please note that the date for this visit is Thursday 18th August (*NOT 16th as previously announced*), meeting at the car park at Danebury at 7 pm. This is the last year of excavations at Danebury, the intriguing hillfort which we have visited many times over the years, so this is an evening not to be missed. Anyone needing a lift should contact a committee member as quickly as possible.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There were several changes to officers and committee at this year's Annual General Meeting. Joy Needham takes over the Chair from Mary Oliver, Lynne Freshwater remains as Secretary, and Martin Morris takes over from Sarah Duckworth as Treasurer.

Warm thanks were expressed to Sarah Duckworth for her efficient term as Treasurer, and to Richard Dexter, Andrew Duckworth, Peter Heath and Betty Waters who resigned from the Committee (Andrew, luckily, will continue to act as Press Officer). The new committee now consists of Susan Batstone, John Horrocks, George Langran, Sue McEntee, Mary Oliver and Peter Reid - a healthy infusion of new talent.

1988-89 PROGRAMME

Our new season begins on September 8th, at 7.30 at Chute House, when Henry Cleere (of the Council for British Archaeology) gives a talk on his own particular interest, ROMAN IRONWORKING IN THE WEALD. This is a close look at a key aspect of the industry of Roman Britain, in an area not too far from our doorstep.

On 13th October we change to a topic of local history, with Martin Doughty and THE CHALLENGE OF SUBURBIA, followed on 10th November by Mark Reeve on BEADS OF THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD.

WELCOME BACK TO HAMPSHIRE

We are delighted to welcome back to Hampshire Stephen Locke, who takes up his appointment as Director of the Hampshire County Museum Service on 1st August after Ken Barton's retirement. Stephen was Natural History Assistant Curator at the Curtis Museum, Alton when I was at the Willis (er, ... years ago). He was recently Executive Director of the Area Museums Council for the South-West and is a Fellow of the Museums Association. Last year he was one of four museum experts invited to travel to the USSR with the President of the Museums Association.

BARBARA APPLIN

COURSES, TRIPS AND DAY SCHOOLS

At Southampton University:

- a nine-day visit to PTOLEMAIC AND ROMAN EGYPT led by David Johnston, 23rd - 31st March 1989 (numbers limited to 25)

- day schools (fee £9, members £7, concessionary £5):

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE (an investigation into 19th century migration in England and Wales, by Margaret Escott), Saturday 15th October

ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE (D J Stent), Saturday, 29th October

USING COMPUTERS IN LOCAL HISTORY (Dr Frank Colson) Saturday, 5th November

ARCHAEOLOGY (Mark Brisbane and colleagues, featuring recent results from excavations in and around Southampton) Saturday 25th February

Details from The Enrolment Secretary, Dept of Adult Education, The University, Southampton SO9 5NH

.....
And at Oxford:

- weekend visit to NORMANDY AND THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY 7th to 9th October (£95 per person)

- day schools on:

COMPUTERS AND LOCAL HISTORY (for beginners), Saturday, 12th November; with lunch £23; without lunch £19

POPULATION CRISIS IN ENGLAND 1200-1600, Saturday, 26th
November; with lunch £17; without lunch £13

THE AGE OF BEDE, Saturday, 3rd December; with lunch £17;
without lunch £13

- weekend courses on:

HISTORIC GARDENS: ARCHAEOLOGY AND RESTORATION, Friday 21st
to Sunday 23rd October

ESTATE RECORDS, Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th November

POT AND POTTER (for local historians and field
archaeologists), Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th November

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM HUMAN BONES? Friday 9th to Sunday
11th December

Details from Oxford University Department for External Studies,
Rewley House, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA

THE PITT-RIVERS MUSEUM, OXFORD

When you read about the Pitt-Rivers Collection, you get the impression that it is talked about either as an important event in the history of museums or as a bit of joke, a textbook example of how not to arrange a museum display, i.e. showing the very worst features of crowded glass cases stuffed full of sundry poorly-labelled exhibits.

One day last month I set off to see for myself what it was like. Sure enough, at the end of the University Museum of Ethnography there was an entrance to the Pitt-Rivers Museum itself, at which point I was immediately confronted with some lethal-looking aborigines' spears, all more than ten feet long and with their wooden spear throwers. Um, yes - a promising start!

On turning the corner, I was then in the old iron and glass vaulted hall, dimly lit, with at least two upper galleries round all four sides, just as you see in the old photographs. The hall was filled with display cases, and yes, they were packed full of - well, of just what?

My fears were fully realised; it was exactly as I had imagined, only worse. So with heavy heart I started wandering round the empty hall. Being ethnography and anthropology, nothing was particularly old; it just looked dusty, dirty or worn out. Boomerangs of all shapes and sizes, human skulls used as doorway decorations, necklaces made from brightly coloured dead birds,

bone skates from Norway (as you would see in a Breughel painting), a wooden door lock from Lycia, crude musical instruments from the Pacific Islands, nose flutes from the Andes, a ten inch iron nail beaten into a small desert knife from South Africa, a rudimentary medical syringe from China and so on...

But wait a moment, what is that? Clothes made from yarn, from New Zealand - but made without a loom. Why no loom? I read on. This was because when the Polynesians emigrated south they only clothed themselves with grass, but in the more temperate climate there was no suitable grass, only flax. So they used the flax but, not having discovered the loom. they could only plait it. Then there was some beautiful electric-blue jewellery from China, but on looking closer it was not made from precious stone or enamel but from the feathers of kingfishers stuck onto a base metal.

I then stumbled on something with which I could really identify, and which set me thinking about the ingenuity of the makers, and that was children's toys. There were fabulous paper kites - again, from China of course, and beautiful shadow puppets on sticks. Then a game which was a cross between darts and bowls, where you lobbed a weight, to which feathers were attached, onto a target. And a spinning top from Malaysia that on one throw will continue spinning for 24 hours unaided.

The most ingenious toy was a little model ox cart made of wood, with clay wheels. The back axle had a lengthwise slit into which a slat was fixed. When this was rotated it struck a fixed flange on the cart, and hence made a clacking noise when the toy was pulled with twine.

Finally, here were the three-dimensional puzzles. I felt frustrated in not being able to touch them, for there was one in particular which I could not work out. Indeed, I wondered whether my leg was being pulled, but from the inscription under it I gathered it could be done, but how, I have no idea - any suggestions?

I had set aside less than half an hour for my visit; I came out two and a half hours later. Need I say more?

RICHARD DEXTER

PROMOTING BASINGSTOKE: THEN AND NOW

At the District Council's Open Day on 15th July, visitors saw a video which had been specially made to entice businesses to Basingstoke. It put forward the attractions of the town - easy access to London and motorways; pleasant countryside; shopping

centre with modern amenities; a little "nod" in the direction of culture and historic sites or houses...

This seemed rather familiar, and it sent me back to look through some items I'd once copied from the Reading Mercury (on microfilm in Reading Library). Yes, there it was - "ready and speedy communication... housing, education... Hackwood Park... Basing House and the Civil War..." Read on.

To Builders and Capitalists

A good opportunity now presents itself to any Builder or Capitalist who may be inclined to erect PRIVATE RESIDENCES in the parish and near the town of BASING-STOKE, Hants, as from the salubrity of its air, the pureness of its water, and its proximity to the South Western and Great Western Railways which furnish a ready and speedy communication with all parts of the Kingdom. Houses from £35 rental and upward are in constant demand and, if erected in a semi-detached form would always find occupiers and produce an ample return for the capital expended. The Holy Ghost School, a foundation establishment, affords a liberal and classical education to the sons of parents resident in the town, at the moderate charge of £3 per annum. A most healthy and commanding site, lying to the south of the town, having an eastern aspect and overlooking the beautiful and luxuriant domain of Hackwood Park and the picturesque ruins of Basing House, of historic celebrity in the Civil Wars, is available for the above purpose, to the extent of Five Acres or more, freehold, on reasonable terms. The site may be viewed, and further particulars obtained, on application to Mr Paice.

Reading Mercury August 2nd 1851

Mr Paice was Charles Paice, Auctioneer and Appraiser of Winchester Street, who appears in Pigot's Directory of 1844 and White's Directory of 1859. He was 33 when the census was taken in 1851, living with his mother and sister, one apprentice and two house servants. He was an Insurance Agent too, for County Fire and Provident Life, and he had been a member of the Town Council until he retired from it in 1851.

Did he succeed in attracting any builders or capitalists? The land he was advertising sounds like Cliddesden Road, but I haven't yet checked whether new houses were built there in 1851 or shortly after. Does anyone know?

BARBARA APPLIN