

B A S I N G S T O K E
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* Calendar of Events *

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* Tuesday 29th January	Mr Duncan Russell THE ROMAN TOWN OF
* (NOT Thursday 31st)	SILCHESTER Lecture at the annexe
*	behind the Willis Museum, New Street.
*	7.30 pm 7.30
*	
* Friday 8th to Sunday	Conference RURAL SETTLEMENT IN
* 10th February	SOUTHERN BRITAIN Southampton
*	University
*	
* Tuesday 26th February	ROMAN AGRICULTURE AND LAND 7.30
* (NOT Thursday 28th)	SETTLEMENT PATTERNS IN ITALY
*	Lecture by Professor K. D. White of
*	Reading University, in the annexe
*	behind the Willis Museum. 7.30 pm
*	
* 7.30	Please note change of place and date.
*	If there are any further changes we'll
*	circulate members.
*	
*	Practical sessions on excavation material
*	are transferred to <u>Tuesday evenings</u> till
*	further notice. Still in the Museum annexe,
*	7.30 pm onwards.
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THE ROMAN TOWN OF SILCHESTER
Lecture by Duncan Russell
Tuesday 29th January '74

Power crisis!

NB Tuesday
— not
Thursday

Duncan Russell, a member of the Society, will be giving the January lecture *** on the Roman town of Silchester - perhaps the most tantalising of local sites, where so much is known but so little there to see. Not to be missed! *** The gap above is because we have to change from the usual Chute House to the annexe behind the Willis Museum, New St, and from Thursday 31st to Tuesday 29th.

'POT WASHING'
Museum Annexe
TUESDAYS

Because we cannot use electricity in the Museum annexe on Thursday evenings, the practical sessions on the treatment of excavation material will be switched to Tuesdays (7.30 pm onwards) until further notice. We hope that more people will be able to come on Tuesdays, as there's a lot of interesting sorting to be done, once the last boxes of pot are washed and marked.

Southampton University Conference
on RURAL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTHERN BRITAIN
8th to 10th February 1974

A non-residential conference at Southampton University from Friday, 8th to Sunday 10th February will be of particular interest to members of the Society who would like to know more of the background to settlements like the one we have excavated at Ructstalls Hill. We hope that several members will be able to go, particularly as this arose out of a suggestion from our own committee - though it doesn't follow exactly the form we originally intended. It is to be the first of a short annual series on current problems and research, and it covers the Bronze Age and Iron Age.

It begins on the Friday evening with a welcome to the conference by Professor Colin Renfrew (and sherry), followed by a lecture on the Hillfort and its Environment by Professor Barry Cunliffe. The Saturday lectures are on Man's Impact on the Landscape (Mr J.M. Wagstaffe), Settlements in Southern England and related areas before 1000 BC (Mr A. M. ApSimon), Settlement Types - Britain and the Continent - 1000 to 50 BC (Tim Champion) and Interrelations between Settlements (Mr I. Hodder). The Sunday lectures are on Prehistoric Remains: Implications of Patterns (Mr H.C. Bowen), Owlesbury: a Settlement and its Environment (Dr J. Collis) and Postholes (Mr P.J. Reynolds).

The fee is £3 (students half-price) and includes tea, coffee and biscuits, and the sherry on the Friday evening. Applications to Mr D. E. Johnston, Tutor in Archaeology, Dept. of Extra-Mural Studies, The University, Southampton SO 9 5NH.

The Secretary has the provisional programme and a list of books on related subjects.

RUCTSTALLS HILL

Although excavation has finished, we are still keeping a watch on the area in case new features are seen here, or at Common Plantation, during work for the housing estate. John and Mary Oliver report as follows:

A small gully approximately 50 cm wide by 50 cm deep in the chalk was noted in the south east side of the new road parallel with the Bastingstoke Bypass, and north west of Ructstalls Hill Copse, 6 m south of the field boundary converging on the copse. There was no means of dating it, but its proximity to Ructstalls Hill is interesting. Grid reference: SU 64755145.

John and Mary Oliver

ANDOVER

The Portway Excavations

Mrs Sara Champion (whose husband lectured to us last year on Hillforts) is excavating a site at Andover which has many similarities to Ructstalls Hill, so we went to see the excavations and to discuss with her, and her husband, points of common interest.

It is, like Ructstalls Hill, a multiperiod settlement site with overlapping boundary ditches, pit groups and post holes, and like Ructstalls Hill it is on chalk. Its first period is about 500 BC, earlier than the 'saucepan pot' phase of the Iron Age which we have at Ructstalls Hill. The second phase is Gallo-Belgic, and the third 1st century AD, and here there are several parallels between the two sites. Andover doesn't have the later Roman phase that we have (though even at Ructstalls Hill this is based largely on unstratified 4th century coins and occasional groups of sandal nails and tiles). It will be particularly useful to compare pottery types and small finds when more work has been done.

But this is where Andover has the advantage -- although when we visited them they were bravely excavating in a cold December. As this was a University excavation, the director and most of the helpers were working continuously through a season of over ten weeks, so they were able to wash and sort pot and other finds as they went along, and of course they had immediate access to university facilities for analysis. Contrast this with our long-drawn-out seasons of weekends, where the site inevitably became untidy and it was less easy to achieve continuity, and with the present amount of pot still to be processed! However, we were cheered to think that the results we had achieved compared well with this full-time dig, and what we need now is an all-out effort on our finds, so that we can seize the chance to see how well the two sites compare in this respect.

Barbara Applin and Mary Oliver

NEWS FROM THE WILLIS MUSEUM

Galleries open

The whole ground floor is now open, as well as the temporary exhibition room upstairs. The Horology gallery has been well known for the last year, being based largely on the collection built up by Mr Willis, who founded the museum. The new Natural History gallery has displays illustrating the ecology of the Basingstoke area - chalk grasslands, oak woods, heathland etc. and there is a display showing the changing ecological patterns along the course of the Basingstoke canal. The Decorative Arts gallery contains a fine display of commemorative pottery from 1740 to the present day - from plates commemorating Queen Victoria's jubilee with a wealth of detail of Britain's trade etc., to the cup commemorating the fire at Burberry's in Basingstoke in 1905 and a jug relating to Arthur Orton, the Tichborne claimant. Other displays of pottery from the museum's extensive collections will follow at six-monthly intervals. The Archaeology gallery contains a display of recent archaeological accessions by the County Museum Service since 1968, at the same time giving a 'taster' for the full display that will eventually be placed in this room.

New Curator-in-charge

David Devcnish has left to go to Hastings Museum, and we welcome his successor, Alan Burchard who comes from the Wiltshire Natural History and Archaeological Society Museum at Devizes.

The Deane Cup

The County Museum Service has recently made a most important acquisition: a silver cup which was given to Deane Church in 1698 by Dorothea Wither of Oakley Hall. It is believed to have been made in London, probably by Robert Danbe in 1551-2, and it is of transitional form, incorporating the shallow bowl of the tazza (introduced into England in the 1530's) with the traditional English late Gothic 'font cup'. The cup was bought by the Hampshire County Council in partnership with the Victoria and Albert Museum when an export ban was put on its sale to a New York collector.

FIELDWALK

It was a great pity that we had to cancel the last fieldwalk, but we felt that the shortage of petrol and the uncertainty at the time about imminent petrol rationing meant that we couldn't ask members to use their cars to get to Popham. If it's possible to arrange another fieldwalk when conditions are better, we shall announce it in the Newsletter. When they were washed, the finds from the first two fieldwalks looked most impressive!

NB Don't forget change of date and place for the next two lectures, and that pot washing is on Tuesdays too.