

B A S I N G S T O K E  
A R C H A E O L O G I C A L  
S O C I E T Y

N E W S L E T T E R

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\* \* \* \* \*Calender Of Events\* \* \* \* \*

* Thursday 28th March	Lecture at Chute House, 7.30 p.m. John Norwood HAMPSHIRE CRAFTS (Joint meeting with Industrial Archaeology Group)
* Saturday 13th to Sunday 21st April (except Easter Day)	Society's excavation outside Church Cottage, Basingstoke. 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 - 5 p.m.
* Thursday 25th April	Lecture at Chute House, 7.30 p.m. Michael Dann THE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF MARTYR WORTHY
* May (details and date to be announced)	Hedgerow dating fieldwalk at Popham
* Thursday 30th May	Evening walk round Silchester, led by Duncan Russell. Time, meeting place etc. to be announced.
* Saturday 6th July	Day Excursion: Devizes area.
* Thursday 11th July	Annual General Meeting at Chute House, 7.30 p.m.
* Practical sessions on the treatment of excavation material, now on THURSDAYS, not Tuesdays, in the annexe behind the Willis Museum, New Street, from 7.30 p.m. (except lecture Thursdays).	

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HAMPSHIRE CRAFTS  
Lecture by John Norwood  
Thursday 28th March

Our March lecture at Chute House is a joint meeting of this Society and the Industrial Archaeology Group. The lecturer is John Norwood, Keeper of Folk Life at the Hampshire County Museum Service, with special responsibility for the Curtis Museum at Alton, and he has made a special study of Hampshire Crafts on the basis of the Museum Service's extensive collections. To coincide with this lecture, there is a small display on Hampshire Crafts in the entrance hall of the Willis Museum in Basingstoke, while this month's temporary exhibition at the Willis Museum is THE USEFUL WILLOW, an exhibition of basketry. We have arranged a small display in the Library also, to attract a wider public, and we are very grateful to members of the Hampshire Federation of Women's Institutes who kindly lent objects for display, and to the Library staff for supplementing this with appropriate books.

Any members who have not yet seen John Norwood's book VICTORIAN AND EDWARDIAN HAMPSHIRE may like to see the enclosed leaflet.

PRACTICAL SESSIONS  
Willis Museum Annexe  
Now THURSDAY not Tuesdays

Now that fuel restrictions have been lifted, we shall return to THURSDAY evenings for our practical sessions on excavation material, in the annexe behind the Willis Museum. Work is now beginning again on the more interesting job of sorting pot. We are also getting the soil samples in order so that they can be sent to an expert for analysis; the small finds in need of treatment are now being seen to in the County Museum Service laboratory, and the more interesting items are being photographed and will need to be drawn. We hope that more people will be able to take part in these sessions now that we are reverting to Thursdays.

RESCUE EXCAVATION  
Manor Farm, Whitchurch

Recently we received an urgent call for help on a one-weekend-only rescue dig at Whitchurch, and we summoned as many people as we could reach in time by phone. We asked Duncan Russell to write an account of it (with Peter Fasham's blessing!) as for part of the time he was helping the surveyors and was able to get a more extensive view of the site than others who were concentrating on individual ditches and pits.

During the construction of the Whitchurch Bypass north-west of Whitchurch, near Manor Farm, a cutting through the chalk escarpment revealed a Romano-British inhumation burial. In the course of rescue excavation, under the direction of Peter Fasham of the M3 Archaeological Rescue Committee, four burials were revealed, dating apparently sometime before the mid third century AD, the dating evidence consisting of several coins deposited with the bodies. The

graves themselves were roughly hewn in natural chalk on an east/west orientation on the eastern side of the modern cut.

Just to the south west of the burials a ditch section (1 metre by 80 cm approximately) was revealed in the chalk face of the modern cutting running roughly south to north. A section cut through this ditch revealed a quantity of Iron Age pottery and animal bone. To the east of this feature and the burials were a number of post holes and shallow trenches which seemed to indicate a settlement area, although as far as I know no structures were identified in the short time available. An attempt was made to relocate the original ditch to the south. Here a shallower ditch was revealed, containing a considerable quantity of potsherds dating from the first century BC to the early first century AD and also a number of oyster shells, and to the west was a shallow depression of weathered chalk that may have been a small trackway and contained small quantities of Iron Age sherds.

Near the edge of the road (the minor road to St Mary Bourne), a large pit was sectioned to an approximate depth of 2 metres. This feature contained Romano-British pottery and also green-glazed medieval pottery and a large amount of animal bones. It would appear that this pit is of medieval date, the digging of which disturbed an earlier feature, and this would account for the presence of earlier pottery as rubbish survival.

On the slope to the south and west several ditches were traced and sectioned at an intersection, and I think an Iron Age date was fairly certain here.

This excavation was very well attended by members of our society which was a remarkable achievement after relatively short notice. I think many of us felt the strain after many months' respite, but I am sure we enjoyed meeting the members of other societies and seeing how other digs compare with our own."

DUNCAN RUSSELL

#### THE DANEBURY LECTURE

On 22nd February Professor Cunliffe gave his annual lecture at Stockbridge, on the excavations at the Iron Age hillfort at Danebury. The extremely short notice we were given made it impossible to tell many members about it, but five of us went to join a large audience.

Professor Cunliffe reviewed the excavations over the last five years, with particular reference to the features which members of the Society saw last August: the numerous grain storage pits (particularly the one which broke through an earlier pit, where the break was mended by drystone walling) and the circular hut just inside the north rampart. With each year's work the findings of previous years are seen in a new context. Professor Cunliffe had some interesting interpretations of various objects and features - often suggestions rather than statements. The fourth or third century BC structures with four or six posts are still not easy to interpret, but Professor Cunliffe felt the small four-posters were granaries. Much of the



layout of the hillfort showed ordered planning, and it was possible that the area for huts would circle the crest of the hill. Professor Cunliffe repeated his idea of Danebury as a 'redistribution centre' (see Mrs Verstage's report in the last Newsletter).

Then Professor Cunliffe showed slides of several objects from the hillfort. He suggested that a 'weaving comb' might also be used for plucking sheep, that chalk 'loom weights' (oblong at Danebury) might also be net weights and that a curved iron implement like a small reaping hook might be for stripping branches to give leaf fodder for cattle, or for wickerwork and wattle work.

Anyone who visited Danebury last year will remember the way the interior of the hillfort had been lowered as it approached the north rampart, by quarrying for rampart material, and how the circular hut had been covered by a thick deposit of silt. Above that silt there had been a surface of flints apparently deliberately laid as a hard standing in the Dark Ages (dated by some very late Roman pot and one sherd of Early Saxon pot).

The Danebury Trust has now been formed and will organise at least seven years' further excavation at the hillfort. This is being linked with work on a wider basis. The 'Friends of Danebury' are walking fields around the hillfort and a series of linear earthworks is being explored. Future work will extend to peat deposits in the Test Valley. Professor Cunliffe referred to the Society of Antiquaries' project on the evolution of the landscape. Our own Society has been asked to send a representative to a meeting for a survey of sarsen stones in Wessex, and we shall be hearing more of this. The 1974 excavations at Danebury will be for three weeks from 15th April and From July into August or possibly September."

BARBARA APPLIN

#### ROMAN INDUSTRY AT HOLYBOURNE

Peter Heath reports on his day at the rescue dig (referred to as Neatham or Holybourne as the complete site is in both parishes). As with Duncan's report on Whitchurch, we have the Site Director's permission for the report. In both cases comments are the writers'; we haven't yet had the official details. We have asked David Graham to give a lecture on the whole Holybourne/Neatham complex next year.

"The Farnham Museum Society are carrying out excavation at Holybourne, near Alton. Leslie Rice and I decided to offer our services and chose the worst possible day, Saturday 3rd March; it snowed all day - well, almost all day; it stopped as we left the site!

The site is on the line of the Chichester/Silchester Roman road and covers an area of approximately 2500sq.m. Because of the gravelly nature of the soil it is quite difficult to trace the actual line of the road and it appears to deviate from the expected line through the site. Attempts were being made to locate the road-side ditches but we were asked to complete the excavation of a rectangular pit (2m x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ m).

The pit contained no recognisable layers and at a depth of 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>m natural gravel occurred. It is believed that the pit may have been lined with wood and used for water storage, possibly connected with tanning. There are, in fact, several of these pits at this site. A circular pit cut the corner of the water storage pit and in this section numerous, quite large, pieces of grey pottery were found; probably 2nd or 3rd century AD. With the pottery were a number of small bones and part of an animal skull and horn. There were also many oyster shells. A few pieces of light brown pottery and red "samian" pottery were uncovered in the upper levels.

Elsewhere at the site are the base stones of a kiln but with no associated items to determine its use. Iron and copper ore together with iron slag indicate metal working in addition to tanning and over seventy coins have been recovered here and on sites close by, now covered by the Alton By-pass. The coins are all dated between approximately 220 and 350 AD and were minted in Britain, Gaul and some, possibly, in the near east.

In spite of the weather it proved to be a very interesting day and a complete contrast to digging at Ructstalls Hill. Unfortunately building development at Holybourne will prevent access to the site after the end of March."

PETER HEATH

John and Mary Oliver have just come back from a day at the site and report that next weekend is the last for the archaeologist from the Department of the Environment, but the Farnham Museum Society under David Graham may be able to continue a little longer. Contact David Graham (tel: Farnham 24630) if you want to help.

#### RESOURCE CENTRE

##### Appeal

The Basingstoke Primary Schools are forming "a Resource Centre in which articles of beauty and interest can be put on show in the schools for the children to see. It will be run on the lines of a lending library'. We have been asked to give any photographs or objects we don't need which may be of interest to the children. Any offers? - fossil, mineral water bottle, clay pipe, unstratified pot...? Please send anything you can of this kind to:

Mrs E. F. Seifert  
Winklebury County Infant School  
Willoughby Way  
Basingstoke  
(tel: Basingstoke 25303)

And can you let one of the Committee know what you've sent?

#### NEW COUNCIL OFFICE SITE Hackwood Road, Basingstoke

1. Richard Rushent-Oram reports: Earth has been removed to an approximate depth of 12 feet. This brought to the light of day a

refuse pit, dug to the depth of 10 feet and 4 to 5 feet wide. The top was wider than the bottom. Several items of interest came from the pit. Firstly a wine bottle, made of dark green glass. This is a bottle produced between 1710 and 1790. It has eight slightly tapering sides and cylindrical. This shape allows the bottle to lie on its side, thus keeping the cork moist. Sorry to say, the bottle has a small hole in it, but it is still a very welcome find. The other items are a brown clay tankard, highly decorated - a little over half of it has survived; two tankard bases, plain white; part of a small jug, white and blue decoration with a very heavy glaze; several pieces of dinner plate, all plain white.

The lawn in front of "Goldings House" has also been removed. This shows the drainage channels, which are mainly brick rubble and clinker. But several pieces of bottle are also included. One piece is from a squared shoulder Codd's bottle, another is the base of a "Hamilton" bottle. This, I should think, shows the lawn was laid around the 1880's.

RICHARD RUSHENT-ORAM

2. Pam and Phil Judkins have also investigated this site, and have drawn the features shown. They also have recovered items from a rubbish pit and were given a large slipware dish (in pieces) by the digger driver. They have proved many apparent features revealed in section to be natural. We are grateful to the Borough for giving permission for members of the Society to investigate this site.

#### IRON AGE CIGARETTES A Cautionary Tale

The latest number of ANTIQUITY tells of the tribulations of an animal expert who was asked to identify fibres from a Belgic excavation. At first they looked like wool, or perhaps flax or even silk! It was not until the fibres had been sent to a textile testing laboratory that the awful truth became clear - simply part of a modern cigarette filter. So be warned - if you smoke on a dig dispose of the evidence carefully!

#### Reminder Excavations at CHURCH COTTAGE

Please see the attached Excavation Notice.



BASINGSTOKE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY

Excavation Notice  
CHURCH COTTAGE  
Basingstoke

There will be a further excavation at Church Cottage this Easter to follow up last year's excavation which revealed Victorian brick built features overlying earlier surfaces and occupation layers producing medieval sherds. Complete investigation was not then possible owing to the building work; we hope this time, by working on an area just outside the building, to recover a complete sequence of layers associated with Church Cottage to amplify last year's findings and produce a greater body of dating evidence.

Work on the site will be from Saturday 13th April to Sunday 21st April (except for Easter Day itself) during the hours 9.30 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 2 - 5 p.m. The first day may involve some heavy work and the last day will be spent back-filling. Bring your own trowel (and kneeling mat if you so wish); other tools will be provided.

Since the area we have to work in is limited, it is hoped that members will be able to come for a full morning and/or afternoon session at a time, so that their efforts may be used to fullest advantage. It would also be a help if members could let us know in advance on which days they will be coming, by returning the tear-off slip below to:

Pam and Phil Judkins  
43 Sylvia Close, Basingstoke

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CHURCH COTTAGE EXCAVATIONS

I shall be able to come on: (delete as appropriate)

Saturday 13	am/pm	Thursday 18	am/pm
Monday 15	am/pm	Friday 19	am/pm
Tuesday 16	am/pm	Saturday 20	am/pm
Wednesday 17	am/pm	Sunday 21	am/pm

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Telephone .....