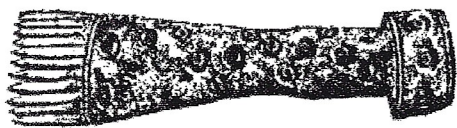


BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER 151

May 2000

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Reg. Char. No 1000263

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2000-2001

Subscriptions were due on May 1st. They remain at the 1999-2000 rates:

Ordinary membership	£11
Family Membership	£15
Over 60	£7
Student	£7
Occasional visitors/guests	£1

Please fill in the renewal form enclosed with this newsletter if you haven't already subscribed, as soon as possible. **Send your cheque, made out to BAHS, to Mr Garth George, 71, Camrose Way, Basingstoke, RG21 3AW.**

Our Treasurer, having agreed that subs. remain unchanged for the coming year, warns that an increase may be necessary next year if we are unable to get sponsorship for the production of our newsletter meanwhile, or if other unforeseen circumstances arise.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, 15th June 2000 in QMC Conference Room at 7.30 pm

Formal calling notice and details will be found on a separate sheet enclosed with this newsletter. Please let Tim Herrington know if the sheet was not enclosed –
tel. 01256322090.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Mary Oliver

LECTURES

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thurs 14 Sept | <i>1000 Years of Pottery</i> Roy Stephenson (Museum of London).
He was the pottery expert for the Time Team Basing House programme and endeared himself to us by pitching in with the pot washing. |
| Thurs 12 Oct | <i>Bodies & Bronzes: the Langstone Harbour Project</i>
Julie Gardiner and Mike Allen (Wessex Archaeology) |
| Thurs 9 Nov | <i>Hunter Gatherers in South Jordan</i> Steven Mithen (Reading University) |
| Thurs 14 Dec | <i>Cheese & Wine Party</i> |

OUTINGS

Ring the appropriate number to book a place. We usually take a small collection on site to make a donation to the appropriate person or body.

Sat 20 May Visit to Winchester for the exhibition **Portable Antiquities**, where Sally Worrall will tell us about this County Council policy and her dealings with metal detectorists, leading to these finds. Meet at 10 am at Hyde House, Hyde Street. In the afternoon we suggest members visit the new galleries just opened at the Winchester Museum and the exhibition of Hampshire history in the Great Hall "Older than England". (Tim 01256 322090)

Wed 14 June Look out for a TV programme featuring Dr Steven Mithen on his work in South Jordan - he will be lecturing to us on this theme in November.

Sat 24 June Julian Porter will lead a **Millennium Walk Around Greenwich** and sends the following notes:

The walk will start on an Island overlooking Greenwich from where we will visit the Eastern Hemisphere, the Western Hemisphere, see a castle, a dome and a very tall wharf and pass four museums. We will talk of Romans, Royals, Rangers, a martyred saint, and the origins of the National Gallery, ending at the "largest brick structure in the world". The walk will be about 4-5 miles long and last approximately 4-5 hours with suitable breaks, including one for lunch in an old watering hole.

If you would like to join the walk, we will start at Island Gardens station on the Docklands Light Railway at 10.45am (09.20 train from Basingstoke). You can reach here from Waterloo, via the new Jubilee Line Extension, changing at Canary Wharf for the DLR. We will either return from Greenwich via the over ground, Connex service from Greenwich to Waterloo East, or back via the DLR and Jubilee Line to Waterloo. (*Julian 01256-356012*)

29 July Day visit to **Fishbourne Roman Palace** (with David Rudkin who gave us such an entertaining and informative lecture in April). Meet at Fishbourne at 10.30 am for the 11.00 tour; if we have 20 or more we can get the group discount (£3.50 children and senior citizens; £3.70 others). We shall have other suggestions for the afternoon. (*Mary 01256 324263*)

Thurs 10 August Evening visit to the excavations at **Silchester**. Meet at Silchester car park at 6.00 pm for a 6.30 pm tour of the site (remember there's a longish walk along the path there). (*Mary 01256 324263*)

Sun 17 Sept Visit to **Bursledon Brickworks**. Meet there at 10 am (take the A 27 from junction 8 on the M27 and follow signs). This is a museum of the history of brick-working, with a splendid mural by Michael Laizans and with special exhibitions on house-building and photographs. There are usually various activities to see (and a café). (*Tim 01256 322090*)

THE EASTER DIG AT OLD BASING

By Claire Lorrain

(Claire is a Young Archaeologist and this is her very first dig!)

This is a bulletin from the Basing dig, 17th April to 1st May 2000. This is my first dig and it has been a wonderful experience to see history from the text book unfold into structures and real life.

The dig has been based on what Time Team found last year, and it has been brilliant to be working with some of the people who were helping then.

We have been working in all weathers and conditions. Despite the mud, clay and puddles, we have had a good variety of finds which have included animal bones, glass and pottery. My most favourite moment was when I found the edge of a wall which probably forms part of the Restoration mansion that once stood on this site.



... Thank you Claire! May this be the first of many reports on successful digs coming from you and other Young Archaeologists.

IRENE ISRAEL an appreciation

Irene Israel, whose death at the age of 77 was recently reported in the local press, was a long-term friend of our Society, of the Friends of the Willis Museum and of the local Centre of the National Trust.

I first met Irene, however, when I was Secretary of the Basingstoke WEA and we were striving to put on classes in the Town. Irene, as Secretary of the Council of Community Service based at Chute House, was so helpful to us and virtually ensured the success of our programme. Indeed, she came to some of the classes as a student and her especial interest was in the local history projects that we ran.

Her talents and interests were widespread and the award of her MBE went some way to recognise her real devotion to bettering the social services and learning opportunities wherever she found the need. I, and many others, will miss the pleasure of Irene's company as she came to our Church Cottage meetings from her nearby house in Church Square.

Tim Herrington



Barbara Applin

HACKWOOD

We have now interviewed several people who were employed on the Hackwood Estate and there are more to come. We are finding that their stories intertwine, giving a fascinating view of a very special way of life. We have heard about the work of the gardener in Spring Wood (it used to take five weeks to trim the laurel hedges), work in the dairy, in the greenhouses, on the farm, and as night watchman. Many people tell of the wonderful staff Christmas parties and the films they watched in Hackwood House's own cinema, often before they were on general release.. I was particularly interested in an account of making cakes and teas for all the visitors to Spring Wood, so delightful a part of the open days. We are looking forward to hearing from the gamekeepers and many other people.

BASINGSTOKE OBSERVER

We have been asked to supply articles for this new Basingstoke newspaper, which comes out free on Thursdays. The first was based on an interview with Joyce Coltman, who is known to many people in Basingstoke through her voluntary work as a Haymaker (behind the cloakroom counter at the Haymarket Theatre) and at the May Club. Extracts from this interview had already appeared in the **OUR TOWN, MY SPACE** exhibition at the Willis Museum, and this article gave us the chance to tell of her arrival from London to Basingstoke before the "overspill" happened, of her feelings about the town and the amazing family party that takes place every year in Hyde Park, attended by over a 100 members of the family. We are working on further articles from the Basingstoke Talking History tapes and we have already had phone calls from people who have read the first **Observer** article and are willing to be interviewed.

As always, if anyone would like to help with interviewing, writing synopses or transcriptions or with research, do let me know (01256 465439).

CONGRATULATIONS TO ANN BROAD!



Hearty congratulations to our member, Ann Broad, who has just received a Good Citizen Award during the annual Tadley town meeting. This was for 48 years work as a Cub Scout Leader in Tadley. She has led nearly 353 Cubs, who gained over 3,000 badges. Ann has taught at Tadley Junior School, Chineham Park School and Burnham Copse School. And now she is a supply teacher.

And that's not all - in July she will be going to the Guildhall to collect another award - a Certificate of Thanks from the Royal Lifesaving Society!

FRESH EVIDENCE FROM VIABLES

In 1974-6 our Society did a small rescue excavation at Jays Close, Basingstoke, finding not only part of an Iron Age enclosure but the remarkable Viables double burial to be seen in the Willis Museum (and on our video **BENEATH BASINGSTOKE**). The work was written up ten years later in the *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club*, when unfortunately the grid reference was wrongly printed, so when development was planned on the rest of the site Tom Vaughan had some difficulty in finding it. However, as he told us, "two decayed seventies platform boots were unearthed during the initial topsoil strip so we knew we were in the right spot".

We give below a shortened version of Tom's report.. The full version and site plan are available on file for anyone who wants to refer to them. The Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust were contracted to carry out excavations only within the enclosure, so members of our Society helped by investigating features outside it – including the pit with the infant burial.

THE IRON AGE ENCLOSURE AT JAYS CLOSE, BASINGSTOKE (SU 6320 5005)

Tom Vaughan, MA (Project Officer, Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust)

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In early Autumn 1999 I undertook a small-scale excavation at Jays Close, Viables, Basingstoke, prior to development. The area had previously been sampled by BAHS under the direction of Mrs. P. Judkin and Duncan Russell in 1974-6, before the construction of the road. Our aims were to build on the results of the Society's work to determine the extent and character of the enclosure. The site lay on the south side of Basingstoke. It was a grassed area on a slight north-west facing slope, at a height of 105-112.5 m AOD over solid geology of chalk and clay with flints. While this made feature definition fairly easy, the slightest shower turned it into a sticky mud-slide.

The Society's investigations (A to F on the plan) had revealed a sub-rectangular ditched enclosure, 50 m x 42 m, with a possible entrance in the south-west corner, a drove-way to the south, and many internal features. A general scatter of struck flint indicated activity in the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age (Period 1). Analysis of the recovered pottery revealed subsequent occupation in the middle Iron Age, about third century BC (Period 2), and the enclosure had been dug in the first century BC/first century AD (Period 3) but was filled with debris as late as the fourth century AD (Period 4). Internal features included postholes, pits and gullies, thought to represent a number of timber buildings from Periods 3 and 4. A large pit within the enclosure contained two adult female inhumations with a large quantity of animal bone, overlying a cyst containing carved antler artefacts, provisionally dated to the third to first century BC (Periods 2 and 3).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the 1999 excavations, three sides of the enclosure ditch were investigated in addition to internal and associated external pits, ditches and gullies, allowing the exact layout of the enclosure to be identified and defined. Unfortunately there were no buried surfaces and it was not possible to locate accurately the internal features revealed in the 1970s in relation to the current site plan. This was probably due to truncation and landscaping during construction of Jays Close.

The enclosure was defined by a single ditch without a bank. Interestingly, the profile was found to vary in almost every section excavated: from straight, concave to stepped sides. There was no regular pattern to these variations, which might have been the result of irregular ditch-digging in the first instance, minor re-cutting and differential erosion. The ditch contained distinct upper and lower fills, the result of natural erosion followed by the deposition of debris.

One area of the ditch was 4m wide, far wider than the rest. At this point one side was utterly irregular, with deep, stepped, seemingly random depressions. However, this is reported to be a common feature within enclosures of this date in Hampshire, and thought to be the result of quarrying (*Pers. Comm.* David Hopkins).

Although no structures were identified, one probable hearth was recorded and a substantial quantity of burnt flint and slag was recovered generally. This indicates extensive burning/heating activity and in particular the smelting of iron, showing that the site had been more than just a simple farmstead.

The skeleton of a human infant was retrieved from an external pit and found by bone analyst, Ian Baxter to be less than 6 months old. As would be expected from a period of high infant mortality, the pit appeared to have been used for general rubbish disposal, rather than purpose-dug for the burial.

Only two small finds were discovered during the excavation, both within the fills of the enclosure ditch: a piece of carved antler, which was very similar to the unfinished red deer antler cheek-piece uncovered with the burials in the 1970s investigations; and a carved bone awl used for leather working.

The finds were dominated by pottery: Over 1000 sherds were recovered from which 49 individual vessels could be determined. Initial analysis has identified three major fabric groups: F (flint), S (quartz) and G (grog tempered) and three main forms: 1 (handmade globular jars), 2 (wheel-made necked jars with occasional grooved decoration) and 3 (upright bowls or jars). The technology of construction strongly correlated with the fabric. Most of the Fabric F pottery was handmade and varied from oxidised to un-oxidised, while most of the Fabric S and G vessels were wheel-thrown and un-oxidised.

The majority of the pottery was retrieved from the main enclosure ditch, three external pits and the subsoil. Only a very small quantity was recovered from the remaining features. In general terms the ditches contained mostly coarse Fabric F pottery whereas Fabric S predominated in the pits. Of the individual vessels, 23 were of Form 1, 23 were Form 2 and three were Form 3. Two of the latter came from the pit with the infant burial. These variations may indicate functional and chronological differentiation across the site. Further study would be required to shed more light on this.

The ditched enclosure with associated drove-way is typical of Iron Age sites in Hampshire. The exact duration of occupation can only be determined through specialist analysis of the pottery and other finds. However, preliminary study indicates that occupation only spanned the first century AD. This is at odds with the 1970s results which were similar to the much longer occupation at other adjacent sites such as Brighton Hill South, Ructstalls Hill and Oakridge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

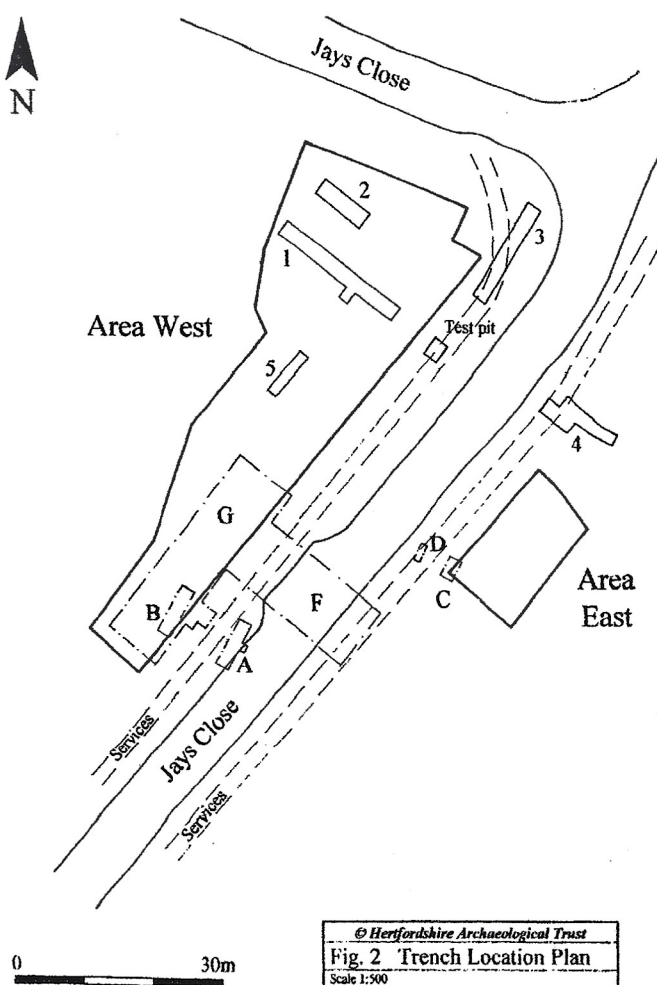
Jonathan Last undertook the pottery analysis. The bone analysis was carried out by Ian Baxter.

The author would like to thank David Hopkins, Hampshire County Council County Archaeology Officer, for his advice; and of course Mary Oliver and volunteers from the Basingstoke Archaeological & Historical Society for their input and valued on-site work.

REFERENCES

Millett, M. & Russell, D. 1984, An Iron Age and Romano-British Site at Viables Farm, Basingstoke, pp 49-60 in *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, Vol. 40,

Vaughan, T. M., 1999, *Viables Two (V2), Jays Close, Basingstoke, Hampshire: An Archaeological Excavation*. HAT Report No. 582 (10/99).



(ILLUSTRATIONS BY KATHRYN HENRY).

CALENDAR

Sat 20 May Visit to Winchester: Portable Antiquities BAHS

Sat 10 June A Millennium of Myth: the essence of Wessex?
Southern History Society, Hampshire
Record Office 9.30-5. Booking by 26 May

Wed 14 June TV programme on Dr Steven Mithen's work in South Jordan

Thurs 15 June ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING BAHS
Conference Room, Queen Mary's Centre

Sat 24 June Millennium Walk Around Greenwich BAHS

Outing to Titchfield Village & Abbey HFC
£8 members; £10 non-members

Sat 15 July Field Trip to Roman Dorchester HFC
(No charge but booking needed)

Study day on Timber-Framed Buildings HFC
Kingsclere (£6 restricted to members, we can send one)

Sat 29 July Day visit to Fishbourne Roman Palace BAHS

Thurs 10 Aug Evening visit to Silchester BAHS

Thurs 7 Sept Fieldtrip to Roman site at Fullerton HFC
(no charge but booking needed)

Thurs 14 Sept 1000 Years of Pottery Roy Stephenson BAHS

Sun 17 Sept Visit to Bursledon Brickworks BAHS

Thurs 12 Oct Bodies & Bronzes: the Langstone Harbour Project BAHS
Julie Gardiner & Mike Allen

Thurs 9 Nov Hunter Gatherers in South Jordan BAHS
By Steve Mithen

Thurs 14 Dec Cheese & Wine Party (venue to follow) BAHS

BAHS = Our Society Lectures at Church Cottage, 7.30 pm
For outings, see page 2

HFC = Hampshire Field Club; we are Institutional members and can send one representative on outings. The Secretary has forms.