

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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<u>Contents</u>	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	MARC 3 NEWSLETTER No 3
	EXCURSION Andover/Avebury/ Avebury Manor/Devizes	HANTS FIELD CLUB A.G.M.
	EXCAVATION Viables Farm	HAMPSHIRE NEWSLETTER
	SILCHESTER WALK	1973 issue
	WEA EVENING CLASSES	RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY IN HAMPSHIRE No 2

* * * * * Calendar of Events * * * * *

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 * Wednesday 26th June Hants Field Club Day in Dorset with Thomas
 * Hardy. Coach leaves Winchester Railway
 * Station 9.30 am. Fare £1.50. (Tickets from
 * Southgate World Travel, 1 Black Swan Buildings
 * Southgate St, Winchester)
 *
 * Saturday 6th July Full day excursion to ANDOVER/AVEBURY/AVEBURY
 * MANOR/DEVIZES. Leave Basingstoke at 9.30.
 * Fare about £1.25 . SEND BOOKINGS NOW to
 * John Oliver, 3 Milkingpen Lane, Old Basing
 *
 * Thursday 11th July ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Basingstoke
 * 7.30 p.m. Archaeological Society at Chute House
 *
 * Tuesday 16th July Hants Field Club excursion to Blenheim
 * Palace. Coach leaves Winchester Railway
 * Station 9.30 am. Fare £1.05; admission 50p
 * (OAPs 25p). Tickets from Southgate World
 * Travel as above.
 *
 * Sunday 4th August Visit to BUTSER ANCIENT FARM. Meet in the
 * car park at Little Butser, 2 p.m.
 *
 * Saturday 17th Excavation of Iron Age/Romano-British site
 * August to Sunday at VIABLES FARM, BASINGSTOKE. Details to
 * 22nd September be announced. All weekends (including
 * Bank Holiday Monday) and perhaps some weekdays
 *
 * Practical sessions on the treatment of excavation material are
 * being discontinued until the autumn, but members wishing to look
 * at material or books in the Museum annexe are welcome on Thursday
 * evenings. Ring Mary Oliver (Basingstoke 24263) or Barbara Applin
 * (Basingstoke 65439) first.
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NB SUBSCRIPTIONS were due on 1st May
Please let the Treasurer have them
as soon as possible

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Thursday, 11th July, 1974
Chute House, Basingstoke

We hope that as many members as possible will be able to attend the Annual General Meeting (papers enclosed). The second motion to be put to the meeting is of particular importance for the future of archaeology in the District and we are anxious to know members' views and suggestions. As before, nominations are invited for all officers and Committee, preferably before the meeting. If the business meeting doesn't take too long it will be followed by short accounts of recent and future digs.

EXCURSION
Saturday, 6th July 1974
ANDOVER/AVEBURY/AVEBURY MANOR/DEVIZES

Leaving Basingstoke at 9.30 am. We hope to see a site in excavation at ANDOVER, then go past several barrows, white horses, hillforts and other antiquities to AVEBURY: visit the Sanctuary, then picnic lunch and visit the museum (optional visit to AVEBURY MANOR - Elizabethan - entrance fee 30p or walk along the Ridgeway). Leave Avebury 3 pm, to DEVIZES (canal and flight of locks/museum - excellent - / historic town). Leaving Devizes 6 pm, arrive Basingstoke about 7.30. Cost about £1.25. Please support this excursion, which promises to be very enjoyable, and please make sure that you return your booking slip in plenty of time to John Oliver (3 Milkingpen Lane, Basing) so that he knows what coach to book.

EXCAVATION
Iron Age/Romano-British site
VIABLES FARM
BASINGSTOKE

Phil Judkins will conduct a trial excavation of a site threatened by industrial development, which we hope to examine more thoroughly next year. Details to be announced later, but please note this year's dates and keep them free - All weekends (including Bank Holiday Monday) from 17th August to 22nd September 1974 and possibly some weekdays. Already a water-pipe trench nearby has produced a Romano-British sickle; the results of a gradiometer survey have not yet come in but provisionally it looks rather different from the Ructstalls Hill site.

SILCHESTER WALK

Our thanks and congratulations to Duncan Russell on conducting a very pleasant and informative walk around the Roman town of Calleva Atrebatum. About twenty-five of us met at the church at Silchester, on a fine May evening, to the accompaniment of a distant cuckoo. This was a good time to see cropmarks of streets although it was tantalising to see a plane overhead whose pilot could no doubt see them even more clearly. The fine town-wall was made even more interesting by Duncan's explanation of its place in the town defences, and altogether we were very impressed by Duncan's knowledge of the site.

W.E.A. EVENING CLASSES

Society members will know that the W.E.A. is running a series of archaeology lecture courses in the local library; the series is divided into three yearly courses, of which the first (1973-4) covered the palaeolithic to Bronze Age, the second (1974-5) will cover the Iron Age and Roman periods, and the third (1975-6) is intended to cover post-Roman archaeology. The classes were very informal and, as the class was held around one table, each member of the group took an active part in the discussion; each member also took part in producing written work, and in compiling a record of the group's activities. Since full 'back-up' facilities were available in the form of books from the library, the course formed an excellent way of acquiring knowledge in fields where it is difficult to keep pace with new ideas by working on one's own or from books.

Because so much ground was covered in the first series of lectures, given by Dr Jane Renfrew (Southampton University), it would be impossible to attempt to summarise them all; I shall try to give an impression of some selected features which were of particular interest.

Dating methods for the earliest periods - potassium/argon dating etc as well as the 'old faithful' carbon 14 were discussed, with some emphasis in the later periods on the vast archaeological reappraisal caused by the carbon 14 - Bristlecone Pine Correction (remember the TV programme 'The Tree that put the Clock back'?) This has had a major impact on assessing cultural influences and interchange throughout Europe; Dr Colin Renfrew's book 'Before Civilisation' is well worth reading as a general survey - it is quite shattering to realise that virtually every reference to cultural contact in prehistory made as recently as five years ago now has to be reassessed!

Equally fascinating were the alternative theories of evolution, which become of greater interest when one realises the slender number and nature of physical finds from which the theories are derived. Much work remains to be done, and we may expect advances from the areas around Lake Rudolf - where it is not uncommon to have 200 metre depths of stratigraphy exposed by ancient volcanic activity or by erosion!

If we move to periods closer to the present, the complexity of the social structures, which existed at what have traditionally been regarded as, materially, relatively elementary stages of development, were discussed in some detail. The remains of Jericho, Catal Huyuk - even of the more elementary Iranian settlements like Ali Kosh - remind

us not to under-rate these early civilisations; and in Britain we have our own cultures which constructed monuments like Avebury, Durrington Walls and Mount Pleasant (and in remoter parts those cultures which could still construct Maes Howe) to which this lesson is increasingly being applied.

We were particularly fortunate that Jane Renfrew is a specialist in palaeoethnobotany and so was able to outline the advances which this new science provides in understanding early agricultural communities. The Iron Age and Roman classes will be led by Peter Reynolds, whom the Society will be visiting on August 4th in his capacity as Director of the Butser Ancient Farm Project; these classes should prove equally worthwhile and deserve substantial support from the Society.

P.E. and P.M.C. JUDKINS

MARC 3
Newsletter No. 3

Les Fawcett has taken the following extracts from the Newsletter of MARC 3 (M3 Archaeological Rescue Committee) to bring us up to date with what is happening on the M3 extension, with a mention of the Whitchurch site where some of our members helped.

"Work over winter months has been field walking, field survey, study of aerial photographs and geophysical survey. New sites have come to light including a probable Bronze Age ovoid barrow, two Iron Age sites and post-medieval sites. Apart from sites on the main M3 line some have been located in the immediate vicinity; these will assist in the choice of those selected for excavation.

Excavation Four days were spent on the Romano-British site discovered in the early stages of construction of the Whitchurch By-pass. Three sections cut across the Roman road in Stratton Park showed continuous use up to the 17th century and that it was laid across Iron Age fields. Work, expected to last about two months, has started on the ovoid barrow (Grid Ref. SU 527 364). Help will be welcomed. Write to P.J. Fasham, Beaconsfield House, Andover Rd, Winchester SO22 6AT (Winchester 4971) "

HAMPSHIRE FIELD CLUB AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
1974 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The meeting held at the John Stripe Theatre, King Alfred's College, Winchester, on 11th May, was well attended.

The minutes of the 1973 A.G.M. were signed by the President after being accepted by the members as a true record of events.

The President then gave his address in which his theme was the new two-tier structure of local government and its impact on the Society. Dr Course pointed out that this could increase the responsibilities of the societies in many ways. A careful watch was required in respect of historic buildings and archaeological sites so that they were not lost as a result of development. He mentioned the action taken

by the Verderer's Court in respect of the New Forest over the proposal that their authority be superseded by the County Council and the support given by the Society. He concluded by welcoming the new President.

The Secretary, before giving his report, thanked Dr Course for all his hard work on behalf of the Society.

In the Treasurer's report, although the financial situation was currently good, the cost of publications was high, a theme which was echoed by the report of the Editorial Board who were considering all means of reducing these costs.

The total membership stood at about 1000 and the Ornithological Section's membership had reached 600 and it is gratifying to note that a number of these are young people.

Reports were given by Local Secretaries and the New Forest Member had pleasure in announcing that the Forest will remain under the authority of the Verderer's Court.

The election of officers and election to council passed with a plea for additional help in running the administration of the society, particularly for a Programme Secretary.

Finally we came to Prof. Cunliffe's lecture 'Recent Excavations at Danebury'. Professor Cunliffe reviewed the work completed over the past four years, but did not mention any new facts.

Members then adjourned for tea in the College Refectory.

D. G. FANCOE

HAMPSHIRE NEWSLETTER
1973 Issue

A few copies of the HAMPSHIRE NEWSLETTER are still available (price 30p) from Mary Oliver or Barbara Applin. If anyone would like to get this regularly, please let us know.

RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY IN HAMPSHIRE NO. 2
Advance subscriptions

The second issue of RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY IN HAMPSHIRE (about twice the size of the first issue) will be published in autumn this year. Anyone making an advance subscription (i.e. before 1st October 74) will be eligible for the low rate of 85p (plus 10p post and packing); after that date the cost is £1 (plus 10p post and packing). The forthcoming issue will include reports on the M27 Iron Age site near Wallington by M. F. Hughes, the West Meon Barrow by Adrian Rance, a Mesolithic site at Wakefords Copse by Richard Bradley, Roman roads in South Hampshire by G. Softe and D. E. Johnston and a short article on Roman pottery from Fair Oak by John Collis. Subscriptions to: Mrs S Bremmer, 17 Leaside Way, Southampton, SO2 3DP (cheques and postal orders payable to South Hampshire Archaeological Rescue Group).