



BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

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CALENDAR

Wednesday 29th October: Southampton University Archaeological Society
lecture: 'Archaeology and Prehistory in the Somerset Levels'
by J.M. Coles (Dept. Archaeology, Cambridge). See
Newsletter 28 for details.

Thursday 30th October: 'The History and Archaeology of Iona' Lecture
by Dr. Richard Reece (Institute of Archaeology, University
of London). Leisure Centre, Council Road, Basingstoke. 7.30 pm.

Saturday 1st November: Council for British Archaeology (CBA) Regional
Group 12 (Berkshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire).
Annual open meeting at Portsmouth.

Wednesday 12th November: Southampton University Archaeological Society
lecture, 'Contextual Archaeology and the Beaker Culture'
by H.J. Case (Keeper of Antiquities, Ashmolean Museum,
Oxford). See Newsletter 28 for details.

Saturday 15th November: Hampshire Field Club and Department of Adult
Education, University of Southampton. One day meeting on
'Hampshire Buildings'.

Wednesday 19th November: 'Aspects of Antiquity' lecture, Jericho and the
Beginnings of Settlement, by Dame Kathleen Kenyon, D.B.E.,
D.Litt., F.B.A. (Chairman, British School of Archaeology
in Jerusalem, London). See Newsletter 28 for details.

HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY OF IONA

Every season we try to arrange at least one 'star turn' in our lecture programme. This year's 'celebrity' is Dr. Richard Reece of the Institute of Archaeology, University of London. Dr. Reece is perhaps best known as an authority on coins, but his researches into the origins and spread of Christianity in Britain have earned him a sound reputation also. In recent years he has been conducting excavations on the Island of Iona in the Inner Hebrides which was granted to the Irish saint, St. Columba in 563 AD for the foundation of a monastery. It was the base from which the Celtic church set about converting the heathen Picts in northern and eastern Scotland to Christianity.

Dr. Reece's lecture will be at the Leisure Centre, Council Road at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 30th October.

CBA GROUP 12 ANNUAL OPEN MEETING 1975

The Council for British Archaeology Group 12 Open meeting on Saturday 1st November is a gathering of amateur and professional archaeologists from Berkshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire to report on excavations and fieldwork during the year and to exchange ideas and information. All interested persons are invited to attend. An exhibition of current work will be mounted which will be open from 12.00 to 5.00 p.m. The meeting itself starts at 2.30, when the principal speaker will be the leading underwater archaeologist, Mrs. Margaret Rule, F.S.A., who will be reporting on her first full season's work on the sunken ship 'Mary Rose'. Tea will be provided for a 'small charge', followed by a number of local speakers who will give brief reports on their work. As usual at CBA functions there will be a bookstall.

Tickets for the meeting are available from Richard Searle at 50p each which will admit to all parts of the proceedings including Portsmouth City Museum which is opposite the meeting place, ALEXANDRA HOUSE, MUSEUM ROAD, OLD PORTSMOUTH.

EXCAVATION AT WINKLEBURY CAMP, BASINGSTOKE

Information has been received from the Department of the Environment that their proposed excavation of part of the Iron-Age hillfort at Winklebury, in advance of a school being built there, will begin on Monday 3rd November. It is expected that they will welcome volunteer diggers from this Society, but at the moment no contact has been made with their director. Further information will be announced when available.

RICHARD WILLOWS

It is with deep regret that we report the death of our member Mr. Richard Willows, late of Boundary Hall, Tadley, on 30th August.

PARISH BOUNDARIES

As part of its 'Evolution of the Landscape Project' the Society of Antiquaries of London decided at a meeting in Burlington House on the 10th May that "ecclesiastical parish boundaries in Dorset, Hants and Wilts should be examined totally, surveyed as necessary and recorded, in accordance with a consistent system, as a contribution to a national archive". Members will no doubt recall the Sarsen Stone Survey which is part of the same project. Once again this Society has been asked to

participate in the collaborative research and the following points should serve as an introduction, and may even whet appetites for what could be an absorbing study for future months.

Parish boundaries indicate what, for a variety of reasons, were selected as suitable lines and suitable means to bound blocks of land then operated as political, social or economic entities.

The nature of the types of boundary can be analysed and, since prehistoric boundary banks are fairly often incorporated, the degree of continuity of defined blocks of land can be estimated.

The boundaries will frequently incorporate parts of manorial bounds. The constituent parts of the whole parish in Saxon/Medieval terms will sometimes emerge.

The age of different parts of the boundary will often be assessable by a combination of documentary and field work including, perhaps, botanical species analysis. Comparison of joint boundaries recorded in charters related to contiguous land blocks would be of particular interest when the ground was surveyed.

By definition, parish boundaries will cross or include 'runs' or cross-sections of all pre-Christian earthworks not earlier flattened. The changes in landscape organisation will at these points be demonstrated. Study of these boundaries would begin with the best recoverable documentation. Thereafter air photographs or the results of the scrutiny of air photographs by experienced interpreters would be made available. Perambulation would then be necessary with details, including photographs taken, recorded on 6" maps and tally cards.

Features specifically involved will include hill-forts and settlements, barrows, other mounds etc., constructed for the purpose, stones, dykes, lynchets, natural features, roads along the boundaries, roads through gaps in the boundaries, etc.

Members may be encouraged by the knowledge that our member, Mr. Nigel Bell, has applied Professor Hoskins' hedgerow dating method to field boundaries in and around Newnham with some considerable success. Provided one is able to identify different plant species in hedgerows the technique of estimating the length of time a hedge has stood is quite simple.

DESIGNATED AREAS

In the journal 'Municipal Engineering' of 10th October there is a brief description of a Government proposal to introduce legislation giving archaeologists the right to excavate and record sites in areas threatened by development. The aim of the proposal is to give local authorities powers to designate areas of archaeological importance. It would seem that in the first instance designations will concentrate on the historic towns and cities with the most threatened sites. Counties and local authorities would share the task of designation and in each case a specified archaeological body would be authorised to dig. The emphasis is on quick action, with a time limit of four months for excavation or even less if delay would be contrary to the public interest.

Such proposals come too late to rescue Worcester, or even Basingstoke, but should be viewed with general optimism and enthusiasm. However, the emphasis on speed almost certainly dictates professional excavations. Amateur societies by their nature require time for their operations

HAMPSHIRE BUILDINGS

The Hampshire Field Club and the Department of Adult Education, University of Southampton, have organised a one-day meeting to be held in the Geography Lecture Theatre I on Saturday 15th November, to discuss Hampshire Buildings. Speakers will include Professor M.W. Barley on sixteenth and seventeenth century buildings and a talk on conservation areas in Hampshire by P.A. Turner of the County Planning Office. Beginning at 10.00 a.m. the meeting is expected to go on till 5.00 p.m. and it is hoped to arrange an informal visit to the newly restored Tudor Merchant's Hall in Southampton.

LOCAL POTTERY FINDS

Someone with his eyes closer to the ground than most it seems is Richard Rushent-Oram, whose peering into holes and trenches during recent months has been rewarded with the following archaeological finds:

1. A single pot sherd was found at map reference SU 605465 in the field enclosed on three sides by Inwood Copse, Farleigh Lane, near Dummer. The sherd is plain, similar to many found at Ructstalls Hill.
2. Three pot sherds found at map reference SU 639517 opposite the Horse and Jockey in Hackwood Road. These are again of the type found fairly widely in North Hampshire and have been classified by the Basingstoke Museum as early Romano/British.
3. Several sherds found in a drainage culvert dug on the south side of the new road between Hackwood Road and Cliddesden Road map reference SU 642512. Again of the same type and period. A large rusty iron nail was also found with these sherds but its age would be rather difficult to ascertain.

RICHARD RUSHENT-ORAM

Richard's notes above should remind us that we all ought to investigate any pit, trench or roadworks that we come across in our daily rounds, if only to prove that 'nothing' of archaeological significance has been disturbed. Archaeological sites often come to light by chance through the removal of soil and in our chalky earth ditches and pits may be clearly distinguishable as patches of darker soil cutting down into the white chalk. Obviously the upcast at the side of the excavation is worth a glance too. Although he does not say so, I suspect Richard's finds came from here rather than the bottom.

People may be deterred from investigating someone else's trench but unless we go and look, who will? Ideally a suspected 'site' should be notified to either the local museum or one of the Society's Committee who will initiate further investigations. If the thought of being made to look silly is a deterrent from reporting the finding of a piece of

pottery or brick, it should be remembered that it is better that a suspected site be proved negative than have an important one go unnoticed and lost for ever. We are the only active group in the District covering a very wide area. It is therefore all the more important that we should all keep our eyes open.

Written contributions for the Newsletter are always welcome from members, but alas come too infrequently. Comments, suggestions and observations from a few others would certainly help to vary its present style. Contributions to Richard Searle please.