



BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

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CALENDAR

Thursday, 23rd
February

'Neolithic & Bronze Age Settlement Patterns' Lecture
by Les Groube, Dorset Archaeological Survey Officer.
Chute House, 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday, 8th
March

'The Early Bronze Age of China' Lecture by Prof.
William Watson. 7.30 p.m. Lecture Theatre 1, Med.
& Biological Sciences Bldg, Southampton University.

Friday 17th to
Sunday 19th
March

Weekend conference on Aethelred the Unready at
Oxford University; details from Dept. for External
Studies.

Saturday, 18th
March

'Old Farmhouses & Cottages' Lecture by Miss J.
Harding, Surrey Vernacular Architecture Cttee, to
joint meeting of Basingstoke Archaeological Society,
Basingstoke Industrial Archaeology Group and the
Hants. Field Club. 2.45 p.m. Chute House.

Second/third
week in March
to 30th April

Excavations at Cowdery's Down, Basingstoke

Monday, 17th
April

Meeting of the Willis Historical Society. Eastrop
Church Hall, 7.30 p.m.

NEOLITHIC AND BRONZE AGE SETTLEMENT PATTERNS: THE EVIDENCE OF BURIAL MOUNDS

Les Groube, our February speaker, is Archaeological Survey Officer for the Dorset Archaeological Committee. His subject is one which will have a particular fascination for anyone who has looked at the round barrows at Popham - the 'Popham beacons' or the mutilated long barrow at Down Grange or has gone farther afield to other long and round barrows or chambered tombs. Neolithic and Bronze Age people tend to be rather shadowy as so little is known of their living sites, but how much can be told from their burial mounds?

Mr Groube's lecture will be on Thursday, 23rd February at Chute House, 7.30 p.m.

EXCAVATIONS AT COWDERY'S DOWN

Stand by all diggers! The County Museum Service propose to start excavations at Cowdery's Down in the second or third week of March, continuing until 30th April.

Members of our Society are invited to take part in the excavation, and further details will be announced as soon as they are known - meanwhile please book these dates in your diary if you plan to help. Volunteers will be needed during the week as well as at weekends.

The excavation should prove to be a welcome change from our usual Iron Age sites - though it's usually dangerous to suggest that; there may be something unexpected! From the air there appear to be Bronze Age ring ditches and a Civil War earthwork connected with the siege of Basing House.

OLD FARMHOUSES AND COTTAGES

This is the subject of a lecture to be given to a joint meeting of our Society with the Basingstoke Industrial Archaeology Group and the Hampshire Field Club. The speaker will be Miss J Harding F.S.A., of the Vernacular Architecture Group.

This is an addition to our usual Thursday meetings and will be held on Saturday, 18th March at Chute House, 2.45 p.m.

We are planning to provide tea/coffee etc. Could anyone who is willing to help with this please contact Alison Jamieson (Basingstoke 56947)?

IDEAS, PLEASE!

Have any members got ideas for future lectures, visits or trips? So far we have found our lecturers mostly by personal contact, but it may be that this limits our range and that our own members have better ideas. The committee is thinking now about next year's programme and we would be very glad if you could let us know in the next two weeks, if possible, of any people of themes you'd like to hear or any places you'd like to visit.

Don't let this put you off giving us your ideas during the rest of the year, of course!

BARBARA APPLIN

FIELD WALKING

A few stout-hearted members braved the mud and rain to join the MARC 3 fieldwalkers at Micheldever on Saturday, 4th February. About 20 people from various societies tried out various methods of field walking, and Peter Fasham has promised to let us know what he learnt from the exercise.

It was a pity that the weather was so bad and that the Sunday fieldwalk had to be cancelled, but no doubt there will be another call for walkers before long.

THE WILLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

At a meeting called in Eastrop Church Hall on 6th February it was decided to form the Willis Historical Society. A steering committee was appointed to arrange the first year's programme of four meetings, after which a constitution will be proposed. Mrs Barbara Herrington agreed to act as Secretary for the steering committee.

One important aim of the society is to commemorate the name of George Willis, the founder of Basingstoke's Willis Museum, the centenary of whose birth falls this year. Lectures at the quarterly meetings will cover historical subjects and it is hoped to organise the collecting of information, photographs etc. of old Basingstoke.

Our own Society and the Basingstoke Field Society will be represented on the steering committee to prevent a clash of interests or dates. Some of our members suggested in 1976 that the Basingstoke Archaeological Society should include 'historical' in its title but, although many of our members are interested in historical as well as archaeological aspects, it was felt that our membership was not large enough to cover too wide a field. We wish the Willis Historical Society well in its plans for the future and will be delighted to co-operate in projects of mutual interest.

The first open meeting of the Willis Historical Society will be held at Eastrop Church Hall at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, 17th April, when a tape recording of Mr Willis's memories of Basingstoke will be heard, accompanied by slides. Further details (subscription etc.) will be announced later.

BOOKS NO HOME SHOULD BE WITHOUT

A Book Society leaflet recently gave under this heading:
Techniques of Archaeological Excavation by Philip Barker !!

THE EARLY BRONZE AGE OF CHINA

This will be the sixth lecture in the 'Aspects of Antiquity' series, the speaker Professor William Watson of the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London.

75p per single lecture. On Wednesday, 8th March in Lecture Theatre 1, Medical & Biological Sciences Building, Boldrewood (entrance off Bassett Crescent East), Southampton University, at 7.30 p.m.

NEWS FROM THE WILLIS MUSEUM

A new Art Gallery on the ground floor will be opened on 17th February with an exhibition of water colours of 'Scenes from Romany Life' by Juliet Jeffery, continuing till March 28th.

MORE FROM BASINGSTOKE WILLS

It is becoming more and more clear that Basingstoke in the 16th century was a place where there was a lot of trade and several well-to-do people, apart from Thomas Lane, the mercer I wrote about before (Newsletter 41). Sabaoth Hitchcock was a man who tanned leather and sold leather goods, gloves and 'points' and purses. He had four 'working vats' and used horse hide, doe skin and buckskin and lamb's leather. Some must have been gilt because he had three gold skins.

Nicholas Harris did not seem to have a business, unless he made good money from his farm, where he had six cart horses, four kine, hogs worth 20s and sheep worth £6 (probably a herd of about 80, as, in another will, 38 sheep were priced at £3.5.0.) But he left one son a parcell-gilt cup, two silver spoons and 63s 4d, to another son a 'standing nutte' which must have been a coconut, and two more silver spoons, and to two other sons he left still more spoons, six each.

George Cox was a clothier, who bought wool, sent it out to be dyed, cleaned and woven, and had in his shop 22 pieces of kersey of all colours, worth £33. He died owing for ten tods (a tod is 28 lb) or wool to four different people and to John Gilbert for kerseys scouring and milling 26s, and to Thomas Birch for weaving eight kerseys. Sadly, he died before his last child was born, leaving it 20 marks in his will, and a cradle waiting in the loft over the hall.

Ladies left wills too. Anna Barnarde remembered her children and grandchildren (though she probably caused a family row over the feather bed - she left it between two of them). She left to a daughter-in-law her best petticoat, her best frock, a white cap, an apron, a double veil and a smock and to her two daughters a 'pranked apron' each. She still had left a russet frock, a veil, a white cap, a smock, a holland kerchief and a 'nysett' which is a 'light neck covering' and bequeathed them to friends.

Elizabeth Lancaster was so proud of her glass windows that she made a point of leaving one of them to her son-in-law. One was in the 'chamber', one in the 'hall' and one 'at the house where my brother Michael did dwell'.

Joan Walker left twenty friends and relations something each, and where most testators left a godchild a lamb, or a few pence, she left 'to Thomas Williamson my godson a pot of a gallon of brass', which was a magnificent present.

By the way, 'lake' (Newsletter 42) may mean 'lawn', so that 'hedlak' may mean 'headlawn', fine white linen for headwear.

ANNE HAWKER

AETHELRED THE UNREADY

A weekend conference to mark the 1,000th anniversary of his accession to the throne will be held at St Edmund Hall, Oxford on Friday 17th to Sunday 19th March. Details from Dept of Extra-Mural Studies, Rewley House, 3-7 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA.