



BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Number 58

February 1980

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CALENDAR

Thursday 28th February	'Chalton, The Middle Saxon Village' by Tim Champion, 7.30 p.m. Chute House.
Wednesday 5th March	'Hillforts: current problems and future prospects' by Prof. Dennis Harding Lecture Theatre A, Physics Building, Southampton University, 7.30 p.m.
Thursday 27th March	'Richard Jefferies - Viewer and Visionary' by Mark Daniel, 7.30 p.m. Chute House.
Friday to Monday 4th - 8th April	Training Dig at Viables
Friday 11th April	Food, Forum and Fun, Kempshott Village Hall, 7.30 p.m.

THE SAXON VILLAGE AT CHALTON, HANTS

The modern village of Chalton lies about six miles south of Petersfield, beyond Butser, just off the A3. Its Saxon predecessor, which had probably been abandoned by the ninth century, was situated above the modern village on a high, exposed chalk ridge. What little dating evidence we have suggests a possible heyday around the seventh century AD.

It is suggested that this type of Saxon village, consisting of groups of timber, post-built houses, barns and possibly workshops, was characteristic of rural settlement before the tenth century AD. It is probable also that there were hundreds of such settlements, thriving on an agricultural economy throughout southern England. Several have come to light and been excavated in recent years by chance, having turned up unexpectedly during the excavation of earlier sites. In much the same way the Saxon buildings on Cowdery's Down, Old Basing, presented themselves on a very mixed site spanning 3-4000 years from the Bronze Age to the Civil War, during excavations in 1978-9. (See Newsletter No.57 for an interim account of the 1979 season.)

Chalton was excavated by Dr. Tim Champion over several seasons from about 1970. Avid viewers of the BBC Chronicle series will remember the programme in which Tim, in shirt sleeves on the sun-soaked hillside, in a sea of blinding white, stripped chalk, led the cameras around the rows of post holes and trenches, giving a clear and expert account of the village, its structures and lifestyle. Since then some new and untried theories have emerged, following post excavation research and analysis, which we shall be privileged to hear when Tim talks to us about Chalton on February 28th. We can look forward to an interesting and well-presented lecture on a Saxon village which it is tempting to parallel with the Cowdery's Down settlement we shall return to this summer.

Chute House, Basingstoke, 7.30 p.m. February 28th.

TRAINING DIG

APRIL 4th - 8th

VIABLES, BASINGSTOKE

We are organising a short training dig over Easter (Good Friday to Easter Monday inclusive) in response to requests at the last A.G.M. The aim is to give instruction in digging techniques, recognition of layers, interpretation of sections, methods of measurement etc. and to give as much practice as possible in these over the four days. In order to prepare properly, we need to know how many people are interested in joining in, so if you would like to be included, or would like more information, please phone Peter Heath at Basingstoke 27713.

There will be at least two excavations in Basingstoke this summer at Cowdery's Down in June and at Basing House in July, both of which will require as much help as we can give, so all those who take part in the training dig will have plenty of opportunity to put their new-found skills into practice!

FOOD, FORUM AND FUN

APRIL 11th

You will all have received an invitation to this rather special evening at Kempshott Village Hall, and we hope that, if you haven't already ordered your tickets from Alan Roach at 1 Thrush Close, Basingstoke, you will shortly be doing so. It promises to be a pleasant evening, good refreshments and a panel of archaeological specialists who are all old friends of the Society. In order to make the evening a success we need your support - your presence, your questions and artefacts in order to have a lively discussion and your sale of draw tickets. Please support this fund raising effort, and have an enjoyable evening at the same time.

The people of Basingstoke are fortunate in having access to one of the finest Tudor houses in the country, open to the public, still largely as it was when it was built by Sir William Sandys, K.G., in 1509-1527.

One of its most attractive features is the Oak Gallery on the first floor of the West Wing. Measuring approximately 75' x 14'6" x 12' high, it was designed primarily for exercise in wet weather, and is said to be the earliest and best of the long galleries which still survive.

The East and West walls are clad with oak linenfold panelling dated to 1527. Carved on this panelling are 794 separate designs, shields, rebuses, mottos, war-cries, and obscure family references, all relating to the Tudor Royal family and nobility, and the local Sandys and Brocas families.

The archivist at the Vyne, Mr W. R. D. Harrisson, has produced a catalogue, identifying every carving in this panelling, illustrated with photographs, clearly referenced, which provides a fascinating insight into the values of our Tudor aristocracy.

Possession of this scholarly work turns a visit to the Gallery from an aimless stroll into a most valuable lesson in domestic archaeology.

The catalogue has been produced in a limited edition of 500 copies, 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 12", on 15 single sided sheets, five of which are photographic plates. Copies can be purchased from the reviewer, or from the bookstall at the Vyne, price £2.00 each.