

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

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CALENDAR

- Sat 5 Sept Hampshire Field Club Visit to Stanbridge
Earls House, Awbridge
- * Thurs 10 Sept PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT & CHANGING TOPOGRAPHIES
Stuart Needham (British Museum)
- * Sat 12 Sept SUTTON HOO Society excursion
- Thurs 17 Sept An Introduction to the Ceramics Collection of
the Hampshire County Museum Service Margaret
Macfarlane (Friends of the Willis Museum) 7.30
- Fri 18 Sept Roman Mosaics HFC lecture at Winchester City
Museum (followed by cheese & wine)
- Sat 19 Sept Annual Conference of HFC at Basingstoke: The
Rise of Suburbia (see Newsletter 98)
- Sat 3 Oct HFC Conference on dating techniques & AGM of
Historic Buildings Section (King Alfred's
College, Winchester)
- * Thurs 8 Oct HISTORY OF THE BASINGSTOKE FIRE SERVICE
Marcus Connolly
- Thurs 15 Oct AGM & Family Letters & Recipe Books 1480-1750
Chris Lewin (Friends of the Willis Museum)
- Wed 21 Oct Conservation in North Hampshire Dr Peter Brough
Tadley & District Society (St Paul's Church Hall,
Tadley, 8 pm)
- * Thurs 12 Nov EVIDENCE OF PLANTS FROM ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES,
PREHISTORY TO THE TUDORS Francis Green
- Fri 13 Nov The Dismantling of a Barn at Manor Farm, Chalton
T Malle, HFC, King Alfred's College
- Sat 14 Nov The Brooks Excavations, Winchester Conference,
and AGM (HFC), Winchester Guildhall
- Thurs 19 Nov Gilbert White & Selborne Andrew Duckworth
(Friends of the Willis Museum)
- * Thurs 10 Dec Cheese & Wine Social & NONSUCH PALACE Martin Morris
- Fri 18 Dec Christmas Get-together & The Madding Crowd (Friends)

* Society activity, 7.30 pm Chute House, Basingstoke

HELP!

Is any member good at drawing plans/maps?
Please contact me - Barbara Applin
(Basingstoke 465439)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A reminder that subscriptions for 1987-8 were due on 1st May and should now be paid at the next meeting or sent to the Treasurer, Mrs Sarah Duckworth, 177 Pack Lane, Kempshott, Basingstoke. They remain:

£8	family membership
£6	single
£3	OAP and student

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM, held on 25th June at Chute House, was attended by the officers and 24 members.

In her report the Chairman thanked the committee for their work in the past year and commented on the varied selection of lectures which had been presented, as well as trips and practical work that had taken place. (New "pot washers" always welcome - Wednesday evenings except for lecture weeks, starting again in September at the Kempshott Village Hall).

The Treasurer gave her report and presented the audited accounts.

Officers and committee for 1987-8 are as follows:

Chairman	Mrs Mary Oliver
Secretary	Ms Lynne Freshwater
Treasurer	Mrs Sarah Duckworth

Committee	Mr Richard Dexter
	Mr Andrew Duckworth
	Mr Peter Heath
	Mr Martin Morris
	Miss Joy Needham
	Mrs Betty Waters

Mrs Sue Headley stood down from the committee.

Under Any other business the Meeting discussed a letter from the Hampshire Archaeological Committee, inviting the Society's support for their objections, on archaeological grounds, to the proposed route of the M3 extension at Winchester. The letter pointed out that advice from English Heritage, in favour of preserving scheduled ancient monuments along the proposed route, had been overturned by the Heritage Sponsorship Division of the DOE, and that English Heritage had not been represented at the Public Inquiry. The Meeting agreed to write in support of HAC, and our Chairman's letter is given on the next page.

The meeting also agreed to an additional Society trip to the excavations at Sutton Hoo (details attached).

After the formal business of the evening, Peter Heath gave an illustrated talk on the training dig at Odiham.

CO-OP

The Inspector
 Dept of Transport
 Marsham Street
 London

Dear Sir,

Archaeological objections to the proposed route of the
 M3 extension at Winchester

At their AGM recently, members of the Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society discussed the proposed route of the M3 from Bar End to Compton, and voted in favour of being associated with the objections raised by the Hampshire Archaeological Committee and English Heritage to a cutting through an archaeologically and environmentally important landscape. The detailed evidence will be presented to you by the above bodies, and this Society supports them in asking you to give the case your consideration.

Yours faithfully,

MRS M OLIVER

Chairman

LECTURE PROGRAMME

Joy Needham has again put together an intriguing programme. It opens with a prehistoric lecture by Stuart Needham of the British Museum (I understand he is no relation!), followed by a topic which might perhaps have been titled "The Rise of the Red Sparrows". Andrew Lawson will be making a welcome return visit, and other lecturers will include some new to our Society and some well-known - our own member, Martin Morris, and the "good Friend", Bill Fergie.

SUTTON HOO

As mentioned in the report of the AGM, details are attached of the proposed visit to Sutton Hoo. Please note that the booking forms and money should be returned by 28th August.

THE TUDORS IN BASINGSTOKE / ANGLO-SAXON ARCHAEOLOGY

Anne Hawker will be giving a series of day-time WEA lectures on Tudor Basingstoke (£15 for 6 lectures) starting on Tuesday October 6th: 10.30 to 12.00 at Church Cottage. Mark Reeve will give a series on Recent and Current Work in Anglo-Saxon Archaeology STARTING ON Wednesday October 8th: 7.30 to 9pm, Brighton Hill Centre.

DAY COURSES AT SOUTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY

- Sat 21 Nov West Sussex Before the Romans
J Magilton and others; 10-5 at the
Roman Palace, Fishbourne
(£9, members £7, concessionary £5)
- Sat 6 Feb '88 Roman Germany
Annabel Lawson; 10-5 at Southampton
University *
- Sat 27 Feb The Archaeology of Southampton
Panel of tutors; 9.30 - 5 at
Southampton*
- Sat 14 May Ptolemies & Romans in Egypt
K Wilson-Barnes and DE Johnston
10-5 at Southampton*
- * £8, members £6, concessionary £4

- Sat 31 Oct Women in Mediaeval Society Sian Jones
10 - 4.30, Southampton *
- Sat 7 Nov Using Censuses: for Local and Family
Historians M Escott, 10 - 5,
Southampton *

GREEK FRESCOES AND ICONS AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY, PICCADILLY

"Icons are images produced in the service of the Christian religion. They demonstrate the variety and also the paradoxes and polarities of religious art. Painting flourishes even as the State falters. The Eastern Orthodox Church and the Western Catholic Church, officially in a state of Schism from 1054, meet and co-exist in the same territory. Artists produce icons in a 'Greek manner' or a 'Latin manner' on demand. The Renaissance confronts the Middle Ages within an Islamic world. 'Greece' is defined in a non-Greek framework."

So reads the display at the entrance of the exhibition.

There seem to me to be three main areas of difficulty when we talk about icons. Firstly that most of the artists are anonymous, secondly that the Church had a stranglehold on any new or fresh ideas or innovation, and thirdly the tradition centres on a style of artistic expression that has its roots in Classical antiquity but which never developed past the Renaissance.

The Byzantine idea of filling the walls of churches with mosaics cannot be equated with the Renaissance frescoes which adorn the walls of churches of Florence, because the Byzantine concept was to create a sort of three-dimensional stage where God

appeared in Majesty (usually in the apse) and the Saints, in descending order of greatness, were placed round the walls as part of the throng, whereas the Renaissance frescoes dealt with one parable, miracle or event at a time. Nor can the Byzantine mosaics and frescoes be likened wholly to our mediaeval wall paintings which depict set scenes such as the Harrowing of Hell.

No, there is something else which I think makes it difficult for us, living in the West and not being members of the Orthodox Church, to understand icons - and that is their intimacy. They are very personal, both as regards the feelings of the beholder or owner and also for what they are themselves. Indeed there was one icon of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary which was to have had pride of place in the exhibition but the local congregation of Syros pleaded with their Bishop not to let it leave their village and their wishes were respected. The nearest I think we approach this intense feeling of intimacy and identity in our country is in the Elizabethan regard of the portrait miniature which was often worn next to the body of the owner.

Icons are of various subjects, including Our Lord, the Virgin Mary and the Saints and combinations of all three. They are generally of characters from the New Testament or of Early Christian Fathers. Seldom is there violent action, the mood is calm if not austere, with a timeless element expressing feelings of compassion, tranquility, understanding and wisdom. What we subconsciously miss is the lack of perspective and, for better or worse, the absence of exposed flesh, particularly the bosom. Both features are much in evidence in Renaissance pictures in the West.

It is said that a particular very early icon from which many subsequent ones were copied was itself a copy of a painting from life by Saint Luke of the Blessed Virgin Mary. However, be that as it may, although an icon may be one of many of the same saint, with its Greek lettering and associated symbols, it will nevertheless have its own identity and character. Thus you are never alone with an icon.

And so it was with the exhibition. There were three rooms duly darkened but with warm dim lights shining onto each exhibit, and each icon with its lozenged-shaped eyes looked back at you. They were all away from home and they seemed to know it. One had a bad scorch mark from a candle which had been placed too close, whilst another, placed in the centre of the room to enable us to see both sides, was obviously asking to be put back onto its staff to lead the next procession.

In spite of this, it was a moving and memorable experience and we must be grateful to the Greek Ministry of Culture for the chance to see them together with the recreated chapel with frescoes. Oddly enough, it was as if they had not been forgotten from home, for when I was there a Father from the Orthodox Church came in fully attired in black vestments and paid his respects to "his" icons.

EXCAVATIONS AT THE BROOKS, WINCHESTER

This is a site to be visited more than once before the end of July '88. It already has some quite unusual features and promises to become even more interesting as digging progresses. There are regular guided tours.

A Roman road is appearing, as well as parts of two Roman town houses which are likely to have had quite wealthy owners. A Saxon floor level of chalk has been identified, followed by mediaeval and 18th century wells and pits, six 19th century horse burials and a Victorian cellar.

The particular importance of this site is its relationship with written records. Before a trowel touched the ground, the excavators knew they were likely to find the properties owned by such people as Hubert the Idiot, Roger the Vintner, John Newman (fuller and citizen) and John d' Tyting. John Newman's house had very substantial walls and his occupation was confirmed by a well-cut drain and a fulling tank with slate base and the metal marks of sluice gates for drainage. John d' Tyting's large property included a large structure which has been interpreted (some think controversially) as the base of a dovecote.

Perhaps what would be most envied by those who have stooped over a laden wheelbarrow is the neat little conveyor belt being used to take spoil to the ever-growing spoil heap.

We shall be having a lecture on The Brooks next February. Meanwhile, more helpers are always welcome there and should write to Mike Morris, The Brooks Excavation, 39 Middle Brook St, Winchester (SO23 8DG).

BARBARA APPLIN

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD DEPT OF EXTERNAL STUDIES

Day schools at Rewley House, Wellington St, Oxford (unless otherwise stated):

Sat 10th October	Mediaeval Records of Property (limited to 20; £14 with lunch, £11 without)
* 28 November	Minster & Parish
* 5 December	Mediaeval Pilgrimages
* 27 February '88	19th Century towns of Oxfordshire
*£12 with lunch, £9 without	
Also: 5 December	Newspapers & Local History (Bulmershe College; £9 including coffee, lunch, tea)

Two linked day schools at Rewley House (£40 with lunch, £33 without) limited to 20: Computer-based projects for local historians

Weekends at Rewley House

	7-8 November	Palaeography & Census
	13-15 November	Art & Architecture in the Roman Empire
	21-22 November	Environmental Archaeology
	11-13 December	Mediaeval Palaces
1988	15-17 January	Britain in the 1st Century AD
	30-31 January	Maps for local historians