

July 1973

..... EXCURSIONS

Don't forget.....

Thursday, 30th August Evening trip to DANEbury. The time for meeting at Danebury has been changed, to 7.00 pm so as to get more daylight. Reminder: Danebury is the Iron Age hillfort being excavated, 3 miles NW of Stockbridge at SU 324 377. Own transport. No need to say if you're coming, but anyone wanting a lift should contact a committee member.

Sunday, 16th September A booking form is enclosed for this half-day excursion (jointly with the Industrial Archaeology Group), led by Phil Morris. Sites of archaeological and historical interest in Southampton, from the Iron Age to the 19th century. Leaving Basingstoke by coach 1 pm, returning about 8 pm. There will be a stop for tea. Cost 50p a head.

..... COMMITTEE

At the AGM on 28th June the following were elected:

Chairman:	Les Fawcett	(telephone Basingstoke 22312)
Secretary:	Barbara Applin	(telephone Basingstoke 65439)
Treasurer:	Robert Applin	(
Committee:	Pam Judkins	
	Mary Oliver	(telephone Basingstoke 24263)
	John Oliver	(
	Duncan Russell	(telephone Tadley 2039)
	Richard Searle	(telephone Basingstoke 20488)

..... EXCAVATION -- RUCTSTALLS HILL

Note: we are digging for four weekends only:

18th and 19th August
25th, 26th and 27th August (Bank Holiday)
1st and 2nd September
8th and 9th September.

No weekday digging because the contractors are on the site, so we shall have to concentrate our efforts at the weekends. There are still some vital questions to be answered about the site by sectioning further pits and ditches.

Times As before, digging from 10 am to 5.30 pm, with breaks for tea and coffee, and a lunch break from 12.30 to 2.

Access Please note that the best way in is now along the A339 Alton Road (off the A30 at the "Venture Roundabout"), and just before the road goes under the M3 a new estate road goes off on the left across the fields. Drive up this road, past a triangular wood, and the site is on the left, marked by our spoil heaps. This new road is not yet a public highway so your car insurance won't apply! Park off the road if possible. There is a break in the kerb by the site.

Equipment Bring a pointing trowel, bucket (lightweight is better), small hand shovel, hand brush. Old clothes advisable, and a kneeling mat. We shan't have the site hut there, as the site is too open to vandalism, so we

shan't have an extra supply of tools, so please bring your own! Any small boxes suitable for small finds will be welcome. Bring coffee/tea and sandwiches if you want refreshments.

..... EXCAVATION MATERIAL

Mary Oliver is organising a week's concentrated work on the material from Ructstalls Hill - some washing and marking of pot etc. fresh from the site, but mostly sorting the pottery. Anyone who is free is urged to come to the Willis Museum annexe on Tuesday afternoon, 28th August (2 pm onwards) and on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 29th to 31st August (9.30 am onwards). This is a splendid opportunity to find out how the pottery is sorted into types, fabrics etc and how it is dated.

..... FINDS REGISTER

For some time we have been wanting to make some form of permanent record of members' finds or archaeological investigations. Now Josie Wall has agreed to organise a Finds Register (probably jointly for the Archaeological Society and the Industrial Archaeology Group). This will be on index cards, colour coded according to period and indexed according to site, and is to give details of the location and circumstances of archaeological finds in the area, with a full description of the objects or structures themselves. It is to cover fieldwork as well - and negative reports are just as important as details of finds - i.e. we want to record places that have been investigated and found to have no archaeological material, for instance when new roads or houses are built. When the format of the cards has been worked out, details will be given in the Newsletter and we hope that any members who have made any archaeological investigations will let Josie have details so that we may start the Register. Iris Gregory's finds at Basing (below) will obviously be included, and Richard Rushent Oram's many finds along the new Loop Road, but there are many other occasions too when members have looked down footings trenches or along newly scraped surfaces. Please keep your eyes open!

..... OLD BASING

Note from Iris Gregory:

Mesolithic axe The site of a future housing development at the rear of the Bolton Arms, Old Basing, OS reference SU 666 534, looked a promising site for possible archaeological remains and so it proved one July evening when a Stone Age axe was discovered in the river alluvium. The axe was of the mesolithic period and measures 16 cm x 5 cm (at the widest part), and is a flaked light grey implement. Some further evidence of occupation of this period is provided by a microlith found at the same location.

Note from Bob and Barbara Applin:

Palaeolithic flake At the same site, in disturbed soil, we found a Palaeolithic worked flake - of the honey colour which seems a particular feature of Palaeolithic tools of this area.

..... CHURCH COTTAGE

When the floor of the barn of Church Cottage was taken up during recent restoration work we had the opportunity for a very rapid investigation of the ground below. Philip Judkins conducted the excavation, and his report is attached.

..... THE M3 EXTENSION: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

This is the report of the M3 Archaeological Rescue Committee (of which Mary Oliver is a member), outlining the archaeological sites on the route of the M3 extension and explaining the need for investigation of sites before roadwork begins. On the basis of this report a full-time archaeologist is to be appointed to organise rescue work. A copy of the report is in the Society library, and it can also be bought from Mary Oliver, price 20p.

..... RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY IN HAMPSHIRE

The first issue has just been published (No 1 for 1973) of a new journal under the auspices of the Hampshire Field Club, intended for the publication of archaeological reports. Number 1 has reports on the excavations of the late Iron Age salt working site at Brownwich Farm, Titchfield; of the late Saxon site at Emsworth and of a Saxon settlement site at Rowner. Copies from Mary Oliver, 55p.

..... BOOK BOX

As well as the books on long loan to the Society, we also have a selection of offprints etc which members can borrow - come to the Museum annexe on a Thursday evening.

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..... STOP PRESS! ! ! VISIT TO BUTSER

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..... This
..... Sunday
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..... Andover Archaeological Society have kindly
..... invited any of our members who wish, to join
..... them on a visit to the Experimental Iron Age
..... Farm on BUTSER HILL. You may have seen its
..... director, Peter Reynolds, on the television
..... Chronicle programme recently talking about a
..... similar venture of his at Avoncroft. They
..... will be shown round the site by Mr Reynolds,
..... and are meeting at the top of Butser Hill
..... at 4 pm. Butser Hill is just off the A3,
..... halfway between Petersfield and Horndean,
..... SU 717 203. Meet at car park at top of hill.
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SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

We have not yet received
your subscription for
1973-4 which was due on
1st May. Please let us
have it as soon as possible,
otherwise we shall regret-
fully have to assume that
you do not wish to renew
your membership and this
will be the last newsletter
you will receive.

Note on Excavations in Church Cottage

P.E. Judkins

Thirteen volunteers of the Society excavated an 8m 50 by 2m trench to a maximum depth of 75 cm in the western half of the aisled barn of Church Cottage, Basingstoke, on 26th/27th May 1973, in advance of restoration work which restarted immediately after the excavation.

The general architecture of Church Cottage indicates a Tudor origin, and a building of the present shape is attested by early town maps. However, the surviving fabric appears mainly Victorian, and the only firm written evidence relates to the period after 1865, when church records refer to the aisled barn as "the Vicarian Barn" and later "the Malt House" (perhaps referring to a practice of churchwardens brewing beer for parish festivals). In 1867 the hall in which excavations were carried out was converted first into a gymnasium; and then again in 1870 into a girls' school, though when this school moved to Fairfields in 1887 the barn reverted to parish purposes.

The major features may be divided into two groups - Victorian features, mainly brick-built and individual features, as opposed to pre-Victorian features, mainly occupation layers. In detail, and in order of antiquity, these were:

1. Solid brick-built draught flue for a stove, originally in the centre of the floor, but later moved back to the wall. Probably post-1870, related to the girls' school phase.
2. Two brick piers, one 1 course deep at the east of the trench, one 7 courses deep at the west by the culvert (see 3 below). Its depth shows that it was weight-bearing, but it has no obvious relationship to the roofbeams. Most probably post-1865.
3. Brick-built culvert, presumably for the stream early maps show as running beneath Church Cottage. Construction would be expensive, so a possible date would be post-1865 when the building ceased to be a barn. Construction trench yielded a fine plain clay pipe bowl, wine bottle fragments and dark brown glazed coarsewares.
4. Circular brick-built vat - a vat rather than a well because of the brick-built stokehole to the west and an internal ledge above its base. Likely to be associated with the malthouse phase of the building.
5. Deep Victorian building trench which destroyed the stratigraphy over a distance of 1m in the centre of the south face of the trench.
6. A crudely formed wall of flints with fragments of brick and tile, and no closely dateable pottery. Cut by brick pier (2 above) and a Victorian working trench but cut from a very high level; probably very early 19th century.
7. A rather finer wall of flints constructed in the upper levels of a deep robber trench. By stratigraphy, this would be contemporary with black clay overlying the flint cobbles (8 below) and chalk surface (9 below); the layer produced a fragment of "bellarmine" and is probably 18th century.

8. Well set flint cobbles, containing some brick but no dateable finds, extending over 2m x 1m 50 to the west of the centre of the trench; probably 17th/18th century.
9. A thick but deeply pitted chalk surface over a 2m x 1m 50 area to the east of the centre of the trench, cut away and replaced as a surface to the west by the flint cobbles (8 above); 17th century.
10. Below the cobbles and chalk, the first continuous layer, of thick grey clay, containing only very fine green glazed pottery and some coarseware. Probably 16th century, or early 17th at the latest.
11. At a depth of 50 cm an area 1m square of tiles pitched on end, contemporary with an area of rough flints to the west and a rather tenuous chalk surface to the east; probably early 16th century.
12. A further layer of grey clay below layer 11; dipping into a ditch in the centre of the trench.
13. Brown clay natural.

Further work will be required to knit these features into a cogent sequence of value for dating further excavations in Basingstoke, and recovering further occupation patterns.

The finds from the above excavation have been washed, and will be deposited after marking in the Willis Museum; a full report will be circulated in due course to all who took part, to whom my most grateful thanks.