

Lawson

Bulletin No.13.

May 1971.

Officers and committee 1971-2.

President and Chairman: Mrs. C. Graham-Kerr, The Thatched Cottage, Whitchurch Hill.

(Pangbourne 2901)

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. C. Perdue, Tall Beeches, Whitchurch. (Pangbourne 2009)

Hon. Treasurer: Mr. E. L. French, Mulberry Cottage, Manor Rd., Goring. (Goring 2277)

Director and Bulletin Editor: Mr. W. J. Fowler, 25 High St., Watlington. (Watlington 734)

Field Directors: Mr. C. Hart, 32 Reeves Way, Wokingham. (Reading 84627 weekdays)

Miss G. Sheridan, White Gables, Stoke Row. (Checkendon 224)

Committee: Mrs. M. Fallowfield, Mrs. M. Gould, Miss O. Buckley, Mr. H. Jones, Mr. S. Jones.

Annual General Meeting.

This was held at Tall Beeches, Whitchurch, by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Perdue, on Sunday, 9 May 1971, and was followed by tea and a meeting of the committee.

Mr. M. Aston, Asst. Field Officer, City and County Museum, Woodstock, spoke of the present crisis in the destruction of archaeological evidence and stressed the urgent importance of identifying and recording existing sites. Motorway archaeology had shown that many more sites existed than had been suspected hitherto, and this was especially applicable to South Oxfordshire, which is largely blank on the archaeological map.

The election of officers and committee followed. Owing to the expansion of membership and activities it was felt that the Group should be put on a more formal basis, and that we could no longer leave most of the organisation to our Founder President. It was also agreed that the subscription should be raised to a more realistic figure, to leave some surplus for the purchase of essential equipment after meeting increased postal and other routine payments. The new rate will be 50 p. for adults and 25 p. for members under 20, payable from the date of the A.G.M.

The President announced an increase in membership during the year from 25 to 60, more meetings and better attendances, and referred to work at Grim's Ditch, the Well and Lilley Farm, while a foray outside our usual territory had resulted in the recording of a hitherto unknown Roman British site at Little Milton. Classes had been held under Mr. D. Sturdy, and some members had attended the C.B.A. Group 9 Conference at Oxford. The Group will be applying for membership of this C.B.A. Group.

The Committee has arranged the following activities during the next months, with emphasis on fieldwork, in the light of the situation stated by Mr. Aston, who also assured us of the support of the City and County Museum's Field Dept. in our work.

Calendar of activities May to July 1971.

Wed. 12 May and every Wed. thereafter till further notice. Fieldwork under the direction of Clive Hart. Meet at The Thatched Cottage, Whitchurch, at 7.30 for 7.45 p.m.

Sunday, 16 May. Well. Meet at White Gables, Stoke Row at 2.30 p.m. (G. Sheridan directing)

Sat. 22 May. Lilley Farm Hoated Site SU 678768. From 11 a.m. onwards (W. J. Fowler)

Sat. 5 June. Well as above

Friday 11 June General Meeting, probably with talk and/or slides. The Thatched Cottage at 7.45 p.m.

Sunday 13 June Lilley Farm as above

Sunday 20 June Fieldwork as above but meet at 11 a.m. with packed lunch.

Sunday 27 June Well as above

Sunday 4 July Fieldwork as above for 20 June

Sunday 11 July Well as above

18 July 6pm. Caher Gully's. Well. 2.30 pm. July 4. Comm.

Members who take part in the fieldwork could probably arrange to do something at other times. A copy of some brief notes on this work is enclosed for those who were not at the A.G.M. A fuller booklet compiled by the C. and C. Mus. fld. Dept. price 5 p. is available direct or through this Bulletin editor.

Reports on work in hand.

Fieldwork A beginning was made on 12 May, when Beech Wood, Whitchurch Hill, was visited and boundary ditches and banks were followed and mapped before failing light ended the exercise. At this time of year many fields are under crop and thus cannot be walked but our area contains much woodland about the details of which little is known.

Well. Work near this old well, traditionally described as Roman, has consisted of the excavation of two cuttings round the capped wellhead. Below the leaf mould is a scatter of animal bones and, below these in gravel and clay, mid. 13th and early 14th cent. sherds above R.B. sherds of the late 3rd and early 4th cents.

Reports on work in hand (continued)

Lilley Farm Moated Site. SU 678768

Excavation here has uncovered the N.wall and part of the W.side of a substantial foundation of flint,brick and chalk blocks,some 4.5 m.sq.,set on an island 14.5 by 12.5 m,surrounded by a moat 4 m.broad.Despite the discovery of a Roman coin(below) and a mediaeval sherd,the structure is probably of 18th century construction,and the few small finds would indicate that this was never a habitation site.Work will continue to determine the limits and eventually uncover the whole of the foundation structure, and outside to study the composition of what seems to be an artificial island.There are many questions to be asked:some answers may be forthcoming from documents as well as from the groundz.

Coin found at Lilley Farm Report by courtesy of Mr.D.Stepto, Sutton Courtenay.

Antoninianus (AE) of the reign of the usurper Allectus c.295 A.D.

Obverse. IMP C ALLECTUS P F AVG

Head radiate(crowned) and cuirassed(shoulder straps to breastplate)facing right.

Reverse. AEQUITAS AVG

Figure of Aequitas facing left holding scales and cornucopia.

Mint Mark. C.L.in Exergue and S.P.in field indicating the mint at Camulodunum (Colchester)

v.G.Askew,Coinage of Roman Britain p.52.Coin is no.512 in Askew's classification.

'Paghesham Magna', Surrey. Our member Ian Mason has drawn attention to the excavation of this site beginning in 1947.Although it is firmly a mediaeval moated manor there are some points which could help us in understanding Lilley Farm.Reference is made to 'the usual practice'of using spoil from a moat to raise the height of the island,one pier was built of flint masonry on a chalk foundation - like our N.W.corner,and the buildings were of timber with tiled roofs - which would be one explanation of our abundance of broken roofing tiles and little evidence of any wall material.(Ref.Arch.News Letter 1949?)

Publications of interest. Members are invited to let others know of any books etc which they have found useful.Details to the editor,please,to make this a regular feature of the bulletin)

'Discovering'Books,Shire Publications,Tring,Herts. Of particular interest:

J.Dyer, Archaeology of England and Wales 25 p.

" " " Cotswolds and Upper Thames (Berks,Glos.,Oxon.) 30 p.

Current Archaeology published 6 times a year for subscription of £1⁵⁰to:

9 Messington Road,London NW3 2TX

The Jan.1971 no.contains the report on Don Benson's excavation of the long barrow at Ascott-under-Wychwood,Oxon. D.B.is the Field Officer at the C.and C.Museum,and is the initiator of the County Archaeological Record to which we hope we shall contribute a good deal from our area.

TO MEMBERS.

- 1.Would those who have past numbers of 'Current Archaeology'please return these to the President,as they are needed by the owner for reference.
- 2.Contributions to future bulletins are requested.Publication in full is not guaranteed!
- 3.PLEASE KEEP THIS NO.BY YOU ONLY FOR THE CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES.THERE WILL NOT BE ANOTHER NO.UNTIL MID.JULY.