
* SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE *
* ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP *

Bulletin no.21

June 1973

President: Mrs. C.A. Graham-Kerr, The Thatched Cottage, Whitchurch Hill (Pangbourne 2901)
Chairman: Mr. W.J. Fowler, 25 High St., Watlington, Oxford (Wat.2734)
Hon. Sec.: Mrs. C. Perdue, Tall Beeches, Hardwick Rd., Whitchurch (Pangbourne 2009)
Hon. Treas.: Mr. E.L. French, Mulberry Cottage, Manor Rd., Goring (Goring 2277)
Field Director: Mr. C.R. Hart, 2 Goddard Close, Shinfield, Reading (Reading 882454)
Committee: the above, with Mrs. M. Fallowfield, Mrs. M.J. Rathmell, Mr. P. Vaughan,
Mrs. P. Woodford and up to two others to be co-opted.

Members will have noticed that the hope of a year ago to publish five numbers of this Bulletin during the year from AGM to AGM in May has not been fulfilled with only three issues in June, September and January. These have however been supplemented by three Information Sheets in the intervals, so that members should have been aware of the Group's activities.

Perhaps this is a more realistic programme, since we like to communicate with members about every six weeks or two months and there is not always time to get together and edit material for a full bulletin. We shall therefore aim to have the next number in September and members are reminded that notes on relevant matters are always welcome.

CALENDAR

- Sun. 10 June. Lilley Farm from 11 am. Future dates will be arranged with and notified to those who wish to take part. If you are interested, make sure your name is on the list with the Hon. Sec.
- Fri. 22 June. Members evening at Langtree School 7.30 pm. If you have slides or can speak for a few minutes on any matter of interest and relevance, be prepared. The President will also outline the scheme for identifying and recording medieval tiles, part of a nationwide census. Again, if you would like to take part, have your name on the Hon. Sec's list.
- Sun. 24 June. Fieldwork. Meet at Play Hatch SU743761 at 11 am.
- Sat. 14 July. Excursion to Woodchester, Gloucestershire - only open for a short period and some Cotswold earthworks. Cost approx. £1.25
 *** Those wishing to take part must inform Mrs. P. Woodford, Bonair, Crays Pond, Goring Heath (Goring 2107) by 30 June

- Fri. 24 Aug. General Meeting at Woodcote. It is possible that we shall have a Dutch archaeologist as guest speaker, otherwise Clive Hart will show slides and comment on his recent visit there (see below - Items)
- Sat. 8 Sept. Excursion to Winchester and Southampton - details later.
- Fri. 29 Sept. D. Miles on work in Abingdon.
- Fri. 27 Oct. D. Hall on Fieldwork. David Hall is the Hon. Sec. of the Higham Ferrers Arch. Soc. and has done extensive fieldwork in Northants and N. Beds. Examples of his surveys are in the OBA9 Newsletter 3. (see Publics below)
- Fri. 16 Nov. Annual Dinner.
- Fri. 7/14 Dec. Probably R. Jones, London Inst. of Arch., who, it is hoped, will take a course of lectures at Woodcote from Jan. to Mar.

Fuller details of all the above after 14 July will be available in due course but PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF THE DATES IN YOUR DIARY OR ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW

Ox. Univ. Dept. for External Studies (Enquiries to R.T. Rowley, Rowley House, Wellington House, Oxford)

- 30 June Day School. Settlement Patterns and the New Archaeology. £1
- 1-31 July Excavation of a round barrow at Middleton Stoney.
- 1-10 August Field survey of Dorchester. Help needed and instruction will be given, but fairly reasonable attendance from 9.30 am to 5.30 pm. desirable.
- Berkshire Downs Volunteers may be needed later for excavations here and courses will be held at Reading Museum, which may well be convenient for

REPORTS

AGM This was held on Sunday 20 May at Tall Beches, Whitchurch, by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Perdue and was attended by some 25 members. Officers and committee as above were elected and the President reviewed the year's activities, noting especially the work that had been done by up to 30 members at various times on the M40 and other rescue excavations, and the fieldwork which was continuing under Clive Hart. The President also paid tribute to the memory of Nancy Gould, whose death had deprived the Group of an ever cheerful member and a wise counsellor in committee.

The Chairman and the Field Director reported briefly on the Lilley Farm site and the fieldwork programme respectively and both stressed the importance of the latter, which in these days of widespread development could not be limited to a planned programme. Almost every excavation made for building schemes, road improvements and the like should be observed, and if there seemed to be disturbance of archaeological material, the site should be reported.

After the business meeting and an enjoyable tea and social break, Clive Hart gave a fascinating talk, illustrated by his own slides, projected by the Hon. Treasurer, on Herculaneum and Pompeii, with some glimpses of Imperial Rome.

Other meetings

Our affiliation to the Further Education Centre at the Langtree School, Woodcote means that we now have for our regular meetings a room with ample space for people and display, and good facilities for projection.

Fri. 19 Jan. The Chairman displayed and introduced discussion on the plans, drawings and finds from Lilley Farm.

Fri. 23 Feb. Richard Bradley of Reading University spoke on Maumbury Rings, Dorset, where a Civil War fort was built on the site of a Roman amphitheatre, which in turn overlay a Neolithic henge monument. The speaker described a detailed re-examination of the results of Mr. St. George Gray's excavations there before 1914, illustrated by slides of the photographs taken then. In all, it was vividly presented and of absorbing interest.

Fri. 16 March Clive Hart and the Chairman discussed a paper by H. Aston and J. Bond in the CBA9 Newsletter no. 3 on "Sketch Planning" and members were invited to try their hands at drawing such plans, especially hachures!

Fieldwork (summarised from a full report by Clive Hart)

Grims Ditch from Carmel College to Mongewell Woods was walked, the only surface finds being possible PRIA pottery near Nuffield, but the site of an enclosure was noted at Woodhouse Farm just S. of the Ditch.

At Digberry Farm (SU691882) the rectangular moated site noted by Crawford (Antiquity V(1931)168) was visited in January and another similar site, marked as a stoney-yellow rampart in adjoining ploughland, was noted immediately W. of the known site.

Development schemes which have been watched include pipe laying near Hailey House, Ipsden; building at Woodcote; sewerage schemes at South Stoke and Sonning Eye, where many brick wall foundations were seen, but a section through a V ditch produced only Victorian pottery and glass. Enclosure banks and ditches running parallel to the B479 from Exlade Street to the Far End, Lane End, were noted before they disappeared in road widening.

The major reconstruction of A4155 (Reading to Henley) would seem to be going ahead later this year. Already a good deal of walking has been done by the Group and by individuals, and work has begun on the recording of field names along the route.

"It must be emphasised again that all members can contribute towards the recording of the area. An excellent example of how an individual can help is the newly discovered moated site near Checkendon (SU692827) discovered by Roy Boyson when walking. It was reported and visited by the group, when a rapid survey of the horseshoe shaped feature was made, taking sections across ditch and rampart.

Please take note! And - Stop Press - a hammerstone was recently picked up from plough soil at Trench Green!"

CRH

Lilley Farm.

Most of the structure foundations have now been cleared, showing two contrasted bases. The N. one is a solid, almost rectangular foundation, 4m. by 1.5m. by 60 cm. deep, of two layers of chalk blocks set in yellow clay, topped by 4/5 layers of mortared flints with some bricks.

Lilley Farm (contd.)

The S. structure is marked by wall foundations only, mainly of flint, and these vary so much in width and depth, incorporating chalk blocks and some re-used sandstone pieces in some lengths, that it is difficult to envisage any substantial superstructure. At one point on the W. wall a length of 3 courses of bricks appears to have slid outwards off the flint foundation; otherwise there is no evidence of walling above the bases. The surface within and outside this S. structure, which is 4.5 by 4m., divided unequally by an internal wall, is a hard compacted chalky clay.

Finds, from the topsoil or immediately below, are meagre and provide no clear evidence of use and certainly none of habitation. This year a few sherds, a 17/18 C. key, an 18/19 C. candleholder and a small cache of oyster shells have been added to an assemblage which is puzzling and seems haphazard.

The structures were probably of late 18/early 19 C. construction and seem to have been demolished and useful material removed long enough ago for substantial trees to have grown over and within them.

WJF

NOTES

Regional Archaeological Units The Department of the Environment is sponsoring a scheme, primarily for rescue archaeology, by which the country will be divided into some 15-20 regions, each with a professional archaeological unit. The Oxford Unit, one of the first is now formally in existence, and its Director, Tom Jessell, takes up his duties in Oct. Initially the unit will cover the enlarged (1974) Oxfordshire but is likely to expand later.

This means that from 1974 our area, as far as rescue archaeology is concerned, will be part of the region covered by a professionally staffed unit. Among the objects of units will be the encouragement and expansion of part-timers' participation in arch. work.

CBA9 sees no clash between its aims as defined this year and the unit's work and has a representative - initially the Hon. Sec. - on the unit committee.

WJF

The "Times" and Archaeology. Since Feb. the "Times" has carried reports in which British and foreign archaeologists will make known their significant discoveries in the way that natural scientists are able to do in the Science report.

Ian Mason.

IPSDEN "The Devil's Ninespin" SU633851 This group now consists of 6 upright stones in a circle c.8m. diam. with 2 which have fallen outwards, around a central stone supported on 4 smaller, and recently tipped up on an end.

It is common knowledge that these stones are not a genuine antiquity and were set in place by "one of the Reades" from nearby Ipsden House. This was Edward Anderson Reade (1807-86) later a distinguished E. India Co's servant, who describes in his diary with some gusto how in 1827 he supervised the carrying through of his project to erect a "Druids' Temple".

Ref. H.G.W.D'Almaine, Proc. Soc. Antiq. vol. 32 (1919) 111

J.H. Baker, The Ipsden Country (Mc. Smith & Son, Reading) 1970. edit.

J. Dyer, Southern Woodland, an archaeological guide (Faber) 1972

GROUP ITEMS

Our Field Director, Clive Hart, was one of four archaeologists who visited Holland just before Easter, as part of the Oxford-Leiden inter-city exchange scheme, primarily to see something of archaeological organisation and particularly of the work of part-time groups.

Pat Woodford (Goring 2107) operates a transport scheme by which members needing "lifts" to meetings etc. will be put in touch with those able to offer them. She will also willingly receive any books for our growing library, loans from which may be made at most meetings. "Current Archaeology" is also available. The cover illustration of the Nov. 1972 no. is a view of the medieval farmstead site at Suller's Wood, where more than a few members worked.

Publications

Space forbids any list this time but a reminder is not out of place:

Copies of CBA9 Newsletter 3 (35p.) and of the report on the 1970 work (25p.) can still be obtained from Rowley House or from the Group Chairman.

STOP PRESS

- * Charlie Chambers is investigating some fishponds at Thame in advance of housing development and would welcome any help until the end of June, any day. Directions -
- * from centre of Thame follow North St. (Aylesbury rd.) west right immediately past the
- * cattle market (on the rt.) along Moor End Lane. After 300-350 yds. the lane bends sharp
- * left and the site is through the gate on the right on the outside of the bend.

ENVOI "The message came through from the planners that they will never be able to do justice to archaeological claims unless they have information. And the basis of information is fieldwork, with the results recorded in an accessible archive. (The quotation is from the report on the 1970 work.)"

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