

Deux & Tavan
Falkesford

** SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE **
** ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP **

19

Bulletin no.19

September 1972

Officers of the Group.

President: Mrs. C.A. Graham Kerr, The Thatched Cottage, Whitchurch Hill (Pangbourne 2901)
Chairman: Mr. W.J. Fowler, 25 High St., Watlington (Watlington 2734)
Hon. Sec.: Mrs. C. Perdue, Tall Beeches, Hardwick Rd., Whitchurch (Pangbourne 2009)
Hon. Treas.: Mr. F.L. French, Mulberry Cottage, Manor Rd., Goring (Goring 2277)
Directors: Mr. W.J. Fowler and Mr. C.R. Hart (Reading 882454)

CALENDAR

- * Fri. 29 Sept. Meeting at Greateaks, Cray's Pond (Oratory Prep. Sch.) at 7.30 pm.
* Mr. R.A. Chambers, Director, M40 Arch. Res. Gp. will speak, with slide illustrations,
* on "Excavations on the M40 route - Lewknor, Beacon Hill, Sadler's Wood"
* Members of the Goring Hist. Soc. have been invited to this meeting.
Sat. 7 Oct. Members have been invited to join the Goring Hist. Soc. excursion to Bath,
including conducted visits to the Baths and to the Museum of Costume and a
free afternoon. Cost approx. £1.20. Please inform the Hon. Treasurer (above)
Fri. 20 Oct. General meeting at Woodcote F.E. Centre, Langtree Sch., details later
and there should be a speaker, with slide illustrations.
(This will be the Group's meeting place in future - see below)
Fri. 3 Nov. By invitation of the Goring Society, at 8.15 pm. at the Primary Sch.,
Wallingford Rd., Goring.
R.T. Rowley, BA BLitt, "Excavations on the Upper Thames gravels"
* Fri. 17 Nov. First SOAG Dinner at Chiltern Chase, Woodcote. 7 for 7.30 pm.
* Guest of honour: David Hinton MA Asst. Keeper, Ashmolean Museum.
* Members who intend to be present and who have not yet returned the slip
* (Info. Sheet 3) to the Hon. Sec. are asked to do so, or otherwise confirm, as
* soon as possible and by 20th Oct. at latest. The cost will be £1.35, which
* must be paid by 20th Oct. Members are invited to bring friends, if
* accommodation allows.
Fri. 8 Dec. General meeting at Langtree as above. (20 Oct.)

Lectures at Dorchester Eight talks by different experts on aspects of "Dorchester in
the past: Mondays from 2 Oct. to 20 Nov. at St. Birinus Primary School, Entrance 25p.
Details and a course ticket (£1.25) may be obtained from the Univ. Dept. for Ext.
Studies, Rewley (if preferred) House, Wellington Square, Oxford.
One-day School - Dating RB and Medieval Pottery - Wantage Sat. 11th Nov. Fee - £1.25
Applications to the Director, Ox. Univ. Dept. for Ext. Studies as above.

Lilley Farm.

Work will take place here, weather permitting, on the following dates:

Sundays from 11 am.

Saturdays from 2 pm.
23 Sept.

8 Oct.

28 Oct.

19 Nov.
3 Dec.

Please come as often as you can. It is hoped before the end of the year - our
last visit in 1971 was on 12 Dec, to uncover the whole of the ground plan of the
structures and in the course of this to find some more conclusive evidence on their
purpose and use (See report below)

Fieldwork Meet at Whitchurch Hill 11 am (packed lunch) on Sundays, 15th Oct. and 5th Nov.

(For convenience a summary calendar is given on p.3)

REPORTS

Meeting. A general meeting was held on Fri. 25 August at Mulberry Cottage, Goring,
by kind invitation of the Hon. Treasurer and Mrs. French. After routine business
and reports on activities, especially work done on M40 sites, Mr. Fowler gave a talk,
illustrated with slides, on "The excavation of an RB rural settlement on Overton
Down, Wilts 1966-8"

Library This is being built up by gifts and loans, and books may be borrowed from
Mrs. P. Woodford. "Current Archaeology" is also available

Excursion to Fishbourne and Singleton, W. Sussex. Sat. 2 Sept.

This was an outstanding occasion. Thanks to the excellent staffwork of Clive Hart, and the map reading abilities of the navigators, the journey was through attractive country and free from traffic problems, and at both Fishbourne and Singleton, and at a welcoming "pub" on the way home, we all arrived at the right place at the right time without trouble. WJF

Fishbourne In W. Sussex we passed through some lovely villages, built in the same brick and flint as in our own Chilterns but with an entirely different flavour.

The Roman Palace was extremely interesting - we hoped that sightseers following the signs "Roman Palace" would not expect a cross between Buckingham Palace and the Vatican! A guide gave a brief talk on the lay-out. Half of the site is under houses and a main road, but local people and contractors have been very helpful in allowing trial trenches and general investigations as opportunities have offered.

The Museum is first class - so well designed and clearly arranged in chronological order. We then walked under cover round the North Wing, the only part at present exposed to view, and round the garden. There are many fragments of mosaics, and a complete one with a Cupid riding a Dolphin, surrounded by fabulous sea monsters - delightful! The garden has been laid out as it was in Roman times - checked by pollen samples - with geometrical box hedges and acanthus plants among others. Several of us returned home with Roman acanthuses! FMW

The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton.

This is set in a park, beautiful in its own right, having picnic places, nature trails and views of the Sussex countryside. But its prime purpose is as a museum, where old buildings due for demolition are re-erected, and buildings discovered by archaeologists are reconstructed.

The Saxon hut at Singleton is a reconstruction of a "graben-haus", based on excavation findings at Seaford and Shoreham. A Saxon loom is reconstructed and the details of weaving are explained and frequently demonstrated.

The reconstruction of a charcoal burners' camp, set in a wood, was particularly interesting, because such camps were in use from prehistoric times until nearly the present day. The huts are small and musty, of turf and sacking over a wood frame. The furnace is built of wood arranged in a cone to form a chimney, and covered with earth and turf to shut out the air and to conserve heat.

The re-erected Bayleaf farmhouse, with a large hall and overhanging first floor, shows considerable development of building techniques since the Saxon huts. The Southwater forge is interesting because of the many tools. Other buildings, such as the Titchfield market hall, Catherington treadmill, Beeding tollhouse and others make this open air museum a most interesting place to visit. PB

Fieldwork, Summer 1972.

At the request of the Oxford City and County Museum a survey was made of land along the A4155 Reading to Henley road in advance of improvements.

A medieval sherd, a bronze buckle and two clay pipe bowls were found at different points, but the most positive discovery was in High Wood, Harpsden, where an odd angular deflection of a boundary bank and ditch led us to a circular mound with a hollowed centre, 5.5' ^{diam.} by 1.2m ^{deep} at its highest point, and the whole made up of gravel and clay, covered with bramble and some large beech trees. The surface is scattered with minute fragments of tile which cannot normally be dated, but there were also two large pieces of Roman "tegula" roofing tile. There is a villa site half a mile NE.

Work has continued in the Crays Pond/Woodcote area. Since the survey began we have noted many rectangular pits, always in beechwoods, with the spoil thrown up on one side only. Their average size is 12-14' long, 3-10' wide, 3' deep. An example at Little Oakenwood, Coring Heath (SU647804) gives some indication of age as it has a large live beech tree on the N. ditch slope and one of 2' diam. on the spoil heap, alongside a rotted stump of the same size. These pits would seem to be connected with a woodland industry - sawyer's pits? CRH

Lilley Farm. Little work has been done this Summer as members have given most of their time to sites on the M40, at Dorchester and, in one case at Wallingford Castle, while the director spent a month at Cadbury Congresbury, Somerset (Dark Age reoccupation of Iron Age hillfort).

However, removal of the earlier spoil heap in the SE corner should, with reasonable weather, make possible the total uncovering of the structures during the next months. An expert examination of the bones recovered to date bears out the conclusion that this was never a habitation site. There are only 1½ lbs. in all, of which about 1/3 are too small to be easily identifiable. Five large ox bones, not from good quality joints, other than tibiae and the remainder is largely sheep/goats, a few pig - and part of

NOTES

Langtree Further Education Centre, Woodcote.

Through the good offices of Mr. Trout, Warden, the Group has now become affiliated to this centre, at the Langtree School.

This means that a suitable and indeed well equipped room will be available for our meetings, which will generally be held there from October onwards. We shall also have the benefit of other facilities.

BOOKS

Bray and Trump, Dictionary of Archaeology. Penguin 50p.

Very useful for most common terms and places, but it has its omissions eg "gruben haus" used in a report above.

Magnus Magnusson, Introducing Archaeology)

Harker, Digging up the Bible Lands)

Bodley Head £1.95 each

The Archaeology of Ancient Egypt, James.)

These are the first of a new series, primarily for older children but it is hoped that they will be useful as introductions for adults. There is a critical review in the July "Current Archaeology", the gist of which is that the first concentrates on personalities and is well done as journalism, the second is interestingly written but accepts fully the modern Israeli interpretation. "Ancient Egypt" is both by an expert and excellently written.

In the same issue of "C.A." there is a selective booklist attached to an article by David Revill on "Archaeology in Schools"

ENVOI

Both at Fishbourne Roman Palace and Singleton Open Air Museum, on our recent excursion, we obtained admittance at "students" rates: a reminder of our purpose in being interested!

Sept. 1972

WBF

Summary Calendar.

- Sat. Sept. 3 LF (Lilley Farm)
- Fri. 29 Meeting - M40
- Sat. Oct. 7 Excursion - Bath
- Sun. 8 LF
- Sun. 15 FW (Fieldwork)
- Fri. 20 Meeting
- Sat. 28 LF
- Fri. Nov. 3 Meeting - Goring
- Sun. 5 FW
- Fri. 17 Dinner
- Sun. 19 LF
- Sun. Dec. 3 LF
- Fri. 8 Meeting