



OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT NEWSLETTER INCLUDING
OXFORDSHIRE PARISH SURVEY NEWS

No 9 - September 1979

Anyone wishing to send contributions to the Newsletter should send details to the above address before the last Tuesday of each month.

OXFORDSHIRE

Bicester, King's End Farm Estate

Pete Briebrach reports that the next phase of house building has now begun on this large estate and more of the Romano-British settlement is now being exposed. The current finds are coming from a sewer trench which has cut through shallow spreads of soil laden with 3rd - 4th century occupational debris. Remains of a soil-bonded rubble stone wall have been uncovered in one side of this trench but this is so near to the site of the now demolished King's End Farm buildings that this wall may be post-medieval.

Chalgrove, Harding's Field

During August the moated manor site at Chalgrove has seen much varied activity. In the first two weeks of the month the Unit's annual training excavation took place on the site, with adult students investigating one of the barns and discovering a sequence of at least 3 buildings. There were visits of reporters from both Radio Oxford and the Oxford Mail. We continued to attempt to perfect the unit's camera-carrying kites.

As well as this the archaeology poses interesting problems. The current hotly debated topic is whether the crosswing was rebuilt on much the same lines as on earlier building or whether it simply has grossly extended footings. In the hall the remains of two earlier tile on edge hearths have been found beneath the complete hearth uncovered in 1978. All three belong to the latest phase of the hall when it was walled off at its western end. In the same phase a substantial post socket was inserted in the middle of the hall, towards its eastern end, possibly when a first floor was constructed over this part of the hall.

The pottery from this seasons excavations continues to be extremely interesting. During the removal of floor layers from the battery, in the middle of the crosswing, pottery from at least three distinct French jugs has been recovered. This includes a wheel thrown strap handle from a Saintonge polychrome jug from south-west France. The site has now produced more French polychrome sherds than ten years' excavations in the city of Oxford. Other finds this year include two chess pieces, one of ivory, the other of bone, a bone dice, several bronze jettons and a silver coin.

Kidlington, Moat Cottage

Richard Chambers reports that the three week excavation which continued the work of the 1976 trial excavations on this medieval and post-medieval moated site has now finished although some fieldwork continues. The summer's work on this site will be more fully described in a later issue of the Newsletter once this remaining fieldwork has been concluded.

Oxford, Trinity College

Dr Popplewell, the Bursar of Trinity, reported a Nuremberg jetton and a barbed and socketed arrow head discovered 2 years ago 'sandwiched' between the floor of the first floor library and the ceiling of the Bursary on the ground floor of the Eastern range of Durham Quadrangle. This range was built in 1471-21 and is all that remains of Durham College, a Benedictine College which was suppressed in 1544.

Stanton Harcourt

Richard Chambers reports that more cropmarks have now been uncovered by topsoil stripping in Dix pit.

Thame by-pass

The Thame Historical and Archaeological Society is maintaining a watching brief over the earthmoving for the Thame by-pass but as yet no archaeological material has been seen.

Wallingford

Pat Granados has reported that Mr Collingbourne of Barncroft Road, Wallingford queried the age of the remains of a brick floor found in his back garden. The floor was made up of both thinner early post-medieval and larger 18th-19th century bricks and appears to belong to a barn demolished some years ago.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Fairford, Claydon Pike

Basil Turton has carried out further resistivity surveying on the site and located an oval enclosure. This has an entrance to the south-east and possibly one to the north-west. Alongside it he has traced the line of a relict stream bed. David Miles has made contact with the American Air Force base at Fairford, where a number of staff are eager to help with the work and possibly with equipment.

OTHER NEWS

Kite Photography

The Unit has bought two kites for air photography. So far the system has proved particularly effective in scaring the living daylights out of site workers and local householders. Some acceptable plates have been taken, however, and it looks as though it will be possible to get noticable photo mosaics from heights around sixty feet by simply guiding the kite across the site and using a remotely controlled motor-drive camera. Basil Turton is the genius who is developing these control

systems. Higher level shots for lecturing and public relations are going to be more problematic because so many of our sites are close to airfields where air traffic control permission will be needed. (BGD)

Oxoniensia 1978 has just appeared and contains Unit contributions on Roman burials at Dorchester-on-Thames, and the Charlbury-Arncott Gas Pipeline. There is also a useful review of the Ashville report by Tim Champion. Prospective subscribers should communicate with the Hon. Treasurer, Oxfordshire Architectural & Historical Society, c/o Fletcher's House, Woodstock, Oxon. Subscription is £4 per annum.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED for excavations in Blackfriars, Oxford. For details please contact George Lambrick on Oxford 44748 after 6.30 p.m.

CALENDAR

- 18 September: The History of a Parish by Mrs K Tiller at Further Ed. Centre, The Bourne, Hook Norton. Tuesdays 7.30 p.m.
- 18 September: Archaeological Workshop by T G Hassall et al at the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, 46 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford. Tuesdays 7.30 p.m.
- 24 September: Abingdon before the Abbey by M K Jones at College of Further Ed., Northcourt Road, Abingdon. Mondays 7.30 p.m.
- 26 September: The Upper Thames Valley: Archaeological Study Group by David Miles at The Elms, Faringdon School, Faringdon. Wednesdays 7.30 p.m.
- 26 September: Archaeological Draughtsmanship by Mrs W E Page at Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, 46 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford. Wednesdays 7.30 p.m.
- 27 September: Archaeology and the Ancient Environment by M K Jones at Wallingford Lower School, Wallingford. Thursdays 7.30 p.m.
- 27 September: Oxford Buildings and Topography by J Munby at Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford. Thursdays 10.00 a.m.
- 1 October: An Introduction to the Study of Past Landscapes by J C Richards and Ms S Wright at South Oxon Technical College, Deanfield Avenue, Henley on Thames. Mondays 7.30 p.m.
- 1 October: The Past Around Us: An Introduction to Local History by Mrs K Tiller at Adult Education Centre, Towersey Road, Thame. Mondays 7.30 p.m.
- 2 October: The Roman Cotswolds, Roman Britain and the Roman Empire by M Henig at North Oxon Technical College, Broughton Road, Banbury. Tuesdays 7.30 p.m.

- 9 October: Town and Country in Medieval Oxfordshire by T G Hassall at Further Education Centre, Chipping Norton School, Chipping Norton. Tuesdays 10 a.m.
- 9 October: Landscape History Study Group by R T Rowley at Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford. Tuesdays 7.30 p.m.
- 12-14 October: Churches and Local History (weekend school) at Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford.
- 15 October: Anglo-Saxon Studies by Mrs P J Jenkyns and M Carver at Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford. Mondays 7.30 p.m.
- 16 October: Palaeolithic Britain by D Roe, and Mrs J Cook at 60 Banbury Road, Oxford. Tuesdays 7.30 p.m.

Further details of all these courses are available from the Course Secretary, Oxford University Department for External Studies, Rewley House, 3-7 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA.