

Anyone wishing to send contributions to the Newsletter should send copy to 3 Luther Terrace, Oxford (Tel: 43888) before the last Tuesday in each month.

Surveys

Parish Surveys. Basic instructions have been issued to all those people taking part in the Survey. Clive Hart has undertaken to act as Secretary/Liaison Officer for the Survey and he and Trevor Rowley are preparing detailed instructions. Anyone interested in the survey who has not already handed in their names and the parishes in which they are interested should contact Clive at:

2 Goddard Close,
Shinfield,
Reading, RG2 9DR

The progress of the Survey will be recorded in a quarterly Newsletter - probably incorporated within the Unit Newsletter.

M.40 and Other Road Schemes. The public consultation process on the M.40 has now begun and John Hinchliffe is preparing a detailed statement on the known archaeology of the various alternative routes. Field walking and survey will be stepped up this autumn, particularly in those areas where the consultation document indicates that there is virtually no choice of routes. John recently attended a meeting in Nottingham on Motorway Archaeology at which the first phase of the M.40 was held up as a perfect example of the coordination of archaeology and motorway construction.

A meeting has been held with Trevor Winters of Oxfordshire County Council to assess the likely road-programme for 1975-6 and field walking this autumn will be concentrated on the routes of the major proposed projects.

Towns Survey. The base maps for the towns have been completed by Patricia Roberts. Hilary Turner has drafted all the historical introductions and Julian Munby has begun to compile information on Listed Buildings and buildings not on the lists.

Excavations/Observations

Abingdon: Ashville Trading Estate. The Abingdon and District Archaeological Society with Mike Parrington have now uncovered a large circular ditch of Iron Age date with two recuts. There are possible packing stones so that the ditch may represent a circular palisade enclosure. Within the ditch there are some postholes, but the shape of any structure is difficult to determine, because of later ditches which cut across the site. In addition to the circular ditch there are shallow pits, probably storage pits and a stoned-lined Roman well with seeds preserved at a high level. Sunday working is continuing and volunteers are required.

Abingdon: Barton Court Farn. David Miles has now virtually completed the excavation of the area south of the villa. One of the most interesting discoveries is a large posthole building of possible late Roman date. The excavations have now been extended and recent finds include a corn dryer, the ditches of the 'paddock' system and a possible driveway. Dr. Helen Keeley of the D.O.E. has visited the site to advise on soil classification and to carry out (inconclusive) phosphate tests. Mark Robinson has collected snail samples and Martin Jones is working on the carbonised grain. Excavations will continue during July.

Abingdon: Fairlawn Wharf. Mike Parrington has been observing this site which has produced medieval and Roman pottery.

Didcot: Kirsty Rodwell has visited a Romano-British site adjacent to the church following a report from the locals. It is possible that a part-time excavation may be mounted on conclusion of the Ashville site at Abingdon.

Farnoor: Mark Robinson has carried out the preliminary environmental work on the site and he has also been looking at the nearby, but very different, environment at Pixey Mead, Wolvercote, by way of comparison. Two wells of 2nd/3rd century A.D. date have been uncovered. Stripping of the site, which has great environmental potential, begins on 1st July. The site directors are George Lambrick of O.U.A.S. and Mike Hall of T.W.A.

Kidlington Church: The nave floor has been lifted. No major excavations will be possible but part of the sleeper wall of the south arcade was located and evidence for 10 cm of medieval floor levels was uncovered.

Oxford: Albert Street, the Bear Inn. Skeletons belonging to the graveyard of St. Edward's Church were uncovered by workmen, but no detailed recording was possible.

Oxford: New Inn Hall Street, Newspaper House. Brian Durham is observing this site and recording medieval and late Saxon pits. The site has been heavily damaged by cellars.

Stanton Harcourt: Dix's Pit. The Archaeological Research Laboratory have carried out a proton magnetometer survey with ambiguous results. Trial work by machine will be carried out to locate the position of the threatened ring ditches. Excavation, with Charlie Chambers as site director, will take place in July.

Stanton Harcourt: Primary School. A trial excavation by Charlie Chambers, following the discovery of a Roman coin (genuine) and a 'mosaic', located an ex-R.A.F. wash house!

Wallingford: New Road, site of St. Michael's Church. T.W.H.A.S. is continuing its trial excavations.

Post-Excavation

Appleford: Mark Robinson has found 50 species of beetle in the 3rd century Appleford well. The lowest levels of the well will give a picture of contemporary environment. The upper levels document the use of the well as a rubbish pit and contain some pretty sordid pieces of information.

Other sites. Work for publication is continuing on the following sites: Abingdon, Broad Street (Mike Parrington); Banbury Castle (Kirsty Rodwell); Hanwell (Charlie Chambers); Oxford, 79-80 St. Aldate's (Brian Durham).

Other News Items

C.B.A. Environmental Report

Mark Robinson is compiling a statement for the report to be compiled by the C.B.A. on the regional pooling of resources.

South Midlands Archaeological Advisory Committee

This committee, which covers Oxfordshire and the neighbouring counties of Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire, recently met to consider regional estimates. The Oxfordshire Unit's ideal estimate for 1975-6 will be £78,000+.

The future role of the S.M.A.A.C. is not certain, in view of the Government statement that 13 new regional advisory committees are to be established nationally to advise on the activities of archaeologists working within counties.

'Throne of Kings'. Tom Hassall has been filming in Oxford for Barry Cunliffe's new T.V. series to be shown early next year.

Pevsner's 'Oxfordshire'. This final volume in 'The Buildings of England' series has now been published. A review by Tom Hassall was published in the Oxford Mail.

Calendar for July and August

30th July

Staff Meeting