

OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT NEWSLETTER
INCLUDING OXFORDSHIRE PARISH SURVEY NEWS

No. 6 - June/July 1977

Anyone wishing to send contributions to the Newsletter should send copy to 46 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford OX1 2EP (Tel. 43888) before the last Tuesday of each month.

ABINGDON - Ashville Trading Estate

The proofs of Mike Parrington's report on Ashville have now arrived from the Council for British Archaeology and these are being corrected. It is hoped that the monograph will be published in the autumn.

ABINGDON - Barton Court Farm

Bob Wilson reports that preliminary results of bone analysis indicate that the outer villa farmyard ditches have a greater proportion of cattle bones in them than in the inner ditches. Since the former are believed to be later in date, containing some Saxon pottery, this proportion of cattle remains contrasts with the high proportions of sheep and pig bones in the grubenhauser pits. Interpretation will not be easy.

ABINGDON - Stert Street

Charlotte Harding, an In-service trainee working with the Unit has been drawing small finds from this site and paging up pottery. This will make the Stert Street report substantially complete.

ABINGDON - West St. Helen Street

Geoff Moores, of the Abingdon Archaeological and Historical Society, and Bob Wilson, report that despite fit fall help with digging a second trench has been started to find more about the extent of the post-medieval buildings and to excavate deeper than the architect specifications allowed for the first trench. The earliest building appears to be of later date rather than as early as the sixteenth century as first reported.

ABINGDON - Wilsham Road

At the request of local societies, the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit held a two-day training school in excavation techniques on the 26th/27th June. The response for this course was less than had been expected and only the Didcot, Thame and Lewknor Societies were represented. The excavation comprised an exploratory trench through each of two circular cropmarks threatened by future housing development and the conclusion of the school was that they were Bronze Age barrows. The course illustrated the type and size of task that can be usefully tackled by a local group under the guidance of one of the members who has obtained a basic training in the techniques involved.

CHALGROVE

Excavation supervised by Richard Chambers has begun on the moated site in the centre of Chalgrove. In the first week walls, floors, an oven, and an open hearth belonging to a kitchen range have been recorded. Work will continue for the next couple of months on this site which regionally is an important one. Excavation, mainly at weekends, is entirely by volunteers and help would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Richard Chambers either at his home Oxford 511216 (evenings) or at the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, Oxford 43888.

COMBE - Combe Mill, Beam Engine

The mill is a sawmill on the Blenheim Estates of the Duke of Marlborough and houses a small rotative mill beam engine dating from 1852, which has been restored to working order by a group of enthusiasts. The engine was originally used as an auxiliary source of power for the mill, the primary source being a waterwheel, but before restoration began in 1969 had lain idle for well over 60 years.

It is now steamed and shown to the public on selected weekends each year, and on these occasions it is usual to have other attractions at the mill, such as a blacksmith at work on the forge, carved furniture making and a variety of static and working exhibits. The waterwheel survives and may be inspected, but unfortunately is not in working order.

Steaming dates 1977

May 1	Aug. 27, 28, 29)	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
July 10	Oct. 15, 16)	
Admission	Adults		20p
	Children (6-16))	
	Senior Citizens)	10p

HARDWICK

Excavations on this Iron Age site began on 27th June under the supervision of Mark Robinson.

OXFORD

Michael Wilcox ends his four years of work with the Unit having completed the preparatory work on the Greyfriars excavation report. In October he commences a one-year postgraduate course for archivists at Liverpool University. He will be sorely missed as one of the more literate members of the Unit! Recently he has made a valuable contribution in the completion of the St. Aldates report, which went to press with Oxoniensia at the beginning of June. Maureen Mellor has also been involved with this project, and she is now tidying up the pottery report from The Hamel site, before starting to process the Church Street pottery.

One of the Paradise Street trial trenches dug by the University Archaeological Society has been completed, producing late eleventh or twelfth century pottery from the deepest level.

OTHER NEWS ITEMS

Blewbury. Blewbury is having a local history exhibition on 16th/17th July as part of the Blewbury Festival - this will include Open Houses, Old Malthouse, South Street, 2-6 p.m.

Didcot. 'The Changing Face of Didcot' by B. F. Langham and M. J. Hall has been published by the Didcot and District Archaeological and Historical Society, price £1 plus postage, obtainable from Mrs. Joyce Hall, 152 Loyd Road, Didcot.

O.A.U. Financial Crisis. An intensive fund raising effort has been successful and the two redundancies foreshadowed in last month's Newsletter have been put off to the end of this financial year. Full details of the new funds will be published in a subsequent Newsletter. However, more guaranteed income is required and readers of the Newsletter can obtain Covenant Forms from the Unit.

SPORTING NEWS - Mike Parrington

On 5th June, a typical English summer day (wet and windy) the 'Unit' played a cricket match against the O,U.A.S. Subscribers to this publication will no doubt recall that our previous sporting ventures have been less than successful but on this occasion an easy victory was won by 30-odd runs. This was due for the most part to the efforts of 'man of the match' Bob Wilson who scored an unbeaten 50 and took several wickets, and also to the wise and knowledgeable captain of the 'Unit' team, a modest soul who prefers to remain anonymous.

CALENDAR FOR JULY AND AUGUST

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| 10 July | Combe Beam Engine open to the public, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. |
| 16-17 July | Blewbury Local History Exhibition as part of the Blewbury Festival. Old Malthouse, South Street, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. |
| 16-23 July | OUDES. One-week seminar in Summer School for Adult Students. 'The Medieval Buildings of Oxford' Tom Hassall. |
| 16 July -
20 August | Excavation at Middleton Stoney, Oxfordshire. Details available from the Course Secretary, Oxford Department for External Studies, Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford. |
| 26 July | Next staff meeting - possibly on site at Hardwick. |