



society

NEWS

The Bulletin of the ENFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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The Editor is Jon Tanner, 24 Padstow Road, Enfield, Middlesex EN2 8BU,
tel: 020 8367 8000 (day); 020 8350 0493 (home); email: jontanner_enfield@hotmail.com

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Meetings of the Enfield Archaeological Society are held at Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield (near Chase Side) at 8.00pm. Tea and coffee are served and the sales and information table is open from 7.30pm. Visitors, who are asked to pay a small entrance fee of £1.00, are very welcome.

Friday 17 December 2002

Animal Bones and Archaeological Sites
Nicholas Bateson

At one time animal bones were regarded as part of the rubbish that had to be cleared from an archaeological site so that the diggers could get at the really interesting material and to this day on some sites the bones go straight on the spoil heap. Bones can however reveal a great deal about the daily lives of people on the site - what they ate (and sometimes what ate them), the economy (and changes in it), and ritual practices at religious centres. Looked at in this way the bones themselves become part of the interesting material.

Examples will be given ranging from the Lower Palaeolithic in Africa to the 19th Century in London. Methods of recording and analysing will be dealt with briefly, and some specimens will be brought to the meeting for those who would like a closer look.

Nicholas Bateson

Friday 17 January 2003

The Villa of Tiberius Claudius Severus, a Peep into the Past
Roy Friendship-Taylor

I have directed the excavations at Piddington, Northamptonshire on behalf of the Upper Nene Archaeological Society over the past 23 years and have uncovered an extremely interesting site, with a totally unexpected history of development, which we are only now beginning to understand. This can only really be fully understood through a long-term commitment of thorough and painstaking fieldwork, excavation and post-excavation work, combining excavation with aerial photography and geophysics and a steady build-up of knowledge of the site and its material remains.

Excavation has revealed not only a large

Roman villa, but also its Late Iron Age predecessor and an intervening early Roman military site, very much associated and interlinked with the Late Iron Age. However, the later history of the villa is also extremely interesting. The villa's demise in the later 3rd century indicates a major change in the type of occupation at the villa, with the establishment of at least seven different family groups living within what had become the ruins of the villa and can perhaps be seen as the beginnings of the village of Piddington! It all culminated with a small Anglo Saxon settlement and cemetery located within the villa buildings.

Now, the Society has bought a redundant Wesleyan Chapel in Piddington village (100% owned by UNAS). It has fully restored the external fabric of the building to its former glory. The Society has now been awarded a grant of £166 500.00 by HLF (Heritage Lottery Fund) to establish a Museum which will be devoted entirely to the Piddington Roman villa and its finds. It is hoped to open its doors to the public later this year.

Roy Friendship-Taylor

Friday 14 February 2003

Turkmenistan: Civilisations of the Oxus Valley
Ian Jones

The Central Asian Republic of Turkmenistan, which has only been an independent nation since 1990, is situated between the Oxus or Amu Darya River and the Kopetdagh mountains, which form the border with Iran. It is desert apart from the fertile land at the base of the mountains, the Oxus valley and the Merv oasis watered by rivers flowing from the mountains of Afghanistan. Despite this a major Bronze Age urban civilisation developed centred on the Merv oasis, which flourished from before 2000 BC until around 1250 BC. This civilisation had contacts with both Mesopotamia in present day Iraq and the Indus Valley in Pakistan. Only one major site has so far been excavated and much more remains to be discovered. After its fall urban cultures continued under local, Persian and Hellenistic Greek rulers until in the 1st century BC the Parthians from Central Asia created an empire extending to the borders of the Roman world and ruled from their capital at Nisa. From the 3rd century AD the area passed under Sassanian Persian control and in the 7th became, and remains, part of the Islamic world.

Of the later cities, Merv, founded during the Persian period with its Sassanian and later Islamic remains, is one of the most impressive

surviving sites despite having been shattered by the Mongols in the 13th century. Other important sites include Dehistan, also destroyed by Gengis Khan, and Konya Urgench, finally wrecked by Tamerlane in the 14th century. Many sites are represented only by single monuments, principally tombs and caravanserais both reflecting the wealth that flowed through the area along the many trade routes of the Silk Route, which converged on Merv. These include the splendid caravanserai at Daya Khatun and the mausoleum at Anau. The later period of Russian rule has left little of interest and the present ex-communist dictator is spending his country's considerable resources in transforming his capital into a Hollywood film set by filling it with grandiose marble-clad structures

Ian Jones

Tuesday 14 January 2003

The Archaeology and Anthropology of Australian Rock Art
Prof. Robert Layton

MEETINGS OF OTHER SOCIETIES

EDMONTON HUNDRED HISTORICAL SOCIETY

7.45 for 8.00 p.m. in Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield unless otherwise stated. Visitors £1.00

Wednesday 18 December 2002

Seasonal Evening

Enquiries to the Local History Section, Town Hall, Green Lanes, Palmers Green London N13
Tel: 020 8379 2724

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION – NORTH LONDON BRANCH

All meetings are held at 8.00 p.m. in Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield. For details, contact Robin Blades, 020 8368 5328

WEST ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

7.45pm in the 6th Form Unit, Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green

Monday 20 January 2003

Social Evening
Tony O'Connor

Monday 10 February 2003

What Did the Building Look Like?
Thomas Cromwell, English Heritage

HENDON AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

All meetings are held at 8.00pm at Avenue House, East End Road Finchley

SOCIETY MATTERS

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that subscriptions fall due for renewal on 01 January 2003.

Please send the Renewal Form (enclosed with this edition of Society News), together with the appropriate sum, to the Secretary, Jon Tanner, 24 Padstow Road, Enfield, Middlesex EN2 8BU; or, if you prefer, you can accost me at a Lecture Meeting. A glance at the enclosed Programme Card for the forthcoming year will show that once again an outstanding series of speakers on a wide variety of subjects has been arranged, giving excellent value for your subs. – and tea or coffee is included!

Subscription rates for 2003 are as follows:

Ordinary Members:	£ 7.00
Joint Memberships:	£10.00
Junior Members:	£ 3.50

Please note that Joint Membership is now defined as any number of **named** persons residing at one address and receiving a single copy of Society News.

Newer members who joined the Society after 30 September 2002 need take no action, as their subscriptions are valid until 31 December 2003.

Attention is also drawn to the necessity of having a current valid membership of the Society before taking part in any excavation or fieldwork, in order to provide adequate insurance cover.

SOCIETY WEBMASTER WANTED

The committee recognises the increasing importance of the internet in communication and publicity, and is keen to establish a Society web site. We would like to hear from any member with the necessary skills and equipment who would be willing to assist with this project. If interested, please contact any Committee member.

MEETING REPORTS

E. Augustus Bowles of Myddelton House

Friday 20 September 2002: Bryan Hewitt

"The Lost Treasures of Myddelton" was the subtitle of a fascinating lecture delivered to the Society on 20 September by Bryan Hewitt, a member of the gardening staff at Myddelton House – now the headquarters of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

Bryan commenced by showing a picture dated 1890 of the numerous items of Victorian furniture in the then dining room of Myddelton House. The owner at the time was Henry Carrington Bowles whose son was Edward Augustus (Gussie) Bowles, who developed the gardens of the House. Subsequently, he became a famous plantsman and Committee member of the Royal Horticultural Society.

As a self-taught botanical artist he painted numerous bulbs, plants and flowers. He also painted numerous birds, many of which were found dead in the gardens. Awaiting painting these were hung upside down by their feet in the lavatory which became known as the mortuary by the staff! His performance as an artist is remarkable considering that from the age of seven years an infection had robbed him of the use of one eye.

When the house was inherited by the Parker Bowles branch of the family, they decided to put it and the contents up for sale, the contents raising £89 000.00. The house and grounds were purchased jointly by the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine and the London University School of Pharmacy. The House and garden subsequently became the headquarters of the Lee Valley Regional Park, the sports field continuing to be used by the Schools of Medicine and Pharmacy until its purchase in 2002 by the Lee Valley Regional Park who then leased it to Tottenham Juniors.

By pulling on a cord, the old Enfield Fire Bell could be tolled to summon Gussie back to the house from the garden, a section of this was known as the Lunatic Asylum and was reserved for plants exhibiting aberrations.

In the grounds, a stone balustrade had been purchased from the grounds of Earl Hague's house then situated at the junction of

Bulls Cross and Whitewebbs Lane and placed adjacent to the lake. A pair of lead ostriches was obtained from the roof of Gough Park, which used to stand at the junction of Forty Hill and Clay Hill.

Sadly, some of the choicest plant pots and statues in the gardens have been stolen by opportunistic thieves, in one case having a lorry with a powered tailgate waiting outside the small gate in the garden's wall previously used by the staff of the New River Company.

Attractive box hedge edged flower beds lined the graceful curve of the old New River Loop as it flowed through the garden supplied with water from the well of the Crews Hill pumping station. The gardens also contained an Edward VII bench from Sandringham, the Enfield Market Cross and a lead tank dated 1767.

Dennis Hill

town adjacent to Dakhla oasis in the Egyptian Western desert, on a Roman supply route where in former times the landscape was verdant.

The Rumania scene was very rural with plenty of farming and trees, whereas the Egyptian site had the remains of mud brick buildings in the midst of a sea of sand. In both cases the local population showed a strong interest in the work being undertaken. An electronic Total Station was employed in conjunction with a hand-held Pen-Computer. In the case of Rumania, the results were tied into the Rumanian National Grid. The software provides for the plotting in three dimensions of the topography, which allows for the monitoring of land erosion. With the use of modern electronic recording, 36 000 data points each

The Role of Surveying and GIS in Professional Archaeology

Friday 18 October 2002: Duncan Lees

On Friday 18 October Duncan Lees, Head of the Geomatics Section of the Museum of London Archaeology Service, gave a fascinating talk to the Society on geomatics and archaeology. He defined geomatics as the collection, presentation and analysis of spatial data. This is essentially the advanced form of the normal surveying practices encountered on every archaeological site of any significance.

A Temporary Bench Mark is established with reference to one or more Ordnance Survey triangulation points and a site grid set out and a level used to determine the depths of the excavation trenches. The measurement of distance has been made quicker and easier with the introduction of the Total Station, which uses a laser and portable reflector to calculate site distances and the plotting of the layout of large sites. By adding a Global Positioning System using several satellites, the observer's position can be rapidly known to better than 10mm on the ground.

Instead of describing sites in England, Duncan outlined his work on a contract basis for the University of Stuttgart at the site of the Roman city of Sarmizgetusa in the county of Hunedoara in Rumania and, for contrast, work for Columbia University at the site of a Roman

with an accurate easting, northing and height were captured in nine working days. There was no post-project processing and the final results had to be available to the sponsors on the ninth day.

The sand blowing in the wind did not affect the optics in the desert, but it was

unpleasant for the staff and hot air rising could interfere with visible light, but not infra-red measurements.

Dennis Hill

Excavation at Gilmour Close, Capel Manor

Some time ago the Society obtained permission from the management of Capel Manor to carry out a small excavation alongside Gilmour Close. This is the truncated section of road left after Bulls Cross Ride, which ran from Bullsmoor Lane to Theobalds, and was cut in two by the construction of the M25. The object of the excavation is to try to locate any surviving remains of Ermine Street, the Roman road which runs north through Enfield and appears to share the same alignment as the present road north from Maidens Bridge as far as Theobalds. As many members will recall, this is not the first time we have searched for this elusive road over the years, and an excavation was also carried out by a professional archaeological unit on the east side of Bulls Cross ride before the M25 was constructed. No sign of the Roman road was found on that occasion, and an inspection of the M25 cutting during construction did not reveal any ditches, and the agger (the raised foundation of the road) could not be differentiated from the underlying natural gravel. Despite the lack of success of these efforts, it was thought worthwhile to open a trench on the west side of Gilmore Close, between the lodge and the M25. The present 19th c. lodge replaces one or more earlier ones located where Bulls Cross Ride passed through the boundary wall into the Theobalds estate. In 1649 the under-keepers lodge at Bulls Cross Gate was described as a substantial three storey structure, but "much out of repair". The six lodges, one at each entrance into the estate, were provided with barns, stables, cow-houses orchards and gardens.

Permission to excavate having been obtained, a trench 8m x 1.2m was set out perpendicular to Gilmore Close and as close to it as possible. A large compost heap now stands

on the road itself, and a ditch had recently been excavated on its west side to allow surface water to drain away. These precluded the possibility of excavating up to the edge of the metalled road surface. The topsoil was found to contain broken brick and tile, and produced a few finds of 18th and 19th c. date. Below this three distinct areas were visible. The 1m of the trench closest to the road was found to be gravel, which initially looked quite promising, but as excavation progressed was found to be the backfill of a recent water pipe trench. West of this the soil contained further brick and tile rubble, mostly in small fragments and giving the soil an orange colour. Although the location of the earlier lodge is not known precisely, it would appear that this rubble is associated with demolition of one of the lodges or its outbuildings. No structural remains have been uncovered at the time of writing. The westernmost 3m of the trench contained a grey organic soil, with sherds of a fairly coarse sand tempered pottery, apparently of medieval date, but a detailed examination of these has not yet been undertaken. At this point, reached in early November, the weather took a turn for the worse and the rising ground water started to force its way into the trench from the underlying natural gravel. An attempt was made to continue working, but the conditions were too difficult, and work has now been suspended while we await better weather. When we return we may be able to discover more about the medieval or later history of the site, but it would seem that Ermine Street has eluded us once again, probably obliterated by continuous wear and resurfacing over the centuries.

Les Whitmore

Demolition of Yet Another Physical Reminder of the Second World War

Having long campaigned for the listing and protection of certain wartime structures, I was disappointed to see that a large communal air raid shelter next to Enfield Grammar (Lower) School in Silver Street, Enfield, has been demolished. These concrete and steel structures may not be beautiful or of great architectural merit but they represent an important phase in our history as symbols of the great European conflict, namely the Second World War. There is no hesitation in listing and preserving prehistoric earthworks, Roman forts, medieval castles, historic houses and factories from the early industrial age, and many people think that wartime structures, where it is practical to do so, should be given the same protection. In fact, elsewhere in the country this is being done.

The shelter in the grounds of the Lower Grammar School was complete and a particularly good example of its type. It also formed part of the history of the school and being within a conservation area I had assumed that permission would be needed before demolition could take place.

Many of the wartime structures still standing at the time and described in my small book "*Enfield at War 1939-45*" published in 1985 have also disappeared and the need now

is to ensure that no further demolition of surviving structures takes place without proper consideration. To that end, the Council has been asked if a register of the pillboxes, air raid shelters, wardens posts and other structures of the period still standing within the borough can be prepared and, where practical, certain of these sites properly protected.

A few years ago I was instrumental in having one of the four air raid shelters in the grounds of Millfield House cleared and a steel door fitted. Since then my colleagues and I have manned the shelter on certain occasions when people have flocked to Millfield to stand inside the shelter and take part in the *Air Raid Experience* presentation. On three occasions teachers brought parties of schoolchildren to the site as part of their educational classes on modern history – only recently another teacher asked if a similar visit could be arranged. I would like to think that this shelter at least is in no danger of demolition.

Geoffrey Gillam

Editors note: this article should have appeared in the September edition of *Society News* but was omitted by an oversight. My apologies to Geoffrey and to the membership.

A Late 19th Century Oven at Bush Hill Park

Earlier this year our attention was brought to the existence of a late 19th century baker's premises at 114 St Marks Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, and a photographic record was made of the building, the cast iron oven and the dough making machine (*Society News* 164, March 2002:8). Lack of time permitted only the crudest of measured surveys of the building fabric. As reported, the cast iron oven bears the maker's name "Kemp and Sons, Oven Builders, Stepney Green, London E." and enquiries were made of the Museum of London and the Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society in an attempt to trace the manufacturer, locate any existing similar installations and ideally to find a new

home for the oven. The Museum of London does indeed hold two groups of predominantly 19th century material including ovens, dough mixers, drawers, cupboards, and tins and other small items from bakeries in Bromley, Kent (Maunder's bakery) and Euston (Stanley) in their reserve collections of Social and Working History at Mortimer Wheeler House. The Maunder's bakery was surveyed by GLIAS, largely photographically.

It was Brian Strong, Hon. Secretary of GLIAS, who passed us a copy of an email from Sally Lloyds of Southampton, great-great-granddaughter of the founder of the Kemp oven-

building business, who supplied the information on her ancestor below.

John Kemp was born c1817 in Downham Market, Norfolk. By trade he was a brickmaker, as was his father before him. In 1840 he married Louisa Dewson and they left Norfolk for Stepney, London, where John established the oven-building business. John and Louisa had several children and the sons continued the business with their father. The eldest son (John Dewson Kemp c1842) married Anne Lupton from South Shields in 1864: family lore has it that she came from quite a well-to-do family and invested quite a sum of money in the business. In fact, 126 Stepney Green was actually renamed Lupton House. John and Anne had three daughters but no sons, but another brother Edward (that is, Ms Lloyds' great-grandfather) did and he and his sons continued in the business. One of them, who later emigrated to Australia, actually did his oven-building apprenticeship with W. Goodmans (in Stepney?). It is possible that at some point the firm ran into financial difficulties and Edward's nephew Stanley Kemp took over the running of the oven-building business until it finally folded in the 1960's. The old Kemp yard was still there around 1968 as Ms Lloyds recalls visiting it as a child, but it has since been demolished to make way for flats. There is

mention of Kemp's oven-building business in Kelly's Directory. Also the Post Office London Directory for 1874 makes mention of it and names three locations in Stepney from where the business was run. There is a Kemp oven still in the wall outside the old bakery shop on Banham, Norfolk, and one on display in the Rye Museum. There is another being auctioned by a salvage company in Suffolk, priced in excess of £5000.00.

Acknowledgments

My grateful thanks to the following for supplying all the above information:

Sally Lloyds

Brian Strong - Hon. Secretary, GLIAS

Karen Fielder – Assistant Curator, Social and Working History, Dept. of Later London History and Collection, Museum of London.

Jon Tanner

CBA Mid-Anglia Region Day Conference

Late Iron Age Funerary Practice in the Mid-Anglia Region

Saturday 12 October 2002

This day conference was held at the Essex Record Office lecture theatre in Chelmsford and was hosted by the CBA Mid-Anglia Region (to whom this society is affiliated) and the Essex County Council Archaeology Section. After an opening address by David Buckley (ECC), the morning session was chaired by Ian Stead who introduced the first speaker, Paul Sealey (Colchester Museum) whose subject was *A Late Iron Age Warrior Burial from Kelvedon, Essex*.

The Iron Age "warrior" burial at Kelvedon, Essex is of national importance as less than 20 are known south of the Humber, and very few have a complete set of weaponry. In 1982 the landowner unearthed a sword with his JCB, and invited his friend, a retired policeman (now deceased) with an interest in archaeology, to excavate in what can best be described as a 19th century manner. The finds were later loaned to Colchester Museum by the

excavator's sons. The site archive comprised seven scribbled lines on a scrap of paper: what a desperate shame the site was not excavated under proper conditions: food for thought for those who so vehemently oppose the Valletta Convention, perhaps.

The finds from the isolated burial included an iron sword, bent 30° at deposition and bearing mineralised textile impressions,

suggesting that it had been wrapped in a cloth. The bronze scabbard had an applied decorative strip of bronze running down the face.

There was a small tanged weapon – a dagger or short sword - and a shield boss, not an import but similar to the Gaulish type. A long iron spearhead was also bent when deposited and also of Gaulish pattern, being of waisted profile. Also present were the fragmented remains of the bronze handle and rim to a wooden tankard, an imported Roman bronze bowl, two wheel thrown grog tempered Late Iron

Age pedestal urns and the iron fittings from a chest.

The artefacts suggest a date for the burial between c70BC and 1BC and Mr Sealey suggested that the burial might be that of a refugee from the Gallic wars or a Briton who had fought in them as a mercenary. Apparently no human remains were found, however.

The next speaker was Gilly Carr (University of Kent), who spoke on *Excarnation to Cremation: Continuity or Change?* This somewhat unconvincing paper questioned the apparent superseding of excarnation by cremation in the Later Iron Age, and attempted to explore the evidence for continuity by listing similarities between the practices. It was proposed that the burial of only a part of the cremated remains showed continuity from excarnation practice, where only the principal bones were kept for burial. At Suddern Farm, Hants, the remains of dry brittle bones were recovered from cremation burials, and this was cited as evidence of the practice of excarnation before cremation. It was also observed that cremation and excarnation appear to have occurred in parallel, as at Hinxton Rings, Cambs. A very small proportion - say 5% - of the population is represented by excarnation, however.

The final paper before lunch was presented by Ros Niblett (St Albans Museum) and was entitled *Folly Lane and Late Iron Age Funerary Rites in the Verulamium area*. The late date of the site – mid first century AD – might explain the choice of the name *Verulamium*, as opposed to *Verlamion*, in an Iron Age context.

Ms Niblett set out to describe the excavation of the burial at Folly Lane in some detail before comparing it with other sites in the area. The Folly Lane site is notable for its sunken timber shed-like structure within a 3m deep revetted shaft, set within an enormous enclosure of nearly 2ha. The pyre site was a few metres west of the pit in the centre of the enclosure, and a selection of pyre debris, goods and human remains were buried in a shallow grave to the north of the pit. It was suggested that the deceased was exposed for an undetermined period within the structure before cremation and burial, accompanied by rites including feasting, as evidenced by quantities of tableware, wine amphorae, animal bone and fragments of furniture recovered from the shaft. All had been deliberately smashed, as had the revetment to the shaft, and the chamber had been carefully filled with layers of turf and soils from a variety of areas.

The site contrasts with others in the area such as those at St Stephens and King Harry Lane, where the norm is for a number of cremation burials within a ditched enclosure.

The afternoon session was chaired by Peter Clayton (CBA Mid-Anglia) and the first speaker was Mark Atkinson (ECC Field Archaeology Unit) on *A Pyre field at Elms Farm, Heybridge, Essex?*

The site comprised 19 oval or rounded-rectangular features approximately 1m by 0.5m, many with a small projection to one side and originally identified as “odd cremation burials”. The features roughly aligned, and their similarity with features at Westhampnett, Hants was recognised. It was realised that the features were pyre sites, the projections being underpyre flues.

Next to speak was Philip Crummy of the Colchester Archaeological trust, who spoke on *Stanway, Colchester*. This site comprises five sequential ditched enclosures containing cremation burials, and four of which contained chambers. These wooden box-like structures appear to have had "lids" at surface level, and the vertical timbers to the sides were set in a slot or trench. Pyre sites adjacent to the chambers were recognised. The speaker believes that the chambers and the enclosures are not contemporary. The site was in use from the mid 1st century BC to around AD60.

Alison Brookes (University of Wales College, Newport) then gave a paper entitled *Situating the dead: visible cosmologies and Late Iron Age funerary practice*. This paper actually concentrated on summarising the variety of types of burial rite and associated features in Late Iron Age southeast Britain - mortuary enclosures, shafts and chambers, pyre sites and so on, that are being detected in increasing numbers. A number of small inhumation cemeteries have been identified in Essex recently, while elsewhere many cemeteries have mixed depositions. Westhamnett is a key site, enabling interpretation of other sites such as those at Elms Farm (see above) and Ashford, Kent. Cremation burials vary from simple oval pits to large square burials, and also vary in numbers,

most sites having from 3 to 20 burials. At King Harry Lane, Herts, there were 455 cremations and 17 inhumations.

The final speaker was Andrew Fitzpatrick (Wessex Archaeology) whose subject was *Later Iron Age mortuary practices in Britain*. This paper introduced a national context and showed that LIA funerary practices of the Mid-Anglia region are but one part of a wide, varied and complex pattern of mortuary practices in mainland Britain. Dr Fitzpatrick briefly described some examples including the chariot burials at Edinburgh and Wetwang, Yorks. The distinction between excarnation, inhumation and cremation burials on chronological and geographical lines can now be seen to be far less rigid than once believed, and the speaker cautioned against generalisation. Finally, Dr Fitzpatrick emphasised the importance of whole-earth sampling of cremation burials – the conference was implored to "bag it all up".

This was a varied and interesting conference in a splendid new facility. Perhaps the most important point was the diversity of the British the Iron Age, something that is also becoming clear in landscape and settlement studies, for example. Finally, we may no longer hear lecturers and tutors cheerfully claiming that "no-one ever died in the Iron Age!"

Jon Tanner

PASTFINDERS NEWS

News of the Excavation and Fieldwork Group

FIELD TRIP TO THE SITE OF THEOBALDS PALACE 1571-1650 Sunday 22 September 2002

Members of the Excavation and Fieldwork Group (Pastfinders) met in Cedars Park on Sunday 22 September and spent two hours exploring the site and extant remains of King James' country palace at Theobalds. Although it would have been nice to have seen a few more faces on the day those who came along in the autumn sunshine were amazed at the scale and grandeur of the palace, which in its heyday had gardens which were compared with Hampton Court and Nonsuch Palace.

Approaching the palace from the east along the Great Walk we stood on the site of the outer gateway, which aligned with a surviving arm of the moat. The palace was built around

three great courtyards with ornamental arched cloisters, fountains and statues.

An existing range of buildings to the south of Dove Court (now Pets Corner) is built upon original palace foundations. Surviving remnants of Old Palace House to the south of the site incorporate original window mullions from the palace. After the Civil War Theobalds was valued at £2000 but the materials were valued at £8000 and the palace was demolished. The magnificent gardens were sold off, the deer park became plough land and the trees lining the mile ride approaching the palace from the south was cut down. Much of the palace has never been excavated but much is known about the layout from the contemporary accounts and plans that survive. With this information and by using a tape measure we were able to work out where the courtyards and galleries had been. Much of the palace lies underneath the car park but enough survives to give a tantalising

glimpse of the splendour of Theobalds. It was interesting to note that the gardeners in the park use fragments of dressed palace stone to decorate and edge the flowerbeds.

The afternoon ended with refreshments in the Cedars Park Tea Rooms and a return visit in November was arranged.

FIELD TRIP TO WALTHAM ABBEY

Sunday 13 October 2002

Despite the inclement weather about ten hardy souls turned out for a guided tour around Waltham Abbey. Peter Huggins, Director of Excavations for Waltham Abbey Historical Society for many years, was kind enough to show us around for a very interesting and informative two hours. The tour began close to the Abbey View car park at the site of the 12th century forge, which was excavated in the 1970's. Next stop was the Lea Valley Tourist Centre where we were shown a model of the Abbey, which helped us to visualise the appearance of area before the dissolution.

Moving along we stopped at the impressive remains of the arched Abbey Gateway, which leads over the Cornmill Stream into the Abbey precincts.

Of the cloisters nothing remains but a vaulted room, which formed part of the Abbots House. Walking through to the rear of the church Peter Huggins pointed out the many different types of stone in the standing walls reused from the demolition of the ecclesiastical buildings, such as Purbeck marble, Hertfordshire and Essex Pudding stone and Reigate Green Sandstone. It was interesting to see the remains of marble columns and decorative mouldings cemented into the fabric of the walls.

We next found ourselves standing on the site where King Harold is believed to be buried. As Peter explained there have been five churches on this site and if this location is the site of the high altar then unfortunately Harold's tomb is in the wrong church!

We were shown the footings of the early Saxon church and then we rapidly retreated into the Abbey Church due to rain. The church tower we see today is of 17th century date and this obscures the original entrance doorway, which is overlooked by a bust of St Lawrence. Inside, a magnificent Victorian stained glass window above the altar dominated the massive Norman pillars and arches.

Legend suggests that Tovi, standard bearer to King Cnut, dug up a stone cross with miraculous healing powers on his land in Somerset. Tovi intended to bring the cross to London by ox-cart but when the oxen reached Waltham they refused to go on and thus the Abbey of Waltham Holy Cross was founded on the spot.

A 14th century painting on the wall of the Lady Chapel still retains much of its original colour after 600 years.

We ended our tour in the crypt and thanked Peter Huggins for an interesting afternoon.

FIELD TRIP TO THE SITE OF THE BATTLE OF BARNET AD1471

Sunday 27 October 2002

Despite the gale force winds about a dozen members turned out to accompany Brian Warren and myself on an interesting walk over the battlefield close to Monken Hadley church. Brian began by explaining that much that has been written about the battle is contradictory. Local tradition has it that the major part of the battle took place between the line of the Old Road to Kits End (today no more than a muddy track) and the A1000. We were shown the site of a hermitage or chapel, which is believed to have been built over the remains of those slain during the battle - estimates vary from 1500 to 5000 dead - on that foggy Easter Sunday. The area still known as Dead Mans Bottom seemed tranquil enough but was a scene of carnage 600 years ago where armoured knights fought in bloody hand to hand combat with poleaxes and war hammers.

Some of the hedge lines on Old Fold Manor golf course may have existed at the time of the battle and it was here that the Lancastrian cannon overshot the Yorkist lines sending stone cannon balls towards Barnet Town. The water-filled moat of the medieval Manor House, which alas is no more, still survives as an obstacle to golfers on the 18th hole.

This historical landscape has to date revealed scant evidence of the events that took place here.

Mike Dewbrey

SMALL FINDS

ENFIELD AND THE INN HOLDERS

Amongst the other places I visited that were open as part of the Golden Jubilee String of Pearls was Innholders Hall in College Street where a minor snippet of local history came to light. During the worst air raid on the City in early May 1941 the hall was hit by several incendiary bombs. Luckily a member of the staff was on duty and, unable to deal with the fire alone, he rushed outside for help. As luck would have it a fire engine from Enfield was passing, one of many brought in from the outer suburbs to assist. The crew were offered several bottles of vintage port and promptly dealt with the fire. Although the upper floor was damaged, two fine ground floor rooms dating from around 1670 were saved

Ian Jones

COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST

Ms Vanessa Bunton has been appointed to the post of Community Archaeologist for the London area, initially for one year. This creation of this post is largely thanks to the initiative of Robert Whytehead of English Heritage's Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service. Based at the London Archaeological and Archive Resource Centre (LAARC), Ms Bunton will be providing assistance and advice to the London archaeological societies and has already held a series of meetings with those societies, including the EAS, to discuss how best this can be achieved. Already, she has produced a draft report, advised on contact numbers and offered help in procuring those essential but unglamorous pieces of equipment such as silica gel, conservation boxes, finds bags and so on.

Jon Tanner.

FOUNDATIONS OF BURY HOUSE REVEALED

Builders digging a foundation trench to the rear of shop premises in Cambridge Terrace just west of the A10 unearthed the substantial foundations of the 18th century Bury house which stood on this site until it was demolished in the 1930's to make way for the shops. The exposed section of wall was almost a metre thick and large quantities of early brickwork were being removed by pickaxe when I drove past.

On the inside of the building in the south the builders had dug down into what appears to

be a circular cellar or icehouse, backfilled with demolition rubble containing many voids. A rectangular slot in the wall may be where a timber floor joist was inserted. The exposed archaeology was recorded with a series of digital photographs.

Bury House was used as a nurses home before being demolished and a photograph of the building can be seen in Dennis Hoy's booklet "*From Fields to Flats*". Graham Dalling, the Local History officer, believes Bury Hall may have been built on the site of an earlier building but nothing was seen in the trench that could confirm this.

Mike Dewbrey