



# Society News

The Bulletin of the Enfield Archaeological Society

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**These are your simple instructions for our special members' event at Forty Hall at 2pm on Sunday 24 June. Please come along!! For more details see page 2.**

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Society News is published quarterly in March, June, September and December

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If you would like to attend the EAS lectures, but find travelling difficult, please contact the Secretary, David Wills (Tel: 020 8364 5698) and we will do our best to put you in touch with another member who can give you a lift.....and if you might be such a driver, please let David know – he's not psychic!

# Forthcoming events

## SPECIAL SUMMER EAS EVENTS

### Sunday 24 June

#### Members event at Forty Hall: Dennis Hill Memorial Lecture: Elsyng Palace

A special event in memory of our late chairman, Denis Hill, who worked so hard to set in motion our successful programme of work at Elsyng Palace. **All EAS members welcome.**

Meet 2 pm immediately outside Forty Hall, for a prompt 2.15 start.

2-15 – 3pm walking tour of the Elsyng site in the park around Forty Hall, guided by Dr Martin Dearne, Mike Dewbrey and members of the excavation team. (Wear sensible shoes, walking boots/wellies if wet). If you are not up to a walk, please wait at the hall and join us when we return at 3 pm.

3 – 3.45 pm. Illustrated lecture on Elsyng Palace and EAS excavations on the site, by Martin Dearne. In Forty Hall.

3.45 – 4.15 Refreshments courtesy of the Enfield Museum Service, and an opportunity to see and handle finds from the Elsyng digs.



### Sunday 15 July

#### National Archaeology Day, 11.30am-4pm Forty Hall

Once again, the Society will be joining with the Museum Service to run a free event at Forty Hall as part of National Archaeology Week. There will be children's activities, a 'bring your finds' stall, and a 'guess the mystery object' competition. The event, on Sunday only, is planned to co-incide with a major weekend dig by the Society in the grounds of the Hall. **See enclosed flyer for details.**

**Our regular series of evening lectures will re-commence in September.** Meetings are held at Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield (near Chase Side) at 8pm. 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 21 September

The Portable Antiquities Scheme New Rules for Metal Detectors - **Kate Sutton, Museum of London**

#### Friday 19 October

London Industrial Archaeology - **Greater London Industrial Archaeological Society speaker**

## EAS Fieldwork



The Society carries out a busy programme of excavation and other practical activities in the Borough.

Please see the *Pastfinders News* column for more details, and contact Mike Dewbrey on 01707 870888 (office number) if you are interested.

# Meetings of other Societies

**EDMONTON HUNDRED HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
7.45 for 8pm, Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield

**27 June**

(7pm for 7.30, Bruce Castle, Tottenham) The Life and Art of George Kenner, internee at Alexandra Palace in WWI  
Joint Meeting with Friends of Bruce Castle  
*Nick McCormick*

**18 July**

Enfield in World War I  
*Graham Dalling*

**19 September**

The History of Epping Forest  
*Stan Newman*

**HENDON & DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
7.45 for 8.00pm Avenue House, 17 East End Road, Finchley

**9 October**

Thomas Telford (1757-1834): 250th Anniversary Lecture  
*Denis Smith*

**WALTHAM ABBEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
8pm, Victoria Hall, Greenyard, Waltham Abbey

**28 September**

Time Line: A Journey Along the Meridian  
*Stuart Bale*

**25 October**

Roman Enfield  
*Martin Dearne (EAS)*



**New Website:**

[www.walthamabbeyhistoricalsociety.org.uk](http://www.walthamabbeyhistoricalsociety.org.uk)

## Copped Hall Archaeology Project: Training Dig and Excavation Reports

A first rate training dig, now in its fifth year, will be running again this summer at Copped Hall, on the edge of Epping Forest between Waltham Abbey and Epping. Courses run weekly from 5 – 25 August, no previous experience necessary. For details & prices visit the WEAG web site [www.weag.org.uk](http://www.weag.org.uk), or e-mail [pmd2@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:pmd2@ukonline.co.uk).

The latest excavation report for this project is also now available, covering the 2004 & 2005 seasons. Price £7 or £3.50 to WEAG members. Contact details as above.



# Meeting Reports

## Recent Excavation Work at Waltham Abbey

16 March: **Peter Huggins**

Peter Huggins will be well known to many EAS members, having excavated extensively in and around Waltham Abbey for many years, sometimes assisted by EAS diggers. So we were delighted to welcome him for a wide-ranging talk on the archaeology of the town, particularly its monastic heritage and its parish boundary.

He began with the church itself, pointing out the only substantial standing masonry which may be attributable to King Harold (see photo), and the form of the fourth (twelfth century) church with its semicircular apse typical of a pilgrimage church, allowing people to process past the holy relics. This finds a parallel in St Bartholomew the Great in the City of London.

The roof of the nave was re-constructed by the parishioners in 1807, but they re-used the same timbers and a close study of the old joints has allowed Peter to re-construct the form of the original 12<sup>th</sup> century 7-cant roof trusses, with their characteristic notched lap joints. A parallel for these may be found at Roydon Church.

In 1985 the installation of under-floor heating gave a rare chance to dig under the church itself. Foundations of earlier churches were found, and a stretch of packed flint interpreted as a foundation for a ground standing timber building, perhaps as early as the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Near the supposed entrance to this structure were found the legs of a female burial, which provided a radiocarbon date of AD 590-690. So it is possible that Archbishop Melitus established the church at Waltham Abbey. Not far away at Nazing a Saxon cemetery with over 120 burials was excavated in the 1970s, of which over 80 were female, some of whom lived into their 70s, with very few children and no young women present. This is suggestive of a nunnery, such as was established with a grant of 40 acres in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century.

Church 2 added side porticos, similar to those at Brixworth, while Church 3 is attributed to Harold in 1060 – it had a continuous transept, similar to those he might have seen in Germany. Some of the pillars in the transept windows may have been re-used from Harold's church.

Peter warned us we may be offended by one section of the talk which concerned the theory that Enfield and Edmonton were originally part of the Minster parish of Waltham. The Synod of Hertford in 672 set Waltham in the diocese of London. Further to the west lay the diocese of Lincoln, but the border runs along the line of Ermine Street and Cheshunt Bank, through Thunderfield Grove and Arnos Grove Park and finally to Finchley – that is to say to the west of much of Enfield and of Edmonton, which must therefore have been part of the same parish as Waltham.

Although most of Peter's work with the Waltham Abbey Historical Society has been published, some other excavators' work on the monastic precinct remains unpublished, notably that on the chapter house, and a 1978 excavation which Peter is writing up now, on what he identifies as the infirmary chapel.

Amongst the finds of this excavation was a stretch of lead pipe, which may be the first evidence within the precinct of the 3km long conduit which supplied the abbey with fresh water from springs in Wormley. An account survives of the construction of this in 1220 – a major feat as it had to pass under the River Lea. Tracing the exact line of this conduit has long been one of Peter's goals – and who knows, his lecture to the EAS may yet prove to play a part in this, as several members of the audience were keen to offer help in the search with geophysical surveys.



**Peter (left) briefs his diggers in July 1986** – among them our present chairman (4<sup>th</sup> left) and editor (3<sup>rd</sup> left). Below the window immediately behind Peter is the section of wall which may be a survival from Harold's church.

# Time Team Special: The Shoreditch Project and the LAARC

18 May: **Roy Stevenson**

The London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre, or LAARC, headed by Roy Stevenson, exists to deal with the problem of archiving the records and finds from archaeological work in London. All of the major contractors operating in London deposit material at the archive, to defined standards.

This makes the LAARC an important resource for research – with 10km of shelves, 1 million slides and 150,000 boxes of finds. It ‘shares’ its specialists with the Museum of London Archaeology Service, and aims to be a ‘centre of excellence’, attracting visitors from such diverse places as Iraq, Kosovo and Kent.

The Shoreditch Project was undertaken in 2005 by the LAARC with the aid of Heritage Lottery Funding to mark the end of the Second World War.

Under Shoreditch Park, a stone’s throw from the LAARC in Eagle Wharf Road, lies Dorchester Street, once a row of Victorian Terraces, some of which were destroyed during the war and replaced by prefabs.

Old maps gave a comprehensive picture of the development of the area from open fields, and showed the terraces to have been built in the 1830s. After a short evaluation dig, a site was chosen to avoid the prefabs, which were based on concrete rafts – i.e. targeting a block which was not destroyed during the war.

The main dig involved local community groups and primary schools, and was the subject of a ‘Time Team’ Special. In fact Time Team sponsored a second trench on a block which had been destroyed during the war, to spice their programme up a bit.

Curiously, the terraced houses were not mirror images of their neighbours, but each had their kitchen on the same side, therefore missing an opportunity to economise on bricks. Many more finds were recovered than expected, including bottles and refined earthenwares, one of them containing “Dr Wimsey’s Black and Blue Reviver”, which apparently dates to before 1848.

The houses were linked with their Census records, showing how overcrowding got progressively worse through the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example one of the first residents of one house was a Mr Roberts, an engraver whose output included a view of Cashal Abbey and US bank notes. Mr Roberts shared the house with one

other, but the same place had five occupants at the next Census, rising to seven in 1881 and ten in 1891, and two separate families in 1901.

Even more compelling than the links with official records were the accounts of former residents who returned to be interviewed and show their old photos. One lady was even able to identify the skeleton of a cat as the mortal remains of one ‘Blackie’, who had belonged to the old lady lodging upstairs.

The ‘community involvement’ aspect of the project was judged a success, with many residents coming in to talk and finds handling boxes provided for local schools tied to the National Curriculum. Roy noted that acts of vandalism at the start of the project quickly died away as people became interested and took pride in the project. Following the success of the 2005 excavation, the team returned in 2006 as part of the Shoreditch Festival to excavate on the site of some prefabs in neighbouring Salisbury Street.

There were many questions following Roy’s interesting talk, both on the Shoreditch project and the work of the LAARC, and Roy concluded by inviting the EAS to visit the LAARC – an invitation we are very keen to take up. Watch this space...

*EDITOR*



The following item from the Middlesex Quarterly County Magazine of Spring 1957 was recently unearthed by Brian Warren, who read it out at the AGM – an appropriate way to close our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year.

*“The Enfield Archaeological Society recently celebrated its first birthday with an annual dinner. This energetic North Middlesex organisation has increased its membership from 13 to 135 in its first year, which has been one of considerable achievement. Under the direction of Dr. J.P.C. Kent of the British Museum staff, members have completed excavating the earthwork at the Bush Hill Park Golf Course and explored the site of Roman Ermine Street at Edmonton. Film shows, a Brains Trust and two coach excursions were included in the Society’s full programme of activities.”*

This edition’s cover star is an 1821 silver crown of George IV, found by metal detector in the borough.



# Excavation at 108 Leighton Road, July-August 2006

(Site Code LHK06)

By Martin J. Dearne

## Introduction

In early 2006 the owners of 108 Leighton Road contacted the EAS to inform us that, following the sad death of the previous occupier, the property was likely to be sold subsequent to an application for planning permission to develop a grassed area along the south side of the front of the house. Knowing the archaeological significance of the site within the Bush Hill Park Roman settlement (having been instrumental in alerting the EAS to development at 106 Leighton Rd, see *Society News 182*) they invited the EAS to excavate the area likely to be developed.

## Excavation

A 2.0 m (north south) by 6.0 m (east west) trench was cut, parallel with and 1.0 m north of the 106 Leighton Rd. recorded sections (Fig. 1).

The work was hampered by the extremely hot weather which baked the brickearth hard, and initially findings seemed to be disappointing. The natural (brickearth over gravels) clearly sloped gently from east to west, though whether this slope was natural or not was unclear, but in any event the slope led to a cut or cuts [8] at the west end of the trench. Mostly impossible to trace in plan and only seen very partially in section, these cut(s) appeared to include a curvilinear one with sloping sides, over 40 cm across, perhaps with a sloping base and c. 35 cm deep, at the extreme south west corner of the trench. This itself may have cut a second element of [8], a north south cut implied by an abrupt rise of c. 10 cm in the surface of the natural (compared to other sections) in the west section.

Filling the cut(s) and covering the slope was a generally 12 - 25 cm thick deposit, [4], a dark brown lightly mottled yellowish brown very clayey silt with very occasional stones and charcoal smears with little pottery in it, representing slow silting by brickearth-rich hill wash in the second and possibly subsequent centuries. (It is entirely likely that elements of the cuts both made into and filled with this apparently homogeneous material were inobvious).

It appeared likely that what was represented was a linear north south step in the natural, caused by

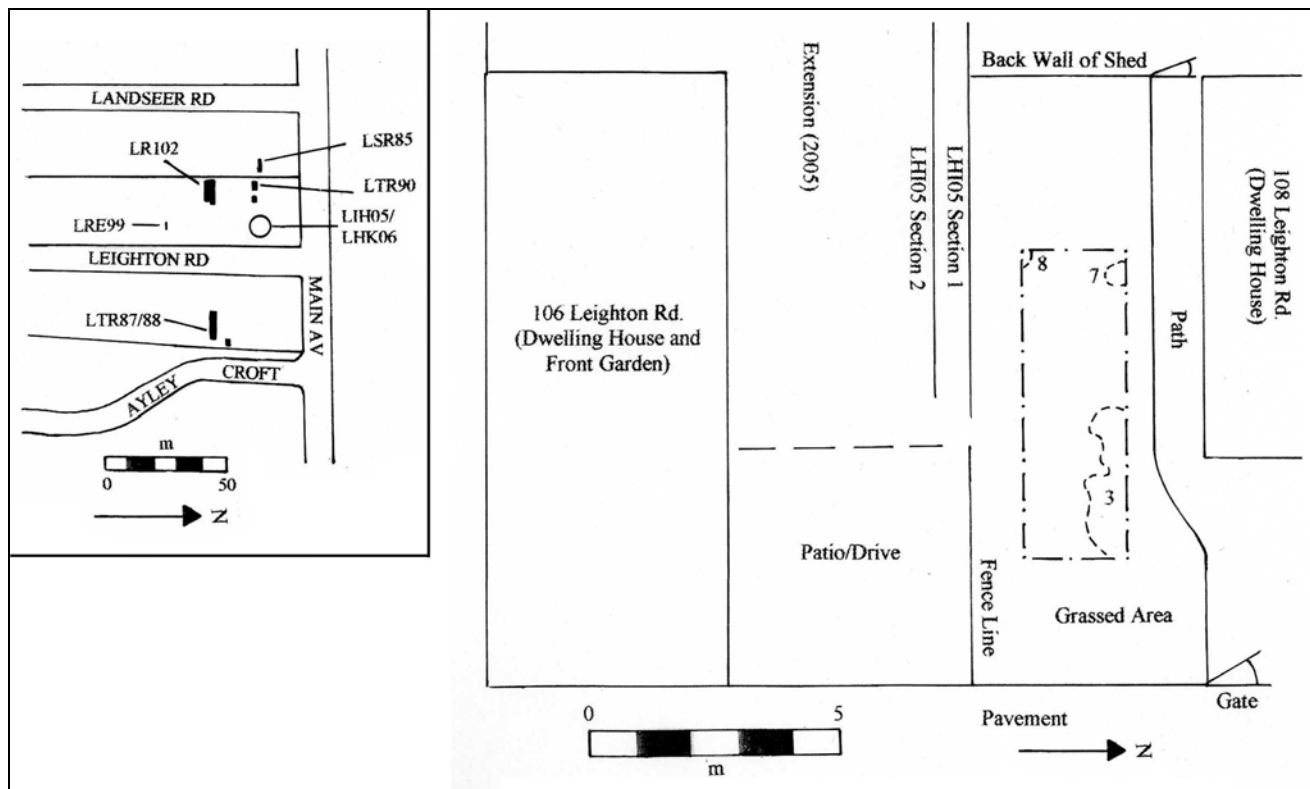


Fig 1: Site and its Location in Relation to Earlier Excavations

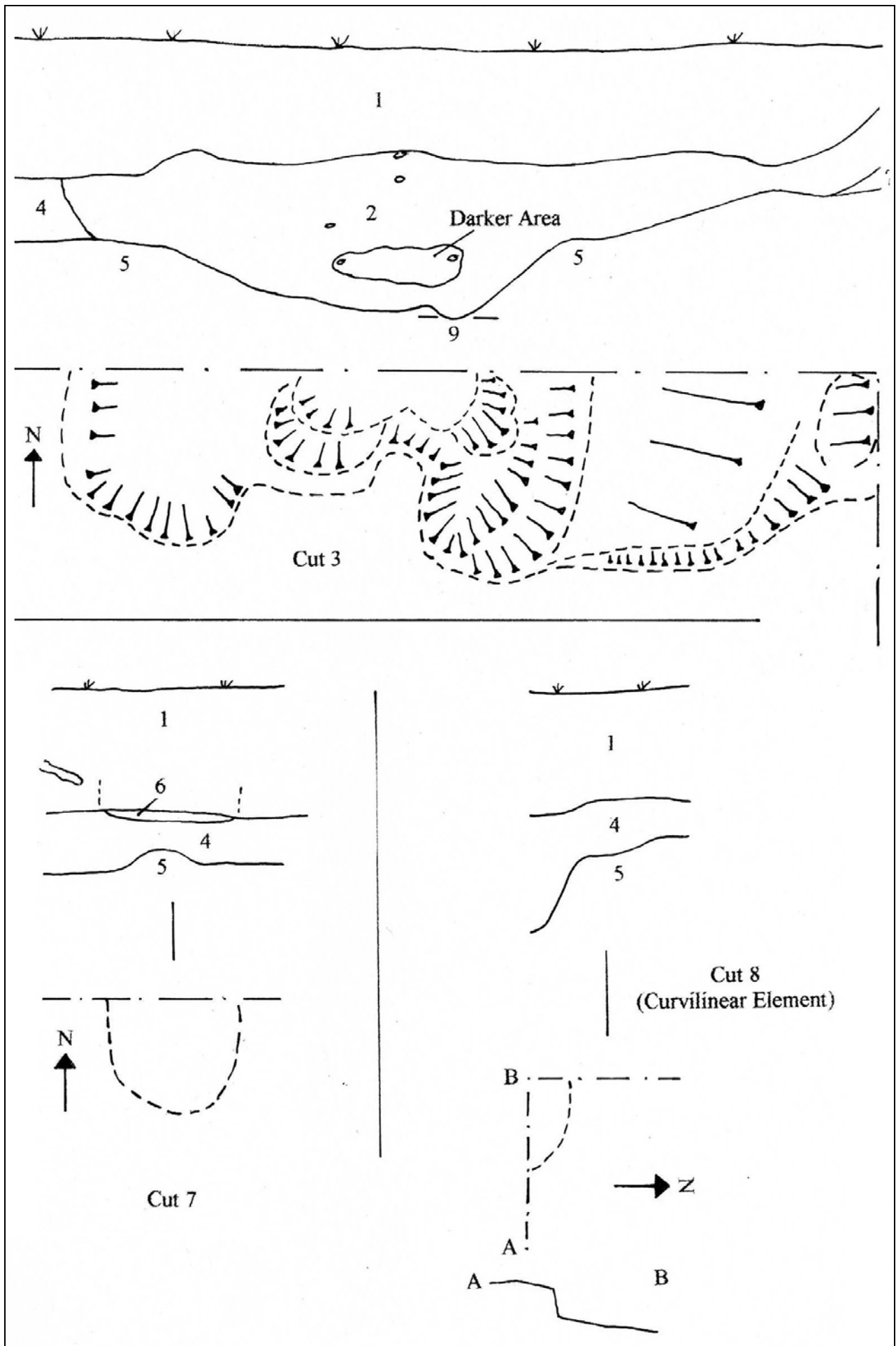


Fig 2: Trench Features at 1:20 (for locations see Fig 1)

some deepening of the possibly natural slope near the west end of the trench, which cut had itself been truncated by a deeper ?curvilinear cut, and then a phase of inactivity as hillwash built up.

Subsequently this hillwash was cut by [3], a generally round sided feature (though on the east more stepped) over 3.1 m east-west. Its extreme east edge probably lay just outside the trench but it clearly extended well beyond the north section, only a maximum of 80 cm of its north-south extent being within the trench and only a few centimetres of its base being seen. Whilst morphologically the fragment of the feature seen could have been a pit, in section especially it seemed more likely to represent a ditch butt end with a gentler (stepped) profile on the east than the west. If so it may well have been the southern butt end of a ditch tending roughly north north east.

The nature of the fill, [2], of this feature also appeared more consistent with a ditch interpretation. Though probably truncated, along with the upper part of cut [3], by modern cultivation, it was again principally a homogeneous brickearth derived silt. A dark brown, below the top few centimetres mottled strong brown, very clayey silt, it generally included only occasional small stones and pot sherds along with the iron tine (prong) of a two tined Roman hoe. But one area of slightly darker fill 12 cm above the base of and in the deepest part of the cut produced a partial sheep jaw. The fill thus suggests the slow accumulation of ?hill washed silt, perhaps punctuated by a build up of more organic material from e.g. domestic rubbish disposal after primary silting. The pottery (from the upper levels) was mainly late first/second century with very few diagnostic sherds but one colour coated sherd may indicate that final deposit closure was not before the mid second century and the likelihood of truncation means that this cannot be more than an earliest possible date. One other ?non-modern cut, near the north west corner of the trench, was identified. If it was a non-modern feature it had been almost completely truncated by modern cultivation but the cut, [7], might have been a post hole, 41 cm in diameter and filled with [6], a brown very clayey silt without inclusions. A possibly Saxon body sherd was recovered from this area and approximate level prior to the recognition of [7]. All the Roman and ??Saxon features and deposits were covered by a deep topsoil [1] resulting from double digging chrysanthemum beds, which had truncated at least some features/deposits, though a relic Medieval ploughsoil was identified at some points.

It was this topsoil that produced most of the pottery including later Roman (up to ?mid/late fourth century) plus some ?Medieval and eighteenth century material.

### Interpretation

Comparing features here at 108 Leighton Road (Fig. 2) with the features recorded at Number 106 was instructive and shows the value of 'negative evidence' because, although the area excavated is unlikely to have seen any Roman occupational activity, or even much rubbish disposal, the small fragment of a curved cut [8] matched and so was probably the butt end of a ditch (LIH05 [10]) seen at No. 106. The other ditch butt end [3] matched the orientation of a second ditch at No. 106 (LIH05 [7]).

Putting the two sites together (Fig. 3) allows us to modify our conclusions at No. 106 and what we now seem to have is a Phase 1 with a ?natural east west slope, deepened at the west end of the current site creating a 'step' in the natural, and also represented by the surface of the natural at the west end of the sections recorded at No. 106. Silting of this cut/slope (at No. 106 part of [9] (which may now be seen to be earlier silting not a western overflow from the ditch [8] on that site, whose full cut profile is also likely to have been invisible because of the homogeneity of what were in fact separate deposits of silt on the slope and in the later ditch)) now seems likely to have been followed in Phase 2 by the cutting of double ditches on an east north east to west south west alignment and with a break in the ditch line under 3.0 m wide (the butt end [3] on the present site aligned with LIH05 [7]; and the butt end [8] on the present site matching LIH05 [10] at No. 106). The end of the northern arm of the latter ditch would have lain just outside our trench at No. 108.

Once both ditches silted up sometime in the second century or later, silt still continued to accumulate in the area but then, in Phase 3, a rather more north south ditch seen at No. 106 (LIH05 [8], in fact with a deeper recut as well) was cut. Crucially it was not present at No. 108 even though its line would have crossed our trench so it too must have had a gap in it or at least ended just south of the trench at No. 108. The likelihood is therefore that it reinstated what seems to have been an entrance way through a major boundary.

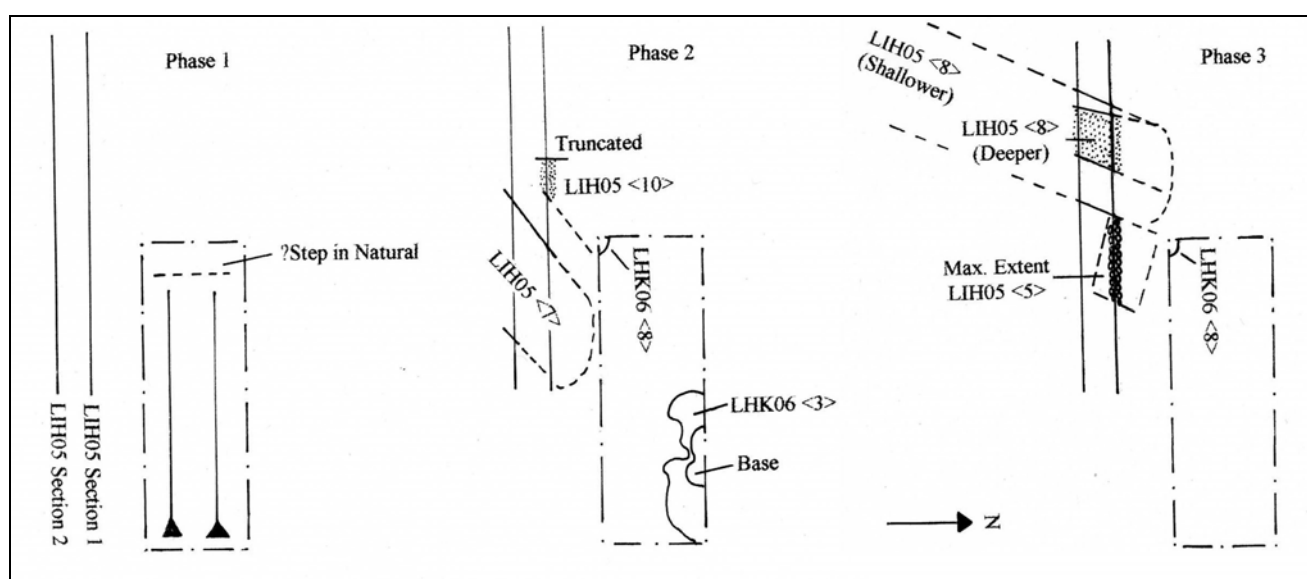
The deposition of what was interpreted at the time as a ritual ditch closure deposit in the top of the Phase 2 ditch LIH05 [7] at No. 106 now also takes on a different significance. It was found directly



above the ditch but that now seems likely to have been a coincidence and more important may have been the cobbled surface above it at No. 106 (LIH05 [5]). This was not present at No. 108 so we can now be sure that it was not a path as we conjectured but a very restricted area of cobbling c. 1.75 m east west by a maximum of slightly over 1.5 m north south – something like a monument base perhaps - at the side of the Phase 3 entrance way. It follows that the ritual deposit probably related to sanctifying the ?monument. Both Phase 3 ditch and ?monument base are also likely dated by the ritual deposit to the late third/early fourth century because it featured a complete beaker of this date.

Truncation prevents us from taking the story of this part of the Roman settlement further but evidence from an earlier excavation considerably further along Leighton Rd. suggests that the Phase 3 ditch at least ran for a considerable distance along the east edge of the roadside settlement, probably parallel to but less than 30 m west of Ermine Street, while the single possible post hole and a total of two ?Saxon sherds add to a small amount of evidence that is accumulating for some possible post Roman activity in the area..

The author is grateful to the members of the EAS who constituted the excavation team.



**Fig 3: Phased Interpretation of Features at 106 and 108 Leighton Road (Scale 1:150)**

## Appendix - Finds Summary

(pottery - Roger Dormer & Martin J. Dearne;  
animal bone - Neil Pinchbeck)

(\* denotes illustrated on Fig. 4; more detailed finds reports are available in archive)

\*Corroded and concreted tine from a ?two tined hoe (cf. Manning 1985, 47, Fig. 12 and Pls. 19 and 20). Gently curving, maximum c. 2.0 X 2.4 cm rectangular sectioned bar, tapering and narrowing to a rectangular sectioned blunt point. Length 13.8 cm. Assessed and drawn from an X-radiograph kindly made by Moira B. Wilson and Claire Malbeq of Rosemary Avenue Veterinary Clinic.

Animal bone fragments from a darker area within context [2] comprised mainly 11 pieces of bone and six of dentition from a mid to proximal section from the left hand side of an Ovis aeries (domestic sheep) mandible which fragmented during recovery. Probably associated were a section of scapula and the end of a long bone of Ovis aeries (domestic sheep), both bearing clear puncture marks from dog teeth, most probably the crown processes of canid molars. A separate group of fragments from the same darker area comprised six poorly preserved unidentified fragments from a large bone, possibly of Bos taurus.(we are grateful to Moira B. Wilson and Claire Malbeq for their interest in and opinion on these fragments).

Very little pottery was recovered and the majority of it was abraded in small sherds; probably suggesting it was part of hillwash and a lot of it might be residual. Diagnostic material was limited and much of it derived from the modern topsoil; context [4] at least may include sherds introduced by garden cultivation or from two separate but undifferentiated silt deposits. [4] produced mainly second century material and vessel no. 3 (below) was unabraded and ought to indicate that the deposit was accumulating in the second century. However, it is impossible to be sure how late this accumulation continued and ambiguously contexted material included a Much Hadham body sherd, and a rim from a large jar in third/fourth century Alice Holt fabric. ?Ditch fill [2] was again dominated by first/second century material; a single Nene Valley colour coated sherd (and a little more fumed greyware than from [4]) may place the later stages of its accumulation in the later second century at least but the deposit may have been truncated. Material from topsoil was of wider date range (Flavian to ?mid/late fourth century) though its quantity and preservation again argue for low level pottery deposition and so activity.

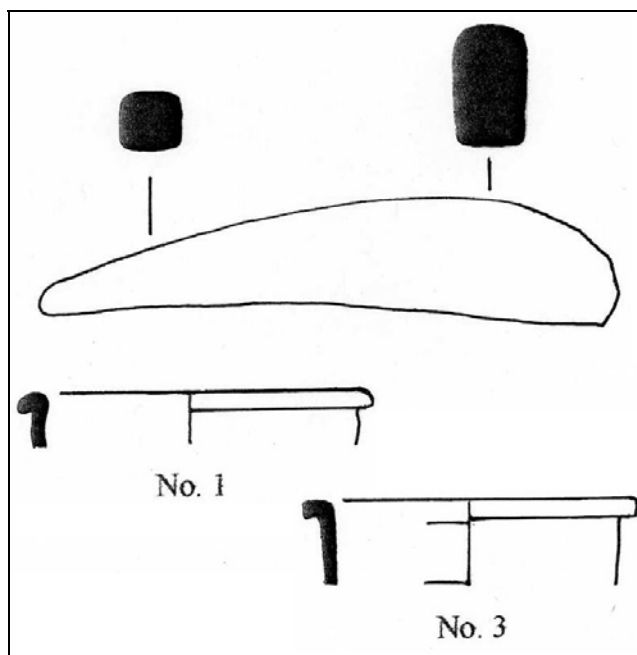
A range of coarseware fabrics were represented including Highgate products, Verulamium Region fabrics, Lincoln Road (Tyers 1977) fabric D, Much Hadham Ware, and Brockley Hill Ware; but only two colour coated sherds, a single ?Oxfordshire Parchment Ware rim, and a single Alice Holt sherd. The assemblage was dominated by inspecific, mainly grey (and grey fumed), wares with only two mortarium sherds and a few small amphora sherds and samian sherds. Forms present were almost exclusively jars and bowls with just one or two flagons. Only two coarse ware vessels, both from [4], call for separate publication here:

\*No. 1 Marsh and Tyers (1978) IV F bowl in reduced grey ware containing both sand and grog temper. White slip on rim and external surfaces. Early second century and similar to Highgate phase III, AD 100-140 (Brown and Sheldon 1974).

\*No. 3 Marsh and Tyers (1978) IV A 3 bowl with vertical wall and horizontal rim, thickened at the edge but undecorated; buff, granular fabric. (AD 80-110).

Two possible ?Saxon sherds were present, a base sherd in hard red brown to (internally) black fabric tempered with flint, sand and ?grog and with variously sized white quartz, and a sherd in a hard, oxidised, internally black(ened) very coarse

fabric with large flint ?and some grog temper and with some brown quartz. However, neither identification as Saxon should be taken as firmly established.



**Fig 4: Finds: Iron tine at 1:2 and Pottery at 1:4**

#### Bibliography

Manning, W. H. (1985) *Catalogue of the Romano-British Iron Tools, Fittings and Weapons in the British Museum*, London: British Museum.

Marsh, G. and Tyers, P. (1978) 'The Roman Pottery from Southwark' in Bird, J., Graham, A. H., Sheldon, H. and Townend, P. (edd) *Southwark Excavations 1972 – 1974 LMAS/Surrey Arch. Soc. Joint Publication 1*.

Tyers, P. (1977) 'The Roman coarse pottery' in Gentry, A., Ivens, J. and McClean, H. 'Excavations at Lincoln Road, London Borough of Enfield, November 1974 – March 1976' *TLAMAS* 28, 101 – 89, pp135-154.

*Copies of the full archive report are available from the Society at cost price.*



# Enfield Archaeological Society

FOUNDED 1955

Affiliated to the Council for British Archaeology and the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society

President: Harvey Sheldon B.Sc. F.S.A. F.R.S.A.

## MINUTES OF THE 51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 51<sup>st</sup> AGM of the Enfield Archaeological Society held on Friday 20th April 2007 began with Vice-Chairman Ian Jones welcoming members and introducing the evening's proceedings (the Chairman having partly lost his voice). Copies of the 2006 Financial Report were handed out.

Ian expressed concern at the drop in membership, but noted that 2006 had been a very active and productive year for the Society, and that we were getting recognition from other archaeological bodies for the quality of our work. He asked if there were any views or comments on last year's AGM minutes and the 2006 Annual Report (agenda items one and two), before Brian Warren and Geoffrey Gillam proposed and seconded a motion that they were accurate and correct records, which was carried unanimously.

The third item on the agenda was the Financial Statement for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2006, which was read out by the Honorary Treasurer Geoff Lampport. Its accuracy was proposed and seconded by David Wills and Jeremy Grove and the motion was accepted by all present.

The meeting continued with the Election of Honorary Officers and Committee Members.

The same committee stood for re-election with the exception of the Auditor's position, which was temporarily filled at short notice by Joan Coventon, for which the Society is most grateful. The position for Social Secretary again remained vacant. The floor approved the re-election of the committee, as follows:

President:	Harvey Sheldon, BSc FSA FRSA
Vice Presidents:	Dr Ild Anthony Geoffrey Gillam Ivy Drayton
Chairman:	Mike Dewbrey
Vice Chairman:	Ian Jones
Hon. Treasurer:	Geoff Lampport
Hon. Secretary:	David Wills
Hon. Meetings Secretary:	Tim Harper
Hon. Membership Secretary:	David Wills

Hon. Social Secretary:	Vacant
Hon. Editor:	Jeremy Grove
Director of Fieldwork & Research:	Dr. Martin Dearne
Auditor:	Joan Coventon
Committee:	Roger Eddington Caroline McKenna Les Whitmore

There were no items of Any Other Business, but to mark the passing of the Society's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year Brian Warren read out an account in the Middlesex Quarterly from Spring 1957 of excavations by the Society at Bush Hill Park and a coach excursion.

Ian Jones closed this part of the meeting by thanking all the committee members for all their hard work and the staff of Forty Hall museum, and in particular, Jan Metcalfe and Val Munday.

The Report of the Fieldwork, Research and Other activities of the Society during 2006 was introduced by Mike Dewbrey, who noted the drop in membership, and invited members to take some membership forms to distribute. He also noted that 2006 had been the Society's busiest year of fieldwork and that we had excavated two Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Elysng Palace and Bush Hill Park hillfort, before praising the efforts of the Society's excavation team. Mike and Martin Dearne gave a lively illustrated account of the 2006 Fieldwork – details of which are not repeated here since they were given in the Annual Report (Society News 184, March 2007) and have been or will be reported in detail in other Society News articles.

Mike concluded by thanking Dr Dearne for his professionalism and hard work directing excavations and writing reports. After the floor was opened to questions, Mike thanked everyone for attending the AGM.

The newly conserved Barbotine Beaker which had been recovered in pieces from Bush Hill Park was displayed after the meeting.

*DAVID WILLS*

# PASTFINDERS NEWS

News of the Excavation and Fieldwork Group



In contrast to last year, the first few months of 2007 were relatively quiet as far as excavations were concerned. This respite has given Martin Dearne our director of excavations the opportunity to tackle much of the backlog of unpublished reports, including 102 Leighton Road, which promises to be one of the most academic and comprehensive we have produced so far. Cataloguing the vast assemblage of pottery from this site and identifying the many forms and fabrics is a time consuming task which has occupied many volunteers.

Sadly we were unable to gain access to another site that was under threat in Leighton Road and that piece of the puzzle has now been lost forever.

On a more positive note we recently took a closer look at the fields known as 'Upper 'and 'Lower Mill Rounds' to the North of Maidens Brook. As the name suggests we were looking for evidence of Sir Thomas Lovell's Tudor water mill.

We returned to the area over a couple of weekends in May to photograph and draw a substantial brick lined culvert which was used to divert water through a sluice from the now disused loop of the New River in the early 19th century. Hard hats were the order of the day as we set to work clearing the encroaching brambles and saplings which were almost totally obscuring the structure. A wooden revetment was uncovered together with fragments from an early 19th century fireplace! Tree growth in places has damaged the brickwork and this may be the last opportunity to record this impressive 19th century structure before nature reclaims it once more. The red brick floor appeared to be stepped along its course, which we took to be a means of reducing the flow before the culvert empties into a gully which runs down to Maidens Brook. However subsequent research by one of our members suggests that this was part of a mechanism for irrigating water meadows.

Also in May we were called in by Forty Hall to record what is thought to be an earlier wall of the courtyard, which was uncovered by contractors laying new paths to the toilet block. Not one of our most glamorous locations! Eighteenth century



maps show this wall adjacent to the north front of the house running diagonally from the lodge by the courtyard gate to a junction with the front of the house.

A stone's throw from here we have been asked to carry out some evaluation work on the garden mound close to the lake in front of Forty Hall. It is believed to date to the early part of the 18th century, being the up throw from the excavation of the lake. The Council plan to reinstate the pathways which once wound round the mound and recreate the 18th century views across the lake. We hope to look at the way the mound is constructed and for any evidence of structures on or within it, such as summerhouse pavilions or even the elusive ice house which may be buried somewhere in the vicinity!

We were kindly invited by the Capel Manor farm manager to photograph a brick-lined well she had discovered in a field west of Forty Hall. The remains of the cast iron water winch were also found lying close by. The brick well cap had collapsed and a probe with a piece of timber suggested the bottom has at least six feet of black sludge in it. As no one volunteered to investigate further it was covered with a metal grill for safety. A nearby pond which shows on the 1785 map had recently been de-silted and cleaned out, and a variety of 19th century bottles salvaged from the jaws of the JCB. We understand that these will be added to the museum collection at Forty Hall.

Archaeology Week is almost upon us once more and we will once again be excavating over the site of Elsyng Palace, so do come along and see us in action and show your support. We will be digging from Friday to Sunday but on Sunday July 15<sup>th</sup> children will be able to help with finds washing and the public are invited to bring along any finds they have made while digging in their gardens or allotments.

If you would like to take part in this or other excavations new diggers are always welcome. For further information call my office on 01707 870888.

If you have not purchased a copy of Geoffrey Gillam's excellent book on Forty Hall then hang your head in shame, copies however will be available on Archaeology Day at a reduced price but they are in short supply so buy now while stocks last!

*MIKE DEWBREY*