
SOCIETY NEWS

THE BULLETIN OF THE ENFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



ISSUE 76

MARCH 1980

CONTENTS

Forthcoming Events

Lecture Report

Postscript

New members

Annual Report (Twenty Fourth)

SOCIETY NEWS is published quarterly in March, June, September and December.

All correspondence and articles for inclusion in the bulletin should be addressed to the Editor, Mr. Graham Deal, 209 Latymer Road, Edmonton, London, N9 9PN and should reach him by the 7th of the month preceding publication.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A reminder that if you have not paid your subscriptions by March 31st, you will not receive the next Bulletin. Please send subscriptions as soon as possible, to the Membership Secretary, Mrs. G. Ivens, 120 Hedge Lane, Palmers Green, London, N.13.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

March 26th Wednesday

Civic Centre, Enfield, 8.00 p.m.

Annual General Meeting

With this bulletin comes the Notice of the 1980 Annual General Meeting and it is hoped that all members will do their best to attend.

We do need more help in running the Society and we would like to see a few more members coming forward. Would anyone like to arrange a couple of coach trips, to help with publicity, to deliver a few bulletins, to type the odd report, to help prepare food when we arrange a social occasion, or to give assistance in any other way? If so, please get in touch with Geoffrey Gillam, 23 Merton Road, Enfield. Telephone 367 0263.

23rd April Wednesday

Civic Centre, Enfield, 8.00 p.m.

Medieval Pots and Potters in and around London

Clive Orton

The types of pottery used in medieval London from c1050 - 1500 A.D., will be examined against the background of their uses and the use of alternative materials. New evidence for the dating of late medieval pottery will be presented and the evidence for the manufacture of pottery in and around London will be reviewed.

This lecture will be of interest, not only because of the presentation of pottery as archaeological evidence for dating purposes, but will have an aesthetic appeal to those people who are interested in pottery design and decoration.

14th May Wednesday

Civic Centre, Enfield, 8.00 p.m.

Presidential Address

Dr. Irid Anthony

The subject of Dr. Anthony's Presidential Address is not yet known, but we can be assured from her past record that it will be interesting and informative. Her previous lectures have ranged far and wide, both in space and time, and have included 'Etruscan Bronzes', 'Early Domestic Buildings', 'Industrial Sites in Roman Britain', 'The Roman Countryside', and many other subjects. We have no hesitation in entering this date in our diaries.

THE DEFENCES OF ROMAN LONDON

A lecture given on Wednesday 14th November 1979 by Dr. Hugh Chapman, Senior Keeper of the Prehistoric and Roman Section of the London Museum.

The site of Roman London was on two gravel plateaux, separated by the River Walbrook and bounded on the west by the Fleet. It was on the eastern plateau that the first settlement was built shortly after the Roman invasion of 43 A.D. London soon became the administrative centre of the province of Britain, and between 49 and 96 A.D., many fine buildings were erected, among them the Governor's palace.

Although the outline of the city would have been marked by the Pomoerium, or sacred boundary, there is no evidence that any linear defences were built before about 200 A.D. Traces of early military activity have been found at Aldgate where small V-shaped ditches, from one of which a sword handle was recovered, suggests that a base was established there by the invasion forces.

The life of the town was interrupted by the rebellion of the Iceni and other tribes led by Boudicca in 60 A.D. when Camulodunum (Colchester), Londinium (London) and Verulamium (St. Albans) were sacked. There may well have been a small detachment of troops in London at this time, but not enough to provide any defence.

In 1952 there came the discovery of the Roman fort in the northwest corner of the city in the Cripplegate area. Of typical playing card shape, the fort covered 12 acres and its obvious function was to house a bodyguard for the Imperial Governor whose palace has already been mentioned. Built about 100 A.D. it was one of the earliest stone forts in this country. Although the foundations of the wall and the ditch surrounding the fort were found, all traces of the internal buildings have been destroyed by the digging of cellars beneath 19th century buildings. The fort appears to have been occupied into the 3rd century.

In 200 A.D. the city was surrounded by a large stone wall, rising to a height of 20 feet, with an external ditch, enclosing an area of 350 acres, making it the largest town in Roman Britain. The archaeological evidence for the construction of these defences gives a date between 154 and 214 A.D. and the generally accepted date is about 200 A.D. It has been suggested that the wall was built on the instruction of Clodius Albinus, a local usurper who gave orders for the building of walls around the main towns of Britain before he left to pursue his ambitions on the Continent.

The method of construction was of facing stones of Kentish Rag from the Maidstone area, with a carefully placed rubble fill. The wall was bonded with layers of tile every few feet, which also served as offsets for decreasing the width of the wall. Internal turrets gave access to the walk-way which occupied the last 6 feet or so of the upper part of the wall. Behind the wall was an earth bank about 14 feet thick.

For many years there was a long debate on whether or not the river front was defended. Excavation has now revealed rows of rectangular oak piles driven into the subsoil, covered with a layer of chalk on which the wall was built. The date of construction for this part of the wall was during the third quarter of the 4th century. The riverside wall was gradually eroded by the Thames and collapsed between 996 and 1066.

There were several gates and the alignment of the wall at Aldgate suggests there was an entrance to the city at this point before the wall was built. The most thoroughly explored gateway is at Newgate where two rectangular guard towers, with a central pier, provided a double entrance have been discovered. There were several bastions on the wall. Those on the western side are hollow and believed to be medieval additions, while those on the eastern side are solid and of Roman date built to accommodate artillery. The addition of bastions meant that the external ditch had to be filled in to provide the necessary base for the projecting masonry. A new, wide, shallow ditch was dug further away from the wall to give parameters of fire for the artillery. The filling of these bastions is made up of a wide variety of architectural fragments; altars, fragments of large funerary monuments, tombstones even parts of a large monumental arch. They were all used in the reinforcement of the city defences and reflect the emergency conditions prevailing during the late Roman Empire.

In 1974, the base of a small tower with ditches in front, was uncovered at nearby Shadwell. It has been plausibly suggested that it was a signal tower, perhaps one of several strung out along the Thames Estuary, to give warning of an impending attack. A date in the 3rd century has been given for its construction.

As well as more evidence of the defences of London being revealed by excavation and observation, several 19th century prints and drawings have been found which illustrate many parts of the defences long since destroyed.

The lecture was of particular interest to us as the small settlement in Enfield on the road from Bishopsgate, where official travellers could obtain a change of horses on their journey along Ermine Street to the north, would have been administered from London. The excavation in Lincoln Road, Enfield in 1976 found evidence of late military activity in this area and such activity would also have been directed from London.

EXCAVATIONS AT WARE

A lecture given on Wednesday the 5th December 1979 by Clive Partridge, who has been directing excavations at Ware on behalf of the East Herts Archaeological Society.

From Enfield, official travellers along Ermine Street would have changed horses again at Ware, where evidence of Roman occupation, in the form of coins, pottery and burials, has been known for many years. The first finds were made during the building of Allen and Hanbury's factory in the early 19th century on the bank of the River Lea. Several burials, both cremations and inhumations, as well as coins and brooches were found when the nearby lock on the Lee Navigation was constructed in the 1860's. Foundations of buildings were uncovered during flood relief work in the same area in 1975 and 1976.

As well as evidence of the Roman occupation, many finds of earlier periods have been made. A unique discovery was part of a Mesolithic site where not only worked flints were found but also structural features cut into the subsoil and sealed beneath a later turf line. An Iron Age ditch was found and it is expected that more finds of this period will eventually be forthcoming as Clive Partridge believes there was a staging post here for traders bringing in goods via the Thames and Lea Valley.

Roman settlement came early; there is evidence of a military ditch containing Claudian/Neronian pottery and at least one section through the early military road has been obtained. Later on, Ermine Street itself was constructed and unlike Enfield, its course and constructional details are particularly well-known in the area. Settlement continued and the area of occupation grew in size, especially during the 3rd and 4th centuries, and eventually covered a sufficiently large area to suggest it may have achieved the status of a town. The western and eastern boundaries of the occupied area are bounded by cemeteries. Chalk platforms were laid down to stabilise the underlying peat and on which were constructed timber framed houses, some of which revealed at least five rebuilding phases. The post holes of a building believed to be a temple fronting Ermine Street were found; fragments of votive plaques and two horses heads buried in one corner appear to be a votive offering.

There was considerable industrial activity; clay pits and pottery kilns as well as several furnaces for iron working were found. There were traces of many ephemeral buildings associated with this industrial activity. Much of the late activity had encroached on Ermine Street which in consequence, had narrowed in width to seven metres or less. The excavation of a timber lined well, dug during the late 3rd century was described, in which were found several complete skeletons of pigs and dogs.

There was no evidence to suggest these animals had been killed and it is possible they died of disease. The well had gone out of use by the late 4th century after which it had been filled with dead animals and other rubbish. Further work on the site is planned over the next few years, when it is hoped that the full story of what appears to be a small Roman town at Ware will emerge. The lecture was an interesting account of an extended archaeological exercise and showed what can be achieved by controlled excavation and continuous observation.

G.R.G.

POSTSCRIPT

B.B.C. 1979 Chronicle Award for Archaeology

When France collapsed in June 1940 it was fully expected that German forces would soon be landing on the beaches of southern England. The first reaction was to build a series of stop lines to slow down and eventually halt the invaders. Hundreds of men poured tons of concrete and laid thousands of bricks, building pill boxes and anti-tank obstacles as part of the G.H.C. line around London. As well as the G.H.C. line, there were other stop lines with pill boxes behind anti-tank ditches, elsewhere in the country. However, it was soon decided that too many men would be tied down in defending these lines, which could easily have been breached. Instead, the troops were moved to the coast where it was hoped to defeat the enemy before he could obtain a firm foothold. The troops, their equipment and encampments have long since disappeared, but the pill boxes remain, a grim reminder of those dramatic months during 1940 when invasion threatened.

A study of these defences has been made by Henry Willis, who lives in Aldershot, which won him the B.B.C. 1979 Chronicle Award for Archaeology. It was a daunting task, as all the maps, plans and other records had been destroyed and the only way to record the pill boxes and recreate the stop lines was to use the archaeological method and go out and look for them on the ground. This he did, singlehanded in his own area, and by writing to local papers throughout the country, he encouraged other people to send him details of wartime defences known to them. The result is a unique record of these archaeological monuments.

One stop line, intended to protect London from a thrust from the north, ran from Rickmansworth in the east, through Shenley, Northaw and Cheshunt. It then crossed the Lea at Wormley and ran across Essex to the coast. Part of this line was surveyed by the writer some years ago and details have been given to Henry Willis. A detailed account of the pill boxes and anti-tank ditch in Northaw and Cheshunt will appear in a future bulletin. In the meantime, our congratulations to Henry Willis for winning the Chronicle Award with his classic exercise in field archaeology.

Geoffrey Gillam.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1979

The Executive Committee has pleasure in presenting its Twenty-fourth Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 1979.

MEMBERSHIP The following table shows the changes in membership that have occurred during the year.

	Adult	Junior	Total
Membership at 31.12.78	260	35	295
Joined during the year	25	3	28
Resignations and removals	40	17	57
Membership at 31.12.79	245	21	266

LECTURES

10th Jan.	Animal Bones from the City of London	Dr. P. Armitage
14th Feb.	History of Roman Coinage	R. Coxshall.
20th Mar.	Annual General Meeting Followed by reports on current research.	
25th Apr.	Galleons and Guilders	I. K. Jones
16th May	Presidential Address St. Francis Folk Museum	Dr. David Anthony
13th June	The Parish Churches of Middlesex.	G. Dalling
1st July	Medieval Craftsmen in London	J. Clark
12th Sept	Archaeology in the Borough of Barnet.	Mrs. B. Gratton-Green
10th Oct.	Film Show Corn and the Origin of Settled Life in Meso America Korean Treasures from a Tomb	
14th Nov	The Defence of Roman London	Dr. H. Chapman
5th Dec.	Excavations at Ware	C. Partridge.

The Committee is grateful to all those people who have contributed to the programme; to the lecturers for coming to Enfield to speak to us, to the Council of the L.B.E. for allowing us to meet in the Civic Centre, to the Camera Club and the Arts Council for the use of their projectors and screen, to Roger Edington our projectionist, to David Fisher for providing microphones and loudspeakers, and to Bill Gregory for providing the cine projector for the film show.

VISIT TO HARLOW No coach trips were possible during 1979, but Ian Jones again organised a local visit. On this occasion, members in their cars, went to Harlow to visit the museum, the site of the Roman temple and a 12th century chapel.

PUBLICATIONS Society News was published each quarter and included articles on 'Enfieldians at Large' by Ian Jones and 'Archaeology and the Lunatic Fringe' by Geoffrey Gillam, as well as accounts of the lectures given at monthly meetings, details of fieldwork and excavation and news of forthcoming events.

Mrs. Wright who had for some time prepared the stencils for the bulletin asked to be relieved of this job. We are very grateful to her for the time and effort she has given to the Society. The high cost of postage means that we depend on the hand delivery of bulletins and our thanks must go to the members concerned:- Roger Edington, Jill Green, John Coleman, David Pettigrew, Derek Needham, Brian Frear, Mr. Edis, Ian Jones, John Fountain, A. Hall, N.J. Bradley, Ann Gadson G. Deal, John Ivens, Gregory Hunt, Glensys Jones, Simon Wood, Les Whitmore.

No new publications have been produced during the year, but work on 'The Royal Palaces of Enfield' by Ian Jones is well advanced.

All copies of the full report on the 'Excavations at Lincoln Road' have been sold as well as the 'Industrial Archaeology of the L.B.E.' Only a few copies of 'Prehistoric and Roman Enfield' remain and work has started in preparing a revised edition. The popular account of the 'Lincoln Road Excavations', 'Histories and Mysteries of Writing' and 'Enfield Palace' continue to sell well and it is hoped to clear the remaining stocks during 1980.

HISTORY WEEKEND Poor publicity arrangements meant a lower attendance at the History Weekend in Salisbury House, Edmonton in October. However, the standard of exhibits and the lectures were up to their usual high standard. Talks on behalf of the Society were given by Ian Jones and Geoffrey Gillam.

AFFILIATIONS The Society continued its affiliations to the Council for British Archaeology, the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, the Youth Council of the London Borough of Enfield and the Enfield Arts Council.

It was decided to pay the full rate of subscription to the C.B.A. in order to obtain the Archaeological Bibliography and other benefits deriving from full membership.

An attempt was made during the year to persuade the Arts Council to re-organise the existing Literature, Local History and other Arts Group, on which we are represented. After considerable discussion a compromise was reached when it was agreed to set up a sub-committee of representatives from those organisations interested in history and conservation. We exchanged programme cards and bulletins with neighbouring societies which has again resulted in some useful additions to our library. Bulletins were also deposited in local libraries.

PRESS AND PUBLICITY Copies of Society News were sent to local papers and we are grateful to the Press for their continued interest in the activities of the Society. The Society was asked to provide speakers by several local organisations and fourteen talks were given by John Ivens.

An exhibition of Roman material from the Lincoln Road site was arranged by us at Broomfield Museum during the year.

BRIAN WARREN In November, Brian Warren resigned from the office of Vice-Chairman, which he had held since September 1977. Brian has been a member of the Society for many years and apart from his duties as Vice-Chairman he has served as the Society's official observer during the construction of the M25 motorway. He spent many hours organising and carrying out field walks along the proposed course of the motorway, collecting and later analysing archaeological specimens gathered from the surfaces of the fields. His notes and records of these activities are an example to us all. He also kept a watch on the road works near South Mimms Castle and as a result of his observations, conclusive proof was obtained that the suspected outer bailey of the castle was a natural feature. Although Brian is moving house, he is not going far and we hope to see him at some of our monthly meetings.

ACQUISITIONS Newsletters and bulletins from neighbouring societies were received during the year, but the most important acquisitions were volumes 1 and 5 of the Victoria County History of Middlesex, donated by the Council for the V.C.H. and Arthur Hall respectively, as reported in the September bulletin.

Following the lead set by the Edmonton Hundred Historical Society, an appeal was made for archival material relating to the early years of the Society, especially photographs and slides of visits etc. A few items were forthcoming but were disappointingly few.

FRIENDS OF ENFIELD MUSEUMS Several members of the Society attended a meeting at Forty Hall when the decision to form The Friends of Enfield Museums was taken.

ST. ANDREWS CHURCHYARD The question of the proposed redevelopment of the detached part of Enfield churchyard was again brought to the fore in 1979 when the Enfield Preservation Society took the matter to the Diocesan Court, the outcome of which is still awaited. We were asked for and gave, an opinion concerning the re-siting of gravestones and why some of these stones deteriorated so rapidly after they had been moved from their original positions.

EXCAVATIONS

CECIL ROAD Work on the farm site in Cecil Road, Enfield was completed in April. The excavation revealed traces of agricultural trenches from which some medieval pottery was recovered. A detailed survey of the farm buildings was carried out by Alan Skilton of the Enfield Preservation Society. It is hoped to publish a full report of the work in the Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society.

LEIGHTON ROAD Further work on the Roman road now considered to be Ermine Street, discovered in the garden of 53 Leighton Road, Enfield in 1978 was continued under the direction of Richard Coxshall.

In September, John Ivens arranged to excavate in the garden of 51 Leighton Road in an attempt to trace the eastward extension of occupation layers noted in Richard Coxshall's excavation. Unfortunately, while top soil was being removed, a water main was fractured, which brought the work to an abrupt halt! A brief glimpse of the Roman level was obtained before the trench filled with water! We hope to try again another day.

BULLS CROSS In July the London Museum Archaeological Team carried out a small excavation on the line of Ermine Street in advance of the construction of the M25 motorway. Several members of the Society participated in the work when several interesting geological features were uncovered, but the results of the work were not conclusive and firm evidence of the road in the area has yet to be found.

WARE A few members of the Society helped the East Herts Archaeological Society during the closing stages of the excavations on the Roman site at Ware in an attempt to recover as much information as possible before the site was required by the contractors.

FIELDWORK

PALACE GARDENS REDEVELOPMENT The foundation trenches for a new sub station behind Nos. 32 - 34 Church Street were examined, as well as the associated cable diversion trenches and a nearby sewer trench, but nothing of archaeological interest was noted. Trenches dug behind the premises of Eastern Electricity in Church Street cut into disturbed ground believed to be the site of the long filled-in Dolman pond. A trench dug across the front of Pearsons loading bay was found to have cut through modern brick rubble.

Following the demolition of the public lavatories next to Pearsons, a small excavation was carried out. Most of the site was found to be occupied by three concrete underground air raid shelters, on top of which the lavatories had been constructed. Only one small piece of Tudor brickwork was uncovered.

However, extensive Tudor brickwork was uncovered when contractors dug a trench in front of 'Millets' at the corner of Sydney Road and Church Street. The brickwork was undoubtedly part of the Palace buildings and notes of its position and alignment as well as several photographs were taken. Thanks are due to Audrey Robinson for drawing the attention of John Ivens to the discovery.

Geoffrey Gillam continued the photographic survey of the Palace Gardens area, to record all changes, before, during and after demolition.

EDMONTON COUNTY SCHOOL A crop mark was noted in the grounds of Edmonton County School, Cambridge Road and John Ivens managed to obtain some air photographs of the feature which follows the presumed line of Erminé Street. It is planned to cut at least one section across the line of this crop mark as soon as circumstances permit.

M25 A watch continued to be kept on the construction of the M25 motorway. Apart from the excavation previously mentioned, photographs of the clearing of the ground by the road contractors were taken by John Coleman. Brian Warren did a lot of field work on the line of the road and he collected several interesting fossils from cuttings made in the gravel subsoil. Brian also examined the line of a medieval road near Cattlegate but was unable to observe a section across its line before the trench was back-filled by the contractors.

RESEARCH

Meetings of the Activities Group were held at Salisbury House during the year when short talks on various aspects of archaeology were given and current excavation, fieldwork and research were discussed.

With the completion of the excavations in Cecil Road and the departure of the professional archaeologists, an opportunity was taken to clean our work rooms at Forty Hall. New book shelves were also put up to house our growing collection of printed material. The slide collection which now exceeds 2,300 items, is in the care of Geoffrey Gillam and has been completely re-indexed.

A letter was sent to the Greater London Council expressing concern at the closure of the Greater London Library and its transfer to County Hall, but with the bulk of the collection being stored in a warehouse in Whitechapel. It was felt that research workers would suffer a disadvantage as a result of the move.

Geoffrey Gillam finished his research on 'Enfield at War 1914-18' and it is hoped to publish the story of local events during both wars in due course.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members who have joined during the past few months:- Miss J.P. Dunstan, Miss A.M. Butler, Master N. Horsten, Mr. & Mrs. J.G. Smith, Mrs. P.J. Collingridge, Mr. Cole, Mr. & Mrs. Eadie, Mrs. Hoare, Miss E. West, Miss Arons, Mrs. I.M. Jordan, Mr. J. Green, Miss S. Hunt.