

NASNEWS



Newsheet of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society

SECOND SERIES NO 4

JUNE 1988

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SUMMER PROGRAMME 1988

As has become usual in recent years the Society's summer programme comprises a series of field trips. Two of this year's will take the form of guided tours around local excavations - namely the Roman villa at Piddington near Northampton and the 'lost' garden landscape at ruined Kirby Hall near Corby. Also included is a new venture that of an evening visit, which in this first instance will be to the famous Saxon church at Brixworth. These field trips present an excellent opportunity for members to visit important sites and to meet those concerned with recording or otherwise preserving their past. Family and friends are, as always, very welcome on all the Society's outings. Though all the trips are 'self drive' (meeting points given below) it is usually possible to arrange transport for those without vehicles provided they contact the chairman (0327-40855) well in advance.

Summer Programme Diary Dates:

KIRBY HALL field trip..... 2pm Sunday July 3rd
BRIXWORTH CHURCH field trip 7pm Thursday August 10th
PIDDINGTON and HORTON pm Saturday September 17th

KIRBY HALL: (sign-posted off A43 near Deene and Weldon). A guided visit combining an appreciation of this magnificent Elizabethan house with an examination of its landscape setting. Following a tour of the building led by Dr Nicola Smith of English Heritage, there is the opportunity to view the current excavations in the gardens and to visit the well-preserved, but not normally accessible earthwork remains of the old village of Kirby. Assemble in the car park next to the church at 2pm. Normal admission charges to the monument apply (75p adult; 55p senior citizens; 35p children over 5).

BRIXWORTH CHURCH: A guided visit around the famous church led by Alan Hannan, the County Archaeologist. Assemble in the car park at 7pm.

PIDDINGTON and HORTON : An afternoon visit to see the excavations at the Piddington Roman Villa followed by a tour of the 18th century landscape of nearby Horton where the building known as the Menagerie has been imaginatively restored. Because attendance is restricted members wishing to participate should contact Roy Friendship-Taylor on Northampton 870312 for details of venue and further information.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting held on 20th April at the Cornmarket Hall, Kettering was attended by approximately 25 members and saw the retirement from Council of the Meetings Secretary Mr Steve Parry and of Mrs Susan Philips, a long-serving and energetic Council member and ex-secretary. Both will be greatly missed. Two new council members, Mr T Sharman and Mr A Williams were elected. The Council now comprises:

Chairman Mr M Rumbold

Vice-Chairman ... Mr R Friendship-Taylor

Editor Mr B Dix

Ordinary Members of Council: G Cadman, Mrs G Johnson, M Shaw, A Williams, S Young.

There is one vacancy.

Treasurer Mr P Myhill

Secretary Mrs W Parry

Meetings Sec Mr T Sharman

Affiliated local societies are reminded that they are always welcome to send representatives to NAS Council meetings. The next Council meeting will be held on 20th July 1988 at 7.30pm, Cornmarket Hall, Kettering.

The annual accounts were presented and approved at the AGM as were two rule changes as notified with the last edition of NASNEWS. One of these allows for the election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman at the AGM, the other ensures that the Society should continue to enjoy the benefits of being a charity. A copy of the rules are enclosed.

JOURNAL 21 is now at the printers and will be issued in late summer/early autumn. In addition to reviewing recent fieldwork and progress in the Raunds Area Project, the contents of the volume include the results of excavations near Weekley and at Castor, together with reports on the Iron Age hillfort at Farthingstone and from Roman Kettering.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN NORTHAMPTON

In the course of the last year several small excavations and watching briefs have been undertaken in Northampton by the town's archaeologist, Michael Shaw. Middle and Late Saxon pottery and features were recovered from St James' Place, while at St Peter's Way the town's medieval defences were located, a shallow flat-bottomed ditch with a narrow stone wall on its inner side being uncovered. More recently a ditch was discovered during the construction of a multi-storey car park to the east of the ABC Cinema which is thought to have been part of an outer town defence while excavations have just begun at Kettering Road in an area thought to have been part of the medieval suburbs of St Edmund's End.

Much energy is now being directed towards preservation, development plans having been amended on sites in Gold Street and Marefair to ensure that important archaeological levels are sealed rather than destroyed by new building works. If you locate any archaeological material in the Northampton area please let Mike know on Northampton 700493.

HUNSBURY HILL FORT

Earlier this year the Iron Age hillfort at Hunsbury in Northampton's southern district was the scene for a small but intensive excavation led by Dennis Jackson of the County Unit. Working on an eroded part of the defences of this scheduled monument Dennis has been able to demonstrate that the earliest rampart comprised a boxed timber structure supporting timber walling to the rear. The rampart was later destroyed in a massive fire though pieces of charred wood and the original timberwork post settings clearly survived within the destruction levels. Though conducted over only a short length of the rampart the excavation has revealed structural information that will be of the utmost interest to students of hillforts throughout the country.

FOTHERINGHAY UPDATE

Following the note in the last NASNEWS about the threat by quarrying to the historic landscape at Fotheringhay, members will be interested to know that the saga continues. The appeal by the gravel company ARC, against the refusal of planning permission by the County Council will be heard in April 1989.

EAST OF ENGLAND SHOW

Visitors to the East of England Show, near Peterborough in July might like to visit the conservation tent where the Middle Nene Archaeological Society is putting on a display with the title, 'A building reveals its history'. This deals with the last three years excavation and documentary research into the 13th century Prebendal manor House at Nassington, Northants where it was discovered that the house stood on the same site as a late Saxon single aisled timber hall. The Show runs for 3 days 19th, 20th and 21st July.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Assistance is needed some weekdays at the County Council Archaeology Unit to help with processing and reconstruction of finds. Please contact Terry Pearson or Liz Ward on N'ton 700494.

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the following new members: Mr D F Reid, Roade; Thrapston and District History Society; Mr P Kent, E Sussex; Mrs J K Burt, Newton Bromswold; Mr & Mrs R Rose, New Duston; Mr R A Storey, Northampton; Mr & Mrs A M Evans, Brixworth; Mr & Mrs J F Tibbets, Kelmarsh; Mr & Mrs K R Bryant, Norton; Mr P Bowman, Stoneygate, Leicestershire.

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The copy deadline for the next issue of NASNEWS is 29th August 1988.