

NASNEWS



Newsheet of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society

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A BUMPER EDITION!

You will notice that your November NASNEWS arrives with a larger than usual number of enclosures. Alan Williams has compiled a handy reference list of all the articles and notes in Northamptonshire Archaeology and this is supplied free of charge to all members. Subscriptions for 1990/91 were due on September 1st and we would appeal for all members to renew their subscriptions forthwith. A bankers order form is included and it would be greatly appreciated if members would choose this option which greatly cuts down on our administration and expenses. A new mailing list will be prepared at the end of November so please try to pay your subscriptions by this time or let us know if you no longer wish to subscribe.

VILLAS GALORE!

These are halcyon days for the study of the Roman villa in Northamptonshire. Excavations took place on at least four villa sites over the summer and society members were treated to exclusive guided tours of two of them. On August 11th David Neal conducted us around his extensive excavations for the Central Excavation Unit at Stanwick. Of particular interest was a circular foundation of pitched stone interpreted by David as a donkey mill. We were also allowed a brief glimpse of the sculptured stones including the head of a figure being trampled by horse's hoofs which had recently featured in the national press. Those who attended this tour were invited to a further tour in the following week of the Oxfordshire Archaeology Unit's excavations ahead of gravel extraction near Redwell Farm, Stanwick. This site, less than a mile from the Stanwick villa is interpreted as having begun life as a mill but was turned into a villa around AD300. The exciting thing about this site, is that one of the walls of the villa collapsed or was deliberately pushed over into the surrounding sand and has been perfectly preserved. ARC the gravel company have now agreed to leave the villa intact. It is to be hoped that arrangements can be made to display it for the preservation of a complete wall is virtually unique in this country.

Meanwhile the Upper Nene Archaeological Society has been continuing its long running excavations at Piddington. One room is producing a fine hypocaust system while two adjacent and well-preserved windows were uncovered in the cellar which was discovered last year. In addition Steve Young has carried out a further season of excavations at Nether Heyford Roman villa. Most of the walls which were revealed had been robbed out but a small area of mosaic was discovered.

Thirty years ago Northamptonshire was regarded as something of a backwater in the Roman period. Recent work shows that this is far from the truth.

JOURNAL 22

The next volume of Northamptonshire Archaeology is at last at the printers and it is hoped that it will be ready for distribution before Christmas. It caters for all tastes for it contains reports on Dennis Jackson's recent excavation of an Iron Age defended enclosure at Wootton Hill Farm near Hunsbury hillfort; the long awaited publications of the Roman villa at Weldon and the Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Wakerley excavated in the 1950s and 1960s respectively and a description of the medieval bridge at Ditchford.

AN ANNUAL REVIEW?

It has been suggested that the society should produce a popular review of archaeology in the county. Clearly this would take time and money to produce. What are your opinions on the subject? Please feel free to write to the secretary to voice your opinion.

NEW EDITOR REQUIRED

As reported in the last NASNEWS the society is looking for a successor to Brian Dix as editor of Northamptonshire Archaeology. Roy Friendship-Taylor has manfully stepped into the breach for the moment to see Journal 22 through the press but a more permanent solution is needed. The journal has during its relatively short life gained a great deal of respect in the wider world of archaeology for its high standard of presentation. The appointment of a new editor is crucial to the success of both the journal and the society. We would like to hear from anyone with an interest in taking up this post.

BACK NUMBERS OF THE JOURNAL

The society holds back-numbers of most volumes of the journal and it has been decided to make copies available at a special reduced rate of £2.50 each including postage. If you are interested see the enclosed list of articles which contains an order form. Additionally offprints of some of the articles in the journal are available at a standard price of £1.00 each. Those available are asterisked in the list.

NEW MEMBERS

It seems likely that the large contribution by English Heritage towards the cost of the journal will decrease in future years. In order to maintain the high standard of the journal it is important that revenue is increased by recruiting new members. Can you introduce a new member to the society? All new members will receive a free journal of their choice.

Meanwhile we would like to welcome the following new members: Mr and Mrs T. Powell and Mrs C. Smith and family.

DOWN TO EARTH

A weekly magazine programme on archaeology, commences on Channel 4 at 8pm on Tuesday November 6th. Presented by Dr Catherine Hills of Cambridge University it promises to report on recent discoveries and analyse topical issues. Readers of The Guardian will already be aware that one feature will be a computer recreation of Stanwick villa.

DIARY

Geoff Dannell is speaking on Pompeii and its surroundings to Middle Nene Archaeology Group, 8.00pm, on Friday 9th November at Palmer Block, Glapthorn Road, Oundle. Details from Jill Johnston Tel: 0832 273798

Iain Soden of Coventry Museum will speak on the Roman Fort at The Lunt, part of which was reconstructed in the 1970s in a pioneering work of presentation of archaeology to the public, on Friday 30th November, 7.45pm, at St Giles' Centre, Northampton. Details from Roy or Di Friendship-Taylor. Tel: N'opton 870312.

Bozeat Historical and Archaeological Society have a very full and interesting programme of lectures to celebrate their 10th anniversary, including on 14th May 1991 Dr Catherine Hills (see above). At their next meeting on Tuesday 13th November Iain Brown is talking on Petra. Further details are available from David Mallows. Tel: 0933 664067.



"I suppose you know you spoil that god of yours!"