

LEATHERHEAD and DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Newsletter 3/73

December 1973

Dear Member

M.25 and ARCHAEOLOGY

At present, the probable starting date of construction work on the section of the M.25 between A.3 and A.217 is 1976/7, and the Surrey Archaeological Society's Excavations Committee plans to complete documentary research, field walking and trial trenching by Spring 1975.

Meanwhile it seems likely that there will be an opportunity for M.25 volunteers to gain excavating experience very shortly. Resistivity tests have revealed signs of a circular earthwork, possibly a round barrow, by the Old Quarry, Ashted. This is in the grounds of the home of our late President, Captain Lowther. He reported excavations there in 1930 which revealed shafts and pits and other signs of Early Iron Age occupation. Excavation led by Mr. R.J. Webber will be started very shortly - he hopes to make a start over the week-end 15/16 December and to continue in the New Year. One of the aims is to provide an opportunity for newcomers to gain experience. Anyone interested should contact Mr. Webber (Tel. 01-397-4885).

"Notes for New Diggers" is the title of a 4-page reprint from "The London Archaeologist" of an informative article by David Farley. Copies will be on sale, price 2p, at evening meetings. Anyone wishing to obtain a copy by post can write to S.R.C.Poulter (14 Yarm Court Rd., Leatherhead.) enclosing, in addition to the price, a suitably stamped and addressed 9 x 4 inch envelope. We reproduce here a very useful Note prepared by the Surrey Archaeological Society concerning the M.25 and the part that members can play.

## ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE MOTORWAY.

Now that the route of the M25 motorway across Surrey has been finalised, with the exception of a few minor details, Surrey Archaeological Society, through its Excavations Committee, is preparing a major co-ordinating exercise in conjunction with local archaeological and historical societies through whose areas the road will run, so that any sites of interest that may be destroyed by the work can be properly excavated in advance of the construction teams.

Experience gained in the past, in Surrey and other parts of the country, has shown that sites, some of them very important, have been uncovered by the earth-moving equipment too late for any scientific excavation to be carried out. Rescue Archaeology, which is a fairly new science, has emerged as a direct result of the need for 'fire brigade' action on sites uncovered by developers or in places that are threatened by development, and local societies in Surrey are actively engaged in 'rescuing' as much as possible as a continuous exercise.

We know from the work of teams engaged on motorway archaeology, including our own group that has been deployed on M23 and is now at work on part of M25, that a large number of sites, usually unsuspected, are uncovered as work on the road progresses. Many of these sites are of little interest other than to record their location, type and if possible, date, but from time to time a site of importance is found that needs careful and unhurried excavation if it is to yield information about the people who lived in, on or near it. Archaeology is not merely dusty bones and broken pottery grubbed from the ground by groups of oddly dressed people scratching away with toothbrushes and teaspoons - archaeology is about people; people who once lived and died in an area and who have gone now from the countryside; archaeology is about the things that they made and the things that they cherished; about the food they ate and the way that they grew it; archaeology is about the way of life of these people who were our ancestors or their predecessors. From careful excavation, grains of knowledge that add to what we already know, or confirm things that we suspect, can be recovered and recorded for future reference.

Already at the northern end of the motorway route traces of Bronze Age and Iron Age occupation have been found as well as sherds of Roman pottery nearby. There will be time to plan and excavate this area without too much hurry although time must be left in case, as so often happens, something unsuspected turns up during the 'dig'. An example of this happened in Dover where a quite straightforward excavation to confirm the location of a Saxon Shore fort uncovered an earlier and much more important fort, the headquarters of the Roman Fleet in Britain. The occupation traces near Staines were found as a result of digging, with machines, a few trenches across the route of the motorway, not at random, but following a period of exploration of records and walking over and studying the ground.

Field walking is one of the first practical operations that will take place

over the rest of the route, indeed in many places the ground has already been searched but this will be done at least once more, at a different time of the year when the vegetation has changed. These walks are not haphazard affairs. To begin with, except for common land, all land is in private ownership and permission has to be obtained in advance for a party to cross it. Walking without such permission leads to trouble and could hinder work in the future if the owner is upset. Quiet overtures have to be made usually accompanied with promises not to stray from the agreed route and not to dig or cause any damage. Before the actual walk starts as much information as possible is collected from maps, plans and documents, as well as from local historians. This information may lead to suspicions that some building or enclosure existed in the past in a certain place, and, once on the ground, particular attention will be paid to that area.

Buildings, especially ones of stone or brick, or at least with stone or brick foundations, can show up as marks in the grass, grassy banks or slight ditches in the turf. Weeds also have an affinity for old stone walls and rubble underground. Stinging nettles particularly like a rough stony bed and regular rectangles of nettles can be seen where once a building stood. A ditch dug into the sub-soil takes a very long time to erode completely and shows up quite clearly if the light is right. Trenches filled with stone help the soil to drain, and, in hot dry weather, cause the crops above to be starved of water so that they are stunted. Ditches that have been filled with good soil may hold the water when it has dried out from the ground around so that the plants get a good supply and are stronger and greener than the rest. These effects vary from one part of the year to another which is why the ground has to be walked more than once. Air photographs, when they are available, can show up features that are invisible on the ground and can lead to the discovery of field systems as well as single houses or small farmyards.

A scatter of potsherds in a field or an area that is never ploughed even though it stands in the middle of a cultivated field; the stone implements that someone's grandfather dug up in his garden years ago; the rusty old sword that Uncle Bill keeps on the wall of his garage; this sort of information, if properly correlated, could save hours of work among books as well as in the field, and if anyone can remember an archaeologist digging in the area in the past and can remember who he was and where he came from, and exactly where he was digging, then they will have hit the information jackpot!

The Excavations Committee is determined to obtain the maximum information about the past history of the countryside through which the road will pass, by the autumn of 1974 and appeals to anyone who knows anything that might be of interest to write to the Secretary of the Committee at 8 Kelvin Grove, Chessington KT9 1DP, setting out the details. While the actual strip of land that will be destroyed is fairly

narrow, the facts are needed about a much wider strip of up to about three-quarters of a mile on either side.

Information is wanted about the following:-

The finding of :- pottery, tools, metal objects of historic interest, human bones or burials, together with the name of the finder and the location of the finds now as well as the position on the ground from whence they came.

The existence of :- maps and plans, field sketches and drawings, stories, printed articles or notes, when and where they appeared and where they can be seen now.

The names of :- roads, tracks, farm fields, houses, enclosures and estates as they are now and if and when any changes took places, supported if possible by documentary references.

The names and addresses of :- any archaeologist or other person who is known to have excavated in the area in the past, information about what they found, where their reports, if any, can be seen, and the location of the finds that they made.

The location and description of :- any pre-Victorian building along the way, or any post-Victorian building if it is of artistic, architectural or historic interest, including barns and outhouses, and the name and address of the owner.

The position of :- any pit, ditch, depression, mound, bank, circle or regular mark showing on the ground. Any foundation walls known to exist or to be seen, with the names and addresses of the landowners to whom the Society can apply for permission to investigate further.

Although this has already been mentioned, the Committee particularly asks that people do not trespass on private land as this will undoubtedly lead to difficulties in the future. If anyone is willing to help with the documentary research or with field work later on, the Secretary of the Committee will be able to put them in touch with their local organiser.

The road route is as follows:-

<b>From;</b> The junction of Blackhorse Lane/Brighton Road at the top of Reigate Hill. to:-		
The eastern edge of Margery Wood	to	The western edge of Margery Wood. to
Dorking Road at GR 240525	to	Tilley Lane at 200555
Stane Street at 192562	to	Leatherhead Road at 176569
Kingston Road at 163585	to	Oxshott Road at 161535
Stoke d'Aberron bridge	to	New Barn Farm at 113577
Hersley Road at 106578	to	Portsmouth Road at 080591
Sanway at 060602	to	Parvis Road at 057613
River Wey Navigation Canal at 055623	to	Spinney Hill 042642

On looking through the early records of this Society, it was found that of the original fifty who were elected to membership at the first Executive Committee meeting on 3rd December 1946, no fewer than nine are still members. Two - Mr. Lewarne and Mr. Dalton - are already Honorary Members in recognition of their past services to the Society, and the Executive Committee thought it would be appropriate to offer Honorary Membership to the other seven in view of their loyal support over such a long period. I am happy to report that they all accepted with pleasure; the new Hon. Members are Mrs. D.W.Lewarne, Mrs. M. Ruby, Alderman J.A.Farmer, and Messrs. F.B.Binger, S.E.D.Fortescue, M. Snellgrove and T.E.C. Walker.

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Advance Notice

By kind permission of the Leatherhead Urban District Council, the A.G.M. will be held in the Council Offices, Bull Hill, Leatherhead, on Friday 29th March 1974 at 8.0 p.m. At this meeting the officers for the ensuing year are elected. Mr. D.F.Renn (Chairman for the last 5 years) will not be standing for re-election, since he believes it is time for a change. Will ALL members please consider who they would like to see in the Chair in future, and let the Honorary Secretary have nominations well before the meeting.

#### HON. PROGRAMME SECRETARY'S NOTES

Once again as the year draws to a close your Programme Secretaries, with the valuable help of the Sub-Committee have been working hard to produce the following programme for 1974:-

- + Wednesday 16th January. Talk by Mrs. Dorothy Davis from the Egham-by-Runnymede Historical Society on "19th Century Education and a Rural Community."
- + Friday 8th February. "Common or Garden Genealogy," Talk by G. Hayward.
- Saturday afternoon 23rd February. Visit to Great Bookham Church and demonstration of brass rubbing by Mrs. B. Haynes.
- + Friday 8th March. Talk by Mr. G.E.Buttriss on "Local Iron Industry in the 18th Century. (Read "Wealden Iron" by Ernest Straker)
- Sunday 17th March Visit to Brockham Railway Open Day.
- + Friday 22nd March. Preparatory talk and slides about the trips and visits for 1974.
- Friday 29th March. A.G.M. at the Council Chamber, 7.30 for 8.00 p.m.
- + Tuesday 9th April. Talk by Mr. W.H.E.Rivett, F.G.S., P.A.I.W.E., President of the Dorking District Naturalists' Society on "The Weald and the Reptiles of 120 million years ago with present day studies." (Read the book called "The Weald")
- Saturday afternoon 18th May. Visit by coach to Dulwich Village.
- Sunday 16th June. Day trip by coach to Salisbury, Stonehenge, Old Sarum and Wilton House.
- Saturday 13th July. Day trip by coach to Ely. The village of Stretham nearby has a 15th century preaching cross, a 19th century tower windmill and an engine house containing a beam engine (1830). At Soham there is the Steelyard (1740), Downfield Tower windmill (rebuilt 1890) and the church of various dates back to Norman.
- 1st to 7th July. Nature trail week at Nower Wood.
- Saturday afternoon 31st August. Visit to Strawberry Hill (provisional only).
- Sunday 22nd September. Day trip by coach to Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale, and Buildwas Abbey, Salop.
- Saturday afternoon 5th October. Walk in Leith Hill area - leader Mr. G. Clifton, Vice-President of the Dorking District Naturalists' Society.

+ Friday 18th October. Natural History talk with slides, subject to be announced later.

Friday 15th November. The Dallaway lecture. Mr. C. Blair of Ashtead on "European Armour" at St. John's School Hall, Leatherhead, by kind permission of the Head Master.

+ Friday 6th December. The Leatherhead Miscellany. (Suggest members bring along anything of interest, whether identified or not, they have found in their homes or gardens in the district.

All lectures begin at 8 p.m. and are in the Red Cross Hall unless otherwise shown. The times, cost and any other information, including booking forms for the outside trips will appear in the next Newsletter. All items marked with a "+" signifies the Red Cross Hall.

The Dorking District Naturalists' Society have extended a warm welcome for members of our Society to join in their programme and the following events are likely to be of interest:-

- January 25th: "Animal Life in Fresh-water" by Mr. C.Ward, M.A.
- February 15th: "More about France" by John Sankey, B.Sc.
- March 1st: "Spring Flowers in Greece" by Mr. L.F. Hall.
- March 15th: "Up North, up High, Arctic & Mountain" by Miss J.Stampe, M.A.
- March 23rd: A Winter Walk, leaders Mr. G.C.Clifton and Mr. L.F.Hall.  
Meet at Wotton Hatch Hotel car park at 3 p.m. for a walk to Hackhurst Downs, tea at Grims Kitchen.

Their lectures are held at 8 p.m. in the Stanway School Hall, Chichester Road, Dorking.

We are fairly well supplied with suggestions for outside trips but we are always glad to receive more, especially unusual ones. Suggestions for lectures are in short supply but we do emphasize that the speakers should be fairly well known.

BOOKS FOR SALE

Following a re-organisation of the Society's library, it has been decided to dispose of those books and magazines that we have acquired over the years which have little or no bearing on our local history. Attached is a priced list. Enquiries please to Mr. Gilbert, 34 Greenacres, Gt. Bookham, Tel. 54956.

EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE YEAR, 1975

In the last Newsletter we asked for suggestions concerning the contribution this Society can make in 1975. The response has been poor, only two buildings have been proposed for detailed study, one in Bookham and one in Leatherhead. Are there no buildings in Fetcham and Ashtead worthy of the attention of a small band of photographers, measurers, researchers? Further contributions from all parts of our area are required and should be sent to the Hon. Secretary.

LEAVING THE DISTRICT?

F From time to time members move to other parts of the country, and whilst for a time they may maintain links with Leatherhead, inevitably the ties weaken as members become more involved in their new locality. It is then that they tend to throw out the photographs, newspaper cuttings, books, programmes and other material concerning Leatherhead that now no longer interest them, even old copies of the "Proceedings" may find their way into the dustbin. We would hope that when such a time comes to you that you would remember this Society and post all your bits and pieces to the Hon. Record Secretary (c/o the Leatherhead Library if need be, they would be sure to have the correct address on their files somewhere). Much valuable material would be rescued from destruction in this way, and we have a waiting list for some issues of the "Proceedings".

FINALLY, A PLEA FROM THE HON. TREASURER

This is an appeal addressed to each one of you. Please would you make a note that your subscription to the Society for 1974 is due on January 1st. To save you work and trouble next January and in the future please would you complete the enclosed slip and send it to your Bank. (This is a Bankers Order but the Post Office, National Giro, Trustee Savings Bank and many Building Societies also make regular payments on behalf of their customers.)

Prompt payment helps your Society and it's officers. Money paid promptly gives your Society the chance to earn a little interest. Prompt payment saves costs. Over 150 of you had to be reminded that your subscription was overdue. Of these, 50 have needed a second reminder. This is an unnecessary expense. So please pay on January 1st in 1974 and on the 1st day of January in future. Thank you.

7 Fox Lane,  
Little Bookham, KT23 3AT  
Bookham 58722

David Bruce.  
Hon. Secretary.

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BANKERS ORDER

Your banker's Name:.....Bank Ltd.,  
of:.....

Please debit my account with £1.25p (One pound 25p) on the 2nd of January each year, beginning 2nd January 1974, until further notice, and pay the sum to Lloyds Bank Limited, Leatherhead (30 94 94) for the account of: Leatherhead & District Local history Society (A/c No. 00/2209)

Please ensure that my name is quoted on the payment.

Date..... Your signature .....  
Your A/c Number.,.....

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES FOR SALE

Author, Editor or Publisher	Title	Price in Pence
anonymous	The Pauliad (1863), (Epic Poem	20
BELLEN, G.R.	Exhibition of heraldry at College of Arms, London (1951)	5
BIEGEN, C.W.	Troy (1963)	100
BRITISH MUSEUM TRUSTEES	Antiquities of Roman Britain (1958)	20
CANTALAMESSA, G.	Giuseppe Sacconi (in Italian) (1911)	20
CHADWICK, J.	The Decipherment of Linear B (1958)	50
CHILDE, V.Gordon	The Dawn of European Civilisation (1957)	125
	New Light on the Most Ancient East (1958)	100
Cole, Sonia	The Prehistory of East Africa (1974)	25
FRERE, S.S.	<u>Verulamium Excavation Committee</u>	
	Third to Seventh Interim Reports (1957-61)	20 each
	Plan of Verulamium (1941)	10
	The Set	90
H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE	The Country Code (1951)	5
JENKINS, F.	Roman Canterbury. Excavations in Burgate 1946-48	10
	Excavations at 5 Watling Street 1947	10
	A Roman Tilery & Two Pottery Kilns at Durovernum(Canterbury)	10
KOSAY, H.Z.	ALACARÇYUK (in English)	20
LOYD, S.	Early Anatolia (1956)	25
LOON, H. Van	The Home of Mankind (1933)	100
MALLOWAN, M.E.L.	Twenty-five years of Mesopotamian Discovery (1932-1956)	20
Nat.Council of Soc. Services.	Armorial Bearings of the Sovereigns of England	10
RICE, T.T.	The Scythians (1957)	70
RYAN, L.V.	Roger Ascham (1963)	150
SOMMER, H.	Excavations at East Grinstead, Wiltshire (1924)	15
	Excavations at Rockbourne Down, Hampshire (1914)	20
ZIEGLER, F.E.	The Pleistocene Period (1959)	150

Magazines

- ancient Egypt: 21 discontinuous parts 1914-27, 10 p each or £1.50 the set
- Antiquaries Journal: 27 discontinuous parts 1934-52, 20p each or £4. set of 27
- Antiquity: 45 discontinuous parts 1929-68, 20p each or £6. set of 45
- Archaeological Journal: Vols. 1-7, 26-36, 38-39, 25p each or £4. for 20 vols.
- Archaeologia: Vols. 89, 90, 92, 50p each or £1.20 the 3 volumes
- British Archaeological Abstracts: Vol. I, No. 1. 20p
- Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology: £1.20 for 6 discontinuous volumes
- Council for British Archaeology: Various reports at 10p each or £1. for 13.  
Research Reports Nos. 5 & 6 at 20p each

Also various volumes of "History To-day", "Journal of British Archaeological Asscn."  
"Meddelanden Fran Lunds Universitets Historiska Museum", Science News and "Strand Magazine".