



Newsletter – September 2015

(www.lbdahs.org.uk)

The Society's most successful archaeological dig took place during August when four Anglo-Saxon graves were excavated at Hockliffe at the invitation of the landowner.

A selection of grave goods including a woman's jewellery was found in what were thought to be pagan burials of around 600 AD but much work has still to be done to analyse the finds and the skeletons.

Bernard Jones, our site director, will be giving an illustrated talk on the excavation at the Society's April meeting and writing in next year's Transactions about this and other digs the Society has been involved in this summer. He is to be congratulated on both the quality of the organisation of such a large excavation and the careful and professional manner in which it was done.

Looking forward to this season's talks, detailed in this newsletter, we had a last minute alteration when Edwin Herbert's talk about the sites in Bedfordshire associated with John Bunyan was brought forward to this month. This was because Alistair Lawson, who was to tell us about the "The Golden Age of British Airships", was sent to Germany on business. Fortunately he is coming to speak to us in February instead.

Otherwise the programme is unchanged. The Christmas Picture Quiz is of old pictures of Leighton Buzzard and Linslade where members will be able to show off their local knowledge and tell us what they show. Obviously there will be some easy ones, some harder ones, and some unknown unknowns, which we cannot identify. So it should be fun but if we can, between us, recognise places that were previously unidentified that would be excellent.

We are currently cataloguing the now vast collection of photographs, which have been donated by members or otherwise given to the Society and hope to have them all digitised and available in cyberspace for instant access.

The Society is also restarting its programme of research groups including work for a book about Leighton Buzzard in the First World War, following the success of "Q Central".

The extra money the Society has gained as a result of the continuing sales of "Q Central" has enabled us to buy a sound system for meetings to enable everyone to hear the speakers clearly. We have invested in new display screens and hope to soon have a new computer and projector. We have agreed to pay for a screen to be fixed in Linslade Community Centre so pictures can be more clearly seen.

A last note of sadness. John Vickers, one of our keenest members, and a contributor to "Q Central", has died. He donated many photographs and much material to the Society and we sell his "History of St Barnabas Church" of which three generations of his family, including him were Church Wardens. He will be missed.

Paul Brown
Chairman

LBD AHS Programme – 2015/2016

Fieldwork – please contact Bernard Jones hon. secretary (01525 376550)

- Sep 9 2015 The John Bunyan Trail – Edwin Herbert**
The talk will summarise the life & times of Bedfordshire's most famous son, John Bunyan (1628-1688), explore many of the geographical features in the county so graphically portrayed in "The Pilgrim's Progress" and now incorporated in the John Bunyan Trail devised by the Ramblers; and assess his influence up to modern times including the "hope and inspiration" he provided to a major Christian figure during a recent crisis.
- The Alastair Lawson talk about Cardington, Bedfordshire called "The Golden Age of British Airships" has had to be postponed until February 2016*
- Oct 14 2015 World War 1, Letters from the Front – Margaret Butt**
In letters from Margaret's grandfather Richard Dillingham to his wife Chris, he talks of his home village of Flitton, the Royal Flying Corps and in general, what life was like for him.
- Nov 11 2015 Stepping into Britain – an illustrated talk by Dr Nick Ashton.**
The oldest human footprints outside Africa were discovered in May 2013 at Happisburgh on the Norfolk coast, where the soft sands and clays are eroding at an alarming rate. As the cliffs crumble they reveal very early sediments at their base which remain for a short time before the sea washes them away. Dr Ashton, Curator at the British Museum Department of Prehistory of Europe, will describe this exciting discovery.
- Dec 9 2015 Christmas Picture Quiz**
- Jan 13 2016 "An Unassuming County" by Brian Kerr**
The Making of the Bedfordshire Countryside.
- Feb 10 2016 The Golden Age of British Airships – Alastair Lawson**
The massive hangars at Cardington which dominate the landscape were built during WWI to accommodate the construction of airships by Short Bros. Engineering Coy. The most famous of these was the R101 which passed over Leighton Buzzard on its test flight in 1929. Not long after, in October 1930 on a prestigious flight to India, it crashed just south of Beauvais France, killing 48 passengers and crew. In the intense fire only 6 survived.
- Mar 9 2016 The Hockliffe Saxon burial ground dig – Bernard Jones**
- Apr 13 2016 Tom Lawson Slide Show followed by AGM**
- May 11 2016 The Shuttleworth Collection**

All talks are at Linslade Community Hall (St. Barnabas), Waterloo Road, LU7 2NR. Talks start at 8 pm unless otherwise advised. Everyone welcome. £3 for non-members. Members free.

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