

WASNEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WELWYN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

SPRING 1993

33 YEARS OF DIRTY WEEKENDS

On Saturday March 13th 1993 at Welwyn Civic Centre I shall present an entertainment to celebrate one-third of a century of the Welwyn Archaeological Society! Our discoveries are nationally famous. Every weekend, with no financial reward, rain, shine or snow, we have been "active in the field"! How, and above all why, do we do it?

If you want to know what the Society has achieved, to find out about the archaeology of mid-Hertfordshire and to be entertained, this is a treat you cannot afford to miss.

PROGRAMME.

- 09.30 - 10.00 Assembly, coffee - and reunions?
- 10.00 - 11.15 "A semi-detached life in villas." Romans in Welwyn. Villas, Cemeteries and a Roman Town.
- 11.15 - 11.30 Coffee
- 11.30 - 12.45 "The Ancient Britons....all well over military age." Iron Age Welwyn. The first farmers in Welwyn Garden City. The Chieftain Burials.
- 12.45 - 14.00 Lunch. There are many pubs and a fish-and-chip shop. Or bring your own. We may use the kitchen.
- 14.00 - 15.00 "At my back I always hear time's tracked bulldozer hurrying near." The motorway and the saving of Welwyn Roman Baths.
- 15.00 - 15.30 "Having baths....was called the Roman Occupation." A visit to the famous Welwyn Roman Baths.
- 15.30 - 15.45 Tea
- 15.45 - 16.30 "Still alive at thirty-three?" Our current researches; Early English, Badgers, Hedges and Butterflies.

Admission: Tickets may be obtained in advance from:

Welwyn Heritage, 23 Mill Lane, Welwyn, Hertfordshire AL6 9EU,
Price £5.00 (cheques payable to Welwyn Heritage) or at the door (subject to availability) £6 (half day £3)

PLEASE SEND A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE IF ORDERING BY POST

THE TRESHAM TRAIL

A WASouting has been organised as a follow-up to the lecture on Thomas Tresham. This will be later than our usual spring outings, because of problems with access and Easter. So book this date: April 24th.

And that's lucky, because it will stay light later! The sites are far apart, and, if the weather is kind, we can add on an extra bit at the end.

The route goes: Higham Ferrers (coffee break, visit Church and Chantry Chapel; Rothwell Market House; Rushton Triangular Lodge (English Heritage); Rushton Hall (guided tour by kind permission of the Headmaster, RNIB); Geddington Eleanor Cross; Lyveden New Bield (National Trust) tour of lodge and gardens. The extra bit if weather is kind, to Fotheringhay (church Richard III window etc - a beautiful setting - and Castle where Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned and executed)

We will set out at 08.30 and return late in the evening. Finding places of refreshment is a problem, and I suggest you bring lunch and tea. Picnics?

The cost, which includes the guided tour at Rushton Hall (but not admission to the Triangular Lodge and Lyveden) will be £7 per seat. Tickets available by post (as above for the Dirty Weekend) and at meetings.

THOSE BATHS AGAIN

As I have said at meetings (and you may have read in the papers), the possibility of my reconstructing a working replica of a suite of baths suddenly increased when I was telephoned by WGBH Boston (a TV station) who want to build one for a series on ancient technology called NOVA.

There has been some to-ing and fro-ing but the number of chickens cannot be estimated; they are not yet incubated. In order to be able to do the job in Britain, rather than elsewhere, where the labour is cheaper, I shall have to drum up support and sponsorship, and an American colleague wants a charity number to send donations to. I am in the throes of registering The Roman Building Trust (if the title is accepted). Its aims are wide enough to allow research into Roman building technology in general and to build other replicas. Details as soon as I hear from the Charity Commissioners.

STRAWS IN THE WIND

Those who were fascinated by the talk on straw plait may be interested to know that Luton Museum are doing a special exhibition from 20th February to 21st March, weekdays 10 - 5, Sundays 1 - 5. Admission is free; there will be demonstrations at weekends. Workshops: plait 6th March, corn dollies 13th March £3.80 BOOKED IN ADVANCE. Further details telephone (0582) 36941 extn 221/240.

WE PLOUGH THE FIELDS

Not bob-a-job but tit-for-tat: I talked to the Scout Fellowship; they will take off the top spit at Frogmore on Sunday 28th March in the afternoon. The Roman layer is only a foot down, so it's easy, like digging the garden except the soil is wheeled away in barrows. Bring your own spade and join in! A fun afternoon? Phone 043 871 5300 for details.

MONEY MONEY MONEY

If you're anything like me you find it difficult to remember whether you've paid subscriptions to societies like WAS. Please check. You should have a membership card, which gives free access to the Roman baths and to meetings of the St Albans Society.

Tony Rook, February 1993