

CASTLE RE-OPENED!

On Thursday, November 3rd. large numbers of local historians and archaeologists together with representatives of the Civic Trust were invited to attend the ceremonial re-opening of the Castle and its new Visitor Centre. This latter is the re-furbished Castle Museum.

After sherry and an excellent buffet, those present formed themselves around Councillor Heinitz, Chairman of WMDC's Leisure Services Committee, as he outlined the background to the restoration and said something about the problems met and how they were overcome.

The guests were then divided into two groups, and shown around the castle by our old friends Richard Van Riel, and Pam Judkin.

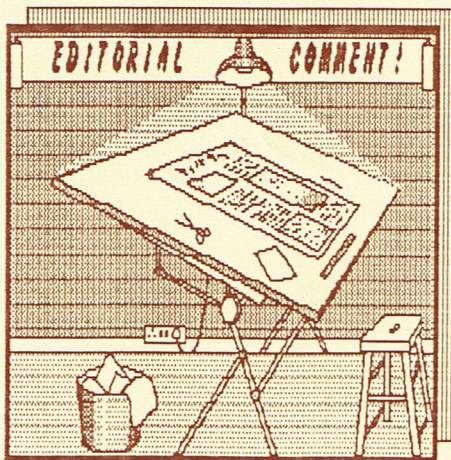
The event finished with coffee in the Lodge, which was most welcome, as by this time the afternoon, though very fine, was exceedingly cold.

As a frequent critic of the District Council, and the Borough Council before it, your Editor, who as immediate Past President represented the Society, was impressed both by the attitude of the WMDC and their plans for the future. Certainly, they have achieved almost all that we as a local pressure-group having been pressing for.

Those present were to some extent disappointed when Cr.Heinitz failed to mention the role of this society, which not only began the work in the castle in 1959, but has ceaselessly put pressure on local government to begin the restoration.

It now remains for local people to try to maintain the castle as a historic monument, by using it as much as possible. In this respect we must all try to discourage those disgusting people who

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Readers who have kept in touch with the popular archaeological press, in other words *British Archaeology*, must have noticed the high profile which their Society is currently maintaining. Latest is the illustrated article on the society history, by your Editor, and by the time you read this another article, by Michael Holdsworth, will be in print. This is on the Womersley Dig, which at present is closed for the winter.

Such media *hype* can only be good for us, as it confirms our position as one of the most active local groups in the Country. Another aspect is the increasing contribution of the younger members; not since the early sixties have our younger folk played such an active role, not just on our own digs, but on others both locally

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Sutton Hoo!

by Janet McNaught.

Sutton Hoo - a place which to me was almost as magic as those places seen in the mind's eye when reciting *Quinquireme of Ninevah*, for yet another English teacher, and now we were about to visit the very site!

As we bowled along with Dave at the wheel, Eric gave us a potted history of Sutton Hoo, in the early days, through his own digging and supervising days, up to and including the intriguing lecture given by Dr. Martin Carver in the Autumn of last year.

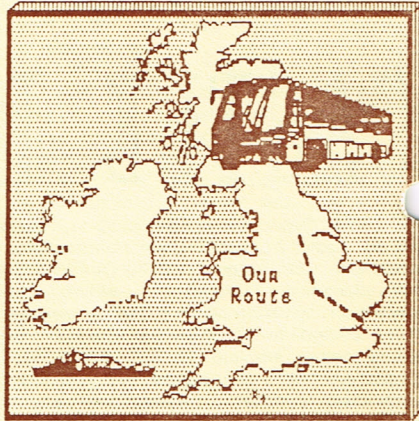
After a peaceful crossing of the Deben estuary, passing the now renovated tide-mill, we were deposited on the southern bank and assured it was "That way!" Having scrambled uphill through nettle, bramble and bracken, we reached a sandy ridge. Several detours and a long steep climb, and we were there!

Not much for the eye to see, as this seasons digging has not yet properly begun, but standing there as the history of the site was recalled, it was almost as if you could see the past unfold. The Saxon invaders sailing majestically up the estuary, noting the sudden rise in the land; choosing the rise as a look-out point, or was it thought lofty enough for a meeting place without risk of ambush, and only later for a royal burial ground, as no settlement has so far been found.

In the early summer of 1939, Basil Brown began excavation of mound 1 at the request of Mrs. Edith May Pretty, on whose land the site lay. What he uncovered was the ghost of a ship's hull, only the imprint of the timbers remaining in the sand, and still in place, thousands of nails.

Later that summer, news came out of treasure on a scale never before found in an Anglo-Saxon grave in England. This went almost un-noticed, as Britain waited nervously for a declaration of War.

Amidships was the burial-chamber, with burial goods from all corners of the earth, ready to be used by king RAEDWALD in the afterlife. Bowls of silver for eating, cooking pots of bronze, cauldrons and



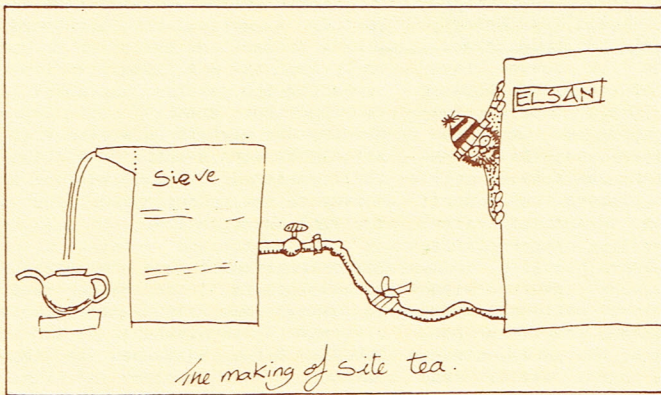
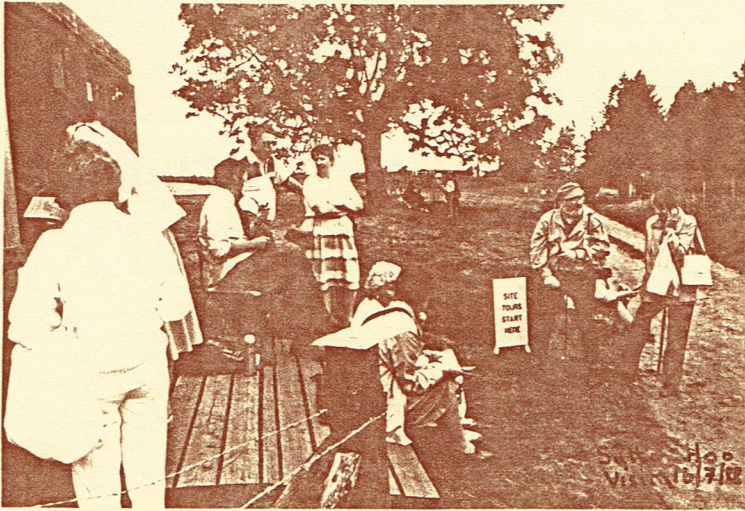
buckets for domestic use, spears for hunting, laid out close to the king's apparel, of which only the intricately enamelled and jewelled metal objects, such as the belt buckle, purse, and clasps, remained. Then there were his more personal possessions, his jewelled sword and scabbard, and most magnificent of all, "the helmet of war!"

What manner of man went to war behind that fearsome helmet, with its face-mask sculptured in such detail? We shall never know, for not a trace of this great king has been found.

The acid soil has destroyed clay, wood, and bone, leaving only shadows in the sand, calling into use many techniques hitherto unused in archaeology. Night photography using infra-red lighting, giving shadows in the sand a 3-D effect. Use of quick-drying resins to make moulds of insubstantial *sand-men*, found in outlying graves. Here lies another mystery; was it "murder or ritualistic slaying," for not one sand-man lay in natural repose.

For me a day to remember.

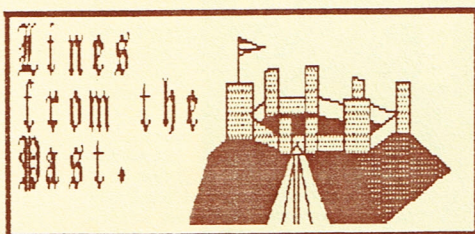
P.S. Did anyone notice the large polythene-sheeted section at the opposite end to mound 1? It was another ship, about to give up its secrets!



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and nationally. This is most important, for unlike the situation in local history where lone workers are common and do much valuable work, in archaeology experience on a national scale is vital if local discoveries are to be understood, and seen in their correct context.

My thanks to the contributors who sent articles and the cartoon for this issue. More work is still needed! EH



THIS EXTRACT IS TAKEN FROM THE NOVEMBER 1958 ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER. It was probably written by the then Secretary, Ken Gardiner.

HORSEFAIR, STREET OF MANY CHANGES.

Horsefair, more correctly named Micklegate or Middlegate, has seen many changes in the last twenty years or so. Even the writer can remember the old school on the site of the new bust station (the old bus station to us! Ed.), the Als Houses in Trinity Street, and the pump just at the corner. One by one most of the old houses have gone, and now only two of the older houses remain, No.5 Horsefair (Ken's home - Ed) and Micklegate House, opposite. Of these two, number 5 is the elder and still has many interesting features. There is a coat of arms over the stairs, though you cannot see it. You can still see evidence of the spiral staircase. In the four large front rooms there are some very beautiful oak panels which for a time were covered with more than seven thicknesses of wallpaper and canvas. Out in the yard, you can see the Wall-Oven arch, and in the wash house there is a large solid stone table, and under it, a well. In the cellar is a trapdoor with a filled-in passage leading to --- we haven't the faintest idea.

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continue to empty their dogs in the castle. Apart from the risk of serious disease, which is now generally known, such a blatant disregard of bye-laws and decency is bound to have an effect on both local users and tourists.

To return to more cheerful (and hygienic) topics, how do you like the new style PONTARCH? As this is the seventh issue of the new series, and the fifth done with the DTP program which, you may remember, your Editor won a year and a half ago, he felt that it was about time that he changed the appearance of the sheet. The experience of using the program (incidentally, I feel that using the American spelling is quite justified when referring to a computer-program) has inevitably led to an increase in competence, which ought to be reflected in the magazine. Needless to say, articles, reviews, cartoons, and pictures are all urgently needed; my thanks to those who have already contributed.

Your Editor and Mr.Hedges were given the opportunity of examining the cottages now being re-furnished on Maude's Yard one evening recently. As the Editor had investigated the same area with Mr.Lodge some time since, he was interested to see the sympathetic way in which the builders have approached their task. Now that the Unit has its own architectural Historian, we seldom get the chance to scabble about on building-sites these days. Members will have the opportunity to see the photographs which we took at some future date.

Would members interested in taking part in a series of Churchyard surveys please contact the Editor or Mr.Hedges. The work is not difficult; it involves numbering the stones in chalk and then copying the details onto pre-printed sheets. Our next issue will carry a major article by John Rushton describing how the Garforth Local History Society did such survey on their Churchyard. John describes the work as addictive!

The Editor has written a number of Basic Programs of use to historians and archaeologists. If any reader is interested in using these, he will gladly supply listings. Those available so far are:-
HEDGES- Dates hedgerows by the Hooper method.

STATURE- Calculates the height of skeletons when long-bone measurement is fed in.

C14DATE- converts old-style C14 dates in years BP into actual calendar years.