

The Welford & Weston Local History Society

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Newsletter 85 – February 12th 2023

Small Town or Bustling Village?

Tiddington settlement: its origins, its evolution, and its place in Roman Warwickshire

An illustrated talk given by Dr Alexander Portch

31st March 2023, at 7.30 in the Memorial Hall, Welford

For more than a century, Tiddington Road on the eastern side of Stratford-upon-Avon has been the subject of investigations into its rich and complex Roman heritage, such that now Tiddington Roman settlement, centred on the modern village, is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The listing entry defines this Roman period occupation as a “Small Town”, placing it in a similar category to Alcester.



Reconstructed grey ware pot, manufactured in Bubbenhall, but found in a back garden in Alcester

“Image copyright Archaeology Warwickshire”

Recent excavations by Archaeology Warwickshire, and others, though have cast a more nuanced light on the nature of activities carried out within the settlement, suggesting it fulfilled a different but no less important role within the economy and society of Roman Warwickshire. The work has also revealed a previously unsuspected time-depth to human occupation along this stretch of the Avon, with the results of one site in particular providing a unique insight into the lives of Stratford’s earliest inhabitants, from the Iron Age to the last days of the early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

This talk will present these findings within the broader context of the Roman period in Warwickshire, contrasting Tiddington Roman settlement with a variety of Roman sites recently excavated by Archaeology Warwickshire, including farmsteads at Southam and Shipston-on-Stour, a pottery production site near Nuneaton, and new discoveries on the banks of the Avon in Warwick.



Dr Portch digging a Roman feature in Tiddington.

"Image copyright Archaeology Warwickshire"

Dr Alexander Portch is an Archaeological Officer at Archaeology Warwickshire, responsible for directing field teams on site and compiling reports for publication and wider dissemination. With a varied background including work as a geophysicist, finds processor, field archaeologist, and with a PhD in the environmental history of tidal energy in the Severn Estuary, he has participated in archaeological excavations across the length and breadth of the UK, as well as a brief stint in Poland. He has particular interests in the 1st millennium AD (including the Late Iron Age), early medieval monasticism, and human-environment interactions around estuaries, coasts, rivers and other watery places in Britain and overseas.

This talk will be available to people attending in person in the village Memorial Hall, as well as available remotely via Zoom. The choice is yours.

You will receive an email from Karen Dickinson, inviting you to join this meeting, about a week before the meeting itself. This email will be sent to all members, whether or not you will be going to the Memorial Hall or viewing remotely via Zoom. Please check in your junk folder if you don't receive it.

On the evening of the talk, you will be able to join the meeting by Zoom from 19:00. The talk itself will start at 19:30. Karen will be away for this talk, so her place as host of the Zoom meeting will be taken by Brian Watson. If you are fairly new to Zoom, I would encourage you to join the meeting early, so that if you experience a problem, you'll have time to call Brian Watson (on 07702 448850), and get it sorted out before the talk starts at 19:30.

If you are going to attend in person, the doors of the Memorial Hall are open from 19:10. We look forward to welcoming you to what promises to be another great talk

Brad Plimmer, Chair, Welford & Weston Local History Society

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