

Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum – 20 September 2006

County Museum Report

Since the last meeting of the forum, the intention to deposit 46 site archives has been notified to the museum, by archaeological contracting units, 16 of which are from the Milton Keynes Council area.

The archive of the extensive excavations at Eton Rowing Lake is still being deposited in phases at the museum.

We can also report that the Finds Liaison Officer, Ros Tyrrell, is continuing her work recording and identifying finds from Bucks and Milton Keynes. The records, along with their images, are viewable online at www.finds.org.uk. Ros continues to visit metal detecting clubs, and attend weekend rallies, on a regular basis, where she gets most of her reports of objects. She also facilitates the reporting of treasure items.

The museum has acquired several treasure items in the last few months, the most significant of which is an Anglo-Saxon bracteate pendant from Hambleton. These pendants are not normally found so far west, being usually found on the South East coast, and on the continent (being originally a Scandinavian type). This particular example has a previously unknown variant of a standard design, and the British Museum has suggested that it may therefore be a locally produced imitation of the original Scandinavian design. It is decorated with a repoussé design of a stylised horse with open jaws, pricked ear and round eye. Its foreleg is extended and the shoulder is defined by a beaded band running across the neck and chest. A looped, serpentine creature above the horse appears to be biting its back, all inside a pelleted border. The pendant has been acquired with help from the V&A purchase grant fund, and the Headley Trust for Treasure scheme, and the Friends of the County Museum.

The museum is also planning a major exhibition celebrating 40 years of Milton Keynes, as a new town, and the exhibition will focus heavily on the history and heritage of the area, not just the 40 years of the town itself. A major part of the exhibition will be material excavated by the MK Archaeology Unit, in displays designed to show how rich the heritage of the area is. The exhibition will run through December and January.