

CAERWENT HISTORIC TRUST

The Llanvaches Coin Hoard: Brian Stephens' remarkable discovery is now beautifully displayed in the Roman Legionary Museum at Caerleon – a “must see” and admission is free. The silver coins, average age 1900 years, have been cleaned up by our own Mark Lewis and look nearly new!

Update on the Trust: further to our special meeting on March 16th, it seems that our Secretary problem will soon be resolved. We still need help with arranging walks and talks.

Our Library collection: most of this is available in the Westgate Barns and certain items can be provided as printed copies on request. However we are keen to improve public access. We are therefore hoping to offer it via the internet. This should be easy for our own publications but less so for the articles we copy from others.

Academic Honour: our Trustee, the above mentioned Mark Lewis, has been awarded a PhD on account of his study of the corrosion of iron in relation to archaeology and conservation. So congratulations to Dr Lewis, he won't cure my headache but I'll see what he can do about our Morris Traveller!

Another visit to Dinham *Saturday 17th April 10.00am*

Primarily a car tour with a little walking: this visit is focussed on the old settlements, whose remains become more precarious year on year. The former Factory will be covered to a limited extent, duration 2 hours. Meet at the West Gate, accessed directly from the A48 (between the old and new roads to Llanfair Discoed). If you have any photos or information relevant to the old sites we would be pleased to see it. *All welcome!*

N.B. we take every care in preparation of visits etc but you take part at your own risk

The Puzzle of the Caerwent Goddess

During the excavations of 1908 it was realised that a small area of ground had been disturbed, just to the NE of the Temple site. Digging out revealed a pit 13 feet deep – a coin at 5 feet, some fragments of imported pottery at 6 feet, then nothing at all except at 11 feet, this small statue of the Mother Goddess!

Less than a foot tall, she is not exactly beautiful, made of the local sandstone, sitting in a high backed armchair, naked except for a hood, an orb in her left hand symbolizing fertility and an evergreen sprig in her right representing eternity. Nobody would dig a 13 foot hole to dispose of a small item of rubbish – this lady was important. She was buried 200 years after the Roman conquest by local people who kept to the older “Celtic” beliefs.



Academics often remark that this figure, and the head found 200 yards to the west of her, are “crude”. I’m not so sure of that. Stylised they are, but maybe this was by intent. The lady and the head are part of the fine Caerwent display in Newport Museum and good copies are in the Westgate Barns.

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