WORTHING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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The History of Worthing Archaeological Society
Part 1

WORTHING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Registered Charity 291431

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Membership Fees

Annual Membership	£8.00 per year
Student Membership	£2.00 per year

Annual membership fees are due on 1st January each year.
Please contact the Membership Secretary for Gift Aid forms.

Newsletter

All contributions to the newsletter are very welcome
Please send these to arrive with the Secretary
by the 1st October for the next edition

Any views and/or opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society nor it's membership.

W A S JOURNAL

VOLUME 3 No 1

Spring 2003

Contents

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the new style journal, you will see from the list of contents, that there is a wider range of issues covered, predominantly from the Sussex area, but also from other areas of the country and from abroad.

Included in this issue is part one of the history, of the Society. The Society has an extensive archive from the early days of the society, but is missing many years from the later period, 50s and 60s and the early 70s, if there are any members who have Society reports from these periods, or from any other periods, we would be most grateful if they could be made available.

As you know the last issue of the newsletter was Roy Plummer's last as editor, a difficult job he had been doing for many years. Trying to meet deadlines can be a thankless task, but Roy always came through and produced a interesting newsletter. On behalf of the committee and the members of the society, I would like to thank Roy for all his hard work over the years, he is still an active member of the society and will be for the foreseeable future.

Please let me have your comments and suggestions on any topic relating to the journal, even if I cannot implement your ideas, I promise they will be considered.

This issue has been edited by Rodney Gunner (Secretary).

Correction :-
No prizes for spotting the error in the caption on the last front cover. It was of course our new treasurer, Guy Dennis.

Sorry for the confusion.

Boxgrove Site Saved

English Heritage buys site of Boxgrove Man

Aggregates Levy Fund Secures Future of 500,000-Year-Old Landscape

The site at Boxgrove, near Chichester in Sussex, where Britain's oldest Human remains were discovered, has been saved for the nation. The former quarry site has possibly taught us more than anywhere else about how people lived half a million years ago.

With £100,000 grant from the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund (ALSF), English Heritage has bought the 20 acre site and, in collaboration with Hanson Aggregates, West Sussex County Council and University College London, is preparing to restore it and plan for its future management and use. There are hopes that Boxgrove will eventually become a major centre of education, research and archaeological training.

It is nine years since the astonishing news broke that the leg-bone of an enormously strong human ancestor who lived 500,000 years ago had been uncovered during excavations at the quarry. This proved to belong to a hominid species called Homo heidelbergensis who inhabited parts of Europe before the onset of the Anglian Ice Age and was probably an ancestor of the Neanderthals. Two teeth (from another individual) were also found, as well as the world's oldest antler tools. Hundreds of hand-axes and flake tools lay where they had been put aside thousands of years ago. The finds were not just important in themselves but because they were found on the largest area of any undisturbed Lower Palaeolithic land surface discovered in Britain, where the Boxgrove hominids hunted, butchered and processed the remains of large mammals such as horse, rhinoceros, bison and large deer.

Archaeologists and scientists were able to reconstruct a whole landscape and a hominid way of life, revealing that these people were sufficiently advanced to be able to plan activities and to work together in groups. They gathered at a water hole on a raised beach that had formed at the base of a cliff, 12 km north of the present shoreline. Though the hominids shared the water hole with lions, panthers, hyaenas and wolves, they managed to secure their kills and to butcher them completely, even smashing the stripped bones for the marrow. David Miles, Chief Archaeologist at English Heritage, said: "It was vitally important for us to buy this unique site with Aggregates Levy funding because there was no other way of safeguarding it. We were unable to protect the large area which still survives in the normal way by having it designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument because it does not fall into any of the categories covered by the relevant legislation. Now Boxgrove, with its unrivalled potential for telling us about our distant past, will be available to future generations."

For Mark Roberts, who led the excavations at the site for many years and is the Director of Boxgrove Projects, the purchase of the site and the plans for its restoration and for further archaeology are steps on the way to realising a dream.

Mr Roberts, Principal Research Fellow at UCL Institute of Archaeology, said: "With the approval of West Sussex County Council we hope to start a restoration programme in the quarry this summer. This will entail securing the site and clearing it of scrub, reducing some of the sheer slopes of the quarry and partially back-filling the central area, using only existing material. Further research excavations, which are likely to reveal more astonishing finds, can then take place."

Though Hanson ceased gravel and sand extraction at the quarries in 1993, the company has played a large part in securing the site for English Heritage and setting up the restoration programme. These earthworks will be carried out by Sussex based earthmoving contractors F L Gamble and Sons.

Bob Smith, natural resources manager of Hanson Aggregates, said: "We have links with the Boxgrove site going back to the 1970s when quarrying first started here and we have enjoyed a close working relationship with English Heritage. The increasing number of archaeological treasures unearthed every year at our sites highlights the important part that responsible quarrying companies like Hanson have to play in initiating and supporting archaeological research."

In the short term UCL, in conjunction with the local authority and English Heritage, will draw up a project to explore all the potential ways of managing and using the site. Key to this is education -all concerned in the Boxgrove Project want to bring the results of this internationally important work to as wide an audience as possible. This could give rise next year to a travelling exhibition and books for a general rather than a specialist readership.

Sir Derek Roberts, Provost and President of UCL, said: "The acquisition and management of this archaeological site is of great significance to the UK and the world of scholarship. I am confident that my colleagues in UCL's Institute of Archaeology will both contribute to, and benefit from, this exciting venture."

More far-reaching plans depend on the amount of funding available but might include a base for visitors, links with museums, all kinds of publication (including a website) and the public being able to take part in the research.

Lieutenant Colonel Tex Pemberton, West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Strategic Environmental Services, said: "I am absolutely delighted this important site has been saved for the nation. The county council will play a full role in helping English Heritage achieve its aim of making Boxgrove a major centre of education, research and archaeological training."

Membership Matters

As we go to press there are a limited number of places for the last trip in 2003

Summer Outings 2003

All outings start from Stoke Abbot road car park, at the stated times.

10th August Museum of London and the Guildhall exhibition
depart time 8.45am cost £12.00.

Tickets from Rodney Gunner.
Phone 01273 887399 for details, by post from
10, Old Barn Way, Southwick, West Sussex BN42 4NT,
please enclose a first class stamp.

Please Note: All tickets must be paid for at the time of booking. Cheques payable to 'WAS'

All visits will be guided, and there will be a small extra charge for this service, which is payable on the coach, together with admission charges, these will be kept to the minimum.

Sutton Hoo - May 2003
Members at on the first trip, standing on the mound which held the famous ship and artifacts

Richborough - June 2003

The History of Worthing Archaeological Society Part I

Lesley Kenny

Reading through the newspaper cuttings collected by the Society over the years, one can conjure up images of days gone by, more romantic and a seemingly simpler way of life.

The history of the Society will be given in decades, using newspaper cuttings kept by the Society and in Worthing Library Reference section, and from the Minutes kept from the out start.

1922-1932

The inaugural meeting of the Society was on 2nd February 1922 (2/2/22!), and was reported in the Worthing Gazette. It detailed the 'Lantern Lecture on 3000 years of Hidden Treasure' by Mr T Sheppard, down to the laughter and applauding of the audience. It is interesting to note that an entrance fee of 1s.6d. was charged (the subscription fee was then 2s.6d.), and the Mayor was in attendance.

The very first excursion took place on 26th April 1922, and was to Shoreham 'for the purpose of visiting the churches and places of interest in the old town'. The Reverend G Holmes Gore received the members at St Mary's Church, but 'it was regretted that the visitors, owing to the inclement weather, could not examine the outside of the church more thoroughly'.

On an 'expedition' to Cissbury, the members were conveyed in two large motor 'char-a-banc's' through 'lanes of newly-green hedges and past gardens of opening apple blossoms being especially delightful...a delightful run back through leafy lanes completed a most enjoyable day'. Today, our excursions raise no interest in the local newspapers, let alone in such a descriptive manner!

The Piltdown Skull has always been a bone of contention and it centred worldwide interest upon Sussex. In January 1922, Mr Llewellyn Thomas gave a lecture on the infamous skull with the aid of a plaster cast (Worthing Gazette and Herald). The evidence, he explained, 'bore ample evidence that these fragments represented the most primitive truly human skull yet discovered'. Miss Marion Frost (the initiator of the Society) had been present when Sir Arthur Keith discussed the skull and Dr Smith Woodward 'told of some of the differences of opinion among the experts, one part holding that it was that of an ape and the other that it was human'.

Jumping forward a few years to October 1925, Smith Woodward was persuaded to hold a 'lantern lecture' on 'the Fossil Man of Piltdown'. This 'highly scientific lecture couched in the simplest language was well attended by a large and appreciative audience' (Worthing Gazette 21/10/25).

Rather amusingly, in October 1926 (Sussex Daily News), the Society's latest lecture was on 'Forged Antiques – Entertaining Lecture on the Fakers Art', given by Mr Thomas Sheppard. He 'looked forward with some apprehension to the discoveries that scientists were continually making, as they always created a disconcerting attitude of mind towards the future...and science had done a very great deal in the past to settle very great and important problems...He was characteristically racy and entertaining and wanted to impress upon them that things were not always what they seemed'. How ironic!

We hear today that coastal erosion is a problem, but it was also a problem in the 1920's. A lecture in October 1922 told that Sussex was 'slowly but surely being washed away' (Worthing Herald 28/10/22). Miss Gerald also mentioned erosion during a lecture on Sussex Maps in December 1922: 'three centuries earlier, there was a piece of common land over 50 acres stretching between the Marine Hotel and the high water mark, although even then, this land, while high and dry at low tide, was almost awash daily' (Worthing Gazette 20/12/22). The articles describing this lecture are very interesting.

Today the Society is moving forward, having recently introduced the Field Unit, which is dealing with the practical side of archaeology. I have only been a member for three years and I do not know when the Society withdrew from practical work.

In 1922, excavations were carried out at Cissbury, but work was to be carried out by 'experts' only (Worthing Gazette 31/5/22) rather than an enthusiast 'causing untold damage' and in 1923 members partook of a Flint Hunt at Black Patch along with the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Club.

Also during 1923, a kitchen midden was excavated at Muir House in Broadwater (opposite St Mary's Church, now under the shopping precinct). A dense bed of shells was uncovered, at it's deepest it was two feet deep. It included oyster, cockles, whelks, periwinkles and mussels. The oyster shells contained a 'V' shaped notch, characteristic of old methods of opening the shell. It was believed that although the Romans 'notched' the shell in the same way, similar features on shells excavated in Hull, were found in association with tobacco pipes and other 17th century material. The deposit was 12 feet by 20 feet and it was estimated that there were at least 300 bushels of shells.

During the same year, an Earthworks Sub-committee was set up, a report written up on the excavation at Black Patch (in Sussex Archaeological Collections volume LXV) and a letter sent to the Duke of Norfolk requesting permission to excavate on Harrow Hill. As a note to all those currently taking part in the practical work, in 1923 labour was hired at £3.5s.0d. per week, to help with the excavation! Permission to excavate at Harrow Hill was granted on 10 February 1924.

The Earthworks Sub-committee drew up a list of items to be purchased for the dig: tool hut fitted with shelves, 10

inch pulley, 18 ft ladder, 6 (30 ft) poles, tripod, 18 planks, tarpaulin, wheel barrow, 2 baskets, 50 ft rope, hooks, bucket, dusters, broom, pointed shovels. This is slightly different to the equipment we have today. It was then requested in November 1925 that the above items be sold, with the exception of the shed!

The Society also took an interest in conservation and in August 1923, the following letter was sent to 'the Times': 'The members of Worthing Archaeological Society have learned with grave concern the possibility of further damage occurring to the area immediately surrounding Stonehenge, and beg to urge the authorities concerned to do their utmost to preserve one of the most valuable archaeological sites this country possesses'.

The Mayor's Special Appeal for funds on behalf of the preservation of Cissbury was successful and the 'full sum required was forthcoming'. In 1925, the acquisition was complete and 'that most important archaeological site is now the property of the Nation.'

A Scientific Sub-committee was set up in 1927 to act as a Regional Survey, with the object of recording 'in a systematic manner, information concerning such objects as Roman Remains, windmills, place names, photographs of disappearing Worthing, etc'.

Miss M Frost asked members for photographs of old buildings of Worthing, as she believed that 'the custody and management of photographic record collections would ultimately rank among the most valuable of many services which their public institutions and clubs could render to the nation' (Sussex Daily News 12/1/27). Following these appeal two collections from Messrs Laver and Francis were received. Where are they now?

The Society was also concerned for the preservation of the South Downs. In March 1926, a resolution was proposed that the Mayor be requested to 'communicate with other Mayors of boroughs bordering on the South Downs, with reference to convening a meeting to discuss the best means of preserving the outlines of the Downs for future generations'.

Although Cissbury was now safe, it was not being kept in good condition, there was a lot of 'rubbish scattered around', therefore the Society requested the Town Council to provide wire baskets and a man to empty them after every public holiday and at suitable intervals.

As a footnote to this section, a letter was sent by Sussex Archaeological Society to the editor of the Worthing Herald (19/5/23) requesting volunteers join them in marking any features (eg, camps, moats, mounds etc) which were not shown on maps of the day.

Does anybody remember the Silver Queen and Will o Wisp Coach companies? The Society requested quotes for outings in May 1923. The Will o Wisp could not take so many people and the Silver Queen charged for the whole coach even if it was not filled. Looking through the Minutes, Southdown was mentioned a lot after that!

In 1925, an invitation to visit the excavations at Harrow Hill was extended not only to Society members, but also to members of the Sussex Archaeological Society, the Portsmouth Innominate Club, the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia, the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Club and the Littlehampton Nature and Archaeological Circle, and over one hundred people from these societies attended.

The General Strike in 1926 caused some difficulties with the summer outings; one was postponed and two were cancelled. But one outing that went ahead was to the Old Quaker Meeting House in Thakeham known as the Blue Idol. I grew up in West Chiltington, which is close to Thakeham, and I have never heard of it. It was a half-timbered 15th century building.

Jumping back to 1922, the Society paid a visit to Sompting Church, which was listed as among the twenty buildings in the country to date prior to 1000AD (Worthing Gazette 23/8/22). Also in 1922, the Curator of Brighton Museum, Dr E Curwen led a trip to the earthworks above Storrington, where he 'traced the valley entrenchment and pointed to signs of a Leper Settlement' (Worthing Gazette 6/9/22).

I now live in Tarring and I also did not know that the stem and bowl of Tarring Church font was then in the garden of a Melbourne clergyman! How did it end up there? The Rev Charles Lee had requested it's return, but at that time had heard nothing (Worthing Gazette 25/7/23). Has it been returned?

I am now drawing to the end of the Society's first ten years and I would like to end on a light note. Many of the lectures over the decade appear to have been very interesting, but some were a little more bizarre!

In 1923, Mr Arthur Beckett gave a lecture on Sussex Folklore. 'He took his hearers with him for an imaginary walk through the romantic district of the Downs from East Sussex westwards – a delightful experience, with such a guide as Mr Beckett, who enlivened the excursion with humour, legend, verse and song' (Worthing Herald 3/11/23). He spoke of a cannonball lodged in the face of Beachy Head (a relic of a sea battle in 1690), old Southdown shepherds, of smugglers and how the Long Man of Wilmington came to be, but the most strange story was that of a gravestone in Storrington Churchyard with the following epitaph:

'Here lies the body of Edward Hide,
We laid him here because he died,
We had rather it had been his father,
If it had been his sister we should not have missed her,
But since it's Honest Ned no more shall be said'!
(An early Pam Ayres?)

He then talked about Chanctonbury Ring and concluded on a poetic note – 'there are fairies on the Downs – people who had not seen them lacked vision or sympathy, or both'. He then recited 'some delightful verses relating to his own experiences of them.

Mr A Hadrian Allcroft gave a lecture on Stonehenge and Tradition (Worthing Gazette 29/10/24). He said 'more common sense was needed' and went on to scoff at the 'sun-worship theory and endeavouring to prove from tradition that Stonehenge was set up to commemorate the death in battle of a number of British nobles'. He advanced the theory (Worthing Herald 1/11/24) that it was of 'Saxon date and that the condition of the stones did not support the great antiquity claimed for it...that it was originally a moot or meeting place and became a memorial of British nobles slain there'. Mr Millbank Smith, a previous President of the Society was 'delighted to have some of his doubts settled'.

In 1928 Mr Noel Heaton lectured with 'first hand knowledge' on the Ancient Civilisation of Crete. How old was he?

The lecture in February 1929 strayed a long way from archaeology. Sir Richard Gregory's address was entitled the Sun and Stars! Remarking that the subject though 'not connected to archaeology, it was a very old one, and might be of interest to them' (Worthing Herald 23/2/29).

In November 1929 the members were entertained by the medieval myth of the Barnacle Goose! The lecture was entitled 'Barnacles'. To cut a long story short, a barnacle turned into a goose and became the subject of religious discussion from the 13th century onwards (Worthing Gazette 20/11/29). The point being discussed was 'whether the bird, being born of fish, might be eaten during Lent'. Goose would be refreshing after eating so much fish. If you want to know the whole story, you will have to read the article!

Dr Mortimer Wheeler paid a tribute during his lecture in 1931 to 'the importance of work carried out by the President at Piltdown which had resulted in giving Sussex place in the history of mankind unsurpassed by any other locality".

And finally...

...Protests on behalf of the Society were made in the autumn of 1930 'against the unsightly chalk letters which were placed upon the south west slope of the Downs below Cissbury, by a local company advertising the Cissbury Building Estate'! The letters were removed!

Snippets

Where is Public Archaeology going?

The Conference of Independent Archaeologists, to be held at Sheffield on the 30th/31st August, focuses on three main themes.

There will be firstly an introductory session on "where is public archaeology going? (see also p.18)

Since the campaign against article 3 of the Valetta Campaign, the initial threat of the state-licensing proposal in archaeology has been lifted, and there has been a rush towards public access and the involvement of the community. How can local societies begin to benefit from this?

The second theme will look at the recent work by local societies, and it is hoped in particular at the results of the Time Teams Test challenge.

The final session will look at the work of using the TR/CIA Resistivity meter; there will be a small prize for the society that has produced the best results. Contributors to all three themes welcome.

Email enquires and offers of papers to
congress03@independent.org.uk
or to Kevan Fadden, 7 Lea road, Ampthill MK45 2PR.
Further details can be found on the website at www.independents.org.uk.

Hedging and ditching

Hedging and ditchingwere normal winter work on most farms before the advent of wire fences, mechanical excavators and side arm flails. When you acquired land you dug a ditch and threw the soil onto your side to mark the boundary.

In wet areas these ditches also served as drainage with a hedge along the bank kept livestock in. In marshy areas there were few hedges and wide ditches kept the livestock in (as they still do).

On the free draining downs the shepherd had his dog to stop the sheep straying so hedges were not necessary and ditches rarely dug as the shepherd knew the extent of his pasture.

Hedging and ditching was work for when there was nothing more productive to do, and it would have taken several years to complete all the hedges and ditches on the farm, by which time the first ones would need doing again.

This was ideal for wildlife as there would always be undisturbed areas, the trouble with modern machinery is that the temptation is to do it all at once Which leaves no refuge for wildlife. Either that or a wire fence is used and the old hedge or ditch was neglected and deteriorates until it is of little value for wildlife.

David Larkin

Field Unit Update

On a fine sunny day in January members of the Field Unit went on an organised walk around the NW area of the Slindon estate, giving the newer members an opportunity to see a part of the estate we don't normally visit.

This was followed at the end of January by a finds processing session involving the marking and recording of finds from previous fieldwalks and excavations. Many thanks to Worthing Museum for the use of their facilities and to Gill Turner for organising the day.

March saw a return to the outdoors with one day of scrub clearance at Stane Street on the northern escarpment facing Bignor Roman Villa. A significant area has now been cleared, and some surveying of the monument will take place later this year.

Excavation re-started in April to find the Romano-British ditch identified in 2001. This two day excavation saw an excellent turnout, and it looks like one of the trenches located the edge of the ditch with a quern stone peeking through the fill. Unfortunately, a lack of time meant we were unable to identify the edges of the ditch or to take a section through it. Again, this is a task for another day.

The 5 day training excavation in early May at Slindon, will have taken place by the time you read this Newsletter. An update of the excavation will be given in the next Newsletter.

Looking further ahead, the summer excavation at Slindon is scheduled to run from Saturday 23rd August to Sunday 7th September. Letters informing Field Unit members of the precise details will be sent out in June. Please reply ASAP as there are a limited number of places available.

From our retired Editor

At the March lecture I was presented with two cases of wine as a token of appreciation for 14 years of editing the Newsletter.

My thanks at the time were a little rushed since I had not prepared anything and am learning to be wary of my unscheduled utterances. I was grateful for the gift and wish to record my thanks properly.

Thankyou.

I was reminded of a vicar whose favourite tipple (in secret) was cherry brandy. The local publican promised to give a case of cherry brandy to the vicar if he acknowledged the gift in the parish magazine. The vicar claimed his gift and in the next magazine there appeared words to the effect that the vicar would like to thank the publican for the gift of fruit and particularly appreciated the spirit in which it was given.

So – I did appreciate the gift of fruit and will certainly enjoy the spirit in which it was given.

Roy Plummer

Ovingdean -A Medieval Manor House ?

Ovingdean has been the subject of archaeological investigation for over a decade. The field to the north of Ovingdean church, formerly known as 'Hogs Croft', contains significant earthworks. In 1986 Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society, under the leadership of Mr Ray Hartridge, conducted a resistivity survey of a section of this field. Resistivity surveys in 1991 and 1999 completed the examination of the whole field and the latter, using an RM15 data logging device allowed greater enhancement of the readings collected. All the surveys have produced areas of extremely high resistance, many in linear arrangements and a configuration of low readings traced the location of the old village pond, filled in during the middle part of the last century.

Ovingdean Church is dated to the 11th century and has a distinct feature of a Norman door located in the north face of the church. The door was blocked in antiquity and is now encroached upon by the graveyard. Local historian Mr John Davies has suggested that the earthworks and the north door may be linked and that the anomalies in the north field could be the remains of a 'Thegnly' manor. Ovingdean is mentioned as a manor in the Domesday book, although no details are given of any buildings.

This year's excavations by the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were designed to examine the geophysical features in a number of areas across the earthworks and, in particular, the large spread of high resistance suggesting buildings and floors. Trenches (A-E) were limited to 1m width in an attempt to reduce the impact of the excavation on the archaeology below. Trench E was later cut into smaller sections when it became apparent that the restricted time allowed would prove insufficient to complete the exercise.

The excavations produced significant archaeology wherever trenches were cut. The trenches close to the graveyard wall contained a thick layer of tile debris. It is likely that this section of the field was used as a workshop during the 18th or 19th centuries when the church roof was partially replaced. Features close to the church included large flint walls with mortar still adhering to the flints. A flint cobbled floor or yard covered a large proportion of the second trench, with post holes and a possible well, this was constructed of flint and was lying to the east of the yard. Significant walls constructed of large flint nodules, again with mortar attached in places, were uncovered in trenches D and E. The walls were well built and measured 1m in width and up to 0.6M in height, the method of construction tends to suggest a date of 13th century or earlier as the flint had not been knapped (pers. comm. Mr C.Butler). A smaller wall measuring only 0.5m in width was found in the south section of trench E, possibly some form of low status building. The readings from the north/east section of the earthworks indicate features suggesting overlying walls, and the location of a possible entrance way. The excavations revealed walls of over 1m width in this area, but the time restriction did not permit any extension to the trench. A study of the wall features could well have produced some form of stratigraphical evidence of phasing.

Trench C cut into the east earthworks revealed the most enigmatic area. The chalk bedrock had been cut away to create a level platform and a significant deposit of flint nodules was revealed in a large conglomeration. This area, nicknamed ' The Tower' produced quantities of green glazed wares, and large deposits of bone, shell and glass. Lying on this platform was a 'wall' measuring 1.43m in width and 1m in depth. Many of the pieces of flint were found to be fire-cracked. Against each side of the 'wall' were deposited buttresses of chalk rubble. The deep section between the wall feature and the natural chalk on the west side contained the majority of finds, including a number of pieces of dressed stone. Finds from the other trenches included a metal axe, belt buckle and a decorated spindle whorl.

On the final day of the excavation 2 small trenches were cut to investigate depressions and mounds on the ground surface, (F and G). Trench F revealed more of the flint cobbled surface found in trenches A and B, while trench G produced a collection of 15 whelk shells and part of a Medieval floor constructed of plain tiles. The floor was covered by a demolition layer of flint nodules.

The excavations at Ovingdean, undertaken as an assessment, have revealed a site of some complexity. The walls, floors, pits, dressed stone and probable well suggest a Medieval site of some status. A study of the pottery from the site, by Keith Edgar, shows sherds predominantly dated to the 13th century, although there is some material from the 12th, 14th and 15th century's, and even a small quantity of Roman. The bone studies have produced the usual collection of domestic animals but also a significant number of possible Roe deer pieces. The geophysical data has recently been re-examined using new software developed by David Staveley and, this has enhanced the profile of a rectangular feature probably a building, located close to the church and within the high resistance spread of the earlier results. The excavations missed this area by a metre. It is often the case that assessment excavations produce more questions than answers, and Ovingdean is no exception. Whether the excavations did reveal the location of a medieval manor house is still open to speculation, but, as every trench cut revealed impressive archaeology in both features and finds, this is certainly a strong possibility.

John Funnell 19th March 2003

New finds for a New Museum:
Preliminary results of archaeological work undertaken by the Sussex Archaeological Society at Marlipins Museum, 2003

The Heritage Lottery Fund's generous financial contribution towards the redevelopment of Marlipins Museum, Shoreham, West Sussex, has provided a springboard for a long overdue reassessment of one of the region's best-preserved medieval urban vernacular buildings, last surveyed in detail by Arthur Packham prior to the Marlipins' acquisition by the Sussex Archaeological Trust in 1925 (Packham 1924).

Initiated by a small-scale evaluation undertaken within the footprint of the museum's northern annexe in February 2002, the programme of work has so far included a comprehensive programme of structural analysis of the historic range by David Martin (*Archaeology South-East*), incorporating newly commissioned dendrochronological dating (Bridge 2002), ongoing documentary research (John Mills, West Sussex County Council/Christopher Whittick, East Sussex Record Office) and a full-scale archaeological excavation of the northern annexe footprint (undertaken by Sussex Archaeological Society volunteers under the guidance of its Research Officer, Gabor Thomas, assisted by two professional archaeological supervisors, Tom Burns and Adam Single).

Together, this complementary programme of fieldwork and research has led to significant new insights into the development of the building and its immediate archaeological setting from the 12th century to the present, an advance which will not only impact upon the archaeological literature but directly upon the way the historic fabric of the Marlipins is displayed to, and interpreted by, the public.

These pages principally report on the results of the four-week excavation undertaken during February and March 2003, although information gleaned from the structural analysis and documentary research will be highlighted where necessary; all three sources of evidence will be integrated into a synthetic study to be published in a future volume of *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. **It should be stated that any conclusions given here are necessarily preliminary in advance of the results of ongoing post-excavation analysis**. Comments on any of the interpretations made in these pages are warmly welcomed; please send them direct to the author.

For those unfamiliar with the architectural gem which has been known by the etymologically-obscure name 'Marlipins' (or its medieval precursors) since the 13th century, a heavily abridged description is here given (see Packham 1924). The Marlipins, a rectangular flint-built structure, measuring 13.85 x 5.80 metres internally, occupies a prime location within the planned medieval town of New Shoreham, a corner plot at the junction between High Street and Middle Street, c.170m SW of the parish church of St Mary de Haura, and a short distance away from the presumed location of the medieval waterfront and harbour (Hudson 1980, 138-148). In common with medieval urban buildings its southern, gable end, fronts on to the major thoroughfare (High Street).

It is two-storeyed, its first floor now partially sunken below street level, with a timber-framed roof substantially covered in Horsham slab apart from the hipped northern end, rebuilt in 1950, which is tiled. The most recent structural survey identifies four principal phases within the building's development (Martin 2002). To the **phase 1** (12th-century) building can be ascribed portions of its east and west flint walls, the former with one extant architectural feature, a round-headed lancet window; recent tree-ring dating has also confirmed that the heavy joists supporting the first floor are also *in situ* survivals from the 12th-century building. The first major structural alterations were made in the late 13th/ early 14th century (**phase 2**), when the front wall was replaced with a highly elaborate chequer-board façade which survives substantially intact with its two doorways, providing independent access to each of the two storeys, and two windows - the uppermost much altered and restored (Fig. 1). A century or so later (**phase 3**), the back (north) wall was entirely rebuilt on a foreshortened alignment and a new roof built using a simple crownpost design. Further modifications took place during the second half of the 16th century (between 1567 and 1599 - as established by tree-ring dating) principally within the timber framing of the upper storey to create an additional floor level and maximize the space within the roof void (**phase 4**). Changes made since phase 4 are more superficial and relate to various intrusions within the north wall (see below) and restorative work undertaken by the Sussex Archaeological Trust during the 1920s.

The Archaeological brief

Designed in consultation with English Heritage and West Sussex County Council, the archaeological strategy was informed by the predicted impact of the planned development upon historic remains both buried and standing. In terms of the latter, the most crucial task was to record the north wall of the Marlipins historic range both internally and externally since the planned 2-storey annexe involved punching a new access point

The external elevation of the north wall following demolition of the 1970s annexe

through its thickness (Fig in alignment with the first-floor window). As part of the building programme, the demolition of the 1970s annexe provided the first unobscured view of the exterior of north wall since 1935

The proposed development also involved lowering the ground level within the footprint of the annexe (an area of roughly 7 x 10m square) by 1.4m to create a flush surface with the sunken floor of the historic range. The evaluation undertaken during 2002 indicated that this process would result in the destruction of a complex sequence of archaeological occupation (to be expected in such a prime urban location), comprising the buried foundations of former buildings and associated domestic features such as rubbish pits extending from the medieval period to the 19th century. A further finding with logistical implications for the ensuing excavation was that whereas modern floor make-up in the southern half of the site immediately overlay historic foundations, archaeology to the north was masked by a substantial deposition of garden soil. Mechanical spoil clearance of the latter was thus a prerequisite to completing the recording and sample-excavation of all features down to the natural subsoil (except in cases where deep negative features penetrated well below the 1.4m sub-floor level) within the 4-week window allotted to the archaeological programme.

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Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Sussex Archaeological Society, the excavation team would like to thank Bramber Construction for their unflagging logistical support and cooperation during the excavation. The work could not have been completed without the voluntary input from the Shoreham Society, especially Mrs Joy Lampshire and Jean Beale, who undertook the finds processing, Sussex Archaeological Society and Worthing Archaeological Society 'regulars' directly involved with hole-digging and Jim and Val Peters of the West Sussex Metal Detecting Society. On a personal note, I would like to thank Helen Poole (Senior Museums Officer) for helping the project to run smoothly, John Mills and Judith Roebuck for their archaeological guidance and Tom Burns and Adam Single for providing such professional back-up, in the case of the former, through into post-excavation.

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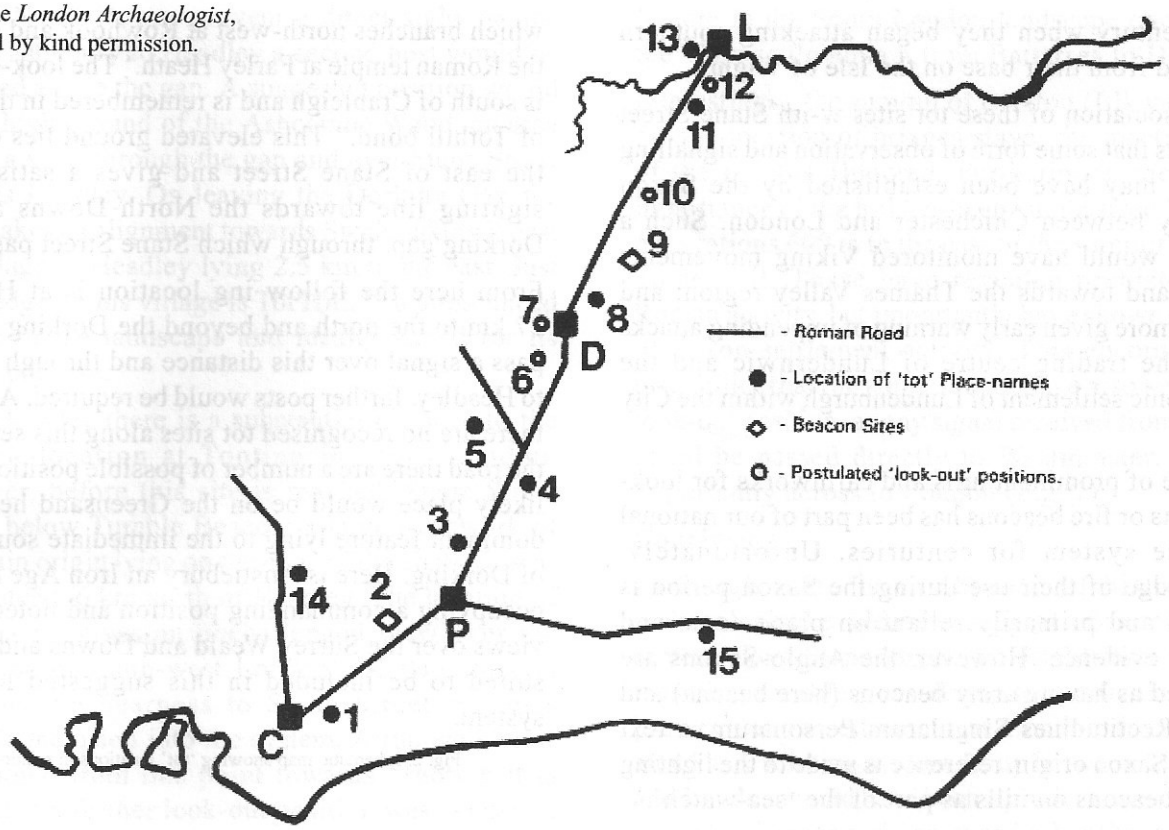


Fig. 1: schematic map showing the distribution of 'tot' place-names and other 'look-out' positions along Stane Street between Chichester and London and adjoining Roman roads.
Key: C = Chichester; P = Pulborough; D = Dorking; L = London. 1 Aldingbourne; 2 Glating Beacon; 3 Pulborough; 4 Slinfold; 5 Rowhook; 6 Anstiebury;
7 Dorking gap; 8 Headley; 9 Tumble Beacon; 10 Cheam area; 11 Totterdown; 12 Brixton Hill; 13 Westminster; 14 Stedham; 15 Hurstpierpoint.

A suggested Anglo-Saxon signalling system between Chichester and London

Graham Gower

Introduction

Situated between Chichester and London and alongside Stane Street is a sequence of six place-names which contain the Old English word element tot. meaning 'look-out place'. In most cases this place-name is associated with Anglo-Saxon watching points. which are usually located on areas of high ground with commanding views over the local countryside.' Whether the sequence of these sites is coincidental or implies some significance is uncertain. but nevertheless, the location of these sites overlooking Stane Street. a highway of historical importance. merits some attention (Fig. 1).

Constructed during the early decades of the Roman occupation. Stane Street ran from Noviomagus (Chichester) to Londinium. Covering a distance of some 60 miles, the road negotiates a varied topography and secures the shortest route possible between the two towns. The directness of the road to London ensured Stane Street as a major thoroughfare during the Roman period and over the following centuries, as confirmed by the use of long stretches of the route in the modern road system.'

However. there was a latent disadvantage with the geography of Stane Street. which arose during the late and post Roman period and again in Saxon times. Running directly inland from a coastal area dotted with inlets and safe harbourace, Stane Street offered a potential aggressor a convenient entry route into Sussex. Surrey and beyond. By its nature the road held a strategic value, a factor no doubt recognised by the late and sub-Roman authorities in their endeavours to contain Saxon incursions coming from the south coast. In an emergency Stane Street would have facilitated the rapid movement of troops to Chichester and the coastal area. and may have been a contributory factor in containing the Saxon invasion of Aclle, who landed at Selsey in 477 and subsequently made little progress inland.

The military importance of Stane Street would have been appreciated in later centuries. when similar circumstances confronted the Saxon military. Their concerns would have stemmed from the threats of coastal raids and incursions by Viking armies. Such concerns would have heightened in the 9th century with Viking attacks upon Wessex and during the late

10th century when they began attacking southern England from their base on the Isle of Wight.

The association of these tot sites w-ith Stane Street suggests that some form of observation and signalling system may have been established by the Saxon military between Chichester and London. Such a system would have monitored Viking movements inland and towards the Thames Valley region: and furthermore given early warning of impending attacks upon the trading centre of Lundernwic and the embryonic settlement of Lundenburgh within the City walls.

The use of prominent hills and earthworks for look-out posts or fire beacons has been part of our national defence system for centuries. Unfortunately, knowledge of their use during the Saxon period is limited and primarily reliant on place-name and charter evidence. However. the Anglo-Saxons are recorded as having army beacons (here beacna) and in the Rectitudines Singularum Personarum, a text of Late Saxon origin. reference is made to the lighting of fire beacons on hills as part of the 'sea-watch'.'

Tot sites

The first tot site associated with the road is located at Aldingbourne, 6 km east of Chichester. Here, on the flats of the coastal plain. a 'totehul was recorded during the 12th century.' Considered to be an artificial feature, this extant 'look-out position would equally have served as a 'sea-watch' for Chichester as well as for the initial stretch of Stane Street.

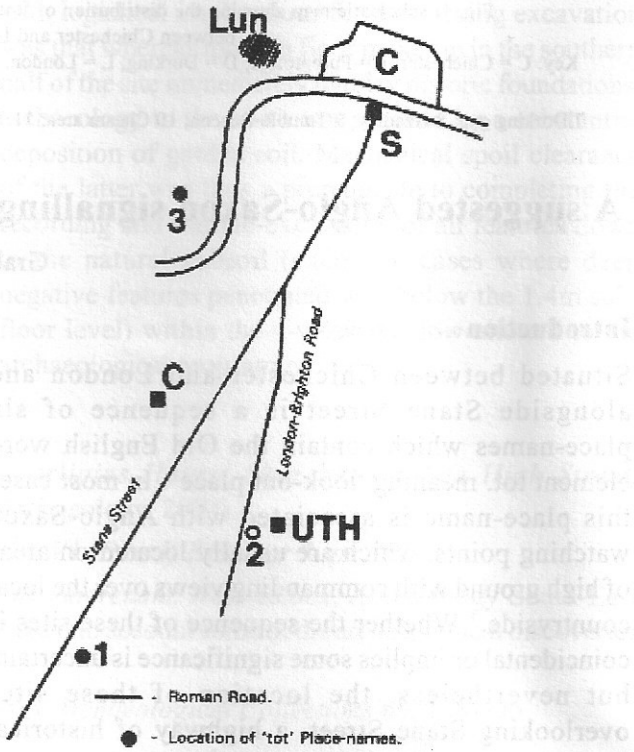
From Aldingbourne the next tot position is 21 km to the north at Pulborough. lying north of the South Downs. To pass a signal to this position would require an intermediary post on the Downs. A likely place for this would have been Bignor Hill, a commanding position 7 km north of Aldingbourne and over which Stane Street makes its route before descending to Pulborough. On its progress over the hill the road passes close to a number of earthworks. notably 'Harting Beacon', a feature that may well be recording the tradition of an earlier 'look-out place'.

From Bignor Hill the next tot site can be discerned with little difficulty 6 km to the north and just beyond Pulborough. Lying 1 km west of Stane Street is a small but prominent hill where Tout Farm is located." From this vantage point a view over the Arun river and valley is also obtained and of the following look-out site positioned 6 km away at Slinfold. Here, set back 2 km west of the road is an area of high ground, again offering clear open views to the north and south along Stane Street and where Tout Hill and Toat Farm are old locality names.

The next position is near to a spur road of Stane Street which branches north-west at Rowhook and towards the Roman temple at Farley Heath.' The look-out here is south of Cranleigh and is remembered in the name of Tothill bond." This elevated ground lies 6 km to the east of Stane Street and gives a satisfactory sighting line towards the North Downs and the Dorking gap, through which Stane Street passes.

From here the follow ing location is at Headley, 27 km to the north and beyond the Dorking gap. To pass a signal over this distance and through the gap to Headley, further posts would be required. Although there are no recognised tot sites along this section of the road there are a number of possible positions. One likely place would be on the Greensand heights, a dominant feature lying to the immediate south-west of Dorking. Here is Anstiebury an Iron Age hill-fort occupying a commanding position and noted for its views over the Surrey Weald and Downs and ideally suited to be included in this suggested look-out system.

Fig. 2: schematic map showing 'tot' locations in relation to London.



Key: Lun = Lundenwic; C = City; S = Southwark; C = Clapham; UTH = Upper Tulse Hill. 1 Totterdown, Tooting; 2 Brixton Hill; 3 Tothill, Westminster.

As the North Downs prevent a direct sighting line from Anstiebury to Headlev a second post would be expected above the gap. A suggested position would be the high ground of the Ashcombe Wood, an area giving a view through the gap and over Stane Street towards Headley. On leaving the Dorking Gap the road makes an alignment towards Swell. taking it past the village of Headley lying 2.5 km to the east. Just to the edge of this village is Tot Hill, "' a pronounced feature in the landscape and ideally suited for its named purpose.

From Headley there is a substantial distance to the next tot location at Tooting in south London. However, before this site is reached. Stane Street passes below Tumble Beacon; a large earthwork of uncertain origin lying on the edge of the chalk Downs at Banstead, 6 km north of Headley. The location of this beacon gives an unchallenged view over the landscape of south-west London and its dominant position and nearness to Stane Street suggests possible inclusion into the system. Although a view is obtained from this point towards 'Tooting it is likely that a further look-out position was needed to satisfactorily bridge the viewing distance. This could be in the locality of Cheam village or further north at Morden, areas where the contour level rises and through which Stane Street passes towards 'Tooting. There is however one possibility, standing in Morden Park and very close to the line of the road is a mound of unknown age and origin. Whether this is a lost garden feature or a result of some earlier activity has yet to be determined.

Of the six tot sites associated with Stane Street, the one located at Tooting is of particular interest." The place-name here is Totterdown, a compound name comprising in addition of tot, the elements earn house and dun hill. The existence of this place-name is usually associated with hill-forts, as for example in Berkshire where a number of associations are known." Where such a feature is located in this part of London is not known, although the association may be with 'Caesars Camp' on Wimbledon Common. The look-out at Tooting is considered to be sited on a ridge of high ground. and remembered in the local name Totterdown Fields'. This position overlooks a pass through which Stane Street makes a course towards Kennington Oval and finally Southwark.

From Tooting the next tot location, which may be a 'linking' position for a system covering the western approaches to London, is found at Westminster. where a tot-hill is recorded; an artificial mound which stood on the edge of Tothill Field and Horseferry Road." However, a sighting line direct from Tooting to Westminster is blocked by the Clapham Heights. To overcome this a signal could have been directed to Brixton Hill lying 3 km to the north; a dominant feature in the South London landscape overlooking the Thames floodplain from Battersea to Deptford.

Interestingly, the summit of Brixton Hill was chosen for the location of brixges stave, the meeting place of the Brixton Hundred. Furthermore. the historic importance of the hill has been emphasised by recent excavations 600 m to the east of the summit at Upper Tulse Hill. These have revealed prehistoric and Roman activity. but importantly have shown evidence of Saxon settlement activity. This encourages the possibility that the summit may have also served as a look-out position. as any signal received from Tooting could be passed directly to Westminster. or more importantly across to London (Fig. 2).

Conclusion

Although there is an absence of historical or archaeological evidence to support a Saxon look-out system along Stane Street, the establishment of one is not improbable. considering the particular need to protect Saxon settlement at London from Viking attacks. A warning system set up between Chichester and London would have been a prudent measure when trouble threatened, as would be the probable designation of Stane Street as a 'here path' (army road) by the Saxon military.

The importance of the road during the Viking assaults upon Wessex is suggested by two battles fought at places, considered but not proven. to be along the road. In 851 the West Saxon King Aethelwulf intercepted and defeated a Viking force at a place called Aclea. Tradition has this battle located at Ockley, a village which flanks Stane Street south of Dorking. Twenty years later Ethelred and Alfred fought the Viking Great Army at Meretun, a locality not yet satisfactorily identified but thought to be Merton in southwest London, through which Stane Street passes on route towards Tooting. Although these are debatable locations, lack of certainty does not mitigate the importance of the road to an army wishing to control Surrey or Sussex and the environs of South London.

Furthermore. other evidence indicates an active Viking presence in South London during this period. In 1862 a Viking coin and silver hoard was found approximately 1 km east of the London-Brighton Roman Road at Thornton Heath. The hoard has been given a burial date of 871/872, a time when the Great Army was wintering in London. Other similar coin hoards have been found at Waterloo Bridge (c. 1884) and at Westminster Bridge (c. 1895) and are also attributed to this period. Further evidence of local Viking activity is recorded with the complaint by the Bishop of Winchester, to Alfred's successor King Edward. that his estate of Beddington near Croydon.

had been 'stripped bare by the heathen men'."

The mobility of Viking armies was no doubt facilitated by the old Roman Road system. which centred on London. To the south the system focused upon Southwark and the approach to London Bridge, the importance of this area in the defence of London is recorded in the Burghal Hidage, where there is reference to 'Suthringa geireorche ' (the work of the men of Surrey) and taken to he an early reference to Southwark. However, the ambiguity of the entry does invite interpretations. encouraging the possibility of other defensive measures being undertaken along the southern approaches to the Thames foreshore and opposite the settlement area of Lundenwic. Such activity could be seen in relation to the defence of this settlement, around which a defensive ditch appears to have been constructed during the mid 9th century a response, it appears, to Viking attacks. With an early warning system directed at Lundenwic, time would have been given for the defences to be made ready and for non-combatants to move into the walled city.

The string of tot names along Stane Street appear to be more than just coincidence and may represent the remnants of a complex Anglo-Saxon communication system based on the old Roman road system. Evidently, it is easy to draw the desired interpretation from these tot sites and to be speculative about their context, but it suffices to say that their existence is indeed somewhat intriguing.

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Museum Day
2nd November 2003

Advance Notice

Following the succesful day last autumn we will be repeating it this year .

Rodney Gunner,
Secretary.

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Where Is Public Archaeology Going?

Something called 'public archaeology' is now fashionable. It gets taught in universities, and official bodies like English Heritage announce they are in favour of it. There is a new insistence that archaeology is rooted in society and belongs to the community as a whole. We now have a 'CBA Working Group on Public Participation in Archaeology' that is investigating ways of increasing public involvement. We have a new umbrella organisation called 'Heritage Link' whose proclaimed role is to lobby government on behalf of mass membership organisations like the National Trust. And we have the All-Party Parliamentary Archaeology Group (APPAG), comprising 142 MPs and Lords, which has just reported on the various submissions it has received 'on the current state of archaeology'. Since the campaign against Article 3 of the Valletta Convention, not only has the immediate threat of state licensing in archaeology been lifted, but there is actually a rush towards 'social inclusion', 'public access' and 'community involvement'.

The CIA needs to engage with this debate. Things are going our way, many people are now open to the argument that we need more independent archaeology, and we have to be clear about the concrete policies we want to achieve this. The CIA Committee has decided both to be represented on the CBA Working Party and to join Heritage Link; and no doubt we will want to take other opportunities to put our case in the future. So what should we argue for?

A major problem is scheduling. The state authorities (English Heritage, Historic Scotland, CADW) are constantly adding new sites to the list of those under state protection. Sometimes this is done quite deliberately to prevent independent research projects being set up - Barton-in-Fabis Roman villa in Nottinghamshire and Fishbourne Roman palace in Sussex are two recent examples. This is quite outrageous. The purpose of scheduling is to protect 'nationally important' sites from damage because they contain important information about the past. That information has to be recovered - archaeologically - so that scheduling *against research* is insane. Is the information to remain locked inside these sites forever? In some places there is actually a quota system operating: the local inspector of historic monuments, in collaboration with county archaeologists, has to schedule a certain number of new sites each year. After that, anyone who wants to do any work on these sites has to jump through hoops to get permission, which may, at the end of a long and tedious process, be denied - so that many will never bother. Some key conclusions flow from this:

a) There should be an end to the quota system, a slowing down in the rate of scheduling, and the default position should be *not* to schedule - i.e. there should be a strong argument of 'national importance' before a site is scheduled and removed, in effect, from local community control. (The exception would be a site threatened with destruction by a non-archaeological intervention, when scheduling might be used as a weapon to protect the site.)

b) There should be a system of democratic accountability for scheduling decisions - local review committees with the power to reverse bad decisions, or an ombudsman to whom appeal could be made. If, on the other hand, a site is and remains scheduled, there should be a presumption *in favour* of investigation, including targeted excavation - i.e. the current policy of hostility to research on unthreatened sites should be reversed.

c) Most sites should be left entirely free of central regulation, so that they can be explored and cared for by local communities. There should be much more encouragement and support, especially funding, for local projects involving volunteers, so that many more people can get involved in active heritage creation. Professional archaeologists - in museums, county units, and universities - should act as facilitators of public *participation* by volunteers.

What do CIA members think? Are these appropriate polices for us to be arguing? Should we add others to our list? How well do these ideas chime with local experience? Let us have your comments for the newsletter.

Neil Faulkner on behalf of the
Council for Independant Archaeology

YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS DAYS
BIGNOR 2003
July 19th - 20th

We look forward to seeing many of you at Bignor in July.
Come along with your children/grandchildren or some other child and join in.

Children under 16 – free admission when accompanied by an adult.

We plan for the usual dig with finds processing, some drawing, surveying, wattle and daubing, use of a resistivity meter, Children's tours of the Villa, Time Team videos and with the consent of the National Trust we plan to repeat our successful guided walk of parts of the Roman road.

The Last Word ?

In the last newsletter a question was asked about a concrete slab set into a track. There were six holes in the slab. What was it for?

I can now tell you that there are more of these slabs still visible. Two not far from a flint barn at TQ145059 or if you prefer on the track going north, slightly east from the road leading to Hill Barn Golf course. Do not enter the parking area for the golf course, but follow the road to the right (east) and look for the track off on your left. There is one similar to the one drawn and another I would guess one and half times as big, (one side is damaged).

A third is visible at TQ110880 to the northwest of Church Hill. There is a car park north of High Salvington to the west of the northern extremities of Honeysuckle Lane. Follow the track/path going northwest for about two kilometres or one and three quarter miles until just short of the Long Furlong. The access from the Long Furlong is on a corner and not to be recommended.

All the above are a little different from the first but presumably performed the same function.

What are they?
Oh Yes.
They are reputed to be part of the traffic control/anti invasion measures of WW2. The holes were designed to have either upturned cones, projections of concrete or H section steel dropped into them. I have heard them described as 'Tank traps' but their siting does not always make sense of that unless, there were extensive anti–tank installations either side. The cones etc were normally left out but kept handy for when they were needed to obstruct the track. Plugs were left in to give smooth passage to normal traffic. The ones near the Long Furlong still have the steel wire showing which was used to lift the plugs out.

Incidently if you happen to be crossing Ashdown Forest on the B2188 and spot the Half Moon public house, do stop, if you have time and stroll along the lane away from the pub . At the bridge look to your right and you should see about a hundred concrete anti tank cylinders being used to revet the stream bank.

Are all the above noted on the sites and monuments record? I don't know but, I understand that John Mills now has the database for West Sussex from the Defence of Britain Project. At the moment it is not easily accessible but the hope is that we will be able to check for any missed items sometime soon. If you can give further information, hearsay or rumour concerning WW2 defences, I would be pleased to hear from you.

John also tells me that after the war, the obstructions placed on farmland to inhibit enemy action were classed A, B or C. C meant - to be removed immediately, B – to be removed when convenient and A – it's the farmer's problem. Nicely bureaucratic and one can picture a council clerk explaining this to an irate farmer.

Roy Plummer

Roman Slaves

Roman slaves lived a life of luxury when it came to there diet, researchers have found.

Dr. Marijke van der Veen of Leicester University analysed rubbish heaps at a giant quarry in Egypt where slaves dug marble for temples in Rome. She found that they ate a diet which was well balanced; they had dined on artichoke, hazelnuts, walnuts, pine nuts, almonds, figs and pepper imported from India. They also ate lentils, dates, donkey meat, fish from the Red Sea, and Nile valley wine.

There was evidence of plants and some 20 sources of meat protein. Documents at the site confirm the presence or vegetable gardens and the growing of many kinds of fruit.

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Sussex Books for sale

from the collection of Ken Gravett comprising thousands of books and pamphlets.

A list of some hundreds of pamphlets is available by e-mail listed in parish order. The books are currently being listed, however in the meantime wants lists are welcome either by post or e mail.

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