

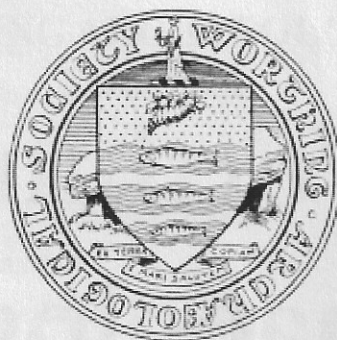
# Worthing Archaeological Society Journal

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## Editorial

Welcome to my second newsletter, as you will see I have made some changes to the layout, your comments on this would be most welcome. In the last issue, we included part one of the history of the society, it has not been possible to include part two in this issue, but it will be in the next issue, which will be published next spring.

In with the journal you will find a membership renewal form, please fill this in and return it with your subscription

and remember, if you are a tax payer please sign the gift aid section. We can then claim back the tax on your subscription.

The society is trying to build up its archives. so if you have any old photos of society outings, excavations, written reports, etc, then they would be most welcome. We can make copies and return the originals.

Rodney Gunner Editor.

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## FIELD UNIT UPDATE

### Recent work

Excavations in Keepers Cottage woods to locate the Romano-British ditch continued in June and July with mixed success. In August attention turned to the Romano-British occupation site in the park with the two week excavation taking place at the end of August.

This well attended excavation had two objectives, to locate the ditch which was glimpsed in 2002 and to locate further wall foundations of the aisled building.

Unfortunately, as it transpired, the ditch proved to be no more than a dump of foreign and quern stone. However, areas of localised burning were found in two of the ditches, together with dark soil containing charcoal. One of the trenches revealed a feature which has been interpreted as a beam slot. Do we have a second building or a structure? Hopefully time and a further excavation will tell. The search for the aisled building foundations was more successful and resulted in the eastern internal north-south wall being found.

Looking ahead, there are a number of activities at Slindon and elsewhere which are in the pipeline. These are:

1. Clearing and recording of the Ha-Ha at Slindon. Currently being planned, this will involve clearing scrub from the Ha-Ha together with recording sections of the wall. A limited amount of excavation is also being proposed.
2. Scrub clearance at Stane Street will recommence on the first Saturday in December.
3. Worthing Museum Open Day on Saturday, 1st November where we will be processing the finds from this summer's excavation.
4. Archaeological Open Day at Shipley on Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November. As part of the Shipley Parish Landscape survey we will be hosting an open day to show the various activities undertaken by the Field Unit, volunteers for the day are still required.

The resistivity machine has finally arrived and training sessions will be planned for spring 2004, when hopefully the ground conditions and weather will be more conducive to getting results and avoiding hypothermia. These training sessions will be open to all WAS members.



## The Pottery from Slindon Park, West Sussex, 1999 excavations.

### 1. Background

Slindon is located in West Sussex, ten kilometres NE of Chichester. The village and park are owned by the National Trust and located just off the busy A29. Slindon Park lies between Slindon Village and Fontwell. The site of the 1999 excavation is to the West of the park on a South-facing slope, between the 50m and 40m contour lines. The Ordnance Survey Grid Reference is SU945082. In Roman times, Slindon was not far from major transport routes, with the Roman road, Stane Street, running just North-west of the site, connecting the harbour at Chichester with London. At the heart of the estate is the former deer-park where the site of a Romano-British farmstead has been located. Until recently, this large field (4.633ha), still enclosed by its Medieval haha, was used for the growing of cereal crops and pulses and was thus ploughed intensively. Many Roman artefacts have been brought up by the plough over the years, and the ploughman, Robin Upton, has formed a vast collection of finds from all over the Estate, some of which are in Chichester Museum. This led in part to the National Trust's decision to have the site investigated archaeologically and to place the land under permanent pasture.

In April 1999 a group of students from New College, University of Southampton, following on from a period of intensive field-walking by members of Worthing Archaeological Society, was invited to investigate the site. A geophysical survey, using resistivity, was carried out and the results clearly showed the presence of a rectilinear structure. The site also appeared to be surrounded by an enclosure ditch. A contour survey of the adjacent woodland was also conducted, confirming the presence of a number of ditches and embankments of uncertain date, and several sherds of Roman pottery were found in

rabbit burrow openings in the vicinity. Excavation of part of the area of the field identified as covering the building was carried out by the same students, including myself, under the direction of James Kenny and John Magilton of the former Southern Archaeology, in June and July 1999. The intention was to evaluate the archaeology and assess the extent of damage it had sustained, establishing also whether there was tree-root penetration from the nearby scrub woodland. A trench 8m x 5m was opened initially and later extended (see Figure 1).

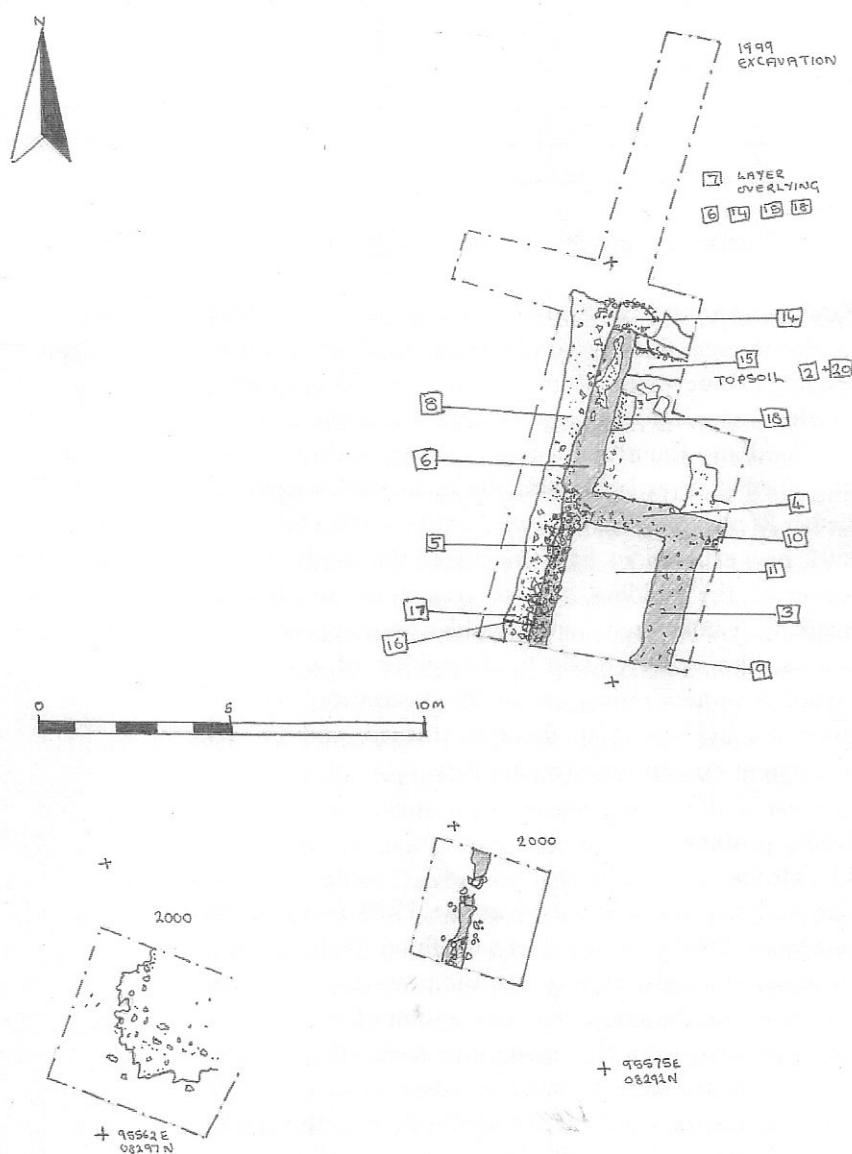


Figure 1: Plan showing the areas excavated in 1999 by Southampton University and in 2000 by Worthing Archaeological Society

Many sherds of pottery and 2.5 cubic centimetre brick tesserae were lifted with the turf. The foundation trenches and robbed-out remains of a number of clunch walls were found only 20cm below the turf, and as the area was cleaned up it became obvious that parts of the site were badly plough damaged, with visible plough ruts scoring the surface. This was worst at the southern end of the trench, where the topsoil was shallowest. The wall foundations were not very substantial and the discovery of many nails along the walls, along with painted wall plaster, led to them being interpreted as probable lath and plaster walls. Pottery was recovered from eight of the contexts (see Table 1).

CONTEXT	NUMBER	WEIGHT(g)	MSW (g)
2	68	378	5.6
7	358	3309	9.2
8	21	170	8.0
17	74	976	13.2
18	78	1225	15.7
20	52	286	5.5
23	29	224	7.7
U/S	227	1373	6.0

Table 1: Number of sherds in each pottery-bearing context

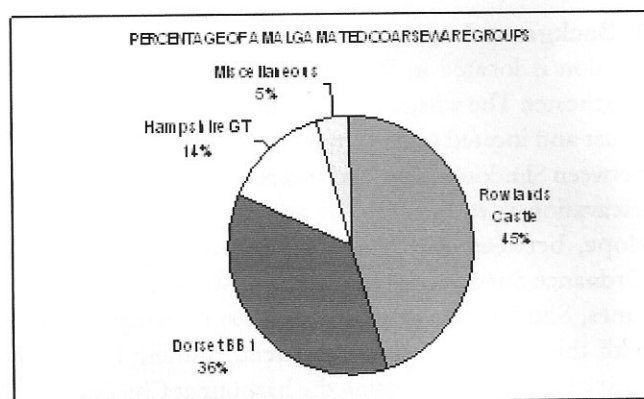
Work on the site at Slindon is ongoing. Worthing Archaeological Society conducted a small excavation, opening two new trenches (see Figure 1) in 2000. In 2001 they investigated a number of the ditches in the adjacent woodland and found these to be Roman in date, and in 2002 further investigations in the main field uncovered further Roman remains. Over the last two weeks of August 2003, new excavations have uncovered the south-eastern corner of the building, plus an area to the north with enigmatic features containing a wealth of pottery and metal objects. This will no doubt be the subject of a separate report. A pottery report on the 2000 excavation will be compiled by myself in the near future, and of the subsequent excavations at a later date.

## 2. The pottery

### 2.1 Fabrics

The ceramic assemblage from the 1999 excavations comprises 907 sherds of pottery, weighing 7942g, giving a mean sherd weight of 8.7g. All the pottery is from the Roman era on the site, with the exception of one piece of clay pipe stem from the unstratified layer. All sherds in this assemblage were sorted into fabric groups under a binocular microscope at X20 magnification. A total of 23 different fabrics was identified from the assemblage. Many of these were represented by single or very few sherds (see Table 2). There were 12 fine ware fabrics and 11 coarse ware fabrics. The most commonly occurring fabrics were from Rowland's Castle near Havant, of which there were three. In order to emphasise this high proportion from a single source, an amalgamation of data on the three fabrics

was used to compose the following chart (see Fig. 2). There is, also a very high proportion of Dorset Black Burnished



Ware 1 present, and some Hampshire Grog-tempered ware.

Figure 2: Percentages of coarseware groups from the site

The majority of the fabrics from the assemblage belong to well-established and published groups. The exceptions are the fabrics from the Rowland's Castle kilns. The pottery from this group consists of 3 main fabrics, for the purposes of this report known as ROW RE 1, ROW RE 2 & ROW RE 3. There is also one sherd recorded as ROW BB, which is a Black Burnished Ware II copy in ROW RE 2 fabric. These are all grey wares. There are also several sherds in an oxidised fabric that is otherwise very similar to the Rowland's Castle fabrics. The pottery from this kiln group has been little investigated. One waste dump was excavated by Margaret Rule in 1967, but was never published (Lyne 1998: 58). A full list of the fabrics and the contexts in which they occur is found in Table 2. The defining features of the Rowland's Castle fabric group are the dense, clean clay matrix, the presence of soft ferrous inclusions that give the pottery a speckled or streaked appearance (see Fig. 3), and the high firing that makes some sherds appear semi-vitrified.

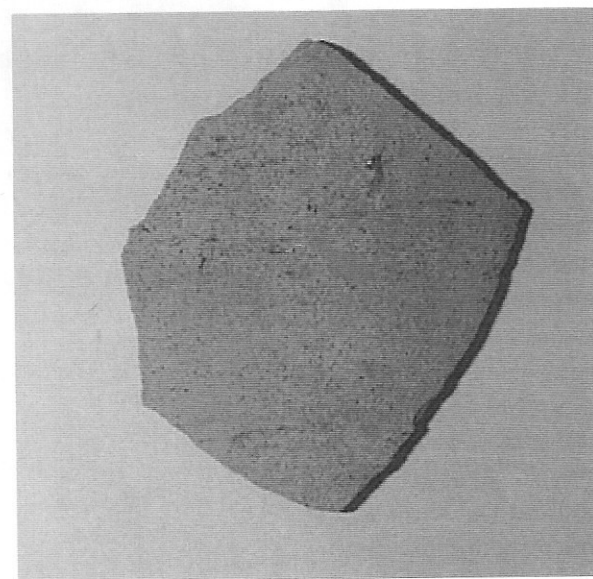


Figure 3: A sherd of Rowland's Castle fabric showing the characteristic 'streaking'



Table 2: The fabrics found in the Slindon Park 1999 assemblage, by context

FABRIC CODE	FABRIC NAME	CONTEXTS
ROW RE 1	ROWLAND'S CASTLE REDUCED WARE 1	2, 7, 8, 17, 18, 20, 23, U/S
ROW RE 2	ROWLAND'S CASTLE REDUCED WARE 2	2, 7, 8, 17, 20, 23, U/S
ROW RE 3	ROWLAND'S CASTLE REDUCED WARE 3	7, 17, 20
HAM GT 1	HAMPSHIRE GROG-TEMPERED WARE 1	2, 7, 18, U/S
HAM GT 2	HAMPSHIRE GROG-TEMPERED WARE 2	U/S
DOR BB1	DORSET BLACK BURNISHED WARE 1	2, 7, 8, 17, 23, U/S
ROW BB	ROWLAND'S CASTLE BLACK BURNISHED WARE	U/S
MISC GREY	MISCELLANEOUS GREY-WARE	U/S
MISC RE	MISCELLANEOUS REDUCED WARE	U/S
MISC OX C/W	MISCELLANEOUS OXIDISED COARSE WARE	2, 8, 20, 23, U/S
OXF WH	OXFORD WHITE-WARE	8, 23, U/S
F MIC	FINE MICACEOUS WARE	2, 17, U/S
MISC OX F/W 1	MISCELLANEOUS OXIDISED FINE WARE 1	U/S
MISC OX F/W 2	MISCELLANEOUS OXIDISED FINE WARE 2	17, 20, U/S
CG BL	CENTRAL GAULISH BLACK SLIPPED WARE	2
CG SA	CENTRAL GAULISH SAMIAN WARE	2, 8, 20, U/S
LVN CC	LOWER NENE VALLY COLOUR COATED WARE	2, U/S
MOS BS	MOSELKERAMIK BLACK SLIPPED WARE	2, 20
NFO CC	NEW FOREST COLOUR COATED WARE	2, 7, 8, 20, U/S
OXF CC	OXFORD COLOUR COATED WARE	7, 8, U/S
MISC WH	MISCELLANEOUS WHITE-WARES	2, 20
MISC CC	MISCELLANEOUS COLOUR COATED WARES	8, 20, U/S
MISC F/W	MISCELLANEOUS FINE-WARES	2

The two dominant fabrics in the assemblage, by sherd count, are the DOR BB1 and ROW RE 2 fabrics. These, therefore, dominated most contexts. The exception was context 18, where neither of the fabrics featured, but 77 sherds of HAM GT1 were present. These were probably from a single vessel.

No DOR BB1 was present in context 20, which, as it is a general layer overlying all other layers, is surprising, especially since there were 18 sherds in the topsoil above this. The majority of sherds of this fabric were large and comparatively heavy. Context 23 had a higher proportion of ROW RE1, at 28.5%, than any other context, with the sherds representing at least three vessels. The next highest concentration was in the unstratified layer, where 61 of the 221 sherds were ROW RE1 equalling 27.6%. Both these contexts are formed from the upper layers of soil, so it is possible that the lighter, finer ROW RE1 was more easily ploughed up and more fragmented, causing it to form a higher proportion of the pottery in the upper strata.

Fine wares were present in all contexts except Context 18, much of it represented by single or very fragmented sherds and again it could be assumed to have suffered from the most plough damage, due to its fragile nature. Only one sherd of Samian pottery was found in a secure context, and the same is so for the F MIC and MISC CC wares. Because of the nature of the site, with finds in the upper layers scattered broadly and not recorded in discrete groups, it is impossible to know whether the rest of the sherds in these fabrics were located close together. The most abundant fine wares were Central Gaulish Samian and Oxford Colour-coated wares, the latter of which were more securely stratified than the Samian, with 10 of the 19 sherds

present found in context 7. These probably represent the remains of at least three vessels

## 2.2 Forms

Several interesting statistics emerged when the fabric and form groups were examined together. The most common form was the Simple Everted Rim jar, with 7 different rim forms falling into that category. Only 4 rim forms were from the dishes/bowls category, and of these all appear to be dishes rather than bowls. Amongst the coarse wares there are no other forms found, so it appears a simple jar/dish dichotomy existed amongst the coarse wares on the site, with other needs such as beakers and flagons being met by the fine wares. Even more dramatic was the finding that, from the diagnostic rim forms available, all the jars except one are made from the Rowland's Castle fabrics, and all the dishes except one are made from Black Burnished Ware. There is one BB1 jar and one ROW RE 1 dish. There is also one Black Burnished form dish made from Rowland's Castle fabric (see Fig. 4). It will be interesting to see whether this bipolar pattern also emerges from the SNP2000 assemblage. Investigation of other Sussex sites could also be carried out, to see whether this is just an isolated pattern.

## 2.3 Quantification

Quantification of the pottery from this assemblage was dominated by the presence of many apparently similar grey-wares, necessitating a meticulous sorting process. There was a very high proportion of body sherds, 637 of the 907 sherds present. There were 91 rim sherds present, approximately 10% of the assemblage, but 23 of the rim types were represented by a single sherd and many of the sherds were very small. During the excavation only one

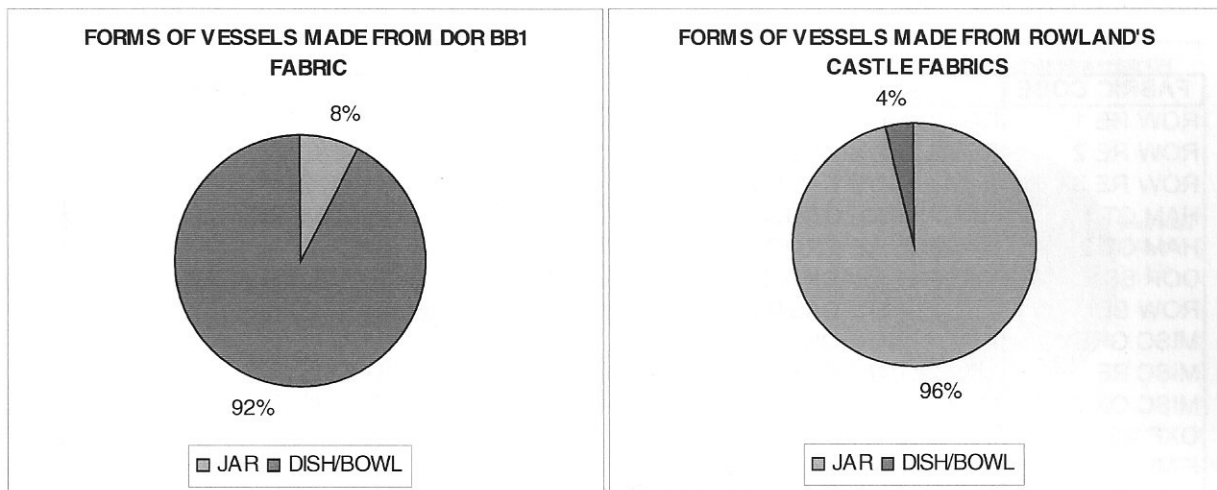


Figure 4: Evidence of the bipolar nature of fabric and form correlation at Slindon

context was sieved, Context 17 – a test pit. This could have altered the quantification by there being a higher recovery rate from this context. There were, however, very few small sherds recovered and the Mean Sherd Weight from this context was over 13g, considerably higher than the average for the assemblage (see Figure 17). Even this figure, however, is a fairly low mean, indicating the fragmentary nature of the pottery, due to the shallow depth of the site and the agricultural regime.

#### 2.4 Dating

Since the condition of this site was poor, with robbed-out walls and plough damage, the pottery is vital to understanding its chronology. The low proportion of imported wares suggests the site was not an early one. Only 30 sherds can definitely be assigned to sources outside Britain, less than 3% of the assemblage. Other wares came from sources within Britain that could not be defined as local. Indeed all the fabrics except the Rowland's Castle and Hampshire Grog-tempered wares fall into this category (see 2.5). The range of fabrics and forms are the key to dating the site, and, in some instances, technological variation can help refine this dating.

One indicator of the late date of the site is the absence of products from the Hardham/Wiggonholt industry, also located on Stane Street, approximately 12km north-east of Slindon. This would seem an obvious source of pottery, but is not utilised. In the report on Bignor Roman Villa, Lyne (1998: 161) says that the Hardham/Wiggonholt industry went into sharp decline around AD200. It was during the period from AD220-300 that the Rowland's Castle wares dominated the assemblage at Bignor (*ibid.* 162). Hodder (1974b: 86) states that the Rowland's Castle everted rim jars are dated by the Fishbourne deposits, 'where a third century context is clearly indicated with a probable earlier beginning in the second century.' There is also a very high proportion of Dorset Black Burnished Ware 1 at Slindon and Lyne (1998: 162) says that his examination of 'numerous 3<sup>rd</sup>- and 4<sup>th</sup>- century Sussex pottery

assemblages has shown the existence of considerable coastal trade in this commodity...' The later Bignor assemblage, from AD300-400 shows a marked decline in Rowland's Castle products and Lyne suggests this, plus evidence from other Sussex sites, indicates that 'the industry went into a sharp decline in the last years of the 3<sup>rd</sup>- century and ceased production around 370' (*ibid.*).

A further indicator that supports a 3<sup>rd</sup>- century date is the total absence of Alice Holt/Farnham products. Lyne (1993: 17) says that "This industry took over much of the Chichester pottery market from the BB1 and Rowland's Castle industries at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup>- century. He also notes the presence on a site at Littlehampton of an Oxfordshire white-ware mortarium of Young's Type M22, which also occurs in the Slindon assemblage, which Young dates to post AD240 (Young 1977: 76). Taken together, these factors suggest strongly a 3<sup>rd</sup>- century date for the site at Slindon (see Fig. 5).

Further evidence is supplied by the range of fine wares present on the site. At the Hassocks Cemetery in East Sussex the assemblage for the period from AD150-270 includes Central Gaulish Samian, Nene Valley and Moselkeramik fine wares, all of which occur at Slindon (Lyne 1994: 80). Although Central Gaulish Samian ceased to be imported around AD200, and exports from the Les Martres-de-Veyre factory (present at Slindon) are 'almost confined to AD100-125' (Tyers 1996: 113), it is known that Samian was curated by its owners (Hodder 1974b: 92). Lyne (1994: 83) cites the quantities present at the shore forts of Pevensey and Portchester as evidence for this practice. The products of the workshops at Trier, known as Moselkeramik, were imported from AD180-250 and Central Gaulish Black-slipped ware from 150 to the early 3<sup>rd</sup>- century (Tyers 1996: 138). The Nene Valley colour-coated wares were produced from the mid-2<sup>nd</sup>- century until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup>- century (*ibid.* 173). In the AD270+ assemblage from the same site Lyne notes the presence of New Forest purple colour-coated beakers, which appear



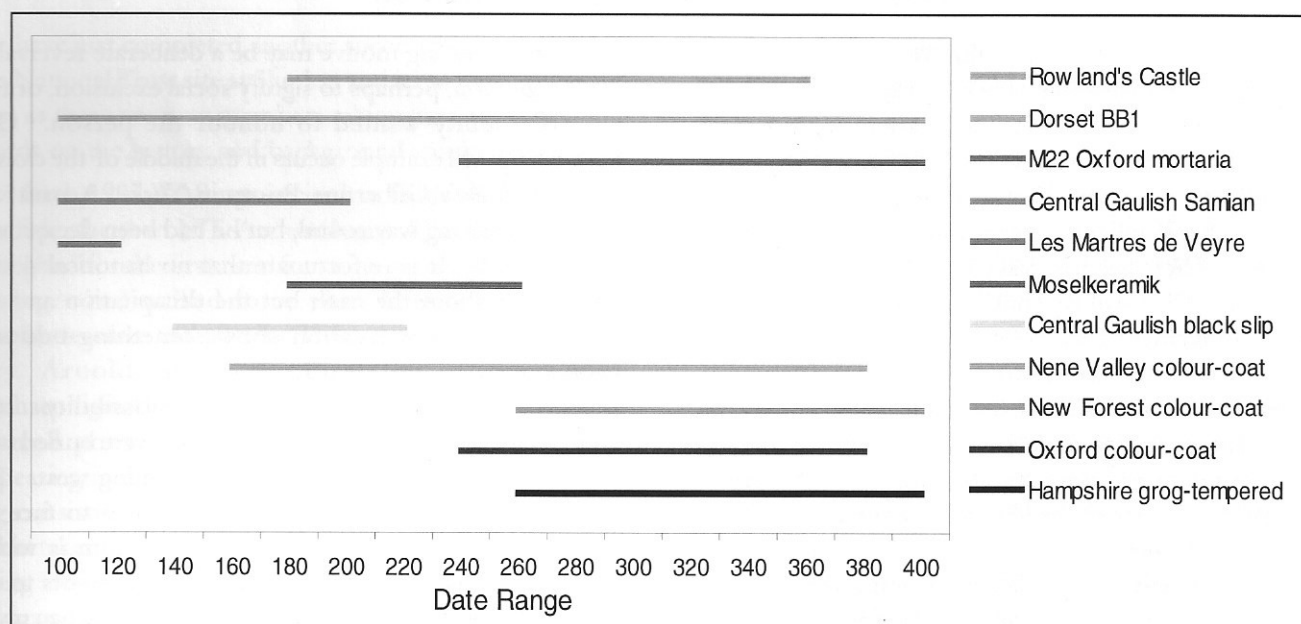


Figure 5: The date range for the Slindon Park 1999 assemblage, showing coincidence of dates in the third century

from AD270 onwards (*ibid.* 81). These also occur at Slindon. Oxfordshire colour-coated wares also feature on the site and these were produced from *c.* AD240 until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup>- century.

### 2.5 Provenance

As mentioned in the previous section, most of the pottery at the Slindon site was arriving from sources that could not be considered local. Even the Rowland's Castle pottery comes from approximately 25 km distance. What is particularly striking about the pottery from this site is that everything comes from the West. A reasonable assumption is that everything was arriving through a single market, almost certainly Chichester. A study of communications in Roman times shows that all the pottery could have arrived at Chichester by sea or road with ease, and then been passed on to smaller settlements by means of an actual market or by travelling merchants. The Oxford and Nene Valley wares could be traded via the Thames and thence via Stane Street from London, or by sea from the Thames Estuary. The Sussex Coastal Plain was densely settled in Roman times and would have provided plentiful marketing opportunities for the enterprising trader.

### 3. Conclusion

The pottery assemblage from the Slindon Park excavations, 1999, proved interesting and informative in several ways. Because of the post-depositional history of the site, with intensive agriculture being practised, the pottery was fragmented, abraded and scattered, making assessment of any phasing on the site impossible. It also led to an unusually low Mean Sherd Weight. The assemblage proved, however, from the fabrics and forms recovered, to be dateable quite tightly to within the approximate confines of the 3<sup>rd</sup>- century AD.

The fabrics found on the site showed a clear trading pattern emerging. There were few imported fine wares, and the Samian on the site is likely to have been residual, in the sense that it had been curated. Romano-British fine wares came from the Nene Valley, Oxfordshire and the New Forest, either by road or by sea, and all the other fabrics came from west of the site. This leads to the conclusion that the major market centre at Chichester was central to the occupants of the Slindon farmstead.

The majority of the coarse wares came from the Rowland's Castle kilns near Havant and, since this site remains unpublished, detailed fabric and form analyses were necessitated. The tight dating of this site will hopefully enable some of the Rowland's Castle forms to be dated from other sites. The Rowland's Castle kilns should be further investigated and published as a matter of priority if the pottery of West Sussex is to be understood, since they were clearly a major contributor to the ceramic assemblages of the region for around 200 years.

Further investigation of the Slindon site, both current and ongoing, may be able to confirm some of the patterns established from this assemblage, in particular the unusual binary pattern of fabric use, whereby the dishes were almost exclusively made of Dorset BB1 fabric and the jars of Rowland's Castle wares. As further areas of the site are opened, it may be possible to infer areas of activity from the concentration of certain fabrics and forms. The 1999 excavation was too small for this work to be done meaningfully. Further work on the site certainly seems to be justified if the quality of information from the pottery assemblage of even this damaged area is anything to go by.

Sue Nelson, University of Southampton, September 2003

## A Cautionary Tale about Orientation

Anyone who has watched *Meet the Ancestors* will realize that excavating burials often take up a large proportion of an archaeologist's life. The standard pattern for burials in the later Middle Ages (from about 1250 onwards) is that the naked person, wrapped in a shroud, is placed in the ground, perhaps in a wooden coffin or more expensive stone one. Their head is placed to the west, their feet pointing east. The theology connected with this orientation is that at Judgement Day the dead will rise and face the risen Christ who will appear from the east.

The west-east orientation gave rise to the interesting theory that the date of burial could be determined by matching the orientation of the grave with the rising sun. If correct the burials in a cemetery could reveal the seasonal patterns of burial. Unfortunately there are too many complicating factors (cloudy days, grave diggers aligning the grave by the church and not the sun) and so this theory has been dropped.

However, whilst west-east burial is the norm there are anomalies and burials which have been reversed (ie head to the east and feet to the west) have been discovered. This is a rare but not unknown phenomenon, but what can account for it? It may be a simple mistake. The wrapping of the body in a shroud may mean that the people disposing of the body were confused and accidentally resulted in the body being placed in the grave the wrong way round.

A second reason may be that bodies were hurriedly disposed of. This explanation is commonly given when bodies are excavated the wrong way round in plague pits. At Norwich some graves were not dug widely enough and so in one grave seven bodies were in the same grave and placed head to toe.

A more interesting motive may be a deliberate reversal of the orientation, perhaps to signify social exclusion, or that the community wanted to honour the person. One particularly odd example occurs in the middle of the cloister of St Andrew's Gilbertine Priory in York. A man was buried the wrong way round, but he had been decapitated before death. It is unfortunate that no historical details are known about the case, but the decapitation and the different burial orientation show something odd was happening.

Medieval priestly burials are a third possibility. It is commonly believed that Medieval priests were buried with their head to the east and their feet pointing west. The standard reason given is that the priest rises to face his flock at Judgement Day. Though the custom is widely known, the lack of archaeological evidence points to the practice being something of an archaeologist's urban myth. It is true to say that later, Tudor, examples are known, and it is not an unknown custom today, but to the author's knowledge Medieval examples are non-existent.

With these facts in mind there was considerable excitement when it was reported that a priestly burial from the 14th century had been found at a priory site in East Anglia. If true, this discovery would blow apart received wisdom and be of great interest. At present the jury is still out and records are being checked. However, a further reason for reverse burial may have raised it's head for there is the intriguing possibility that the priestly burial may have inadvertently been published the wrong way round. This was certainly a reason for reverse burial not foreseen by this author. The author of the report has been contacted and I hold my breath and await the answer, though with the original site records to be checked it may be a long process ...

Christopher Daniell



*Sele Priory Church, St Peter-in-Beeding*



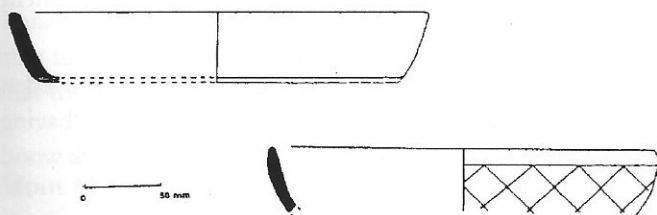
## The Dig at Slindon

We have just completed another successful summer dig at the National Trust site at Slindon and it has been suggested that as there are new members taking part, perhaps a few words on the history and background would be helpful.

In March 1997 WAS was invited to fieldwalk Field 52 by Joy Ede, the then N.T. Archaeologist. This field had been ploughed for the first time for some years and she and the Manager had walked some short lines and discovered Roman tesserae and pottery. This was not a new site as the Rev. Arnold, under the direction of the Sussex Archaeological Society, had found tesserae and remains of 2 small pottery vessels, and had published a report appearing in SAC 26 in 1875. One hundred years later a dig consisting of 2 trenches and a surface collection was undertaken by Bishop Otter College in 1974/5, the finds being lodged in Chichester District Museum.

So in March 1997 we fieldwalked Field 52 and to our delight picked up a large quantity of Roman pottery, brick and tile, and oyster shells - a sure sign that Romans had been there. There appeared to be a slight platform in the field where we conjectured that a house had stood. That winter we washed and marked the finds, and compared them with the Bishop Otter finds. In December we invited Con to give us his opinion and we all learnt much with his help.

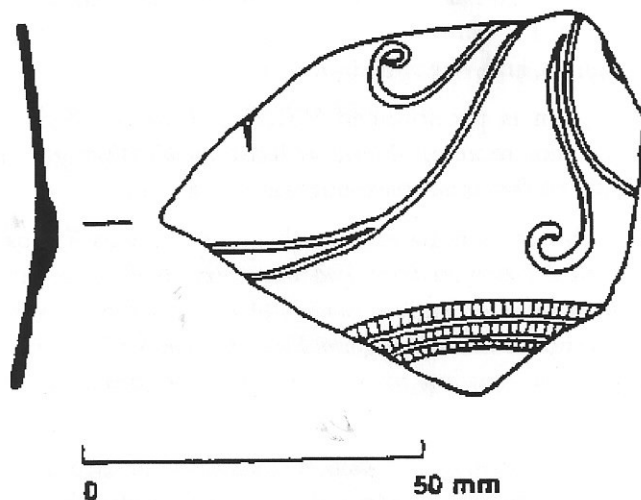
In the autumn of 1998 we assisted James Kenny in undertaking a geophysical project with a resistivity meter. James also organised another geophysical survey with mature students from Southampton University. Based on this, which appeared to show a square within a square, a classic Roman temple design, Southampton's students were, to our chagrin, given permission to excavate. We regarded it as our Site! However, the temple theory crumbled as the outline of the walls was interpreted as the chalk and flint rubble foundation of the northeast corner of an aisled building, and the finds were domestic and not particularly spectacular. Many nails were found, leading to speculation that the roof was of wooden shingles and possibly the upper walls were of timber and daub. The building appeared to be a fairly low status farmstead, albeit built only a short distance from Bignor Roman Villa. Lots of questions were still unanswered and James turned to WAS volunteers for further investigation, and over a hot July weekend we dug a further trench to the south of the original Southampton trench, uncovering a robbed out wall which was a continuation of the outer north-south wall



*Black Burnished ware dishes from Southampton's excavation.*

In October we dug several trenches in the woods to the west of the field as the field was reinstated as pasture. One trench uncovered a rammed chalk surface, but as winter approached we had to backfill and wait for spring. During the summer and autumn of 2000 we extended this trench into the field and discovered a wealth of finds including glass, nails, Black Burnished and Rowlands Castle ware pottery, and a piece of decorated Samian. I was later able to match this to another piece found by Bishop Otter and lying forgotten in the museum. 2001 was the year of foot and mouth and we were not allowed back near the trenches. In the woods and during our summer week-long dig we discovered a ditch cut into the chalk containing bones with good preservation. These are assumed to be kitchen refuse consisting of sheep/goat, cattle and pig as well as a tibia from a red deer. From March 2002 the trenches in the woods were extended in the hope of finding more of the chalk ditch which proved illusive. Towards the end of August we returned to Field 52 for a 2 week excavation under our Site Director Keith, and with James keeping a careful eye on our activities. This year we were joined by enthusiastic AS Level students from Boundstone, led by their lecturer Peter Brannlund, who deturfed and mattocked with a vengeance. Which was as well as this was the largest excavation we had undertaken at Slindon and consisted of 6 3m x 3m trenches over the southern part of the building, as well as opening up the chalk feature, and digging a trial trench over what appeared on the surface to be a slight ridge. More of the western north-south wall was exposed together with north-south and east-west internal walls.

Finds included coins (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century), glass, oyster shells, a blue segmented glass bead, several pieces decorated Central Gaulish Rhenish ware and a bone spoon. The trial trench over the ridge revealed what looked like the bottom of a ditch with foreign and quernstone pieces lying in it.



*Central Gaulish Rhenish ware*

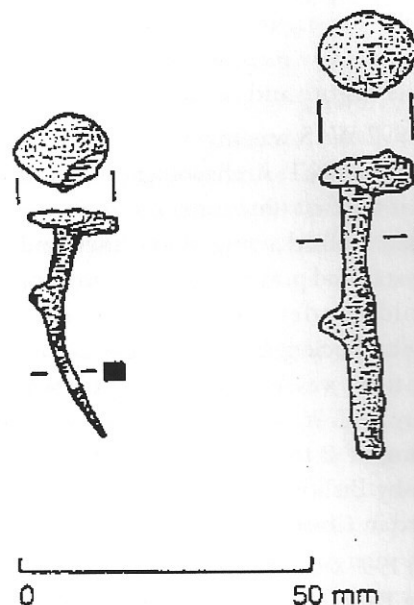
The winter saw us back in the woods attempting to extend the chalk ditch. Our metal detectorists Val and Jim found 4 coins on our spoil heap - not surprising as in the woods visibility is bad. One coin may have a clear representation of Helen, mother of Constantine, complete with an

elaborate hairstyle. Our May 2003 excavation south of Keeper's Cottage proved inconclusive, and further work took place once again in the woods where one of our students, Luke, turned up a large piece of quernstone.

Old friendships were renewed at the summer 2003 dig. Our director Keith planned a series of trenches, one 5x5m, and three 3x5m, adjacent to the trial trench of the previous year in order to define the outline of what might be a boundary ditch around the farmstead. A trench was also planned at the southern end of the building. Over the 2 weeks the 'ditch' changed into 'another building', built of wood, as a possible beam slot was identified, with overlaid spreads of burnt material. Since it is inconclusive, we shall have to return in order to find the answers. The southernmost trench picked up more internal east-west and north-south walls. These appeared almost exactly where we expected to find them as we had previously laid out a resistivity survey over the building. Pete and Bob had also undertaken the challenge of a dowsing survey of the area with interesting results.

Finds include a large piece of a mortarium with a soft red fabric, tentatively identified as Oxford ware by Richard Pulley, pieces of heavy Rowland Castle ware identified by Sue Nelson, beehive ware sherds with fingerprints, window glass, an enigmatic round lead object with a hole in the middle, one green glass bead, and pieces of New Forest indented beakers.

For sheer numbers nails came out on top.



*Examples of Roman nails*

The work is fun, interesting and ongoing, so if you feel like wielding a trowel or a mattock next year, come and join us for 2 weeks from 14<sup>th</sup> August when we can promise back-breaking, sweaty days on the peaceful sheep-scattered Downs overlooking the sea.

Cheryl Hutchins

## Slaugham

The parish of Slaugham covers an area of about 5,500 acres in the middle of Sussex. There are four villages that make up the Parish, they are Pease Pottage, Handcross, Slaugham, and Warninglid.

Slaugham is pronounced Slaffem, Ham is a Sussex termination meaning Manor or House; in 1620 the registers show that the present spelling was being used.

The church dominates the village, it contains a most beautiful Norman font and there are many sixteenth century monuments and brasses to the family of Covert, whose house was at Slaugham Place, the ruins of which lie just off the London road yet are perfectly peaceful and romantic.

There are many ruined walls, a small tower at each angle, enclosing about three acres of lawns and terraces, broken down arches, stone fireplaces with panels and coats of arms and a small pond which is still one of the principal sources of the Ouse. In its great days, some two hundred years ago, it had a household of some seventy people and occupied nearly 1,200 acres.

In the churchyard there is a link with one of England's greatest admirals, Admiral Horatio Nelson, for it is here that his favourite sister, Catherine Matcham, lies buried. The tomb is close up against the wall of the church, the inscription on the tomb reads: Here lies, Catherine, the beloved wife of George Matcham, Esq., and youngest Daughter of the Re. Edmund Nelson, by Catherine his wife, daughter of Maurice Suckling, Esq. Prebendary of Westminster, second son of Robert Suckling, Esq., Lord of the Manor of Woodton in the County of Norfolk. Catherine was born at Burnham Thorpe like her famous brother, married in 1787 and died in 1812, leaving three sons and five daughters to respect her memory and lament her loss.

The Matcham family, when they were at Slaugham, lived at Ashfold Lodge which Squire Matcham described as "having a fine extent of pasture and grain enclosed by a thick wood of oaks."

Rodney Gunner



## Here be Dragons???

In the tiny hamlet of Lyminster there is an ancient church, much rebuilt over a very long period of time. Part of the walls of the nave are all that remains of a Saxon Nunnery. Mediaeval pottery has been found in the farm field south of the church and to the north, a little way along the footpath to Arundel is a fair sized round pool. This pool is known as the Knucker Hole after a legendary Dragon that lived there and terrorised the local inhabitants, eating animals and of course maidens. Plenty of books will tell the tales of how the local Dragon slayer overcame the monster and one of these involves a huge sticky pudding on a horse and cart.

There are 70 British villages with a traditional Dragon and the name Knucker is probably from the Anglo-Saxon word "nicor" which can mean sea monster or dragon and as the pool is beside an ancient footpath from Lyminster to Arundel, the dragon's presence would be highly inconvenient! The pool has long been supposed by local legend to be bottomless and a local resident remembered when he was a boy, in about 1910 that the bell ropes were taken out of the church, tied together with a weight on the end and lowered into the pool, but failed to touch the bottom. There is a rather simpler reason. This part of the

coastal plain has a gravel base through which many underground watercourses flow and the Knucker hole is where one of these streams accesses the surface while still following its underground path.

The present day locals still tell the tale about the Greengrocer from Wick, south of Lyminster, who, in the 1930's, set off on a foggy morning with a horse and cart across the fields to go to Arundel and disappeared. No trace of him or the horse and cart was ever found. In the late 1960's the story of this bottomless pool attracted the attention of the Sussex University Sub-Aqua club who thought they would investigate it. Their dive was duly arranged and a member of the local archaeological group went along to watch for anything of special interest. It appeared that there was a ledge at some depth in the pool which held a variety of artefacts. Among the items retrieved was an iron bedstead, lots of broken Victorian pottery, a small Victorian fire surround and --- a cart wheel and some pieces of horse harness. Was this the remains of the Wick Greengrocer or --- the remains of the Dragon slayer's pudding cart?

Anne Induni

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## Research Opportunities

There are two separate pieces of research that need to be carried out as part of the Slindon programme. These are open to any individual or small group (2-3 people) within the society and do not need any previous knowledge of the Slindon programme or research.

If you are interested in either or both of the following, please contact the Field Unit Director (see bottom for contact details).

### Ha-Ha

As part of the work being done to survey and record the Ha-Ha in Slindon Park, it will be necessary to undertake research into the history of the Ha-Ha and compare it to others in Sussex.

This research will involve analysing the map evidence for the extent of the Ha-Ha together with other contemporary ornamental and garden features near the structure. Also, the researcher(s) will need to compare this Ha-Ha with other examples in Sussex.

This research will involve visits to the site in Slindon and may involve visits to other sites in Sussex. It is expected that this research should be completed by June 2004.

### Moot Mound

There is very little evidence for Anglo-Saxon (early Middle Age) occupation on the Slindon Estate, with one of the sites being a Bronze Age barrow which has been altered for use as a Moot Mound.

Whilst the barrow has been surveyed and recorded a piece of research needs to be undertaken to:

- a) Investigate the existence of the lines of communications to the Anglo-Saxon settlements associated with the Moot Mound.
- b) Gather information on other Moot Mounds on the South Downs (Hampshire and other parts of Sussex) and compare with the one at Slindon.

Again, it is expected that this research will be completed by June 2004.

As per the other piece of research, this will entail visits to the site and possibly other Moot Mounds.

Own transport is essential as research will entail visits to Slindon, WSRO at Chichester, ESRO at Lewes and possibly other places in Hampshire and Sussex.

If you are interested in being involved in the above, please contact Gill Turner.

## Excavations at Ropetackle, Shoreham-By-Sea

The historic town of Shoreham-by-Sea, has until recently seen surprisingly little archaeological work. However, in the last couple of years archaeologists have been busy at a number of locations in the town, including John Street and Middle Street, and more recently with building recording and excavation at The Marlipins. This increased level of activity culminated in the first large-scale excavation in the town's history.

A team from Archaeology South-East spent the first five months of 2003 excavating at the Ropetackle site at the west end of the High Street, on the banks of the River Adur. Prehistoric, Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval material was recovered during the excavation, (which was aided and abetted by miraculously good weather).

After a lengthy history of well-publicised failed development projects, planning permission had eventually been given for the redevelopment of the site. Even before plans were finalised, an archaeological evaluation was carried out in October 2000. Despite the severe flooding of parts of the county at the time, the work uncovered a number of medieval and post-medieval features containing large assemblages of pottery, animal bone, building material and clay pipes.

Detailed large-scale excavation at the site began this year in advance of the much-awaited development. Following the mechanical removal of deep deposits of modern material in two large areas either side of Little High Street, a range of archaeological features were discovered including post-holes, ditches, gullies, wells, pits and cess-pits, as well as limited evidence of building activity. Provisional dating of the recovered pottery suggests the following phases of activity at the site:



*Close-up view of aquamanile (before reunion with his lost leg!!)*

### *Prehistoric and Romano-British Remains*

A background scatter of struck flint and fire-cracked flint recovered from later deposits suggests prehistoric activity in the vicinity, although no definitely proven prehistoric features were found. There was clearer evidence of Late Iron Age/Romano-British occupation at the site, with a ditch and a number of small pits containing Romano-British pottery, concentrated to the north of Little High Street. Residual pottery from the period was also found in a number of later features.



*Excavation in Progress*

### *Medieval Remains*

The vast majority of the excavated features date from the medieval period with large assemblages of pottery recovered from deep rubbish pits and cess-pits. Significant assemblages of animal and fish bone were also retrieved, in addition to shell, metalwork, building materials (including a number of chimney pots), stone anchor weights and a variety of small finds, including buckles and bone needles. Provisional dating suggests most of the material dates from the 13th and 14th century.

Of particular interest was a large collection of artefacts and well-preserved environmental evidence from a well located to the south of Little High Street. The impressive pottery assemblage including an almost complete *aquamanile*, or water jug used for hand washing before meals, only the third known example of this type of artefact to be found in Sussex. The green-glazed jug was in the shape of a ram, complete with face, eyes, horns, legs, body and a tail. One of the legs had been snapped off in antiquity, but was recovered from further down in the well itself, leaving the jug complete except for part of one of the horns. Again, initial analysis suggests a 13th to 14th century date.

A small number of other near-complete medieval vessels were found including fine green-glazed jugs, and coarser cooking pots and storage jars discarded into rubbish pits. Heavier domestic objects such as quernstones (including imported German lava examples) and pieces of at least one mortar were also recovered.

### *Post-Medieval Remains*

The site produced a range of post-medieval remains including large assemblages of post-medieval pottery, a particularly eye-catching collection of clay pipes and other artefacts recovered from wells, pits and a row of privies located in the former back yards of houses fronting onto the north side of Little High Street. An unexpected bonus was the presence of reused finely-carved medieval masonry in one of these structures. The surviving remains of a number of demolished post-medieval buildings were also recorded on both sides of the road. Away from the street frontage, a buried timber structure provisionally identified as a saw pit was excavated and recorded, with samples taken for possible dating by dendrochronology. Other post-medieval remains included a World War II air raid shelter and part of a contemporary gas mask.



*Post-Excavation Work*

A programme of post-excavation analysis is currently being undertaken. Particular attention will be paid to the huge assemblage of pottery from the site (more than 18,000 sherds were recovered during the evaluation and excavation phases combined), as well as to the fine collection of animal and fish bone, and to the excellent environmental evidence recovered from the site. The results will be fully published in due course.

*Acknowledgements*

The fieldwork and on-going post-excavation work has been funded by the developers, the South East England Development Agency. The author would also like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting and John Mills, Archaeological Officer, West Sussex County Council for their respective help. And of course, thanks are due to the evaluation and excavation teams without whom these pages would be blank.



*Aquamanile in situ before lifting*

Simon Stevens

Senior Field Officer Archaeology South-East

## Marlipins Update

Building work on site at Marlipins is progressing well, in the capable hands of Bramber Construction Ltd of Shoreham. It is good to have a local firm and they are certainly producing a very good quality structure. The building is now watertight and the electricians have moved in. Those who remember Marlipins in the old days may find it hard to imagine that the new building will have underfloor heating which will make a big difference. New lighting is being installed, to enable us to pick out some of the finer points of interest in the old building and we shall feature it as our biggest artefact in the displays. David Martin's architectural survey in conjunction with the dendrochronology results, have made us much more aware of the history of Marlipins and Gabor Thomas' excavations added greatly to our knowledge of medieval Shoreham. They can be seen in detail on

[www.sussexpast.co.uk/marlipins](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/marlipins).

These along with the work at Ropetackle and the two churches have made a big difference to what we know about the early days of New Shoreham and this will be reflected in the new display. Work on the displays is continuing, with a team of Marlipins volunteers helping the increasingly harassed curator and liaising with the design firm Concepts and Innovations of Lavant. Again it is a pleasure to be using a West Sussex firm with an innovative approach to the challenges of bringing out the best in the collections and their setting. The Shoreham Society are closely involved too, as are representatives from Adur District Council, so although the site is one of the treasures of the Sussex Archaeological Society, it is also very much part of the local community.

When Marlipins opens in time for next season, there will be four galleries, instead of three as in the past. The upper floor of the new annexe will be for temporary exhibitions and we have several planned for 2004, from photography

through art to gardening. Downstairs in the old building, the visitor will come face to face with our maritime past as facets of Shoreham's history story as a harbour are explored in detail. This will lead on to a new archaeology gallery, displaying a range of material from our Bronze Age skeleton to the new medieval finds. St Mary de Haura celebrates its 900th anniversary this year, a mere youngster compared to St Nicolas in Old Shoreham, but some interesting work has been done there this summer, including a geophysical survey in the churchyard which located traces of a previously unknown north porch for the original much larger church.

This can be seen on their website,  
[www.stmarydehaura.org.uk/archaeology.html](http://www.stmarydehaura.org.uk/archaeology.html)

Upstairs we come closer to our own time, with themes from Adur's more recent past, including agriculture, the Beach, early film making, wartime and domestic life. As usual, we are trying to cram a quart into a pint pot as there is plenty to display in a restricted area, but there will be more background information available to help people with enquiries.

All being well, the museum will open to the public on 1<sup>st</sup> May next year and will remain open for the usual season, Tuesdays to Saturdays, 10.30 - 16.30, up to the end of September. We hope that the new Marlipins will be able to make a significant contribution to the archaeology and history of Sussex. Come and see for yourself!

Between now and then there is such to be done, not least basic decoration and cleaning in the old building, so that it is not shown up by its smart new neighbour.

Further information is available from Helen Poole, Senior Museums Officer, either at Marlipins Museum: or on [zmoich@sussexpast.co.uk](mailto:zmoich@sussexpast.co.uk)

Helen Poole

## At Your Convenience Or Where and when you could go.

(A warning—this is not for those who are easily embarrassed by basic facts of life!)

The City of York is a fine and interesting place, with its Cathedral, Viking Exhibition, Castle, Museums and Medieval Streets. It has now added another attraction for visitors—A Historic Toilet Tour. Two splendid lecturers conduct groups round the ancient city and can enlighten you on some very basic historical facts [including one possible Biblical fact that cannot be repeated in print], reminding you that the first people who considered basic public hygiene were the Romans.

We are indebted to them for many things, one of which used to be our symbols for writing money—*£-libra*, *s-solidus*, *d-denari*: otherwise pounds, shillings and pence. The Romans had Public Conveniences complete with flushing water systems in large towns and army forts. There are well known examples at Housesteads and in Ephesus. The Emperor Vespasian found that there was money to be made from public lavatories and put a tax on urinals. To use them you had to “spend a penny”—1 d. He later ordered that urine should be collected from these conveniences and sold to tanners! They also built sewers to take waste water away.

After the Romans, people reverted to using cess pits, simple holes dug in any piece of ground, which frequently contaminated water supplies. By Norman times the monasteries understood the need for proper hygiene and drains. They built where there was a proper supply of fresh water, had “Lavatoriums” for washing themselves, and “Reredorters” for the toilet purposes with flushing drains. The lords in castles were not so well cared for. The “Garderobes” usually emptied into the moat, or into a pit that had to be periodically cleaned out. There was a special person in the lord’s household called the Gong Farmer, whose job was to keep all the garderobes clear. This system lasted a very long time, and the huge “Privy” block at

Hampton Court with its elaborate system of tunnels for maintenance has recently been excavated. For ordinary folk in towns, everything was thrown into the street. London got a fresh water supply for the rich in the 13C but sewers came much later. Some houses began to have garderobes and there was a system of “Night soil men” who removed the residues.

Some cities did have public facilities—of a kind. York had a Privy or “Jakes” under an arch below the Maison Dieu on the end of the Ouse Bridge. London had 3 Privies under bridges in the same century. By 1544 the one in York even had a female attendant to look after it. By the 17C Councils began to provide privies for the labourers but it soon became obvious that this was not quite enough, and “Houses of ease” or “Sugar Houses” were built. These were of course for men only, no ladies were ever supposed to need such facilities!

By Victorian times it had become obvious that something was needed for travellers, and for “Gentlemen”. Various public urinals were constructed, one in York of a type known as a “Vespasienne”, but there were often objections to their provision by members of the public. Ladies were still ignored, and at this time “Tea Rooms” became popular, because ladies could visit them and both refresh and relieve themselves in respectable surroundings. It wasn’t until the 1890’s that proper provision began to be considered and the first conveniences for ladies were provided. Things got better all through the first half of the 20C and life generally became more convenient. Unfortunately during the last 10 years many facilities have gone again, victims of vandalism and economies, so when the need is felt, it may be much more difficult to find a solution—where to go has gone.

Anne Induni

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## West Chiltington

This village is two-centred. The heart of the village lies around the church which is late 11th or early 12th century, although a church was listed in Domesday. Many of the houses in The Street are 16th or 17th century. The Stone House and the Old School were built in the 1870’s to replace the previous National School, and ceased being the School and School Master’s house only in the 1970’s when the new building in Fast Street was opened. A little museum is housed in the Parish Reading Room just downhill from the church and nearby there is a grass area opposite 1 Hayling Cottage which was a pond until filled in forty years ago. The Queen’s Mead and the Elephant and Castle provide refreshment, whilst the Church Hall and Youth Hall are venues for entertainment in this part of the village.

During the 20th century the main settlement area of West Chiltington shifted to the south, and a much larger area of housing has grown up on what used to be commonland or “The Lord’s Waste”. Geologically this land is Folkestone Beds of the Lower Greensand and not nearly as productive as the Hythe Reds which are still farmland. In 1868 by private enclosure act the commonlands of the manors, Chiltington Manor and Nyetimber Manor, were enclosed and every farmer or cottager with grazing rights on the heathland was allocated a certain amount of land to be enclosed. Very quickly a number of houses, mostly semi-detached cottages, were built, then some slightly superior dwellings, soon to be occupied by returning First World War veterans.

During the 1930's along the southern and eastern edges of the parish on land formerly belonging to Roundabout Farm, an enterprising developer called Reginald Fairfax Wells designed and built picturesque thatched cottages on what was still open heathland though soon the gardens were invaded by pine trees and bracken. These "Wells" cottages with their eyebrow dormer windows, brick porches and latched doors, were originally designed as weekend cottages but soon become family homes. Part of the common had been an army camp in WWII, with Canadian troops posted here during training manoeuvres on the Downs. This was built over from 1966 onwards and by 1999 the density of housing on the Common was increasing rapidly with "back-garden" infilling developments of three to five house cul-de-sacs.

However open farmland still survives between the old village and the newly developed Common. This farmland, centred on Churchfield Farm, still preserves something of the open appearance it may have had in medieval times. In 1990 much of the areas was unfenced, until the need to keep dogs out of Pick-Your-Own fruit fields prompted wire fencing. Strawberries, asparagus and raspberries flourished until 2001, when the farm was sown to grass for turf sales. Old Sales Particulars record that soft fruit and root crops such as turnips and mangolds were grown here in 1930's. Blackcurrants for Ribena were grown in one field which now hosts a vineyard. North of the village the highly productive Hythe beds continue northwards to the Greensand escarpment. From the footpath near Knowe Top there are outstanding views of the South Downs and closer to Woodshill farm the views extend across the Weald to the North Downs.

West Chiltington parish extended from the Common in the south right up to Coneyhurst in the north. On the Weald medieval settlement took the form of woodland pasture outliers used by settlements down on the Sussex Coastal plain, it was never densely settled or cultivated and even in the last century scrubby areas were being brought into cultivation after periods of abandonment. On the Greensand agriculture and settlement has been intensive and long lasting. Domesday book records Nyetimber Manor and Chiltington Manor both in the new administrative Rape of Arundel and "the other part of Chiltington" as being in the new division The Rape of William de Braose (Bramber).

Recent research is investigating the possibility that these three estates recorded in 1086 may have survived as individual properties until late 19th/early 20th century. At that time in the parish there were three large estates being (1) Nyetimber (owned by the Goring family of Highden), (2) West Chiltington (owned by Lord Abergavenny, the Nevills of Eridge) and (3) the other part of West

Chiltington which was owned by the Curzon family of Parham. The three West Chiltington estates were sold in 1888, 1930 and 1898 respectively. No great house was ever built in this parish and yeoman farmers administered the parish affairs. The Abergavenny estate was run on traditional lines from 1535--1930 and even in the early 20th century the Custom of the Manor was practised, with copyhold tenure, quit-rent and heriot, and the custom of Borough English (youngest child inherits).

The manorial records help us to identify the agricultural holdings. We can demonstrate that most of the hedges visible today near the old village are on four-hundred-year-old boundaries. This was a village where any medieval Common Field system must have been enclosed or radically reduced by at least the 16th century.

Work by the late Margaret Holt identified some 57 timber framed buildings surviving (at least partially) across the parish in both Greensand and Wealden areas. Despite the massive influx of people on the Common the historic legacy in this parish is still apparent.

One route for a walk of some two hours duration is suggested on the map, but alternative public footpaths can be followed using the map Explorer 121: (formerly Sheets TQ 01/11 & TQ 02/12 (Pathfinder 1287 & 1267).

Starting from the Village Hall/Recreation Ground car park, take the footpath running towards "Stream Farm" but, on entering the lane, turn east along Stream Lane and north up the quiet country lane called Gay Street. Take the public footpath past Lower Jordans Farm and Nyetimber Farm, then north-east to Woodshill Farm on the Greensand scarp, then down on to the road for a few metres (just off map 121) and then the footpath through farm buildings on the east side of the road. In the field beyond the farm buildings at the junction of two footpaths, turn south and climb up the hill again, past Quarry Farm stables and proceed gently downhill, past "Knowe Top", a route with outstanding views.

This footpath passes Hatches Farm and emerges onto Fast Street near "Naldretts" at beautiful timber-framed "hall house" of medieval date, with one surviving barn adjacent. Turn west to the village cross-roads. In the village you may explore the Church before finding the footpath at the end of the graveyard which takes you through the old Glebeland and modern turf pasture back to Mill Lane, nearly opposite the Rec. If coming out at the Windmill, be very careful on the main road through the village and walk on the western side of the road (the outside of the bend.) An alternative footpath comes out further south.

Caroline Wells



## Friends of Thornborough

Friends of Thornborough was formed three years ago by a group of local people concerned about the impact of quarrying on the Thornborough Henges. Since then those concerns have been proved correct as the ongoing quarrying has revealed and destroyed significant quantities of historically important evidence directly related to these monuments.

It is clear that the henges sit in a wider landscape - marked out by alignments of wooden posts, the remains of which exist in the form of pits. Other evidence such as burials and ring ditches were also placed here. Many of these are being destroyed NOW at the Nosterfield quarry, and Tarmac, the quarry operator is looking to extend this quarry into other archaeologically sensitive areas.

However, it is not just the surrounding area that is under threat. Thornborough is a naturally wet environment, this is ideal for the preservation of buried archaeology. The quarrying is dramatically lowering the water table on Thornborough Moor, this means that any archaeology within the area of the henges will be decaying at an increased rate of up to one hundred times of that previously seen.

### What is a Henge?

Henges were built by our late Neolithic and Bronze Age forebears. They comprise huge circular mounds, with one or two entrances, and an inner ditch. In some cases, as at Thornborough, an outer ditch was also created. The exact purpose of henges is not known, although their relationship to burials is well testified and as a result a ritual purpose is commonly accepted. Many believe that these great monuments were the locations of regular spiritual gatherings related to the changing seasons. In the case of Thornborough, recent work has identified a close relationship with the astronomical alignment of Orion's Belt.

### The Thornborough Henges

Early in the Neolithic and Bronze Age, Thornborough became an area of great religious focus. An enormous sacred complex was built comprising henges, burial mounds and post alignments. Each of the three Thornborough Circles has a massive bank, originally 15-20ft high and a diameter of about 800ft. Excavation has shown that when first built each bank may have been coated with gypsum crystals in order to make them "gleaming" white.

Other features included at least one ceremonial avenue, or cursus, which is over a mile in length and 100ft wide. Additionally, there were nine burial mounds. Two of these were linked by a long alignment of timber posts. At least seven other post alignments have been identified at the henges.

### Destruction by Quarrying

The area in the immediate vicinity of Thornborough is being quarried for gravel. This has destroyed a number of archaeological features. Discussions are now taking place

In addition to the archaeology, the historic landscape that is also at issue here. Less than one hundred years ago these henges were untouched by quarrying and were surrounded by pasture - beautiful monuments in a beautiful setting. The quarry if continued, will leave the henges as islands surrounded by lake and marsh, completely out of keeping with the thoughts of the original builders.

North Yorkshire County Council have opened a landfill waste disposal site next to the central henge - is this the way to protect our most important ancient site?

Furthermore, the quarrying appears to have removed natural flooding controls in the area. Thornborough village has seen an unprecedented number of floods in recent years.

We believe this shows a total disregard for the heritage that is represented by the henges, and for the welfare of local people. The Friends of Thornborough have the support of over 90% of locals directly affected by the quarrying and now seek to widen the level of support for the campaign. Please help us.

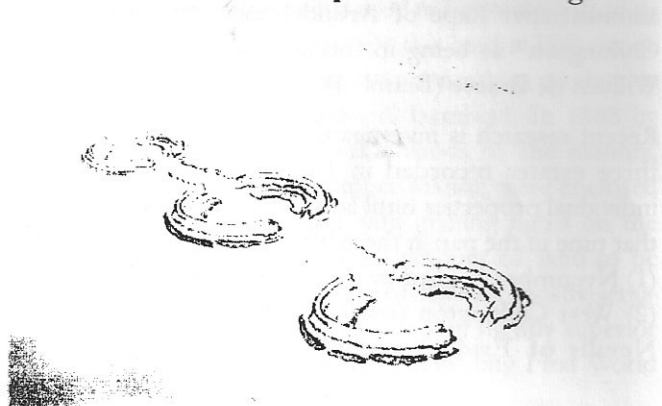
[www.friendsofthornborough.org](http://www.friendsofthornborough.org)

with a view to extending this quarrying to totally surround the henges. This will destroy any archaeology that remains and leave a patchwork of lakes surrounding the henges ruining the setting of the henges. A landfill site has been set up next to the impressive central henge. It is these activities that Friends of Thornborough wish to stop. We believe these sites are of international importance. They and their wider environment should be protected for future generations to enjoy.

### Centre Hill Barrow

The monument was 1 8m diameter and 1 m high in 1864 (Lukas 1870). At a *depth of 1.5m from its apex*. Small, unburnt bone fragments were found in the remnants of a wooden coffin aligned north-east to south-west. A 'rudely ornamented jar of coarse earthenware' and an Early Bronze Age flint implement formed on a flake, were associated with the body.

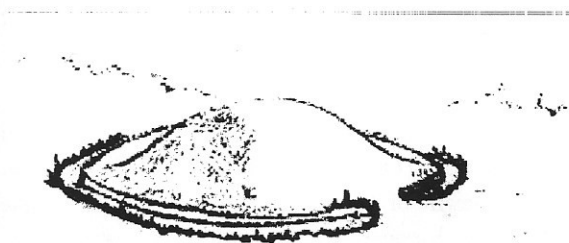
### The Monument Complex at Thornborough



There are a wide range of ancient monuments at Thornborough. The first to appear were the Cursus monuments, which were followed by early burial mounds or barrows, later the three henges appeared, finally the pat or post alignments and other barrows. It is generally agreed that the complex was important for the whole of northern Britain from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age and represents a continuity of culture throughout these periods (2,000 years). This document as a guide to the known remains.

### The Central Henge

This Class IIa henge of the same date as the other henges here, at consists of a circular bank and internal ditch, separated by a substantial berm, and a narrower and segmentary external ditch. Entrances are aligned NW-SE. The inner ditch is 1.05m deep and is c. 25m wide. The bank is up to 4.5m tall and 18m wide at the west side of the south entrance. The diameter is 240 - 250m. A survey across the internal southern entrance established the presence of a pat of c. 5m diameter: a linear ditch ran through the entrance from this pat for over 25m.



This large round barrow is of a Bronze Age date and lies on a slight ridge on the axis between the Central and Southern Henges.

### Barrow to the south-west of the southern double pit alignment

This round barrow is of a Bronze Age date and is known from aerial photographs only.

There are also two round barrows to the south of the southern henge of a probable Bronze Age date which are known only from aerial photographs.

### Double Ditched Barrow to the south-east of the Southern Henge

This barrow is of a Neolithic date and has two concentric ditches. There is also an associated pat concentration. Ploughing had reduced the monument to 30.5m diameter and 1.5m high by 1952. In 1997 Grimston Ware pottery sherds were found in its inner ditch.

### Pit Alignments related to the Southern Henge

The first single pat alignment is to the south of the henge and possibly of Neolithic-Bronze Age-Iron Age date and is seen in aerial photographs. A 102m length of 13 pats appears to become a continuous ditch feature that runs for a further 104m to the east. The alignment cuts across the continuation of the henge axis.

The second single pat alignment is to the east of the henge and is a shallow arc of 31 pats 192m long, possibly of Neolithic-Bronze Age-Iron Age and is known from aerial photographs. A shallow arc of 31 pats running for 192m.

### Other Possible Cursus monuments

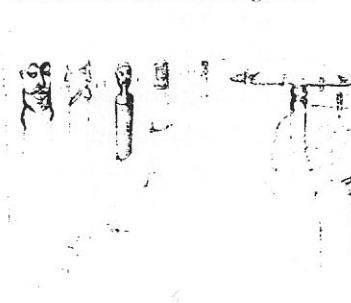
One possible cursus of the early Neolithic period appears on aerial photographs to the east of the Northern Henge. Surviving for a length of 240m and 72m wide, the feature has a squared terminal immediately south-east of the Northern Double Pat Alignment. Geophysics was inconclusive, but located a possible rang ditch. A further possible cursus may be of Neolithic date as located close to Upland Farm, as of two parallel ditches c. 96m long and 40m wide. It may be related with nearby rectilinear enclosures and trackways.

### The Northern Henge

This Class IIa henge, has two entrances and an outer as well as inner ditch. It was built at the same time as the other two henges - the later Neolithic period and is the best preserved of the three giant henges of Thornborough. The first phase of henge building saw the creation of the outer ditch, which is narrow and segmented and was possibly accompanied by an outer bank built using the soil from the ditch. Entrances are aligned NW-SE. Phase II of construction saw the creation of the central bank, which is now 3m high and 18m wide, with a berm of 12m separating it and the inner ditch, which is c. 20m wide. The outer bank may have been reduced to build the inner one.



The Southern Double Pit Alignment



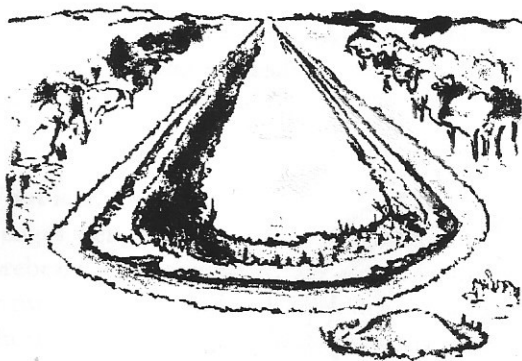
This Cursus is of the early Neolithic period and was over 1.2km long and 43m wide. It is seen as a cropmark. The cursus was marked by a ditch, which was 2.1-2.7m wide and 0.6-0.9m deep. A stone cist containing a crouched inhumation with its head to the terminal was discovered about 3.5m from the terminal end. At the time of building, the area was wooded. Evidence suggests that during building the prep was in a dry open environment. Large quantities of gypsum found suggest that the bank had been coated with it. The outer ditch is a shallow V-shape, it was 4.7-6.9m wide across its top, with a depth 1.0-1.3m. An outer bank survives to a height of 0.25m.

and p width of c. 5m. 13 small postholes lay beneath the bank, possibly showing the line of a previous wooden circle. Within the outer ditch was p large hollow, associated with four substantial post holes, and 59 smaller postholes of 0.26-0.78m dia. and 0.31-0.58m deep. This suggests that at some point the henge was circled with a large number of posts.

### The Southern Henge

This henge has a circular bank and internal ditch, separated by a substantial berm, and a narrower and segmentary outer ditch. The entrances run NW-SE. The inner ditch survives to p maximum depth of 0.6m and is c. 16m wide. The bank survives to a height of 1.8m and width of 2m. The outer ditch survives as an earthwork to p depth of 0.25m to the north. The diameter of the monument is 240-250m. The western side of the outer ditch close to the entrance possibly terminated at its southern end in a causeway with four stake holes.

### The Central Cursus



### The Oval Enclosure

'This long mortuary enclosure of the early Neolithic period is visible as a sub-oval cropmark to the east of the Central Cursus. This is a ditched enclosure 17m north-south by 25m east-west. The ditches were U-shaped in profile, 2.5m wide and between 0.6 and 0.75m deep. The ditch appears to be segmented p its north-west corner. It also had a 2m wide bank

### The Northern Henge Pit Alignments

A double pit alignment of the later Neolithic-early Bronze Age runs south-west of the henge eastern side to north-east for 132m. The pits are c 9 to 10m apart, pits every 1 m.

A single row of pits, 7.5-11 m apart and 2.5-4m dip, runs east from the henge. Three single Pit alignments were also run towards the Northern Henge from Nosterfield quarry, north west of Nosterfield. In this field there were several ring ditches and other pit alignments.

'This later Neolithic-early Bronze Age double pit alignment was an important part of ancient Thornborough. It is 35m long, with pits every 5m. These were probably filled with wooden posts. This "avenue" joined two barrows and also crossed the henge entrance alignment. The rows of the posts where c. 1m apart. At the northern end pre two, closely set, parallel lines of nine trenches, each about 3m long, 80m north-east pre two further large pits. Excavation uncovered 88 pits, these varied in size from 0.75m diameter and 0.35m deep to 4m diameter and 1.8m deep. The existence of post-pipes and stone packing suggested that most contained post settings. There was a gap of c 3m in the eastern line of pits, where it passed closest to the northern entrance of the Southern Henge. One of the excavated pits contained the upper half of an inverted Deverel-Rimbury vessel, another three sherds of Collared Urn. Carbon dating returned an oldest date of approx. 1750 B.C.

### The Three Hills Barrow Group

'These three barrows pre of the Bronze Age, the northern one has been destroyed by ploughing. In 1864 it had a diameter of 18m and p height of 0.3m. In 1864 two 'jars of coarse earthenware' were discovered, these held the cremated bones of an adult and p child. Beneath these 'jars' two clay layers sealed p heat affected, clay lined pit, 0.5m diameter and 0.3m deep, which contained charcoal and human bone.

The central round barrow has also been destroyed by ploughing and is recorded as having similar size and finds as the northern barrow.

The southern round barrow is larger, having p diameter of 24m and a height of 1 m in 1864. A quantity of burnt bone and charcoal was discovered 0.2m from the apex and a large collection of cobbles and a fragment of burnt bone 0.6m beneath.

### Barrow to the west of the Central Henge

This round barrow is of the Bronze Age and was destroyed by quarrying with no record.

## Concretions

Another tale of concrete structures from WW2. Sailing up – and down – the Thames on the Waverley from Tilbury to the Pool of London I spotted some concrete barges.

For the uninitiated these were constructed during the war, as steel was wanted for other duties. They were of course steel reinforced, but the quantity of steel used was minimal. They were difficult to repair if holed by enemy action (or clumsy handlers), so were never really popular after the war.

The ones I saw were on the North bank in the area of the landfill site East of Woolwich. I know of one other which

was used to fill a breach in the sea wall at Swanscombe after the floods of 1953. I wonder whether if there are any preserved as part of the present cult for preservation of WW2 artifacts. Does anyone want to preserve one or two?

As a tail piece – in Bristol in October I spotted two concrete pontoons being used by the local Sea Scouts. These would presumably be of the same vintage. If you have further knowledge or wish to correct any errors please contact me.

Roy Plummer



## The Chained Library in Wimborne Minster

A visit to the chained library in Wimborne Minster was interesting not just to see the books and ponder upon the ease which we now obtain books and other publications. The lady attendant, wearing white cotton gloves for turning pages, was talking to another visitor and explaining that the coins displayed on the top of one cabinet were not coins of the realm. She explained that these were used to buy items say at the milliners who would only accept her (or his) own coins. A bureau de change at the end of the street was available for exchanging coins.

I waited until we were alone and queried this explanation saying that the version I was familiar with was that the coins were struck to accommodate the public need for small change and that in general local traders would accept each other's coins which were then exchanged back to the originators, presumably being done at everyone's convenience. She could only say that she repeated what she had been told.

I then spoke to Ron Kerridge, many of you may remember his excellent talks on coins and tokens. What follows is my recollection of that conversation. He told me that in Broadwater since there were only a few traders they were happy to accept each other's coins (or more strictly – tokens, one has to be careful not to be seen to be counterfeiting). However Ron points out that in a larger area, such as London, the traders would not know each other that well if more than a street or so apart. So the idea of a bureau de change is not so far out as I thought. Ron then reinforced the point by saying there was a place in London known as Exchange Alley where coins could be exchanged. Presumably some small charge was made – to the customer not the trader is my guess. As for Wimbourne his records show that a Mr Williamson noted in 1880 that there were 13 known issuers of tokens, some going back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This number makes it unlikely that they all knew each other, whilst nearby shops would probably accept each other's coins, they would not accept those from farther afield

Roy Plummer

## Summer Outings 2004

9<sup>th</sup> May 2004

### Hengistbury Head and Christchurch.

The archaeological and ecological importance of Hengistbury Head was formally recognised after a detailed archaeological survey (1915) conducted by Mr. Bushe Fox. This survey was conducted as a direct result of the campaigning of a local historian named Herbert Druitt. Druitt had tirelessly sought to protect the Head from the ravages of developers and without his intervention; the Head would have been a total loss.

Hengistbury Head was arguably the premier port for the import of continental goods such as Italian wine in around 100 BC. Some have referred to it as the first truly urban settlement in England. The visit will be fully conducted.

### Christchurch Priory.

Our second visit of the day will be to Christchurch Priory, possibly the first building stood around 634 AD, Saxon in origin, the Norman part being built in 1094 AD, There will be a fully conducted tour of the Priory.

6<sup>th</sup> June 2004.

### Cranbourn Chase, Sixpenny Hanley. The Pitt Rivers Tour.

This will be part two of our first visit to the area with Martin Green, this time we will be making visits

to the sites that Pitt Rivers excavated in the area of Cranbourn Chase, Pitt Rivers (1827-1900) a pioneer of scientific excavation and recording. After a military career, he spent some 25 years excavating a series of prehistoric and Romano-British sites, it is some of these sites that we will be visiting.

The day will end, with a cream tea, this is an optional extra.

4<sup>th</sup> July 2004

### Colchester Castle, and the area around the City.

City of Victory, our tour will take us in and around the City of Colchester, Britain's first Roman town. The visit will be fully guided throughout.

8<sup>th</sup> August 2004

### The Peat Moors Centre, Sweet Track and Iron Age Centre,

We will be visiting two sites of interest, The Lake Village with the reconstruction of the famous Sweet Track, and the reconstruction of Iron Age Huts, The second visit will be to the Glastonbury Lake Village Museum, which is located in the Triunfal building in Glastonbury, this covers the finds from the excavations in and around the Lake Village site, and offers a insight to Iron age life. Both sites will have guides.

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## Membership

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

## Journal

**All contributions to the newsletter are very welcome**

Please send these to arrive with the Secretary  
by the 1st March for the next edition

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

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