Worthing Archaeological Society

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Contents

Editorial

Welcome to this edition of our journal, in this edition I have tried to cover a varied cross section of articles, from the Americas to Wales. I have also carried on with the theme of burial and religion, one or two of the subjects may prove to be a little controversial.

Once again I have more articles than space allows for, in selecting the ones that I have included, I have tried to cover a wide as possible range of subjects, and have not kept to the Sussex area. The reason for this is that at the time of going to press most of the reports from the summer excavations have yet to be written up.

Many of this year's field activities will be covered in the next issue of the Journal late next June.

Most of the outings this year proved popular, but due to lack of interest the last one had to be cancelled, next year's outings have therefore been cut to three. Instead there may be some afternoon conducted walks to local places of interest.

Detailed below are next year's outings, so please book early to avoid disappointment, all outings will be guided throughout.

Rodney Gunner

Coach Outings Summer 2005

This coming Summer there will be **three** Outings

Sunday May 8th
Danebury Hill Fort, Butser Ancient Village

On this visit we will be looking at the Iron Age Hill Fort on Danebury Hill.
A splendidly sited fort, covering 5 hectares. First occupied in the first millennium BC, abandoned about 100 BC.
On our return journey we will be stopping at Butser, to look at the replica Roman Villa recently erected there.
An interesting insight to Roman building techniques.
Our guide will be the Curator, David Allen, of Andover Museum of the Iron Age.

Sunday June 5th
Dorset, Worth

This promises to a very interesting visit to an area of Dorset, renown for Medieval and post Medieval building.
There is the very fine Norman church at Studland, similarly that at Worth Matravers. Worth also boasts one of the finest set of terraced fields anywhere. A unique Norman chapel, which is probably a sea mark.
Plus a group of cliff quarries which have some remarkable early post medieval industrial archaeology including some remarkable graffiti showing ships involved in the stone trade.
Our guide: Gordon Le Pard as seen on the T.V. Wreck Detectives programme.

Sunday August 7th
Winchesea and Rye

This visit to Winchesea will be unusual, the guided tour is called "Above and below the Town of Winchesea" this covers the turbulent history of this interesting Town. The tour will last approximately two and a half hours.
Then we move on to Rye, here you will have time on your own to explore this unique Town.
Do not fail to enjoy a cream tea in one of the many tea houses.

Each outing will cost £13.50
Tickets from Rodney Gunner

Please allow extra for venue admission costs and the cost of tour guides.
Every effort is made to keep these to the minimum.

Prehistoric Religions — Interpretation and Metaphor

A difficult subject in pre-historic archaeology is the designation of a ritual significance to sites and artefacts. The word "ritual" carries with it a mental picture of priests and congregations and we allow these thoughts to enter the picture as we struggle to find meaning. The usual sorts of finds, such as tools, present no such difficulty: an axe of the Neolithic is not that different from an axe of today and there is an unbroken line of evolution of design and types of usage from then until now.

Changes in religion or worldviews must have been more dramatic. The worldview of a Palaeolithic hunter would be different from that of a Neolithic farmer. Both had axes, and although the uses of these axes would have varied somewhat, some of the uses would still have been shared.

With an alleged "ritual" object or site, there is no such evidence of meaning and being faced with no smooth evolutions of function we have to make educated guesses if we are to offer any interpretation at all. Most would prefer not to an attempt an interpretation and there is wisdom in that decision. Most archaeological interpretation is carried out in a more scientific manner and is based on the material evidence of excavations through the contexts of finds.

The problem is that the past is not just about subsistence and provable events, but what we thought about. Our thoughts drive our actions but when these thoughts enter the realms of belief, there is no direct connection to the material as there is in axe design. Instead, what lies between the thought and the material evidence for it is metaphor and that metaphor is dependent on the worldview of the people who have left us the material evidence. We find ourselves going round in circles as we attempt to interpret what we see.

North American archaeology is very much tied into anthropology. I think that the reason for this is that American sites are often those of people whose descendants still live in the area and have a belief system which, although evolved, still retains enough of its earlier characteristics to be of valid concern. Also, contact with such people soon drives home that fact that they look at their world very differently from us. In Europe, there is no such luxury for the prehistoric archaeologist: all that remains of our long dead ancestors within the people is genetic and we cannot translate genes into ideas at all. The prehistoric in North America is not that remote. I live in an area that was settled only just over a hundred years ago and hardly ever visited before that by Europeans. The prehistoric lies just below the surface in the minds of some of the indigenous population.

This often poses a problem to these people: being dragged rather suddenly into the modern world is not easy and the transition, combined with the attitudes of one group towards the other, has resulted in many terrible effects. There is often poverty and feeling of not belonging to the "white man's world". Such feelings sometimes lead to alcoholism and suicide. Many have made the transition well, but have lost much of their original identity as a result. A few have tried to retain many of their earlier traditions but often become rather self conscious about sharing these with us.

I remember one such incident when Willy Big Bull, a Blood Indian, came to town with his latest paintings. He had achieved a decent living as an artist and his paintings blended western styles with native iconography. He exhibited at a gallery owned by my friend Marion. He was always well dressed, in a western casual manner: His only obvious connection to his culture from his appearance was his long braids. We talked as we looked at his latest paintings and he mentioned that his daughter had come down with the flu. Marion suggested that he bring her up to town and that her own doctor, she was sure, would be able to see the girl. He politely refused. We tried to talk him into it but he still kept politely refusing. After a while, seeing that neither Marion nor I were backing down and were alarmed about the welfare of his daughter, he said "my wife is taking her to the old woman". We both backed off at that point! Even though he was among friends, he did not want to admit the strength of his connection to his own culture.

While we were not told what this visit "to the old woman" would entail, and perhaps even Willy was not entirely sure, we might imagine that a combination of ritual and native herbal medicines would have been used. In this effort to understand what would have happened, I have already filtered the event through my own cultural background: by separating the concepts of herbal medicine and ritual. I have assigned two methods. In the mind of that old woman this separation likely did not take place. She would simply "cure" the young girl.

The form of this cure is still with us: scientific tests of drugs often involved the use of a placebo. It is known that the expectation of being cured can affect the experiment. Many patients will essentially get better because they expect to do so. There is a myth involved here and by myth I do not mean the modern equation of the term with "misconception", I mean a real myth that comes out of the world view of our modern culture. We are used to saying such things as "We now know how to split the atom". This is not exactly true. It would be better to say; "Some people know how to split the atom". No individual can claim to be a repository for all scientific knowledge and we have mythologised the scientists and identified ourselves with them.

A mythic hero embodies a set of characteristics and can be identified by his attributes: Hercules carries a club and a lion's skin so when we see a Roman statuette with these attributes we can safely identify it as Hercules. The modern doctor is another sort of hero. His or her attributes can be a white lab coat, a stethoscope around the neck or even

just a prescription pad. We are confident in the scientific method and we know that everything that the doctor does is in accordance with that method.

As members of modern society, we think of the placebo effect as a problem in the development of new drugs. We make no immediate connection between a doctor and a Stone Age shaman. This is not to say that either the doctor or the shaman should be called a "faith healer", but we are led to the conclusion that both are perhaps a little closer than we would care to admit. A very successful doctor might prescribe some medicine saying; "This will fix you up!" A less successful doctor might prescribe the same medicine saying, "In 45% of cases, this drug has proved very effective." The second doctor is being more scientific, but the patients of the first doctor will likely do better.

We share a worldview where the doctor is a part of the scientific community and where drugs are properly tested. We do not consider that this worldview has anything to do with the success of medical treatment. Even though we are familiar with the placebo effect, we do not choose to think about it when we visit the doctor and we certainly do not attempt to categorise the experience.

The shaman's rattle or drum, the burning of sweetgrass, the incantations or prayers and the administering of herbal medicines are all part of the ritual just as our visit to the doctor's office is another ritual. We do not analyse our visit and the Blood Indian girl would not analyse her visit either.

Recently, there has been disagreement in the worldviews of modern archaeologists and the indigenous N. American peoples. They believe that they "have always been there" and some modern archaeologists say that they arrived by crossing the Bering Strait or by following the edges of the northern ice sheet.

The real problem is in the choice of metaphors. We see the indigenous person as a biological entity and think of genetics. We tend to separate ourselves from the environment. The indigenous N. Americans see themselves as part of their current environment and, as such, they have indeed been nowhere else.

When we see evidence of ritual, we tend to divorce it from the rest of the assemblage. If, instead, we try to imagine the worldview of these ancient people, and see how this object might fit into that view, then we might understand it better. A good place to start is in the knowledge that in some ways we are not that different: we just have a different set of metaphors.

John Hooker

Book Review

John Henry Pull and Shepherds, Crowns
Compiled and Edited by Anthony Brook.

West Sussex Geological Society
Occasional Publication No 3,
July 2003.

We have probably all found "shepherds" Crowns on the chalk Downs or seen examples on windowsills, but I was surprised to find that John Pull had written on them so extensively. By happenstance, Anthony Brook was given a file containing unpublished essays and drawings by John Pull on "shepherds crowns"-in fact fossil echinoids – and other original documents. A year later he published these in the West Sussex Geological Societies occasional publication No.3 July 2003. The publication includes a forward by Dr.Miles Russell of Bournemouth University-author of " Rough Quarries, Rocks and Hill: John Pull and the Neolithic Flint Mines of Sussex " summararizing his immense contribution to archaeology in our area.

Dr. Sally White has contributed personal, biographical details of this "most loveable character "first published in Sussex Past and Present, December 1995.During the 1920sand 1930s, John Pull was justifiably famous as one of the premier amateur archaeologist in Britain. As director of excavations at the local, but nationally very important, Neolithic flint – mine sites of Cissbury, Church Hill and Blackpatch, he was a true pioneer

There then follows six of John Pulls articles on "shepherds" "crowns "entitled: "Introducing an interesting fossil;" "What they represent "; How they became fossils, by entombment in the chalk; " "How they came to be changed from time fossils to flint ones;"" Their occurrence as symbols in prehistoric graves" and " The survival of belief in the magical virtues in Sussex."

I can do no better than quote Miles Russell's comment in his forward," I am pleased to see that Anthony Brook has been able to examine additional material from Pulls treasure trove of largely unpublished data. That he has succeeded in compiling, critically analyzing and presenting data in such a clear and comprehensive way is as much a tribute to his industry and dedication, as it is to Pulls original source of material. I applaud this, and am gratified to see of the work, as long ignored by the academic community, being docucumented and disseminated.

Worthing Archaeological Society honor John Pulls memory by dedicating their February lecture each year as the John Pull Memorial Lecture.

Joe Barrow.

Copies of the book can be ordered from Anthony Brook at the February Lecture.

Palaeolithic Evidence in the Lavant Valley: Aarchaeological Significance and Geological Context

Overview of a dissertation by Pat Jones

For some time the areas along the line of the Goodwood/ Slindon Raised Beach, which was first recognised by Prestwich (Prestwich 1859), have been extensively investigated. This has in recent time has been mainly conducted by members of the Boxgrove Mapping Project, funded by English Heritage in conjunction with UCL (Roberts and Pope in prep.). The raised beach at Boxgrove and Slindon has been mapped, and others areas investigated by excavation and boreholing. The Lavant Valley however, has received little attention in recent years since Woodcocks 'The Lower and middle Palaeolithic periods in Sussex.' (Woodcock 1981). Therefore the purpose of this dissertation was to redress this imbalance, and to establish any relationship between the Goodwood/Slindon Raised Beach and the River Lavant.

To this end, a fieldwalk was arranged in a field below the 40m OD contour line, in order to establish if any material had eroded from the raised beach. Members of Worthing Archaeological Society's Field Unit assisted with the fieldwalk, and flint recognition and surveying expertise was also provided. It was quickly established that the distance from the beach would be too great to find *in-situ* artefacts, but artefacts may have eroded downslope. Due to the nature of the investigation only worked flints were collected, but Roman pottery was noted in the field. A few Palaeolithic implements and some late Prehistoric material, mainly Neolithic, were discovered. The greatest distribution of Neolithic flints was collected from the eastern section of the field. This may be due to its proximity to the River Lavant, and the utilization of this area of the floodplain by Hominids in Prehistory.

Another avenue explored was the distribution of chatter-marked beach pebbles, which are typical of raised beach material. These were plotted onto a map of the field, and most of them were founding a linear pattern along rows I, J and K. This roughly followed the line of a Roman road, and was thought to be quarried material utilized in its construction. Another cluster of these pebbles in row L were at the western end of the field, immediately downslope from the raised beach. This indicates that these pebbles eroded out of the beach and travelled downslope

During this fieldwork, and following research at the Chichester District Museum on a large collection of artefacts from Lavant Parish, it became evident that these artefacts had been mistakenly identified as originating from an area close to the fieldwalk. (Woodcock 1981). This was Sheepwash Lane, and it was not a feasible findspot because;

It was not near to the raised beach and had nowhere for the 58 handaxes to have eroded from.

Some of the artefacts were very fresh and wouldn't have remained so in such a close proximity to the River Lavant.

Obscure descriptions of the find spots by the collector did not match the suggested area.

Another collector plotted other artefacts onto maps in 1914, and none were found in the area where the river incised the valley floor (Chichester District Museum 2003).

Therefore, a further aim of the fieldwalk was to assess the impact of the river on the artefacts, if any, and to establish if there was any similarity between these and the artefacts at the museum. If the museum artefacts were from sheepwash lane, also on the river floodplain, a similar assemblage of artefacts may be expected to arise at the fieldwalk at Lavant. This in fact was not the case, as very few Palaeolithic artefacts were found at the field.

The evidence from this fieldwalk combined with research at the museum and record office at Chichester, plus information provided by the Boxgrove mapping project, indicate that if Palaeolithic land-surfaces existed across the Lavant valley they have been dispersed by fluvial activity. The relative absence of Palaeolithic artefacts is most likely due to downcutting through marine deposits by the River Lavant, This would indicate that the artefacts from Chichester District Museum did not originate from the river floodplain

The results of the fieldwalk at Lavant conclude the evidence that the artefacts from the Museum were mislocated in their perceived origin, as little Palaeolithic material and a complete absence of hand-axes was discovered there. If a site at the foot of the dipslope of the Goodwood/Slindon Raised Beach yielded so few Palaeolithic artefacts, it is unlikely that a site at a much lower OD level on the river floodplain, and away from the raised beach, would produce so many.

Further investigations are in progress to discover and map the geology of the Lavant Valley, in conjunction with the Boxgrove mapping project, and to further consider the origin of the artefacts deposited within Chichester Museum and their archaeological context

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News of the Committee

Eric Anderson

Eric has served the Society for many years in varying capacities, mainly as a committee member. Last autumn, after many years, Eric retired from the post of treasurer, continuing on the committee as archivist.

Earlier this year Eric decided to resign from the committee to allow him to step back from as active a role within the society.

Over the years Eric has made many contributions to the Society and will be missed by the committee.

I am confident that you will join me in thanking him for all his efforts and we look forward to his being able to continue to make a contribution to our activities.

Rodney Gunner
Hon. Secretary

Surface Collection Survey of Blackjack Field

Introduction

As part of the fieldwork being carried out on the Slindon Estate by Worthing Archaeological Society on behalf of the National Trust, the Field Unit carried out two surveys on field 15 (Black Jack) in September and October 2001.

These consisted of a 'walk-over' survey and a systematic field walking survey on the Bowl Barrow (NT site 121020) in the north-west corner of the field.

According to Whitfield in 1994 the barrow had a diameter of 20m and an approximate height of 0.2m with Bronze Age pottery and 'burnt clay' being found on its surface (Whitfield 1994, 99).

For the detailed systematic field walking survey a grid consisting of thirty-six 5 x 5 m squares was used orientated on a north/south baseline. All archaeological material was bagged from each square.

The Finds

Worked Flint

Debitage accounts for 90% of the worked flint with 10% identifiable as implements.

Worked Flint

		Qty	*%*
Debitage	*Hard-Hammer Flakes*	*96*	*65%*
	Soft-Hammer Flakes	*11*	*7%*
	Blades	*6*	*4%*
	Bladelets	*12*	*8%*
	Re-touched Flakes	*7*	*5%*
	Core	*1*	*1%*
Implements		*15*	*10%*
	Total	***148***	***100%***

Debitage

Hard-hammer struck flakes make up 65% of the worked flint. The majority of these are mainly short and broad with large platforms and bulbs and a large proportion have hinge fractures.

Soft-hammer flakes together with the blades and bladelets account for 19% of the worked flint. The blades, comprising four whole blades and two broken, and nine bladelets and three broken are all soft-hammer struck.

Only one small core was found, which may have been due to a collection bias. This appears to have one or possibly two irregular platforms and has only a few flakes removed with a substantial amount of cortex remaining.

Of the re-touched flakes, one is soft-hammer struck. The majority are fairly large, crudely worked flakes with one obviously flawed flake that was probably abandoned during manufacture. All show post-depositional damage making positive identification impossible but may well have been intended as implements.

Implements

The total number of implements identified is 15, of these 3 where found on the 'walk over' survey, and the remaining 12 during the field walk (see diagram 1 for distribution plan) :

The implement types and quantities of each found are as follows:

Implement Type	**Qty**
End Scrapers	6
End Scraper/?Awl	1
End/Side Scrapers	2
Hollow Scrapers	3
Hollow Scraper/Awl	1
Knife/Scraper	1
Knife	1
Total	**15**

The knife/scraper was found during the 'walk-over' survey. The patination is blue/grey with darker patination on the distal end with a small amount of cortex remaining on the dorsal side.

It is suggested that this change in patination may indicate that the implement was buried in an upright position for a considerable time. There is some post-depositional damage. This appears to be a finely manufactured implement and is of Neolithic date. A further knife was found during the systematic field walk but this is a simple retouched flake.

Scrapers from hard-hammer struck flakes make up the majority of the implements and include two possible combination implements. The predominance of scrapers, especially the hollow scrapers, may indicate a specific activity site.

Most of the soft-hammer debitage of blades and bladelets is likely to indicate Mesolithic activity in the area. Although the majority of the hard-hammer flintwork appears to reflect Neolithic technology, some of this is likely to be of a later date. The flakes are large, squat and bulky and a small number of scrapers appear to have the minimum amount of retouch. A more likely date for this flintwork may be Later Bronze Age.

Pottery

Only five small sherds of pottery were recovered.

Fabric Type No.	**Qty**	**Sherd Type**	**Fabric Colour**	**Inclusions**
1	1	Body	Buff/grey	< 2mm calcinated flint
2	1	Body	Pale orange/buff	< 2mm calcinated flint
3	3	Rim or base	Red/orange	No visible inclusions

Fabric types 1 and 2: these sherds are badly abraded and are of Prehistoric date (probably Bronze Age).

Fabric type 3: this pottery is of unknown date but mostly likely to be Post-Medieval.

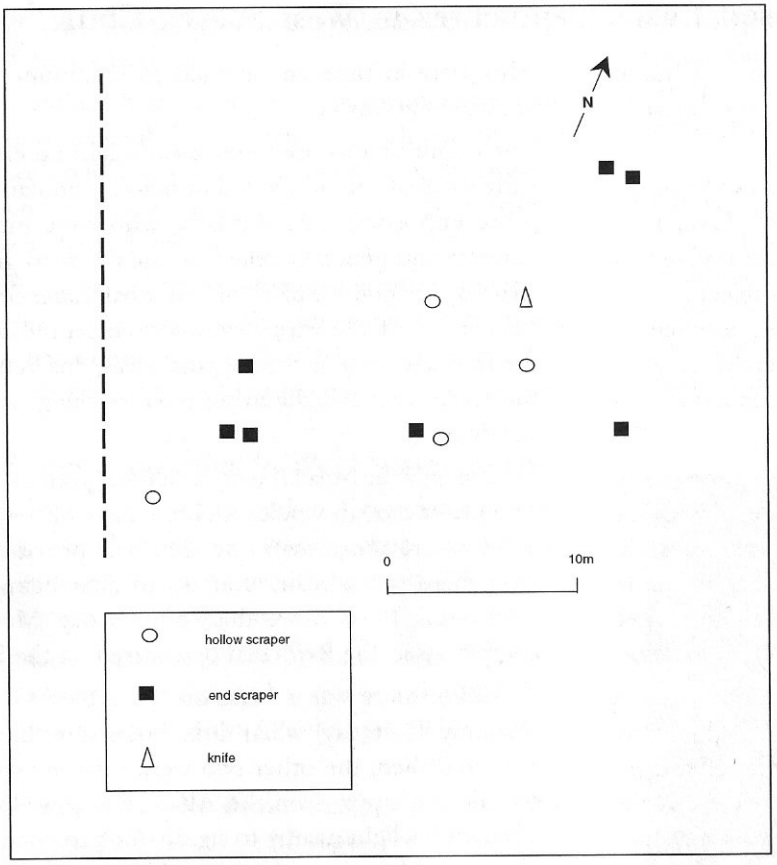


Figure 1:
Distribution plan showing implements from detailed Field Walk. All pieces found are plotted. Dotted line indicates field boundary.

Foreign Stone

- Hard Sandstone (30 mm x 15 mm and 40 mm x 30 mm)
- Sandstone 60 mm x 25 mm
- Horsham stone (largest piece measures 50mm x 35mm)

All the sandstone probably originates from the Weald. None shows any sign of having been worked.

CBM - Tiles

Largest piece measures 60 mm x 50 mm. Two of the tiles have square peg holes. The majority of the CBM is most likely Roman.

Iron Objects

All the metal is likely to be from modern farm machinery.

Discussion

A large number of finds had been recovered previously by Mr. Robin Upton, an Estate worker, from the site of this Bowl Barrow. Most of the finds are of Bronze Age pottery and burnt clay fragments and only a few pieces of worked flint, although these included two Mesolithic/Neolithic scrapers (Kenny, 1996, 3).

A small proportion of the flintwork in this assemblage is likely to be Mesolithic but the majority date to the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. Generally, scatters of Mesolithic flints are found across the Estate with concentrations in an area between two ancient river courses that may suggest some temporary settlement (Whitfield, 1994, 19) but the flints in this assemblage seem to be consistent with some isolated hunting and gathering activity.

The technology and limited range of implements suggest a Late Neolithic/Bronze Age date. No permanent settlement has been found on the Estate, although it can be assumed that extensive wooded areas of the Estate were being cleared for settlement, monument construction and agricultural activities and that by the Late Neolithic/Bronze Age most of the Downs were cleared and being utilised for grazing and cultivation (Whitfield, 1994, 22, 27). The high proportion of implements and the predominance of scrapers may indicate a specialised industry related to hunting or stock farming similar to that suggested by Holden at Rackham Hill. Holden also noted that Rackham and other comparable sites were found close to round barrows at the margin of cultivated land or seasonal pasture (Holden, 1975, 102).

The Prehistoric pottery in this assemblage may be fragments of cremation vessels and therefore directly associated with Barrow but the sherds are very small and abraded making positive identification difficult.

The building material, which consists of relatively small and abraded pieces, is probably associated with the Celtic/Romano-British field system that covers the area of this field and adjoining field 16 to the south (Kenny, 1996, 3).

Further field walking of this field and surrounding area may provide further information about the knapping site and its association with the Barrow.

References:

Holden, E.W., 1975, *A Late Neolithic Site at Rackham*, Suss. Arch. Coll. 113, 85-113

Kenny, J., 1996, *The Upton Collection of Archaeological Artefacts from the National Trust Slindon Estate, West Sussex*, Southern Archaeology (Unpublished)

Whitfield, C., 1994, *Archaeological Survey: Slindon Estate*, The National Trust (Unpublished)

Observations on Supposed Easter Sepulchres in West Sussex Churches

Recent years have seen a surge in interest in Church Archaeology, many adult education courses now exist to cater for the demand.

Church buildings are merely the meeting places of groups of Christians who actually form the Church. Over time the design and layout of these buildings has evolved to met the changing fashions of the liturgy, a subject far too extensive to cover in a short article. This development is the source of much heated debate between archaeologists and liturgists, but it sells books so no one is in a hurry to resolve the differences.

My subject is one that I had not come across through my many church visits and might not have done so without being encouraged first by Robert Hutchinson and recently David Parsons. There are varying documentary accounts of the form of service, I have summarised these here, I am sure that the details would have varied both by location and over the many centuries involved.

I hope that your appetite is stimulated to go and look at these features and others in this part of our rich heritage. Please remember all the churches mentioned below remain consecrated and are used for regular Christian worship. Not all are normally open to the casual visitor, so be sure and check before travelling.

The origin of Easter Sepulchres in England

For Christians, Easter - that is: the death of Christ and his Resurrection – and the associated celebrations is their main focus of belief.

The early purpose built meeting places of Christians evolved to provide for the regular celebration which came from this main festival: - The Eucharist (Thanksgiving), Mass, Communion or Lords Supper, was instigated by Christ on the night before his crucifixion, at what has become known as the Last Supper.

'Mass' was the term used by the medieval church before the reformation, the Roman church continues to use it, but - Anglo-Catholics aside - Protestants prefer to use other terms. The term Mass comes from the Latin dismissal; - *mittere* – 'to sent forth'

In the Mass, bread and wine are blessed by the priest as symbolic of the body and blood of Christ. For much of the medieval period until the reformation these 'elements' actually became the physical substance of Christ in the doctrine of transubstantiation. This doctrine was established by the Roman church in AD 1215 and restated in AD 1551 it remains a part of Roman Catholic teaching. This doctrine lead to various censures being placed on the treatment of the blessed elements, including that it was not to touch the floor or become 'soiled' in any way. This belief led in turn to the develpment of certain fittings, e.g. piscina, aumbry, pyx etc.

The Mass was celebrated with varying frequency in the medieval church. With the growth in the mysteriousness of the liturgy it became increasingly remote from the people who were in time encouraged to commune only once annually - at Easter.

The origin of this mysteriousness might be viewed as an early form of job protection or the very human wish to be more important than the laity, who were mostly likely illiterate and generally relied on the priest to guide them. In a way he took the place of the tribal leader or local lord. Many parts of the liturgy evolved to meet the demands of the time and various theologians' ideas, this in turn lead to the developments in the layout and furnishing of the church buildings.

In time only the bread (Host) would be given to the people. The priest though would celebrate daily or perhaps more often where more than one altar was provided. At one time there was a restriction on an altar being used for celebrating Mass more than once a day. Many of the complaints at the Reformation centred on the Eucharist.

At Easter there was a Mass on the eve of Good Friday (Maundy Thursday) when three hosts were blessed. One was used then, the other two were reserved (placed in a container - a pyx – on the Altar or in a wall cupboard, often with a light nearby to signify the presence of God – a red one if hanging, otherwise white) to Good Friday. On Good Friday one was used, the other host was then placed within a pyx into a special receptacle, which was in or against the north wall of the chancel near to the altar. Initially this was a wooden structure, written records survive of churchwarden accounts of the costs for the provision of this important liturgical feature. Once the practice of having an Altar Crucifix became established this was also placed in the Sepulchre with the host.

There is documentary evidence from the 9th Century that the Altar Cross was wrapped in cloth – to represent the tomb shroud – and placed in the sepulchre - which was at this time often sited on the north end of the altar. This was before the host was used, but the symbolism was the same.

From the late 13th century a number of churches made permanent provision - usually built into the north wall of the Chancel close the to Altar, in other cases use was made of a tomb or monument often specifically designed for the purpose, sometimes provided for in the deceased's will. These tombs may include a container or simply a flat shelf. There may have been a decoration or tableau representing the rock tomb and features such as roman soldiers etc. The presence of such decoration or sculpture may be diagnostic of a tomb having been specifically provided to for the base of the sepulchre.

Once the host had been placed in this structure, termed the Easter Sepulchre (Sepulchre = tomb) it would be watched / guarded, often the watchman may have been paid or at least provided with ale and candles, records of this cost remain. Early on Easter Day (Sunday, the third day) the host was reverently returned to the Altar to take it's part in the day's celebration of the risen Christ. The

symbolism was to represent the entombment of Christ's body and the resurrection.

From the earliest times it appears that in monasteries – and possibly generally - the ceremony took on the form of what we would recognise today as a drama, with monks dressed up to emphasis the occasion. Possibly the origin of drama as we know it.

At the reformation much of the medieval pomp, ceremony and doctrines were swept away, some sooner than others, but most had gone by the end of Elizabeth's reign. The puritans of the 17th century destroyed most of the remaining icons and decoration. The rise of protestant beliefs lead to the abolition of the ceremony and the need for the Easter Sepulchre as it was linked to the discredited/ unpopular doctrine of transubstantiation.

Wooden Sepulchres were cast out, for use as firewood or the materials reused, in England just one is thought to survive. Those built into the building's structure have fared a little better, but many have been filled in, covered over or simply reused. Where the form was a tomb, this survives, often though with much of the iconography lost to the puritans and others.

Some Easter Sepulchres in West Sussex today

There are records in wills and other documents for some forty Easter Sepulchres, however every church would have had one, in some form, in the medieval period. No wooden ones are known to survive in Sussex.

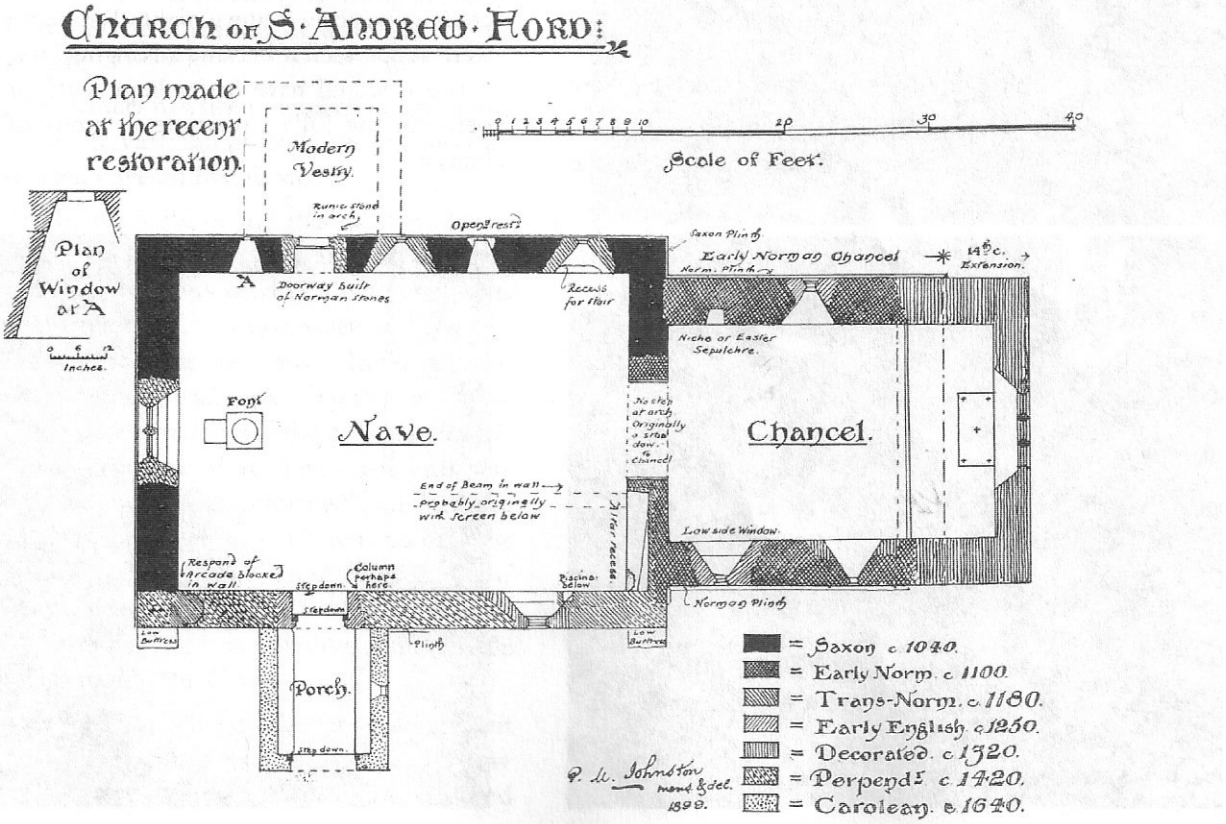
In a few places there are physical remains in the structure that are thought to have served as sepulchres. Other sites can only be guessed at, or await investigation/restoration of the fabric.

The following examples demonstrate a few potential survivors from the large range of sepulchre types.

Ford

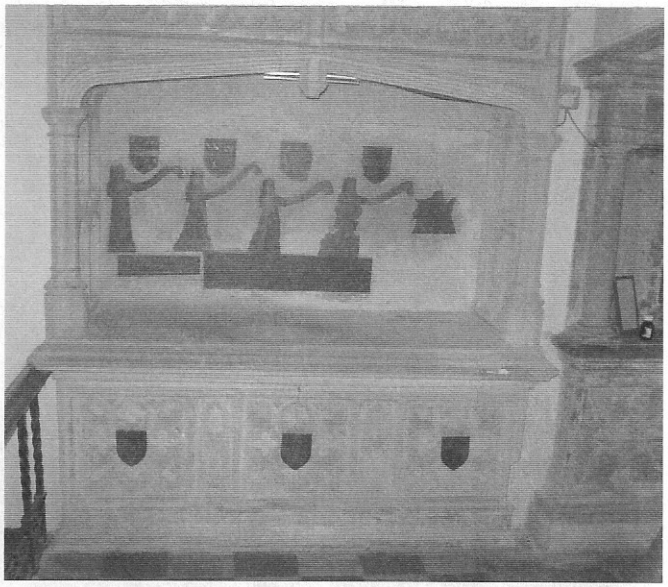
This is another church with Anglo-Saxon roots, here the feature generally identified as the Easter Sepulchre is a tall niche close to the west end of the chancel, this is referred to as a Relic Shrine by some. It is also a little distance from the Altar, but would appear to be quite a good candidate for an Easter Sepulchre, possibly with a dual used for the remainder of the year. The position of this possibly earliest example in Sussex may reflect the earlier position of the altar near or under the Chancel arch.

The niche was uncovered by the Victorian restoration. The present pink plaster dates from the 2000 restoration.



Bosham

This church which has origins in Anglo-Saxon times, is featured in the Bayeaux tapestry. The original chancel was twice later extended, this is evidenced by uncovered blocked windows and a noticeable change in the wall fabric. The north wall has a shelf tomb recess that may be the sepulchre. Within the extension of the chancel, it is some distance from the present altar, however there is a broken piscina almost opposite, indicating an earlier altar location. There is an effigy lying on the shelf, which would have required a wooden platform for it to be used as a sepulchre, there has been recent 'restoration' that may have affected the appearance or the true sepulchre has been lost.



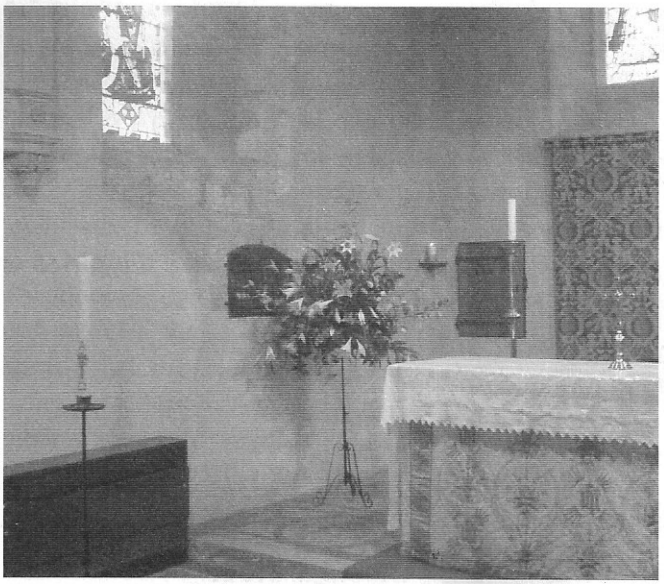
Slaugham

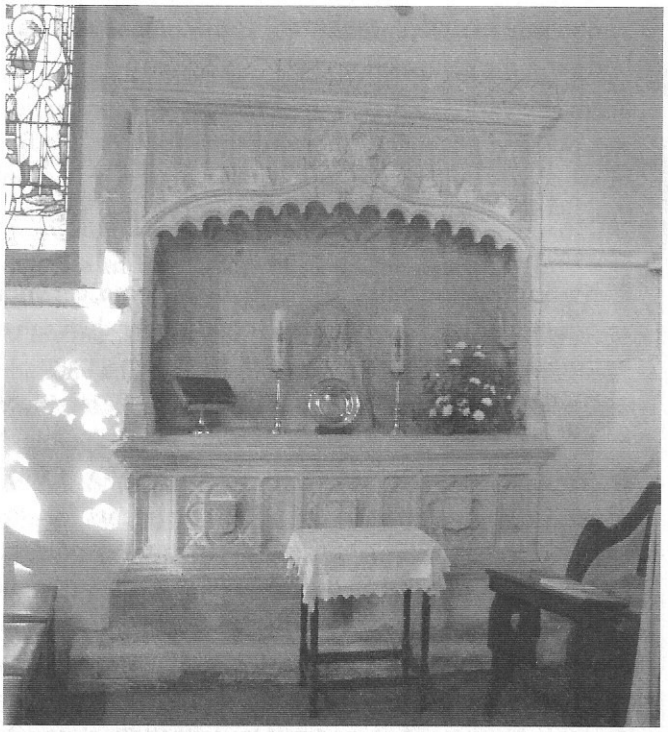
Here the form is a tomb within the Altar rail, built into the bottom of a window. There are several brasses of the family members with prayer scrolls and coats of arms.

Shipley

The Easter Sepulchre niche is within the Altar Rail, there is a modern grill fitted to protect the contents.

Note the Aumbry in the east wall of the chancel, complete with door.





Kingston-Buci

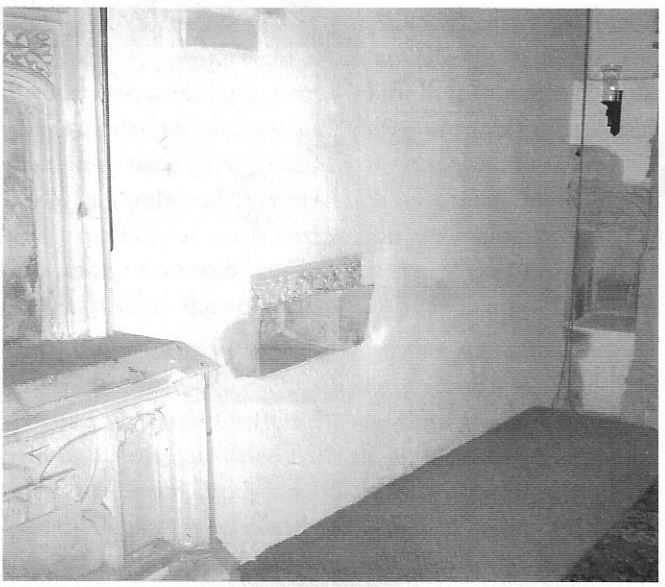
This is another Church with supposed Saxon portions. The Easter Sepulchre here would appear to have been a tomb sited on the north of the site of the Altar in the sanctuary. The current ordering of the church has moved the communion table to the south side of the Nave, the narrow Chancel making the sanctuary seem very remote.

Sompting

Two recognised sepulchres here, one a recess with bands of interlacing foliage work.

The second is the canopied tomb of Richard Burri, it has angels bearing shields with coats of arms.

Note the decorated recess (aumbry?) in the east wall. This church was given to the Knights Templars and when these were suppressed it became a Knights Hospitallers church hence it would have had a large staff of priests etc to perform the fullest possible versions of the medieval liturgy.



Westhampnett

Here use was made of another tomb sited within the Altar rail, north of the Altar. The fine stone carvings have survived well.

West Grinstead

This is thought to only have documentary evidence for its existence, but there is a surviving niche in the north wall of the sanctuary. It is interesting that it is still used to hold the un-consecrated wine and oils(?).

Other Recorded sites

Broadwater – A tomb outside the sanctuary.

Trotton – the table tomb said to have served as the sepulchre is in the NE of the chancel.

Lost ?

These few churches are among those reported to have had Sepulchres, on reviewing my own observations and records there appears to be no visible feature resembling or usable as one. At least not in the north wall of the chancel close enough to the Altar.

Amberley: - the chancel has been panelled in wood, the piscina has been left to view, but possibly any remains of a sepulchre have been covered by this work.

Boxgrove: - In the medieval period this was a monastic foundation, the monks using the Quire and the West end corresponding to the nave was used by the local people. There are flat topped tombs in the north ailse which might have served as sepulchres for the monks. In the western end the altar was against a wall separating this end from the quire for the monks, two doors in the wall were for the monk priests to serve the altar. The nave end was demolished after the church was 'reformed' and the quire thereafter used as the parish church. There is no obvious sign of a sepulchre serving this altar, it is not know if there was a separate celebration of the Easter mysteries in each part of the church, but it is possible as the people would not be allowed into the Quire.

Coombes: - the chancel walls have the remains of apparent early painting to resemble stone and a blocked doorway to a later vestry – now demolished. West of this blocked doorway there are marks on the wall that I had previously interpreted as a further possible blocked / lost doorway. This would be worth a further investigation linked with the work that Rodney Gunner and Michelle Crabb are doing on the wall paintings here.

Stoughton: - the chancel has been cleanly plastered in recent times, possibly the signs have been covered. It is interesting that the piscina appears to be in the east wall (not the south) with an Aumbry between it and the south east corner.

Other candidates

In some cases features generally identified as being an Aumbry, may have been served as Easter Sepulchres. There is a example which might be considered in the north wall of the nave of the redundant church at North Stoke. A church not otherwise recognised as having an Easter Sepulchre; despite having fine triple sedilia and piscina constructed in Clunch, together with other features normally expected in high status churches.

Modern Form?

This picture taken in Easter 2004 is in Tillington Church, it shows a Calvary and Tomb on top of a 'parish chest'. Might the form of this not be far from that of Easter Sepulchre decoration in the medieval period.

References:

English Church Furniture – Cox & Harvey
English Church Fittings, Furniture & Accessories – J.C. Cox
The Christian Altar – C.E. Pocknee
The Mass, a study of the Roman Liturgy – Adrian Fortescue
The Stripping of the Altars – Eamon Duffy
Various Internet sites – for modern interpretations of Transubstantiation.
Various other books and guides were referred to - these added little.

Glossary:

Aumbry: a Chest or cupboard usually in wall of Chancel, used to store sacred item such as altar plate or relics
Piscina: usually in wall to south of altar used to rinse the chalice and priests hand, drained into sacred ground.
Pyx: container used to hold the reserved host

Martin Snow

Fort St. George 1607-1608

In 1995 a friend asked me to join her in a one-day dig at a local courthouse looking for Fort Shirley 1754.

I said you want me to do what! Archaeology had never entered my thoughts before that day. The following summer I spent a week in a shell midden on Indian Iowa Island.

Then in 1997 I received a notice from Friends of the Maine State Museum about a field school in Popham, Maine looking for Fort St. George 1607-1608. I had to try this field school and in September 2004 I spent my eighth season there.

The first summer we knew the location of one posthole, our leader, Dr. Jeffrey P Brain had spent many hours working with the site map drawn by John Hunt and sent back to England in the fall of 1607.

He figured that with one posthole of the supply house, the others should be in line about 20° off true north. What a thrill it was to uncover that first summer five postholes and have them line up perfectly.

One even contained a fairly large chunk of wood from 1607.

We found a caulking iron in the supply house that must have been used in the building of the pinnace (1) Virginia which carried the remaining men back to England, after their leader George Popham(2) died during the winter and the second in command, Raleigh Gilbert discovered he had inherited a sizeable estate in England.

In the years following we uncovered Gilberts house-finding artefacts that would have been a part of his upper class life. I am sure he dropped a shirt in a corner as we found more than 20 glass buttons in two sizes in the same area.

Over the years we found many pieces of Bellarmine pottery shards with faces on the bottle neck as well as parts of medallions .Two pieces were joined, and what looked like a squiggle design turned into the date 1599.Last summer I found the missing middle piece! The other two had been joined two years ago.

So it goes – the site was finished. In the 1900s Fort Baldwin was built over the site, so it is amazing what we have been able to find despite all the disturbance over the years.

We are all looking forward to the 400 year celebration in 2007 and hopefully Maine's first ship The Virginia of Sagadahoc will sail again.

Kathy Bugbee,
Southport, Maine, U.S.A.

Notes.

(1) Pinnace a small 17th century ship having two or three masts and a flat stern, used as a warship, and a merchant ship, and as a tender.

(2) Popham, George , c.1550–1608, early colonist in Maine, b. England. He was named in the patent granted to the Plymouth Company in 1606. In consequence of the colonization project of his uncle, Sir John Popham, and Sir Ferdinando, George Popham, in the *Gift of God,* with Raleigh Gilbert in the *Mary and John,* set out in 1607 from Plymouth, England, to plant a colony in North America. They explored the Maine coast and settled at the mouth of the Kennebec (then called the Sagadahoc) River on the present site of Phippsburg. A fort was erected, called Fort St. George, and Popham became president of the colony. He died that winter, and the colony was abandoned in the following summer.

History, Early Inhabitants and European Colonization

The earliest human habitation in what is now Maine can be traced back to prehistoric times, as evidenced by the burial mounds of the Red Paint people found in the south central part of the state. The Native Americans who came later left enormous shell heaps, variously estimated to be from 1,000 to 5,000 years old. At the time of settlement by Europeans the Abnaki were scattered along the coast and in some inland areas.

The coast of Maine, which may have been visited by the Norsemen, was included in the grant that James I of England awarded to the Plymouth Company, and colonists set out under George Popham in 1607. Their settlement, Fort St. George, on the present site of Phippsburg at the mouth of the Kennebec (then called the Sagadahoc) River, did not prosper, and the colonists returned to England in 1608. The French came to the area in 1613 and established a colony and a Jesuit mission on Mt. Desert Island; however, the English under Sir Samuel Argall expelled them.

In 1620 the Council for New England (successor to the Plymouth Company) granted Ferdinando Gorges and Captain John Mason the territory between the Kennebec and Merrimack rivers extending 60 mi (97 km) inland. At this time the region became known as Maine, either to honor Henrietta Maria, queen of Charles I, who was feudal proprietor of the province in France called Maine, or to distinguish the mainland from the offshore islands. Neglected after Gorges's death in 1647, Maine settlers came under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1652. King Philip's War (1675–76) was the first of many struggles between the British on one side and the French and Native Americans on the other, all of which slowed further settlement of Maine.

French influence, which had been reasserted east of the Penobscot, declined rapidly after 1688, when Sir Edmund Andros, royal governor of all New England, seized French fortifications there. After the colonists overthrew Andros, Massachusetts received a new charter (1691) that confirmed its hold on Maine. With Sir William Phips, a Maine native, as governor and the territorial question settled, local government and institutions in the Massachusetts tradition took root in Maine. Maine soon had prosperous fishing, lumbering, and shipbuilding industries.

St Albans Museums News Release

Roman Bathhouse discovered at Turnershall Farm dig

As the field archaeologists from St Albans Museums reach the end of the third excavation of the Roman Villa & Burial site at Turnershall Farm, Wheathampstead they have just discovered a bathhouse.

It is situated approx. 50m SW of the early 2nd century villa and is a small structure, approx. 5m square, with a plunge pool next to a room heated by a hypocaust. One piece of Roman glass has been found in this trench, which leads to speculation that the heated room had a window.

This room also has a coarsely tessellated floor (the rooms in the villa had finely tessellated floors, but no mosaics) and also dates to the 2nd century AD.

It is not yet known if this is the bathhouse for the wealthy family living in the villa or, more likely due to its size and distance away from the villa, was meant for the workers and slaves on the estate.

The 2004 excavation has increased our knowledge of this site and has found evidence of continuous settlement by high status peoples from the late Iron Age to the mid Roman period. From the Iron Age there are round houses and evidence for coin minting and in the Roman period there is a two storey corridor villa with fine red tessellated pavements and close by are two burials, extraordinarily rich in grave goods, dating from 140-150 AD.

The site continues to raise as many questions as discoveries. In the Iron Age layers there are many burnt spots in the ground indicative of a lot of small fires, not for pottery production, but possibly for glass making, there is a small enclosure of this area. Around the whole site, including the villa, there is a very large enclosure of approximately 150m x 140m, which would have dominated the landscape.

Reflecting on the cumulative results of the excavations so far, Simon West, Field Archaeologist comments that "this site is unusual in that there is not a single phase of building, but all the structures have been put up over 300 years. The owners then moved away from the site, demolishing everything in the process, so that we find the villa has been completely robbed and there are far fewer finds than would be expected."

The museum service continues to be indebted to the landowner Mr Titmus, who continues to allow the excavations to take place in his fields. Discussions are still taking place over the possibility of a 4th excavation next summer, which would investigate more of the archaeology shown by the geo-physics surveys, follow up indications of several other buildings and possibly find another bathhouse closer to the villa. The museum service is also grateful to the metal detector Dave Phillips, who in 2002 first found the Roman burials and brought the site to the attention of the museum.

Alison Coles

47,000 treasures found by Britain's amateur archaeologists

Press Release

Last year an incredible 47,000 historic artefacts were found by amateur archaeologists in Britain and reported, identified and recorded through the Portable Antiquities Scheme. From prehistoric weapons to a Victorian antidote to witchcraft, the unearthed objects span almost 500,000 years and were all discovered by metal detectorists, gardeners, farmers, builders or walkers.

While treasure items account for less than 1 per cent of the total number of objects found, this extraordinary success was revealed by Arts Minister Estelle Morris, announcing the publication of the Portable Antiquities Scheme's Annual Report for 2003/4. "The past year has seen a huge rise in the number of items found and reported by the public, largely thanks to the expanded network of Finds Liaison Officers working for the Portable Antiquities Scheme," she explained. "Finds officers, volunteers, community history groups and amateur archaeologists all work together to make this a tremendously successful scheme and I'm particularly pleased to see its reach extending and so many items being reported."

Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and led by MLA - the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council - the Portables Antiquities Scheme is run by a network of Finds Liaison Officers. The scheme is there to record all archaeological objects found by members of the public, who are helped by officers to identify and record their discoveries, as well as get them into museum collections. Last year, the scheme was extended into Wales and the number of finds staff more than doubled, helping over 2,300 people.

According to Estelle Morris, the rate of finds will continue to rise: "It is good that the number of finds being reported is increasing rapidly and may reach around 500 by the end of this year, representing almost a 100 per cent increase on 2002." Metal-detector users are responsible for the great majority of Treasure finds," she explained. "I am pleased to see how present arrangements are encouraging both them and archaeologists alike to co-operate on identifying and recording finds ensuring that important information about our heritage is not lost."

For more information about the Portable Antiquites Scheme, visit the organisation's website: www.finds.org.uk.

Worthing Museum

Please be sure to support our own local museum, after the recent politicing it's service is still under threat, with staffing levels and general funding far from certain.

The museum staff provide an excellent attraction for local and visitor alike, with a regularly changing programme of exhibitions and events for all interests.

Worthing Museum is open Monday to Saturday

George Holleyman

Archaeologist whose most important excavations in Sussex laid bare the full details of life in Bronze Age Britain.

For more than half a century George Holleyman made a very distinguished contribution to the archaeological study of the South Downs. It would be almost impossible to discuss the prehistory of lowland Britain without including his excavations at Plumpton Plain (1934) and Itford Hill (1949 – 53), which completely revolutionised our understanding of the Bronze Age.

George Alfred Holleyman was born in 1910. The family moved to the Brighton area in 1914 at the outbreak of the First World War, he remained in the Brighton area for the rest of his life.

George Holleyman was educated Christchurch school in Brighton, and then onto Technical College.

George from an early age showed an interest in the past, and as a young man made many visits to Brighton Museum, it was there that the Curator Herbert Toms started to take an interest in George, and introduced him to the Doctors Curwen, father and son, both famous archaeologists.

Toms was Lieutenant-General Augustus Pitt-Rivers right-hand man in the field during his pioneering days of excavations in the Cranbourn Chase in Dorset in the 1880s.It was here that Pitt Rivers together with Toms developed there rigorous excavation style based on stratigraphic principles, it was this method of excavation that Toms passed onto George Holleyman. Toms was a very good teacher and it was through him that George learned the importance of field survey, and landscape archaeology, it was around this time that George met the illustrator Robert Gurd, he was later to go on to illustrate many of George's books.

Holleyman, like so many archaeologists of his generation showed great interest in aerial photographs, and used them to show the agricultural activity on the South Downs during the late Iron Age and the Romano-British periods.

It was through his knowledge of aerial photography that at the outbreak of the Second World War that he was commissioned as a flight Lieutenant in the RAF, and became a photographic interpreter at RAF Medmenham.

After the war Holleyman set himself up as antiquarian book seller in Brighton, he soon became a book seller of high reputation, his collection was one of the largest in the south of England. He spent many hours on the road attending sales, and he bought the library of Leonard and Virginia Woolf, and at the time was considered a great scoop.

Throughout this time his main interest was archaeology, and this took up all of his spare time, he excavated and published a very wide range of Down land sites, including the late Bronze age hill fort at Harrow Hill, and the Iron Age site at Munthan Court.

It was at Muntham Court in 1954 that under the direction of George Holleyman and G.P.Burstow Worthing Archaeological Society conducted their excavation on the Iron Age site.

The fieldwork at Plumpton Plain was a joint project with Dr E. C. Curwen and was almost entirely directed by Holleyman; Curwen went on to say later in the reports that really he was only a sleeping partner, and it was Holleyman that put in all of the work

The report that came out of this field study, entitled "Late Bronze Age Lynchet- Settlements on Plumpton Plain, Sussex" in the second volume of the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, emphasised the importance of placing settlements in their landscape context, this was something at the time very few archaeologists were doing. .

George Holleyman was a lifetime member of Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society which he joined in 1929,during his membership he was its President, and until his death was vice President. The society was one of his most active supporters, and sponsored most of his excavation work. He was a member of Sussex Archaeological Society, he served on its council from 1948 till 1984,and also served as vice president until his death..

The excavation of a late Bronze Age settlement on Itford Hill Sussex must be George Holleyman lasting memorial.

Itford Hill was a truly remarkable well-preserved group of settlement enclosures, which were set in a network of well-defined lyncheted fields, unchanged since they had been deserted around 1100BC.This was the very first time that a whole site with enclosures complete with fence lines and ponds had been excavated, this to reveal life in the minutest detail in the Bronze Age.

There is so much more to say about George Holleyman but perhaps, many will remember him for his extensive knowledge of prehistoric Sussex, his site visits, offering his advice on an excavation. The Late Con Ainsworth once said that George Holleyman was his guiding light in Archaeology, what better tribute to end with.

Rodney Gunner.

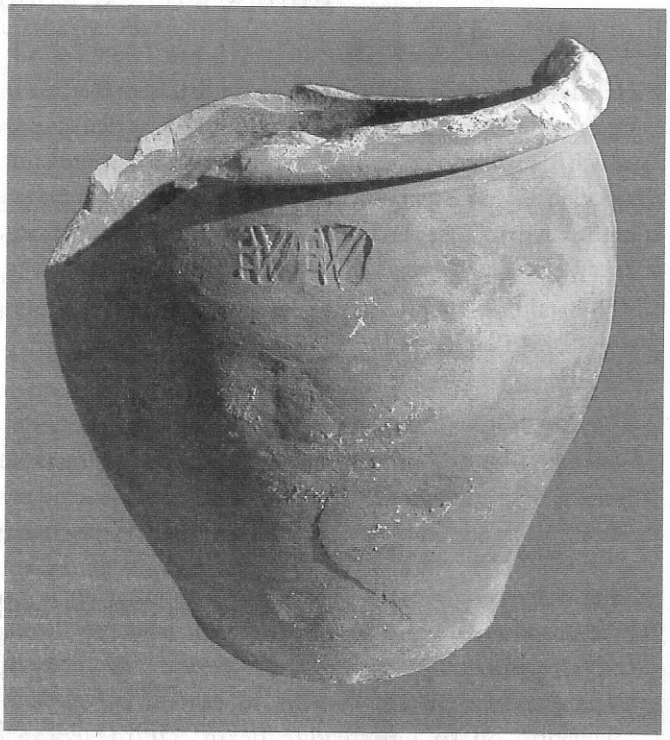
George Holleyman, archaeologist and antiquarian bookseller, born December 10, 1910. Died on October 2, 2004, aged 93.

St Mary's Hospital

During refurbishment of the interior of St Mary's Hospital, in St Martin's Square, Chichester, the removal of post medieval stud walling has produced two interesting discoveries as well as the opportunity to record details of the medieval fabric of the building.

In the south aisle the removal of several layers of wallpaper from a timber partition revealed the original layer made up of a large number of pages from an account book of c.1800. In the north aisle, close to a blocked doorway, an almost complete 17th century cooking pot from the Graffham kilns was found placed beneath the floorboards. This has been interpreted as a 'witch pot', originally containing a group of objects designed as a charm against evil spirits. A small pit nearby produced a collection of animal bones, including cat and bird, that may have had a similar motive.

James Kenny



Excavation of a 6,000-year-old Iranian mound

Iranian archeologists are about to embark on an exploration project in the Marvdasht plateau (Iran) in a bid to discover relics of architecture and recognize its inhabitants' lifestyles. Rahmat-Abad mound is one of the most historically significant settlements in Marvdasht, measuring 115 m in length and 75 m in width and 4.5 m in height. It is now exposed to vehicles that pass along it on a busy road in the southern province of Fars.

"Since it is the most important mound in the area and quite close to Persepolis, any exploration in Rahmat-Abad could possibly render answers to our raft of questions on the way people lived their lives and built their dwellings," said Mohammad Hassan Talebian, head of the Pasargadae and Parse project. Iranian archeologists have already discovered significant artifacts during their geophysics surveys and now they want to unearth them.

Archeological excavations have shown that millenniums before Darius decided to choose the plains of Rahmat Mount for the construction of the majestic Persepolis Palaces, civilized populations had been living in the Marvdasht Plains.

A Walk

Date 1st January 2005

Time 10.45 for an 11am start.

Place Bignor Hill Car Park.

Come and walk off all that Christmas food and drink!

Its going to be a nice sunny day the walk will be over a period of about three and half hours and to get you in the mood we will start with a

GLASS OF HOT MULLED WINE

The walk will be lead by Keith Bolton and we will be looking at various sites on the Slindon Estate We will start by going southeast towards Barkhale and two barrow sites, onto to the Moot Mound then west across Stane Street heading towards Upwaltham hill to a hollow way and three barrows in the woods

You are advised to bring hot drinks and something to eat plus warm clothing and wear good boots or walking shoes

Note:
the route of the walk is subject to change and is dependant on the weather conditions at the time

Europe's oldest wooden staircase found in Austria

A 3,000-year-old wooden staircase has been found at Hallstatt in northern Austria, immaculately preserved in a Bronze Age salt mine. "We have found a wooden staircase which dates from the 13th century BC. It is the oldest wooden staircase discovered to date in Europe, maybe even in the world," said Hans Reschreiter, the director of excavations at Vienna's Natural History Museum.

"The staircase is in perfect condition because the micro-organisms that cause wood to decompose do not exist in salt mines," he added.

The staircase is about one metre (three feet) wide and is made of pine and spruce. It was used, the archaeologist said, during the Bronze Age to go down into the salt mine and was found some 100 metres (300 feet) below the surface. The salt mine lies about 200 metres from a necropolis which was the seat of the so-called Hallstatt Civilisation, one of the most important and advanced of the Iron Age, that lived around 700 BC.

"For the moment we have uncovered a piece of only about seven metres, but the staircase extends further down and up," Reschreiter said. He said previously the oldest known wooden staircase in Europe dated back to the fifth century BC.

Tarmac Condemned by Heritage Experts

The archaeologist who knows most about what is now recognised as a unique sacred prehistoric landscape around the Thornborough Henges near Ripon has castigated Tarmac Northern for seeking to extend its open-cast quarrying on to Ladybridge Farm. Dr J.Harding of Newcastle University has carried out research-driven fieldwork in the area for nearly 10 years and condemns the mining company for submitting factually misleading statements and failing to recognise the importance of Ladybridge.

The existing quarry at Nosterfield has already destroyed part of the remains of a Neolithic settlement occupied by the builders and users of the henges. The proposed extension would eradicate the remainder, preventing it being studied by future researchers using techniques that have yet to be developed. "The archaeological value of Ladybridge can not be over-estimated," says Dr Harding in his letter of objection. "It has a unique contribution to make to understanding both Thornborough's archaeology and settlement patterns in later Neolithic Britain."

Tarmac proposes to employ the same rescue techniques for any buried archaeology at Ladybridge as it has used in the existing quarry. But these are dismissed by Dr Harding as "badly conceived methodology and poor quality fieldwork." He insists that, "It would be misguided for the shabby treatment of an archaeological landscape of regional, national and international significance to be followed with the rapid and complete destruction of what remains of the settlement area to the north of the henge complex."

Dr Harding concludes by warning North Yorkshire County Council that permitting quarrying "would be widely condemned as against the broader interests of archaeology and the heritage sector in Yorkshire, the UK and the European Community; as contrary to the democratic and economic rights of the local community; and as an act of vandalism."

Readers who wish to support Dr Harding's objection can find out how to do so on the website
www.friendsofthornborough.org.uk
or by sending an SAE to
Dick Lonsdale, Kiln Farm, Nosterfield, Bedale, DL8 2QX.

Ancient footsteps retraced by Henge protestors

A 5,000 year old ceremony was recreated when campaigners carried an ancient ceremonial axe through Yorkshire's "Sacred Vale" to Thornborough.

"The area between Catterick and Boroughbridge can claim to be one ofBritain's first great religious and ceremonial centres" said George Chaplin of Heritage Action. "It contains Britain's largest concentration of

prehistoric henges, vast circular earthworks that were used as ceremonial meeting places. We staged a march through this "Sacred Vale" to highlight that the area is an immensely important part of our local and national heritage and that plans to quarry the surrounding archaeology are akin to vandalism."

The trek took place in October taking in all of the original ancient ritual landscape - seven mighty henges and a giant stone row, as well as many other monuments that line the route.

The route focuses on the mile-long triple henge monument at Thornborough, the location of a bitter battle between protestors and quarry firm Tarmac.

The marchers carried with them a prehistoric stone axe that last travelled the route five millennia ago. The axe was originally brought from Scotland, and was deposited in a ritual location close to Thornborough.

"We believe it's vitally important that the Sacred Vale is recognised for what it is" said Mr Chaplin. "not just important to Yorkshire - important to Britain. If the destruction of the surroundings of any of these monuments is allowed to continue it would be a national disgrace, not just a Yorkshire one.

Excavations at Caergwrle

Wirral and North Wales Field Archaeology group (WNWFA)

The site was originally brought to our attention by Mr.Charlie Harston, a local resident. Mr Harston expressed his anxiety over his "features" to the local community council, who then contacted me to have a look. Mr Harston had also contacted the Royal Commission for Wales, who agreed that the site merited further investigation, but they could not spare the time to undertake an excavation. Following consultation with the Royal Commission for Wales, we are now undertaking the excavation on their behalf, as well as with the local council. Excavation was agreed because the site is under threat of damage from tree roots.

It would appear that in the 1960's the hill and medieval castle on top were sold to Hope and District Community Council by the Earl of Derby. Sheep had grazed the hillside thus keeping it clear of trees. After the sale, sheep grazing ceased, and some silver birch trees were planted to beautify the hillside, and within a few years, the present dense growth of trees came to be.

The medieval castle was originally Welsh, but was invested by Edward I who undertook rebuilding and remodelling. Around the top of the hill is an embankment. John Manley excavated the castle in the 1980's and obtained a C14 date from the embankment of 240 - 600 AD (uncalibrated). Our site is on the north west slope of the castle hill outside the the protected monument area. On first inspection it appeared to be a series of circular structures of dry stone walling. However, as excavation has progressed, it now appears the walls are of drystone construction, and have infills of sand and river cobbles. The D shaped feature on top of the wall is most interesting. The spine of the D consists of 3 large slabs of stone set in a cut groove of the bedrock. The design appears to be a support for something of great weight. Because of the highly acidic nature of the humus, finds are scarce, although we do have a clear line of pottery going back to the early medieval period, and also surprisingly, some Civil War pottery. We also have some handmade nails, of carbonised iron.

The logistics of excavation have been very difficult. Access to the site is via a steep path; because of problems with vandalism a site hut is out of the question. Sanitary facilities are best described as rustic. Having said that, the work has been a fascinating voyage of discovery, not to mention great fun. Actually correctly interpreting the site is another matter, but work continues.

Background information about Caergwrle:

Caergwrle was famous at the turn of the nineteenth century for its spa waters. A bottling plant was built on the hillside above the River Alyn.

Following the advent of the railways people flocked to Caergwrle for the waters and a day out in the Welsh countryside. It also appears they flocked to Caergwrle Castle. We have found large quantities of Victorian/ Edwardian pottery and glassware. We have even found Mama's teacup! The mental images this conjures are wonderful. My estimation of our Victorian forbears has risen enormously. They must have been determined to have a day out. Hauling great earthenware dishes full of food, thick glass bottles and all the rest of the gear off the train, and up that hill! Awesome. No wonder we have the SS Great Britain and suspension bridges, they could do anything!

Felicity Davies

4,000-year-old tombs unearthed in China

Archaeologists in eastern Fujian Province (China) have unearthed 31 tombs dating back about 4,000 years from the bottom of a reservoir in Fuqing. The 31 prehistoric tombs are scattered in an area of 800 square metres at the bottom of the Dongzhang Reservoir, which has dried up due to continual droughts.

Archaeologists with the provincial archaeological research institute have excavated the area during the past two months, unearthing 123 objects from the tombs. The relics range from pottery to stone tools and jade ware. Each of these tombs is about two metres long and 0.5 to 0.6 metres wide. Lin Yuliang, a research fellow with the institute, said that among these relics, a stone dagger, a stone ear pendant and pottery cups were first discovered in Fujian Province. The fine jade articles and stone loops and bracelets show that handicraft art had reached a high level in the area at that time.

Comparing the ceramics with pottery ware unearthed from other parts of Fujian, experts concluded that the tombs belonged to a period between the late Neolithic and the early Bronze Age, dating back to 3,500 to 4,000 years.

Du Yuliang said the Dongzhang Reservoir was formerly an open flat land surrounded by mountains and suitable for farming. Du and his colleagues concluded that ancient people in the area farmed instead of fished, because the researches have not found any tools used in fishing. Archaeologists made an emergency excavation in the area when the Dongzhang Reservoir was first built in 1957, when they found the foundations of a Bronze Age house. They have decided to expand their excavations to about 10,000 square metres in area to search for more traces of prehistoric humans.

Pagan Traditions in Christianity

The Pagan traditions of Western Europe did not vanish with the arrival of Christianity from the East. Early Church "spin-doctors" realised the need to incorporate aspects of indiginous traditions into the framework of the Christian ethos, to more easily facilitate conversion to this exotic, desert-based, monotheistic religion.

One factor for the allure of Christianity in Pagan Europe *WAS* its desert origin. Identifying with a foreign culture where cold winters were unknown must have been extremely appealing to the daydream phantasies of European Pagans living in a climate where survival depended upon the whims of the weather in a harsh climate.

Pagan spirituality centred around the agricultural "wheel" of the year in its almost humanly changeable mood-swinging seasonal cycles. If only the local fertility God/Goddess would stop tormenting the Earth and just let it be summer all the time…

Along comes a band of priests dressed in costumes to make the highest Druid Priestess look shabby, telling tales of a God named Jesus who lived in a land of endless summer. This new God promoted socialism (rich and poor being equal in his written teachings), and He came from a society which featured the added propaganda incentive to the Pagan male population of patriarchal supremacy. One can easily see working class Pagan men being easily swayed, especially in areas of Ireland, Wales and the Scotland where matriarchal inheritance still existed.

Add to this the boon in the construction industry of churches, abbeys and cathedrals springing up everywhere. Fed up with the drudgery of working on the farm? Come to the new towns and become a building worker like Jesus the carpenter.

Artists and sculptors could exercise their talents in decorating these fantastic structures with elaborate design features that would last for hundreds of years into the future, for all to admire. The arrival of Christianity changed the entire lifestyle of agrarian Europe, not just its religious orientation.

The greatest draw of Christianity was that it was no longer necessary to stand out in the cold and rain and mud to celebrate the seasonal festivals of the year with one's family and friends. There really must be something to a religion that could bring with it such incredible architectural wonders to revolutionise worship. Even the greatest Chieftain's large roundhouse was nothing but a hovel in comparison to the lowliest monastery.

Rather than forsake the old Pagan pantheon, antagonising the very population it sought to convert, the Church developed the concept of saints. Pagan Brighid of Ireland (one famous example) was morphed into St. Brighid, along with dozens of other heroic characters from Celtic mythology who suddenly became Christian role models. Sacred wells were re-dedicated as Christian holy sites, and women, now demoted to secondary social status, had the Christian "Goddess" of the Virgin Mary to emulate and admire, without whom Jesus Christ could not have been born in human form.

This was small comfort to the Druid priestesses, who were denied access to jobs at the altars of Christianity. But for the average woman who still had to work all day on the farm AND make all of her family's clothing as well as wash it, going to church was way better than trudging through the mud to a clearing on the woods in the pouring rain to celebrate the forces of Nature who now went by the names of the Holy Trinity and a list of saints longer than the Celtic, Nordic, and Roman pantheons laid end to end.

In the Germanic countries of Europe, Pagan traditions like the "Easter" bunny delivering Easter eggs to children became part of the new accepted "folk customs" tolerated by the Church. The traditions stayed the same but the magical rabbit now celebrated the rising of Christ from the dead instead of the Vernal Equinox of the agricultural solar calendar. Even the mathematical calculation for the timing of Easter each year is based on the Vernal Equinox and the Full Moon. Christian symbolism doesn't enter into the equation at all.

The Christmas tree phenomenon comes from an age-old northern European tradition of culling young evergreen trees in winter to make room for larger trees to grow tall and broad for the production of wood for building houses and ships. At the bleak time of Winter Solstice, the "sacrificed" trees were brought indoors and decorated with candles and homemade trinkets, before being used for firewood after the celebration of winter was past.

Whether it be dancing round the maypole, Morris dancing, or parading through the village with garlands of spring flowers round the heads of the young and eligible, the Pagan "Beltaine" fertility traditions were gently absorbed into Christianity. Benign "Green Man" images adorn the corbels of columns in churches, smiling down upon the congregation, along with the angry crone images of "Sile na Gig", who rails against losing her youthful looks whether you think of her as a Pagan or a Christian archetype of menopause.

Samhain (the Irish language name for Halloween), was originally the New Year's Eve of the Celtic calendar. This "quarter day" (midpoint between the Autumnal equinox and Winter Solstice) received the greatest mutation of all Pagan festival days. The associations of focusing on the dead comes straight out of Roman Catholicism. "All Souls' Day" may be the 2nd of November instead of the 31st of October, but all of the trappings of "the day of the dead" have nothing to do with this Pagan feast day in celebration of the "Eve of Winter" ("Noswaith Gaeaf" in Welsh).

Scratch the surface of virtually every facet of Christian traditions and you will reveal a continuing Pagan custom, bent slightly out of shape from the original, but not broken. Be it the lighting of candles, the heady use of incense, the blessing rites of child naming, puberty, the public commitment of marriage, or the formal saying of farewell to the dead, the Pagan roots of Christian practice go deep into the Pagan pre-history of Europe, long before a new magical God was born to a working-class couple in a stable in a faraway desert at the Winter Solstice.

NOTE: There are no footnotes to this essay. All references come from numerous resources which you can look up for yourself at any halfway decent library or via the internet, and which all basicly agree on the historical folklore references used in the content of this essay, if not its emotional validity. The humourous presentation style is all mine.

About the author: Cerridwen Connelly is PrifGofalwres (High Caretaker) of a traditional Druid Order from west Wales called "Druid Caretakers of the West (of Wales)" and colloquially as "TechnoPagans Unlimited". Her website is at http://www.technopagans.co.uk. She is also an archaeological photo-journalist.

Cerridwen Connelly

Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society News

BHAS have had a very busy year, with field walking, geophysics, surveying and excavation. In February and March field walking took place at Lower Hodderrn Farm, Peacehaven. The fields walked were next to the area later designated as the Brighton Waste water site. The walking produced large collections of both Mesolithic and Neolithic material, including 7 rough out axes and 1 Mesolithic tranchet axe. A local resident has a collection from the same field, which includes a number of polished axes. One of the BHAS team is using the information for her dissertation. The professional unit of Archaeology South East have been conducting a geophysical survey of the adjacent fields and have found a number of possible Iron Age enclosures.

The geophysical team have undertaken major surveys at both Woodingdean and Millbank Wood, Stanmer. Both surveys have produced interesting anomalies and BHAS are beginning a small series of test trenches at Woodingdean beginning this week-end, to examine the anomalies. The site at Woodingdean is part of the cemetery expansion area and as such liable to be destroyed in the not too distant future. A Roman site is known about close by, and aerial photographs show considerable earthworks in the adjoining fields.

Millbank Wood contains quite a number of earthworks, orginally thought to be a newly discovered hill-fort. However, examination of the area shows that the features are probably ancient sunken trackways. There is the possibility that there was a mill at Millbank, but historical research has found only ephemeral notes from about 1604. The paddock adjacent to the wood also has earthworks and the resistivity survey has produced some very interesting anomalies including both circular and linear arrangments. The survey within the wood has produced readings of very high resistance, which may prove to be unknown buildings. An archaeological assessment of the area by excavation is planned for either next season or the one after.

Rocky Clump-The excavation at Rocky Clump continues with more features being found. This year we have examine a new section of the large ditch that runs south/north across the field and which now has expanded onto a terrace, with a number of pits and possibler post holes cut into the terrace. Finds this year have include some beautifully decorated fine pottery, masses of cattle bone and a coin of Lucilla, circa 192-196AD, found only minutes after the YAC group had left the site in May. It was planned to open trenches in the South field, within the cemetery area and inside of the 'shrine' area, but the rescue ezxcavations at Woodingdean have temporarily postponed this until either the autumn or next year.

East Brighton-In October 2003 BHAS conducted a watching brief at East Brighton Golf course and were present when a grave cut was revealed. The area has had a number of Early Bronze Age burials in the past. The grave cut proved to be another Early Bronze Age crouched burial with pottery in-situ, but sadly not a beaker. Close to the burial was a ditch that produced pottery dated to the Midlle Iron Age (pers comm. Sue Hamilton). A small resistivity survey north of the features showed that the ditch curved around the burial, and that there were other linear ditch features and possibly other grave cuts within the vicinity. Roedean and East Brighton are considered to be very important and sensitive areas with regard to prehistory, and a new development at the golf course is being closely monitored.

John Funnell

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Please send these to arrive with the Secretary
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