

# Worthing Archaeological Society

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## News sheet

We wish you all good health. Take care and get those trowels and boots shining ready for their next use.

### Coronavirus

Due to the current COVID-19 situation we are being advised to avoid unnecessary social contact. Therefore, as a Society we have made the difficult decision to suspend our Lectures and other face to face activities including Finds Processing and Meetings until further notice. This is a proactive step to protect the well being of our Members and the wider community. Please keep checking our website for updates: [www.worthingarchaeological.org](http://www.worthingarchaeological.org)

### GDPR

If any of your details eg: address, post code, telephone number(s), email address or Gift Aid option - have changed since you last completed your WAS Membership Application Form, please let me know.

All members have the right at any time to withdraw consent for WAS using personal data for communication purposes, please contact the Membership Secretary to do so. Please refer to our updated Privacy Notice on the Society's website

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

Many thanks.

Patricia

### Study Day

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November – Dr Ben Jervis.

Senior Lecturer in Archaeology, Cardiff University

### **Understanding Medieval Pottery: Binsted in context**

Over the past few years WAS members have been working hard to record the nationally important assemblage of medieval pottery from the Binsted kiln site. The aim of this Study Day is to review the results of the analysis of the data generated by WAS, and to place Binsted into the wider context of pottery production and consumption in medieval Sussex. The day will comprise 2 lectures; one providing an overview

## April - May 2020

of the results of the work undertaken by WAS volunteers and another on medieval pottery production and consumption. There will also be an opportunity for WAS members to (re)acquaint themselves with the Binsted material and to explore possibilities for further research into the trade and use of the Binsted pottery using the Worthing museum collections.

This study day will be held in Worthing Museum Education Room, Chapel Road, Worthing. It will start at 10 and finish at 4pm with a lunch break and coffee breaks throughout the day. The cost is £25 for WAS members and £30 for non-members.

**If you are interested please contact Patricia Leming: [p.leming@btinternet.com](mailto:p.leming@btinternet.com)**

### February Lecture

#### **John Pull Memorial Lecture**

'An Archaeological Childhood in Sussex' by Dr Janet Pennington



Janet began by listing her various interests and achievements, including teaching for the CCE at the University of Sussex, Archivist at Lancing College and member of the Wealden Buildings Study Group. Her PhD on Sussex Inns and Taverns has led to her being asked 'are you the pub lady of Sussex?' on Billingshurst high street.

In 1995 SAC asked for sons and daughters of well known Sussex local archaeologists to write their memoirs. In 2017 Janet was asked to give an after-dinner speech at a meeting of the

Steining History Society. Using extracts from her memoirs, she added images and her 'Archaeological Childhood in Sussex' talk was born.

Janet's parents were Eric and Hilda Holden. Although Eric was a shopfitter by profession, he trained as a surveyor at the Institute of Archaeology. Along with her sister Pamela and cousin, Andrew, Janet spent her childhood years on a succession of local Sussex digs, and her family holidays were spent touring 'proper' archaeological sites across Britain. She described spending her childhood staring at the ground, being always aware of the geology and archaeology of wherever she was, as her parents brought to life through their descriptions the ancient people that built the mounds or struck the flint. Her first introduction to sex education came from a holiday picnic sitting on the Cerne Abbas Giant and then a field full of donkeys displaying similar appendages! She remembers touring medieval churches in Sussex where you could sit down and play the organ, and a post WW2 visit to Fairlight Cove to view the Iguanodon footprint whilst dodging land mines on the beach.

Janet's most exciting earliest memory is of entering the Church Hill Neolithic flint mines along with her father. He encouraged her to 'imagine she was a Neolithic flint miner' whilst she was crawling along clutching an antler pick and shoulder blade shovel.

Janet's parents dug alongside some of Sussex's other most notable archaeologists, 'Uncles' Phillip Burstow, John Pull and George Holleyman. Fond memories include George Holleyman who owned his own bookshop and gave Janet 10/- for some scrawled-over Enid Blyton books so she could buy a mouth organ. John Pull painted watercolour images of Sussex and her father received one as a Christmas card each year.

Memorable digs included Itford Hill with Phillip Burstow, and Muntham Court, where she found her first flint hand axe. It was also here that she decided she was in love with Barry Cunliffe who was a fresh-faced 16 year old. The fact that he named his wheelbarrow 'Jean' after his girlfriend indicated her feelings were not reciprocated!

Janet and her cousin Andrew were known as 'Shall we and Lets' and got into all sorts of scrapes, including deciding to unsuccessfully carve ashtrays out of chalk on one flint mine dig. Janet fears a future archaeologist is going

to find a huge pile of these ashtrays one day and decide it is a 'ritual' deposit!

Eric and Hilda Holden were instrumental in the rescue excavation of the ancient village of Hangleton ahead of a housing development during the 1960's, and a reconstruction of the Hangleton Cottage can be visited at the Weald and Downland Museum.

Janet noted her mother, Hilda, was always well turned out for all digs and usually dug in a skirt. Holding onto good domestic help was important to Hilda. Janet remembers being told to keep secret from the excellent but superstitious Mrs Cook, that there was a skeleton of an Anglo Saxon woman with the back of her skull crushed in residing on the floor of the front room, so she didn't leave. Janet just stepped over it so she could carry on her piano practice. Janet moved to a cottage Botolphs in 1977 and, typically, discovered Medieval pottery sherds, a roman coin and multiple Anglo Saxon beads in her runner bean patch. This led to a dig next to her house in 1987 by Mark Gardiner; he didn't find any more beads and Janet has had a necklace made from hers.

Janet concluded her talk by describing her parents as having been a lively force in Sussex archaeology.

Vicky Lillywhite

### [March Lecture and AGM](#)

Our AGM was held before the Lecture. All your Committee and Officers were re-elected, and we were pleased to add Vicky Lillywhite and Jennie Williamson to our Committee.

### **March Lecture – Recovering (from) the past: Archaeology and Operation Nightingale**

Richard Osgood, who is the Senior Archaeologist for the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), gave a lecture which ticked several boxes for me, in terms of interests, including archaeology (of course), but also military history and veteran welfare. Richard has worked as Senior Archaeologist for the DIO since 2004 and co-founded Operation Nightingale in 2011. Previous experience included a period as Research Assistant to Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe. For those who are not familiar with Op. Nightingale, it is an initiative by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to assist the recovery of wounded, injured and sick military personnel and veterans by getting them involved in archaeological investigations.

As Richard reminded us, archaeology is supremely good for everyone's mental wellbeing as it includes three key factors: Fresh air, using our mind and our body, and on most digs there is a job for everyone, no matter how inexperienced.

Just to broaden our education, Richard talked about his inspiration taken from J L Carr's A Month in the Country, which explores how two WWI veterans, meet whilst researching different elements of a medieval church, and find solace in lost customs and ways of living.

Richard explained four different digs that he had worked on with veterans. The first was Exercise Magwitch, named after a Charles Dickens character from the Prison Hulks anchored offshore. This investigated a late-18th century unconsecrated burial ground on Burrow (Rat) Island in Portsmouth Harbour where coastal erosion was uncovering graves.



Richard Osgood on Operation Nightingale in 2013. [Crown Copyright/©MOD2013]



Dickie Bennett, of Breaking Ground Heritage, on Exercise ANGUS HOLDFAST, an Operation Nightingale dig. [Crown Copyright/©MOD2018]

This dig included serving soldiers from the Royal Military Police (RMP) who were given additional forensic archaeology training (on top of their existing police forensic skills), as well as veterans. The excavation recovered 12 sets of remains from the Island for further scientific research which will be published in due course. Early indications suggested that all of the remains belonged to young men, of around 18-21 years of age. One useful nugget that Richard provided was that military burials of the period were usually easily identified as such (as opposed to civilian graves), because of the brass buttons on the uniform coats which tend to survive well. The lack of buttons indicated that these graves were all criminals, not prisoners of war (POW).



Recovering a bone from one of the skeletons.

The second dig was the recovery of a WW2 Hurricane of the Polish Air Force from the Battle of Britain near Beachy Head. The plane was flown by Kazimierz Wunsche of 303 Squadron, who baled out suffering burns and leg injuries. The team who excavated this included soldiers and airmen from the current Polish armed forces, (as well as some WAS Surveyors.) The third excavation was of a WW2 camp near Swindon which had housed American troops prior to DDay and resulted in a large number of finds including Brylcreem jars, Spam tin keys and silk and metal fittings from parachutes. The last dig that Richard talked about was the 2012-4 excavation of Barrow Clump on Salisbury Plain. Originally a Neolithic settlement site, subsequent use included an Early Bronze Age burial mound and an Anglo-Saxon cemetery site. Although a Scheduled Ancient Monument, special permission was given due to damage being caused by badgers. Richard also talked about some of the particular benefits of Op Nightingale. One Royal Marine Sergeant (Dickie Bennett), who was invalided out of the services after several tours of Afghanistan, went on to study for a (first class) degree in archaeology, and then his Masters and PhD. He now runs Breaking Ground Heritage, a charity which supports veterans with an interest in archaeology and which works alongside Op Nightingale. He also talked about the achievement of a Rifleman who now has his name against an artefact on display in the British Museum, and (in a lighter hearted moment) the double amputee who removed his legs to excavate.





Images from the Barrow Clump excavations including Saxon grave goods

Lastly Richard detailed some of the research that has been done to validate the benefits of archaeology in the treatment of PTSD and pointed us to a paper (Dig in: an evaluation of the role of archaeological fieldwork for the improved wellbeing of military veterans) which can be found here -

<https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2019.85> .

If you missed the talk and would like to learn more, the following websites may be of interest:

<https://www.wessexarch.co.uk/our-work/operation-nightingale>

<https://www.strongisland.co/2018/05/03/uncve-ring-secrets-burrow-rat-island-portsmouth-harbour-exercise-magwitch/>

<https://www.dag.org.uk/barrow-clump/>

The Wessex Archaeology video - Operation Nightingale: Time Warriors is here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWTGbfyeZT4&t=26s>

Robin Courtney Bennett

### [Boxgrove and the Paleolithic of the Sussex raised beaches](#)

Matt Pope, Senior Research Fellow of the Institute of Archaeology at UCL  
Study Half Day Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March

Matt divided the morning into two lectures, one on the geological framework of the area and the other on Boxgrove itself. The highlight of the morning, once Matt had set the scene, was that he gave a remarkable account of how he thought a horse carcass had been butchered.



The detail of the story was spellbinding and made the scene at Boxgrove which only lasted a few hours, come alive.



Boxgrove axes on display at the Natural History Museum.  
Colin Wheeler

This is a link to the publication Matt mentioned.

<https://onlinestore.ucl.ac.uk/product-catalogue/faculty-of-social-historical-sciences-c03/archaeology-south-east-f31/f31-the-boxgrove-wider-area-project>

### [The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum](#)

is celebrating its first 50 years.

WAS 'Diggers' under Con Ainsworth and John Friar helped cut and lay the first paths etc. at the Museum before it opened and helped build the Hangleton reconstruction building.

There is a photo in the 40th Anniversary Museum book clearly showing Con and other volunteers. There were also other archaeological reconstructions there in the past, one of which has appeared in splendid form at Butser, the other being Old Erringham.

John Crane

### [South-East England Regional Conference](#)

Saturday November 14<sup>th</sup> in Haywards Heath.  
Geology and Archaeology.

Reserve the date, full details in the next Newsletter and on our website.

### [Walking into History](#)

The guided walks given by Alex Vincent have all been cancelled for the moment. Details will be published as soon as they can start up again.

### [Current/World Archaeology](#)

WAS has been given 2 boxes of these magazines – from about 2012 to date. If anyone would like to have some/any/all of these, please contact Liz.

### [WAS Archive.](#)

Connie is currently Curator of our Archive. Thanks to Roy Plummer and Jackie Phippard (widow of Norman), we have a good collection of Sussex Archaeological Collections, starting from the very first.

### [A date for your diaries.](#)

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2020 (10.00-17.00)  
A joint CBA South East and Sussex Archaeological Society conference –  
[Archaeology and Climate Change](#)  
This conference will include the CBA South East AGM.  
Venue: King's Church, Lewes  
Further details to follow.

### [Archaeological Roundup](#)

If you are interested in what has been happening in Archaeology in all of Sussex, there is a Round-up on the SAS website. Follow this link:  
<https://sussexpast.co.uk/research/sussex-archaeology>

### [Annual Journal](#)

Feel free to use your unexpected free time to consider writing an article for the Journal. Cheryl, our Editor, would be delighted to hear from you.  
[hutchincheryl@hotmail.com](mailto:hutchincheryl@hotmail.com)

### [Worthing Heritage Alliance](#)

WAS is part of this group which has a very useful Calendar of all events in the area of an Historic nature.  
[www.worthingheritagealliance.org.uk](http://www.worthingheritagealliance.org.uk)

### [Easy Fundraising](#)

If you shop online, do consider using Easyfundraising to make donations to WAS.  
<https://new.easyfundraising.org.uk>  
Retailers give part of every amount spent to WAS, if you nominate us as your charity.

### [Photo Archive](#)

WAS is hoping to develop an archive of photos, accessible via the website. Some of our past digs are already well covered, but if you have photos you are willing to share, please would you send them to Theresa and Richard on [theresa\\_in\\_brighton@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:theresa_in_brighton@yahoo.co.uk)  
If they are not recent ones, we would be grateful if you could give us names of people and sites included.  
There are some on our website which we haven't been able to identify – if you know when and where they were taken, please let us know.

### [And finally a reminder](#)

Subs for 2020 were due on January 1<sup>st</sup> - £25 for ordinary members, £10 for full-time students. Many thanks to those who have paid already, especially those who have paid by standing order, or by Bacs.

Please send to: Liz Lane,  
Membership Secretary,  
5 Smugglers' Walk  
Goring-by-Sea,  
West Sussex.  
BN12 4DP  
Membership forms can also be downloaded from the WAS website:  
[www.worthingarchaeological.org](http://www.worthingarchaeological.org)

Items for next News sheet please to Liz, as above,  
or [liz.13lane@gmail.com](mailto:liz.13lane@gmail.com)

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