

Worthing Archaeological Society

News sheet

WAS Field Unit

Fridays at Sompting

If you are interested in continuing the 'dig', join in on Fridays, until the end of August. Meeting at 9.30 on site, working until around 4. Details from Connie: connieshirley1@aol.com.

Slindon Stable Block Cleaning/Recording

Please feel free to join us cleaning the unrecorded part of the paved floor of the Stable Block on Saturday mornings from 3rd August 9.30-4.00pm. And come if you can only manage a morning or a couple of hours. And leave whenever you need to. The stabling yard is enclosed so if it is sunny you will need suncream and a hat. Water will be on hand and there is a village shop (The Forge) where lunch can be bought if you forget your sandwiches. Just let Cheryl know when you are available - hutchincheryl@hotmail.com – if you haven't already.

5th October 2019 - 10.00am-3.30pm

Bob Turner is holding a Section Drawing and Planning Course at Slindon Stableyard on Saturday 5th October 2019 (where the Finds Sheds are based).

This is a chance to be hands-on with an archaeological dig recording. Archaeology is a destructive process so accurate recording is essential at all stages so at some future time we have a complete record of what was found and where.

We will look at, and have experience of recording, the floor of an excavation, and also how to record vertical sections using standard practice and recognised recording procedures. A must-do course for all archaeologists who want to progress beyond digging.

This is for members only and will cost £5. Tea and coffee will be available but please bring your own lunch. WAS will supply boards and paper and you will be contacted nearer the date with a suggested list of equipment.

August – September 2019

Please let Patricia know if you are interested: p.leming@btinternet.com

SOMPTING 2019

The run-up to the summer dig is usually centred around prayers for fine weather. This year was different, we needed rain.



That failed to arrive and so the ground was akin to rock. Even Malcolm and the digger had difficulty penetrating the surface almost tipping over backwards in an attempt to break the ground. At least there was no turf to stack for the back-filling, most of the top surface just blew away. Preparation for the dig is, as always, down to the efforts of Connie.

Her background work in research and surveying always gets us on the spot and this year was no different.

Once the equipment had been delivered by a well-oiled machine, the tent was put up and the finds team installed, well then it did rain and blow, boy did it blow. The tent needed extra stakes and ties to keep it in position but it did the job for the two weeks we were on site.

The eastern trenches over the previous year's dig proved very productive in both walls and finds. Some lovely Bronze Age and

Medieval pot sherds which, with the expert eye of



Gordon, were identified by type and location even the price when new! A Nuremberg Jeton was also found in the eastern trench spoil, very close to the site of last year's Jeton and the same date of c1600.

The western trench was down to Vicky and Henry. Any trench with these two in it soon gives way to their natural forces and allows itself to be enlarged, deepened, enlarged then extended. Thus the chasm of trench 10 was so impressive with the Earth's mantle pulsating at the bottom. Either that or it was a sewage pipe. That trench was going to take some back-filling.



**Beautifully dug
Trench 10**

Two weeks of fine weather, bar one day, and fine friends, made for a very successful dig. Although definitive answers have yet to be found as to the layout of the site, our knowledge and understanding is improving. The best part of the dig was Mike's offer to back-fill Vicky and Henry's chasm with a digger and that the eastern trenches can remain open for our Friday sessions. A very rewarding and absorbing two weeks that will hopefully provide some answers in the forthcoming Fridays.

Chris L

Finds Processing

Throughout the year Finds are processed at 9.30am, twice-monthly, at our Slindon base, led by Gill Turner.

Next meetings will be

Thursday, 1st August

Thursday, 15th August

Thursday, 5th September

Thursday, 19th September

ggmturmer@aol.com

Lecture Programme – see last page of the Newsletter.

October 8th, in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre.

Connie Shirley

The Malthouse Field at Sompting –

Investigation of Building Remains.

WAS has investigated the building remains in Sompting Paddocks which may be part of a malthouse and farm complex known to be on this site in the 17th Century.

Excavations have taken place over three years and a chalk-lined well and further flint walls have been found. Finds recovered include pre-historic flints and pottery from the late Neolithic to the present day. We present a review of the site in the landscape and findings to date.

Owing to the Closure of the Library on November 1st the Lectures will take place in an alternative place in Central Worthing. We will let you know, as soon as we know, where that will be.

November 12th

Carolina Rangel de Lima, Finds Liaison Officer
- Sussex

The Portable Antiquities Scheme.

The PAS promotes best practice by finders, landowners, archaeologists and museums in the discovery, recording and conservation of finds made by the public. Carolina is the Finds Liaison Officer for Sussex and will talk about some of the recent finds recorded in our area. She may also bring along a selection of artefacts for handling at the end of the session.

December 10th

Mr John Mills

Archaeologist WSCC and President of Worthing Archaeological Society

Researching the life of a bridge: Old Swan Bridge and the Arun river crossing at Pulborough, ancient and modern.

How do you research the history and changing life of an ordinary small local road bridge? This talk uses archaeology, topography, geology, transport and local history to study the archaeology and history of Old Swan Bridge at Pulborough, built in the 1780s. Previous bridges and river crossings on its site, from Roman Stane Street onwards, the bridge builders and rebuilders, flood and bridge authorities, and the villagers of Pulborough all come into the picture.

WAS Study Day 10am – 4pm

23rd November Simon Stevens 'The Archaeology of Death and Commemoration' – Museum Education Room.

Please contact Patricia Leming

p.leming@btinternet.com

if you wish to attend this day.

£25 for WAS Members. £30 for non-Members.

Food and Feasting – Judie English, Saturday 8 June 2019

A select group of WAS members had a great day in the Downs Barn, Sompting. Judie English shared some of her vast knowledge with us on food and feasting through the ages. Homemade bread, curd cheese and two types of pottage (soup) were provided for lunch. Not forgetting Chris Lane's homemade elderberry wine which was very tasty and highly intoxicating!

Starting with Neanderthals through to the Medieval, here is a sample of topics that were covered.

Food was necessary for life. Feasting allowed food to be provided in large amounts and consumed wastefully. The use of food in feasting was to enhance the status of the giver and was possibly to demonstrate the subservience of the receiver, who had to then try and prove they too could equal it. Feasts were often used for important events such as marriages, treaties etc.

Early humans eg **Neanderthals and Homo sapiens** were apex predators not just scavengers and were able to hunt and catch a wide range of prey from red deer to aurochs and mammoths. This would have required planning and communication to co-ordinate. All parts of the animal would have been eaten or processed in some way but there would have been no way to preserve food.

In the **Mesolithic**, people preferred to live close to the shoreline and riverbanks of northern Europe. They ate sea food extensively, with evidence being found in shell middens in northern Britain, Scandinavia and elsewhere. Fruits, nuts and seeds were essential parts of the prehistoric diet. There is evidence that dairying may have reached Britain in c 4,100BC (the **Neolithic**). Yoghurt, butter and cheese may have been made but no fresh milk would have been consumed at that time, and there is no real date yet for cheese production in Britain.



In the **Bronze Age** brewing was introduced, as was the use of metal for cauldrons and cooking utensils. Most of Britain was being farmed, with field systems all over. New crops were used including flax (for oil and fibre), gold-of-pleasure (oil seed) and spurrey (for oil). Boats were used for coastal and river use. Excavations at Must Farm in Cambridgeshire (several houses built on stilts over fenland) show a B.A. site destroyed by fire with adjacent dry land on which remains of 20 or so cattle were deposited in one go which could have been for a feast. Emmer wheat and barley would

have been used for porridge or gruel rather than bread since there was no evidence of baking.

Venison, horse, pigs and lamb were also consumed. Some freshwater fish would have been eaten. There were few vegetables other than pulses, greens and certain wild roots. There is evidence also in Cladh Hallan of milking herds.

Late prehistoric farming shows a story of success, in particular of grain production, and by Late Iron Age, Britain was exporting grain in large amounts to Europe. Hengistbury Head was a main port of entry to this country.

The Romans introduced grapevines, medlars, mulberries, true apples etc. Vineyards were planted as far north as Yorkshire. Fruits were preserved in various ways and were used extensively throughout cooking. They loved fish and shellfish and farmed fish for the table.

Fish was only eaten on a regular basis by the wealthy. Many of the vegetables we eat today were cultivated eg: celery, leeks, garlic, cabbage etc. Olives, dates and almonds were also grown, together with a variety of herbs. Milk from goats and sheep was considered superior to that of cows with olive oil being used for baking pastries and seasoning. Cheese was considered essential and the Roman soldiers were given it as part of their rations. A variety of Roman breads were made. During the famine of 123 BC the governors set up granaries and controlled the price to ensure all the population could buy grain cheaply. Wine was normally mixed with water just before drinking as it was so intoxicating. Romans introduced fallow deer, pheasants, donkeys and possibly rabbits. Many wealthy prominent Romans discouraged meat eating but pork, beef and mutton or lamb was commonly eaten. There was a mixed view of refined cuisine, it could be considered as either civilised progress or a decadent decline. Because of the importance of land-owning in Roman culture, cereals, legumes, vegetables and fruit were often considered more civilised than meat. Carnivores may have been seen as Barbarians. Some Christians adopted fasting as an ideal.

Food became simpler as life in the West diminished and trade routes were disrupted. The church discouraged gluttony. After the Romans left Britain the climate deteriorated and life was hard for the **Saxons**. The Anglo- Saxon Chronicle records 35 episodes of famine between 450 and 1066. There was evidence of ergot (which flourished in damp conditions in poor weather) in grain. Some fishing

and hunting wild beasts and birds took place.

Vegetable broth was the main food for the poor eg: made of beans; peas and mint. Christianity forbade the eating of meat on certain days of the week so fish was an important food. Fishing was done in the Arctic waters and the Baltic Sea which would have meant fishing was done in extremely hazardous conditions. By the end of the Saxon period, Christianity applied religious laws on what could be eaten. Meat could not be eaten on over 250 days a year so fish was very important. Wheat was available (for bread), barley (brewing and poorest bread), oats (for animals and porridge). White bread was eaten by the better-off. Lots of honey was used so bees were kept widely. Major feasts lasted for up to 3 days. A vast amount of food and drink was consumed with proper use of table etiquette. Story-telling and other entertainment took place.

After the **Norman Conquest**, closer ties with Europe meant new types of fruits came from France eg: sweet pears and different types of apples. Commoners were allowed to harvest fruits and nuts. Cane sugar was introduced to Britain before 1066 and afterwards larger amounts came. Dairy food was considered very important during the **Medieval** period especially for families as there was little meat available. Hens were very important and eggs too were subject to the religious dietary laws. There was also a range of bread wheat grown for human consumption. Barley was grown for beer making as water was unsafe to drink. Vegetables were very important for the poor as they could not afford meat. By the Tudor period vegetables were considered unsafe to eat so the rich avoided them. Fish was eaten by the wealthiest; plaice, haddock and mackerel. Conceits (highly decorated pieces) were placed on tables at feasts.

For the majority of people over time, food became more varied, cheaper and safer. Also the religious laws gradually lapsed. People eat more simple meals though there are still opportunities for feasting eg: weddings, Christmas, competitive dinner parties which result in wastefulness that in the Roman period, would perhaps have been frowned upon!

Patricia L

[Binsted Strawberry Fair](#)

A goodly number of WAS folk were there to explain our table of Finds. And to eat strawberries, buy plants, stroke kittens...



WAS Bursary

WAS has a small amount of money available to Members who would like to extend their knowledge by going on Archaeological Courses/lectures, but might find it difficult to afford. This could be a contribution towards the costs of the Course, or a contribution towards travel expenses. Recipients would be expected to pay a small contribution towards the costs and provide a report back for the Newsletter. Contact our Treasurer, Connie connieshirley1@aol.com

GDPR

WAS Data Protection and Privacy Notice Update

The Society has updated its Privacy Notice to include 'WAS members' details are provided for Society business only and should not be used for other purposes without the explicit consent of individual members for that alternative purpose.'

This Privacy Notice can be viewed on the WAS website.

Safeguarding Policy - We now have a WAS Safeguarding Policy please refer to the website. If any of your details – address, post code, telephone number(s), email address, or Gift Aid option - have changed since you filled in the form last year, please would you let us know.

Please let WAS know at any time if you wish to withdraw your consent from receiving

communications from us and we will delete you from our list.

Many thanks.

Museum Object Handling

Every Saturday, 10 -12am and 1 - 3pm.

Worthing Museum Public Gallery.

Well worth a visit – at any time.....

Also there is a marvellous Exhibition about [Cissbury](#) in the Studio at the moment.

Arundel Museum walks August 18th to 26th -

The Museum will be offering Guided Walks around Arundel at 2pm during the Arundel Festival. There will be a guided walk, coffee and a visit to the museum for just £7. The guided walk only would be £4. Call 01903 885866 or e-mail office@arundelmuseum.org for more details.

Project to record all Sussex War memorials

If you are interested in this, a joint East Sussex/West Sussex Project, please look at eastsussexww1.org.uk/take-part

Brighton Museum

Has an excellent new Archaeology Gallery – well worth a visit.

WAS Archive.

Connie is currently Curator of our Archive. We have a good collection of Sussex Archaeological Collections, starting from the very first.

Please feel free to use them for your research. There is a selection on sale after Lectures.

South Downs Cross-Ridge-Dyke Project

Judie English, David Lea and Richard Tapper have been involved in this huge project for some time. The sections between the Arun and Adur and the Arun and the A286/Lavant valley are on our website. Makes very good reading.

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

Articles for our 2019 Journal are welcome.
Send to our Editor, Cheryl, on
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

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

If they are not recent ones, we would be grateful if you could give us names of people and sites included, where possible.

Sussex Archaeological Society

Sunday 1st September 2019 (10.30-13.00)
Sussex Archaeological Society – **Guided walk, Findon**

Dr David Dunkin will be leading a walk for members and guests to include the parish church, the Neolithic flint mines and the Late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement and in particular the temple complex.

Start location: Holmcroft Gardens off Cross Lane, Findon Village

Fee £5: Book via: members@sussexpast.co.uk

Archaeology Walks for 2019 with Alex Vincent.
Meet at the Resource Centre (Davison House) Car Park, North Street, Worthing, BN11 1ER on Monday evenings at 6.45 for 7 PM.

August 5th Sheepcombe, Findon. Medieval manor house.

August 12th Beach House, Worthing.
Palaeolithic site. As this is the last walk, if it is raining, we will meet in a pub.

Contact Alex on alexeclipsing@gmail.com

Beedings and Bramber LHS

Meetings are held at 7.45pm in Beeding & Bramber Village Hall, High Street, Upper

Beeding, BN44 3WN and visitors are always welcome, entry for them £2.

Wed. 4 September Ian Everest: The Women's Land Army

Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society

BHAS Summer Outings

11th August 2019 – **Chatham Dockyard**

Full details on BHAS website.

<http://www.brightonarch.org.uk>

To book for Chatham, please enclose a cheque for **£30 per person (BHAS member)** or **£35 (non-member)** made out to BHAS and send to:

Margaret Carey
27 Quebec Street,
Brighton,
BN2 9UZ

Please be sure to include: your contact details, including email and phone number; and your preferred pick-up point – Holmbush, Hove Town Hall, Old Steine or Patcham Salisbury

8th September 2019 (provisional) – **Mary Rose**

BHAS are also arranging a trip to the Mary Rose in Portsmouth – probably on Sunday September 8th. This will not be a coach trip but a train trip with people making their own way. To get the group discount of £13.50 for entry to the Mary Rose museum we will need 15 people to come on the trip. We will be sending out more details nearer the time.

Horsham and District Archaeology Group

horshamarch@hotmail.co.uk or 01903 872309

Sussex Archaeological Society

<https://sussexpast.co.uk>

Liss Archaeology

Colemore. Liss are planning a big test pit project up there in the autumn 19/9 to 14/10. More diggers required plus finds processing, drawing, recording etc.

More information is available from

lissarchaeology@gmail.com

www.lissarchaeology.uk

CBA Southeast runs lots of Archaeological events, workshops, etc.

www.cbасouth-east.org

Chichester District Archaeology Society

activities@cdas.info

[Lewes Archaeological Group](http://www.lewesarchaeology.org.uk)
www.lewesarchaeology.org.uk

[Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society](http://hantsfieldclub.org.uk)

Has a variety of events

See landscape-events@hantsfieldclub.org.uk

[Wealden Buildings Study Group](http://www.wealdenbuildings.org.uk)
www.wealdenbuildings.org.uk

[South Downs Society](http://southdownssociety.org.uk)

Based in Pulborough, the Society has a variety of walks and talks which might well be interesting.

Email them:

enquiries@southdownssociety.org.uk

[List of WAS Officers](#) – is on our website.

[And finally a reminder](#)

Subs for 2019 were due on January 1st - £25 for Ordinary members, £10 for full-time students. Many thanks to all those who have paid already.

See Liz at Lectures or:

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

Items for next News sheet please to

Liz, as above,

or liz.13lane@gmail.com

The Worthing Archaeological Society is a registered Charity (291431)

Lecture Programme 2019 -2020

October 8th 2019

Connie Shirley

The Malthouse Fields at Sompting –Investigation of Building Remains

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January 14th 2020

Professor Naomi Sykes

Fishbourne Roman Wildlife Park: new questions from old bones

Over the last 20 years Fishbourne's animal remains have been subject to large-scale reinvestigation through a series of projects funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. This talk by Professor Naomi Sykes will present the results of this work, highlighting their importance for our understanding of the past but also their significance for modern international animal conservation policy.

February 11th 2020

Dr Janet Pennington

My Archaeological Childhood in Sussex

Janet grew up in the post-World War II years looking at the ground – daughter of Sussex archaeologists Eric and Hilda Holden. Most of her early memories are of Sussex history, field-walking with her parents and observing, later taking part in, archaeological excavations all over Sussex. This talk takes us back to a more peaceful time with little traffic, no health and safety, and when every outing seemed to be tinged with excitement and mystery.

March 10th 2020

Richard Osgood

Senior Archaeologist Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Recovering (from) the past: Archaeology and Operation Nightingale

Operation Nightingale started in 2011 with the aim of assisting the recovery of military personnel post operational-tours using archaeology. Since then it has worked on sites as varied as Saxon cemeteries in Wiltshire to crashed fighter planes in Sussex. This talk will draw together many of the fieldwork results, and discuss the outcomes for volunteers and heritage

April 14th 2020

To be announced