

# WAS NEWSLETTER

## 2nd VOLUME No 27

### WINTER 2001

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## Editorial

This edition of the newsletter we hope will be the best yet. We have been exploring new layout and printing techniques. Thanks to Rodney and Joe for their efforts in that direction. If we have succeeded there should be some better pictures unfortunately not yet in glorious technicolour. There is of course a price to pay, but our feelings are that you will all enjoy and perhaps benefit from the new arrangements.

Further advances in the technology front include a trial effort at producing our own website. Whilst this may not be exciting news to some it does help to improve our image to the outside world.

Some of you may have noticed a few discrepancies in the article on flint knapping in the last newsletter.

The article was written by an American and therefore, based upon information and finds from America.

You may have noticed the use of a 'billet' from a moose antler or that no flint hammer stones were mentioned.

Now that I have purchased a book on the stone tools of America - more specifically Canada, I will no doubt be enlarging upon the differences between the techniques. The basic ideas must surely be similar.

You will find items concerning the deaths of Dr Peter Reynolds and our dear friend Con. Whilst by no means detracting from their contributions to archaeology, I would like to point out that there is another, unsung, hero of local Archaeology who deserves more than just a mention. I am referring to Dr Dixon. I was not aware of his work until a geological acquaintance pointed it out to me. I give below – almost verbatim some extracts from my colleagues plea for a plaque to be placed in his memory.

Parts in italics are the editor's additions.

Dr Dixon

Antony Brook

Dr. Frederick Dixon was born on 16 March 1799, the youngest of 3 sons of the Rector of Sullington. One brother became an Army officer, another became an Anglican clergyman, and eventually, the Rector of Ferring. Tailender Frederick went to Eton College and completed his medical training at Guy's Hospital in the early 1820's. From late 1827 all 3 Dixon brothers lived in adjacent properties in Chapel Road. Worthing until Frederick moved his entourage to a large house in Union Place in 1833, where he resided until his sudden and unexpected death on 27 September 1849 at the early age of 50.

Dr Dixon is significant at 3 scales: locally, to the citizens of Worthing; regionally, to the society of Sussex; and nationally, to the burgeoning community of Science. In August 1829 Dr. Dixon was instrumental in establishing the Worthing Dispensary in Ann St. next to the old Theatre, where medical care was provided, free of charge, to "the sick and necessitous poor of the town and neighbourhood". As Consultant Surgeon to the Dispensary, Dr Dixon was, in effect, Worthing's Medical Officer of Health. He laid the groundwork for what this popular Dispensary evolved into — Worthing Hospital. Dr Dixon did his best to alleviate pain and suffering in dire circumstances. He was also elected to the elite and august body of Worthing Town Commissioners, and instigated improvements in coastal defences and life saving in the 1840's.



*Sepulchral urn discovered near Storrington on the Downs*

*His archaeological collection contained many funereal or sepulchral urns ascribed to the Romans, a large amount of bronze artifacts, coins – many found to the East of Worthing on the beach where "a blockade station formally stood". Samian pieces and almost complete vessels. Much information about his finds is readily available to us through the publications of the Sussex archaeology Society. I do not know if it is possible to see the actual artifacts at Alnwick*

Dr Dixon was far more than just a caring and concerned medical man: he was a well read intellectual, with a sharp enquiring mind, particularly about anything ancient. On the wider stage of the County, Dixon was a founder Member and Councillor of the newly established Sussex Archaeological Society in 1846. One of the earliest county wide historical organisations. He was a very enthusiastic champion of the cause, attending and chairing Meetings, arranging exhibits and submitting erudite papers for the early volumes of the Sussex Archaeological Collections. He acted as Local Secretary for Worthing. His outstanding contribution to firmly establishing this learned Society in its difficult

early years was most appreciated, after his demise.

It was as geologist more particularly a Palaeontologist that Dixon gained a wider recognition. For at least 15 years before his untimely death, he had been assiduously searching out fossils mainly at Bracklesham Bay and had built up a finely worked Collection, which formed the basis for his magnum opus commonly known as *The Geology of Sussex* a magnificent tome, with 44 coloured Plates, published posthumously late in 1850. After 150 years this volume still remains the standard work of reference on the subject. Despite his early death, Dixon

attained scientific immortality, because 24 fossils have the species designation 'dixon'.

Dr Dixon also acquired a large Collection of pre Norman Antiquities, which finished up in Alnwick Castle Northumberland.

From 1833 until his death in September 1849, Dr Frederick Dixon lived at No. 3. Union Place, Worthing, a 'fine spacious marine residence', built c. 1830 in a short elite street on the contemporary outskirts of town facing south over the rooftops to the sea, and just along the way from St Paul's Church. Dr Dixon's house still stands there, essentially unaltered in style and design, and currently houses the Adult Education Centre of Northbrook College. It is listed by Worthing Borough Council as 'a building of local architectural and historic interest' and I believe, worthy of even more interest as the erstwhile domicile of Worthing's Premier Man of Science. Dr Dixon was a V.I.P. in Worthing in the 1830's and 1840's, a key figure in the social and intellectual milieu of the town, and indeed the County, with national overtones. He richly deserves a plaque on his old place of residence. *It strikes me as highly appropriate that the home of such a man is now in use as a centre for learning. Many of you no doubt learnt some of your archaeology from Con there.*

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## YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS DAYS AT BIGNOR 2001

Anne Induni



"The future Guardians of our Past" was the comment by the Archaeologist who had given up his time to help with the young people who came to join in the activities organised by the Worthing Archaeological Society at Bignor on July 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.

There was a wide selection of different things to do, making wattle and daub, mosaics, spinning, finds washing and marking, surveying, dowsing, pot drawing, using a quern, and a metal detector. Pride of place went to the opportunity to take part in an actual excavation in a small trench alongside the boundary fence on the north side. One young "excavator" was extremely pleased with himself - he had recognised the small red cube he had found as a piece of tesserae.

Those

the  
place

event  
thank

active



who tried several activities were given a certificate stating that they were "a young archaeologist for a day in July 2001 and had practical experience of many archaeological techniques". The Society was very grateful to landowner for allowing the activities to take in view of the great difficulties for farmers at the moment, and it was very encouraging that the was well supported. The Society would like to the Custodians of Bignor and all those members who gave up their time to take an part in what was a very worth while event.



## Slindon Pre – Excavation work

Richard Pulley

Saturday August 4th saw our return to Slindon for some real archaeology. Sadly foot and mouth restrictions were still in place so preventing us from digging near earlier excavation sites on the fields in the park. The National Trust however has been kind enough to allow us to make some exploratory excavations within the adjacent woodland.



A very good turn out of field unit members meant that our first day back was a great success; with all our major objectives being achieved. The new site was surveyed, allowing it to be mapped accurately in relation to the earlier excavations. Then began the task of clearing the abundant undergrowth from the area we want to explore. Although the intention of the day was just to prepare the site for excavation in September, one area being cleared quickly began to produce

examples of Roman pottery. The finds clearly indicated a Roman presence that appears to be not very far below the surface of the soil.

By the end of the day's work, some thirty sherds of pottery had been recovered. Amongst the items found was a very nice rim. As with the other examples discovered this piece was made of a coarse sandy fabric. At first it appeared to be similar to examples of South - East Dorset black burnished ware (Tyres. 1996, page 184, fig 228; 39.1). The strongly horizontal rim suggesting a copy of these flat rimmed bowls. Examples from Exeter have been dated between 160 - 200 AD (Holbrook and Bidwell. 1991, Page 108 types 36 -38). There are also parallels with pottery types from the Alice Holt/Farnham pottery industry which produced large flat rimmed dishes between 150 - 220 AD (Lyne and Jefferies. 1979, page 49, fig 37; 6B.3). On this evidence a date in the late second early third century seems likely.

Despite the fact that the majority of sherds were made from a similar sandy fabric they appear to have been fired at different temperatures producing a range of colours from buff through to orange and grey, with the later being the predominant colour. The pottery appears to be typical of this area of Sussex and is most often associated with kilns in the Hardham and Wiggonholt, Littlehampton area, now known as Arun valley ware. Some sherds did show signs of burnishing including the inner surface of the rim illustrated. Although the pottery awaits further cleaning and analysis it seems that there is a lot more to come, which will make a more secure dating much easier.

With both Slindon providing opportunities for some excellent digging in the future it is to be hoped that more members will become active members of the field unit. From just one afternoon of scrub clearing has come very clear evidence that the Slindon site has some dramatic possibilities. Don't miss out on a unique opportunity to discover more about the history of Roman Sussex.

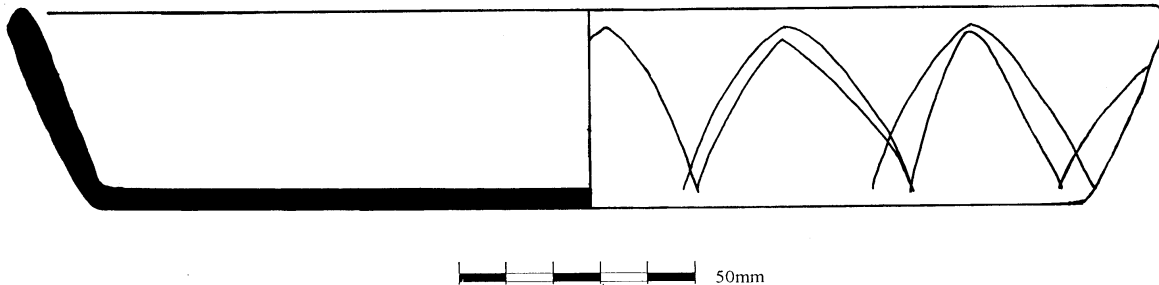
## Excavations

Amongst the pottery recovered from the Romano-British ditch excavated during the late Summer in Slindon Park was a significant part of a large plain-rimmed dish.

It was some 24 cms in diameter and had a depth of 4.5 cms. (see illustration below). The fabric from which it was made appears to be typical of what is commonly called black-burnished ware. This fabric, produced in Dorset, can be found on many Roman sites throughout the country. It was popular during almost the entire period of Roman occupation and was widely copied by other potters. Our example appears to be the genuine Dorset fabric. Certainly both inside and outside surfaces have been carefully burnished, the outer surfaces have been decorated with intersecting arcs and the base shows signs of having an intersecting loop decoration burnished on it.

In some places the burnished surface has worn away making it impossible to accurately judge the complete design of the arcs. Inside the bottom of the bowl appears to be evidence of a tar like deposit which has left it with a black glossy appearance, quite what this was is difficult to judge but it seems unlikely that is the residue of anything that might be considered to be food.

Dating the dish is difficult as the form was produced from the second through to the fourth centuries. The design however is rather more unusual, being typical of later varieties of this type of dish.



In London Symonds dates similar types of design to the end of the third into the early fourth centuries, although the fabric is burnished it is not Dorset black-burnished ware. From excavations at Brixworth in Northamptonshire (Woods) similar forms showing intersecting arcs have been dated to the end of the third and early fourth centuries, again the fabric although burnished did not originate from Dorset. I have as yet been unable to find any exact parallels in the same fabric, although a popular type of vessel it seems reasonable to suggest that the design on the outer surface point to a third century date at the earliest.

Holbrook, N and Bidwell P. T. 1991 *Roman Finds from Exeter* The University of Exeter.

Lyne, M. And Jefferies, R. 1979 *The Alice Holt/Farnham Roman pottery industry* CBA: London

Tyers, P. 1996 *Roman Pottery in Britain* Routledge: London

Symonds, R. 1991. *Late Roman London*. Lon. Mid. Arch. 42

Woods, P. 1. 1971. *Brixworth Excavations*. Journal 8. Northampton Museum and Art Gallery

### Southampton University at Slindon 1998

### Pottery Finds

### Richard Pulley

One sunny summer afternoon I happened to be visiting Chichester Museum's storage facility on the St James' industrial estate. Here a vast treasure-trove of artefacts is carefully stored away in cardboard boxes that reach from floor to ceiling. Amongst the material that the museum holds are a number of boxes that relate to excavations and fieldwalking that has taken place at Slindon. With time at premium and a large amount of material to study I decided to take a quick look at the pottery Southampton University excavated from the area in 1998. All their finds fitted neatly into one large box (museum reference: A201 15 - N32) and were bagged up showing what I assumed to be the context number on each bag. This is no more than a few initial remarks about what I found.

The collection was as ever with Romano - British sites dominated by coarse ware fabrics. Most of which were of



a sandy fabric fired into a range of colours with grey being predominant. Many of these pieces appeared to originate from the Rowlands Castle area. One form from this pottery is particularly common in Sussex the large indented jar. Made from a light grey, hard, sandy fabric it is easily identified by the thumb prints that have been carefully and deliberately placed within the jar itself before firing. Examples have been found at Fishbourne (Cunliffe 1971) Fishbourne Creek (Rudling 1986) and Littlehampton (Gilkes 1993). Dated by Cunliffe to 'the second to fourth centuries' (Cunliffe 1971). He suggests that they might have been used as beehives<sup>1</sup> - an interesting idea and an opportunity perhaps for someone to do some archaeology by experiment.

No rims were identified from Rowlands Castle, the distinctive batch markings on so many of them being an excellent indicator of origin. The other coarser, more sandy fabrics might have their origins in one of the Arun Valley kilns. Certainly the fabric marked as 'iron Age' appeared to be a sherd from a Roman jar made of coarse sandy material similar to that found at a kiln site in Littlehampton.

There were also two sherds of East Sussex ware. A fabric common to all sites east of the Adur up to the Kent border but only infrequently found in our area. This grog tempered fabric is easy to identify thanks to its smooth and soapy texture which contrasts markedly with what looks like a rather crude fabric which can be fired from orange to black even within the same pot.

The only other coarseware fabric I could very tentatively identify was from the Alice Holt kilns (Lynne and Jefferies 1979).

A rim of a flanged bowl (Class SB. Lynne and Jefferies 1979). Dated to the third - fourth centuries - they were relatively common products of these kilns (Lynne and Jefferies 1979).

In terms of fineware there was a small sherd from the rim of a Samian vessel that appeared to be from a Dragendorff 18/31/R shallow bowl, the fabric looked Central Gaulish rather than Southern but I hesitate to make any claims to accuracy with this type of fabric, not being familiar with the full range of industries and forms. If it is Central Gaulish however then a date range of between 90 - 150 AD seems probable (Tyers 1999)

Of the home produced fineware there were three nice examples of colour coated New Forest ware. Two perhaps came from the same vessel or same type of vessel (Fulford 1975) a large indented beaker with a metallic purple slip. This form has been dated to between 270 - 340 AD. The other sherd comes from the lower part of a globular beaker (Fulford form 42:2 ) a striking piece (illustrated below) because of the white painted 'fir tree' design over the top of the purple slip. This form was produced between 300 - 340 AD (Fulford 1975).

Also recovered from the Southampton excavations were fragments of amphorae and quern stone none of which I was able to identify in terms of date or origin. Most intriguing of all was a piece of tile bearing the combed pattern associated with flue tiles used sometimes in the construction of hypocausts. Decorated with diagonal and vertical lines it bears a resemblance to tiles found at Fishbourne Creek in 1982 - 1983 (Rudling, SAC 124 (1986)). At this point you might be thinking something like; hypocaust, bath-house, mosaic, villa, palace, Time Team, fame at last! Sadly this might not be the case. As Rudling points out (SAC 124) tiles such as these were often used in the building of corn driers, a rather more mundane but agriculturally more important type of structure.

I draw Fishbourne Creek to your attention for another reason and that is that the building excavated there was an aisled masonry structure very similar to what has been suggested might exist at Slindon. Certainly a quick glance through the material that Southampton excavated suggests that parallels might already be possible even with such a modest range of artefacts.

Finally, during the course of my investigations into the box of pottery sherds I discovered, much to my surprise, what appeared to be Roman coin. Very badly corroded it was impossible to make anything of it. With luck the museum might be able to get it dated.

With no excavation report or context sheets to go on I'm afraid this is a very rough and ready discussion of the pottery from Slindon. Let us hope that a full and detailed account of the results of Southampton's work will be

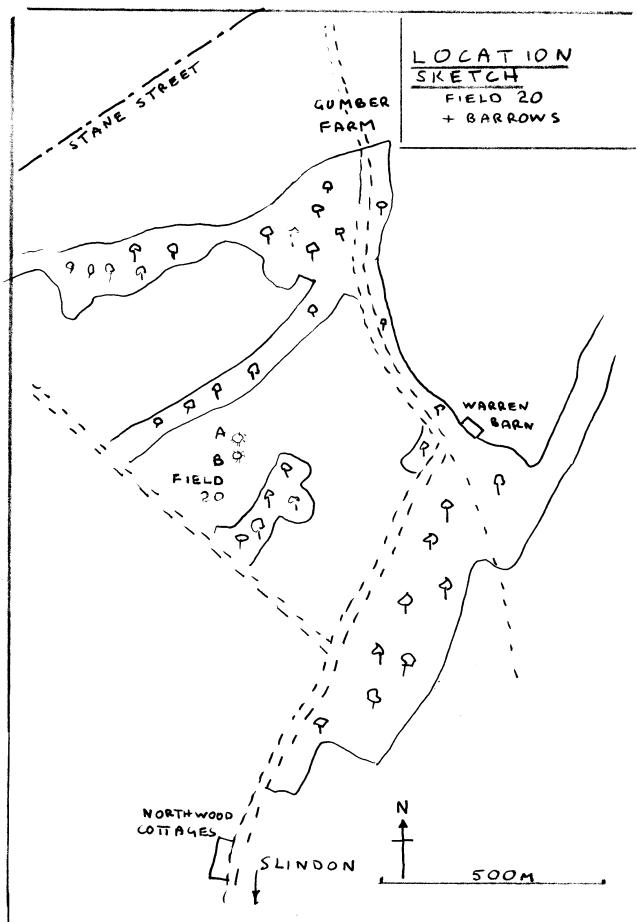
published in the near future and that our own modest efforts will reveal more about this fascinating Roman site.

- <sup>1</sup> See also Lynne and Jefferies (1979) for further comments on the use of such vessels as beehives.  
 Cunliffe, B. 1971 *Excavations at Fishbourne* London: Society of Antiquaries  
 Fulford, M. 1975 *New Forest Roman Pottery* Oxford: BAR British Series 17  
 Gilkes, O. 1993 *Iron Age and Roman Litchfield* SAC. vol 13 1, pg 1 - 21  
 Lynne, M and Jefferies, R. 1979 *Alice Holt/ Farnham Pottery Industry* London: CBA Report No 30  
 Rudling, D. 1986 *The Excavation Of Romano-British Site by Chichester Harbour, Fishbourne* SAC 124  
 Tyers, P. 1999 *Roman Pottery in Britain* Routledge: London

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### Slindon Field 20 Barrow Excavations

Extracts from a project design by James Kenny  
 26/09/01



A national project, (the 'Management of Archaeological Sites in Arable Landscapes Project'), is being undertaken by Oxford Archaeological Unit, for the DoE, to assess soil erosion on archaeological sites. Our society was asked to help at Slindon. In order to incorporate the results of the WAS evaluation into the national project a series of forms was provided by OAU for completion before, during and after fieldwork.

#### Background

In 1975 Robin Upton informed the then West Sussex County Archaeologist, Field 20 at North Wood contained a possible Bronze Age barrow cemetery comprising as many as ten mounds and that some Bronze Age pottery sherds had been recovered from the general vicinity. The site is c.700m south-east of Stane Street and c.2.6km north-east of Slindon village

As a result of annual ploughing the mounds are now barely visible. In 1993, when the National Trust undertook a survey of the archaeology of the Estate (Whitfield, 1993), only one of the barrows could be identified



### **The excavation**

Worthing Archaeological Society helped to evaluate two of the barrows by trial trenching in order that their structures and states of preservation could be assessed with a view to determining to what extent, if any, designated management of the site is warranted.

A single trench totalling up to 35m in length and a minimum of 1.5m wide was excavated. The trench started near the edge of 'Barrow A' and ran south to pass through the centre of 'Barrow B'. The surface, plough soil, was removed with a toothless JCB bucket. The exposed surface was then trowelled only enough to assess what was there.

An Ordnance datum level was surveyed onto the site.

Further work may well be to carry out complete contour survey of the site.

The broad objective was to determine the nature, extent and degree of preservation of archaeological deposits likely to be affected by continued ploughing of the site. This information will then be available to the National Trust Slindon Estate, who may wish to use it to design management strategies to reduce further destruction of surviving deposits.

### **Specific queries**

Are the surviving mound and the sites of mounds man-made barrows?

Does the mound seal a buried soil? Do they have ditches?

Are there associated artefacts/ecofacts of significance?

*The weather was bad. Time was short :- a contract ploughman was waiting to start. Nevertheless a stalwart team did identify some ditches/barrows. I understand the only find of note was a Roman coin probably Claudius. -- Editor*

Swanscombe is in the news again. Apart from the fame of being your editor's birthplace it is the resting place of Sir Erasmus Wilson who brought Cleopatra's needle from the Nile. It is also the site of the discovery of the earliest known bones of man found in Britain (or it was, prior to Mark Robert's discovery of Rupert at Boxgrove). However the latest find is of a 1.5 metre portion of a tusk of a palaeoloxodon antiquus. It was discovered during the building a new school. By now it should have been removed to a laboratory for examination and preservation. The hope is to then have it on permanent display at the school. I wonder how many young minds will be stimulated by it.

The latest newsletter from the Sussex Industrial Archaeological Society has an article on a glassworks circa 1600. In all my years of digging within or without our society I have yet to work on a glass site. The remains are often tantalisingly scant. The site in question is at Tanlands Copse near Northchapel. The Wey and Arun junction canal with Pallingham and its quay is not far away. But in the port records for Littlehampton there are a few references to glass exports. Perhaps we are seeing an adherence to an already established transport system for glassmakers set up in the distant past. After all glass has been made in the weald for centuries.

John Mills (with a contribution from James Kenny), 29-10-01

So far, 2001 has been a busy year for archaeological fieldwork in West Sussex, with particularly interesting archaeological excavations at Northbrook College (West Durrington), Angmering (two sites), Westhampnett and Drayton, near Chichester, and a number of smaller-scale excavations which are bringing new sites to our attention.

## Prehistory

For the prehistoric period, discoveries of previously unknown Bronze Age sites have repeatedly come to light. On the future route of the Angmering Bypass, overlooking the long glacial snowmelt valley which runs down Longfurlong and Water Lane towards Angmering village, parts of two or three small ditched enclosures of Middle Bronze Age date were discovered, one enclosing a collection of post holes which may be what remains of a timber structure or structures. One of the ditches contained a chunk of decorated bucket urn and part of a saddle quernstone.

This seems to be part of a Middle Bronze Age settlement, most of which probably lies outside the Bypass route, in an arable field; but proven settlement sites of this period in West Sussex are very rare indeed (Amberley Mount on the downs for example; on the coastal plain, Kingston Buci).

Groups of Middle Bronze Age cremation burial urns were recovered at Roundstone Nurseries, Angmering; at Drayton, where their distribution was in a broad linear "band" across the site; and at Westhampnett, where some urns may have been placed in a half-silted ring ditch, one of two on the site.

The second half of the Bronze Age seems to be a period of great dividing-up of the landscape, and at Westhampnett, later in the Bronze Age, part of a field system with double-ditched trackway was laid out, one trackway ditch cutting right through one of the ring-ditches. At Roundstone Nurseries and on the Angmering Bypass route, substantial ditches (2 metres wide and perhaps originally over 1.5 metres deep) of the Late Bronze Age were recorded, with indications that they once had adjoining banks: these may have been significant land boundaries or enclosure ditches. When the Angmering ditch was half silted up, a fire was laid and lit in it at one point, perhaps using the bank and ditch as a windbreak.

Also of the late Bronze Age, at Northbrook College, parts of the eaves-drip gullies and some post-holes of two probable round houses came to light this summer, each possibly replaced at least once. A section of ring-ditch was noted by Con Ainsworth in the early 1980s, one of two now below the site of the present College buildings. On the then prevalent dating of Bronze Age/ Early Iron Age pottery, the ring-ditch was thought to be Iron Age; it would be interesting to know, if the pottery can be located, if this feature would now also be thought to be of Late Bronze Age date like the two new ring-ditches.

Earlier this year the surviving post-holes of a circular Late Bronze Age structure and part of another probable round-house eaves-drip gully and post-holes were revealed at Centenary House, Durrington, only a kilometre to the east. Very recently, parts of two more possible eaves-drip gullies of round houses, of Middle/Late Bronze Age date, have come to light at Chichester Road, Selsey (James Kenny, *pers. comm.*).

The Bronze Age round-houses on the two Worthing sites seem to be the only ones of their period known on the Sussex coastal plain; those at Selsey the first possible examples of Later Bronze Age round-houses on the peninsula. A number of Late Bronze Age pits, ditches and post-holes were recorded in 2000 in Horsemere Green Lane, Climping, almost certainly part of another settlement, and a cluster of Late Bronze Age pits at Roundstone Nurseries (one containing a long copper alloy pin) but with no discernible remains of a round house.

At Drayton, besides some Late Bronze Age pits and ditches, there were two rectangular post-hole structures, the post-holes frustratingly containing only a few struck flakes and burnt flint. Rectangular Late Bronze Age structures are known to have existed in the U.K., but the Drayton buildings might

equally have been Early Saxon in date (if the scant contents of the post-holes were residual) or even Early Neolithic.

Earlier this year what appears to be the eaves-drip gully of yet another Late Bronze Age round house was recorded, but this time on the banks of a tributary of the River Mole, on the north-west edge of Gatwick Airport, near the modern Surrey county boundary, well away up in the weald where such sites were traditionally thought not to have existed. Prehistorians in both Sussex and Surrey may feel encouraged! Accompanied by one or two shallow pits and sitting in a ditched enclosure, this may be the first recorded instance of a Late Bronze Age dwelling in the weald of West Sussex. During the 1990s a collection of pits and a ditch of Late Bronze Age date were recorded at Ashington; and a couple of small pits at Burgess Hill and Ardingly; but no surviving indications of dwellings.

On the Angmering Bypass route, a series of shallow linear gullies, on at least two different alignments, were laid out, some cutting through the completely silted-up Late Bronze Age ditch. These are thought possibly to be Iron Age field boundaries. Iron Age sites still seem not to be quite as common as Late Bronze Age sites on the Sussex coastal plain, although the discoveries of Late Iron Age enclosures at Ford Aerodrome in 1999, and of the pre-villa Iron Age occupation at Northbrook College, in the 1980s and 1997, are obvious exceptions.

### Roman period

At Roundstone Nurseries, Angmering, part of a complex Romano-British site was revealed in excavations in advance of house-building. Traces of buildings were detected: shallow beam-slots of a small rectangular building, mostly dug away by Romano-British quarry pits, and a partial alignment of chalk-packed post-holes. A short stretch of linear, gravel-metalled trackway of Roman date ran across the site, the metalling apparently a replacement for a rutted, sunken track below it. A flint-lined corn-drying oven, and a concentration of cesspits, pits and ditches on various alignments over and around the traces of buildings was bordered to the south and west by a system of rectangular ditched enclosures, probably broadly contemporary fields. A single Roman in-urned cremation burial was found, well away from the settlement, within the area of the "fields".

At Northbrook College, north-east of the present College buildings, a number of Romano-British pits and ditches and a possible pond were revealed, petering out about 130 metres to the north-east of the former bath-house site. This excavation has revealed the eastern limits of the Romano-British villa complex; the western edge very probably lies on the other side of Titnore Lane, judging by concentrations of Romano-British pottery recorded in Hightiten Barn field in fieldwalking in the 1980s.

A trial excavation in Amelia Road, Broadwater, about 30 metres from the find-spot of some coins of Diocletian and Constantine (recovered in digging foundations for Park Crescent in 1826-1828) had a negative result: no ancient features of any date surviving.

### Saxon period

Back on the Angmering Bypass route, the latest phase of occupation comprised the corner of a large enclosure containing pottery dating probably to the Early/ Middle Saxon period. No other Saxon features were found within the Bypass route.

This enclosure is again a great rarity on the coastal plain. There is, however, a parallel elsewhere in Sussex for a Saxon enclosure, turning a corner to enclose the hilltop, from excavations in 1988-89 at Market Field, Steyning, but of 10<sup>th</sup>-century date. Nationally, other enclosed sites seem commonly to be of Middle or Later Saxon date, enclosing often rather widely-separated buildings. In this case most of the Angmering enclosure - and any surviving remains of buildings within it- must lie nearer the present village.

Another notable Saxon discovery of 2001 has been two two-post *grubenhauser* or sunken-featured buildings, probably Early/ Middle Saxon in date, at Westhampnett. *Grubenhauser* of early Saxon date were recorded in the Worthing area at Botolphs (Bramber) in 1986, but are still rare discoveries in West Sussex.

New information from recent radiocarbon-dating of one of several human burials, excavated ten years ago within the Roman walled area of Chichester, may change our ideas on the earliest Saxon occupation of the town.

*James Kenny writes:*

"We think the Roman administration of Britain fell apart in the early fifth century and that sub-Roman society struggled on for a few decades before the imposition in turn of a pseudo-Celtic and then an Anglo-Saxon hierarchy. Whatever; there is no evidence of Roman occupation in Chichester after c. AD 400. Medieval Chichester starts with its inclusion in a scheme of defence against the Vikings, organised by King Alfred in the late ninth century; in fact the place-name "Chichester" is first named in an Anglo-Saxon Chronicle record of the destruction of a Danish army by its citizens in AD 894. It seems, however, that at this time the city was no more than a temporary strongpoint and that the real trappings of urbanisation (such as a mint, markets, religious establishments, etc.) didn't arrive until their deliberate introduction by King Athelstan in the second quarter of the tenth century (i.e. AD 925-950).

"However: in 1991 a group of skeletons was found at the rear of a shop on the south side of East Street, inside the Roman walled town. no

### **The 1991 Excavations**



*The skeletons are marked by white squares*

There were no grave goods. Although buried in graves cut into the surface of a Roman street, they are unlikely to be of that period (burial within the boundaries of a settlement was illegal in Roman times), and they can't be medieval because all the cemeteries are already known from documentary evidence, and the site is nowhere near any of them. But now, we have just received the result of radiocarbon dating of a bone sample from one of

the skeletons - AD 680-810! Thus we apparently have Anglo-Saxon burials in Chichester in the century before it was reoccupied! The next question, which probably can't be answered, is whether or not they were Christian (Sussex was only converted by Wilfred in c.AD 680)."

### **Medieval period**

Two medieval sites excavated in 2001 should be singled out. One is the very recent excavation at 5 John Street, Shoreham, close to the High Street in the centre of the medieval port, where a number of pits of 12<sup>th</sup>- to 15<sup>th</sup>- century date have been revealed. Medieval pottery, though in only small assemblages, includes fragments of 13<sup>th</sup>-century French Saintonge vessels and Raeren (Belgium) late medieval stoneware. Together with the finds assemblages from the trial excavations at Ropetackle in 2000 (where there was good environmental evidence in pits, e.g. medieval fish scales), there is at last slowly arising the first good archaeological evidence for the early occupation of New Shoreham.

The other site to mention is a recent excavation within a medieval village centre - South Bersted near Bognor Regis - where a number of pits, a plot boundary ditch and a pottery "cistern" vessel (complete and buried upright in a small pit, probably for water storage), all of (?)12<sup>th</sup>- to 13<sup>th</sup>- century date, were probably followed by reversion of the site to agriculture; the site lay at the eastern extremity of the main street.

Sites with good evidence of medieval occupation in West Sussex' historic village centres are still few in number. In Worthing, the 1960s excavations in Tarring are one example. In 1997, in the centre of Worthing hamlet, the Little High Street site (now Saxon House) revealed several phases of medieval occupation, the earliest features being a series of Saxo-Norman (?10<sup>th</sup>- to 12<sup>th</sup>- century) boundary ditches, pits, gullies and a possible beam slot. Later features included 13<sup>th</sup>- and 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century grain drying ovens (containing charred wheat seeds, the later one also some peas). After this the site, on the northern edge of the hamlet, most likely reverted to agriculture until the 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. A single sherd of Early/ Middle Saxon pottery was also recovered.



## Extracts from Sally White's address at Con's funeral

I met Con in 1974 in a field in Angmering. I was down a hole and Con was visiting the site to see what we were up to. (A similar scenario was repeated several times over the years, always with a cheerful 'Hello Sal, what have you got there?'). When I was introduced to Con I was told that he was 'Mr Archaeology' in West Sussex. He has lived up to that reputation ever since. I knew and valued Con for 27 years. Some of you have known him much longer than this and others met him more recently. All of us who are here today are united in the high regard in which we held him. We all have our individual memories of Con. For myself, I always saw Con and Ena very much as a unit who shared a generosity, warmth and keen intelligence while each pursuing their separate interests. Personally, although I am saddened by his death, I am not altogether surprised that Con only lived 9 months after Ena's death.

Born during the First World War Con's life spanned most of the twentieth century. This was a period in which Sussex was fortunate in having a large number of very gifted amateur archaeologists. Con earned his place among this impressive group. In those years, before professional archaeology, Con like his contemporaries had a day job. In Con's case it was working in a radio shop in Worthing.

Con's involvement with archaeology began in the early 1950s when he worked with John Pull down the Cissbury flint mines. Before long he was deeply involved. Arriving at Worthing Museum in 1960 Ken Barton set up a wonderful group of archaeological enthusiasts called the Museum Correspondents. Con quickly joined this group in 1961 and was allocated Findon Valley and High Salvington as 'his patch'. His responsibility was to keep a close eye on any hole dug in this area, a responsibility he performed with enthusiasm. Ken and Con used to meet up on Wednesday afternoons (half day closing at the shop) and head for the closest pub to the area they wanted to inspect that day. They then stuck their heads down any building sites or roadworks they could find, discovering numerous Roman sites. Con then got involved in Worthing Museum's excavations in Worthing, Steyning, Bramber and Tarring. To further his knowledge he joined the Worthing Archaeological Society and the the Sussex Archaeological Society, maintaining a close interest in both societies until his death. He served on the Council of the Sussex Archaeological Society for a total of twelve years and on the Committee of the Worthing Archaeological Society for a great many years. He was also active in the Worthing Society.

Ken Barton left Worthing in 1963 and his replacement, Jane Evans, also developed a rewarding working partnership with Con from which the Museum and Sussex archaeology benefited enormously. They collaborated on a number of important sites including Muntham Court, Wiggonholt and, - the logboats.

When I started work at Worthing Museum we had a dingy 'hut' at the back. On one of its walls were the words of a song written by Major Roper in 1964, to be sung to the tune of Widdecombe Fair. It told the story of the discovery of a flotilla of logboats in the River Arun, a project in which Con was deeply involved. Deeply in terms of mud as well as in terms of commitment. The last verse gives you the flavour of the song:

'Now they've collected a regular fleet,  
All along, out along Pulborough way.  
Five canoes-six canoes - all records beat

By     Jane Evans, Stuart Rose, John Friar, Tim Bertram,  
       Stan Jepson, Ted Sparkes, Mr Suggers, Major Roper,

Old Uncle Con Ainsworth and All-  
Old Uncle Con Ainsworth and All.

We all know that Con could be persuasive, but few, I think would have expected even him to be able to persuade the owner of a property in Binsted, unhappily sited over an important Medieval kiln site to let him dig up her garden not once, but twice. I understand that her path was replaced in better condition than it had been when they arrived but the sheer volume of pottery and tile that was removed, some 4

tons, must have left a sizeable hole in the garden.

For information about sites he did not work on himself but which he visited regularly Con was a mine of information. One such site, where I do not think he actually dug (there wasn't room!) was the Roman well or ritual shaft at Findon which was excavated by Dr Ratcliffe Densham and a pot-holing club in the 1960s. The shaft was under 4 feet wide and 260 feet deep. The excavators worked, one at a time on a bosun's chair at the end of a long cable. Con cheerfully told me that he was one of the few people to have been to the very bottom of the shaft and proceeded to describe it.

Con was not only a very gifted field archaeologist but also a loyal friend and a superb teacher and communicator. I used to wonder if his family had to make an appointment to see him between the courses that he taught on all periods across the length and breadth of Sussex. His energy was prodigious. He had that rare ability to help students to think out their own ideas while passing on to them the knowledge that they needed from him. In 25 years teaching adult education classes he inspired countless students and stimulated in them a curiosity and excitement that mirrored his own attitude to archaeology and history. Not content with teaching all these classes Con also contributed endlessly to the successful coach outings run by the Worthing Archaeological Society, led tours around local sites such as Boxgrove and took groups abroad.

This year Con's unique contribution to both archaeology and education in Sussex have been recognised by the award of two honours. In January he was awarded the Honorary Degree of Master of Arts in recognition of the 25 years he spent lecturing about archaeology for the University of Sussex to adult groups all over Sussex. In May, when he was too ill to attend himself, Martin and Susie came to the AGM of the Sussex Archaeological Society when Con was elected an Honorary Vice-President of the Society. These honours were richly deserved.

Con's death marks the end of era, that of the great amateur, largely self-taught archaeologists and educators who served Sussex so richly during the C20th. Con will live on in all our memories; his work will also have a tangible memorial in the work of his students and in the photographs of him in action that dot the archaeological files at the Museum. His death is also, to all of us gathered here today and to many many others the personal loss of a dearly beloved person.

To finish I would like to borrow a couple of lines from Hamlet:

**'He was a man, take him for all in all,  
We shall not look upon his like again'**

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Dr Peter Reynolds

Those of you have met Peter, visited Butser or had any contact at all with him will be saddened to know that he passed away after a short illness whilst in Turkey on the 26<sup>th</sup> September this year. His research into Prehistoric and Roman agriculture will obviously continue and control of the farm is now in the hands of his partner Christine Shaw. It was often said that he was one of the prime movers in ensuring that the National Curriculum History now starts pre 'the Rotten Romans'. His constant search for proof to validate theories often brought him into what I may term as 'academic conflict' with some archaeologists. What?, how? and why? are powerful weapons and he used them with gusto against generally held or fashionable opinions.



His internet obituary ends:- **The following extract, from Peter's will, stands as his own epitaph:**

"Finally I have enjoyed my life. I worked hard and played hard, I made horrendous mistakes of judgement and trust but I set out not to wreak vengeance on any who deserved it nor did I consciously seek to hurt anyone. My greatest pleasure in life was life itself - the fun of being and of sharing. Regrets are few - perhaps only the lack of ownership of a T shirt with BIN THERE DONE THAT - there were other places, other activities up to which I didn't get!

I like to think the precepts of IT describe my life and that perhaps I added a whit or two to the sum of human understanding – unlikely.

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

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## Palace Lands

## Notes from Keith Bolton

In May of this year a farmer keen to find out more about the history of some land (known as Palace Lands) contacted John Mills of WSCC who forwarded his query to Worthing Archaeological Society.

As a result a fieldwalk was undertaken within two weeks of the phone call. Due to the size of the field it was decided to concentrate efforts on and around three flat "platforms" visible in the field. The grid was set out in a series of 10 x 10 metre squares with two people walking each square. The aim was to collect all man-made material or material 'foreign' to the site. The majority of these finds (horsham stone, sandstone, Sussex marble) were counted, weighed, recorded and then left in the field, with a small sample being kept.

The remainder of the finds from the site has been through the initial finds process i.e. washed, marked and sorted with further detailed processing planned as a future activity. A summary of the important finds is:

- Diagnostic Ceramic Building Material (CBM), 215 pieces weighing 6,700g. Includes glazed tiles and a piece of glazed crenellated ridge tile.
- Non-Diagnostic CBM, 325 pieces weighing 6,200g.
- Pottery, 303 sherds weighing 1750g, mostly abraded body sherds, some diagnostic pieces with green and brown glaze.

The current aim is to produce a short report for the farmer detailing what was found together with photographs and drawings of certain finds. Future work, still to be arranged include an observational survey of the surrounding area, a detailed survey of the site and a resistivity survey of the site.

If anyone is interested in medieval pottery or medieval ceramic building material and wishes to undertake a detailed analysis of the finds, then please contact either myself or Gill Turner. Also, if anyone is interested in drawing some of the pottery, brick and tile then again contact either myself or Gill Turner.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF KNEPP CASTLE AND IT'S ESTATES

Eric Anderson

Following our field walking on the palace lands field near Knepp castle, a question was asked – Why Palace lands? Eric Anderson undertook some research but was unable to reach any definite conclusion. The best we can offer is that they were part of lands which changed ownership with the varying allegiances between crown and Barons. Eric tells us that the way de Braoses' wife was treated by King John is another story altogether. The following description of the history of Knepp Castle may help you to make up your own mind.



The ruins today consist of one fragment of a wall, a part of the keep. It is about 7 metres high standing on a large shallow mound similar to an upturned saucer.

The castle was originally built by the De Braose family, as a secondary residence. While no masonry from the curtain wall or other defences survives, other evidence from aerial photographs and the earthworks indicate that the castle was circular in form enclosing about 2 acres and covering the crest of the mound.

The castle was surrounded by a wet moat that was fed by a branch of the Adur. West of the ruins in a spot known as Town Field there seems to have been a raised road which connected with the castle by means of a drawbridge.

The mound itself is thought to be of prehistoric origin and a Saxon building may have preceded the castle, but as yet no archaeological evidence has been found to validate these suggestions. It is thought that Knepp Castle was built at the same time as Bramber Castle. Both being completed by early to mid 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Although Knepp Castle was a secondary residence it qualified as a castle in its own right and it seems the De Braose family were in frequent residence at Knepp as many letters were written from there by them. Knepp Castle and its estates passed out of their hands during the reign of King John as he thought De Braose was one of the barons plotting against him and the estates were forfeited in 1210 and given to the Duke of Cornwall who was the son of King John.

This castle was a favourite of King John and he stayed there on at least four occasions the last being in 1215. In addition Queen Isabella stayed at Knepp Castle for 10 days at Christmas in 1217. King John used Knepp Castle as a hunting lodge and continually kept large quantities of supplies there. He also kept the park well stocked with game. Further he fortified the Castle in 1214 to safeguard the hunting equipment, which he did not want to fall into the hands of the insurgent barons.

This was a time of great political turmoil. England had turned against John and he found Knepp Castle a refuge. As an indication of this he issued a letter to Roland Bloett who was the controller to take all goods to Bramber and make the castle (Knepp) unusable, but this was on May 18<sup>th</sup> 1216. He died before the crown was taken from him.

In 1218 Henry the third, who also visited Knepp Castle, reinstated the De Braose family, not as any recompense, but to ensure their allegiance in the Baron Wars of the day. Knepp continued in occasional

use, but by 1282 it was in the possession of the De La Cnaps who took the name of the estate and were thought to be distantly related to the De Braose family.

Here the recorded history of Knepp Castle ends. It fell into disuse at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century and suffered the ignoble fate of being robbed for building stone. It was then supplanted by a new Knepp Castle, built by William Burrell in 1806.

Although the castle declined the estates were still important and the history of the estates from De Braose/De La Cnaps to the Burrell family is as follows.

The heirs to the De Braoses were the Mowbrays who were succeeded by the Howards and apart from a slight intermission when it reverted to the crown the estate stayed in this family until the attainder of Duke of Norfolk in 1572. We then find it in the hands Richard Nye whose son Henry inherited it in 1575. The next possessor was Edward Caryl in whose family it remained until mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, when it was purchased by William Belcher, who sold it to John Wicker of Horsham. It then passed to his daughter Mary and her husband and was then bought by Sir William Burrell who built the new Knepp Castle which still exists. It is supposedly a fine building but it is not open to the public nor is it easily seen from the road.

This ends the history of estate and castle visited by several monarchs and in the centre of a turbulent period of British history.

Acknowledgements 1. VCH vol 2 p192/3 2. Castles of Sussex by Guy p85-89 & p142/3

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## **Outings Summer 2001**

**All Outings Start From the Town Hall Car Park Stoke Abbot Road.**

Departure Time For All Trips 8.45am Sharp. Coach fare for all trips £12.00

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b><u>May 12<sup>th</sup></u></b>    | <b>Old Sarum + Salisbury Cathedral.</b><br>Entrance Fees, Guides about £4.50.payable on the day   |
| <b><u>June 9<sup>th</sup></u></b>    | <b>The Dover Boat Museum + Dover Castle.</b><br>Entrance Fees, Guides about £5.50.payable on the day.   |
| <b><u>July 7<sup>th</sup></u></b>    | <b>Downs Farm Cranbourne Chase A full days tour with Martin Green</b><br>Entrance Fees, Guides, £3.50 each payable on the day.                      |
| <b><u>August 11<sup>th</sup></u></b> | <b>Welwyn Roman Baths, and St Albans (Verulamium) A full days tour With Tony Rook</b><br>Entrance Fees, Guides about £3.50.each payable on the day. |

**Tickets are on sale from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2001 Please make cheques payable to W.A.S. and include SAE WITH YOUR APPLICATION FOR TICKETS.**

Rodney Gunner, 10 Old Barn Way, Southwick, West Sussex, BN42 4NT

Phone 01273 887399, Mobile 07803 596684.

## Notes on visits

Rodney Gunner

### Old Sarum Castle

The massive Iron Age Hillfort of Old Sarum, (Old Salisbury), was reused by the Romans, Saxons and Normans, before growing into one of the most flourishing settlements in medieval England. This fascinating and dramatic site contains the ruins of a castle, cathedral and Bishops Palace. From the Iron Age ramparts there are fine views of the surrounding countryside,.

### Salisbury Cathedral.

Salisbury Cathedral is perhaps Britain's finest example of medieval architecture. Built between 1220 and 1258, the tallest spire in England was added a generation later and can be seen for miles. The surrounding close is perfectly preserved and is still locked at night. The Chapter House has a unique medieval biblical frieze and an original 1215 Magna Carta.

### The Dover Boat Museum

The Dover Bronze Age Boat, in September 1992 archaeologist from the Canterbury Archaeological Trust working alongside contractors on a new road between Dover and Folkestone discovered the remains of a large wooden prehistoric boat thought to be some 3,000 years old, belonging to a period known to archaeologists as the Bronze Age. The Dover Bronze Age boat is one of the most important prehistoric discoveries to be made in this century.

### Dover Castle

Built on a high cliff, in a strategic position facing threats from Europe, Dover castle has always been an important part of Britain's line of defence. The Romans built a 80ft high flint lighthouse on the remains of an iron age hill fort. In Saxon times a chapel was built for the castle garrison. Henry the 2nd carried out a complete reconstruction between 1168 and 1188 providing the castle with the towered walls of the inner bailey, the beginning of the outer walls and the great square keep-the largest in England.

### Downs Farm Cranbourne Chase

Martin Green is a farmer excavating on his own farm, and running his own private museum, he has just published his book "A Landscape

Revealed-10,000 years on a Chalkland Farm. This is going to be a very interesting day out. You will be visiting many sites of Archaeological interest.

### Welwyn Roman Baths

Welwyn Roman Baths are a small part of the Dicket Mead Villa, which was built in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. The Baths are compact and simple in design. In 1960, local archaeologist Tony Rook saw Roman tiles in the bank of the river. He began a training dig for a group, which became the Welwyn Archaeological Society. After ten years of excavating, the baths were uncovered- just as the route was announced for a new motorway, heading straight through it. The baths were saved by building a steel vault over it, which now forms a bridge over the motorway. Tony Rook will be spending the day with us showing us the Baths and then on to St Albans (Verulamium).

### Verulamium - Roman St Albans

Verulamium was once one of the largest towns in Roman Britain. It began as a Iron age Settlement-at one time the capital of the Catuvellauni tribe. In the years following the Roman Conquest of 43AD the town was rebuilt in a typical grid system. Verulamium had its own local government and probably jurisdiction over the surrounding countryside, the fact was that the distinction between town and country dwellers was very marked in the Roman period. Country dwellers were not held in high regard and to be banished from Rome was regarded as a serious punishment. Yet the towns depended on the villa economy and when the villas virtually disappeared at the end of the Roman period, the towns also declined.