

## Letter from the Editor and Chair

Welcome to our spring newsletter, whose lateness I must firstly apologise for. As with many local committees, we have been rather short-staffed in recent months, with too many roles falling to too few people to fulfil them. Unfortunately, both the newsletter and events have suffered slightly as a result, and I would take this opportunity to ask our members for any considerations of a suitable person who might step in and help take on or support these important roles? It is always useful to add 'new blood' to the committee, and there is no doubt quite a few amongst our membership who have some of the skills needed. Do get in touch if at all interested.

On a more positive note, we have had a very successful online lecture series this winter, with three fantastic talks on research in the South-East from top speakers – Drs Will Rathouse, Andy Margetts and Martyn Allen – all of which have been recorded and are available on our [YouTube channel](#). We intend to continue the lectures in the Autumn, so do be sure to follow our social media channels and bi-monthly e-letter to be kept up-to-date on these and other events, including July's Festival of Archaeology.

Although the date of our 2022 AGM has not yet been announced, it will once again be held as an online event this autumn. We can provide the date of our annual conference, which will be held jointly with Kent Archaeological Society in Canterbury on **Saturday 12 November** on the theme of agriculture, industry and trade in the Roman South-East, with talks covering a range of recent work and discoveries in all three counties. A full programme will be available soon, but for now, please save the date.

Other upcoming events which will no doubt interest our members are Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society guided walks, free to BHAS and CBA-SE members, including one this coming **Sunday 16 June** at Steyning (and later in October at Stanmer). Led by Dr Janet Pennington and starting at 11:00, the Steyning walk will take in the historic village, which hints at Roman origins but has a major presence during the Saxon and medieval periods, as well as the church and museum – please get in touch with John Funnell, [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk), to book a place.

*Anne Sassin*

## 2022 Conference Report

Church archaeology is a vast subject. The study and development of the buildings themselves has a complex range of subjects. The joint CBA South East/Surrey Archaeological Society November conference, '**Archaeology of the Church: perspectives from recent work in the South-East**', provided an interesting collection of papers. The first talk by Michael Shapland, originally from ASE but now the archaeologist for Chichester Cathedral, was fascinating. The early Saxon cathedral was located on Selsey Bill, close to the local lord's manor, and not within the confines of the Roman town. The cathedral moved within the town walls in AD 1075. This was an interesting talk about the politics and reasons why the safety of the walled town were not exploited.

Bermondsey Abbey has been the subject of a number of excavations in this busy part of London. The investigations have provided quite a detailed account of this very complex structure. It was the site of a Saxon Minster church with some evidence of an earlier church still retained at lower levels. The garth area was the burial place of the early monks, but it appears that during Norman times these were dug up and re-deposited in large pits. Alistair Douglas (PCA) provided a detailed account of how the abbey developed.

Nathalie Cohen of the National Trust is also the recent cathedral archaeologist at Canterbury. Her talk focused on recent works in and around the building. Outside, various utility trenches have revealed a number of burials, while inside the interior have produced in situ tiled floors from an earlier phase of building. Canterbury is filled with graffiti from all periods, and also has numerous masons' marks. Nathalie talked about the crypt and Thomas Becket's tomb, later moved, with the old one being used for storage. The original location was found to be full of oyster shells.



James Wright (Triskele Heritage) spoke about ancient myths and focused on grooves found on church stone walls, believed to be from medieval archers honing their arrowheads. The medieval archery butts were often well away from the church buildings, and when practising only dumb arrowheads were used, otherwise the targets would have been torn to shreds very quickly. His idea for these grooves was that people believed that if you scraped sand from church wall stones, and dipped it in holy water, it could cure any number of ills. This is the more likely reason for these marks. Pilgrims were also known to rub church stones.

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Andrew Richardson, Ellie Williams and Lesley Hardy's presentation focused on investigations at St Eanswythe Church in Folkstone, undertaken as part of the Finding Eanswythe community project, led by Canterbury Christ Church University. The site is associated with an early church built around AD 660. The church supported both monks and nuns and appears to be associated with defensive walls. It is reported that in 1138



the relics of St Eanswythe were moved to a new church. During recent renovations a plaque was removed from a wall, and a lead casket containing human remains was found behind it. The bones were of a young woman. Osteo-archaeological studies show that it is the remains of one person. She was about 17-21 years of age, the right age for when St Eanswythe died. A molar and small foot bone was sent for radiocarbon dating, and it is possible that the remains are actually of the saint. What an incredible find.

The church of St Mary's in Eastbourne was the subject of Jo Seaman's presentation. The original town of Eastbourne was inland, and the town only became closer to the sea during Victorian times. The original church catered for the ancient farming community. The church is full of graffiti, with designs of rosettes, circles, ships, letters, name, fish, crosses and 'daisy wheels'. Some areas of the church have a focus of one type of design, fish or ships. Jo and his team have plotted them all. The original church was to St Michael only later changing to St Mary's. The change is noted in a charter of AD 1208.

The final presentation was about a tomb in Bletchingly, of Sir Thomas Cawarden. The tomb now visible is of a simple design and quite crudely constructed. Investigations commenced when large fragments of dressed stone were noted as part of the later church tower construction. The stones had elaborate dressings and were considered possibly as part of the old manor house. Facets of the tomb include Tudor roses, and a study of Tudor tombs showed designs with fluted columns and Ionic head stones. The stones in the tower were similar to ones from Tudor tombs and it is now considered they may have belonged to the original tomb of Sir Cawarden. There is some evidence that this type of Tudor tomb did have some unstable elements. Why were they removed? A later even more elaborate tomb for Sir Robert Clayton required a wider panorama, so it looks very much as if the earlier tomb was dramatically reduced in size to accommodate the later one.

The conference was a splendid day full of intriguing and interesting archaeology, mainly focused on above ground archaeology. Church archaeology has so many facets that I am sure other conferences on a very complex subject will be forthcoming in the future.

*John Funnell*

## Surrey

Surrey Archaeological Society hosted its Annual Symposium on 9 April in Ashted. This was a successful relaunch of an 'in person' event and a brief report on the proceedings will be published in a forthcoming newsletter. The Margary Award was awarded to the Prehistoric Group for a display on the important Palaeolithic collections from Farnham which members of the group are cataloguing. The Annual Symposium for 2023 is planned to be held on **18 March** and will again be staged in the Ashted Hall. Plans are now under way for the Surrey Historic Environment Research Framework (SHERF) conference to be held on **26 November 2022** via Zoom, with a theme of 'Defensive structures'.

The Roman Studies Group is planning events to celebrate its 20th anniversary. It also has obtained permission from English Heritage to undertake geophysical survey and metal-detecting at the Titsey Roman Villa and temple site, whose results will be published at a later date. The group is arranging two site visits in 2022 and a conference in 2023, as well as the annual Abinger dig which will commence in July (information is available on the website). The Medieval Studies Forum is planning a medieval graffiti study day in Cobham in September and a Pottery study day in October (details on the website), whilst the Prehistoric Group will continue to catalogue the Rankine Collection in Farnham and intends to run a study day in October.



In February, a fieldwalking and geophysical survey took place at Neale's Field, Chipstead as a Society outreach project to see if any associated evidence could be found in explanation for the large array of metal-detecting finds from the site, in particular those of late medieval date. Displays of the finds were available at the Chipstead Rugby Club and later at the April symposium.

Also in February, the Society's regular *Bulletin* newsletter was re-branded as *Surrey's Past*, becoming a more engaging magazine-style edition to be published three times a year. The monthly e-newsletter continues to be an important outlet for news and volunteer opportunities in the interim.

Earlier this month, the Society hosted a successful online workshop run by the Surrey County Council Historic Environment Team, with various members of the HER and planning team discussing their roles and responsibilities, alongside recent updates and developments. The talks have been recorded and will appear on the Society's YouTube channel in due course.

*Rose Hooker*

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## Sussex

As life returns to 'normal' after the Covid pandemic, archaeological organisations in Sussex have been gearing up for both a return to live in-person lectures and meetings, and a significant increase in fieldwork compared with what has taken place during the last few years.

### Sussex Archaeological Society

At the Sussex Archaeological Society, a live conference was held on 23 April at Lewes which examined 'Sussex Flint Mines and the Arrival of the Neolithic in Britain: visions for future research'. This was, however, more than a return to the pre-pandemic normal as the conference was also made available (but with initial broadcasting problems) online by Zoom, ie a hybrid event. Zoom lectures, both linked to live events and otherwise, are probably here to stay, and during the winter SAS arranged for a second year of online zoom evening lectures. These were again provided free to members, but are also now available to others for a fee of £5. A further bonus for members in December was the publication of *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 158 (for 2020), but sadly for the second year running there was no winter newsletter (*Sussex Past & Present*), and thus only one out of a normal three issues for the whole year. On the plus side, SAS did publish last summer another very welcome addition to its South Downs series: *Country Houses of the Sussex Downs*. Written by Sue Berry, this book (the sixth in the series, priced £9.50) looks at country houses and their estates from the Saxon period to the present day.

One slight disappointment has been the continued lack of Sussex Archaeology Forum meetings since October 2019; such important meetings, with reports and discussions by representatives of most archaeological groups, various independent archaeologists and the development control archaeologists in Sussex, have in the past been both convened and normally hosted by SAS. It is pleasing to report that the Forum meetings are due to resume this August.

Another very recent welcome return is the Sally Christian Archaeology Bequest Fund which is administered by SAS. This Fund, which was established in memory of Sally Christian who developed a passion for archaeology as a mature student at the Centre for Continuing Education of Sussex University, supports students and early career archaeologists conducting aspects of training, or archaeological research related to Sussex. Applications need to be submitted by mid-February for awards in March and mid-August for awards in September.

Staff recruitment at SAS continues and, after the appointment of Andrew Edwards as the new CEO last summer, there have been two more senior manager appointments, Tim Ridgway as Head of Marketing and Communications and Leanne O'Boyle as Head of Historic Properties. In addition, the Society have this year advertised for three Property

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Managers to join its senior management team, and a number of more minor posts. Although so many such appointments might seem surprising given the relatively recent (January 2020) and urgent EGM to get members' approval for the sale of three properties to keep the Society afloat, fortunately, the arrival of Covid was probably a 'life saver' with long periods of government furlough payments and other large rescue and development grants.

One sad piece of SAS news is the death of former Trustee and Vice-chair, Professor G Jeff Leigh OBE, aged 87. Professor Leigh, who had an outstanding professional career in the field of chemistry, was much involved with the Marlipins Museum at Shoreham, and did important research regarding Southwick Roman Villa. Please see the separate obituary.

### Sussex School of Archaeology and History

The Sussex School of Archaeology and History continues to provide the two counties of Sussex and further afield with a range of online lectures and courses, and in March held its annual Sussex Archaeology Symposium live at Lewes. The date of next year's Archaeology Symposium has now been fixed for **Saturday 25 March 2023** at Kings Church, Lewes. A new venture later this year (**Saturday 26 November**) will be the first of hopefully annual Sussex History Symposia. This too will be held at Kings Church, Lewes, and the Sussex School is keen to hear from potential speakers for, or exhibitors at, either of these two events. The aims of both the History and Archaeology symposia are to make available to the public the results of recent research in Sussex. They are also intended to provide networking opportunities by both researchers and volunteers, and the chance to view poster displays and book stalls. Another advantage of an in-person rather than just an online meeting is to host publication launches with authors present to sign copies and talk to delegates. Thus at the recent Archaeology Symposium, David Staveley had copies available for sale (priced £10) of his privately produced 'Great Work' – *With a Mag on Farne Street*, the results of much survey work (especially geophysics and LiDAR) along the Roman road known as the Greensand Way which starts (or ends!) at Hardham in West Sussex, goes to Barcombe Mills, and can now be traced to Pevensey (in East Sussex).

One of the talks at this year's symposium, that by James Brown of the National Trust, included preliminary details about a well-funded new project which is soon to start in East Sussex: Changing Chalk. This project, which is a landscape partnership scheme, will have three main archaeological components. The first will be a 'Big Dig' in the Eastbourne area involving the digging of test-pits. The second aspect will be the monitoring of Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the project area. Finally, there will be mapping work based on aerial photographs in a defined area around Brighton. Gary Webster, who is an archaeologist, has been appointed for four years to work on the Changing Chalk Project as a National Trust Heritage Officer.

## Elsewhere

During the last eight months the various local archaeological societies in Sussex have also been hampered by Covid restrictions, with face-to-face lectures and meetings cancelled, and often now replaced by online versions. Fieldwork has also been reduced. I give a few examples of fieldwork not covered in my last report, together with preliminary details of forthcoming work and other events.

## Hastings

Starting in the east, last summer the Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group (HAARG) did not undertake any excavations in Sussex; instead they assisted with a National Trust project at Smallhythe in Kent. However, during early 2022 HAARG has been carrying out some geophysical survey work (both resistivity and magnetometry), with sites including Hastings Castle. HAARG is also planning for the autumn a two-week excavation on a Romano-British iron production site (dates to be confirmed). HAARG members will also be returning to Kent this summer to help with a community excavation project at Lossenham Priory, Newenden.

As this year is the 50th anniversary of the founding of HAARG, the group celebrated this achievement by holding a ‘mini-conference’ during the afternoon of Saturday 7 May at Fairlight Village Hall, near Hastings. 57 people attended including the Mayor of Hastings, James Bacon. Topics covered included Hastings Castle, Hastings St Augustine Priory and Hastings Country Park.

## Brighton

To the west, the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society (BHAS) continued excavating at Rocky Clump, Stanmer, near Brighton (see last newsletter) until late October. During the 2021 season a number of geophysical anomalies were investigated in an attempt to seek evidence for a postulated Iron Age roundhouse located close to a previously found enclosure. The latter contained a granary structure, a grain storage pit



*Fig 1 Finds Processing by members of BHAS (Photo: BHAS)*

and a number of baby burials. The 2021 excavations revealed a possible dew-pond, a ditch noted on the geophysics, and a large circular area appearing to have been terraced into the hill side. A number of postholes align with others found in 2012 and suggest a possible entrance. Finds included pottery, mainly flint-tempered wares, burnt animal bone, fire-cracked flints and quantities of daub. The terrace is over 700 mm deep, but as yet the excavations have so far failed to confirm that it is the site of a roundhouse. A number of rectangular structures were evidenced by a series of beam slots, and a very large pit, only partially



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excavated, has produced over 120 struck flint flakes. The site was visited by both the Brighton and Wealden YAC groups who enjoyed doing some digging. The site was also visited by Mr Neil Redfern, the new CEO of the national CBA based at York. Although post-excavation work on the finds has commenced (Fig 1), progress has been limited due to Covid restrictions. BHAS have now resumed digging at Rocky Clump on Saturdays and Wednesdays and will continue until the end of October. It is also hoped that in 2022 BHAS will be able to return to the Old Manor House at Portslade where last year some test pitting was undertaken (see the last CBA-SE newsletter). This year the aim is to excavate on a larger scale.

## Worthing

Moving westwards, the Worthing Archaeological Society (WAS) is celebrating its centenary, and this great achievement has been marked by the publication of a booklet, *WAS 100, 100 years of the Worthing Archaeological Society, 1922-2022* (edited by Alex Vincent). In addition to providing a short history of, and timeline for, WAS, this booklet includes short accounts about such topics as Highdown Hill, and John Pull and the Blackpatch flint mines. It also contains appreciations of two WAS stalwarts, Con Ainsworth and Tony Pudwell.

WAS fieldwork in 2022 has already included some survey work of the foreshore at Climping. New geophysical survey and excavation work is soon to take place just outside the scheduled area at Bignor Roman Villa. Excavations will take place during weekends starting Saturday 2 July and ending Sunday 14 August and will be visible to visitors to the villa. Thereafter WAS will return to the Malthouse site at Sompting and undertake excavations between 20 August and 3 September.

## Chichester

Yet further west, throughout September and November 2021 the Chichester and District Archaeology Society (CDAS), undertook a geophysical survey on the Sussex/Hampshire border (Fig 2). Evidence from aerial imagery had suggested that the site contained several ring ditches. The magnetometry survey results revealed four ring ditches of varying sizes, one of which appears not to be completely closed and oval in form. Additionally, there were linear ditches, several pits of differing sizes and traces of possible lynchets/field boundaries.



*Fig 2 The magnetometer survey undertaken on the Sussex/Hampshire border (Photo: CDAS)*

Another project involving CDAS members also took place in September 2021. This was a resumption, after an enforced break due to Covid, of excavations on a Roman site in Priory Park, Chichester. Under the direction of the Chichester District archaeologist,



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James Kenny, the two week excavation examined an area between a previously uncovered Roman private hot bath and a contemporary town-house to the south. The southern part of the bath-house was found to have been almost completely robbed away, and evidence from pottery finds and the presence of early medieval pits indicated that this took place both during the late Roman period and the high middle ages. However, the robber trenches of walls running south and east from the bath-house were identified, as well as the remains of the furnace, so it should be possible to reconstruct a basic plan of the bath-house and to demonstrate that it was connected to the southern town-house.

During late May and early June 2022, Society members have also been working with James Kenny to excavate medieval and post-medieval remains in the vicinity of the Guildhall in Priory Park, Chichester.

Members of CDAS have recently been involved in the establishment of a new Young Archaeologist Club (YAC) for Chichester District. This Club is now up and running, and we at CBA SE wish it all the best for the future. This is a club for 8 to 16 year olds. It is due to meet once a month to “explore and discover all things archaeology”. Contact details: email [chichesteryac@gmail.com](mailto:chichesteryac@gmail.com).

### UCL Institute of Archaeology

Another project undertaken in Chichester District during 2021, and also in previous summers, was that at Downley, near Singleton in West Sussex. Run by Mark Roberts (of Boxgrove Palaeolithic fame) of University College London as the UCL Institute of Archaeology’s annual Field Course for students, the excavations explored three areas (Fig 3) external to the Tudor hunting lodge building which was first investigated in 2019. Further fieldwork is planned to take place at Downley this summer.

*Fig 3 Downley, looking SE towards the Trundle, at the conclusion of excavations in July 2021. The main area contains the well, a Roman ditch, Tudor pits and a curtilage ditch; the NE area, the curtilage ditch and an early cold store; and the SE, the continuation of the curtilage ditch and postholes of Roman and Tudor date. (Photo: UCL IoA)*





*Fig 4 Downley. The stone lined cistern just to the north of the lodge, contained armour, other metalwork, food debris, glass and complete jugs. (Photo: UCL IoA)*

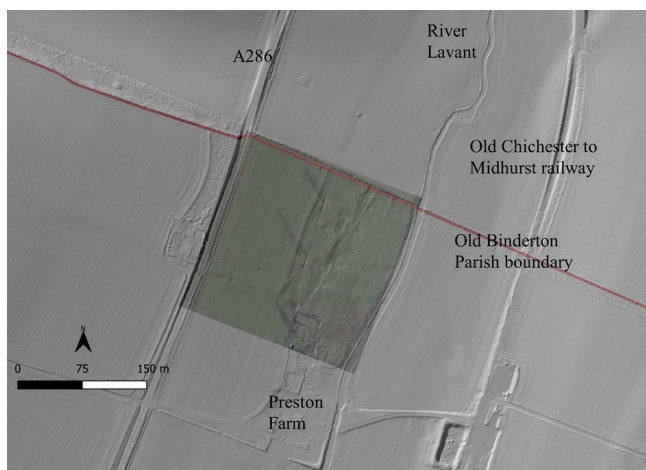


*Fig 5 Downley. The cold store half-sectioned; note how it cuts through the earlier Tudor curtilage ditch. (Photo: UCL IoA)*

The 2021 excavations, though still within the Tudor curtilage hedge ditch, looked outside the lodge to the north and east. A major discovery was the well, known to be at the site from documentary evidence; the lack of demolition debris in the upper fills proved this to be one of the last features to be backfilled before the site was returned to agriculture, as would be expected. Also in the main area, a stone lined cistern (Fig 4) contained a large amount of debris from the inside of the lodge, including a partial set of curated late 15th century armour. Another important discovery, this time in the NE trench, was a flint-lined pit with a stone face and a rendered chute, which was originally thought to be another cess pit, but its distance from the building, and the complete absence of cess from the interstices of the flint, made for a more likely explanation being an early form of cold store or icehouse. This project,

which trained over 80 students, mainly 2nd year undergraduates but also others through to PhD research students, provided yet more information on this important deer park and lodge, and its prehistoric and Roman past. (For details of another important UCL training excavation run by Mark Roberts in the summer of 2021 at Ashington, see separate article).

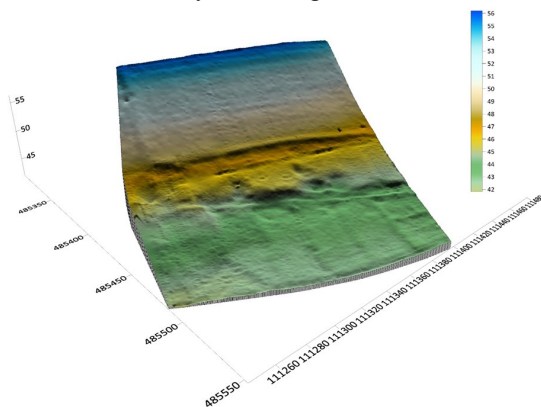
A third project directed by Mark Roberts in Sussex in 2021 took place in November at the behest of James Kenny, Chichester District Archaeologist. Located on Preston Farm



which is part of the West Dean Estate, this survey work formed part of a five-day UCL Institute of Archaeology Surveying Course. The survey complemented the LiDAR survey which had previously been carried out as part of 'The Secrets of the High Woods' project, and was able to provide viable hypotheses for the features visible in the field to the north of the farm (Fig 6).

*Fig 6 The survey area at Preston Farm: aerial view underlying LRM LiDAR*

Preston Farm was held of the crown by the Bishops of Exeter from before Domesday up until the suppression of the religious houses that began in 1535, and in Preston's case was completed in 1543 when it reverted back to the earls of Arundel who had been tenants of the Bishop in the 15th century. It was almost certainly linked to the Bishop's minister church at Bosham, perhaps an outlier providing further resources for the community at Bosham. The survey revealed a double lynchet trackway at the base of the slope down to the floodplain, with medieval pottery found in the disturbed ground on its eastern side. This trackway runs from Langford Farm to West Dean and is clearly shown on the Yeakell and Gardner map of 1778-83; this then is probably the original road that turned off the Chilgrove-Harting Road before the route of the current A286 was established. The medieval field systems are shown clearly in the Digital Terrain Model (DTM) of Fig 7; whether there was a type of croft and toft arrangement will only be elucidated by excavation. The other linear on the image cuts all the medieval features and is almost certainly related to later 18th century flood management practices, acting as a drainage conduit and carrier to inundate the flood plain meadows in December and then again on a diurnal basis in late Spring and Summer. A trial excavation is proposed for the site in 2023.



*Fig 7 DTM looking WNW, showing the medieval fields and SW to NE trending linear features*



## Wealden Iron Research Group

Despite Covid restrictions, members of the Wealden Iron Research Group (WIRG) were active throughout 2021. Monthly smelts took place at the group's experimental bloomery furnace on Ashdown Forest from April to October with the aim of producing slags similar to what is found in the field, but, at the same time, producing a workable bloom of iron (Fig 8). The group have reverted back to a smaller Romano-British type furnace as the previous one, a larger furnace based on an excavated medieval example, required so much ore and charcoal that the number of smelts were restricted to two or three a year.



*Fig 8 WIRG's Experimental Furnace  
(Photo: WIRG)*

Elsewhere, excavation of a 1st-2nd century Romano-British furnace site at Great Park Wood, Brede continued on a monthly basis from April to October, with the area investigated being extended from the woods into the adjacent field following a magnetometer survey conducted by HAARG.

Covid restrictions reduced the number of field visits to three, including the identification of the 14th century site at Capel, Tudeley, in Kent, one of the few bloomery sites to have been documented. An analysis of a piece of slag revealed a high calcium content, suggesting a local Cyrena limestone may have been added as a flux to improve the yield. However, more samples need to be examined to confirm this technique which is not evident elsewhere in the Weald.

The smelting group will this June be conducting a demonstration smelt at the Historic Metallurgy Society conference at Cranborne, Dorset ([historicalmetallurgy.org/current-events/agm2022/](https://historicalmetallurgy.org/current-events/agm2022/)). WIRG welcomes visitors to its smelts and dig, and visitors should contact Tim Smith, [secretary@wealdeniron.org.uk](mailto:secretary@wealdeniron.org.uk), for details.

## Seaford Head

Finally, an interesting new project in 2022 is that designed to investigate and more fully record the archaeology of Seaford Head, upon which an Early Iron Age enclosure ('hillfort') is located. This scheduled ancient monument is at risk of coastal erosion, and last year there was a major cliff collapse. The fieldwork will be undertaken by Archaeology South-East (UCL), using funding provided by Historic England and the South Downs National Park. To find out more, please go to <https://buff.ly/3IjcGuU>.

*David Rudling*

*(with thanks to HAARG, BHAS, WAS, CDAS, WIRG and Mark Roberts of UCL Institute of Archaeology for the information that they supplied)*

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## Kent

The Kent Archaeological Society-sponsored volume *Maritime Kent Through the Ages* (to which EB contributed) was launched at Faversham Guildhall at the end of October. This was followed by a very successful conference held on 6 November at Canterbury Christ Church University which was live streamed, with over 100 attendees in total. The KAS annual conference at UoK followed two weeks later. There were some very interesting talks and attendees seemed happy with the event despite some late arrivals (A2 closures) and a couple of speakers not making it through illness or other causes (not to mention some administrative problems outside the KAS' control!)

Committees have been meeting virtually and grant-giving has recommenced. The Allen Grove Committee has met and awarded several grants, and Council has agreed in principle to contributing towards Prof Warwick Rodwell's proposed research on and publication of the Canterbury Cathedral Cosmati pavement. Work continues on revising the constitution and honing a strategy for the future of the Society (to be presented at the next AGM). In January, Council met in person to discuss these issues – the first face to face meeting since the pandemic began.

We learnt of the death last August of Dr Christopher Chalklin who was an eminent historian and a long standing member of KAS, both as a Council member and vice president. He sat on various committees, contributing much deep knowledge, especially with regard to publications and finance. Outside of KAS, we have also been saddened by the sudden deaths of Pete Clarke of Canterbury Archaeological Trust and of Geoff Halliwell, stalwart of the Dover group with an immense knowledge of worked flint.

Brighter notes have been provided by the Shorne Woods Archaeology Group's shortlisting in the Archaeological Achievement Awards and award of £10,000 to Sittingbourne Heritage Museum by Ecclesiastical Insurance Group's Movement for Good scheme. Kent's archaeology has hit the headlines again with Tony Wilmot's excavations at Richborough amphitheatre.

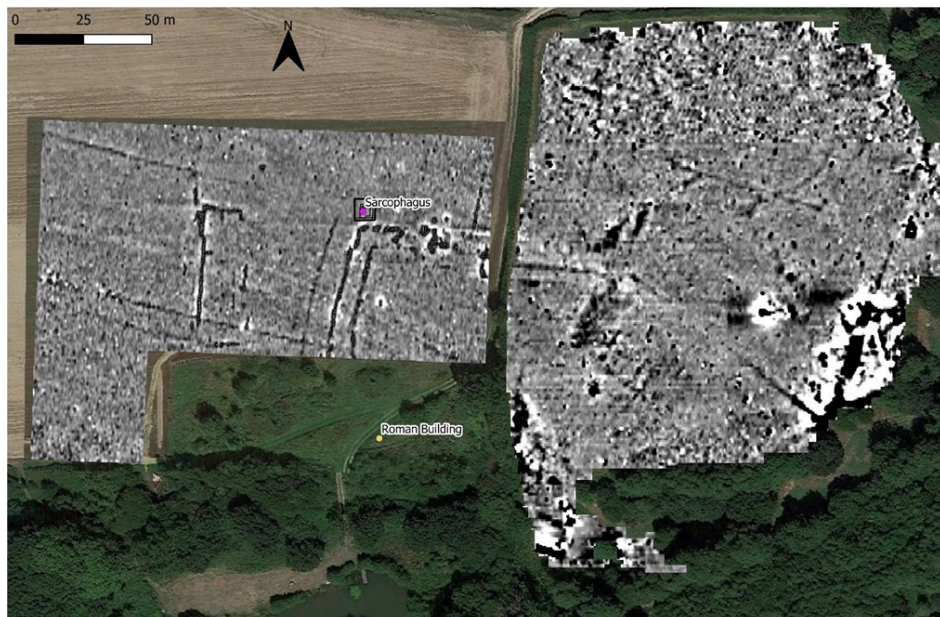
Two other books have recently come to my notice: *50 Finds from Kent – Objects from the Portable Antiquities Scheme* by Jo Ahmet, and a long awaited book on Eccles, *The Romano-British Villa and Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Eccles, Kent – a summary of the excavations by Alex Detsicas with a consideration of the archaeological, historical and linguistic context* by Nick Stoodley and Stephen R Cosh.

The Friends of Canterbury Archaeological Trust have held some interesting Zoom lectures that have been well attended, with the organised walks during the Canterbury Festival also very popular. If you are interested in becoming a Friend, you can contact me as I am their membership secretary.

*Shiela Broomfield (with grateful thanks for help from Elizabeth Blanning)*

## UCL Excavations at Ashington

In the summer of 2021 excavations at Ashington in West Sussex formed part of the UCL Institute of Archaeology Field Course for first year students. The project at Ashington, directed by the writer, was designed to contextualise two extant features: a putative Roman villa that was already scheduled in 1973 and a stone sarcophagus first uncovered in 2019 (Fig 4).



*Fig 1 Composite QGIS model showing two recent magnetometer surveys overlying an aerial photographic base. The positions of the sarcophagus and the 1947 trench are shown. The excavations took place above the Scheduled Ancient Monument in the western field (see Fig 2).*

The trenches were located to groundtruth the geophysics and through this to provide context for the previously known Roman finds (Fig 2). The trenches all came down on Roman features. These were mostly ditches (Fig 3) but also included an oven constructed after the villa was abandoned; a large depression used to dump household waste, possibly for later use as manure; and an area of preserved Roman soil horizons with associated building stones. Preliminary analysis of the finds provided a date range from the early 2nd century AD up until the beginning of the 4th century. The building was then abandoned and fell into disrepair, with elements such as the hypocaust and roof tiles being used in secondary construction features such as the oven. The geophysics data point to a substantial Roman building in the field to the east (Fig 1), with an associated bath house. The sarcophagus sits outside the boundary ditches, as expected, on the crest of an elongate spine of Hythe Formation sediments; the object has been carved out of



Lodsworth stone from the Hythe Formation and contains an internal lead coffin. It was slid into an asymmetrical oversized hole from the east and broke upon impact with the back wall (Fig 4).



*Fig 2 The excavation at Ashington from above. Seven trenches were opened in order to ground truth the magnetometry image produced by David Staveley in Fig 1.*



*Fig 3 Boundary ditch on the outer edge of the villa's home farm; note the imbrices, hypocaust and tegulae from the building*



*Fig 4 The sarcophagus looking west; note the line of chalk clasts that extended onto the stone lid*

The excavations achieved their purpose of providing the context required for the Roman buildings and grave and will inform the ongoing process of preserving and providing protection for the site.

*Mark Roberts*

## **East Head, West Wittering, East Sussex**

Reports by members of the public about two exposed wooden structures on the lower shore at East Head led to survey and sampling by the Chichester and District Archaeological Society (CDAS) in 2020/1. The structures are fish traps, but unusual ones. The majority of Anglo-Saxon and medieval fish traps in the UK are ‘simple’ structures with V-shaped plans, of varied sizes, constructed of posts with connected hurdles. The East Head traps differ in having a circular ‘pound’ at the apex of V-shaped leaders, into which fish were directed on a falling tides. Cooper et al (2017) have reported a very similar trap from Ashlett Creek, Southampton dated by radiocarbon to the Middle Saxon period. This presence of a large circular ‘pound’ remains restricted, in the UK, to the Solent area: it has a close parallel with another Saxon period weir at Binstead on the Isle of Wight, whilst similar circular pounds have been reported from Langstone Harbour, also dated to the Anglo-Saxon period (Allen and Gardiner 2000, 112- 123), and at Medmerry, near Selsey, at present not yet dated. These ‘Solent-type’ fish traps show clear similarities to traps with circular pounds on the Northern French coast: there is an illustration of one from the 18th century, and they have remained in use until recent times (Cooper et al 2017).

East Head 1 has a pound around 7m in diameter with some internal wooden and sand-stone slab components and with two leaders extending outwards and a less substantial



*East Head (Photo: Peter King)*

shingle spit which was formerly further east, protecting tidal creeks. Augering at the sites shows that they were constructed in low-energy creeks, and macrofossils from samples indicate a salt marsh/intertidal mudflat environment, which no doubt existed behind an earlier position of East Head.

Plainly, these structures at East Head required dating. CDAS is very grateful to CBA-SE for funding two radiocarbon dates, which were provided by Queens University Belfast. The results (95.4% probability) are as follows:

UBA-44774. 299 ± 23 BP, cal AD 1505-1653, median probability 1557 AD

UBA-44775. 317 ± 25 BP, cal AD 1492-1644, median probability 1561 AD

The two results are consistent, pointing to construction around the mid-16th century.

Obviously, these results were unexpected. Remarkably, similar structures have now been reported from the Middle Saxon period and the 16th century, but apparently with no similar structures of intervening date. There are a number of possibilities, but no definite answers. It is possible that there were cultural contacts between the Solent area and northern France, so that there was interchange of ideas about how to construct a fish trap. Alternatively, local fishers in the Solent area during the 16th century may have seen the remains of much earlier structures and replicated them.

Allen, M.J. and Gardiner, J. 2000. *Our Changing Coast: A survey of the intertidal archaeology of Langstone Harbour, Hampshire*. CBA Research Report 124. York: Council for British Archaeology

Cooper, J.P., Gianni, C., Opdebeeck, J., Papadopoulou, C. and Tsiairi, V. 2017, 'A Saxon Fish Weir and Undated Fish Trap Frames Near Ashlett Creek, Hampshire, UK: Static Structures on a Dynamic Foreshore', *Journal of Maritime Archaeology*.

Searle, S.A. 1975. *The Tidal Threat – East Head Spit, Chichester Harbour*, Chichester Harbour Commission pamphlet.

*Peter King*



## Professor G Jeff Leigh, OBE (1934-2022)

Jeff Leigh, aged 87, died on 1 February 2022, following a stroke. He was a member and former trustee of the Sussex Archaeological Society (SAS), an interest that developed following retirement from an outstanding career in the field of chemistry. Born in the East End of London, Jeff had been captivated by chemistry at school when his teacher gave a pyrotechnic demonstration of chemical sublimation. As an undergraduate he studied chemistry at Kings College London, where he was later awarded his PhD. Subsequently he was employed as a lecturer at Manchester University, and in 1962 he joined the Sussex University Nitrogen Fixation Unit. In 1994 Jeff became the first Professor of Environmental Science at Sussex University, and was considered the world's leading authority on nitrogen fixation. For this work he was awarded an OBE. Jeff lectured all over the world, published extensively (over 250 scientific papers plus several books), and was instrumental in naming several elements.



After retirement Jeff, who had always been fascinated by the Roman ability to exploit nitrogen fixation through the use of manuring, became more interested in archaeology. This interest was undoubtedly piqued by living near the site of Southwick Roman Villa, an important archaeological site once owned by SAS but later sold and built over. Starting from scratch, Jeff studied archaeology at the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) at the University of Sussex, and in due course was awarded first a Diploma in Archaeology and later an MA in Field Archaeology. As part of his studies Jeff made good use of his knowledge of chemistry to investigate with Professor Liz James and Dr Nadine Schibille (both then at Sussex University) the provenance of some very rare (for Britain) gold glass tesserae which were said to have been found at Southwick Roman Villa, but which, after scientific analysis, can no longer be assigned to the Roman period (*The Antiquaries Journal* 93 (2013), 93-107). He also published a joint paper with one of the writers (David Rudling) on the villa's development in Roman times and also the site's 20th century history (*SAC* 151 (2013), 27-52).

Jeff undertook volunteer fieldwork on several Sussex archaeological sites, and also excavated in the West Indies with Peter and Lys Drewett. Jeff thus demonstrated the importance of Life Long Learning and the ability to bring to a new discipline skills learnt in another one. What a tragic shame therefore that Sussex University closed its CCE department and the teaching of archaeology in 2013, especially given the current national shortage of trained archaeologists. Jeff was also an active member, and trustee and Vice-Chair (2009-12), of SAS, and was very involved with Marlipins Museum at Shoreham, where he was a Friend and served as the group's Chair.

Jeff was a kind and modest man, a multilinguist, a keen gardener, and always determined to succeed with his various projects. In addition to his own major achievements, he was very generous with his knowledge which he enjoyed sharing with others. He will be much missed.

*Lys Drewett and David Rudling*



*Gold glass tesserae said to come from Southwick Roman Villa.  
Approximately 10 x 10 mm square.*

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## Council for British Archaeology South-East

CBA-SE is a branch (Charity No 1047378) of the Council for British Archaeology which aims to advance the public's knowledge of archaeology and history in their local area and to share information across counties.

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### Contributions for the Newsletter and E-letter

If you have news that you think might be of interest to people in the South Eastern region, please contact the editor ([asassinallen@gmail.com](mailto:asassinallen@gmail.com)). Articles and notes on all aspects of fieldwork and research on the history and archaeology of the region are very welcome. Contributors are encouraged to discuss their ideas with the editor beforehand, including on the proper format of submitted material (please do supply digital copy when possible) and possible deadline extensions. The newsletter is issued twice a year, with the next one intended for Autumn 2022.

Events, including lectures, workshops, conferences and fieldwork opportunities, should be sent to Rose Hooker ([rosemary.hooker@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:rosemary.hooker@blueyonder.co.uk)), our e-letter editor. The e-letter is emailed to all of our members and partnership organisations, and is circulated six times a year.

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