



Horsham District Archaeology Group

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# *H.D.A.G.*

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*Newsletter Jan- June 2015*

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**Excavating at our Roman site – February 2015**

Dear All

It has been another very busy first half of the year for HDAG. We opened the year with our winter talks and our AGM, topics spanning the Bronze Age through to Late Medieval periods in Sussex. In February, we re-opened and enlarged last November's trench at our Roman site, and took delivery of our very own Total Station. In March, HDAG assisted the National Trust with a topographical survey in Brickyard Woods at Nymans, and more excavations in Petwork Park. April found us carrying out a speedy field walk on the Nymans Estate prior to crop sowing in Hill House Field, and we held a fundraising event with a Table Top sale and display of archaeological finds at a local venue. In May, we visited Liss Archaeological Group at their RB site just outside Colemore in Hampshire, assisted with another Petworth Park excavation, and had a fabulous HDAG dayschool on 'Castles' with Simon Stevens from ASE. In June, members had a visit to Steyning Museum and two of the Committee spoke at a CBA event at UCL on the monitoring of the loss of planning advice from WSCC that HDAG have participated in. We hope you enjoy reading about the above in this newsletter, and suggestions for research topics or talks/outings are always welcome from our members. Regards *Vicky*

## HDAG FIELD WORK

### Tavern, Temple or Brothel?

By Mick Mills



Our recent dig in April of this year was a great success. We returned to our RB site to re-open and extend our previous trench over a rectangular feature of a possible building. The target was the North West top corner of a ditch and possible wall we had discovered last year. We relocated the original trench and extended a further 2 metres to the east finding a huge amount of pottery, and a lot more questions. The ditch continued as we had hoped but the possible collapsed wall of building materials did not, and turned out to be a pile of brick, roof tiles and pottery. The pottery we found in the fill of the ditch, and the majority was high status WiggonHolt ware, but also some stamped Colchester mortaria and imported hunting scene cups. An almost complete Tazza (incense burner, below centre) and several wine flagons were also found. Additionally we found some very unusual RB pottery sherds, also with potential ritualistic associations, and they are currently being examined by an expert, so watch this space.....

So what have we found here? I have had all sorts of suggestions from people, some say it's a tavern, some have said temple and someone even said a brothel! Well, we will return next year and hopefully work out just what we have found. *Mick*



Reconstructed vessels from the recent excavations

## 2015 Winter Talks and AGM

In January HDAG were delighted to welcome Dr Judie English who gave us a talk on the 'Archaeology of Steyning'. Judie gave us an overview of the history of Steyning and then talked about the Steyning garden Test Pits project she began in 2014. We followed this talk up with a visit to Steyning Museum in June and a guided tour of the church and other areas of interest with the Curator, Chris Tod.

In February David Lea gave a talk on the Bronze Age in Sussex. From what was initially thought to be very little known about Sussex and the Weald Bronze Age activity, David showed us the wide range of evidence that has now come to light.

In March we held our AGM. Mick Mills gave a presentation on the results of the recent Roman site excavation, we welcomed Peter Hardy and Martin Breese (new Membership Secretary) onto the HDAG Committee, said goodbye and thank you to outgoing Membership Secretary, Valerie White, and finished with a wonderful talk by Simon Stevens, ASE on the 'Excavations at Lewes Priory'.

## Topographic Survey of Brickyard Woods, Nyman's Estate by Jennie Williamson

HDAG's new survey team were asked by the National Trust regional archaeologist, Tom Dommett, if they could help map the former brick works hidden in the woods.

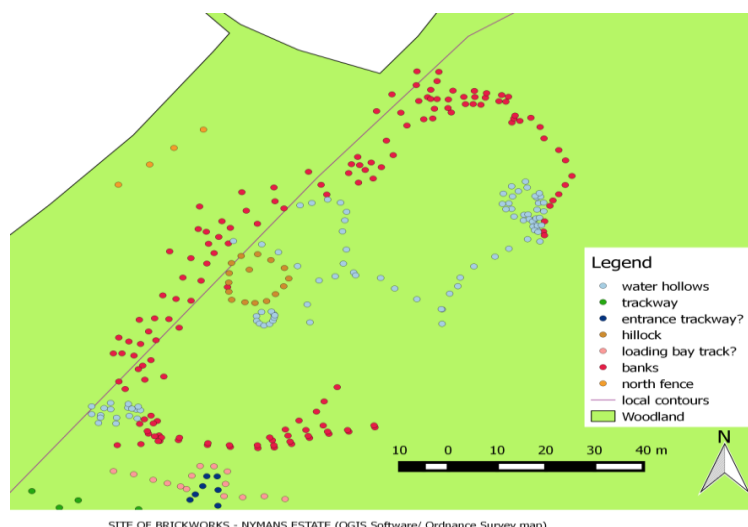
The area included two ponds, terracing, depressions and trackways. We could see where clay had been dug out, found evidence of buildings, human occupation and the old track ways used for transporting the bricks. We were all glad to have the chance to practice using a Total Station under expert supervision and spent two days at the end of March measuring the lumps and bumps in an area of wood cleared by the Nyman's team.

Under Andy Bradshaw's expert eye (CBAS), we used a similar Total Station to the one we now own. There was a great sense of achievement in mastering the simplest of steps plus we were working in very interesting and pleasant surroundings. Luckily, Martin is on the team and has spent many hours since interpreting the downloaded information we recorded (see plan below). It matches the sketch plan Vicky drew on site and is definitely a record of the once productive brick works.

Evidence suggests the brick works were in use by 1794 and in 1843 were occupied by John Baldwin (foreman) and Thomas and his son Joseph Biggs. By 1871 all traces of John Baldwin and the brick works disappear. The name Brickyard Woods first appears on the 1875 OS map by which time the brick works have been dismantled.

In its productive period, the clay would have been dug by hand, mixed with water and kneaded before sand was added. This would have then been pushed into wooden moulds before being left to dry in a drying shed prior to being fired in a kiln. All the raw materials were available nearby making this an ideal site that once was a busy thriving industry, a far cry from the peaceful scene we surveyed. *Jennie*

Plan of brickworks in Brickyard Wood, Nymans by Martin Breese, HDAG



## HDAG's new Total Station and fundraising

Thanks to a very generous donation by a HDAG supporter, we were able this Spring to purchase a Total Station. HDAG organised extra fundraising to raise the total amount needed, and this was achieved through very generous HDAG member donations, a second hand book stall at the Sussex Archaeological Symposium, and a Table Top sale at a local venue. A Total Station is an essential piece of surveying equipment for measuring, plotting and planning where a feature is in the landscape, and HDAG is eternally grateful to our supporter for the contribution towards this purchase.

## Fieldwalking Hill House Field, Nymans Estate

by Vicky Lillywhite

HDAG were asked to carry out a very 'last minute' assessment of a field adjacent to Hill House Farm on the Nymans Estate (below). The farmer had recently ploughed and was about to sow, and so we were given a couple of days notice to organise a field walk. The part of the field under assessment was divided into 5 transects and finds were collected from each. A Romano –British pot sherd had been found in this part of the field during the 1960's, and the purpose of the assessment was to determine if this was a chance find or if there was more evidence to be found. Another single Romano-British pot sherd was collected during the assessment and further work is recommended when the field is next available. *Vicky*



### Loss of archaeological and ecological advice from West Sussex County Council

From 1<sup>st</sup> April, WSCC ceased their provision of archaeological and ecological advice to Districts and Boroughs in West Sussex, with regard to planning applications, as part of cost cutting. Each district was informed it had to make its own independent provision for this advice. This move by WSCC has caused great concern among amateur and professional archaeologists alike. Similar actions in other parts of the UK have resulted in little or no provision being replaced and loss of archaeology has resulted.

HDAG have been working alongside the CBA SE advisor appointed to advise over these changes. Our actions so far have been to write to Horsham District Council to express our concern and ask what provision they will put in place. We have also written to Parish Councils and local history groups to raise awareness of this issue, and placed an article in the West Sussex County Times to let the public know of this change and its implications. We are also monitoring HDC planning applications to understand how the new provision will work in practice.

### **LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS CARRIED OUT BY PROFESSIONAL COMPANIES.**

**Billingshurst: Land off Marringdean Road and south of Daux Wood (TQ 08800 26427).** Targeted trial trench investigation, following a topographical survey on this former World War 2 Prisoner-of-War Camp found evidence of the elaborate drainage arrangements for the POW hutments and for the site as a whole, but no trace of foundations for the hutments themselves. Finds included a cache of copper alloy buttons in one of the hutment drainage gullies (ASE reported by WSCC)

**Pulborough: Land to the west of Stane. (NGR: TQ 0510 1950).** A total of eight features were identified, including a large linear feature dated to the medieval period. The recovery of a small assemblage of probable post-conquest pottery from this feature would now suggest that it is of early Roman date and may represent a hollow way or similar feature (ASE).

## NATIONAL TRUST -PETWORTH PARK

### UPDATE

#### **2015 IS THE FINAL YEAR OF THE PROGRAM OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK AT PETWORTH PARK. THE FIELDWORK SO FAR THIS YEAR ....**

**Stew Ponds:** A geophysical survey (magnetometry and resistivity) was undertaken in February by the National Trust over an area of c. 1.2ha adjacent to the 'Stew Ponds'. The survey identified a number of features which may relate to the dovecote, carter's stables, kennels and other functional structures recorded here on historic mapping and removed by 'Capability' Brown in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. The survey also revealed traces of possible industrial processes (lime kilns?).

#### **Lawn Hill Excavations (March 2015)**

Two test pits were excavated on the northern edge of Lawn Hill either side of the July 2014 'Elizabethan Lodge' excavation site. To the west the excavations identified demolition rubble relating to (but no discernible extension of) the probable Elizabethan Lodge, while to the east only post-medieval landscaping was evident. A single test pit on Arbour Hill suggested Brownian landscaping but no evidence for any occupation.

#### **Upperton Excavations (May 2015)**

A single trench was excavated by the National Trust investigating a partially visible cobbled surface adjacent to the dog-leg in the Park wall at the Upperton Gate. The excavations revealed a concave feature of unknown date with several phases of repair, part of the water supply infrastructure within the Park – either feeding the ponds or serving as a watering hole for stock.

#### **Tillington Excavations (May 2015)**

Four evaluation trenches were excavated by Chris Butler Archaeological Services in the westernmost of the Tillington paddocks, west of the Stone Colt House. Historic mapping suggests the settlement of Tillington extended into this general area before being demolished to make way for the parkland in the later 18<sup>th</sup> century. The excavations suggest that the settlement (identified during 2013 excavations in the eastern paddock) never extended into the western paddock, and the area was most likely used for grazing .

## HDAG FUNDRAISING

HDAG member, Marianne Hobby, applied to our local Waitrose for HDAG to be the recipient of their 'Green Token' donations for the month of June. We were delighted that we were chosen, and Marianne and Chairperson, Joan, were also invited to the preview opening of the brand new Waitrose and John Lewis at Home in Horsham. Marianne shares her experience below.....

"I was lucky enough to be invited with Joan, as representatives of HDAG, to the opening of the new Waitrose & John Lewis store in the Bishopric Wednesday night. Apart from the initial car parking hiccup, the two hours we spent in the store were wonderful. To say I was impressed would be an understatement, I was overwhelmed. The moment we walked into the store we were greeted by charming, enthusiastic staff. We had wine and canapés and chatted to various members of staff from some of the other stores. We were then given a tour of the Waitrose part of the store. Apart from the typical groceries found in the Carfax store, there were innovations I have not seen in any other store in town. A wine bar, a juice bar, a pastry bar and an area of seating for a pause to try new delicacies. There is a lovely big cafe. The store is well stocked, the lighting is good and the aisles are spacious. I doubt if there is anything you can't buy in the store, apart from clothing. We were then taken round the two floors of John Lewis. I found the ceiling a bit warehouse-like but I was told it was the fashion. Once you started looking at the furniture, household goods, electrical goods and furnishings, you didn't notice the ceiling. I think the store will be an asset to that part of town and that it will be very successful. We got the impression that community was important to Waitrose, hence the success of the community boxes, of which we are fortunate to have one. I came away with my goodie bag and walked home proudly showing off the John Lewis logo." *Marianne*

## HDAG'S VISIT TO LAG SITE AT COLEMORE

By Elizabeth Rice

Nine members of HDAG converged at Colemore in the beautiful Hampshire hills just NW of Petersfield on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May for an invited visit to the Liss Archaeological Group (LAG) excavations there of a Romano-British settlement site. We were greeted by our guide for the visit, LAG member Lyn Pease. She took us into the finds tent, where, after giving us a very thorough run through of the site layout within the local landscape based on previous years' geophysics and excavations, she then showed us the many finds on display – some lovely items of pottery, glass and metalwork laid out in beautiful display cabinets hand made by one of the LAG members. We were able to handle many of the items and compare them with our own finds. One pot found within the remains of an oven and containing some bones was thought to be a dog bowl (perhaps it had belonged to Fido though, with no inscription we will never know for certain!) The areas where a two-storey roughly square building in which had been the remains of the oven (and dog bowl) in one corner excavated last year but now turfed over was then pointed out to us by Lyn before we crossed over to the nearby trench where the diggers had resumed work uncovering the remains of another rectangular building under the supervision of fellow HDAG member Juliet Smith. Juliet camped on site for the duration of the dig, where no doubt the experience was enhanced not only by the enjoyment of the early morning birdsong in a beautiful quiet location but also the provision of a very practical and wonderfully thought-out toilet plus shower block (below), designed and constructed by the same LAG member who had built the display cases. On leaving LAG to carry on with the work we stopped off at the wonderfully named "Pub with no Name" for a sociable lunch in front of a much appreciated log fire before heading back home.

Our grateful thanks go to Lyn, Juliet and all members of LAG who made us so welcome on the day and we hope that the return to the site the following week by HDAG members Pete and Martin to put into practice their total station skills while providing a contour survey of the site contributed along with our donations to our thanks for the enthusiastic hospitality provide by LAG during our visit. *Elizabeth*



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## Future planned HDAG events 2015

Sunday July 19th 11-3pm:  
**Festival of Archaeology,** HDAG will be at **Worth Park, Crawley** as part of their 'Victorian Picnic event' with a display of finds from HDAG's excavations at Worth. We welcome your support as visitors to the event.

Saturday August 1st:  
Proposed visit to **Butser Ancient Farm.** We hope to have a tour of The Reconstructed Iron Age Settlement and see a demonstration of flint knapping (Details to be arranged)

Saturday 22nd August - Sunday August 30th: National Trust's **Big Dig at Petworth Park.** Some of us will be helping to hopefully uncover the Sixth Duke's impressive stables. Visitors always welcome as are potential volunteers.

Saturday October 10th:  
Guided tour of **Richborough and Reculver Saxon shore Forts.** We will be car sharing and having an expert talk us round the visit.

Saturday November 7th: It is planned to visit a **Roman Glass Workshop in Andover** (Details to be arranged.)

Events are emailed out to members on a regular basis. Please keep an eye on your emails for further HDAG activities coming soon.

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## HDAG Castles dayschool - a personal review of the day

by Robert Cripps



In May I went along to the Castles Day school at Easted Barn, Southwater with speaker Simon Stevens of Archaeology South East. It is clearly a subject he is immensely knowledgeable and enthusiastic about, and he was able to impart a good deal of that knowledge in an interesting and humorous way. The day was broadly divided into two (with several breaks for tea and cake); the morning session looking at the evolution of the castle from the Norman 'Motte & Bailey' (as illustrated in the Bayeux tapestry above) to when they became obsolete; the afternoon session looking at the excavation and preservation of a castle in Wales – Dolforwyn in Montgomery, Powys.

During the day we looked at the role of the castle; their construction and how design of castles responded to advances in construction, science and warfare and ways to capture a castle should the need arise. Simon was able to illustrate his talk with many of his own photographs from many of his holidays, particularly in Wales.

During the latter part of the day we discussed the excavation of Dolforwyn Castle. It is a site owned and managed by CADW, and a site excavated over a number of seasons. It was the last 'Welsh' castle initially constructed by the indigenous folk whilst at the same time the English were building castles in Northern Wales (Harlech, Conway, Beaumaris, etc). It wasn't a uniform site and had a number of irregular features - an extramural round tower at one end, a square tower and keep at the other end, a D shaped tower along one side and a large mystery ditch dug across the site.

Simon was very honest and shared his concerns about how the site is now presented, and how health and safety requirements to reduce risks and hazards has meant the site losing some of its original form, with uneven surfaces being paved over to create crazy paving, and walls being re-pointed and partly rebuilt. Some food for thought there.

I found the day enormously informative and attending talks such as this serve to stimulate my interest in the subject matter further. I shall be going out and purchasing a copy of Ella Armitage's Early Norman Castles of the British Isles and having a look on line at the reconstruction of a French castle-

[www.guedelon.fr](http://www.guedelon.fr) . *Robert*

## Environmental Archaeology Day

Schools review by Joan Francis



This year I attended two day schools on this hugely interesting subject. Dr Mike Allen was the lecturer for both. The first was run by Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society (BHAS) and covered 'Sampling in the field and Sampling strategies' plus so much more.

The second was run by Worthing Archaeological Society entitled 'All about Snails'. I can now understand why snails are so useful in understanding past environments. The type of snail present can show if a site had trees, open grass land, perhaps grazed by animals or if it is arable as each type of snails lives in a preferred location.

There are around 110 different species in the British Isles and is thought that there has not been any extinction over at least the last 5000 yrs making them an ideal subject and nowhere near as complicated as comparing plant grains and seed.

Unfortunately for HDAG we are unlikely to find any snails on our digs as they rarely survive in the clay soil of the Weald but survive very well in chalky soils of the Downs.

WAS could not have chosen a more delightful setting for the event at The Downs Barn (below). Dr Allen mentioned the possibility of running a day school at his Wiltshire home; I shall be putting my name down!

*Joan*



## **GLOSSARY**

ASE – Archaeology South East

AS – Archaeological Solutions

BHAS – Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society

CBA-SE – Council for British Archaeology South East

CBAS – Chris Butler Archaeological Services

Mortaria- a strong mixing bowl with a grit roughened interior

RB – Romano -British

SCAU- Surrey County Archaeology Unit

SSA- Sussex School of Archaeology

WAS- Worthing Archaeological Society

WSA – West Sussex Archaeology

WSCC- West Sussex County Council