



LEWES ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

Affiliated to the Sussex Archaeological Society
and the Council for British Archaeology

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NEXT LAG LECTURE

Dr David Rudling

Romano British Settlements in the Ouse Valley

Friday 17th January 2020 at 7.30pm

Lecture Room, Lewes Town Hall, Fisher Street Entrance

50 YEARS OF



50th Anniversary Celebrations so far

The 50th anniversary programme got off to a good start with a special talk by LAG's Honorary President Mike Allen. Mike looked back to LAG's early

excavations and activities ending with a description of LAG as it is today.

Over the summer a number of guided walks took place – to the Priory and Gundrada Chapel; a summer solstice

walk to join the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society on the top of Mount Caburn and a walk around the Pells Water Courses.



The Gideon Mantell walk was also on a rainy day and this time the walk took place in the kitchen of the house where he was born.

Brian Phillips and Fiona Marsden led a wonderful walk to Plumpton Cross and along the ridge towards Mount Harry re-tracing the army of Simon De Montfort as it approached Lewes for the Battle of Lewes in 1264.



LAG had its traditional visit to Bridge Farm, Barcombe to look at the summer's excavations (more about those later in the newsletter). The final walk was a Battle of Lewes walk starting on the Downs above Gallops (the Nevill), proceeding to the Old Pump Station (opposite the Black Horse pub) and then onto the Castle and ending at the Battle of Lewes memorial in the Priory grounds.



The programme of talks re-commenced in October with a fantastic talk by the former Chair and current friend of LAG Martin Brown about the excavations at Larkhill, Bulford and Tidworth Wessex prior to the building of housing estates for MOD personnel. Then in November Joe Gazeley offered a conflict analysis approach to the Battle of Lewes.

In January 2020 David Rudling will speak about Romano-British settlements in the Ouse Valley. In February, Dan Swift from Archaeology South East will give LAG a special talk on monographs on the Lewes Library, Baxter's and Lewes House excavations of which he is the author and which are due to be published in 2020. In March John Bleach will give a timely talk on Malling. The anniversary year will close with a talk by Paul Garwood on Stonehenge. Paul will talk about his recent work in the Stonehenge landscape which is recovering a plethora of new information from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age.

We hope that you will be able to join in our celebrations.

Heritage Crime and how to help combat it



According to Daryl Holter, Sussex Police's volunteer heritage crime adviser, heritage crime is on the increase. Heritage crime is any offence which damages or harms the value of England's heritage. It includes sites or items which are considered to be of historic importance. These include listed buildings and scheduled monuments, World heritage sites and conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, protected marine wreck sites, undesignated but acknowledged heritage buildings and sites, registered battlefields and military remains of historic interest.

Some artefacts and sites are protected by specific criminal offences to prevent harm caused by damage and unlicensed alteration. However, other crimes such as theft, criminal damage, arson and anti-social behaviour offences can also damage and harm and interfere with the public's enjoyment and knowledge of these items.

It is important to protect these artefacts and sites as once they are gone we can never get them back exactly as they were. Sussex Police are already working with partners and agencies such as Historic England to successfully tackle heritage crime in Sussex but are appealing to members of the wider public for their help to stop this type of crime. Our members, with their special interest in heritage sites, could be ideally placed to offer this help. If you see anything suspicious or out of place near a heritage site please report it to the Police. The

following is guidance on how to report a crime that has been carried out to a church, historic building or an archaeological site.

1. If an incident is happening **now** or if suspects are still at the location **dial 999** and ask for police attendance. If the incident **has already happened** and suspects are no longer present please report via the website <https://www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/> or call local non-emergency police number, 101, or crime stoppers on 0800 555111. If connected to a Contact Centre ensure you state that you wish to 'REPORT A HERITAGE CRIME'.
2. Give details of the offence you wish to report e.g. THEFT, CRIMINAL DAMAGE
3. Give your details: full name, personal address and contact telephone number/s, email address.
4. Give full details/description of the incident.
5. Give full address/location of the incident including postcode or National Grid Reference if possible. Inform them that a HERITAGE CRIME has been perpetrated at a HERITAGE ASSET.
6. Provide an accurate timeframe encompassing when the offence took place as best you can.
7. Detail property damaged or items stolen including identifiable marks etc. if you can.
8. Provide a clear summary of what has happened. Give events in chronological order if possible.
9. Ask for a crime or police reference number.

Bridge Farm 2018-19: A journey into the dark centre!

The 2018 summer season saw the opening of the seventh trench at the intriguing Romano-British settlement site at Bridge Farm, near Barcombe Mills.

Trench 7 is located in the very centre of the area enclosed by the 2nd century double-ditch defences and it was hoped that this 45 by 20 metre area over a central crossroads would reveal evidence of the formal hub of the settlement. However we constantly reminded that this site represents over 300 years of activity and what remains in this area seems once again mainly feature industrial activity. This consist of a collection of very large, deep pits, areas of fired clay, several series of postholes with large flint and chalk packing all containing a dark brown sandy silt suggesting a high charcoal content. Some of the postholes do appear to be in rows but so far lack the corresponding row that would be needed for a rectangular structure. They are certainly not as obviously related as the 13 postholes of the building revealed in 2014.

An area of the road from Pevensey was revealed at only 200mm below the current ground level in the south-eastern corner of the trench. The upper layer of this consisted of pebbles and small nodules of Downland flint which had been disturbed by ploughing. Beneath this was a compressed sandy layer of flint gravels forming the main base structure of the road. It is remarkable that this had survived at such a shallow depth and no trace was found anywhere else along the trench having been presumably ploughed and/or robbed out.

Of the many large pits one in the northwest corner of the trench proved to be not only multi-layered but very deep. As it was truncated by two baulks it needed the adjacent spoil heaps to be removed before excavation could be

completed and it hoped to get this prepared for the 2020 season. Most of the other pits and postholes discovered in 2018 were half-sectioned and recorded and then fully excavated in 2019. This task was complicated in many cases by the larger pits being cut by later pits and gullies.



One area was of particular interest as a deposit of fired clay appeared surrounded by lumps of chalk and fire-cracked flint nodules. The feature had the appearance of some kind of hearth with the presence of chalk leading us to think that it may be the remains of a simple clamp-type lime kiln. Our initial thoughts were called into question on discovery of 2 very large postholes adjacent to the 'Pevensey' road which had large blocks of chalk used in addition to flint nodules as post packing.

From the initial cleaning-back of the trench surface a large and varied assemblage of pottery was collected, totalling over 28,000 sherds in 2018-19, with a greater percentage of fine wares than seen from previous trenches. This included a good quantity of samian, some with embossed decoration, maker's marks and scratched graffiti.

Close to the chalk-lined hearth was a pile of black colour-coated white fineware beaker sherds with a number of large amphora sherds nearby. We had more

mortaria sherds than before including one almost complete mortarium in a light buff/cream fabric and more amphora sherds some with maker's stamps. As this has proved to be at least a 3 year trench we will have to wait before commissioning the pottery analysis.



3 of the fibula brooches recovered in 2019

As well as pottery we have found a variety of bronze dress accessories including some fibula brooches, pins and jewellery fragments. The brooches are quite fine which suggests they come from the earlier phases of occupation. We have also recovered a few coins to give us some clues as to the phase of activity we are excavating and whereas in Trench 6 at the northeast corner of the settlement a larger assemblage of coins was dominated by late 3rd century radiates and 4th century House of Constantine issues here the coins seem much earlier dating mostly to the 2nd century.

Could this imply a movement away and towards the northeast from this area during the later Roman period? Are the deep pits a result of subsequent plundering of materials from this area? In 2020 we will dig further into the features we have revealed and excavate the north-eastern section of Trench 7 where we hope to find some clues to the enigma of this area and possibly some more large postholes to align with those excavated in 2019.

For more details of both past, present and future activity at Bridge Farm visit our website www.culverproject.co.uk.

Hot off the press: Bridge Farm should feature in the BBC4's Digging for Britain on 4th December .

Recent fieldwork in Lewes

Lewes: Peace Garden, Castle Precincts (NGR: TQ 41471 10128). (CBAS Ltd Site Directors: Caroline Russell and Emily Walsh). Monitored groundworks for the reconstruction of a garden within the scheduled monument of Lewes Castle. The excavations did not extend deep enough to expose any medieval walls or features. The bank was made up of redeposited topsoil, presumably derived from the construction of the adjacent car park. Its removal exposed one side of some brick and stone walling that partly enclosed the existing circle, which is an infilled pond. A D-shaped brick structure was built onto the stretch of stone walling. It had a rendered lining and served as a water feature, with a water pipe running into the top of it. An assortment of finds were found within the bank material, particularly within the backfill of the water container; these included pieces of gypsum and carved stonework (marble was present); bricks; small glass jars and bottles; and pottery, most of which comprised large fragments of garden pots and urns. A selection of finds was removed off site for analysis. Ground reduction of the footpaths and circles removed a very mixed, redeposited topsoil to reveal an underlying layer containing flint shingle; the distinction between these two deposits was often not very clear. A single skin brick wall was exposed at the Limit of Excavation within one of the new footpaths, beside the car park. It had an exposed length of 1.41m. The excavation of the service trench comprised the deepest excavations on Site, and exposed deposits interpreted as the redeposited topsoil and shingle layer, and an earlier topsoil (although there was very little difference between the three of these deposits), and an underlying chalky deposit of made ground at the base of excavation. At the southwest end of the trench, a walled circular structure, 0.71m wide internally, was exposed, in front of the flint garden wall that bounded the Site. The feature was exposed to a depth of 0.61m (nine courses) and was interpreted as a possible well. The

chalky deposit of made ground may have been that deposit exposed at a higher level within one of the excavated footings for a bench.

Lewes Old Grammar School TQ 98191 (CBAS Ltd)

An underground air raid shelter was revealed (August 2018) during ground works adjacent to where previous monitoring had taken place on-site. The entrance is located at the northern boundary of the site. The air raid shelter entrance has two upright parallel brick walls of English Bond measuring 2.30m high, 3.96m in length and 1.04m apart protecting several concrete steps leading down to the entrance doorway. Beyond this brickwork the air raid shelter is constructed of precast concrete sections. Initially an area acting as a lobby is encountered where after 0.90m a 0.89m opening allows a right-angled turn left into the shelters main chamber. This lobby measures 2.13m in length, 1.03m width and 1.99m in height, going down to 1.90m at the north-west end where the roof is on a slope (7 degrees) to assist drainage. It was noted that above the doorway to the lobby a purpose precast concrete section with the slope set and a mortised profile to accept a precast roof cross member was in place. The shelters main chamber measures 9.04m in length, 2.13m wide and 2m in height, designed to accommodate 50 people. At the opposite end to the entrance a vertical square shaped emergency exit shaft is positioned in the roof leading up for 0.71m and measuring 0.61m by 0.61m at the top where a vented metal hatch covers the hole. At the north-west end of the start to the shaft an additional 0.15m gap has been allowed to accommodate the users back as they climb up a ladder to exit the shelter. This area of the roof is modular and has precast pieces to form the emergency exit. Many of the upright precast sections are showing signs of concrete fatigue whereas the roof sections appear unaffected.

A27 East of Lewes Road Improvements NGR: 545934 108391 (Archaeology South East)

The watching brief involved the monitoring of the excavation of eight trial pits. The natural deposits comprised Gault Clay and occasionally Head deposits. The natural deposits were overlain by topsoil and sometimes subsoil in six of the Trial pits, all located within farmland. Two of the Trial pits were located on the verge of the A27 and both showed signs of modern disturbance with made ground overlying the natural deposits. No archaeology was recorded during the watching brief.

Book Review of “Ragstone to Riches” by Simon Elliott



This book is a comprehensive study of the Roman smelting and stone quarrying industries in the Kent and the Weald. Iron from the Weald was the main source of iron during the Roman period. It is a well-researched book providing valuable detail on the Roman use of natural resources in the South East.

A comprehensive analysis of the county of Kent during the Roman occupation gives a good background to the detailed descriptions of the main iron working sites with locations and site history.

The ragstone quarrying industry which took place in the Upper Medway Valley

supplied building materials to many sites in the South East including London. The analysis of the Medway Valley is largely based on new research.

The scale of the ragstone quarrying was impressive. The industry relied heavily on road and river transport links to distribute stone around the South East. The Roman sites are described in detail with a focus on five large quarries including the huge Dean Street quarry.

An excellent appendix summarises the range of building materials sourced in Kent and the South East during Roman times.

Richard Stanyer

RSP: £32 ISBN: 9781407316529
However, LAG newsletter readers are offered a 15% discount – quote LAG!8 if you put in an order.

<https://www.barpublishing.com/ragstone-to-riches.html>

BHAS Excavations at Rocky Clump Stanmer Park

The excavation is of a Late Iron Age/early Romano-British enclosure possibly being the site of a peasant farm.

This year's excavation mainly concentrated on the eastern and southern areas of the site to try and determine what activities were carried out in this complex series of features. The main focus was the large southerly ditch which was excavated in sections. The excavations were also trying to determine the sequence of re-cuts in the SE corner and how it was truncated by a ditch running from north to south.

Large amounts of animal bone were found in this area. The ditch that runs through the central area of the site has been fully excavated and two potential causeways providing an entrance to the central enclosure have been found. Two

sections have been investigated along the large upper east/west defensive ditch. The first section was in the centre of the ditch and revealed substantial amounts of pottery and animal bone. This and others found later could have been placed there as part of a number of "structured deposits". Further work is required to determine this. There have also been two baby burials which were found in this section.

The second area that has been excavated is an extension to this ditch at the eastern end. It appears that the main ditch was re-cut in the past. The below ground grain pit has now been completely excavated and revealed further sherds of the pot which was found towards the end of last season. Other areas of the site which are being investigated to try and determine further features are the lower N/S ditch and Terminus and the parallel upper N/S ditch, which have proved very interesting and has allowed the phasing of these ditches to be determined. A range of test pits have been dug that have given some very interesting results.

Young Archaeologists Clubs in Sussex



Felicity Thompson and Odile Royard are setting up a YAC (ages 7-16) in Brighton and it will be up and running in time for the new school year. They approached Brighton Museum as a host and they are really happy to do this with their new museum. The catchment is unknown at

present, but Chailey YAC has a waiting list so membership should be good to start it going. There will be a mixture of fieldwork as well as time in the Museum.

Spending cuts at The Keep

The Keep houses the collections of East Sussex County Council's Record Office, and partners: the Brighton History Centre, the Mass Observation Archive held by Sussex University and the university's own Special Collections Archive.

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) announced in August that it would be seeking to make savings of £300,000 from The Keep's budget for the three years to 2022. A spokesperson for ESCC said -

"For ESBHRO, regrettably this means we are having to reduce staffing levels and in future the team will focus more on accruing and managing statutory records – those records we're obliged by law to hold. While there will be a shift to more of a 'self-service' approach, there will still be staff available to assist customers and answer their questions and queries as at present. The partners remain committed to maintaining The Keep as a publicly accessible facility where people can continue to make use of the huge wealth of archive material available."

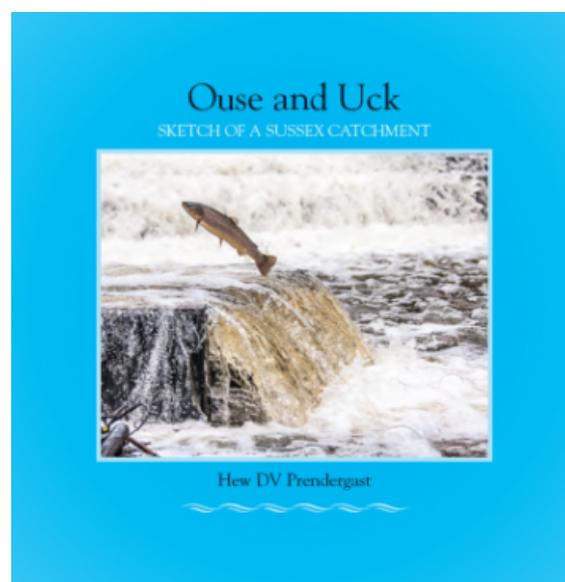
Following this announcement Christopher Whittick and Casper Johnson have left their posts. Christopher had worked at The Keep for 42 years mostly latterly as the Chief Archivist. He is continuing to offer his services to The Keep on a voluntary basis. Casper Johnson was the County Archaeologist and more recently Team Manager Heritage and Records. He has since taken up post as a Senior Archaeological Officer with Kent County Council.

Over the coming months LAG will seek to work with other local groups to make representations to the Council regarding

further cuts with a view to ensuring that there is continued good access to The Keep with sufficient staff to enable the public to carry out research, over and above the statutory requirements to hold and maintain public records.

If you would like to be involved in making representations please contact Anne Locke anne.locke@talktalk.net who will be leading on this on behalf of LAG.

Ouse and Uck by Hew Prendergast



The Chairman of the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust Hew Prendergast has published a short new book on the Ouse and Uck. Over the centuries for the sake of power, transport, and water, the rivers have been banked, blocked, straightened and diverted. Now, however, a new approach is emerging, involving terms such as restoration, biodiversity and natural flood management. Against a background of the historical role of the Ouse and Uck, this booklet describes current issues and sets out some of the activities underway to solve them. Cost: £7 (including p&p) For a copy please contact: hew.prendergast@oart.org.uk or hew.prendercast@btinternet.com.

New County Archaeologist and Finds Liaison Officer

Greg Chuter has taken up a new post with the Environment Agency in the West Country. The new County Archaeologist is Neil Griffin.

Carolina Rangel de Lima has been appointed as the new Portable Antiquities Scheme's Finds Liaison Office at the Barbican House Museum. Any finds of artefacts can be reported to Carolina so that she can record them properly. She can be contacted by email at FLO@sussexpast.co.uk.

Wealden Buildings Study Group

The Wealden Buildings Study Group offers a free interpretative recording of historic timber framed buildings in Sussex. This year it has visited houses in Fittleworth, Bury, Groombridge, Fordcombe, Horsted Keynes, Shoreham-by-Sea, Bramber, Udimore, Rotherfield, Horam and Eastbourne. The Group also holds monthly talks – see listings below for details or see it's website www.wealdenbuildings.org.uk.

Talks and events

BHAS	Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society
ENHAS	Eastbourne Natural History and Archaeological Society
FOAC	Friends of Anne of Cleves House
LHG	Lewes History Group
LAG	Lewes Archaeological Group
SAS	Sussex Archaeological Society
SSA	Sussex School of Archaeology
USAS	University of Sussex Archaeological Society
WAS	Worthing Archaeological Society
WBSG	Wealden Buildings Study Group

DECEMBER

Mon 9th December – LHG talk and AGM – Exploring Public Art in Lewes with Andrew Buxton. 7pm Kings Church, Brooks Road, Lewes. £3/1.

Fri 13th December – BHAS talk and AGM – Mythmakers of the Maiden Castle:

changing a Roman siege mentality with Miles Russell. 7.30pm Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton. £4/free for members.

JANUARY

Fri 10th January – BHAS talk – Herbert Homs (BHAS founder member) with Oliver Gilkes. 7.30pm Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton. £4/free for members.

Sat 11th January – BHAS Day School – Flint and Fossils with Karine Le Hegarat and David Bone. To book email Glynis.jones100@hotmail.co.uk. £30/£25 (for members). If attending half day £15.

Mon 13th January – LHG talk – The History St John Sub Castro Church, Lewes with Stuart Billington. 7pm Kings Church, Brooks Road, Lewes. £3/1.

Tues 14th January – WAS talk – Fishbourne Roman Wildlife Park: new questions from old bones with Naomi Sykes. 7.30pm The Gordon Room, Worthing Town Hall, Stoke Abbott Road, Worthing.

Fri 17th January – LAG talk – Romano-British Settlements in the Ouse Valley with Dr David Rudling. 7.30pm Lecture Theatre, Town Hall, Fisher Street entrance, Lewes. £4/3/2/free for under 25yo.

Sat 18th January - BHAS History Forum Talk - The History of Brighton Fishing – Alan Hayes. 2.30pm start. The Fellowship room, Central United Reformed Church, 102 Blatchington Road, Hove. £4 to non-members.

Sun 19th January – WBSG talks – Public and Private Space with Judie English and House History and Manorial Records with Caroline Adams. 11am and 1pm at Wivelsfield Church Hall, Church Lane. £5. Bring your own packed lunch.

FEBRUARY

Sat 8th February – BHAS Day School – Geology of the Mediterranean with Tony Corrigan. To book email Glynis.jones100@hotmail.co.uk. £30/£25 (for members).

Mon 10th February – LHG talk – Lewes Between the Twittens with Dan Swift. 7pm Kings Church, Brooks Road, Lewes. £3/1.

Tues 11th February – WAS talk – An Archaeological Childhood in Sussex with Janet Pennington. 7.30pm The Gordon Room, Worthing Town Hall, Stoke Abbott Road, Worthing.

Fri 14th February – BHAS talk – Waterlogged Preservation (Mary Rose)

with Amie Friend. 7.30pm Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton. £4/free for members.

Sat 15th February - BHAS History Forum Talk - Brighton before the Pavilion: a different aspect of the city history – with Geoff Mead. 2.30 pm start. The Fellowship room, Central United Reformed Church, 102 Blatchington Road, Hove. £4 to non-members.

Sun 16th February – WBSG talks – The Marden Project with Tony Singleton and Heritage England with Samantha Stone. 11am and 1pm at Wivelsfield Church Hall, Church Lane. £5. Bring your own packed lunch.

Friday 21 February LAG talk – Report on the Major Excavations in Lewes at the Lewes Library, Baxter’s Printworks and Lewes House with Dan Swift. 7.30pm Lecture Theatre, Town Hall, Fisher Street entrance, Lewes. £4/3/2/free for under 25yo.

MARCH

Mon 9th March – LHG talk – 1 Brighton Road, Lewes: 80 years of imprisonment in the country town of Lewes with Christopher Whittick. 7pm Kings Church, Brooks Road, Lewes. £3/1.

Tues 10th March – WAS talk – Recovering from the past: archaeology and Operation Nightingale with Richard Osgood. 7.30pm The Gordon Room, Worthing Town Hall, Stoke Abbott Road, Worthing.

Fri 13th March – BHAS talk – Early Routeways on the Weald and Downland of South East Englands with Martin Bell. 7.30pm Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton. £4/free for members.

Sat 14th March – BHAS Day School – Archery Day with Amie Friend. To book email Glynis.jones100@hotmail.co.uk. £30/£25 (for members).

Sun 15th March – WBSG talk – AGM, Summer Visits Reports and at 1.15pm The Wealden Houses of Surrey with Martin Higgins. 11am and 1pm at Wivelsfield Church Hall, Church Lane. £5. Bring your own packed lunch.

Friday 20th March – LAG talk and AGM – Malling, Lewes: An Anglo-Saxon Estate, a Christian Centre and Medieval Parish with John Bleach. 7.30pm Lecture Theatre, Town Hall, Fisher Street, Lewes. £4/3/2/free for under 25yo.

Sat 21st March – BHAS History Forum Talk – Eugenius Birch the King of Piers with Kathryn Ferry. 2.30 pm start. The Fellowship

room, Central United Reformed Church, 102 Blatchington Road, Hove. £4 to non-members..

Sat 28th March – Sussex Archaeology Symposium – wide range of topics covered by varied cast of speakers. Kings Church, Lewes. £35 including lunch. Email info@sussexarchaeologyco.uk.

APRIL

Tuesday 13th April TBC – WAS talk – Researching the life of a bridge: Old Swan Bridge and the Arun river crossing at Pulborough with John Mills. 7.30pm The Gordon Room, Worthing Town Hall, Stoke Abbott Road, Worthing.

Friday 17th April - LAG talk – Stonehenge Unveiled: large scale field projects and the transformation of the Stonehenge landscape with Paul Garwood. 7.30pm Lecture Theatre, Town Hall, Fisher Street entrance, Lewes. £4/3/2/free for under 25yo.

The LAG newsletter comes out twice a year in the spring and autumn. The autumn deadline is the end of October and the spring deadline is the end of April. Contributions to Paula at paulawodcohen@yahoo.co.uk please.