

DON'S DOWSING DIGEST

March 2011

Hi everyone,

We had such a glorious day at Uffington last Sunday. Although the day started rather grey and wet we ended in glorious sunshine. Seventeen members attended the field trip with many more members not able to attend for various reasons. We started by climbing up to the hill-fort and in its interior started to locate the energy lines that pass through the site. We were also able to locate the earlier Bronze Age defensive ditch by dowsing. Many Iron Age "house-platforms" were also visible to the trained eye. Thanks to friendly moles, sherds of Iron Age pottery and several "pot-boilers" were discovered.



Uffington White Horse

We then moved on to the famous Uffington White Horse, not a turf cut figures as the Cerne Abbas Giant or the Long man of Wilmington. The Uffington White Horse was created in the Late Bronze Age by digging trenches into the chalk to a depth of almost a metre and then backed filling with the pummelled chalk!

Folklore and legends abound on this monument and even in the 19th century regular customs were enjoyed on the horse, especially on the eye of the horse!!!

We were able to locate an energy line passing through the monument and carrying on towards the church at Uffington Village.



Dragon Hill – where St. George slew the dragon?



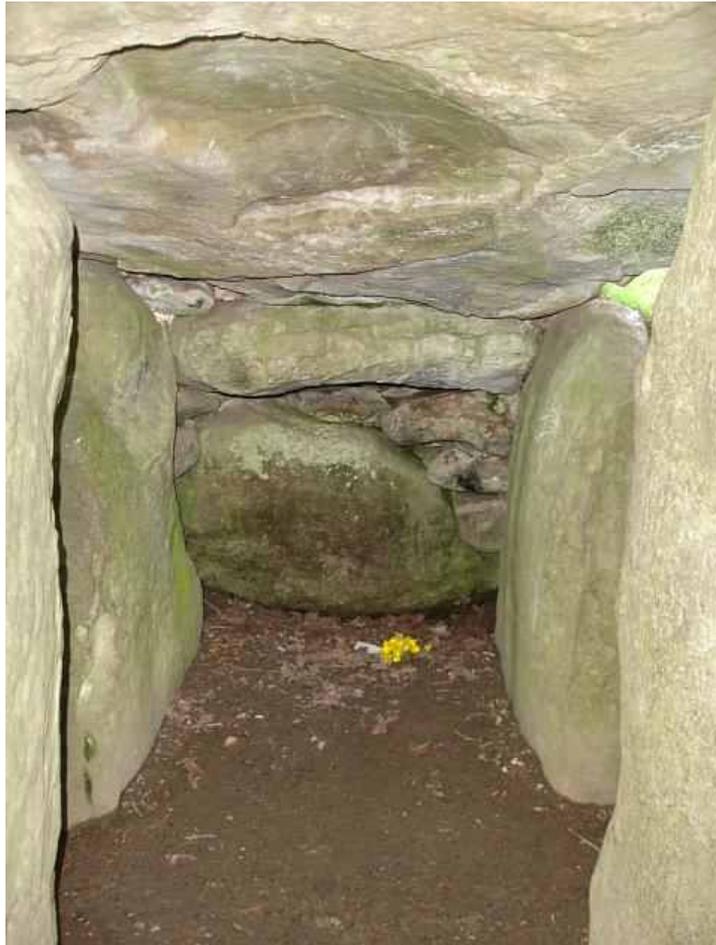
After a wonderful lunch at The Rose & Crown at Ashbury (highly recommended) we walked a short way along the Ridgeway to the Long Barrow of Wayland's Smithy. A Neolithic long barrow sits amongst a grove of trees just off The Ridgeway path with stunning views out across Oxfordshire.



Wayland's Smithy Long Barrow



Entrance to Long Barrow



Interior of Long Barrow

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Wayland's Smithy is a Neolithic Long barrow, made famous by Sir Walter Scott in his "Kenilworth", the tale of a Berkshire farrier. It sits within a charming beech grove by the side of The Ridgeway. The name – first recorded in a charter of King Edred dated AD955 – has long been associated with Wayland, the Saxon god of smiths and metalworkers, and it has always been said that he still lives there, though you will never see him. If, however, you tether your horse near the barrow, leave a groat or a silver sixpence on the uppermost stone and go for a walk; upon your return you will find the beast newly shod !

Minor excavations at the site in 1919 revealed some eight skeletons in the main chamber, as well as two early Iron Age currency bars (or possibly unfinished swords). Grinsell suggested that they were payment for an Iron Age metalworker who had lived on in local folk history.

Further legends are told of Wayland and there were, apparently, once a number of other features in the landscape associated with him. The folklorist,

Diana Woolner, thinks he is a local manifestation of the Saxon cult of Woden, a horse God possibly associated with the hill-figure at Uffington.

A second popular tradition names Wayland's Smithy as the tomb of King Bagsecg, one of the Danes who fell at the nearby Battle of Ashdown. If this were the case, it must have been a Saxo-Danish re-use of the site, a not uncommon situation amongst ancient barrows.

In 1962, Piggott & Atkinson undertook a major excavation at Wayland's Smithy, revealing a two-stage development of the structure during the Neolithic period, some time between 3700 – 3400 BC. In Phase One, an ovoid wooden mortuary chamber with a stone floor had been constructed and fourteen bodies placed inside. Though one was whole, and crouching, the others lay in piles apparently buried elsewhere until the flesh was stripped from the bones. When the chamber was full, two flanking ditches were dug and the extracted chalk piled over the top of the chamber and edged with sarsen stones.

Only fifty years later, Phase Two commenced. Over the original structure, a wedged shaped long barrow, edged with sarsen stones, was constructed: one hundred and eighty feet long and tapering from forty-eight feet down to eight feet wide. It originally stood eight feet high and covered a series of sarsen built burial chambers at the wider southern end. Six large sarsens, averaging nearly ten feet high, guarded the entrance to a cross-shaped cavern: a twenty two foot long passage with a single chamber on each side. The main roof was six feet high and the side chambers, four and a half. The whole was flanked by huge six feet deep, fifteen feet wide ditches which provided the chalk for the construction. Tree trunks were also split and set up like totem poles. Finds included pottery, leaf-shaped arrowheads and stone hand-mills

http://www.berkshirehistory.com/archaeology/waylands_smithy.html

The book I mentioned on Sunday on the St Michael & Mary Line is : -

The Sun and The Serpent by Paul Broadhurst & Hamish Miller.
ISBN 0-95151-831-3, Mythos Publications

Some members of our group asked about the legend of Wayland on Sunday and I didn't give a suitable answer, so here is the information requested: -



Frankish Casket showing the legend of Wayland

Wayland (or Weyland/Wieland/Volundr/Volund/Volcan) the Smith was the son of the sea giant Wate and the sea nymph Wac-hilt. He was bound apprentice to Mimi the Smith and became a skilled metal worker. Wayland and his two brothers lived for seven years with three swan-princesses. The brothers are said to have found the princesses sunning themselves without their swan-coats. The brothers stole the coats and hid them, forcing the princesses to remain as human women. When one day the swan-princesses vanished, Wayland's brothers set out to look for them, but Wayland stayed behind and was soon captured by the evil King Nnidung (or Nithun/Nidud) of Sweden (boo!)

To prevent Wayland from escaping, Nidung ordered his men to cut the sinews of Wayland's leg. The king had Wayland fashion wonderful items for him and his family.

Eventually Wayland took his revenge (hooray) by luring the king's two sons to his smithy, where he killed them and turned their skulls into drinking goblets, which he gave to the king. He made their eyes into beautiful jewels which were presented to the queen (yuk!). He then lured the king's daughter to his smithy, where he seduced her. While she slept, Wayland flew off using swan-feather wings he had made.

Wayland flew over King Nidungs hall and extracted a promise that he would never hurt Wayland's child. Then Wayland told the king what the goblets and jewels really were, and what had happened to his daughter, then flew off. King Nidung could not in turn harm Wayland's son, now his heir, because of the promise he had given.

<http://www.waylands.net/public/smithy/legends.htm>

But what happened to the three swan princesses?

Events I

The next dowsing day is this coming Sunday March 20th when we are going to meet at the Salmon Leap pub, Testwood Lane, Totton at 09.30. To find the Salmon Leap, simply come into Totton from the Redbridge flyover, take the last exit at the round-a-bout in Totton, marked up as Council Offices and Police Station, go past the police station and after a few yards turn left into Testwood Lane. The Salmon Leap is about a mile up this road (please park in the service roads not the pub car-park).

I am aware that many members are away next weekend, either on holidays or elsewhere but even so could you please let me know if you are coming or not? Depending on the weather we may only be out until 13.30 but there may well be a chance to continue our research into the afternoon.

Events II

Our next day out is on Sunday April 10th when I have arranged to meet at FISHBOURNE ROMAN PALACE CAFÉ at 09.30. We shall then car-share to The Trundle near Chichester. The Trundle is a multi-phased hill-fort with evidence of Neolithic flint-mine shafts and a later Bronze Age enclosure ditch. The Trundle offers fantastic view over Chichester Harbour. There are some very unusual energy spirals to be discovered on this site.

There may well be an opportunity to visit Fishbourne Roman Palace in the late afternoon if time allows. Last admission time is 16.30

I have reserved seating in a pub near Arundel, unfortunately, being West Sussex, the prices for their roasts is £12.95 but they also do baguettes and burgers plus other snacks. It is ESSENTIAL that you let me know if you require lunch or not?

After lunch we will be visiting Bignor Roman Villa which has some spectacular mosaics (far better than Fishbourne) I am attempting to arrange a guided tour of the villa by one of their guides. There is also a chance of tracing the Roman Stane Street which passes close to the villa on its way from Dell Quay at Fishbourne to London.

Other Events

Saturday 9 th April	ADG Committee Meeting, London
Sunday 10 th April	Day out to Bignor & The Trundle
Monday 11 th April	HADS Committee Meeting
Tuesday 12 th April	Talk on the Marden Henge – Jim Leary - Salisbury Museum 19.30
Thursday 14 th April	HADS Talk at St Cross Gary Biltcliffe
Sunday 1 st May	HADS Stonehenge OOH visit (sold out)
Thursday 12 th May	Don Bryan talking to the Marlow Archaeological Group
Saturday 21 st May	Tour of Bishops Waltham - Palace car-park 18.00
Sunday 22 nd May	Day out to the Cranborne Chase
Saturday 4 th June	Discovering the Winchester Waterways Durngate car park 15.00
Sunday 12 th June	Day out to the Isle of Wight
Sunday 26 th June	Week tour of Northumbria HADS/History Group
Sunday 10 th July	Day out to the Rollright Stones
Saturday/ Sunday 16 th & 17 th July	Archaeological Dowsing Group of the BSD event at Cheltenham including a visit to the Belas Knap Neolithic Long Barrow, more details to follow.

So, plenty to do and places to go. There will be other dowsing events offered as and when I can fit them in.

Some really good news is that Wendy Fromm at Nursling has given us permission to continue our research at Nursling Mill, this is the site of the Roman settlement and the crossing point of the River Test. Small trial excavations will take place later in the spring.

Hope to see you all out with HADS this coming spring & summer

With kindest regards

Don

Do keep up to date by viewing: -

www.hantsarchaeodowsers.hampshire.org.uk