

HAMPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOWSERS

Newsletter – Late Autumn 2021

Welcome to this, our second Newsletter of the autumn..

I write this shortly after Gill and I have returned from our holiday/archaeological tour of Shetland, Orkney and northern Scotland. Having visited the Neolithic site of Jarlshof on Shetland as well as those of Skara Brae and The Ring of Brodgar etc. on Orkney, coming home certainly brought us back to earth with a bump.

However, back to the present. I hope all HADs members, new and old (if you will forgive that expression) are keeping well. Covid of course is still with us and the number of daily cases doesn't seem to be diminishing. The experts reckon that Covid is here to stay. We have just booked in for our annual flu Jab and the Covid Booster. It was interesting to note the difference in attitude towards Covid between Scotland, where precautions including face masks are compulsory, and England where in some places people don't seem to be bothered.

Back to HADs news.

Don, HADs members and the local community were bitterly disappointed that the trial excavation on Hook Common over the weekend of 25/26 August had to be cancelled at the eleventh hour. It was suddenly pointed out to us that the site was an SSSI on which any excavations are forbidden. Why couldn't we have been told that before all the necessary arrangements had been made including additional insurance? Maybe there will be another opportunity at some time in the future.

However, we soon bounced back at the St Cross Michaelmas Fair held on 25 September. Thanks to HADs members who gave their time at this effort. Don was delighted that we were able to join up some new members and welcome back a previous member.

Our new 2020/21 brochure had been published in time for the Michaelmas Fair; copies will be available for members at future HADs events. In the meantime, the brochure has been posted on the website at <http://www.hads.uk>.

We had another disappointment when our visit to Coxford, Southampton on 3 October had to be cancelled due to a forecast of heavy rain during that day. However, Don is re-arranging a date for a visit next month. He is also working on his programme for future dowsing dates and other trips, so please watch out for further information in due course.

Your Committee met on 10 August and again on 13 October. It has been decided to re-introduce the £2 fee per person when attending dowsing sessions or mini-trips. Also, as in the past, there will be a charge of £3.00 for HADs members (£5.00 for non-members) for events at Shawford Parish Hall (excluding the Christmas Social). Zoom meetings will remain free for HADs members.

Regarding the anonymous donation of £500 to HADs funds I am pleased to advise members that this has been spent wisely on special equipment which will aid HADs and its members. This includes a digital projector (to replace Don's old personal projector) which will be very useful at future talks. Other purchases include a table for use particularly on digs and a trolley to carry our equipment around. At the time of writing approximately £50 is currently remaining from that donation.

Our Treasurer, Edwina, had a shock recently when she received another anonymous envelope through the post. That envelope contained a further £500 in £50 notes. There was a typed note enclosed stating that this was a second and final donation to HADs. The donor clearly wants to stay anonymous, so we will obviously respect those wishes. We want to say to that donor a very big and sincere THANK YOU! At our recent Committee meeting we discussed this second donation and decided to invite all our Members to come up with suggestions on how that might best be spent.

Regarding donations, we wish to thank those members who made donations to HADs during the Covid Pandemic. We are very grateful to them.

Our next HADs event will be on Sunday 24 October when we will be visiting Titchfield Abbey (see Don's recent email for details).

As we approach the latter part of the autumn it is time to refer to our forthcoming talks programme. Our first talk will be on Thursday 28 October at 7.30pm at Shawford Parish Hall when we will be welcoming back Andrew Negus, with the next instalment of his series about 'Portsmouth – Harlots, Dung and Glory'. His talk this time will cover '1860-1930 Into the Modern Age'. We shall see why the dockyard triples in size, why the dung disappears, and how corsets cut down on prostitution. Mudlarks will entertain us, as will Sherlock Holmes with his football and three super women heroes will feature well. New hospitals, hotels and theatres will appear and bring baby Peter Sellers along too. The 1st World War will bring glory and death to the town, which is then honoured as a city with a Bishop. A murder follows ...

On 25 November our own Chris Sellen will be telling us (via Zoom) about 'Exploring Aspects of Aerial Archaeology'. Since the 1920's discovery of archaeological sites from the air has been a major tool for archaeologists.

Then on 16 December at Shawford Hall we will be holding our annual Christmas Social. The Committee is currently working on plans for that event so watch out for further information in due course.

An additional talk has been programmed for 13 January when our member Dave Jesinger will be talking to us about 'Energy Lines especially relating to Local Churches'. This additional talk, which doesn't appear in the brochure, will be via Zoom.

Andy Manning of Wessex Archaeology will be returning on 27 January and will be disclosing to us (via Zoom) the latest findings at Durrington Walls with his talk 'The Durrington Anomalies – Hiding in Plain Site?'

We will be holding our 2022 Annual General meeting on 24 February next year. That will also be held via Zoom.

Our last planned talk of the season will be by Kay Ainsworth who will finally be able to tell us, (at the third attempt, due to Covid) about 'The Life and Times of Alfred the Great'. That talk will be at Shawford Parish Hall.

(Please see directions to Shawford Parish Hall at the end of this Newsletter).

In addition to the above we are planning a pre-Christmas dowsing visit to the ruins of Knowlton Church on Cranbourne Chase in December followed by a seasonal Pub lunch.

Next year HADs will be celebrating its 15th Anniversary and the Committee have started to give thought to what kind of an event that might be. Members' thoughts would be welcome.

Members might recall that, in my last Newsletter I referred to the lack of social contact between members as a result of holding many of our events on Zoom. That issue has not been forgotten and our Social Sub-Committee has been considering some social events for the future.

Long time members will remember that HADs used to be affiliated to the British Society of Dowsers (BSD) but ended that association when it was felt that BSD was 'losing its way'. There has been a suggestion by another Dowsing Group that either the BSD be reformed (though currently it is still in existence) or another body be established with similar objectives. Your Committee decided to take a waiting brief and see what happens.

It just leaves me to wish you all, on behalf of your Committee, continuing good health, a good autumn and we look forward to seeing you all again at our future events.

A special closing plea – it is still possible to catch Covid-19 despite being double vaccinated. If any member should be feeling poorly prior to an actual HADs event, it is essential that you stay away and avoid the possibility of cross infection. I am sure everybody will understand this. Many thanks.

Paul (Herbert),

Chairman, HADs 17 October 2021

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Directions to: Shawford Parish Hall, Pearson Lane, Shawford, Winchester, Hampshire. SO21 2AA (for 28 October, 16 December, and 31 March 2022)

From Chandler's Ford direction take the main road through Otterbourne, shortly before crossing over the M3 take the right turn for Shawford. Before the Station take the left turn into Pearson Lane. Continue up Pearson Lane and the Parish Hall is on the right hand side,

From Winchester, after passing through Compton cross the M3 and take the left turn for Shawford.

Please note: the Parish Hall car park has a maximum capacity of 40 cars but only if they are double parked. Alternatively park in Shawford Station Car Park – it is only a reasonably short walk to the Hall.