

HADS NEWSLETTER



Heather in the New Forest

SPRING

2014

Hi everyone,

Apologies for the late appearance of this Spring Newsletter but it has been a very hectic year so far, with lots of things going on and lots of things to organise.



Anyway, our first event of 2014 was the talk on Pompeii and Herculaneum given by our very own Clive Essery and Alan Sandford. Here's Alan's report on their talk:

"POMPEII AND HERCULANEUM" – Talk by Clive Essery and Alan Sandford, 16th January 2014

2014 started with the wettest January on record, but we are grateful that the rain at least partially eased off for our first talk of the New Year. This was an "in-house" event, hosted by HADs committee members Clive Essery and Alan Sandford on the subject of "Pompeii and Herculaneum".

After agreeing to give the talk, Clive and Alan found that the subject matter was so vast that they would need to be focused and selective; this is where the idea of talking about the differences between the two sites came about. They also decided to play on the fact that Clive's favourite of the two sites is Herculaneum, whilst Alan has a preference for Pompeii.

Clive started on the theme of "contrasts", showing the difference between the sizes, locations and populations of the two towns, and the different way they were overcome by the catastrophic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. He also looked at the areas excavated and the depth they were buried, comparing the event to other volcanic eruptions in the past.

Alan then spoke about the "darkness" that overcame both sites. This was a rather grisly look at the human remains found and the scientific analysis of how they met their fate. Most of the victims found at Herculaneum were discovered in the boat houses on the shore, where they had probably gone

hoping for rescue from the sea. In contrast the victims from Pompeii were found all over the town, many in their own homes.

On a much brighter note, Clive then spoke about the “brilliance” that is Herculaneum. Due to it being far less visited than Pompeii and that the buildings you see are generally more intact, you can still get the feeling of walking down ancient streets. A visit to Herculaneum offers a unique atmosphere and is something you are unlikely to ever forget.

Alan then spoke about the “full picture” you get from visiting Pompeii, where you can see far more of the buildings (such as the basilica, forum, theatres and amphitheatre) that make up a Roman town than you can at Herculaneum. As it was impossible to show everything, he concentrated on themes such as housing, business, religion and entertainment.

On what both Alan and Clive are in full agreement is you should visit *both* sites if at all possible. You need a whole day to see Pompeii, at least three hours at Herculaneum and half a day at the Archaeological Museum in Naples, where many of the treasures from both sites are displayed. The exhibition in London last year was terrific, but it couldn't compete with the “real thing”.



Thank you Clive & Alan for this superb talk.

Report written by Alan Sandford

Bitterne 23rd January

Our first 2014 dowsing survey took place on this Thursday when a few members were able to join me at Bitterne to try and trace the Roman road which led to Chichester from the Roman site at Bitterne. Many years ago, I was part of the excavation team who dug a small section of this road at the junction of Peartree Avenue and Spring Road. This site was later marked with a stone marker and plaque.

What appeared to be a straight forward survey, tracing the road across Freemantle Common, soon became a very complicated route indeed. The route we were following appeared to head towards the direction of Hamble and not towards the expected Kanes Hill.



On the Roman road at Freemantle Common



It soon became apparent that we were following the wrong road! It appears that there are two routes leaving Bitterne towards the east, one going via Kanes Hill and one heading towards Hamble. A return survey is necessary to sort these routes out!

Winchester 2nd February

Our targets for the day were to locate the Roman Durngate, which is somewhere on the north-east corner of Roman Winchester, and to try and find the missing Roman road which heads towards Alresford. We located the possible site of the Durngate quite easily: it appears to be almost opposite the Police Station in North Walls.



Paul is on the site of the Roman Durngate



Line of the Eastern Roman wall

After establishing the site of the Durngate, we turned our attention to locating the possible Roman road towards Alresford. It appears that this route leaves Winchester through the Eastgate of the city and comes along what is now St John's Street before it turns towards Alresford opposite the Old Blue Boar (or Bowl) Inn. We need to return to Winchester and follow this route towards Neatham, where there is a known Roman settlement.



The line of the "missing" Roman road to Alresford

HADS AGM 13th February

At a very well attended AGM we elected our Officers and Committee members for 2014. I was able to give a presentation on the 2013 activities of HADS, and they were pretty amazing. Looking at the powerpoint presentation it was staggering just to see what HADS do in a single year and the places we visit!

At the end of the meeting, and under Any Other Business, Paul Herbert, our Chairman, called Alan Sandford forward, along with all of the committee members, to present Alan with an engraved paper weight in recognition of Alan's service both to the committee and to HADS in general. Alan is moving to Rochester within a few months but he is not cutting his ties with us and will still attend our extended tours.



Good luck Alan, and we wish you every happiness in your new home.

Norfolk reconnaissance trip 20th – 24th February

I drove up to Norfolk in the early hours to check out the Furzedown Hotel and find the sites we would be visiting on the extended tour in May.

ADG Event at Gestingthorpe 7th – 9th March

Although not a HADS event, several members of HADS are also members of the British Society of Dowsers Archaeology Group. Hill Farm at Gestingthorpe is the home of Ashley Cooper. Over the last few years both Ashley and Harold (Ashley's father who died last year) have given support to archaeological dowsing on their farm at Gestingthorpe.

Our surveys have shown that there is rather a large Roman settlement site on Lemon Hill. The site includes a possible Roman temple, numerous buildings and a system of trackways. Many surface finds indicate that there are definitely Roman buildings in the area.



Great weather, great site and great company - just what dowsing is all about!

Christchurch Field Trip 16th March

Several members made the trip to Christchurch. It was a glorious day weather-wise, and the floods had subsided. We searched for energy lines at the castle, viewed the Constable's house, traced the Saxon ditch around part of the town, had coffee and ice-cream. We then had a very good lunch in *Ye Olde George Inn*. After lunch we had two Priory Guides who led us on a tour of the Priory, we were led down to three Saxon crypts, not normally open to the public. The day ended with more tea, cake and ice-cream – a very successful day indeed!



The History of Hursley ~ A talk by Dave Key. 20th March.



Dave Key (left)

When HADs worked at Hursley Park in the summer of 2012, we were hosted by Dave Key. We were impressed by Dave's knowledge and immediately thought about getting him to give a talk on Hursley's history. This finally happened on 20th March. Dave is a local man and an employee of IBM, current occupants of the Hursley Estate.

Hursley is part of the manor of Merdon, which is located on an Iron Age hill fort. Much later, in 643 AD, the manor of "Meretune" was granted to the Bishop of Winchester. The site later became a deer park which was ditched and fenced and contained a hunting lodge - the enclosure survives to this day. In 1138 a castle was built at Merdon by Bishop Henry of Blois but this had a very short lifetime as Henry II ordered it to be "slighted" in 1155.

After the Reformation, the Merdon estate was granted to Sir Philip Hoby and he built a house, located on the lawn behind the current mansion, which has completely disappeared. However, in dry summers you can see the footprint of the building on the grass, although it does not seem to fit the surviving illustrations.

Eventually the estate passed to Dorothy Major, wife of Richard Cromwell, Lord Protector, the successor to his father, Oliver Cromwell. Richard had all his lands taken away at the Restoration but was able to use Hursley as it was held by his wife. Richard was exiled in 1660, leaving Dorothy behind. When Dorothy died in 1675, Richard's son, Oliver, returned to claim the estate and a long dispute over ownership ensued. Eventually the Cromwells gained the estate and Richard was able to return. After Richard's death, his daughters sold the estate to William Heathcote in 1718.

In 1721, William had the Tudor mansion dismantled and a new house in the "Queen Anne" style (even though it was past her time) built nearby. This

forms the core of the present building. The landscaped gardens, laid out by Stephen Switzer survive mostly intact to this day.

In 1888 the estate was sold, furnished, to Joseph Baxendale. The house was photographed by Country Life in 1902 and from that we can get a very good idea of how it had looked in the 19th Century. In the same year the house was sold to George Cooper and it underwent a major rebuild with new wings added and a lavish refurbishment. Country Life revisited in 1905 and photographed the updated house.

In 1914 Sir George offered the estate to the military. A massive camp was established, including a 350 bed military hospital. After the war, the house returned to the family and the walled garden was redesigned with help from Gertrude Jekyll in 1925.

The estate was requisitioned in World War 2, when the design and production of Vickers Supermarine, including the Spitfire, was moved from bombed Southampton. A lot of ancillary buildings were constructed for their use. In 1943 the site was again turned over to the army and "D Day Camps" were established, although Supermarine remained until 1956.

Following Supermarine's withdrawal, the house and gardens were left in a dilapidated state and the Cooper family did not have the resources for restoration work. In 1958, IBM took over and Hursley became the site of a great deal of modern computer development, including colour monitors and cashpoints. IBM's involvement continues to this day.

Thanks for the talk Dave – it was well worth the wait!

Report written by Alan Sandford

Offa's Dyke Path Thursday 27th March – Sunday 13th April

It seemed a good idea at the time but after walking over 177 miles, mainly in mud and water I had my doubts! However, it did me a world of good; I lost some weight, built up some muscles, met some nice people and more importantly raised £1840.00 for a young lad called Geoffrey Ellis. Geoffrey had broken his back in a mountain bike accident last year and needed money to retrain him for a new life.

I have included this item just to thank all of you who sponsored me and helped me raise such a lot of money!



Views along the way



Spectacular scenery and a new girl-friend!

Adventures on Easter Island – a talk by Edwina Cole – 17th April

ADVENTURES ON EASTER ISLAND

We finished our 2013/14 lecture programme with a fascinating talk given by our own Edwina (Ed) Cole on the remote landmass that is Easter Island. Ed, along with Janet Blizard, another HADs member, visited Easter Island in 2012. As a demonstration of the place's isolation, they had to travel all the way to Santiago in Chile and then take a five hour flight from there. The nearest inhabited neighbour, Pitcairn Island, is over 2,000 km away.

The Tapati festival was going on at the time of Ed and Jan's visit. The festival is by the islanders for the islanders although visitors are welcome. Easter Island is slightly smaller than the Isle of Wight and has a population under 6,000. The airport is just a hut. There are no trees to speak of and very few beaches. Early visitors to the island, including Captain James Cook, were generally unimpressed!

The Island has over 2,000 archaeological sites and we are grateful that one of the pioneer female archaeologists, Katherine Routledge, spent 17 months on the island from 1914-15 and left very good notes. The remoteness of the island is demonstrated by the fact that Katherine was totally unaware of the outbreak of the First World War in 1914!

Easter Island is roughly triangular and was formed of three (now extinct) volcanos. The first human settlers came from other Polynesian islands between 600 and 900 AD. The natives call Easter Island "Rapa Nui", which this is also the name of their language. Some Rapa Nui words are:

- "Moai" – the famous "stone heads";
- "Pukao" – the red hats or topknots on some of the stone heads;
- "Aku" – the ceremonial platforms where the statues stand;
- "Mana" – sacred/magical power.

The stone heads were erected between 1000 and 1600 AD and were thrown down from when the first European visitors came in the early 18th century. As late as the 1860s, Peru mounted slave raids and more than half of the inhabitants were abducted; this led to the island's culture being devastated and, at the time of the annexation by Chile in 1888, there were only 111 inhabitants. The early 20th century saw the introduction of sheep farming, causing further damage to the island's archaeology, the natives being confined to Hanga Roa on the west of the island.

No one knows why the natives suddenly ceased the production of moai. There are over 400 in a quarry that were simply abandoned. The moai are supposed to represent deceased ancestors and nearly all of them look inland; nearly 900 still exist. One moai has restored eyes of white coral with a red pupil and is quite startling when seen for the first time.

The ceremonial village of Orongo, situated on a cliff-top, has been reconstructed and it is there that the "Bird Man Competition" was held. Rival

tribes competed annually to obtain the first egg of the “sooty tern”. Whoever found it was endowed as a bird man, considered to be sacred and would live in isolation for a year. A moai in the British Museum is considered to be important in the ceremony and its removal from the island is the cause of some resentment.

One of the saddest aspects of European interference is that no one can now read the “rongorongo” script. It appears on 27 artefacts (all in museums) and all attempts at deciphering it have failed.

Despite all its tribulations, the island remains a fascinating place, full of wonder and was well worth the considerable effort in getting there. Thank you to Ed for ending our successful lecture programme on a high!

Report written by Alan Sandford.

This was an excellent talk, so much so that Ed has been asked to repeat it, both to WARG members and those HADS members who were unable to make her talk.

Wareham Trip 27th April

Following our Saxon theme we went to visit Wareham, one of King Alfred's fortified burghs. Wareham has a complete set of Saxon banks and ditches. We started the day off by looking at the site of the castle, now with a modern house built on the site. Very thick foundation walls have been discovered in the grounds of the present house. These foundations are thought to be 11th or 12th century.

A short walk along the Saxon bank led us to the church of St Martin's, itself a late Saxon church, but with far earlier foundations. We were able to dowse for the earlier church quite easily. Coffee and lunch were taken in Wareham. After lunch we searched for the lost Saxon royal palace, some members were able to find this whilst others couldn't – so typical with dowsing unknown sites. Apart from one heavy downpour at the start of the day we were very lucky with the weather.



Inside St Martin's Church



Wareham Quay with the Priory Church behind



Searching for the Saxon palace

International Dowsing Day 4th May - Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley

The purpose of this day was to introduce the subject of dowsing to ordinary members of the public who have had no experience of dowsing at all. I am very grateful to those members of HADS who came along and helped on the day. It was very successful: I think we introduced about 30 people to dowsing on the day, from the very young to the very old. We were also given a tour by one of the rangers to the top of the chapel/water tower which gave us fantastic views of Southampton Water.

One person Clive spoke to said it “was a life changing experience!”



Some views of the International Dowsing day

Lepe Study Day 10th May



HADS trip to Lepe Beach

On this Saturday, 20 members of HADS attended a study day in the Country Park classroom at Lepe. We were studying *'The death of Anglo-Saxon England'* and *'The rise and fall of the Norman Kings.'* The staff at the café supplied refreshments. They, and the Country Park staff could not have been more welcoming and helpful.

Don's first lecture was a master class in sorting out the bits of Anglo-Saxon history that we thought we knew, but had forgotten! His handout with details of the Royal House of Wessex was really useful as we heard about Edmund the Magnificent, Edwy and Edgar the Peaceable amongst others. He also explained the run-up to 1066, clarifying a lot of the detail.

Coffee and cakes followed, then we settled down to hear about the Normans. What a lot they were. Many came to unpleasant ends and there were so many Matildas that we lost count! We all marvelled at Don's knowledge and the expert way he has of sharing it with us.

Lunch followed and afterwards we all gathered back in the classroom to celebrate Ron's birthday with yet more cakes and delicious drinks. This was to fortify us for our D-Day walk.

D-Day Dave and his wife arrived to show us the D-Day sites in the Country Park. It didn't rain, but we all got blasted by the gale force wind that swept away any cobwebs we might have had. It was a fascinating walk, opening our eyes to the important role that this coastline played in WW2.

We arrived back in the classroom, finished the cake and drinks (of course!) and reflected on all we had seen and heard.

Thanks go to the staff at Lepe who were fantastic and to Don the Magnificent, without whom these wonderful days just would not happen.

Report written by Edwina Cole



D-Day Dave giving his talk



Braving the elements on Lepe Beach

HADS Tour of Norfolk 17th to 20th May



We couldn't believe it! The weather forecast was set fair and we were on our way to Norfolk. We knew what to expect, because Don had explained it all at our meeting but even he couldn't predict the weather, and we had all packed for every eventuality.

First stop was Bury St Edmunds where we had time for lunch in an excellent café and a quick look at the Abbey. Then it was back on the bus for the rest of the journey to Great Yarmouth. When we arrived, Paul and Lisa who were to be our hosts for the next 4 nights welcomed us. Lots of us had rooms overlooking the sea and we settled in for another HADS trip.

Next morning was Saturday and we set off for Hopton on Sea where we quickly discovered the Michael and Mary lines as they enter England. We were also fascinated by a huge operation going on along the beach to secure the area from future flooding. Going into the church we were given a very interesting talk by the vicar and Don found some cuddly toys to be photographed with.

Then it was on to St Olave's Priory which was an incredibly peaceful place with significant remains. There, sitting amongst them, were two people who were very interested in what we were doing and wanted to know all about dowsing. I think we were reluctant to leave such a lovely place, but we were on our way to Burgh Castle, which is the best preserved Roman monument in East Anglia.

There were lots of information boards to read as we walked along, but our first stop was to be The Fisherman's Inn for lunch. Paul told us all about windmills and then we set off to explore the castle itself and admire the remains of the Roman defences. We walked around the church, noticing the round tower, and then headed back to Great Yarmouth. Several of us took the opportunity to walk around the town and investigate the tourist information office. Ed and Jan discovered a quirky tea shop and Alan and Pradip went off to visit some of the churches in the town. Our meal in the hotel was HUGE.....no slimming on this tour!

Sunday morning dawned bright, clear and warm. Because we were so close to the sea, some HADS members were enjoying walking along the beach before breakfast and enjoying the early morning sun. Then it was back on the bus for our trip to the Roman town of *Venta Icenoram*. Today it is known as Caister St Edmunds. There was so much to dowse for here - a complete Roman town lies under the grass - and many members were able to trace the roads that ran through the settlement.

We then set off for Wymondham, where we were to visit the famous Abbey. It is enormous, and we were given such a warm welcome as we entered. Everyone we met on this tour was so friendly and welcoming, all wanting us to experience this part of England at its very best. The screen in the Abbey is astonishing, and we spent our time here admiring the beauty of this building. We found a lovely café to have lunch in (don't we always?) and thoroughly enjoyed our walk around the town.

On our way back we were treated to a drive amongst the Broads and ended up at Ludham Bridge where we stopped for tea, ice cream and wonderful views of the water and the boats. Before we got to the hotel we stopped off at the remains of Caister Roman Fort nestling amongst the houses on the outskirts of Great Yarmouth.

On Monday we drove to Norwich where we were to enjoy a day at leisure. Everyone decided what they wanted to do. Jan and Vicky went off on their own tour of discovery, whilst others found lots to do in this lovely city. I think most of us went to the Castle Museum and enjoyed the riverside walk amongst other things. Most of us agreed that a longer stay in Norwich would be a good thing to do. Our tour came to a rapid end after that, but there were more surprises in store!

On Tuesday we said a reluctant goodbye to Lisa and Paul at the Furzedown Hotel and set off for the long journey home, but where was Don taking us? After going down some very narrow roads we were delighted to arrive at Dunwich, the city that fell into the sea. It was fabulous there and we all enjoyed the walk to the ruins of Greyfriars Priory. For some, this was a real highlight of the whole trip. But we weren't done yet!

There was a possibility of stopping in Colchester, so that's where we had lunch. Some members managed to do a lot in the short time that we had, and perhaps to think that a return trip would be interesting. Then we did make it home, on time and expertly driven by our Leader and Planner of all the glumptious fun that we so enjoy on our wonderful HADS extended tours. We had perfect weather, five days of sunny bliss and an itinerary that was fascinating and interesting. All the wet weather gear stayed in our bags, and we enjoyed a comfy hotel and each other's company. No wonder we love these tours and are already looking forward to the next one.

Thanks Don.....you are a STAR!!

Report written by Edwina Cole

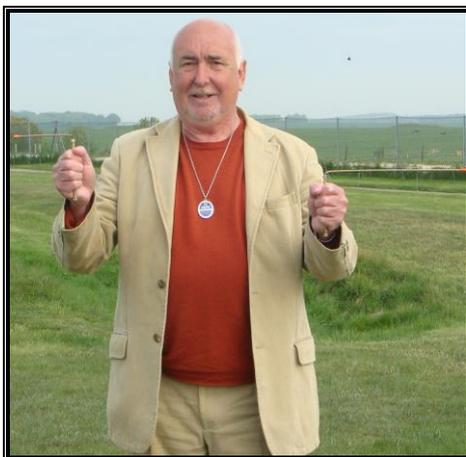
Athelney 1st June

The last item in this Newsletter is on our recent trip to Burrow Mump and Athelney. We had 16 members attending this trip so a mini-bus was ordered. We left Winchester South Park & Ride and drove in sunshine to our first coffee stop at Podimore Services on the A303. After a short rest we drove via Langport to Burrow Mump, one of the seven hills of the Somerset Levels. We could see the Glastonbury Tor lit up by the sun some miles away. We knew that the St. Michael energy line came from The Tor to Burrow Mump which we then located. The chapel on top of the hill dates to about the 13th century with later additions. We were able to locate an earlier prehistoric ritual site lying beneath the later church. Then it was lunch time, so we walked the short distance to The King Alfred Inn at Burrow Bridge and had, probably the best roast dinner of any trip thus far - it was huge, with loads of vegetables.

After lunch we drove the short distance to Athelney, the island where King Alfred sought shelter after losing the Battle of Chippenham in 878. It was at Athelney where Alfred rallied his troops that led to his victory against the Vikings at Edington.

We dowsed for Alfred's early fort, the monastery he founded, and more successfully, the causeway leading to Athelney. Some dowsers stated that they had located some of the crumbs of bread that Alfred had burnt when he fell asleep but I think they had had too much sun whilst resting like babies in the long grass...

Happy days



I have included an up to date dowsing programme and look forward to seeing most of you out dowsing very soon.

Kind regards
Don

June 2014

HADS SPRING/SUMMER DIARY

Saturday 14th June

Glastonbury ~ dowsing inside the Abbey ruins ~ searching for the earliest church built by Joseph of Arimathea. Meet at the Abbey Gatehouse 10.00. Cost £10 to include admission to the Abbey. Car – Share please.

Sunday 22nd June

Avebury ~ dowsing with Paul Daw ~ looking for “lost stones and avenues” ~ Meet at The Red Lion 10.00 ~ Normal dowsing fee (£3 + £2 for donation to Stone Circle and Henge Society) – Car – Share please.

Thursday 3rd July

Dowsing/Social Evening at Kings Somborne – Meet outside of the church (Opposite The Crown) at 19.00. We shall search for the site of John of Gaunt’s Palace before we retire to The Crown for a social gathering.

Thursday 10th July

Dowsing/Social Evening at Farley Chamberlayne (TBC) Searching for the early church and medieval village and viewing (from a distance) the Semaphore House. Meet outside the church at 19.00. We shall be retiring to The Dolphin in Hursley for a social gathering afterwards.

Thursday 17th July

Dowsing/Social Evening at Hamble Common – Meet in The Square at Hamble at 19.00. Searching for Roman and Iron Age remains on Hamble Common. We shall be retiring to The White Hart for a social gathering afterwards.

Sunday 20th July

To celebrate the Festival of Archaeology we shall be searching for archaeological remains with the Roman Fort at Portchester (TBC). Meet at the gateway to the fort at 10.00 – picnic or a pub lunch.

Thursday 24th July

HADs Committee Meeting

Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th July

Extensive dowsing survey at Hook, near Warsash. Searching for the “lost village and chapel of Hook”. As the site is quite open to the public we must maintain our presence on site so a picnic lunch is suggested.