

HAMPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOWSERS

Newsletter – SUMMER 2021

Welcome to this, our SUMMER Newsletter.

Hello again to all our HADs Colleagues and I hope you are still keeping well and active. When I wrote the last Newsletter I referred to gradually easing our way out of the Covid pandemic. However, we now have concern again with the spread of the Indian Variant which is affecting more and more areas of the UK. Whilst case numbers in Hampshire are extremely low we still have to take precautions with continuing to social distance and the wearing of face masks.

I am sure you all enjoyed Andy Burnham's talk on 'The Old Stones' on 27 May and Don's two Winchester Walks on 6 and 13 June, which attracted 22 and 24 members and guests respectively. I am sure a number of HADs members watched Don's talk to the City of Winchester Guides on 3 June about his 60 years involvement in Archaeology (a re-run of his previous talk to WARG).

Our next planned event will be during the afternoon of Sunday 4 July when we will be dowsing at Itchen Stoke. Joining instructions will follow in due course. As stated in our last Newsletter, this will be an opportunity for new members to have a go at dowsing. Full tuition will be offered on the day. The site that Don has in mind will be suitable both for experienced and new members.

Your Committee met again on 9 June and the main topic for discussion was the method in which we should organise future talks, particularly during the winter months. Here I want to thank those members who participated in the consultation exercise. All the views expressed were reported to and considered by the Committee. The general consensus of those who replied was that we should have a mix between actual (live) talks and others via Zoom, which has proved to be such a popular vehicle for continuing our talks during the pandemic.

As for the Committee's decision, it was agreed as follows:

October 2021 – live talk, possibly Andrew Negus.

November 2021 – Zoom talk.

December 2021 – Christmas Social – live event.

January 2022 – Zoom talk.

February 2022 – Annual General Meeting and Talk – Zoom

March 2022 – live talk, possibly Kay Ainsworth

April 2022 – to be decided later whether to hold a talk that month.

We are currently in discussion with possible speakers for the November and January meetings.

(Regarding possibly holding a talk in September 2021, this will now not be possible as at least three of the Committee members will be away on holiday at that time).

Turning to the matter of the venue for our future talks etc, The Hundred Men's Hall at The Hospital of St Cross has been our 'home' since the formation of HADs and it is very dear to our hearts and Cathy Secker, the Porter, and her colleagues have always been so helpful and friendly. Nothing has ever been too much trouble. However, after a long discussion in Committee we have agreed to try an alternative venue that could offer all the services and facilities we need. One of the possible venues we investigated was Shawford Parish Hall which Don, Gill and I recently visited and had a very useful meeting with the Caretaker, who lives on site. He was very welcoming and showed us the accommodation and the various facilities. Whilst the main hall is rather too large for our current numbers it would be an excellent venue with adjacent kitchen (complete with all crockery and equipment that we would need) and toilets. The hall is well heated and comes complete with microphone/pa equipment and hearing loop together with Wi-Fi. There is car parking on site and additional parking at the nearby Shawford Rail Station and other parking is available close to the hall. There is also a very popular pub, 'The Bridge', close to. Another important factor is that the hire charges are reasonable and the

Caretaker deals with all the furniture arrangements. So, it is proposed that we hold our talks/events in October, December and March at Shawford. Full location details for the Village Hall will be provided to members in due course.

The Committee appreciates the comments made by some members during the consultation exercise (and by Committee members themselves) that one issue in holding talks on Zoom rather than face to face is the loss of social contact with other members. We have discussed this and propose to hold some additional social events next 'season'. Watch this space!

The Committee also discussed additional possible purchases utilising the balance of funds from the anonymous donation received last year. We have been using Don's personal digital projector as a back-up at our talks and this needs upgrading for our use. Don also uses his personal camera for HADs activities and that is also now somewhat out of date so we have agreed to fund its replacement. I hope these two acquisitions for HADs continued use will meet with members' approval. They will, of course, remain the property of HADs.

As always, I wish you all, on behalf of your Committee, continuing good health, a good summer and we look forward to seeing you all again at our future events.

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Paul (Herbert),

Chairman, HADs 14 June 2021