



Southampton Archaeology Society

January 2024 Newsletter

Dear members

I hope you're all keeping well and enjoying this unusual January weather. Two of our meetings last autumn attracted big audiences, but we've since had to find a new venue for our lectures. The Christmas Social was held at Stella Maris Parish Rooms, and the January meeting was online as usual. Both meetings were attended by more than 40 people, with several non-members joining for Ian Riddler's talk online. If you weren't able to be there reports are included in this issue, and thanks to Mandy Kesby for her notes on Ian's talk about late Roman and Anglo-Saxon combs (a fuller version will be posted on our website www.southamptonarchaeology.uk).

Also in this issue I'm delighted to feature a review of the exhibition "Rendlesham Revealed", held at the Sutton Hoo Visitor Centre in Suffolk from March to October last year, and many thanks to Sam Edwards for this. Rendlesham has been in the news over recent years and this was the first public display of the work, which has yet to be fully published. There may be further revelations to come, so watch this space. I'm most grateful to Val Ferguson of the Friends of Old Southampton Cemetery (FoSOC) for her article about the Belgian War Memorial of 1916, one of the earliest memorials erected for those who died in WWI. The story of Southampton's support for Belgian refugees is little known and it's great to have this brought to mind. And we'd like to congratulate Southampton City Council on completing the first phase of repairs to the city's historic monuments, celebrated on the final pages, and thanks to Andy Russel for permission to reproduce the announcement from SCC's "Culture Vulture" posting from 18th January.

Our first face to face meeting of the year will be held on Tuesday 13th February at the Central Baptist Church, Devonshire Road, Polygon, which will be our venue during the next few months. The talk will be given by Mark Peryer of Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society, on **Stanchester: a Roman rural settlement** starting at 7.30pm (refreshments from 7.00pm). Roadworks start around Watts Park and the Civic Centre from Monday 5th February, with a one-way system restricting access from the west. Car drivers may find it best to approach via Bedford Place, where parking is available on-street (eg in Henstead Road), in Amoy Street car park or Grosvenor Place multi-storey, or there may be a few free on-street places (but please do not use the church car park). Buses will run to the Station and Civic Centre for access by public transport, and we hope to provide more information about transport options with an update nearer to the time.

With best wishes, and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Sarah

A message from the committee of Southampton Archaeology Society (SAS)

Like many charitable groups, SAS is run by members giving their time as volunteers to support the Society's aims. We are a small group (eight elected members and one co-opted), and this year we found ourselves stretched when faced with the task of finding a new venue. Most of us have served for several years and held different roles within the committee, and some manage two roles (Hon Treasurer/Membership; Hon Secretary/Publicity), so as we approach our AGM in May we'd like to recruit new committee members.

The meetings are held about every six weeks via Zoom at present, and by getting involved you can help plan the programme of talks, join in discussions and put forward new ideas. It would be possible to join a meeting as a 'taster', and new members can be co-opted at any time. If you're interested please contact the Chair, John Langran on john.langran@hotmail.com.

From Roman Temples to Terry Pratchett – the making of “Terry Pratchett: HisWorld”

Exhibition.

By Richard Henry, SCC archaeology curator, December 12 2023.

The Roman Temple

During the period from ~2008 to 2013 while Richard Henry was Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) for Wiltshire, an extraordinary series of finds were recorded on the Portable Antiquities Service (PAS) website: 63,000 from one site, and in 2013 a geophysical survey was undertaken as a PAS Landscapes Project. Excavation was carried out to give University students experience, and this identified a Roman temple of timber framed construction with floors made from local stone, and a revetment wall terraced into the hillside. Although damaged by ploughing, a central pole and pit were discovered, where finds were concentrated. The finds comprised an interesting votive assemblage from the Late Iron Age and Early Roman periods, including miniature amphorae, Roman sledge hammers, horse and bridle equipment, and pieces made from ivory; also a number of lead ‘curse tablets’. Many of these were vindictive and angry – one referred to a hatchet or axe “stolen from the house”. The temple was dedicated to Bregneus, a deity unknown previously, and the assemblage suggested he could have been a ‘smithing’ god.

Once the excavation ended another hoard was found at the site, which included one of the largest miniature swords from the Roman Empire. Sir Terry Pratchett had been knighted in 2009, and decided that as a knight he needed a sword – to cut his sausages! He was intrigued by the finding of this sword and provided funds for its analysis; and with a friend he collected lumps of iron ore in the fields and they tried unsuccessfully to make a similar sword. The replica sword was created with the help of a grant.

Making the Exhibition

Sir Terry Pratchett died in 2015 aged 66 years, and Richard suggested an exhibition at Salisbury Museum to celebrate his life, which was funded with £100k from his family. They agreed he could display anything he wanted to showcase Sir Terry’s life and interests – which turned out to be surprising.... Terry Pratchett was once told by a head teacher that he would never amount to anything, and he was slow to start reading so his mother bribed him to read, at 1d per page. Later he claimed to have read JRR Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* trilogy in one day! He was inspired by Michael Ayrton’s book about Daedalus, *The Maze Maker*, and wrote to the National History Museum to ask for samples of insects: they sent him snails, spiders and grasshopper/crickets. Later Terry Pratchett was awarded 20 marks out of 20 for a piece of his homework which was published in the school magazine, earning him £14. He used the money to buy a typewriter and began to send M/S to publishers. In 1969 his first book was published, and soon he was earning enough to give up journalism and write full time.



The focus of the exhibition was a representation of Terry Pratchett’s study, a window into his world with a bank of six computer monitors (when asked why so many, he replied “I don’t have room for eight!”); and spaces for his cats to come in while he worked. The study was ready only two days before the exhibition opened. Other items displayed were: the sword; Sir Terry’s hat and leather jacket; his treasured Blue Peter badge; and honorary Brownie membership (Terry Pratchett was kidnapped by them).

Sir Terry was diagnosed with a rare type of Alzheimer’s which caused loss of sight, and as an artist he lost the ability to draw. He was a vocal advocate for Alzheimer’s and gave a certain amount to the charity every year. After his death he wanted his equipment to be destroyed, and it was arranged for his computer hard drive to be run over by a steam roller at the Dorset Steam Fair, with a great deal of publicity. Many direct quotations from Sir Terry’s work were displayed, for instance “I believe that the sum

of all our experiences good and bad are the things that make us who we are. That has the making of real magic. Please go out into this world and experience its wonders.”

The exhibition was held in Salisbury in the winter of 2017/18 and 21,000 people came, from all over the world. A man from Australia took time off to be there for the first day; and someone from Germany spent a week walking round the exhibition. Many people dressed up and some became quite emotional, and their comments reflect a high level of involvement. The exhibition was given an award for Museum of the Year, and also raised £40,000 for charity.

This talk took place in Stella Maris, St Joseph Church Parish Rooms and was followed by wine and a buffet for SAS members and their guests.

Sarah Hanna

Rendlesham Revealed: The Heart of a Kingdom AD 400-800 at Sutton Hoo

This temporary display was held in the exhibition hall of the 2021 Visitor Centre at Sutton Hoo (near Ipswich, Suffolk) from March to October 2023. Rendlesham was known by a reference in Bede as an East Anglian Royal Settlement, and the exhibition opens with this quote - "Swithelm, the son of Seaxbald, was successor to Sigebeht. He was baptised by Cedd in East Anglia, in the royal village called Rendlesham, that is, the resident of Rendil. King Aethelwold of East Anglia, the brother of King Anna, the previous king of the East Angles, was his sponsor." (Bede HE iii 22, ed Colgrave and Mynors). Responding to possible illegal metal detecting in 2007 on the site now identified as Rendlesham, a pilot project was launched from 2009 - 2014 with Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service involving four metal detectorists (results of which were published 2013 - 2014). 100,000 objects later, geophysical and aerial surveys revealed an extensive site with a substantial structure. This was followed by a National Lottery funded Community Archaeology project between 2020 - 2024, and over a total of fifteen years 400 volunteers were involved from Suffolk Archaeological Field Group, Suffolk Family carers and local primary schools. The results of these excavations were displayed, which usefully augmented the permanent exhibition at Sutton Hoo, to situate the burials in the wider political and material context of the royal settlement of Rendlesham, further up the Deben valley.

Rendlesham: drone image of excavation trenches 2022, showing the foundations of the Hall and boundary ditch (R); and rubbish dump area (L).

Credit: Suffolk CC Archaeology.



The exhibition consisted of four large wall cabinets in a small room, following a simple chronological display punctuated with some thematic digressions. We begin at 400 - 570 AD, addressing the earliest contexts of Rendlesham, a collection of farming homesteads with strong material origins in Denmark, Northern Germany and the Netherlands. Some of the earliest metalwork at the site - cruciform brooches - are imported directly from this region, and also an impressive silver sword-clasp reflecting the presence of elite

social status at Rendlesham. However, there is already some sign of cultural changes - as at Snape Anglo-Saxon cemetery, where a mixture of cremation in urns (represented by many urn fragments) and full inhumation burials was found. Between 525-575 AD, individual luxury goods were produced locally that deviated from imitating continental patterns, for instance a silver and gold horse and rider brooch dated c.550 - 575 AD which has parallels with, but does not reproduce, similar French and Dutch examples. An artistic interpretation of the timber great hall (23 m x 10 m) at Rendlesham is presented, with photos from earlier periods of the excavations - which yielded a very large amount of animal bones deposited in a trench next to the hall, likely from consumption. Similarly with other Anglo-Saxon polities, the notion of a 'capital' is anachronistic and Kings with their retinues would move around sites - aside from Rendlesham, settlements were used by royalty at Caistor-in-Norwich (Norfolk) and Coddham and Hoxne (Suffolk).

Much of the exhibition addresses the height of the settlement between 575 - 720 AD (overlapping with the ship burial at Mound 1 in Sutton Hoo, the potential burial of Raedwald of East Anglia, c.624 AD), when commercial activity at Rendlesham explodes. Some of the earliest post-Roman coinage in Britain - about 250 coins - have been excavated from Rendlesham, possibly the largest collection of any site in England at this period: not as a hoard but likely lost in the process of commercial transactions. They indicate a shift in cultural and commercial focus from the cultural template of Northern Germany, Denmark etc, to western Europe and the Mediterranean. This period at Rendlesham is marked by the presence of Merovingian gold coins, often adapted as brooches and pendants, and numerous Byzantine/Eastern Roman coins (e.g. one from Justin II, reigned 565 - 578 AD) and weights, suggesting the presence of eastern Mediterranean merchants at Rendlesham; also imitation Byzantine coins minted in parts of France. This period also sees the beginning of a distinctive East Anglian style in the 'Y' shaped groove on birds' beaks on decorated copper fixtures for swords, belts and harnesses, with numerous examples displayed showing clear parallels to finds at Sutton Hoo, as well as a particularly fine section of a bronze horse harness decorated with the interweaving knot motif iconic of this period, and of insular Celtic and Northumbrian art. One piece - a golden pyramid mount from a sword harness, gold filigree over garnet - is evocative of the Sutton Hoo finds, represented by excellent reproductions in the Visitor Centre, thus showing their likely manufacturing source (the originals are held by the British Museum). Coinage may also have been minted at Rendlesham - some very early gold and silver coins found at Rendlesham are displayed, respectively a shilling dating to c.630 - 660 AD and penny of c 710 - 760 AD, encapsulating the projection of power at the site.

The exhibition concludes by addressing the final period of Rendlesham as a royal site, c.720 - 800 AD, and the subsequent development of Ipswich. Between c.700 - 725, coinage found at Rendlesham decreases notably, whilst coin use is increasing elsewhere across England and East Anglia, concurrent with a move to specifically developed coastal ports as opposed to inland commercial centres. This section contains some excellent examples of 8th century AD coinage - such as a rare silver Penny (c.796 - 798 AD) of Eadwald of East Anglia (reigned c.798 - 805 AD) - minted in Ipswich but found at Rendlesham - along with Ipswich ware pottery, which began to be found throughout East Anglia.

Overall this was an impressive exhibition that provided context to the burials at Sutton Hoo. Community involvement was emphasized with pictures of the 2022 - 2024 volunteer excavations and images of living history/re-enactors as craftspeople. The limited exhibition space however did not make it easy to engage with some of the exhibits, especially the coins. The nomadic nature of early Anglo-Saxon kingship, the association of burial sites with periodic sites of Royal occupation and how and why this ended add so much to the permanent exhibition in the Visitor Centre, so it seems a pity that this could not become a permanent feature; or that no accompanying book has yet been produced for promotion and sale on site. It is strange that the later stages of Rendlesham's history and its fate were not tied into Christianisation, given the part that the possible occupant of Mound 1 - Raedwald of East Anglia - may have played in that process. But Rendlesham was again in the news in November 2023, with the discovery of a possible dedicated Anglo-Saxon religious building at the site - we expect to hear more of this in the future.

Review by S L Edwards

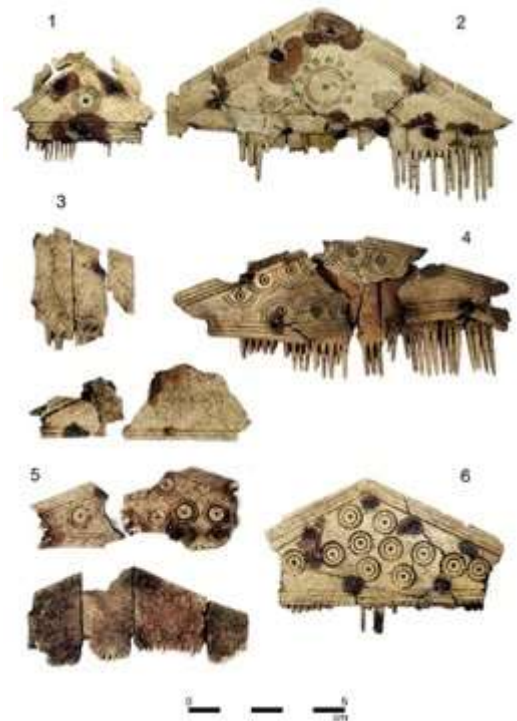
This period of transition has a fascination for archaeologists but it's rather elusive, extending culturally from about 350 to 430AD: new coinage and Roman ceramic industries seemed to have disappeared in the early 5th century when Romans armies withdrew from Britain, leaving a gap in easily datable materials. The study of small finds in Britain can be helpful in working out the details of this period, as Richard Henry demonstrated (SAS Lecture 11th April 2023, **Fractured Britannia: the end of Roman Britain**). Ian Riddler has studied combs made in bone and antler, together with bone artefacts such as late Roman needle-cases: examples of needle-cases from St Albans and Winchester were made by sawing one or both ends from animal limb bones, but it's not clear which type is earlier. Bone and antler combs have not been closely studied in the past, but are becoming recognised as a consistent dating tool.

The publication of Spong Hill Anglo-Saxon cremation cemetery excavation 2013 was a turning point in early Anglo-Saxon archaeology, with radio carbon dates on combs enabling the construction of distribution patterns by comparing them with cremation urn typology (Correspondence Analysis). This led to older assemblages being reassessed and an assignment of phases: A: 375 - 400AD; B: 400 - 440AD; C: 475 - 525AD, suggesting a considerable overlap in styles from late Roman 4th century (350 AD to 425AD) when wooden, bone and antler combs became popular in England. Antler was more durable than wood and combs in this material were often double-sided with both fine and coarse teeth.

Types of comb

Combs are found with animal (often horse) heads profiled on the end segments, and teeth forming the mane, possibly made in England. At Handford Road, Ipswich Late Roman combs were found with heads having eyes and a mane formed by the teeth, including fine and coarse teeth. Late Roman combs dated after 425AD from Spong Hill A-S cemetery had a slightly different riveting layout and were made with copper alloy rivets rather than iron. This tradition is found in areas closer to the continent of Europe (East Anglia and Kent). Late Roman-style combs continue to be made and during Phase C, the design of combs becomes more stylised (examples from Abbots Worthy, Winchester) without animal profiling, central rivets and teeth all of the same size.

Illustration of triangular comb styles discussed below, with rina and dot styles of decoration. Credit: Ian Riddler



Alongside the manufacture of double-sided Roman-style composite combs, there are triangular or semi-circular combs, Types A to E, featuring large and small ring and dot decoration, often with framed borders, and single-sided with teeth made in sections. These styles are known as 'Germanic' and originated from outside the Roman Empire. They are smaller than the late Roman styles and may be earlier: the size of combs tend to increase in later phases, some as long as 30cm have been found. The technology of construction is also important in dating combs. The earlier Phase A combs are centrally rivetted, with combs from 450 AD having centre and edge riveting, while later examples are rivetted on the edge only. Recently two more types have emerged from royal sites at Lyminge, Kent and Rendlesham, Suffolk with connecting plates fixed by off-set iron rivets. Combs with hollow copper alloy rivets were later in date, originated in Scandinavia and were probably introduced by the Vikings.

The subject of combs is intriguing and although the technology seems to change relatively slowly it is complex, with continuity of late Roman styles into the early Anglo-Saxon period. Most examples from Eastern England show influences from the near continent, before Scandinavian designs appear with the Vikings. It is expected that new scientific technologies will improve the chronology of these items in future.

With thanks to Mandy Kesby for use of her detailed notes, and apologies for any errors. A fuller version of the talk will be posted on the SAS website within the next few weeks.

Sarah Hanna

The Belgian WWI Memorial, Southampton

Background: History of Belgium

In 1815 Belgium united with Holland as the Kingdom of the Netherlands, under the Prince of Orange. In 1830 the Belgians revolted and repelled Dutch forces, set up their own Government and proclaimed independence under a Constitutional Monarchy. In 1831 Britain, France, Prussia and Russia proposed Belgium as a neutral state to which they guaranteed integrity and inviolability of Belgian territory. Belgium in turn was to observe neutrality towards other States. The 'Treaties' were signed in 1839, referred to by the Germans in 1914 as a '*Scrap of paper*'. On 4th August 1914 German troops crossed the Belgian border in violation of the country's neutrality, aiming to attack France through Belgium. Britain required Germany to withdraw and when this went unheeded Britain declared war on Germany on 5th August 1914. From 1914, wounded Belgian soldiers came to hospitals in the UK, and those who died in or near Southampton (Netley) were buried at the Old Cemetery, Netley Military Cemetery or at South Stoneham.



The Belgian War Memorial, 1916 as it looks today. Note gravestones of Belgian soldiers to the front and left. Photo credit: FoSOC

Providing for Refugees

The machinery for dealing with Belgian war refugees at Southampton was set up at a meeting held on 28th September 1914. The Belgian Consul at the port, *Mr. T.W. Fladgate*, (who is buried in the Old Cemetery - he died in 1918) had appealed for funds, resulting in the receipt of over £175 (today's £10,323.64). The meeting was held at the Mayor's Parlour to form a Committee to administer the fund, presided over by *Mr A.W. Pearce, J.P.*; others present were *Rev. Father O'Mahoney, Dr Russell Bencraft., Dr A. J. Bathe*, and *Mr. Fladgate*. It was decided that the fund should be called the *Belgian War Refugees Fund*, and the money be used in assisting and caring for the refugees. Dr. Bencraft offered assistance from the Southampton Branch of the Voluntary Social Service Bureau, acknowledged with gratitude, and it was formally agreed that the Branch should be asked to provide voluntary helpers to meet refugees on arrival, and to see that they were properly cared for. Various details connected with the registration of temporary quarters for the refugees and for the issue of collecting cards were also discussed.

The Memorial

By March 1916, considerable interest was evinced by the exhibition in Messrs. Garret and Haysom's Stonemasons showroom, East Street, of part of the memorial to the Belgian soldiers who died in defence of their country. The

monument, of Gothic design, is executed in Hopton Wood stone. It consists of a richly carved Crucifix, having a Flemish tiled hood, supported by an octagonal column, rising from a large Cornish granite base to a total height of 16 feet. The part on view is the Crucifix, carved from the solid stone. The whole fittingly commemorates heroic deeds.



Extract from the Daily Echo 23rd May 1916: “Unveiled at Southampton today, striking ceremonial. In a corner of the Borough Cemetery beneath the great oak tree stands a tall, slender column of stone upon a hewn base, at the top of which is a figure of Christ. Southampton people have watched it take shape above the graves of those soldiers of *King Albert* who died of their wounds in the neighbourhood and have been accorded burial in our own soil. Today they are privileged, many of them, to take part in the ceremony of its unveiling and dedication to the glory of God, and to the honoured memory of those who met the first shock of the war.”

This unique feature is commemorated in the Old Cemetery every Remembrance Sunday by the Friends of Southampton Old Cemetery.

Many thanks to Val Ferguson of FoSOC for this article.

Investing in our city's heritage: first phase of Southampton's conservation project complete

Following Southampton City Council's commitment to investing in preserving and regenerating many of our important heritage assets, the first phase of works are now complete.



The Bargate, Southampton

The structures are mostly medieval with stone construction varying from the medieval Town Walls, the remains of Southampton Castle, medieval wine vaults and occupied weathertight medieval buildings, including the Bargate and the Westgate. These structures form part of historic Southampton tours, attracting local visitors and tourists to generate economic benefits for the city.

The first phase of repairs started in June and included internal and external repair works to Tudor House to maintain and protect the venue. High profile monuments such as the Town Walls and St Mary's Churchyard Wall also had repairs. Forty Steps near Western Esplanade were repaired whilst there were roof repairs in Quilters Vault, the Westgate and the Bargate.

The Castle Bailey Wall, next to the car park in Castle Way, benefitted from a range of repairs which included: vegetation treatment and removal, mortar repairs, stonework replacement, sedum capping and rebuilding of existing stonework. The wall was also repointed and given a protective green turf capping which was carefully selected to protect the top of the walls.

The works were carried out in collaboration with the council's in-house heritage and archaeological experts, external expert advisors and Traditional Stone Restoration. The heritage repair project will ensure these nationally important historical assets will be available for the people of Southampton and visitors from across the globe to enjoy for the decades ahead. The importance of Southampton's heritage is well documented with architectural historian, Nikolas Pevsner, famously writing:

"In all Britain there are few, if any, examples of medieval urban defences as impressive as those in Southampton." Nikolas Pevsner & David Lloyd 1967, **The Buildings of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight** p533; repeated in the 2018 edition.

Thanks to Southampton City Council for permission to reproduce this news item, from Culture Vulture 18/01/24.

www.southamptonarchaeology.uk

 Southampton Archaeology Society

 @SotonArchaeoSoc

Email: southamptonarchaeology@gmail.com

<p>Lectures from February 2024 will be held at Central Baptist Church, Devonshire Rd, Southampton SO15 2GY, at 7.30pm on the 2nd Tuesday each month (subject to Covid restrictions as current). Refreshments are available from 7.00pm. Talks are free to paid-up SAS members, £3 to guests.</p>	<p><u>Subscription Rates 2023/24</u></p> <table> <tr> <td>Individuals</td> <td>£12.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senior Citizens</td> <td>£10.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Juniors/Students</td> <td>£10.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Family</td> <td>£16.00</td> </tr> </table>	Individuals	£12.00	Senior Citizens	£10.00	Juniors/Students	£10.00	Family	£16.00	<p>Contact us www.southamptonarchaeology.uk</p> <p>Mandy Kesby, Hon Secretary. 29 Abercrombie Gardens Lordshill SO16 8FQ amandybutt@aol.com Phone: 023 8073 5360</p> <p>Sue Davies, Hon Treasurer. 32 Arlott Court SO15 2RZ suedavies64@btinternet.com Phone 023 8022 1587</p>
Individuals	£12.00									
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Family	£16.00									
<p>2022-2023 SAS Committee Chair – John Langran Vice-Chair – Martyn Dowell Hon Treasurer – Sue Davies Hon Secretary – Mandy Kesby Committee Members – Sarah Hanna, Matt Garner, James Brown, Brian de Lara. Archaeology Advisor: Dr Andy Russel.</p>	<p>If you or a friend wish to join SAS (or to renew your subscription) please contact the Hon Treasurer for an application form, or visit our website to print off a copy.</p>									

We would love to receive contributions to the Newsletter – by email to sarahvhanna@hotmail.com, or by post to Sarah Hanna, 346 Hill Lane SO15 7PH. We reserve the right to edit as necessary.