

# Southampton Archaeology Society

## July 2016 Newsletter



Dear Members

Those of you who attended the AGM on 10<sup>th</sup> May will know that some changes were made to the SAS committee: Mandy Kesby is taking on the role of Hon Secretary in place of Anna Welch, who will continue to organise the winter lecture programme and other events. John Langran will be taking over as Hon Treasurer, while I shall continue as newsletter editor and stand in as Vice-Chair. Thank you to all members who have renewed their subscriptions for 2016/17 so promptly, and I do apologise that we could not give you all new membership cards at the time. Thanks to our former treasurer Terry Pook we have a new supply, and cards may be collected at meetings from September. Any outstanding subscriptions should be sent as soon as possible to John, whose contact details are given on the back page.

Our June outing, Matt Garner's Walking Tour of Hamwic was a great success, fully booked with several non-members taking part. An unexpected encounter occurred at St Mary's churchyard where Matt recounted an incident concerning a skeleton found during a watching brief, when the archaeologist involved (who no longer works at the Unit) actually walked past! Matt has agreed to lead another walking tour in future and we all look forward to hearing more stories from Southampton's medieval past.

In this edition I am grateful to Andy Russel for his article on the repairs to the Bargate, and I couldn't resist writing something about my visit to the island of Jersey with its wealth of archaeology. Some local events are listed during the CBA's Festival of Archaeology from 16<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> July, and you may like to know that Anna Welch will be representing the Institute for Archaeologists at Salisbury Showground of Archaeology on the weekend of 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> July. There will be opportunities to visit several properties in Southampton and elsewhere during Heritage Open Days between 8<sup>th</sup> and 11th September.

I hope you all enjoy a great summer, and we look forward to seeing you at our first lecture meeting of the autumn on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September – 7.30pm at St Joseph's Hall, Bugle Street (speaker to be confirmed).

With best wishes

**Sarah**

## Outing to Community Excavation at Quarr Abbey, Isle of Wight

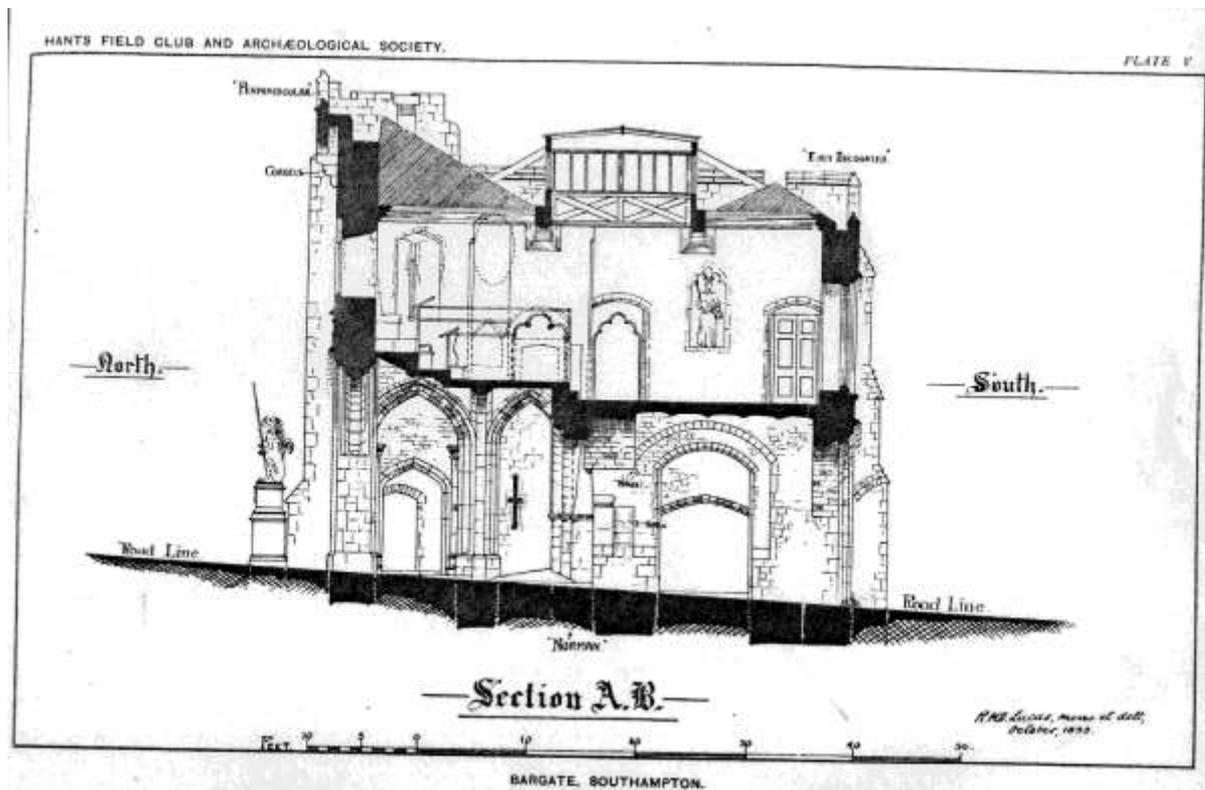
Fieldwork in 2016 will take place between Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September (Tuesday to Saturday), led by Matt Garner of Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit and involving students and volunteers as in previous years. It is still possible to volunteer to work there although accommodation on the site is already booked up and you would need to find your own place to stay nearby. Please contact Matt before 19<sup>th</sup> August, at the Unit 8083 2937 or 07949 758148, or online [matthew.garner@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.garner@southampton.gov.uk).

Southampton Archaeology Society plans another visit to the site on the Open Day, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, and if you are interested please contact Anna Welch on 07812 851095 or [archaeoanna@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:archaeoanna@yahoo.co.uk) as soon as possible. Further details will be available in early September with booking form.

## Southampton Bargate Repairs 2016

Southampton Archaeology Unit has carried out a major recording project during repairs to the Bargate.

The core of the Bargate is thought to date to the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, when it stood as a stone tower in an earth bank. To the north were the town ditches, crossed by a bridge, possibly with a drawbridge incorporated in it. It is not clear when the town wall began to be built, but murage grants were made by the monarch from the 1260s onwards. In about 1300 drum towers were added to the town walls, and one was built either side of the Bargate. They would have needed deep foundations, deeper than the town ditch or else they could have been undermined by attackers. The drum towers provided flanking fire to defend the gate and allowed defenders to pick off attackers trying to cross the ditch and scale the walls on either side of the Bargate. During the Hundred Years war a semi-hexagonal fore-tower was added on to the north side, built in the ditch. The large cross-shaped opening above the gate was possibly for an arbalest, a spear-throwing engine. The Bargate was equipped with cannon well into the Tudor period and it was last used for defence in the English Civil War when a blockhouse was built there, and the arrow slits were opened out to allow musketeers to use their weapons.



*Cross-section north-south dated 1899, showing lantern roof.*

The Bargate has been suffering from water ingress on the battlemented parapet, for some years and the water has been passing down inside the thick stone walls dissolving the ancient lime mortar. The water was trapped in the walls due to the use of Portland cement mortar in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when the parapet was rebuilt and the outer walls repointed. This caused accelerated decay of the stonework. The parapet has now been waterproofed and the old cement repointing has been cut out. The walls are being repointed, and damaged stones repaired or replaced. All the new work will use lime mortar to a mix agreed with Historic England. It was hoped to repair and repaint the shields above the gateway, but we have been advised that the stonework will take at least a year to dry out before we can carry out this work.

The Archaeology Unit have photographed the areas to be repaired and produced annotated drawings, examining every single stone and noting its fabric. Analysis is ongoing but the medieval phases were built with Quarr and Bembridge stone from the Isle of Wight, and close examination of the tops of the towers

have revealed they had wide decorative embrasures built in Caen limestone, with little shelter for defenders between them. The fore-tower was built with large pieces of Upper Greensand from the south side of the Isle of Wight. Much of it was decorated with elaborate mouldings, but the Greensand has not weathered well and a great deal was replaced with Bembridge and Caen stone, probably in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the five shields above the gate were replaced in Caen stone.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the Bargate saw the first of a number of episodes of restoration, with brand new arrow slits and other windows being put in under the supervision of Mr Poole (of Tudor House), borough engineer. Around that time the town wall to the west of the Bargate, by then hidden between the police station to the south, and the Coachmakers' Arms to the north, was removed. Any remaining parts of the town wall were cleared away when the police station was rebuilt in mock-Tudor style in 1904. The whole of the parapet, and much of the buttress tops, were rebuilt in Portland stone in 1912.



In the 1930s the town wall to the east of the Bargate was removed; the Archives department were able to provide a photograph showing it still stood to full height, forming the south side of the houses in Pembroke Square. To the west a new road was put through the site of the police station, and there a brand new stretch of town wall was built, and a brand new west wall of the Bargate was built with it. This new work had weathered so well that when the building was analysed by PA Faulkner, the eminent architectural historian, in the 1970s he was adamant that it dated to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, which has led to some confusion until it became clear that this was a c.1938 rebuild.

By the time you read this the scaffolding should be down, so go and have a look. Analysis of all the records will take a few more months, then the Archaeology Unit will produce a full report.

*The Bargate 1833 (people were much smaller then!)*

**Dr Andy Russel** SCC Ancient Monuments Officer

## **An Archaeological Tour of Jersey**

Last May I fulfilled a long held ambition to visit Jersey, to see the famous Neanderthal hunting site of La Cotte de St Brelade. This is a collapsed cave (now steep cliff) on the south east coast, where a huge number of bones from Woolly Rhinoceros and Mammoths were found in excavations during the last century, when the site was interpreted as a place where in the Lower Palaeolithic Neanderthal hunters drove their prey over the cliff in order to exploit the carcasses. Since 2009, a team led by Drs Matt Pope, Beccy Scott and Andy Shaw with students from Southampton, UCL and Cardiff Universities has been involved in the 'Ice Age Island' project, re-examining finds from these excavations. The team's work was described to SAS members in a lively talk last April by Josie Mills, a PhD student on the project, and they have reached very different conclusions: 250,000 years ago at a time of low sea level Jersey would have been a rocky outcrop in the plain linking the present British Isles to the continent of Europe, inhabited by very large mammals.

*La Cotte de St Brelade, note archaeology in cleft. Photo S Hanna*



La Cotte would have been an occupation site where Neanderthal hunters overlooked the plain and would bring back the fruits of their hunting to share with their group. Our guide in Jersey was Matt Pope, who showed us many other known or potential occupation sites around Jersey's coast, including evidence of raised beaches left by the fluctuating sea levels of successive ice ages during the last 1,000,000 years. Jersey Museum in St Helier has a wonderful exhibition based on the former excavations and the team's current work, with details of flint tool making, possible hunting methods

and the mechanics of sea level rise, and a lifelike Neanderthal hunter model.

But there is more than this to Jersey's pre-history, including excavations at Les Varines, Upper Palaeolithic site inland where last year they found an enigmatic engraved object which is the earliest example of Palaeolithic portable 'art' found in Britain. Excavation will be taking place for six weeks from 4<sup>th</sup> July, and they hope to secure funding to stabilise the cliff at La Cotte de St Brelade in order to resume excavation there also. We visited several Neolithic sites while Matt Pope was with us, mainly passage graves for communal burial, the most well known being La Hugue Bie a megalithic tomb under a large mound which has two medieval chapels built on top – a spectacular site. Many of these monuments are situated on headlands or overlook the coast, but no settlements have yet been identified.



*Passage grave of Les Monts Grantez. Photo S Hanna*

The tour continued with a look at medieval archaeology, mainly castles as Jersey was well fortified especially after England lost the last Norman possessions on the French mainland under King John. Gourey (or St Orgueil) Castle was first built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and later enlarged by the Tudors but finally defeated by Cromwell's forces in the Civil War. St Elizabeth's Castle defending St Helier was started in late 16<sup>th</sup> century and named after Elizabeth 1 by the first governor, Sir Walter Raleigh. This was enlarged and strengthened up to the 18<sup>th</sup> century when castles could no longer provide defence against artillery; but both sites were used by the Nazis who constructed massive concrete gun emplacements and observation posts within the defences.

The theme of our final tour was the Nazi Occupation of Jersey from 1941 to 1945, which has left highly visible features especially on the coasts to west, south and east of the island (the north coast is rocky and less accessible so fewer defences were needed there). The invasion of the Channel Islands was greatly significant to the Nazi regime as a part of the British Isles, and they were determined to hold on to this prize so they spent a vast amount to defend it, about 25% of the resources on the whole Atlantic Wall (from Norway to Spain!) The defences are still in situ, massive concrete bunkers, gun and observation points and communication towers which stand like sentinels on headlands, with anti tank walls also on the



beaches. Some of the bunkers have been restored and re-equipped (with advice from former German defenders), but these installations were never used in action. They were built by forced and slave labour, including political prisoners, nations such as Spanish, Polish, Russians and east Europeans, and even prisoners of war, working in difficult and dangerous conditions on inadequate rations. The underground Jersey Tunnels have been preserved as a poignant memorial to these victims of oppression, where the history of the Occupation is told in graphic detail with many artefacts from the era. The tunnels were first excavated as workshops for repairs to military equipment, and after D Day they were refitted as a hospital with modern operating theatre and wards ready to take hundreds of German casualties – but no patients were in fact treated there.

*Unfinished tunnel built with slave and forced labour by hand, Jersey, c1943.  
Photo S Hanna*

The archaeology of Jersey tells so many fascinating stories and it's easy to visit, from Southampton by air in under an hour, or ferry from Weymouth which takes somewhat longer. It's warm and sunny of course and buses from St Helier run to nearly all parts of the island for a flat £2 fare: what are you waiting for!

**Sarah Hanna**

## Events you may be interested in this summer

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July** Southampton Ancient Egypt Society **Study Day: The Temples of Thebes**. With Dr Aidan Dodson of University of Bristol 9.30 to 16.30. Members £20, non-members £25, booking on 07729 627901 or email [info@southamptonancientegyptsociety.co.uk](mailto:info@southamptonancientegyptsociety.co.uk). Free refreshments, but lunch not included. Oasis Academy Lordshill, Romsey Road, Southampton SO16 8FA

## CBA Festival of Archaeology 16<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> July:

**Isle of Wight: Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July Tennyson Down Archaeology Project**. Excavation of pre-historic enclosure, run by National Trust, Museum of London Archaeology and CITiZAN. To take part in the dig (min 2 days) contact 01983 741020; or visit 10.00 to 16.00 Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>, Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> or Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July. Grid ref SZ325856, no onsite parking. Nearest is Highdown free car park, 1 mile from site + steep steps.

**Hampshire: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July Visit Hampshire Cultural Trust archive collections** 9.30 to 12.30 or 13.30 to 16.30. Free but pre-book by email: [trudi.bedford@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk](mailto:trudi.bedford@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk) or phone 01962 826700. HCT, Chilcombe House, Chilcombe Lane, Winchester SO23 8RD.

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July Walking Tour of Winchester** with Prof Martin Biddle. 13.30 start from Great Hall, Winchester. Total number 35, free (suggested donation £5pp), pre-book with Clare Chapman on 07743 953504 or email [winchesterstudies@gmail.com](mailto:winchesterstudies@gmail.com).

**West Sussex: Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July Weald & Downland Exhibition and Trail**. 10.30 to 18.00 daily; no need to book, entry charges apply. Weald & Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton, nr Chichester PO18 0EU. Details on [www.wealddown.co.uk/events](http://www.wealddown.co.uk/events) or tel 01243 811363.

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July Archaeology of Medmerry Beach** (between Selsey and Bracklesham Bay) 13.30 to 16.30, organised by RSPB Pagham Harbour/Medmerry. Book on 01243 641508 or [pagham.harbour@rspb.org.uk](mailto:pagham.harbour@rspb.org.uk); £12 (£9 RSPB/CDAS members). Meet at Earnley car park PO20 7JL (next to Earnley Concourse).

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July Fishbourne Roman Palace *Have a go at archaeology*.** 11.00 to 16.00 daily, entry charges apply; free activity and no need to book. FRP, Salthill Road, Fishbourne PO19 3QR. Details from FRP 01243 785859, or see [sussexpast.co.uk/properties/discover](http://sussexpast.co.uk/properties/discover).

**Wiltshire: Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July Ancient Avebury Guided Walk** with Dr Nick Snashall, 10.00 to 14.30, £25pp, booking essential on 0844 249 1895. National Trust Avebury, tel 01672 539250.

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July Showground of Archaeology at Salisbury Museum.** 10.00 to 17.00, no need to book. £2 (donation) entry to showground, £6 to attend each talk. Dig with Phil Harding, Exhibition: writing in Ancient Egypt, talks, activities etc (see poster). Salisbury Museum, The King's House, 65 The Close SP1 2EN, 01722 332151.

**Southampton: Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July Tudor House Summer Spectacular** 10.00am to 17.00. Tudor House and Garden, St Michael's Square, Bugle Street SO14 2AD. A fun-filled day to start the summer, at the original price of 6 pence per person! Explore the house, tour attic and cellars or join in activities (pre-book on (023) 8083 4536); charges apply.

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August WARG Excavation at Warnford Park** in the Meon Valley. Diggers and finds processors needed to work on site of 18<sup>th</sup> century house with remains of Tudor house below. To register you need to join Winchester Archaeology Rescue Group, please see the website [warg.org.uk](http://warg.org.uk)

### **Other events: Heritage Open Days in Southampton**

Over four days from 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> September many buildings and venues which are not generally open to visit will be opening their doors to the public, often without charge. In Southampton properties include SS Shieldhall, St Alban's and St Denys churches and Townhill Park and Gardens. Transport will be provided between venues/events by vintage buses; further information from [culturesouthampton.org.uk](http://culturesouthampton.org.uk).

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September Heritage Fair** organised by **Southampton Heritage Federation** at St Joseph's Hall, Bugle Street SO14 2AD. 10.00 to 16.00. An opportunity for local heritage groups to exhibit and promote their activities to the public, and **SAS** will be taking part. Free entry, light refreshments (donations please).

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September Heritage Open Day at Tudor House.** 10.00 to 16.30 Free entry: activities include medieval archery, crafts, renaissance music, guided tours (charges apply for extra activities).

Lectures are free to members and £2 per visitor. Please bring your friends! All lectures will take place in St. Joseph's Hall, Bugle Street, Southampton SO14 2AH, unless otherwise stated, from 7.30pm to 9.00pm. Tea and coffee is served from 7.00pm. Please join us at the Duke of Wellington pub after the meeting.

#### **2015 - 2016 SAS Committee**

**Chair** – Martyn Dowell  
**Vice-Chair** – Sarah Hanna  
**Hon Treasurer** – John Langran  
**Hon Secretary** – Mandy Kesby  
**General Committee Members** – Anna Welch, Terry Pook, Sylvia Horlock, Rowan Bright and Matt Garner. Archaeological Advisor: Dr. Andy Russel.

#### **Subscription Rates**

Individuals	£9.00
Senior Citizens	£7.00
Juniors/Students	£7.00
Family	£12.00

If you or a friend would like to join (or if you haven't yet renewed your subscription) please send your details to Sarah Hanna, with a cheque for the appropriate amount payable to Southampton Archaeology Society – or you can pay at next lecture.

#### **Contact us**

##### **Mandy Kesby, Hon Secretary.**

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We would be very glad to receive contributions to the Newsletter – by e-mail or post (it doesn't have to be typed). Whilst we will endeavour to print articles in their entirety, we reserve the right to edit as necessary.