



Southampton Archaeology Society

July 2020 Newsletter

Dear members

I do hope that you are keeping well after more than three months in Lockdown, and now that July is here at last some restrictions are being relaxed. The SAS committee are all well and we'd like to express our sympathy to any members who have experienced contact with Covid-19 among their family or in person. Of course all of us have suffered the loss of our social activities with friends and family such as sharing meals or exercise groups, singing, art or cultural activities and some may have felt quite cut off, so it will take a little while before we all feel safe enough to start going out again. Attached is an updated SAS lecture list for 2020/21, and on the back some ideas for other events online and also out of doors, which I hope may tempt you out during the summer.

The City Council libraries re-opened part-time this week, and from next week they will be back to almost normal hours. The Museums and Galleries are not yet opening, but notices on their websites declare they will be soon, so we live in hope it'll be before the end of July! Meanwhile with churches and church halls now open we've had confirmation that St Joseph's Hall can host meetings so we're preparing to welcome members and friends to our first lecture since March, with safety measures in place (details on the back page). Thank you to Helen Wallbridge for the preview of her talk on 8th September about the **American Wall** in Western Esplanade. I'd like to thank Martyn Dowell for his article on the Old Testament Studies, and to members of the graffiti team for help with the piece about our activities. I'm grateful to Godfrey Collyer for presenting us with a copy of his new book on the **Mayflower in Southampton** for review. Looking further ahead, we'll be holding our Study Day **Southampton and Hampshire in the time of the Mayflower**, postponed from June on Saturday 10th October, 10.00am to 5.00pm at the Art Gallery Lecture Theatre; and the **Mayflower Walk** postponed from April will now be held on Friday 23rd October (booking forms are attached for both events). Also in October, on Tuesday 13th we'll have our **AGM** postponed from May, when we plan to present a new constitution for Southampton Archaeology Society to members. Our current constitution is little changed from the original 1961 SCMAS document, so this will bring the Society up to date with the Charity Commission and legal requirements. The document is quite complex and a copy is attached so you can study it beforehand, and we'll try to answer any questions at the meeting. The AGM will be followed by an update from Dr Andy Russel on the Archaeology Unit's recent work.

For now I'd like to send best wishes to you all for a pleasant summer, and hope to see you in September.

Sarah

Stories from the Walls: American WW2 graffiti in Southampton

During the Second World War, more than two million American soldiers passed through Southampton to embark for the battles in Europe. Whilst waiting to board the ships, around 100 of these men carved their names and hometowns on a wall in Western Esplanade. Hear about the Maritime Archaeology Trust's volunteer-based programme, with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to record these inscriptions and research the stories of these men. Discover how technology is being used to digitally preserve this heritage and make these inscriptions and the stories accessible worldwide. This project is led by Helen Wallbridge of the Maritime Archaeology Trust, and on 6th March she hosted an outdoor workshop at the American Wall in Western Esplanade to demonstrate the technique of Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI), using multiple exposures to enhance images of the eroded graffiti, and to help identification.

Three members of SAS graffiti team attended the workshop, and the photo below left shows the results, compared with those below right (taken with a mobile phone on the same day).



Image above: Maritime Archaeology Trust. Compare right: 'Eddie Meyer, Illinois' (within landing craft) top right and above; 'Jewetta Callaway, Miami Florida' lower right and above
Photos right: S Hanna

Helen gave a talk about the project at Tudor House in February 2020, when they had identified some 50 individuals. She will be our first speaker in the new SAS lecture programme on 8th September, 7.30pm, St Joseph's Hall, when we look forward to hearing more of the Stories from the Walls.

Old Testament Study II by Martyn Dowell

Last time I told you we would turn back to Judges, but actually we restarted at Joshua. I had wanted to avoid the more difficult matter of the exodus from Egypt for the time being, but of course we actually jumped right into it, as Joshua begins with the tribes from Egypt entering into Canaan. Fortunately though, it is 'good history' in that events are in pretty well the right order. This has come from two sources, from each of the later kingdoms of Israel and Judah, each with their own prejudices which we are studying at present in the books of Kings. Later they were combined and edited skilfully, which tends to give the impression of a whirlwind conquest of the whole land. This was not so, the process was long protracted, and indeed long and protracted for us, trying to trace their progress from one mystery city to another, whose names have changed many times! An interesting point was the reunification with pockets of the Jewish population who had remained in Canaan since Abram's time, never having been among the economic migrants who went into Egypt centuries earlier.

Next comes Judges, much of which is hagiography of a motley selection of heroic characters, populating the period between the return from Egypt and the establishment of monarchy under Saul. This was clearly a chaotic and bloody period of continued conquest lasting from c1200bc to 1020bc, during which there was no clear leadership. The stories of these personalities are orally transmitted yarns of fanciful deeds, none more so than those of Samson, a powerful warrior who married into the Philistines, a people who at that time controlled much of the southern area. From there, Samson's life has become inflated into myth.

Whenever they gained an advantage, the people are said to have done right in the sight of the Lord, but when there was a setback, a standard sentence was used, claiming that they were worshipping foreign gods. The cults most often mentioned are 'the Baalim' and 'the Ashteroth'. Ashteroth was apparently a Canaanite mother goddess, and 'the Ashteroth' was a sort of totem pole carved with a statue of the goddess at the top, presumably for outdoor worship. Referred to as an abomination, the Jewish priests took delight in chopping them down. As you know, they despised imagery in worship, conveniently forgetting that Yahweh (Jehovah) had once been a bull god! More of that later.

Baal is correctly referred to in the plural because like the later Roman gods, he had proved very absorbent. The worship of Baal became popular all around the southern Mediterranean, taking over the cults of many local gods, and so was known as Baal-zebub, Baal-berith, etc. In Tunisia, the Carthaginians worshipped a version which placed particular reverence on infant burials, perhaps because they were seen as pure and innocent, unsullied by the world. Zealous Victorian archaeologists saw this as child sacrifice, without any real evidence.



Idol of Baal from Ugarit (Pinterest)

As the Jewish tribes encountered them, a bewildering number of petty kings are mentioned, like Og of Bashan, with his iron bedstead. These people ruled separate city states and it becomes clear how one at a time the Jews divided and conquered them to gain overall dominance. The narrative continues in the books of Samuel. The bible commentaries praise these as good history, and avoiding the usual prejudices, it is easy to follow the course of events. Samuel was clearly more than a wandering prophet, he became advisor and unifier of the tribes, and ultimately kingmaker. Then comes the erratic rule of Saul, but I'll come back to him and his successors another time.

Bibliography

The Bible Any modern English translation (or the authorised version, it is still the most scholarly translation).

Who wrote the Bible? Friedman ISBN 0-224-02573-2

Civilisations of the Holy Land Paul Johnson 1979

The Bible and Recent Archaeology Kathleen M Kenyon (revised P S Mooney 1985) British Museum Books

I understand the OT Studies group, led by Carol Cunio (for U3A) have been meeting in fortnightly in Martyn Dowell's garden during the last few weeks of Lockdown, and Martyn plans to continue this series for us to learn more about the history behind the Old Testament stories (*Ed*).

Report from SAS Graffiti team 2019 and 2020 by Sarah Hanna

This is a summary of our work over the past year or so and an update is long overdue. All activities ceased on 23rd March 2020 but we hope to resume this project before the end of the year if possible.

2019

Early in the year the team continued our explorations in the Old Town at the Castle Hall and Vault, visits to the Westgate and Tower and the western Walls which included 15th century Catchcold Tower, one of the earliest structures in England built to house cannon. A small group visited the excavation site at the Lower High Street Vaults adjacent to St John's School, where it was noted that Roman numerals were marked on several stones (probably mason's marks), but otherwise little medieval graffiti was found. Some of the marked stones were measured to investigate the possibility that the numbers could indicate the size of stones. A final visit in the Old Town was made to the Weigh House Vault in May 2019 (the Weigh House itself is unsafe to visit at present). Photographs and record sheets of surveys are stored on Drop-Box.

A visit to St Boniface Church, Nursling in February discovered marks in the tower and an inscription in the nave commemorating two 17th century churchwardens. OGS Crawford is buried in the churchyard and despite heavy rain the team photographed his grave. The website www.southamptonarchaeology.uk has a report of this visit, along with the reports from Castle Hall and Vault, the Westgate and Tower, Catchcold Tower and the Weigh House vault.

In the spring of 2019 we were invited to record the extensive graffiti at Eling Tide Mill, led by Matt Garner who is a volunteer there. This was a complex operation as the 18th century Mill comprises three floors each divided into a number of bays. Marks could be found in areas which were difficult to access and



there were hazards from low ceilings (as taller members of the team will remember). Graffiti of various forms was discovered: carpenter's marks on wooden joists, walls and ceilings; initials, dates and inscriptions, which might be scratched or incised; or more recent marks written in pen/pencil or chalk. There were also a number of marks on the exterior brickwork, some of which appeared to relate to repairs, while others may have been made by workers around the Mill in the past – and present!

Eling Tide Mill: Marks incised on joist, interpreted as carpenters' marks. Photo: S Hanna

Later last year visits were made to Holyrood Church in Lower High Street (bombed in 1940 and now a memorial to the Merchant Navy) particularly to explore the Chancel and tower, which happened to be open while pigeon deterrents were installed. A follow-up visit was made to St Nicholas Church, North Stoneham (previously recorded by Hampshire Medieval Graffiti Project (HMPG), to examine 19th and 20th century wooden pews which were to be removed. Relatively few marks were found on the pews but on the organ casing lists of names were discovered, made by some of the young men who pumped the organ bellows, with a number of inscriptions on the walls and window recesses; also a dedication of the organ to celebrate the reign of King George V. Reports from Holyrood and North Stoneham are on the SAS website.

We ended our 2019 schedule in November when we visited Winchester Cathedral, guided by Dr Cindy Wood, to look at some of the historic graffiti in the Nave. This included marks made probably by Oliver Cromwell's soldiers during the Civil War when they used the cathedral as stables. Dr Wood and her students at Winchester University have made a comprehensive survey of the cathedral graffiti, and she will be talking about some 17th century examples at the SAS Mayflower Study Day on 10th October.



Winchester Cathedral Nave: Names of George Kinge and Thomas Bathe, with dates 1603. Photo: S Hanna

2020

In February this year the SAS graffiti team visited a newly repaired vault at 11 St Michael's Square where the only illumination was torchlight, but a few marks were recorded, and a report was added on the SAS website. From there we made a brief reconnaissance to the 14th century vaults at 46 and 48 French Street, two adjoining vaults which run east to west and are open at the eastern (French Street) end. The western ends of both vaults have a central doorway opening on to spiral stone steps, formerly leading to the ground floors of the medieval merchants' houses which stood on the site (demolished after bomb damage in WW2, and now occupied by a block of flats).

We noticed that many stone blocks in 48 French Street were marked with Roman numerals and we saw a few of these marks in 46 French Street, but most of that vault is rendered so not many blocks were visible. In addition, inscribed graffiti was seen on the exposed masonry facing the street (which is lit by daylight), and some scratched and chalk marks were spotted on concrete structures supporting the building above. Previously we had seen similar Roman numerals in some of the vaults on the Lower High Street excavation site and at Lankester's Vault (High Street). We assumed that these marks were made by masons before the vaults were constructed but did not fully understand them. We hoped that the large number of marks in 48 French Street would allow us to test various hypotheses.

The team made two more visits to the French Street vaults in March to record the stone blocks with Roman numerals. These marks ranged from II to X (with all numbers between) but some (eg V) were often

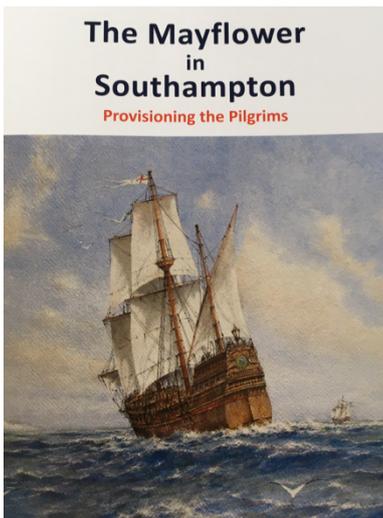


Part of 48 French Street vault showing mason's marks (note inverted V, VI etc).
Photo: M Garner

inverted – further evidence that the blocks were marked before construction of the vault. The location and sizes of the blocks were recorded to try to understand their significance. Matt has tabulated the results which seem to show a correlation between marks and block sizes, and consultation with architectural historian Dr Jenny Alexander (an expert on masons' marks) has supported this theory. Further surveys and recording are needed, both in these and other Southampton vaults, to build on this study which promises to throw light on the way these vaults were constructed.

Thanks to Karen Wardley and Matt Garner for contributions to this report, also to Brian and Joan Webb, Gill and Roger James and Derek and Sue Stewart for reports on several of the visits.

Review of 'Mayflower in Southampton: Provisioning the Pilgrims' by Godfrey Collyer



This excellent book gives details of the religious background to the Mayflower's voyage in 1620 and in particular an account of the dramatic events leading up to her departure from Southampton. The passengers were a mixed group made up of settlers looking for opportunities in the New World, and religious separatists seeking freedom to worship in their chosen way. While in Southampton preparing for the voyage and buying supplies they had to have repairs made to the Speedwell's hull, and major disagreements arose between them over money and over the terms of their agreement with their financial backers.

Godfrey Collyer tells the story in a series of topics, giving a flavour of the political situation of the early 17th century and some of the personalities involved. The book is illustrated with a well-chosen range of engravings, paintings and photographs all contributing to the story, which is usefully summarised on the last page. This would be a great gift or memento of the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower's sailing for anyone interested in the history of the voyage or of Southampton.

Sarah Hanna

The book is published by SeeSouthampton at £7.95, available from the author at godfrey@seesouthampton.org.uk. Godfrey will be speaking at the SAS Mayflower Study Day on 10th October when the book will be on sale at £5 (£1 of this going to SAS funds).

Mayflower Walk: Friday 23rd October 11.00am to 12.30pm. A walk for SAS members and friends, to be led by Godfrey Collyer in the Old Town, Southampton visiting sites involved in the Mayflower story. Meeting at the Bargate, the walk lasts 90 minutes, covering a distance of about 700 meters on level ground, with some steps down into Lankester's vault. Cost £6 per person, max no 15 (to allow for 1meter+ distance). Please see booking form attached with the newsletter for details.

Arrangements for lectures at St Joseph's Hall

Two of our committee members checked out St Joseph's Hall last week and they report that with seats one meter+ apart we can accommodate an audience of up to 35, but sadly we shall not be able to offer refreshments at present. Arrangements within the room will be reconfigured, with the screen placed at the far end so seats can be filled up from the front row, with access either side for entry/exit. Hand sanitizer will be provided both at the sign-in table and in the toilet (only the disabled toilet will be in use). There will be a sign-in list with contact details for members (required by law) and visitors will need to provide their details also. We would like to ask members to make payments such as subscriptions or Study Day bookings by bank transfer where possible, but if cash or cheque is necessary these must be placed in a container to avoid direct handling (please submit the exact amount or a completed cheque). Full details for bank transfers can be found below.

Payment of SAS subscriptions 2020/2021

Thank you to all members who have already renewed their subscriptions for 2020/21, and welcome to some new members. Many subscriptions remain overdue however, so before the new season is launched I'd like to remind you about subscription rates and urge members if possible to pay by bank transfer.

Current subscription rates: Adults £10; Seniors £8; Students/U18s £8; Family £14.

Any new members who joined in 2019/20 after the New Year will be able to pay half price for 2020/2021, as the last year's programme was curtailed. Rates will be: Adults £5.00; Seniors £4.00; Student/U18s £4.00; Family £7.00. The SAS Membership application form is attached.

Bank details: Name - **Southampton Archaeology Society**; Account No. 01528286; Sort Code 30-97-80 (Please insert 'SAS Membership' in the "Reason" box).

John Langran

Website contact: southamptonarchaeology@gmail.com

Facebook group: Southampton Archaeology Society

Lectures are free to members and £3 per visitor. Please bring your friends! All lectures will take place in St. Joseph's Hall, Bugle Street SO14 2AH, unless otherwise stated, from 7.30pm to 9.00pm. Please join us at the Duke of Wellington pub after the meeting.

2019-2020 SAS Committee

Chair – Sarah Hanna
Vice-Chair – Martyn Dowell
Hon Treasurer – John Langran
Hon Secretary – Mandy Kesby
General Committee Members – Rowan Bright, Chris Evans, Karen Wardley and Matt Garner. Archaeological Advisor: Dr Andy Russel.

Subscription Rates 2020/21

Individuals	£10.00
Senior Citizens	£8.00
Juniors/Students	£8.00
Family	£14.00

If you or a friend wish to join (or to renew your subscription) please ask the Hon Treasurer to send you an application form, or you could pick one up at the next Archaeology Society lecture.

Contact us

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