

# Southampton Archaeology Society

## October 2017 Newsletter



Dear Members

The last three months have been busy for Southampton Archaeology Society, following the final lecture of our 2016/17 programme in April, when Matt Garner told us about the three-year excavation project at Quarr Abbey, Isle of Wight. At the AGM in May members agreed on a small rise in subscriptions from May 2018, and we also enjoyed a lively presentation from leaders of Southampton Young Archaeologists' Club about their work and adventures with young people.

This summer promises lots of activity, with the CBA Festival of Archaeology starting on 15<sup>th</sup> July, and some local events are featured in later pages. There are two current exhibitions in Southampton on the subject of castles: Southampton Castle at Tudor House Museum and Garden; and at Southampton Art Gallery is a major art show *Capture the Castle* with both earlier romantic and modern interpretations of the theme - not to be missed. Southampton and Winchester are both celebrating their connections with Jane Austen for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her death, on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1817 in Winchester. Jane briefly attended school in Southampton and lived in the city between 1806 and 1809: there will be walks, talks, concerts, a literary weekend and even a Ball, continuing until October!

**Sarah**

## Matt Garner's leaving "do"

Soon after our last newsletter went to press, Matt Garner announced he would be leaving Southampton City Council Archaeological Unit, after **30** years' service. Matt's leaving party was held at the Platform Tavern Southampton (so named after the former C18th gun platform on which it was built). The event was attended by colleagues from the Unit past and present, friends from Southampton University, Southampton Young Archaeologist's Club, members of SAS and many others.



The cakes (pictured left) are copies of a steata 'peacock' coin from Saxon Hamwic, showing the stylised bird on the obverse and a king's head on the reverse. Made by Matt's partner Zana, one in lemon and the other in chocolate, they were delicious! Here's a picture of Matt cutting the cakes.

Matt is now trying to enjoy a well-earned rest, but his peace is constantly interrupted by requests for help with projects such as helping to organise and speaking at meetings and conferences; recording graffiti and helping his mother when she came out of hospital. So not so much progress with moving home and planning the next phase of his life, and we all wish Matt well for the future!



## Excavation at God's House Tower, Southampton June 2017

God's House Tower forms the southeast corner of Southampton's medieval town walls, and it formerly housed the Archaeology Museum, which closed in 2011 ahead of SeaCity Museum opening in 2012. Further archaeological work will take place when the building is remodelled as an exhibition and performance venue.

Southampton Archaeology Unit was commissioned by Aspace Arts to investigate the archaeology of God's House Tower. To the south it is linked to God's House Gate, to the north to the Town Wall. The early 14<sup>th</sup> century Town Wall was investigated down to 1.8m below ground level. It could be seen that the Town Wall had been partly dismantled and rebuilt when God's House Tower was constructed in the late 14<sup>th</sup>/early 15<sup>th</sup> century.



A trench dug along the north wall of God's House Tower revealed the toilet block constructed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to serve the Southampton Gaol (see figure left). The plans for the gaol survive showing that one toilet was for debtors, and the second was for felons.

Site plan showing position of trenches. Southampton Archaeology Unit, 2017.

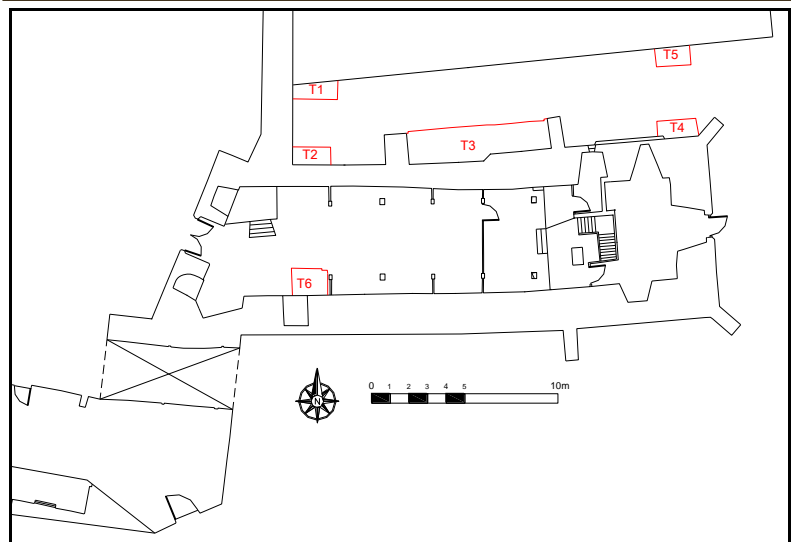


Figure. Far toilet was for the debtors, nearer toilet for the felons. God's House Tower north wall to the right. Photo: A Russel.

Trench 4 examined the northeast corner of the Tower itself, built of large blocks of white limestone and green sandstone. The lower part of the wall, long buried, featured a chamfered course, with above it a drip moulding, demonstrating that originally the lower part of the tower was on view. The internal trench revealed that prior to the building of God's House Tower there had been an earlier stone structure on the site. It was probably a tower with its battered foundation in the ditch, attached to the Town Wall to the west. This was presumably provided to help defend the adjacent God's House Gate which occupies the southeast corner of the rectangular walled town.

**Andy Russel**

## Forthcoming Events

**Tudor House & Garden** continues until further notice - *Southampton Castle: A Ceremony in Stone*. The exhibition explores the castle's history through archaeology, documents and surviving stone structures. Tudor House and Garden, Bugle Street SO14 2AD, open 10.00am to 3.00pm Monday – Thursday, 10.00am to 5.00pm weekends (closed Friday). For admission prices visit [tudorhouseandgarden.com](http://tudorhouseandgarden.com).

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November** 10.00am to 4.45pm. HFC Landscape Section Conference (with AGM). **Romsey: Religious Centre, Market & Industrial Town**. Conference organised by Romsey Local History Society (RLHS) whose members are among the speakers; topics include History of Romsey, water management, digital mapping, boundaries and the pastoral landscape. Cost: £12 members; £17 visitors; £6 f/t students. Venue: Science Lecture Theatre, Peter Symonds' College, Owen's Road, Winchester SO22 6RX. Please email [landscape-events@fieldclub.hants.org.uk](mailto:landscape-events@fieldclub.hants.org.uk) for information regarding bookings/availability.

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November** 11.00 to 16.00. SeaCity Museum, Havelock Road, SO14 7FY. Drop-in session on **SS Mendi Bell** with Graham Scott of Wessex Archaeology, co-author of *We Die Like Brothers: sinking of the SS Mendi*. Free to visit (museum entrance applies).

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November** 9.50am to 4.30pm HFC Archaeology Section Conference and AGM - **Secrets of the Dead**: speakers include (among others) Dr Simon Roffey on Medieval Hospital cemetery of St Mary Magdalen, Winchester; Richard Greatorex on an A/S execution cemetery at Weyhill, Andover; Prof Julia Lee-Thorpe on human and pig remains from the Mary Rose. Cost £12 HFC members, £20 non-members; cheques payable to 'HFC Archaeology Section'. Please send email address or SAE for reply to: Chris Sellen, 40 Merrieleas Drive, Chandlers Ford Hants SO53 2FN. Venue: Peter Symonds' College, Winchester (see above 11<sup>th</sup> Nov).

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November** 2.00 to 4.00pm. SeaCity Museum (see above 11<sup>th</sup> Nov). **Southampton Through Time – Tour & Tea** with Andy Skinner: a special guided tour of the permanent exhibition *Southampton Gateway to the World*. Hear some incredible stories of the City, followed by delicious cream tea. Cost £12, includes museum entry; pre-book on (023) 8083 4536.

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November** 10.00am to 12.30pm. **History of Your House**; join our Archives Curator for an introduction to the 'hows' of researching where you live, including sources available eg maps, plans, and local directories (original sources relate only to areas within Southampton). Cost £10, pre-book on (023) 8083 4536. Southampton Archives, City Centre, Southampton SO14 7LY.

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>/Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December** 10.00am to 5.00pm. **Christmas at Tudor House** FREE entry! Step back in time to deck the halls with holly and ivy boughs, meet some costumed characters and make holiday crafts to take home (charges apply). Father Christmas flies in for the weekend only, visits £7 per

child (includes gift + photo, 10.15am – 4.45pm, pre-book on 023 8083 4536). Tudor House & Garden, Bugle Street SO14 2AD.

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December** 7.00 – 8.45pm. **Christmas Lantern Tour** with Dr Andy Russel: explore the sights, smells and tastes of Southampton's historic Old Town – visit the hidden vaults, and enjoy seasonal refreshments at Westgate Hall. Cost £8(£7 conc); pre-book on (023) 8083 4536. Meet by Tudor House in St Michael's Square, Bugle Street. Please bring a torch; tour not suitable for people with mobility issues.

**2018 Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January** 7.30 – 8.45pm. Westgate Hall Talk *Crime in the Second World War: Spivs, Scoundrels, Rogues and Worse*, given by local writer Penny Legg who reveals why this era was a 'golden age' for villainy and crime, and stories about some of the characters involved. Refreshments available. Cost £5/£4 SAS, FoSMAG and A&H volunteers. Westgate Hall, Westgate Street SO14 ? Pre-book on (023) 8083 4536.

### **Southampton Archaeology Society News**

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our members for their support, and particularly to those who help with the lecture programme, for instance Penny Rudkin who arranges for posters to be sent to the City Libraries before the meetings, and also makes coffee and tea each time. Other members often help with putting out chairs, bringing equipment and with clearing the hall and washing up at the end of meetings. We're most grateful for your contributions, which help to make the meetings a good social occasion.

Next Lecture: September 12th 2017 7.30pm. **Gill Woolrich** 'Southampton Castle'. The history of Southampton Castle, using documentary, architectural and archaeological evidence, expanding on the current exhibition at Tudor House. Hear tales of kings, pirates, fly-tippers and other ne'er-do-wells, and a short introduction to medieval toilets.

Our 2017 - 2018 lecture series begins in September. Details from Anna Welch, tel 0781 285 1095, or email [archaeoanna@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:archaeoanna@yahoo.co.uk). Lectures are free to members and £2 per visitor - bring your friends! We meet at St. Joseph's Hall, Bugle Street SO14 2AH, starting 7.30pm (and generally finish by 9.00pm). Tea and coffee is served from 7.00pm. Please join us after the talks in The Duke of Wellington pub in Lower Bugle Street.

Our new **Graffiti Survey Group** has started on a survey of graffiti in the attics and cellars at Tudor House Museum, led by Karen Wardley. Our next meeting is on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 10.30am, meeting in the café if you'd like to come. Contact [sarahvhanna@hotmail.com](mailto:sarahvhanna@hotmail.com) to find out more.

Facebook users may use this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/748138972007328/> to access the SAS Facebook group – sign up to Facebook if you'd like to join in too.

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,

#### **Subscription Rates**

Individuals	£9.00
Senior Citizens	£7.00

#### **Contact us**

**Mandy Kesby,  
Hon Secretary.**

**2017-2018 SAS Committee**

**Chair** – Martyn Dowell

**Vice-Chair** – Sarah Hanna

**Hon Treasurer** – John Langran

**Hon Secretary** – Mandy Kesby

**General Committee Members** – Anna

Welch, Rowan Bright, Chris Evans and

Matt Garner. Archaeological Advisor:

Dr. Andy Russel.

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.