



Southampton Archaeology Society

October 2022 Newsletter

Hello again members

The new lecture programme started well in September Dr Cindy Wood 's talk on **Post-Dissolution Graffiti in Winchester Cathedral**. Cindy opened our eyes to the amazing variety of images and marks found in the public spaces (nave and aisles), also on upper window recesses and other less accessible areas of the cathedral. The second lecture earlier this month attracted more visitors than usual, to hear Rachel Williams of Wessex Archaeology talking about their excavation, **Behind the Red Lion**, on the site of Southampton's former fruit and vegetable market. Rachel explained the history of the site, from the late Saxon defensive ditch to remodelling of the well-known public house between Tudor times to the 20th century; a summary is included in this newsletter, thanks to Mandy Kesby. Reports on both talks will be coming soon on www.southamptonarchaeology.uk.

It's exciting to report the discovery of an Acheulian handaxe in the first article below: found by Graham Dall, (SAS member and formerly of Southampton Archaeology Unit) and possibly up to 400,000 years old. Many thanks to Dr Francis Wenban-Smith for his scholarly description of the handaxe and its probable origin in river gravel terraces of the former Solent River Channel. I'm grateful to Karen Wardley and members of the SAS Graffiti team for allowing me to summarise their report on the group's visit to the ancient church of **St Mary, Breamore, Hampshire**; and to Anna Welch for her account of the 100th anniversary celebration of Southampton Classical Association, and lecture on interior design in Pompeii. Also included is a review of the exhibition in the Pavilion at SeaCity Museum: **Sugar, Politics and Money - Southampton and the Transatlantic Slave Trade**, exploring Southampton's history of involvement with slave-ownership in the Caribbean, and how this contributed to the town's 18th century prosperity.

Our next lecture will be held on **Tuesday 8th November**, 7.30pm at St Joseph's Hall: the speaker is Professor Tony King, talking on **Celtic to Romano-Celtic: archaeology and topography of religious sites in southern Britain, from the Late Iron Age into the Roman period**. Please see the attached poster for further details. Finally, bookings are now being taken for our **Christmas Social** at 7.00pm on **Tuesday 13th December**, as advertised here (Booking Form also attached).

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Sarah



Southampton Archaeology Society

Christmas Social for Members & their Guests

Tuesday 13th December 2022 7pm to 9pm

at St Joseph's Hall, Bugle Street, Southampton SO14 2AH
Buffet and drinks provided @£6 per person (pre-booked)

The Goose is Getting Fat – a very Hampshire Christmas
with The Concert Party

To book please email: southamptonarchaeology@gmail.com

A handaxe from the Exbury-Lepe peninsula

A Palaeolithic handaxe was recently found on the shore at Lepe Country Park, at Stone Point (National Grid Reference SZ 45660 98450), and I was invited by Matt Garner to write a few words on it for the SAS Newsletter. The handaxe (Figure 2) was found by Graham Dall on Saturday 9th July 2022 at the end of the carpark on the shoreline. As reported by Graham: “During the recent hot weather I decided to go to Lepe



F1. The shore at Lepe, with the low cliff of the Milford-on-Sea gravel terrace in the background. Photo: F Weban-Smith

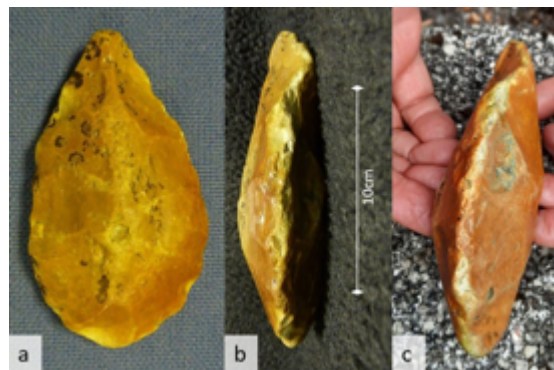
Beach and wandered along the shore towards the National Coastwatch station and, seeing some people I knew, settled down for a chat. It was pure fluke that when I got up I noticed the handaxe laying amidst the sand and shingle as I was folding up my chair.” The findspot is shown in the photo left (circled) (Fig 1).

As can be seen from Figure 2, the handaxe itself is quite large (c 15cm from base to tip). It has been worked all round, with a pointed tip and a rounded base. It is also very rolled, so has probably lost about 5-10% of its original length and maybe 10-15% of its original width. As always with such finds, the key questions concern its provenance, age and origin. It is rarely possible to date an individual handaxe from its shape, although certain timeframes can sometimes be supported or rejected within the Palaeolithic period between c 800,000 and 50,000 BP. In this instance, its form is broadly typical of the prime period of handaxe-dominated “Acheulian” lithic industries between c 400,000 and 300,000 BP, during the (Hoxnian) interglacial that followed the major Anglian glaciation, and in the period of climatic deterioration after the Hoxnian - although earlier or later cannot be fully ruled out. Its maker would thus probably have come from the proto-Neanderthal northwest-European population that inhabited the region between the Boxgrove era of c 500,000 BP (*Homo heidelbergensis*) and the main Neanderthal era (between c 150,000 and 40,000 BP).

Even though found loose on the shingle, its condition and discovery location provide other hints as to age and origin. The Lepe-Exbury peninsula is underlain by a suite of ancient gravel terraces, laid down by the Solent river flowing broadly eastward from Bournemouth towards the southern part of Southampton Water, in the valley to the north of the Durlston-Needles Chalk ridge. The terraces form a rough “staircase” of east-west trending gravel bands, which get progressively younger as the ground-surface dips southward. The “staircase” continues under the water of the Western Solent, with a younger-still channel cutting into the Tertiary bedrock. The attribution and dating of these east-west trending terraces are under continual academic dispute. The low cliff behind the beach at Lepe - sometimes attributed in its own right as the “Lepe Gravel” - is currently (Hatch 2014) attributed to “Milford-on-Sea gravel”, and is thought to date to between c 150,000 and 50,000 BP, a period when Britain is (a) thought to have mostly been unoccupied, and (b) the populations that were occasionally present were not making handaxes such as this one.

The handaxe’s degree of abrasion is unfortunately a source of confusion. It could have been washed out of a cliff or other deposit in a fresh condition, and then rapidly have become well-abraded through rolling in the beach shingle. Alternatively, it could have become rolled during ancient river transport, and then been derived from its source deposit in a rolled state, and discovered before much further abrasion had taken

F2. The recently-found handaxe from the shore at Stone Point, Lepe: a) plan-view; b-c) right-hand side-view. Photos: F W-S



place. Bearing in mind the young age (in Pleistocene/Palaeolithic terms) of the Milford-on-Sea terrace exposed above the shore at Lepe (Fig 1) and of the gravel beds forming the foreshore, it is unlikely that the handaxe dates from the time of their formation. If it came from these, then it was probably derived from one of the pre-existing older/higher gravel bodies further inland, becoming reworked into the Milford-on-Sea gravel when it was formed.

The shoreline currents at Lepe variously come from both east and west according to wind and tide, although slightly more strongly from the west, as indicated by the build-up of shingle on the west side of groynes. Furthermore, there is evident size-sorting of the shingle, with larger handaxe-sized pieces concentrated in the area of the recent discovery. The older/higher terrace deposits inland from the Lepe shore are exposed on the west side of Southampton Water and cut through by the Beaulieu river. They are also cut through by the Dark Water stream, which issues into the western Solent at Lepe and was probably often a more substantial feature in ancient times. Thus there are several mechanisms for material from these older terraces to end up on Lepe beach, and reworking down the Dark Water channel seems the most likely.

F 3. Two handaxes from the shore near Little Exbury. and map showing the locations mentioned in text. Photo: Francis Wenban-Smith

There are several other records of handaxe finds from the Solent terraces of the Lepe-Exbury peninsula, collated in the Southern Rivers Project (1993: 148; map SOL 7), although these mostly don't have good provenance for their location or stratigraphic context. The sites listed are: the shingle below Inchmery House, Calshot, a cess-pit in Limekilns Lane, a building site in Blackfield, and an



unspecified gravel pit near Fawley. In addition to these, two fine handaxes (Fig 3) were shown to me during a Palaeolithic open-day event held at Lepe Country Park in November 2004. These were reportedly found on the shore in the vicinity of the “Exbury Camp” promontory at the mouth of the Beaulieu river.

Overall, it seems that the terrace gravels in this area contain handaxes; and it may well be that abundant concentrations are present in as-yet-undiscovered places. The most-immediately-desirable development would be to identify further finds in good context, although reports of any finds are always very welcome.

References:

Hatch M, 2014. *The Pleistocene Solent River and its major tributaries: reinterpreting the fluvial terrace stratigraphy*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Queen Mary College, University of London.

Wessex Archaeology 1993. *The Southern Rivers Palaeolithic Project, Report No. 1: the Upper Thames Valley, the Kennet Valley and the Solent Drainage System*. Wessex Archaeology, Salisbury.

Francis Wenban-Smith (Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton)

Behind the Red Lion: excavations at the former fruit and vegetable market.

Speaker: Rachel Williams, project officer with Wessex Archaeology

This lecture on 11th October reported on the excavations early in 2022, taking place directly behind the historic Red Lion pub/Indian restaurant fronting the High Street, Southampton; and Rachel also referred to excavations on other parts of this housing development. The site has been excavated in stages, as areas became available. A layer of brick earth lies 2m below street level, and floor surfaces above at ~1m (Fig 1).



Prior to excavating it was known that the late Saxon defensive town ditch ran through this site, and a key aim was to find the ditch (which had been identified on a nearby site), but demolition of an underground carpark on the site had destroyed much existing archaeology. The Saxon ditch proved to be the earliest feature identified, around 4m deep; the ditch contained few finds but there was good stratigraphy, and the line of the medieval Town wall was visible in service trenches.

Fig 1. View of site showing depth of features: note the stone-lined cesspit (L) and Saxon ditch (R). Credit: Wessex Archaeology.

The ditch was cut by medieval pits which contained dark deposits useful for dating and environmental evidence. More medieval pits were located directly behind the Red Lion, producing limited amounts of pottery, and one was lined with oyster shells with some brick and charcoal. There was evidence that many later pits had been cut into the original pits, with homogenised deposits in upper levels of the site; but earlier stratigraphy became clearer further down. Publication of Wessex Archaeology's work on this site is hoped to shed light on some of the previous discoveries, especially from the Saxon occupation.

The star features were two medieval cess pits close to a boundary wall, which has been regularly maintained over centuries. The first was a stone-lined cess pit (Fig 2), partially excavated down to 2m, revealing well-preserved walls, a locally made 14th century cooking pot and smaller medieval items. Environmental samples were taken, but the results have yet to be analysed.



Fig 2 View showing boundary wall, with stone-lined cess pit and late Saxon ditch. Photo: Matt Garner



The second cess pit was located to the north of the first, with a more recent upper fill containing charcoal and a concrete slab which topped the wall behind it, both of which were removed. It was cut by another pit full of onion bottles (C17th) – probably from the pub (Fig 3). This cess pit was squarer and less deep than the first. Flagstones were uncovered on the edge of the plot.

Fig 3. Base of onion bottle, from cess pit 2.

Credit: Wessex Archaeology

The property boundary (Fig 2, above) runs across the middle of the site, with traces of a parallel wall to the east which could have been a passageway. Areas of medieval cobbles were revealed, and a 'dog leg' of wall, part of which has slumped into a pit (some of the wall had been robbed). Part of the site was used later for drainage, with a small possibly 17/18th century drain meeting another drain running east/west, perhaps discharging into the town ditch. The remains of a Tap Room were found on the east of the site at Back of the Walls, as shown on the 1847 map of the old town. Footings of the walls were uncovered together with the base of a toilet, probably added at a later date, and cut through by the pub's modern cellar wall. Some of the larger stones used to build the back boundary wall may have originated from the town wall. Broken bottles were visible between them, and an audience member suggested the glass was inserted there possibly to deter rats from getting through the gaps between the stones. Further to the east of the site part of the former Canal was found, comprising the tow path and edge of the canal fill.

On 10th October 2022 Wessex Archaeology returned to the site for another six weeks, and they hope this extended exploration may provide further clues about later phases of the site. Once archaeological work on the site is finished they will start on post-excavation analysis and the process of detailed interpretation, so we hope to hear more about the site from Rachel in future.

Mandy Kesby

Report on SAS Graffiti group visit to St Mary's Church, Breamore, Hampshire

The visit took place on Monday 15th August 2022 and involved seven members of the SAS graffiti group, led by Karen Wardley. The church (Fig 1) is located half a mile north of Breamore village, near Fordingbridge, Hants, among the fields close to Breamore House and its extensive farm museum.

Fig 1. The church of St Mary, Breamore from the south. Photo: K Wardley



Breamore was founded in Saxon times as a Minster church on a possible Royal estate set within a large enclosure. It served as the mother church for several nearby villages until the mid 12th century when it became the parish church of Breamore. The village is recorded in the Domesday Survey as being owned by the king.

The design of the building dates it to the late 10th or early 11th century. It is of typical cruciform shape consisting of nave, crossing (with tower above), north and south porticus (chapels) and chancel. Within the south

porch a Saxon Rood can be seen, badly damaged by 17th century attempts to remove the figures of Christ and the saints: this had probably been moved from the chancel. The church has been considerably remodelled during its life, and the external flint and rubble fabric includes reused Roman brick and stones; wall paintings were whitewashed, and in the 19th century a gallery and organ loft added.

The most significant concentration of historic graffiti is found on the exterior, on two adjacent stone blocks on the west side of the porch: these are covered with initials, many dating to the 17th century (1694 occurs at least twice). The church porch was traditionally where church business was carried out, so these dated initials could mark a significant local event (see illustrations Figs 2 & 3 over page).



Fig 3. On the west face of the same block is further graffiti with another series of dots and letters. The dots may have acted as guides for drawing letters and other shapes.

Photo: B Webb

Fig 2. A stone block on the west corner of the south face of the porch, showing dated initials: IH 1694; AB 1679; SE 1694; boxed initials TC and other initials, some with dots at the terminals. Photo B Webb



Little early graffiti was found inside the church, no doubt due to the many alterations that have been made to the fabric; but there is much recent graffiti in the gallery, on the south side of the organ casing, installed towards the end of the 19th century (see Figs 4, 5, & 6).

Fig 4. Graffiti on south windowsill, beside stairs to the gallery & organ loft: pairs of initials and a mystery geometric shape. Photo: K Wardley



Fig 5. Initials with entwined hearts; a well-drawn bicycle; and the name 'D Frowd 1942 March 29'.

Photo: K Wardley



Fig 6. An American visitor with the surname 'Meery', from Langdon, North Dakota, USA: possibly stationed nearby during WW2?

Photo: K Wardley

Survey archive

140 photographs were taken during the survey. All images and record sheets are held by the Hampshire Field Club Medieval Graffiti Project archive and are available on request. A copy of this report has been lodged with the Hampshire Historic Environment Record and with the church, and is now available on the websites of Southampton Archaeology Society www.southamptonarchaeology.uk and Hampshire Field Club www.hantsfieldclub.org.uk.

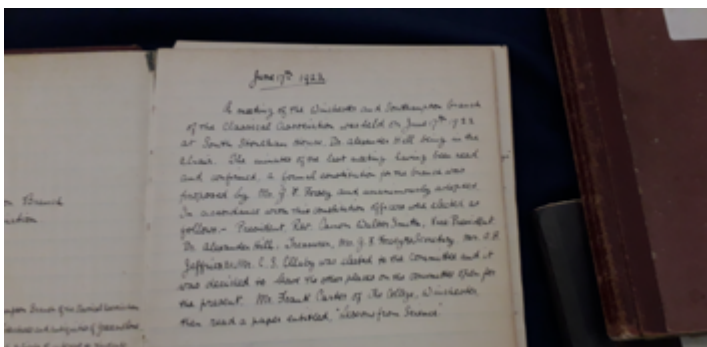
This summary provides a very small sample of the graffiti and other features recorded during our visit to this lovely and historic church. The full report was prepared by Brian and Joan Webb and Karen Wardley, and summarised by Sarah Hanna. Please do visit the SAS website to look at this comprehensive report, it's a fascinating read! You will also find an incredibly interesting report from Julian Porter concerning a stoneware pipe outside the church wall.

Celebrating 100 years for Southampton Classical Association

The Southampton branch of the Classical Association celebrated 100 years on 14th October 2022 with a talk by Dr Shelley Hales from Bristol University entitled **Keeping up with the Popidii: the importance of home improvement at Pompeii**. The talk was preceded by a buffet and celebratory drink, plus a chance to chat with SAS' own Dr Andy Russel about evidence for the Romans in Southampton, and a recent excavation at Clausentum. Andy had brought some artefacts and there was a display about archaeological work, which drew a lot of interest.



Above: Andy Russel with the display at Southampton City Art Gallery.



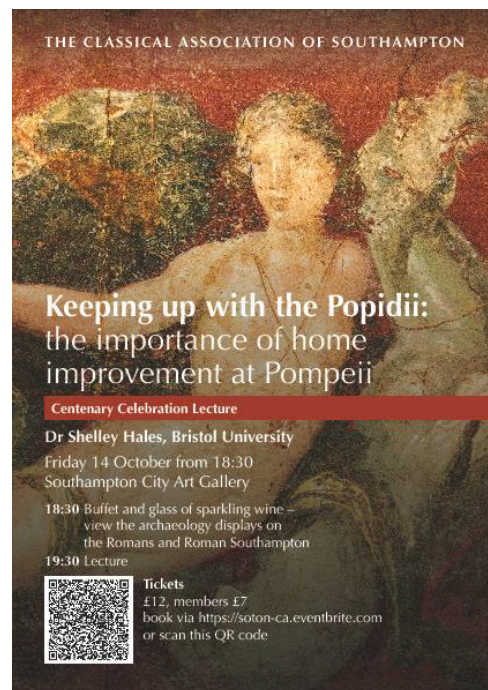
Left: Minute recording the formation of Southampton branch of the Classical Association, June 17th 1922.

Photos: Anna Welch

Below: Poster for the lecture on 14th October 2022.

Dr Hales' talk focussed on decoration in Pompeian dining and reception rooms. Pompeian interior design was not about expressing your personality – it was about impressing people! The dining room was the showpiece of the home for those rich enough not to eat from street vendors. Looking out onto a garden for socialising, the dining room was a room with a view and an event in its own right. Colours were bold and, as some pigments were very expensive, an opportunity to show off wealth. Black was very popular, and highly polished so that it would shine and play light on the wall paintings as the sun went down and lamps were lit, creating a blurring between the dining space and the mythological spaces depicted. The atmosphere that Pompeians might have experienced during the drama of the dinner party was excellently evoked by Dr Hales and enhanced by the surroundings of Southampton City Art Gallery.

The evening was very enjoyable and well attended, including some familiar faces from SAS. Anyone interested in attending more talks from the Southampton Classical Association can find their website with the current lecture programme at <https://thesouthamptonbranchoftheclassicalassociation.wordpress.com/>



Anna Welch

SAS Facebook Group

During the last few weeks this group has reached a total of 1000 members, and many are coming to our lectures and study days. Our recent talk earlier in October attracted an audience of 58, one third of whom were visitors (and several of them joined the Society on the night). We're delighted to find so many new people interested in our local heritage and archaeology, we hope they will enjoy the activities we present - and we'd be happy to welcome many more!

Sugar, Politics and Money - Southampton and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

This exhibition opened in July 2022, in the Pavilion at SeaCity Museum, as part of Southampton Stories. It was developed by Dr Maria Newbury and a group of volunteers, to encourage public discussion about the complex histories behind museums and archive collections: supported by the Arts Council England (ACE). The exhibition tells the stories of Southampton families who had past links with slavery, including owning plantations on Barbados and other islands in the West Indies: one prominent plantation-owner in the late 18th century was Bryan Edwards, who became MP for Southampton and campaigned against Abolition of the slave trade. The prosperity of 18th century Southampton and its success as a spa town owed much to fortunes made in the Caribbean, as exemplified by the Sugar House factory where raw sugar from West Indian plantations was refined and distributed for sale; the business later failed and the building was used for other purposes, though it survived until damaged by bombs in WW2.

In 1807 the trade in enslaved people was abolished, supported by local residents such as schoolmaster John Bullar; and several former slaves were invited to the town to speak on the evils of enslavement.

In 1833, Parliament voted for emancipation of slaves in British ruled lands, followed by huge compensation payments paid to their former owners, including many from Southampton. One formerly enslaved woman, Zoe Launda married a sailor called John Holloway and they settled in Wickham Court, near Brewhouse Lane in Southampton, an area of poor housing where their lives would have been quite hard.

Zoe and two of her children in the 1880s outside their home. The houses were demolished during the 1890s. Credit: SCC Archives



Tickets to visit Southampton Stories are available from SeaCity Museum separately from visiting the main museum displays: for further information please see <https://seacitymuseum.co.uk/southampton-stories>.

S Hanna

www.southamptonarchaeology.uk

 Southampton Archaeology Society



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<p>Our lectures normally take place in St. Joseph's Hall, Bugle Street SO14 2AH, 7.30pm on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, subject to restrictions as current. Refreshments are available from 7.00pm. Talks are free to paid-up SAS members, £3 to guests.</p>	<p>Subscription Rates 2021/22</p> <table><tr><td>Individuals</td><td>£10.00</td></tr><tr><td>Senior Citizens</td><td>£8.00</td></tr><tr><td>Juniors/Students</td><td>£8.00</td></tr><tr><td>Family</td><td>£14.00</td></tr></table> <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>	Individuals	£10.00	Senior Citizens	£8.00	Juniors/Students	£8.00	Family	£14.00	<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>
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<p>2022-2023 SAS Committee Chair – John Langran Vice-Chair – Martyn Dowell Hon Treasurer – Sue Davies Hon Secretary – Mandy Kesby Committee Members – Rowan Bright, Karen Wardley, Sarah Hanna, Matt Garner, Sam Edwards, James Brown. Archaeology Advisor: Dr Andy Russel.</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.