



**Locked down but not  
locked out Newsletter  
August 2020**

**News 🧑🏫 Meetings 🧑🏫 Reports 🧑🏫 Diary  
Dates 🧑🏫 Travellers' Tales**

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This newsletter provides reports on the activities of WARG, the Society for Winchester archaeology and local history. It also carries information of interest to the WARG membership.

For more information on WARG or to join, email [membership@warg.org.uk](mailto:membership@warg.org.uk) or visit [www.warg.org.uk](http://www.warg.org.uk)

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## Editorial

Welcome to the special bonus edition of the WARG newsletter. I'll wager no one expected a bonus newsletter – (all Monty Python fans please feel free to insert the Spanish Inquisition joke here).

We may still be partially locked down, but Archaeology being the dynamic discipline it is, we shall never be locked out where research and deduction can still flourish.

Many of you would have been planning to be digging at Hursley over the next few weeks, which sadly has been locked down, but only until next year if all is well. However, if your garden is already covered in test pits, or you do not have any space to dig, and are desperate for the activity, the grass in my small orchard is knee high to a giraffe, and you would be welcome to dig there, although, living near the source of the beautiful River Itchen, I fear there are no artefacts to find, other than the odd lost earring or misplaced trowel, of recent vintage.

As a small compensation, Andy King has provided a write up of last year's dig at Barton Stacey. Kim Batten has talked about his potty obsession, and Techer Jones has written an interesting article about the Beauworth hoard. We could not ignore the Cerne Abbas Giant who has caused a recent stir and our stalwart Julia has, as ever, been jotting about interesting things, both local and global. With some interesting book reviews, we hope to fill a little of the gap left by cancelled summer events. Subject to Maureen's continued efforts to find a safe venue, and social guidelines, we shall be open for talks in October.

These last few weeks, I have watched the International Space station fly over my garden and also watched, through the eyes of an astronaut, in real time, as he carried out

maintenance on the International Space Station whilst floating in space. I observed the fiery SpaceX Dragon re-entering the atmosphere, splashing down in the Gulf of Mexico and being recovered, all on my mobile phone. I could not but wonder what my Grandmother would have thought about this, 60 years ago (she did not believe that actors did not actually get hit in a stage fight), and I thought of the Newsletter Editor in 60 years' time. Will s/he be writing about the geological archaeology of the Moon?

But, enough of this mental meandering, and before handing over to the Chairman, I must apologise to all Culham College alumni, as their badge was not only printed upside down but back to front.

### **Stop Press.**

As you may have heard, after the summer recess the Government is to debate changes to the planning legislation in England and Wales. The Committee has agreed that on behalf of WARG, your Chairman should write to the local MP to express our concern at the potential damage this may cause, on both large and small scales. Examples of the need for scrutiny can be seen at the Brooks, (pre-planning lack of scrutiny, see - WARG history) and Barton Farm (post planning example), both large sites, and also the small scale Hyde900 excavations within the local community and school. WARG is fortunate to be in an area where the local authority has awareness of the need for scrutiny, and has engaged a team of geo-archaeologists who are currently drilling bore holes to investigate the land prior to inner city redevelopment.

Steve has kindly included a copy of his letter within his 'Notes' and the committee would urge concerned members also to contact their MPs and local Councilors to support the Group's view to protect our heritage. Steve's letter provides

all of the relevant information and you are welcome to use it as a template to your views on the subject.

WARG was founded from identical concerns and in the next newsletter I shall be including WARG's history.

*The Bard, of course, had an apposite comment, never more so: - 'When we mean to build, We first survey the plot, then draw the model; And when we see the figure of the house, Then must we rate the cost of the erection.*

*William Shakespeare Henry IV, Part 2' (1597) act 1, sc. 3, l. [41]*

So, stay safe, stay well and do contact us with requests for information on subjects which interest you, or write about them yourself – you know my contact details.

With very best wishes,

*Janet.*



### **Chairman's report - Steve Old August 2020**

Welcome to the bonus edition of the WARG newsletter. I hope you are all well and coping with these strange times. Since the last newsletter we have seen a gradual easing of the lockdown and the gradual opening up of our historic places locally even if in most cases it's just the gardens, which is all good news.

Most community archaeology projects and most local history groups have yet to start back with their, I think most, like WARG are waiting to see how things progress and how

practical it will be under the circumstances, before committing to any dates for a resumption, which I hope you will agree is a prudent approach.

Some things are returning to normal though, I read recently that a hoard of silver coins had been found by a metal detectorist in the grounds of a pub, probably deposited during the English Civil War around 1642. I have also seen in the press stories of large collections of stolen artefacts being recovered in raids, including those dug up and not declared by metal detectorists, which just goes to show, you get good and bad people in all parts of society.

During this strange period, I have taken on a small project to expand my family tree research, write a book about one of my ancestors, make copyright safe another book I have written and updated some papers I wrote a few years ago, possibly turning them into books. They all have a theme that is either local history, archaeology and/or family history based. If I get them completed and get round to getting them printed, I think I will offer them to members at cost price, so watch this space!

Also watch this space for the possibility of getting involved in some proposed upcoming community research events that we may be getting involved in. We are looking to get involved in this sort of scheme if we can and we think our membership would like to be involved, if you come across any that are proposed, let the committee know and we will investigate further. The committee and I are looking forward to welcoming you back to our talks and any other events we put on in the near future.

**An Important message form the Chairman**

chair@warg.org.uk

13th August 2020

Dear Mr. Steve Brine

**Re: Protection for heritage and archaeology in the planning system**

I am writing to you on behalf of WARG and its members. WARG is the society for Winchester Archaeology and Local History for whom I am the current chairman, one of the largest Archaeology and Local History societies in Hampshire with 250+ members.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced that “permission in principle” is to be granted to planning applications for housing on certain sites, which follows on from the Prime Minister’s declaration of the 30<sup>th</sup> of June that he would “build, build, build”, free of the burden of “newt-counting delays”. That speech came hard on the heels of his senior adviser, Dominic Cummings, being quoted by the press as saying that he intended to “take an axe” to planning legislation. These statements are gravely worrying to anybody who has concern for England’s built and archaeological heritage, which is once again threatened by proposals to deregulate the planning system

In England, heritage likely to be affected by planning decisions is currently protected by the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), as explained in the Government’s document, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice*. The

general requirements are that the impact of development on heritage should be appropriately mitigated:

NPPF Para. 127c: new development should be “sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change”.

NPPF Para. 184: “Heritage assets[...]are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.”

The Framework provides protection for both designated (e.g. Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Parks and Gardens) and non-designated heritage assets. Importantly, the principle that ‘the polluter pays’ and other ‘precautionary principles’ as set out in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 apply to the historic as well as to the natural environment.

Heritage protection in UK (including English) law is set within an international legal framework based on the Granada Convention (1975) and the Valletta Convention (1992). The Granada Convention requires parties to follow conservation policies which:

- include the protection of the architectural heritage as an essential town and country planning objective [...] at all stages both in the drawing up of development plans and in the procedures for authorizing work
- promote programs for the restoration and maintenance of the architectural heritage;



- make the conservation, promotion and enhancement of the architectural heritage a major feature of cultural, environmental and planning policies

The Valletta Convention recognises the importance of archaeological heritage. States parties are required to protect archaeological heritage in the planning process, including through the input of archaeologists in the planning process itself, by undertaking assessments of the impact of proposed development on archaeological heritage. It states parties are also required to fund the mitigation of damage to archaeological sites; in the United Kingdom, funding is provided by the developer in accordance with the ‘polluter pays’ principle.

Any alteration to the planning process must take into account the United Kingdom’s legal tradition of protecting the historic environment, or taking steps to mitigate damage to it, where damage is justified. This is not only a moral obligation, but a requirement that the United Kingdom has taken upon itself by acceding to international treaties. Without adequate protection for its historic environment *in the planning process*, the United Kingdom will do irreparable damage to its shared heritage, and breach international law.

The Prime Ministers claim that “newt-counting” holds back house-building is untrue. As the Oliver Letwin’s report of 2018 showed, the greatest obstacle to development is not the planning system, but the speed at which new houses can be made available without undermining the housing market – or, to put it another way, without reducing the price of houses. In fact, commercial archaeology, which employs over 5,000 people in the United Kingdom, contributes over a quarter of a billion pounds to the national economy each year. Indeed, alongside other approaches to the

conservation of historic buildings and places in the planning process, archaeological fieldwork ahead of development can help reduce local opposition to new development by providing excellent opportunities for community engagement. The justification the Government has provided for its radical changes is specious and misleading.

Without adequate protection for heritage in the planning process, innumerable sites and buildings would have been lost to future generations. This is particularly pertinent in your constituency of Winchester, where history exists under every street, garden, vacant plot etc., There are historical remains yet to be uncovered in Winchester that could change our understanding of the city's past.

The Government's new plan to assume permission on land set aside for development poses a clear and significant threat in particular to archaeological heritage assets, which are frequently buried and unknown, until an assessment required as a condition of planning permission reveals them. Of the thousands of such sites, three examples of archaeology discovered as a result of planning conditions are the Anglo-Saxon town and cemetery at in Ipswich, 80 decapitated skeletons thought to have been Roman gladiators in York, and a Roman villa in Cam, Gloucestershire, which the developer agreed to preserve after discussion with the local community. Without archaeological conditions attached to planning permissions, these sites would simply have been destroyed.

The planning system has been designed to recognise that heritage is important to local communities. Stripping away communities' right to inform the decisions that affect them is an affront to those communities and a huge risk to our shared heritage. As MP for Winchester and Chandlers

Ford, I urge you to hold the Government to account. The heritage of the country and this constituency is being put at risk for false reasons, without adequate scrutiny and without any genuine justification. Please take whatever steps you can to question the Government and its Ministers on the matter, and to vote in a way that ensures the continued protection of the historic environment in the planning process. You may wish to join the All-Party Parliamentary Archaeology Group, which advocates on behalf of archaeology in Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Old    Chairman WARG



### **Meet the Secretary – Maureen O'Connor**

**'If you see daylight, go through the hole'.**



I came quite late to a love of archaeology after spending the first 20 odd years of my working life in Australia and South Africa initially in secretarial roles but later as a textile technologist and project manager. I was extremely privileged to be part of an innovative,

multi-disciplinary, in-house programme run by Tongaat Textiles in Natal during the early 1980s which cross trained shift supervisors in all areas of textile production – spinning, weaving, dyeing, finishing and quality control. I was one of a very few given the opportunity to undertake every training module and the only woman. In Apartheid era South Africa, it was amazing to work alongside and get to

know such a diverse group of people. This experience led indirectly to the establishment of the 1<sup>st</sup> Maidstone scout troop, one of the first mixed race troops in the country. Both my sons attended as cubs and I was honoured to be awarded the title of Lynx for my role as co-founder and secretary.

Relocating to Sydney in 1986 I joined Textile Industries Australia, who some might know of through their bedlinen brand, Sheridan (Australia's Great Indoors). Then in 1990 I returned to the UK with TIA as part of a team set up to establish an export market in Europe based in Tiverton, Devon; a town with a long textile tradition.

It was during this time I discovered my new passion, joining Somerset Archaeology, Natural History and History Society (SANHS) and completing an HND course in Archaeology and Heritage Management at Somerset College. Alongside this I found time to volunteer with the National Trust at Dunster Castle and learn the secrets of conservation cleaning (or dust relocation). Opportunities for hands on excavation came along through restoration work at Hestercombe House searching for garden features shown in Gertrude Jekyll's plans, Knightshayes Court with Tiverton Archaeology Society and Bignor Roman villa. In 2003 I moved to Portishead and soon joined the Clevedon & District Archaeological Society whose active community archaeology arm was regularly called upon by the North Somerset planning department to carry out watching briefs on infrastructure and building projects in those heady days for local groups before PPG. As well as the usual winter lecture and summer outings programmes, CDAS has a lovely tradition of an annual study tour and through these wonderfully well organised trips I have travelled all over the UK visiting amazing sites from prehistoric to Victorian industrial, often 3 or 4 in day. These are not relaxing

holidays! Over the years I acted as Treasurer and latterly as Secretary for CDAS as well as co-organiser for the Study Tours. In 2005 I commenced a 6 year part time Archaeology degree at the University of Bristol but regretfully due to my mother's failing health had to withdraw in 2008.

Since retirement and another move, to Hampshire this time, I have maintained my involvement with archaeology and indulge my preference for prehistory by regular trips – Orkney & Shetland, Carnac, and Malta most recently. I am now happily acting as Secretary for WARG and enjoying getting to know the local area and of course you lovely members.

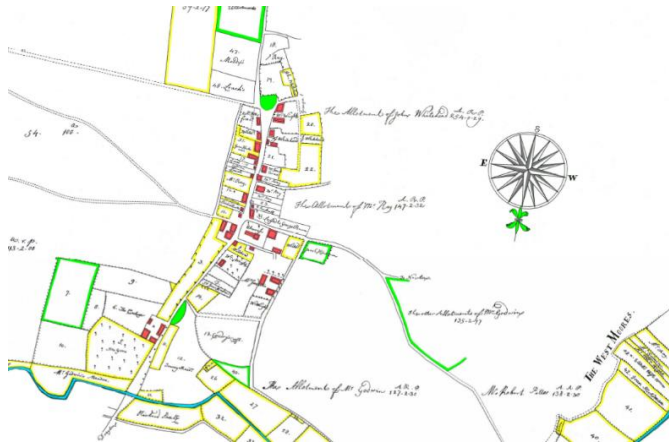


## **Excavations at Barton Stacey 2018 & 2019 – Andy King**

WARG, in conjunction with the Barton Stacey History Group, undertook excavations to the northwest of All Saints Church, Barton Stacey in the summers of 2018 and 2019 with the aim of locating the medieval manor house or evidence of the manorial complex.

### **Pre-excavation Research**

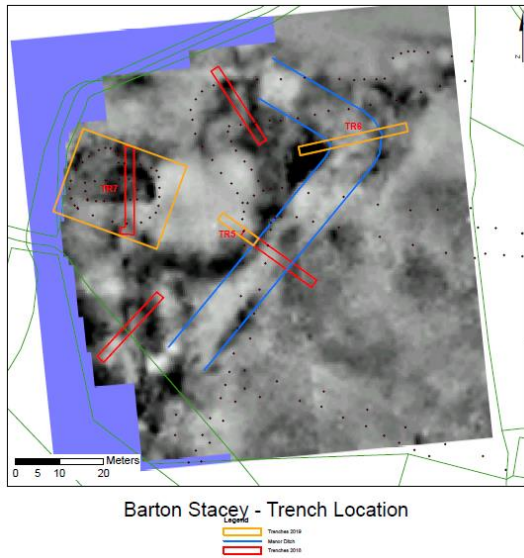
The History Group's researches show that Barton Stacey was in existence from at least the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and was a substantial settlement held by the King at the time of Domesday Book. In 1199 King John gave the manor to Rogo de Sacy for services to King Richard. Rogo's son Emery inherited the manor in 1206, and King John is known to have stayed in Barton Stacey on the 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> July 1207. When Emery died in 1253 the manor was divided between his two daughters, and the division is described in detail in subsequent inheritances. However, in later inquisitions there is a reference to a 'derelict manor', and by 1450 it is called 'the site of a manor'.



In attempting to locate the site of this manorial complex, three areas northwest of the church were considered and, on topographical grounds, that nearest the church was selected for more detailed investigation. The site chosen was a paddock which we know from cartographic sources to have been undeveloped since at least the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A resistivity survey was undertaken by the University of Winchester, which appeared to show promising signs of walls and other anomalies. In keeping with the community focus of the project, local children were encouraged to sift through the molehills in the field, and recovered a quantity of medieval pottery.

Armed with this information four evaluation trenches were opened in 2018, each 20m x 2m, guided by the geophysics.

**Fig. 2 Resistivity results and trench location**



Trenches 1 and 3 were sited on anomalies which appeared to represent walls, but these were found to be deceptive. The underlying geology is periglacial head, a solifluxion deposit cut by gravel-filled

paleochannels. Some of these appear to have been responsible for the wall-like signatures. However, trench 3 did produce a wide but shallow pit, the finds from which date to the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. Other evidence of pre-conquest activity came in the form of residual pottery including plain rimmed chalk-tempered cooking pots, and two sherds of vegetable tempered ware probably of 8<sup>th</sup> century date. A strap end decorated with a stylized zoomorphic design, dating from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries was also found in a later context.

*Fig. 3 Late Saxon zoomorphic strap end*



Trench 4 was located to investigate a rise in the ground level which it was thought might represent a boundary at the back of the burgage plots leading down from the main street.



Excavation demonstrated that the area had been levelled up, although no evidence for a revetment was found, and there were traces of ephemeral structures in the form of floor surfaces. Towards the western end of the trench was a ditch running north-south, which was lined with clay and large flints, and could be a boundary ditch for the manorial complex.

Trench 2 was placed across a prominent mound in the field, and provided tantalising evidence for a building in the form of flint foundations cut into a chalk mound. This became the main focus for the 2019 excavations.

### **2019 Excavations**

Trench 7 uncovered the whole of the mound investigated by trench 2 the previous year. The mound was found to be a substantial sub rectangular structure measuring 19m x 11m. It had a core of solidly packed large flint nodules covered by a layer of rammed chalk. Into the top of the flat-topped mound were cut foundations for a substantial building. Vestiges of flint walls remained above the foundations.

*Fig. 4 Chalk mound and flint building*





These works represent a considerable input of resources, for



what must have a building of some importance. Situated on top of its white chalk mound it would also have been an imposing sight. The mound and building are aligned directly east-west. These factors, together with the paucity of domestic or industrial refuse, suggest that this building was the manorial chapel.

*Fig. 5 Possible grave*

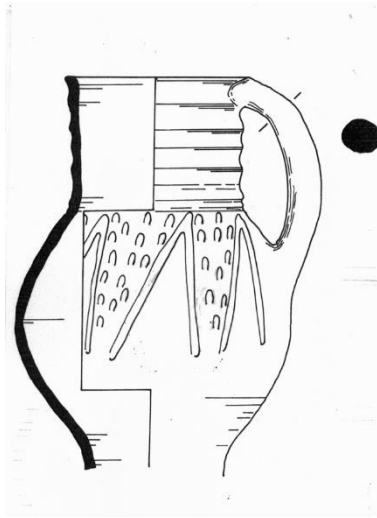
*cut at east end of building*

Weight is given to this interpretation by the discovery of a straight-sided rectangular pit measuring 3.4m x 0.9m x 1.0m deep towards the east end of the building, and itself aligned east-west. This is precisely where a significant burial would be located in a chapel building. If this is the case, the occupant would have been moved when the chapel went out of use, presumably to the parish church, although there is no evidence for this.

A chronological bracket for the building is provided by a layer of gravel which covered the late Saxon pit in trench 3, and underlay the mound. 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery was associated with the building's collapse or demolition. This puts it exactly within the time frame of the lost manor. Over

the entire site there was a complete lack of pottery dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and very little from the 15<sup>th</sup>.

*Fig. 6 Decorated fourteenth century jug*



Two further trenches were opened in 2019. Trench 6 was cut to the north of trench 4 to confirm the proposed line of the north-south ditch found in trench 4. The ditch was located and it produced a single sherd of medieval pottery, although it was much less substantial than anticipated and so its function remains open to question. Trench 5 was a

westward extension of trench 4 which located another ditch-like feature and also took in the edge of a large circular depression whose origins, date and purpose are unknown.

## Conclusions

One aspect of the project which was a huge success was the engagement of the local community. Many villagers came to dig or wash finds, and many more came to find out what had been revealed. The younger members of the community enjoyed sieving the spoil heap to look for 'treasures' that the archaeologists had missed.

If the interpretation of the building as the manorial chapel is correct, then the manor house itself cannot be far away. Church Farm House immediately to the north of the site dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and contains reused medieval masonry. It is not known whether the current house was built over the remains of an earlier building or just used stone robbed from elsewhere.

*Fig. 7 Some of the team with All Saints church in the background*



So, although the medieval manor house was not located, we believe the net is closing in. We do not know at this stage whether or not the landowners will give permission for further exploration in the future, but the results of these two seasons will certainly fuel further debate and hopefully future research.



### **The Beauworth Hoard - Techer Jones**

On 20<sup>th</sup> June 1833, four urchins were playing in a small pasture called The Old Litten at Beauworth. One of the boys noticed a piece of lead sticking out of a rut caused by a wagon wheel. He dug and uncovered an oblong lead box, about 13 x 9 inches. Winchester Museum Service now holds it. The museum's contemporary report says, "the box contained scarcely less than 12,000 coins. Those originally inspected were 6,500 but some thousands were dishonestly withheld." Another report says, "about 6,500 were examined by numismatists but, some thousands more, in

packets of various sizes, afterwards found their way to London”.

*‘Follis’ (Roman Imperial coins) of the emperor Diocletian Roman, AD280-309 From a hoard found in Beauworth, Hampshire. © Hampshire Cultural Trust*



The coins were mostly from the reign of William I (1066-1087) but a few were of William II and, significantly, several were of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066). The coins were all of fine silver alloy, were in mint uncirculated condition and some Edwardian coins had been cut into halves and quarters.

Who had hidden this hoard? Well some point the finger at Bishop Walkelin of Winchester. Walkelin was the first Norman Bishop of Winchester. He was consecrated 950 years ago in May 1070 and he died in 1098. It was Walkelin who initiated the construction of our present cathedral. Walkelin owned a manor at Beauworth (not necessarily a large house, perhaps only a farm owned by the Bishopric). He may have buried the hoard for altruistic reasons, rather than being motivated by greed.

On the death of William I, his son William II went to Winchester and inspected the royal treasury. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us that, “for his father’s soul he distributed [some of] these treasures: to some minsters 10 marks of gold, to some 6 marks, and into each shire was sent 100 pounds to be distributed to the poor”. The following year, the Abbot of Winchester died and was replaced by

Ralph of Flambard described in the Chronicle as “a man who exceeded all others in evil and who rifled the churches that had been entrusted to him of all their property”.

The time immediately after the death of William I was unsettled in England as William II had very quickly taken over the throne when logic says that it should perhaps have gone to his elder brother Robert, Duke of Normandy. The theory goes that Bishop Walkelin hid the bequest he had received to mark the death of William I, in order that neither Ralph, nor any other – in these troubled times - could get their hands on it. And the knowledge of its location died with Walkelin.

There are two certainties. One is that a good proportion of the hoard found its way to the good citizens of Beauworth. For example, there is a record of a Miss Elizabeth Grover born in 1816 and who lived all her life in the village. She told of giving away several coins to relatives. The second certainty – there are no longer urchins in Beauworth. So look behind your cupboards and under the floor boards- who knows how many of these coins may, even today, be lurking in Beauworth.



### **Going Potty and Falling Over – Kim Batten**

If you are expecting this to be a piece about the potential consequences of aging, then I’m afraid you are going to be disappointed. A few years ago I spent a year studying historic building conservation at Portsmouth, one of the results of which was I became more prone to tripping over in town and city streets. This was because instead of looking where I was going, I was admiring the facades and architectural details of the old buildings above the modern shop fronts at ground floor level. For several hundred years

up until recently, nearly all buildings were topped off by a much neglected architectural feature, their chimney pots. While many chimneys pots are fairly basic and utilitarian in design there are a huge number of different shapes and sizes which are based on either improved function, on aesthetic appearance, or a combination of both.

Before the invention of purpose-built chimney stacks, some early pottery structures (louvres or finials) were fitted to roofs, to speed the escape of smoke and fumes from open hearth fires inside medieval buildings. Modern replicas of these can be seen on Southampton's Medieval Merchant's House (photo 1). These were created during English Heritage's reconstruction during the 1970's, based on fragments found during archaeological excavations in the adjacent French Street area.

*Photo 1. Southampton Medieval Merchants house*



*Photo2.Salisbury(smoke cure)*

The earliest chimney pots on top of chimney stacks seemed to have appeared in this country in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Although during Tudor times, large ornate brickwork chimney stacks without pots were popular, such as those at Hampton Court, as ostentatious displays of wealth and status. While some of the more recent ones we see on our streets today are square in cross section, the earlier ones were generally circular tubes of clay produced on a wheel. The height was limited by the length of the potters arm, but



longer ones could be produced if two tubular sections were joined together while the clay was still wet.

*Photo 3. Oxford (ornamental beehives)*



*Photo 4. Winchester (mushroom tops)*

There aren't many books about chimney pots, although for a small number of people they can become an all-consuming interest. The Reverend Valentine Fletcher wrote a small book cataloguing the different types, and covering the history of chimney pot usage. He died in 1993 leaving a collection of over 200 chimney pots which had been arranged on his front lawn, to the Park Farm Museum in Milton Abbas. This museum has now disappeared and the collection has been passed on to Bursledon Brickworks.

Apart from Bursledon's Fletcher collection there doesn't seem to be a museum dedicated to chimney pots in England. Hampshire Cultural Trust have a few in their Bar End stores, and a small exhibition focused on Fareham pottery's products at Westbury Manor museum in Fareham. At Longport, in Stoke-on-Trent there is a shop called Cherished Chimneys, which has a stock of more than 2,500 reclaimed chimney pots, rescued from all over the country by owners Lance and Steph Bates.

Nowadays specialist suppliers like local company West Meon Pottery produce wide ranges of different designs. West Meon have made bespoke replacement pots for the National Trust, Historic Royal Palaces and many other historic buildings all over the UK.

*Photo 5. Westbury Manor Museum.*



*Photo 6. Fareham pots at Bar End store*

Some designs are characteristic of particular geographical areas, usually because they were produced by local potteries. Fareham was one of the centres for chimney pot production in the south of England, and many of the



*Photo7. Winchester (Fareham pots)*

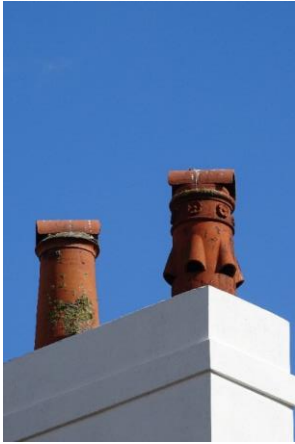
*Photo8. Romsey (copper pots)*



chimney pots you see in Winchester and Chichester are of the characteristic Fareham design decorated with a white slip band just below the top.



Wallingford is another area which seems to have a few distinctive local shapes, such as the ornamental pocket roll shown below.



*Photo 9. Wallingford      Photo 10 Southampton (smoke cure)*

*Photo 11. Venice (various designs)*



If you wander abroad, the range widens, though there is much greater use of ornamental brick, tiles and masonry

instead of the pottery chimney tops.

So next time you are out and about, take a few moments to look up above the roof tops and admire the range and design of the chimney pots in the streets around you, but be careful about tripping over. Take a look to see what sort of chimney pots you have on your own house.



*Photo 12. Lymington*



*Photo 13. Strawberry Hill*

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All photographs © Kim Batten



### Who do We Think He Was? - Janet Backhouse

Just outside the village of Cerne Abbas in Dorset is a figure cut into the chalk hillside. Local legend says it is a representation of the God Helit, another source writes that an alternative contender is the Roman god Hercules. Although it is similar to images of Hercules it does not show his lion pelt which is a feature of that Deity.



Although, to compound the mystery in the 1980s, a survey revealed anomalies that suggested he originally wore a cloak and stood over a disembodied head. Other suggestions are King Herla and the Devil.

There is long and wide speculation about the giant's age; could he be a fertility symbol from the Iron Age (800 BCE – 500 CE), when the region had provable settlements or is this depiction much younger? Our first documented evidence for the giant is in the 1694 Ecclesiastic records of St. Augustine's Abbey, where it is written about the costs of repairing the Giant, which needs to be done every 30 years, to prevent overgrowth. This also points to the fact, that such a chalk shape, if not actively maintained, would almost certainly disappear within a hundred years. However, there is another supportive record in the 17th Century, and archaeological research confirmed the plausibility of a much more recent origin.

A written reference to the giant is dated 1751 by the Rev. John Hutchings. In his 'Guide to Dorset'. He wrote to Dr

Lyttleton, the Bishop of Exeter, that there was a figure on the hillside of vast dimensions (he is 55 m. i.e. 180 feet tall) which, he had been told by locals, had been carved in 1539. In that year, the local monastery had been dissolved, and the figure was allegedly that of the wicked abbot, Tomas Corton, with the phallus representing his lustful ways, the club showing his reputation for taking vicious revenge, and his feet pointing away from the village to show that he had been driven out.

In 1764 William Stukely wrote that people in the area called the Giant "Helis". Yet another writer stated that up until the 6th century, the god Helis was worshipped. Helith and Helis may be bastardisations of an ancient version of the name for Hercules – Hetethkin. In the 1930s it was suggested that Helith could have been identical to Walter Map's 12th Century report of King Herla, who became a leader of the Wild Hunt, which in its turn could be connected to the French legend about Herlechin – the story of the army of the damned dead and their warring giant. Local legend says that a real giant was killed on the hill and that local people drew around the figure and marked him out on the hillside. One story goes, that a Denzil Holles, who had owned the land in the period 1654 - 1662, would have carved the Giant as a parody of Oliver Cromwell, representing mockery of his repression as the club and his Puritanism as the phallus. This would seem to have been a somewhat risky undertaking at the time. However, there does seem to exist circumstantial evidence for this period, supported by the fact that some other chalk shapes had been carved between the 15th and 17th Century in that region of England. A further suggestion is of his creation in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the third Earl of Shaftesbury as propaganda for King William III. (of Orange)

For a long period, the figure was allowed to become overgrown, but surprisingly in the allegedly prudish Victorian era, he appears to have been displayed in all his glory. It has been suggested that his significant reproductive anatomy is in fact the result of merging a smaller appendage with a representation of his navel during a re-cut by the Victorians!

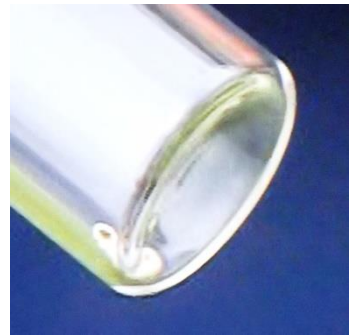
For obvious reasons many legends concern the Cerne giant's fertility powers. One such has it that childless couples who made love on a certain crucial part of his anatomy would soon be blessed with children. History neither documents the efficacy of this practice nor if these children grew up to be inordinately large. Also, young women wishing to keep their lovers faithful would walk around the hill figure three times, the rationale for that is not known and in recent years such indulgences have been discouraged! It must be noted that similar practices also relate to the nearby St. Augustine or St. Austin's Well, which is said to have similar miraculous properties. However, among related sciences today this is widely rejected. It seems too unlikely that the monks of the nearby abbey would have tolerated such a heathen symbol, although, if legend is based on rumour, perhaps Tomas Corton might have done so!

In 1920, the Pitt-Rivers family, of museum fame, gifted the giant to the National Trust which has now commissioned investigations to establish his age. OSL – optically stimulated luminescence has been used to date soil samples from the giant's elbows and feet. This determines when mineral grains in the soil were last exposed to sunlight, and will give a date range for the original cutting. Separate analysis by Mike Allen, Environmental archaeologist and pre-historian may have exploded the myth of a prehistoric symbol, as there is no evidence of Roman presence in the

soil. He has however, discovered the presence of microscopic fragments of snail shells in this soil under and within the chalking.

The snail shells, of the species *Cernuella virgata* are thought to have been imported from Europe in the 13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> century in packing straw.

***Cernuella virgata***, also known as *Helicella virgata*, common name, the "vineyard snail", is a species of small, air-breathing land snail, a pulmonate gastropod mollusc in the family Geomitridae, the hairy snails and their allies. This species of snail makes and uses love darts.



*Snail shells from  
Cerne Abbas giant*

As yet no specific date has been confirmed for the cutting of the giant, but it looks as if he is more likely to be Medieval than pre-historic.



## **Julia's Jottings**

### **The Earliest Known Greek Building Complex**

A complex of around 60 marble buildings dating back 4600 years has been uncovered on the tiny Greek island of Dhaskalio. These findings have transformed the experts' understanding of Bronze Age culture, and suggests that the Greeks were much more advanced organisationally, technically and politically than previously thought. It's estimated that between 7,000 and 10,000 tonnes of shining white marble were transported from one Aegean island to another to build the glittering complex which would have been visible in the sun from many miles away. The complex was built within about 100 years of the creation of Stonehenge, the first Egyptian pyramids, the Great cities of the Indus Valley and the first Mesopotamian kingdoms.

### **The Perils of the English Channel!**

Many people and much foreign matter have fallen prey to the vagaries of our Channel, but one of the latest to be recovered is a completely intact Fairey Barracuda Torpedo Bomber which crashed off Portsmouth in 1943 whilst on its test flight. Discovered by engineers surveying the seabed for an electricity cable between England and France, it is the only existing example of this plane, despite 2,500 of them being in service with the Fleet Air Arm over the years. Crashing at low speed in quite shallow water, it's in excellent condition and will be housed in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm Museum in Somerset.

### **A Fabulous Place to Visit**

Several of you will have visited the Orkneys, though perhaps not recently. Dick and I visited Mainland and Rousay several years ago and were blown away by the sheer

number of fantastic pre-historic sites – Skara Brae amongst them. Consisting of around 70 islands, this part of our nation is absolutely stunning, leaving one wondering whether Stonehenge and Avebury are actually all that wonderful. Well, yes of course they are, but if the Orkneys weren't so far away, I think they'd trump the 2 southern sites. Recently excavations at Westness on Rousay have revealed a high-status Norse drinking hall, dating to the 10c. The Orkneyinga Saga tells of this hall as being the home of Sigurd, the powerful 12c chieftain. It stands on the land of Skaill Farmstead, the Norse word meaning "hall", and it overlooks the sea. The substantial stone walls of the hall, about 5.5m wide and over 13m long, have stone benches down each side and finds include pottery, a bone spindle whorl, a fragment of a Norse bone comb and soapstone from Shetland. The excavation is allowing an unparalleled opportunity to investigate changing dietary traditions, as well as farming and fishing practices between the Norse period and the 19c.

This large group of islands, pawned to the Scottish crown in 1468 by Christian 1 of Denmark, still have many more goodies to offer up, I feel sure. A return visit may be on the cards.



## **Book Review - Steve Old**

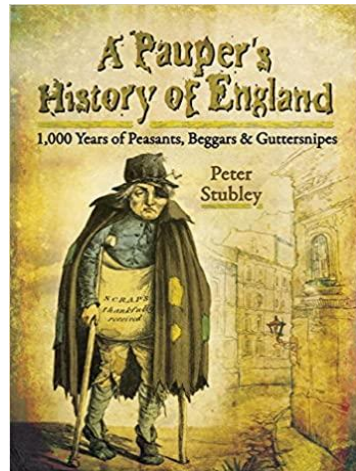
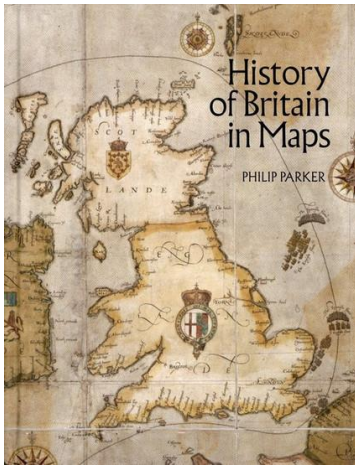
**History of Britain in Maps – Philip Parker Harper Collins  
2017 £25.00 (Publishers List Price) ISBN 978-0-00-797614-0**

As a one-time geographer and cartographer this book appealed to me and it did not disappoint. Illustrated throughout with key maps or extracts from key maps, it tells the story of not just Britain, but also the development of the mapmaker's craft as well.



It starts with a series of maps that take no account of scale or perspective and takes you through an evolution until we get to the modern-day OS maps that we know so well and the functional maps for the Underground/Metro systems and North Sea oil fields.

The maps are reproduced in stunning detail and the explanations of them, their use and importance are presented in a simple style that imparts the facts but without being over academic. For the illustrations alone this book is well worth a look, but if you are keen on history and have a visual learning bent then this book is right up your street.



## Book Review -Steve Old

**A Pauper's History of England – Peter Stubley Pen and Sword Books 2015 £19.99 (Publishers List Price) ISBN 178337611-2**

Most histories of England rely on the telling of the lives of the rich, famous and powerful. This is mostly due to the fact that records of these people's lives survive in the many public records, pipe rolls, tax returns and retelling of their

deeds. The person who works in the field, in the mill, in the factory, the person who has no money and does nothing to cause a record of his deeds to be recorded, slips under the radar.

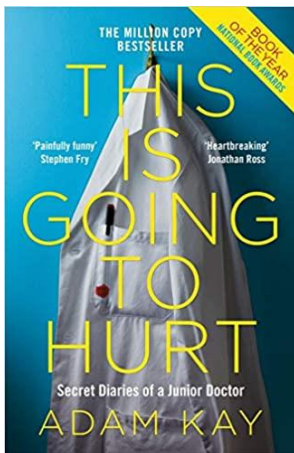
This book attempts to tell their story, how their lives panned out, how without their presence in the wider economy, that economy would not have functioned. From the early system of serfdom and through the Black Death to the workhouse, it tells of what life was like for these people.

If you ever wondered what a guttersnipe was, who were the black poor or what a bridewell was then you will find the answer here. It is not a comprehensive study and is far from academic but it brings the story of England's poor to life in a style that I found very entertaining, well worth looking out if you can.

## **Book Review – Janet Backhouse**

**This is Going to Hurt – Secret Diaries of a Junior Doctor 2017 Adam Kay pub.picador isbn 978-15098-5861-3 Janet Backhouse**

**National Book Awards, Book of the Year 2018**



Whilst air travel and technology has made this year an unprecedented challenge to our health and social care, the challenges faced by care staff in all settings, and all responsibilities, has not changed a great deal. The volume of patients may have increased, but the inadequate calculation of staff per patient

continues to fall short of the real time face to face care needed, and this has been exacerbated by staff having to work outside of their areas of expertise. Many have fallen prey to the virus, and many valuable souls have been lost whilst simply doing their jobs.

The actual physical and emotional challenges for those staff have not changed a great deal over decades. Infection control has always been the fundamental principle of health care, it has just increased in volume and the enormity of the challenge. This bittersweet book recounts those historical challenges with a great deal of humour and underlying sadness.

Adam Kay comes from a family of doctors but you may know him better as a comedian and writer. You may not have heard of his medical career, which culminated in the post of senior registrar – one step before consultant, which is when he encountered the straw that finally ‘broke the Camel’s back’. Doctors and nurses are well known for their ‘gallows humour’ and he is one of the numerous medical personnel lost to comedy. In recommending this book I can do no better than to quote the dust jacket which, in my experience is ‘spot on’.

*‘Welcome to the ninety-seven hour weeks. Welcome to the life and death decisions. Welcome to the constant tsunami of bodily fluids. Welcome to earning less than the hospital parking meter. Wave goodbye to your friends and relationships... Welcome to the life of a junior doctor.....’*

Welcome to a good read.



## Walks and Talks Programme

We hope to be able to recommence our monthly talks in October. We shall let you know as soon as we are able if this will be possible.

**12<sup>th</sup> October** AGM and PhD candidate talks Tom Watson "Winchester's Anglo-Saxon Saints"; John Merriman "The impact of the Black Death (1348-49) on the clergy of the Winchester Diocese"

**9<sup>th</sup> November** Don Bryan, BA (Arch) - Director HADS – 60 years in Archaeology

**14<sup>th</sup> December** Marjoleine Butler, Trustee - CBA and Roland Smith, Chair - CBA Wessex - CBA at 75 and CBA Wessex at 60 – Celebrating Archaeology for All, past, present and future



## **WARG Committee 2020**

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