



# Newsletter

## Autumn 2020

News 槓 Meetings 槓 Reports 槓 Diary  
Dates 槓 Travellers' Tales

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## Editorial

As I write this we continue to live through an extraordinary and important period of history. At times of pestilence and quarantine, people have always put stylus to wax, quill to parchment, pen to paper and fingers to keyboard. This makes me think that WARG should be contributing to the pandemic archive with a record of the experiences of its members. Whether a Covid 19 victim, family member, essential worker or 'just' surviving a disrupted life, can you contribute your experience? It could be authored or anonymous and added to the WARG website to contribute to the heritage of future generations. Sharing experiences can also be beneficial.

Looking to the future, at WARG's Zoomittee in September, we considered the unconscionable situation of proceeding to 2021 without our talks and walks. Hopefully, by next Summer we shall be able to walk and picnic again, but what until then? The obvious way forward seems to be to follow the trend and put our talks online. This may initially seem to be a decision which will disenfranchise members who do not have, or do not wish or be able, to use the technology, or, like me have unstable broadband connections, but not so. Our amanuenses are back on board and will scribe the talks for inclusion in the newsletter, so no-one will miss out.

As a positive it would save regular attendees and those who do not enjoy travelling in the cold and dark, from making the trip to Winchester. It would also save the use of fossil fuels in getting there. Another benefit, it gives the capacity for more members to be able to 'attend' and when restrictions are lifted, to bring a guest to their TV rooms. Also positive is the fact that by using Zoom, the talks can be recorded by individuals for revisiting or catching up if you

could not be there. Maybe more interesting than daytime TV. (The record button is at the bottom of the screen.)

Yet another positive, we save the cost of the room and hopefully spend your membership subscriptions on other benefits for the group. To that end we have purchased a Zoom licence for WARG use.

I am struggling to find a negative, which I guess is that we shall not be meeting face to face, with the additional benefit of having a chat, but that will return when we can keep you all safe. A short general chat on Zoom is possible between joining the meeting and the start of the talk when you can put names to faces. Do feel free to chat on email at [wargnew@gamil.com](mailto:wargnew@gamil.com). It is open 24/7.

Recently we have been able to welcome new members to the group. You are seeing a new type of WARG but the people have not changed and are as friendly as ever. Hopefully you will meet them next year on the dig or at events. Until then, please contact me at [wargnews@gmail.com](mailto:wargnews@gmail.com), or Stuart or Andy for membership information. You will receive flyers by email but if you prefer to have a hard copy of the newsletter, please let me know. All contributions from members to the newsletter are very welcome.

Hands, Face, Space – please stay safe, and remember not everyone can hear you and may need to lip read. This is how I deal with that.



Sadly, this is not actually me.



*Jane.*

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3/2

## Chairman's report

### **Autumn 2020**

As this year draws to an end, I look back on what a strange year it has been, so far! This time last year we were busy making plans for our "Big Dig", had our summer 2020 walks and visits planned, and all our speakers for 2020 booked and raring to go. None of us thought that none of this would come to fruition, that we would have time on our hands, that our gardens would look so good and become so productive!

As this year draws to an end, with no real sight of an end to the pandemic, we have turned our thoughts to harnessing new and emerging technologies to keep our members amused and informed as well as falling back on our newsletter and producing an additional edition. We want to give our members value for money so are always looking for ways to achieve this, watch this space.

On a personal note, I have started teaching my Archaeology class at Eastleigh College again, but this term we are doing the lessons online using Microsoft "Teams", a whole new way of teaching Archaeology but one that has so far proved to be very successful. It is strange though, not getting the feedback from an audience sitting right in front of you, and handling technical glitches. The one advantage of running the course online is the fact you don't have to travel to Eastleigh College, find a parking space and then travel all the way home. This has removed the "too far" barrier, so if anyone wants to join, please contact Eastleigh College. Also, the books I have at the printers, all five of them, should be available by November, in time for Christmas, and a sixth book has just been completed and is going through the rest and check stage. When the time comes to publish these

books and make them available, I will send out a flyer. The books have all been created as non-profit making.

Well, here's to a better 2021!

'Before I signoff, I am very sad to inform you of the death of Chris James on September 29th. Chris passed away peacefully at home as he had wished. The WARG committee would like to send sincere condolences to Jo, and to Jo and Chris's family.'

As we go to press, we have also heard of the very recent death of Elizabeth Thorn on November 5th. The WARG committee also wish to send their sincere condolence to Peter and to Peter and Elizabeth's family.

**Steve Old Chair WARG**



**A Short History of WARG – I am grateful to Dick Selwood for sharing his extensive records of WARG. This is necessarily a 'potted version' but it is hoped there will be a more detailed version to celebrate WARG's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

Winchester is probably one of the most archaeologically explored and recorded Cities in Europe. While archaeology has been carried out in the City since the nineteenth century, the high-water mark was the 1960s, when the Winchester Excavations Committee, under Martin Biddle, carried out huge excavations in the centre of the City

In 1961 a site near the Cathedral was to be developed as a hotel (now the Wessex) and Martin Biddle was invited to lead an excavation. The site was so rich that Martin persuaded the City it should support a programme of funded excavations, and in 1962 the Winchester Excavations Committee was founded.

As the major digs of the Winchester Excavations Committee came to a close, Winchester City Council appointed a full-time Rescue Archaeologist and, at the instigation of Martin Biddle, a Winchester Archaeological Rescue Group (WARG) was created.

Why rescue archaeology? It is only relatively recently that archaeological remains have been offered any protection when a site is being developed – for a building, a road or whatever. Before the current regime, unless it was a scheduled monument, if a developer didn't want to bother with archaeology, they could destroy it with impunity. Even here in Winchester there were developments that did just that: for example, the Friary site in St Cross Road was badly damaged in the 1960s, with the full extent of the damage only discovered in 2008/9.

Some developers were prepared to allow “rescue archaeology” – usually a limited dig. Winchester appointed a rescue archaeologist, Dr Peter Wade-Martins, in March 1972. However, he had no official support, not even an office. WARG's role, at least initially, was to be the entire support system for rescue archaeology. A disused chocolate factory in Little Minster Street (previously a temperance billiard hall) was the headquarters, and WARG volunteers had to rewire, redecorate and even find ways of heating the building, before the Rescue Archaeologist could move in.

The initial membership form emphasised that the group needed active participants and gave a list of the skills that were thought useful, including flying (with access to a plane), computer programming and machinery maintenance. (WARG now has a member who is a qualified pilot with access to a plane. Chris is also a great photographer as you will have seen.)

The first meeting of the group was on 31st of July 1972 and it agreed that as well as supporting the archaeology, there would be a newsletter and a programme of lectures, discussions and visits. The first visit was to Danebury, on 23rd of August, followed just over three weeks later by a visit to the Saxon village excavation at Chalton. The talks

**WINCHESTER RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP**

I am interested in taking an active part as a member of this voluntary group

NAME..... Age (if under 11).....  
 ADDRESS..... TELEPHONE.....  
 Home.....  
 Office.....

Please tick any of the following fields in which you have professional or amateur experience:

Surveying	Laboratory work	Filing
Cartography	Botany	Copy typing
Graphics & design	Geology	Store-keeping
Technical drawing	Metallurgy	Electrical wiring
Architectural drawing	Zoology	Machine maintenance
Quantity surveying	Computer programmer	Decorating
Photography	Punch card operator	Carpentry and joinery
Scientific photography	Secretarial work	Sign writing

Flying (with access to plane).....  
 Any other special skill or knowledge of possible relevance.....

Have you any previous archaeological experience.....

It is not necessary to have any special skill or experience to join. The ability to take an active part is all that is needed. But we do want to find out at once what special skills there are in the group, so that we get the best possible results from our work.

programme started on Monday 4th September 1972, and ran each month through to February. There was even a special extra-mural course created by the University of Southampton of “10 lectures and 5 field events”.

Subscriptions were set at 50p (students and under 18s 20p). Digging and processing, the small group of dedicated WARG members spent weekends and evenings on rescue sites. Over the next 15 years there were over 200 reports in ‘Find’ the WARG newsletter, ranging from the long programme at Victoria Road (which ran from 1972 to 1976) to short sampling exercises, field-walking and even a graveyard survey. The WARG working party with – what is



now Hampshire Cultural Trust - sorted the human remains from Victoria Road, as a large project in 2017.

Communication Archaeology is not just digging and processing: as important is recording and communicating the results. From the beginning WARG produced a newsletter. This covered a wide range of things, from detailed archaeological reports, through to reports of visits and even an occasional crossword. Producing a newsletter, in the days of Roneo machines which seemed determined to put ink everywhere but in the right place, could be a saga in itself. (No change there, my PC frequently takes it into its processor to reorganise my copy – Ed)

The 1980s and 1990s were times of change for archaeology in Britain and Winchester. There was recognition that much valuable information was being lost and in 1990 the government issued PPG 16 – guidelines that gave local authorities the powers to require developers to carry out archaeological investigations before building. Sadly, this is now being undermined by new legislation.

Growth of professional archaeology, from a single archaeologist supported by amateurs, Winchester developed a strong professional team of archaeologists, based in Hyde House, with a display area, meeting room, a dedicated “pot shed” for processing and ample storage. The City took over responsibility for publishing the newsletter in 1988, with WARG material as a section within the newsletter and later as an insert.

The Brooks - In 1987/8 a large area in the centre of Winchester was excavated before a major shopping centre was built. It found evidence of occupation from Roman times, with significant medieval material, including large merchant’s houses. One of the largest city centre excavations in Britain, it still only dug a quarter of the site, with the

archaeology on the rest of the site being totally destroyed to build the underground car park. The site had public viewing areas and attracted large numbers of visitors. Many WARG members were active in both the digging and the finds processing, a lot of which was carried out on site

#### **WARG at work**

While in the 1970s and 1980s WCC was very supportive of archaeology, in the changing climate of the 21st century



policies also changed. The City made the field unit redundant in 2004, and encouraged senior archaeology staff to take early retirement. The community archaeology programme was discontinued and the dedicated facilities in Hyde were later closed.

Over this period WARG's role became less central. While members took part in digs and in finds processing, it was as individuals, and the events programme was one of just talks and visits. In 2004/5 the committee of WARG took a long hard look at the future and, while maintaining the acronym, to reflect the original *raison d'être*, the committee decided to widen its remit to history and extended the lecture programme to reflect this, as The Society for Winchester Archaeology and Local History.

With the decrease in resources by the City unit, WARG restarted working parties in the artefact archive. It undertook finds processing for commercial digs and, with support from Dick Whinney, then of the City's staff, began

a programme of field walking. In 2006 it resumed active archaeology, with the excavation of a Roman site, and then in 2007 began a four-year project at St Cross, followed by a project at St Elizabeth's Chantry part of Winchester College, followed by a two-year dig at Warnford looking for Belmont House.

WARG's Logo is a reproduction of the first finds at St Cross in 2007. A fragment of encaustic floor tile, made by William Tyler of Otterbourne in the late fourteenth century. Complete versions of this tile are in St Cross Chapel and in the Cathedral. The excavation at St Elizabeth's College also found tile fragments from William Tyler. He had supplied tiles to Winchester College and many St Elizabeth's tiles were removed and used in the College when St. Elizabeth's was demolished, including examples of the WARG logo tile: a neat continuity.



## **Snippets of News About Recent discoveries - Janet Backhouse**

There is so much going on in archaeological discovery at present it has been like trying to choose the favourite chocolate from the selection box.

### **A year for the Dinosaurophiles**

On August 12<sup>th</sup> BBC South Today announced the discovery of what is possibly the World's newest Dinosaur, a new species of theropod, discovered on the Isle of Wight

This species which was related to Tyrannosaurus Rex – the King of the Tyrant Lizards, and includes the Velociraptors and Allosaurs, walked the Earth around 115 million years ago. It was around 4m (about 13 feet) long, sharp in tooth and claw and predacious.

Four skeletal chunks were found by Paul Farrell, in 2019, in marine sediment, whilst kicking up the sand when waiting for his daughter to finish her dance class. The chunks have been assessed by Dinosaur Isle and also the University of Southampton, and has been named Vectaerovenator inopinatus.



Dinosaurs are generally named descriptively and this name relates to this creature's distinctive anatomy, having its bones invaded by lung tissue, which enhanced its ability to absorb oxygen.

<http://www.dinosaurisle.com/newhomepage.aspx>

Photo ©Science news2020 Ref: BBC South Today online 12/08/2020

## Another bit of Bling

In the summer edition of WARG news we told you about the amazing Bloodstone brooch found in Northamptonshire. While this new find may not be as visually stunning as the Bloodstone, it is equally astounding in both archaeological and decorative value.



Photo ©Current Archaeology2020

Discovered by a metal detectorist near Wakefield in West Yorkshire, this little gem is Roman – from the period 43-410CE, and is thought to be unique as no other examples are known to exist.

It is made of a copper alloy decorated with red and yellow enamel with a Triskelion pattern on the head (a motif consisting of a triple spiral exhibiting rotational symmetry) and similar patterns running down the body. It measures approx. 58mm x 15mm. The brooch is missing its pin but portions of the assembly are still in place.

The decoration is similar to that of Iron Age objects also found near Wakefield and dating to around 200BCE – 200CE. It could be extrapolated that Iron Age fashion was also attractive to the Romans. Truly, a little gem.

Ref: Current Archaeology 'Finds Tray' Issue 368 November 2020

### **Another thing the Romans did for us.**

Fraser Hunter – Iron Age and Roman Curator, National Museum Scotland, writes about an amazing find in the stores of the Museum of Scotland. He 'dug this out' during preparations for moving to a new location. The WARG working party will know very well what surprises come to light when opening old boxes at Bar End store

Part of a Roman funerary urn, this was discovered at Camelon just North of the Forth valley and the Antonine Wall, in 1849, during the construction of a railway line. It formed part of an extensive find from a Roman fort. It is made of a honey-coloured stone which was labelled as Alabaster. It measures 365mm in diameter and approx. 170mm in height, and was catalogued as '*A very fine alabaster*

urn, containing a quantity of calcinated bones.' Sadly, it was broken in the unearthing. Also, sadly, in 1900 it was dismissed as presenting 'no features which suggest Roman workmanship', consigning it to obscurity.

Not to be deterred, Fraser started researching the vase's provenance, and, with the help of Simona Perna of Royal Holloway College, identified the tradition of such urns in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries CE. The vase is not actually alabaster (calcium sulphate), but Travertine (calcium carbonate) probably sourced in Egypt and fashioned in Rome. Originally this urn would probably have had four components, a pedestal, bowl, lid and finial.

**The urn's bowl 365mm in diameter**



Historically, there is support for the urn being in Britain, as Emperor Septimius Severus brought his funerary urn to

Britain with him. (A prescient chap). In the 1000-man transit fort, the Commander would have been of high social status and a frequent rider, probably carrying all he needed for this and the afterlife.

There is no evidence to suggest there was a tomb or monument and no inscription has been detected on the urn, but it is thought that the funeral would have been sufficed to memorialize the individual. Fraser writes an elegant memorial *'It serves as a reminder of the powerful people who passed through the Roman frontier in the course of their career, some of whom stayed longer than they planned'*

The Urn's Base  
Photographs ©  
National  
Museum of  
Scotland 2020

You can see  
the urn now  
deservedly  
displayed in  
the National  
Museum of  
Scotland  
(Chambers Street, Edinburgh)



LEFT The urn's base, 170mm in diameter. The bowl once fastened on to the short band on top, which protected the stone in this location, giving a better idea of its original golden appearance than the other water-worn surfaces.

Below is a similar urn from Via Laurentia near Rome. The Camelon urn may have looked very much like this.



Ref: Fraser Hunter: *Current Archaeology* 368 2020 p 5



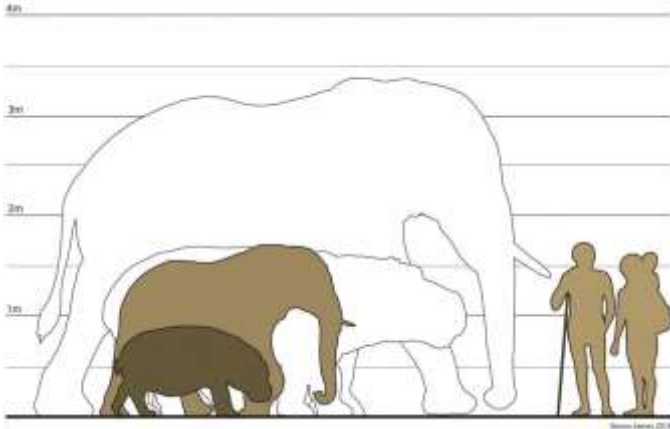
## Cyprus's Pygmy Hippos - Kim Batten

Over 4 million tourists visit the island of Cyprus every year, mainly for holidays involving sun and sea. A much smaller number is drawn by the attractions of the archaeological sites. The larger and more popular ones, such as those at Paphos, Curium and Amathus, all of which were the principal cities of classical era city states, are well presented for visitors. Despite this, visitor numbers are very low compared with those visiting high profile sites in Italy and Greece. An extremely low number of visitors are drawn by an interest in the archaeology related to the pygmy hippos which used to populate the island. However, interest is growing, to the extent that a convention was held in the Aya Napa Municipal museum last November to discuss ongoing research and excavations related to these animals. This was timed to coincide with the start of an excavation season by the Department of Antiquities to uncover more pygmy hippo skeletal material from a cave in the nearby Aya Napa Sculptural Park.

During the Pleistocene Ice Age there were rapid changes in temperature and shorelines in the Mediterranean, during which some mammals swam to or were isolated on islands where they evolved into new forms. Along with a smaller population of elephants in Cyprus, large size was an evolutionary disadvantage for hippos in an environment with no predators and a limited food supply, leading to a process of evolutionary dwarfism. A similar, but slightly larger species of pygmy hippo evolved on Crete during the same period.



Relative size of pygmy hippo (from Akrotiri Environmental Education Centre)



Their existence was unknown till the early 1900s when Dorothea Bates, a young pioneering female fossil hunter working for the Natural History Museum and the Royal Society, uncovered skeletal remains in 2 caves to the north of Nicosia, which she identified as those of pygmy hippopotami. She later went on to discover the similar species in Crete. Since then, there have been a number of excavations at different sites which uncovered fossil and subfossil pygmy hippo remains at 32 different sites in Cyprus. The most high profile of these was carried out by Alan Simmons in the 1980s at a cave known as Akrotiri Aetokremos, within the British Sovereign Base Area. This excavation became widely discussed, not just because it uncovered over a quarter of a million fragments of pygmy hippo bone (representing at least 220 individuals), but also because of the theories proposed by Simmons based on his controversial interpretation of the evidence from the site.

The earliest human presence on Cyprus is based on findings of chipped stone artefacts from the late Palaeolithic era, around 8500BC. It was around this time that the endemic pygmy hippos and elephants became extinct.



Bone layer at Ayia Napa (from Filippidi)

Although traditional theory believed that this was due to changes in climatic conditions at the end of the Pleistocene, with warmer and drier conditions, Simmons believed that it was human intervention that wiped these animals out. Many aspects of the archaeological evidence remain unexplained, but most peer analysis has been highly critical of Simmons theories, despite the many papers he has written to defend his proposition against criticism.

Many of the aspects of the depositions remain unexplained. All sites with significant depositions are in caves. Only two individual pygmy hippo bone fragments have been found at different sites of human habitation, and even Simmons accepts that these do not present evidence of coexistence if humans and hippos, but are likely to be 'souvenirs' found

by Neolithic collectors. Aetokremos was probably the largest deposition but is characteristic of the other sites,

Pygmy hippo jaw in Limassol Museum (author)



although it is the only one containing any human artefacts (chipped stone). The bones were found in a compact layer of bones about 20 inches thick. Around 15 % of the bones show blackening, thought to be from burning. There were no signs of butchering or cutmarks. None of the bones were articulated and there was no indication of sorting or arrangement. Although

there were bones from some other animals, this was primarily a deposition of pygmy hippo bones. At Ayia Napa, 96.6% of the bones were from pygmy hippos.

Simmons proposed that Aetokremos was a site where animals had been herded and butchered. Others think that it was a natural shelter used by the animals, which may have become trapped there, or that these were assemblages of bones collected from a wider area, by humans or other animals. Blackening on the bones could well have been caused by human instigated fires at a later date, as stratigraphy showed that excavations down into the bone layer had taken place.

Other studies have shown that the blackening is from iron or manganese oxides. For at least the last 500 years, local people used to search for and dig up these bones in the belief

that they were the relics from saints, the bones of dragons or of people from shipwrecks. In the Kyrenia area it was common practice to grind hippo bones to powder and use this to treat disease, and this is believed to have caused the destruction of many bones from the caves in that area.

While academic interest in Cyprus's pigmy hippos has continued to grow, there is little to engage the public, either residents or visitors. The new Thalassa Municipal Museum at Ayia Napa has a reconstructed skeleton on display, but there is little to draw one's attention to the history or evolution of the species, or to put it into context. Limassol's archaeological museum has one small case in a corner, containing a pigmy hippopotamus skull, jaw and a few other fragments, in a display that is unchanged since the 1980's. Definitely not enough to tempt the tourists away from their beach holidays.

**References.**

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**Filippidi, A., et al (2013) Taphonomical observations on the pygmy hippopotamus site in Aghia Napa, Cyprus.**

**Hadjisterkotis, E., Keshen, R (2005) Misconceptions about the fossil bones of the large mammals of Cyprus from prehistoric times until today.**

**Shindler, K. (2005) Discovering Dorothea.**

**Simmons, A., Reese, D.S. (1993) Hippo Hunters of Akrotiri.**



## **From Pigmy Hippos to Tiny Dinosaurs - Janet Backhouse**

When we think of Dinosaurs, I guess we all think BIG, however, this idea has been exploded by a newly described species around 237 million years old, which suggests they evolved from extremely small ancestors. The fossil reptile, named *Kongonaphon kely*, or 'tiny bug slayer,' would have stood just 10cms (approx. 4 ins) tall.

The description and analysis of this fossil and its relatives, published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, may help explain the origins of flight in pterosaurs, the presence of "fuzz" on the skin of both pterosaurs and dinosaurs, and other questions about these charismatic creatures. Pterosaurs lived among the dinosaurs and became extinct around the same time, but they were not dinosaurs. Rather, pterosaurs were flying reptiles. Christian Kammerer, a research curator in palaeontology at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences says *"There's a general perception of dinosaurs as being giants,..... but this new animal is very close to the divergence of dinosaurs and pterosaurs, and it's shockingly small."*

Both species belong to the group Ornithodira but their origins are not well documented. The fossils of *Kongonaphon* were discovered in 1998 in Madagascar by a team of researchers, in a collaborative project led by American Museum of Natural History, in collaboration with scientists and students at the University of Antananarivo, the University of California-Santa Barbara's Department of Earth Science and an American Museum of Natural History research associate.

This fossil site has produced some amazing finds, and it took some time to research these bones and discover their

origin. Kongonaphon isn't the first small animal known near the root of the Ornithodiran family tree, but previously, such specimens were thought to be isolated exceptions.

This "miniaturization" indicates that the dinosaur and pterosaur lineages originated from extremely small ancestors. For instance, wear on the teeth of Kongonaphon suggests it ate insects. A shift to insectivory, which is associated with small body size, may have helped early Ornithodirans survive by occupying a niche different from their mostly meat-eating contemporaneous relatives.

The work also suggests that fuzzy skin coverings ranging from simple filaments to feathers, may have originated for the regulation of body temperature, as heat retention in small bodies is difficult. The mid-late Triassic period was a time of climatic extremes, inferred to have sharp shifts in temperature between hot days and cold nights.



© Frank  
Ippolitto/AMNH  
2020

Ref: [American Museum of Natural History](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/07/200706152659.htm). In ScienceDaily, 6 July2020.  
[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/07/200706152659.htm](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/07/200706152659.htm)>.online 14/10/2020



## Do you want to go on a Ghost hunt?

Yes, ghosts do exist, although perhaps not in the conventionally understood form. In archaeology they have a specific meaning. Tracey Matthews, our Archaeologist who represents Winchester City Council on committee, has

suggested WARG might like to assist with gathering new archive material about Ghost signs.

These are the often-fading advertisements or business signs one sees on old buildings, which are rapidly fading into history. They may have been preserved for posterity or just forgotten or ignored.

You may have seen this in Parchment Street which looks as if it has been reused or the Nestle Milk advert in North Walls



© Sir-lose-a-lot 2008



© Stephen Richards 2012

This does not take a lot of effort, just keeping eyes open as we move around and using camera or phone to snap an image. It would be nice to add to the Archive of Hampshire signs, but there is a website for the entire world. Can WARG members find any more in Winchester or the surrounding area? [www.ghostsigns.co.uk](http://www.ghostsigns.co.uk)



## Finds for thought

In *Current Archaeology* 368 - *Upfront*, Joanna Close-Brooks of Milford on Sea posits a very plausible hypothesis. Based on an article by David Breeze (CA365) regarding Roman pandemics and the possible evidence for such in Britain. She

suggests that the 'unusual number of coin hoards' of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century which were buried but not retrieved, could be explained by there having been a pandemic which compromised or prevented retrieval. An interesting proposition.



**Living with the White Horse – Hillforts of the Ridgeway. An Armchair Archaeology presentation given by Gary Lock. – Edwina Cole**

'Our name, Hidden History Travel, reflects the hidden nature of the past, and how travel can help us uncover its meanings, mysteries and insights. We combine travel, archaeology, history and culture to create wonderful holidays and worthwhile experiences.' This talk is linked to one of their tours.

An acknowledged expert on the Iron Age, Gary Lock taught at Oxford University and has used a range of techniques to further his research. He was the co-principal investigator for the project that produced the Online Hillforts Atlas which maps all 4,147 hillforts in Britain and Ireland. This is a completely free resource, available to all, and makes really good archaeology accessible to everybody.

The White Horse at Uffington is the only chalk figure that has been dated to the pre-historic period, and Professor Lock's talk was about the people who used the hillforts. They are the most obvious legacy of the Iron Age, but they are not all on hills and they weren't all forts! In fact, there is very little evidence for them being attacked.

This talk is about 3 forts that are near together, Uffington Castle, Alfred's Castle and Segsbury Camp.



Although they are close, they are actually different and are linked by the Ridgeway. This path goes way back before the Iron Age. There are 2 main things to think about:

1. Continuity, where a site is used over and over again and
2. Hillforts as a class of site, exploring the similarities and differences.

Some of these sites were used from 1000 BCE – 5<sup>th</sup> Cent. CE. During this time the people didn't have writing, but they did have a concept of their own history related to places in the landscape, described by Professor Lock as historical mnemonics.

**White Horse Hill** is a complex of monuments, which include

The Horse overlooking the Manger; Round barrows; Linear ditch; The Ridgeway; Western enclosure; Hillfort; Long barrow



**Uffington  
White  
Horse ©  
National  
Trust 2020**

The White Horse needs to be scoured or cleaned every 30 years so it remains clear. It is a very special bit of landscape overlooking the Manger.

There was very little evidence of anything going on in the interior of the hillfort. People weren't living there; it was visited for short periods of time. It was regarded as a very special sacred place in Roman times, when Roman people

probably asked why it was there, just like we do. The Romans had a big interest in Uffington because they respected the religious elements there. They drained the Vale of the White Horse which used to be very wet.

**Segsbury Camp** was a much bigger hillfort, in fact the biggest hillfort in Oxfordshire. Inside is a whole series of house/pit groups dated from 6<sup>th</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BCE.

A foundation gully of a round house was found, but the round house was demolished before the pits were dug. There is also evidence of use of a lot of sheep on the site. The ramparts are different to Uffington.

They are 4 metres in a V shape, which would have taken a huge amount of time and effort.



© archaeology.org

It was a communal place with periodic re-use. There was expansion in the 4<sup>th</sup> century with a focus on sheep farming, but it was abandoned by the end of the Iron Age, possibly due to economic change when arable farming became more important. This was unlike Uffington where the re-use was based on continuing, but Segsbury Camp changing, religious practices.

**Alfred's Castle** has an interesting chronology. Nothing to do with Alfred whatsoever! Early Bronze Age round barrows; Linear ditches (LBA); Early Middle Iron Age enclosures; A Romano-British farmstead; Minimal late Saxon activity.

© Alfred's Castle archaeology.org

It was smaller, and occupied permanently, fulfilling a different social role to Segsbury and Uffington. It was re-used by the Romano-British.



The category of hillfort is questioned through detail of excavation. There may be similarities on the surface, but functional and chronological differences are of more interest.

The horse was a special animal in the Iron Age. Images of them appear on coins and metal work. The Marlborough Bucket is a fine example, showing leaping horses. The area of the Berkshire Downs is still very 'horsey', and Waylands Smithy was where horses would be left to be shod.

There is very little evidence for storage of water in the hill forts. People must have collected it, but they used much less than we do. There is supporting evidence for hill forts not being used in warfare. They may have been there, making a statement about how important the place was. The complicated entrances may have been developed to emphasize that people were entering a special place, rather like entering a holy site.

The first written reference to the White Horse is in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. There was a big fuss when the county borders were moved and Berkshire lost its White Horse to Oxfordshire!!



## **The Red Lion – A lesser known Elizabethan theatre – Janet Backhouse**

While the majority of theatres are still dark, we do hear of projects to revive live entertainment, but this theatre has been dark for around 500 years.

In January 2019, confirmed in June 2020, Archaeology South East together with UCL, working on the redevelopment site in Whitechapel - another example of the importance of not interfering with the pre-development planning law – discovered a rectangular timber structure. This site is thought to be where the Red Lion Inn was located and is cross referenced to the Carpenters' Company records and those of the Kings Bench, both related to court cases referring to purchase of the land and construction of a theatre. Other references locate it 'on the eastern edge of Whitechapel where it meets the western edge of Stepney' and actors being paid to 'perform at Mile End in August 1501'. All within the location area. One can speculate that the number of 'Red Lion' establishments in the area suggests they may have been named for the theatre. Beer cellars, bottles and tankards have also been discovered on the site.

The Red Lion is thought to be the first purpose-built theatre, which had been constructed in the garden of a farmhouse in around 1567, although its rural location seems to have contributed to its early demise. Diversity in farming seems to have been as important in the first Elizabethan era as in the second.

It was a single gallery multi sided theatre, the stage measuring 40 by 30ft (the Globe is thought to have been 43 by 27ft) It was the first of four built by John Brayne, the brother in law of James Burbage of the Lord Chamberlain's

Men acting company. Purpose built Elizabethan theatres may have been the first since Roman times.

The Red Lion - Whitechapel 1567; The Theatre - Shoreditch 1576;

The Curtain - Shoreditch 1577; The Swan – Southwark – 1596;

The Rose - South wark (which stages the first of William Shakespeare’s plays) - 1587

The Globe - Southwark 1599.



© Hugh Macrae  
Richmond 2016  
157 – 1642 online  
17/10/2020

If you are wondering why the South Bank became a popular place for theatres it

was to avoid the strict regulations of London at the time. The ‘City of London’ did not approve of theatre because public performance was thought to be a breeding ground for the plague and for unseemly behaviour. This does seem a little hypocritical as a large parcel of land in Southwark was leased by the Bishop of Winchester, the remains of whose palace can still be seen in link Street, near the reconstructed Goal called ‘The Clink’, and this area was notorious for the number of whorehouses. The ‘whores’ being known a Winchester Geese as they were licensed, by the Bishopric to work within the liberty of The Clink. There was a dedicated unconsecrated grave yard for the prostitutes and ‘single

women' (possibly a euphemism) at Cross Bones Graveyard in Southwark. The area also hosted activities such as bear and bull baiting which was forbidden within the city.

### Remains of the Bishop's Palace in Clink Street. 2013



Plaque on the gates, of Crossbones Graveyard.

Funded by

Southwark Council online 10/2020



### Meow - Discovery of an Elderly Peruvian Pussy Cat - Janet Backhouse

This delightful depiction of a lounging cat, which resembles a drawing by a 21<sup>st</sup> century child, has recently been uncovered at the Unesco World Heritage site in the Nazca desert of Peru. This area is famous for its line drawings, of animals, insects and people, which are best viewed via satellite, and are known as Geoglyphs. This one is approx. 120 ft (37m) in length.

The Nazca lines cover about 600 sq. m of desert around 250 miles from the Peruvian capital Lima, and were first recorded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 2019 researchers uncovered 140 geoglyphs and it is surmised that there are more to be found.



©Smithsonian Museum 2020

These 'line' drawings are thought to have been created by uncovering subsurface coloured earth. The cat, dated around 200 years old, had remained hidden on a steep slope which was subject to erosion. It was barely visible and was uncovered during the construction of a path to a planned viewing station. It has now been restored which took about a week. This particular drawing is thought to pre-date the Nazca drawings which were created around 200-700 CE and is from the Paracas era 500 BCE-200CE. This is extrapolated from the designs on preserved textiles of that era.

Initially studied from the ground in 1926, study progressed to aerial photograph and subsequently to satellite photography. Nazca experts Paul Kosok and Maria Reiche argued that the lines fulfilled "astronomical and calendrical purposes," although current thought is that they were related to religious symbols for fertility and rainfall, and that they may have been for multiple purposes, possibly partly as religious sites and partly navigational aids.

Sadly, human activity both by design and accident has damaged or destroyed some of these lines. Further research

into the purpose of the lines can be found at [http://www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Nazca\\_Lines](http://www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Nazca_Lines)

**Strictly speaking this is one of Julia's Jottings, but it surely deserves a 'hole' of its own.**



## **Eek! - Julia Sandison**

We all know that humans have changed a great deal over the millennia but it's always wonderful to know that in many respects we're still the same as our ancient ancestors. Our knowledge of the Roman way of life has much to thank Vindolanda for, and a recent discovery shows a lovely playful side to these people. A lifelike mouse made out of a piece of leather and about life size has been in a box of thousands of leather offcuts at the Vindolanda Museum since 1993 and at some time in its past was squashed very flat. Apparently so lifelike as to appear real in a darkened room, this little treasure was found with all the other leather scraps in the house of the commanding officer and dates to around 105-130.



And just why has it been found now? Well, Covid 19 has given archaeologists rather a lot of time on their hands! If

you would like to read more about Julia's 'Mouse' you can see what Vindolanda staff have been doing during lockdown at <https://www.vindolanda.com/news/roman-leather-mouse-discovered> Photograph ©Vindolanda Charitable Trust online 14/10/2020





## Julia's Jottings

### **A Coffee and a Smoke!**

We've known for a long time that underwater archaeology is tricky, especially in a busy body of water like the Mediterranean. However modern remote and robotic methods have enabled work to be carried out in the Levantine Basin and one of the most important finds has been a 17th c Ottoman merchant ship – believed to have sunk about 1630 - with its holds full of Chinese porcelain, painted jugs from Italy and peppercorns from India. Hidden deep in the lowest hold was a store of clay pipes, hidden no doubt because tobacco smoking attracted severe penalties in the Ottoman Empire at the time. The Chinese porcelain collection consisted of around 360 cups.

Coffee and smoking seem to go together, it would appear, though the “barbarian Orient” was obviously well ahead of the West as the first coffee house didn't open in London until 1652, at least a century after the Levant.

### **A Great Find and a Great Loss**

One of my favourite holidays was when I visited Pompeii and Herculaneum a few years ago. Led by an archaeological team, we were able to visit the workshops of Pompeii to see the conservators at work. However now the world has a “second” Pompeii – a site to the south of Lyon in France has revealed that this area was engulfed by 2 huge fires, one in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> c and the other a few years later. Like the more famous site, these have left furniture, artefacts, shops, public spaces etc covered with layers of ash and have saved many mosaics too. However, the site has now been built over with an apartment complex and a car park, so I'm afraid you'll need to go to Pompeii for your fix of Roman life in the Empire.

## **An Amazing Discovery**

Wonderful though it is to find gold and silver artefacts from the past, to me by far the more interesting is something like string from around 50,000 years ago! A 6mm long 3-ply fragment made of bark was found in the Abri du Maras region of France. Neanderthals, who died out around 40,000 years ago, were extremely capable: they controlled fire, lived in shelters, buried their dead in graves, were skilled at hunting large animals, and knew how to make string out of the inner bark of a conifer tree. This little wonder was used to hold the handle to a 60mm long stone tool. Wonderful!

## **An Unexpected Find**

Whilst repairing a landslip on the sloping sandstone embankment of the railway line near Guildford, workers have uncovered a small cave made up of several smaller sections ranging from 0.3m to 0.7m high. The cave walls are adorned with markings and crosses with niches where it appears candles may have been placed. Mostly destroyed by the cutting through for the railway in the 1840s, the cave is part of a hill once known as Drakehill – the Hill of the Dragon – and it's believed that this was a shrine long before the building of a church at the top of the hill in the 13th c.

Not an easy site to interpret, I suspect.

## **Another Hampshire Hoard.**

A new housing development at Portchester has uncovered a collection of rare Bronze Age ornaments which have been donated to the Hampshire Cultural Trust. Amongst the collection were a rare type of clothing pin, a pair of arm rings, part of an axe and a knife and spear. Dated by the British Museum to the Middle Bronze Age, Ross Turle –

curator at HCT – says that the clothing pin is a first for Hampshire and shows evidence of much usage. Apparently, this object is particular to southern England and may be purely of native origin.

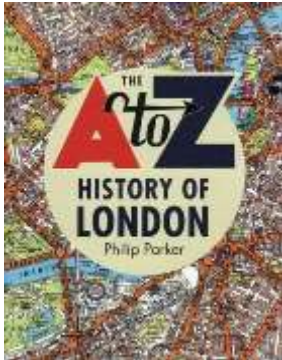
It's to be hoped that these items will be on display when life returns to normal and the museums can open again!



## **Book Reviews**

**The A to Z History of London Philip Parker ISBN 978-0-00-835176-2 Collins 2019 rrp £25.00 (online for about £10.00) - Steve Old**

This colourful hardback book looks at the history of London but in a new and refreshing way, using the maps produced by the Geographers A-Z Map Company Ltd, maps of the



capital, which it has produced over the years since the first one was published in 1936 by Phyllis Pearsall. It shows how London was affected by key changes, infrastructure developments, slum clearance and World War. It shows not just a progression of changes using a timeline, it also investigates themes, and shows how these were

an influence to the development of London, including the Olympic Games in 2012, Theatreland, music venues and so on. This is not a detailed history, but it is a fascinating twist on the normal histories of London, and as an ex-Geographer and Cartographer I found this approach extremely interesting. It is illustrated throughout with both colour and black and white maps and illustrations and has chapter guides formatted like parts of the London Underground

map. If you want something a bit “off piste” to entertain you this winter, I think this book may well fit the bill.

**Parsons and Prawns: the story of the first 180 years of the railway at Micheldever Station, Hampshire. - Peter L Clarke. Diver Publications, 2020. Contact Sue Bell on [suebell0906@gmail.com](mailto:suebell0906@gmail.com) for all information. - Julia Sandison**

This small book is not just for those of us who love trains but can be enjoyed by historians as well. It tells of the need for a station near Micheldever and why it was some distance from the village. Packed with information – both local and national – it has some good laughs in it as well, and is a welcome addition at this time of cultural paucity. Many illustrations add to its charm and at a modest £10 to include



UK pop it's a worthwhile buy for oneself or as a small Christmas gift.

Micheldever Station  
1905 © HCT 2020

**1000 years of Annoying the French – Stephen Clarke pub. Corgi 20011 ISBN 978-0-552-77574-8 – Janet Backhouse**

This 654-page Sunday Times bestseller really deserves the accolade. It sounds a long read but flows along with ease and wit. If you ever enjoyed ‘1066 and All that’, this is a grown up and more accurate version of a thousand years of history, giving an alternative perspective to Cross Channel and transatlantic encounters with our European

neighbours. Having read this, I can understand any reluctance all might have to concede points in the Brexit negotiations.

Prendre Madame Guillotine par exemple. When P.G. Wodehouse said *'There is only one cure for grey hair. It was invented by a Frenchman. It is called the guillotine'*, he was wrong. It wasn't even invented by Docteur Joseph-Ignace Guillotin, they even spelt his name wrongly. Joseph –Ignace was a Deputy and he only suggested this method of execution during the Assemblé, as an alternative to the brutality of hanging. He very nearly experienced the actualité of the method when he was imprisoned for aiding an Aristocrat. The first type of this killing machine is recorded as a method of execution in 1286 – in Halifax, - honestly – the very same home of the Mint with the Hole and Quality Street chocolates. In 1577, such execution was described as a community event, when, on market days, everyone would be invited to take hold of the rope restraining the blade pin. It is even recorded that if an animal was the subject of the commission of a crime, the rope would be tied to the animal who would then carry out the execution. Quid pro quo for the slaughter house maybe. This and many other fascinating events explode generally held perceptions of Anglo –French history. So, were we ever invaded by the French – emphatically not – William the Bastard (The 1<sup>st</sup> of England) was a Norman not a French man? Born in the lovely town of Falaise in Normandy he would have been furious to have been called French.

There you have it. Two millennia of myth and legend set on its head in a humorous read, and organized so that you can dip into various areas of our many mutual disagreements.

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**Walks and Talks Programme We are back – a little different but just as interesting.**

If you do not use or have access to Zoom – worry not, all talks will be scribed by our talented amanuenses and published in the subsequent newsletter – so no one will miss out.

Please see attached /enclosed talks summary.

*Please don't forget to mute your microphone and turn off your video when the talk starts.*

**Monday, 9 November**

'From Cricket to Cookery: A Regimental Archive for all Occasions' by Heather Needham, Principal Archivist, Hampshire Archives and Local Studies

**Monday, 14 December**

'The CBA at 75, CBA Wessex at 60' by Roland Smith, Chairman, CBA Wessex

**Monday, 11 January**

'60 Years in Archaeology' by Don Bryan, BA(Arch), Director HADS

**Monday 8 February**

**Crick Buildings of England and Wales** by Dr. Nat Alcock

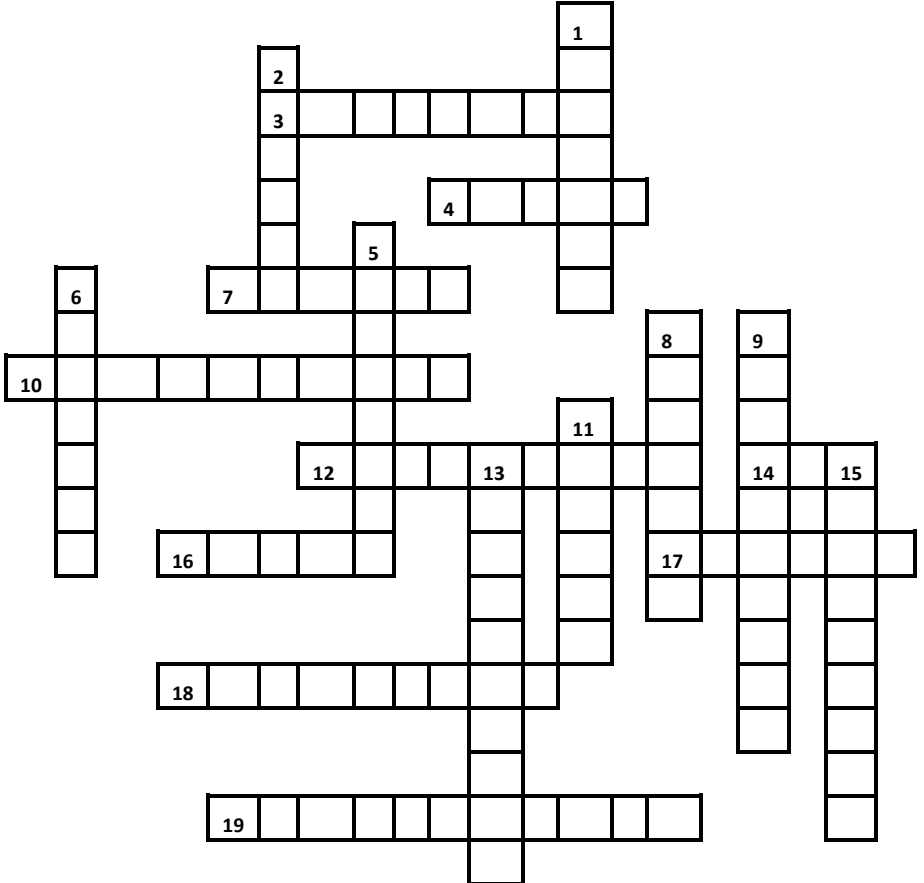
**Future talks are in the pipeline and will be announced by flyer.**



And finally, to exercise those 'little grey cells'

Puzzling with Seneca – Answers in the next edition

### WARG Crossword 1



Across

- 3. St. Cross is a \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Hyde is one of these
- 7. There is a statue of this King
- 10. King Alfred's college became one of these
- 12. Order of monks that had a property in Winchester
- 14. Hampshire Emblem
- 16. The \_\_\_\_\_ Hall is where the round table hangs
- 17. English car brand/Religious order
- 19. Digging up the past

Down

- 1. St. Elizabeth's \_\_\_\_\_ was on the water meadows
- 2. A small church
- 5. A name for a thing you dig up
- 6. Winchester had both an old and a new one of these
- 8. Surname of the founder of Winchester College
- 9. The time before history
- 11. Head of Winchester Cathedral
- 13. Another word for digging
- 15. A large public building on Broadway

WARG Wordsearch 1

V A G K B N S B C X C Q C I R  
M K V E E S Q A C G Q P A D E  
M E G H O N R D L G J I T T T  
A O C R N M L E P A H C H C S  
T T C G E M F A W O V Q E F N  
I T W L E T A G T S E W D R I  
S L I I P Y M B L I C G R I M  
U T P M N I R X B P P A A A B  
E D Y H X C L O J E L S L R L  
C A S T L E H G I F Y T O S I  
C O L L E G E E R R H A E H S  
M G U S K K Y E S I P B L X E  
K A D Z D O D F H T M L O X H  
O O R P C V M N H Q E E D H C  
V N W O Y C E O D Y Z R M M W

- |           |          |            |
|-----------|----------|------------|
| ABBAY     | Chesil   | Minster    |
| ALFRED    | College  | Oram       |
| BEGOT     | Dole     | Pilgrim    |
| CARMELITE | Friars   | Priory     |
| CASTLE    | Hospital | St Cross   |
| CATHEDRAL | Hyde     | Table      |
| Chapel    | Itchen   | Westgate   |
|           |          | Winchester |





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And finally, finally – Lisa Heckman’s picture on ‘LinkedIn’ really made me smile.

