



# Newsletter

## SUMMER 2019

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**T**he WARG Newsletter provides reports on the activities of WARG, the society for Winchester archaeology and local history. It also carries other information of interest to the WARG membership.

For more information on WARG, and to join, call 07867 935583, e-mail [membership@warg.org.uk](mailto:membership@warg.org.uk) or visit [www.warg.org.uk](http://www.warg.org.uk)

## Chairman's notes

Welcome to the Summer 2019 newsletter. The year so far has been a busy one and to come we have our Big Dig and our summer programme of visits and events. It has been difficult for your new chairman and new secretary to fill the spaces left by Julia and Dick.

### **Join the committee**

I know I have asked previously but we do need to have some more members joining the main committee, the commitment is to attend three committee meetings a year and the AGM and to voice your views on any emails that are sent out to the committee members by the officers. We need to expand the breadth of information so we can represent the views of as many members as possible. We did try and set up a "Members Focus Group" but so far, we have had no takers.

We are also in need of people to write articles and book reviews for the newsletter, so if you have been somewhere interesting, read a book that either grabbed you or left you cold, as long as it is history or archaeology, jot down a few words and send it in!

### **New Exhibitions**

This year so far, we have seen the opening of the new exhibition at Winchester Cathedral and the re-opening of the medieval gallery at Winchester Museum, both events promoting the story of Winchester and hopefully increasing the tourist numbers and therefore the area's trade.

### **Big dig**

This year's "Big Dig" is returning to Barton Stacey in order to try and answer the questions raised in last year's dig, the dig will run from Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August to Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August with time either side for set up and take down.

### **Outreach**

WARG has also been extending its outreach and community work with a pilot scheme, in partnership with St Swithun's School, to encourage more young people to look at taking the study of archaeology further, a separate report on this scheme is included within this newsletter.

There are several events this year that WARG representatives will be attending with our stand, for which we will need volunteers! We have been invited to Salisbury Festival of Archaeology again on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>

July 2019, we are an integral part of the initial CBA Winchester Festival of Archaeology on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2019, for which Dick Selwood has done great work, and we are an integral part of St Cross Hospital's Heritage Open Day on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019. We are also in attendance at The St Cross Summer Fete and the St Cross Michaelmas fair.

I hope you all have a great summer

*Steve Old  
Chairman*



## Winchester Museum: The Gallery of a Thousand Years

The launch of this revamped gallery at the Winchester Museum was attended by myself and several other members of WARG along with representatives of other interested organisations.

The newly refurbished medieval gallery at the City Museum has been renamed The Gallery of a Thousand Years. Enriched with archaeological finds from the last 20 years and animated with new digital interpretation, it tells the captivating stories of the people that lived in Winchester, from the departure of the Roman legions to the beginning of the Tudor dynasty.

The main speaker of the evening was Professor Martin Biddle. Martin told the audience of the results of his latest re-examination of the finds from Winchester, this showed, he said, that there is enough evidence to prove that Winchester was a key site, commercially, religiously and administratively in the period after the Romans left and the establishment of the Saxon city.

Another speaker was our own, and Hyde900 representative, David Spurling who introduced the Hyde Abbey arch in its new permanent location.

The gallery has an expanded number of finds on display that tell the story of medieval Winchester and this is enhanced by an interactive digital display that has digital people from Winchester's history telling their story. The new displays and interactivity have brought this part of the museum up to date and is sure to attract visitors, both young and old.

*Steve Old*

## Kings and Scribes

The new exhibition at Winchester Cathedral is just stunning. I won't go into detail, but hope just to whet your appetite and encourage you to visit it.

There are three areas. On the ground floor of the south transept is an area dedicated mainly to the magnificent Winchester bible, with three volumes open under glass. Two touch screens allow you to explore sections, zooming in on illustrations and a video shows the production process, from calf skin to layering gold leaf onto images.

Upstairs, past the Morley Library is a mezzanine floor with material on the life of the pre-reformation priory, drawn from the pipe rolls – the accounting records of the priory.



*One volume of the Winchester Bible*

The climax is the two galleries at triforium level. One is built round a timeline of the cathedral's development and its relationship with the origins of the English nation. It includes masonry and other artefacts, early mortuary chests, which were later enclosed by the ones we can see today on the screens

around the choir, models and a set of reproductions of the female bones (Queen Emma, wife of Ethelred and Cnut?) found in the mixed bones when the chests were examined.

The second gallery is about the physical cathedral and its stones. After the great screen was destroyed in the English civil war, its exquisite carved stones were used in different building projects. Later work has uncovered many of these and they are beautifully displayed, along with other artefacts – not forgetting records of William Walker. There is material on the cathedral website, but it does not even begin to capture the essence of the exhibition. It is open during normal cathedral opening times and is included in your entrance fee. I can only urge you to set aside a couple of hours to go.

*Dick Selwood*

## The Round Mounds Project: June Lloyd Lecture: 2019

The experiences of Jim Leary when excavating Silbury Hill – a manmade prehistoric mound near Avebury, sparked his interest in the nearby smaller mound (18 metres high) at Marlborough College.

Enquiries showed that there was no record of any excavation but that the mound was popularly believed to be medieval. The college trustees enthusiastically supported the idea of drilling cores into the mound to try and identify datable material which could be used to establish the date of its construction. Despite this



*Marlborough College Mound*

project costing much more than envisaged, due to the difficulties of accessing the site, it went ahead. The cores contained charcoal which radiocarbon dating showed to be from c.2400 BC, exactly the same date as Silbury Hill. This date was a very significant one in the prehistoric era, marking the end of the Neolithic period, the advent of Beaker burials and the dawn of metalworking in the UK.

His work on these two sites was further highlighted by another discovery during his more recent work done on the immense Neolithic Henge at Marden in the Vale of Pewsey between 2014 and 2017. In the course of background research, it was noted that a map of the site from 1724 showed another mound which was no longer in evidence. Historical investigation showed that in 1807 two antiquarian investigators, Richard Colt Hoare and William Cunnington had undertaken an excavation of the mound. They had dug a shaft into the mound which collapsed, nearly burying them. It measured 15 metres in height but no artefacts or burial traces were found. In a subsequent visit in 1818, Cunnington found that the mound had vanished, apparently removed by a local farmer.

In the course of the modern excavation Jim Leary put a section across the site of the mound discovering a shallow spit of soil some 15 cm. in depth, a remnant of the mound. This yielded some dateable material (articulated pig legbone) which produced a radiocarbon date of 2450 BC.

This coincidence of three manmade mounds in a relatively small area of Wiltshire, all dating from the late Neolithic and all located at low lying sites near the sources of chalk-fed rivers, naturally posed the question how many other such monuments were there in the country?

Lacking support from his University for research into an answer, he turned to the Leverhulme Trust who were also intrigued by this topic and who agreed to fund a project to look at other mounds in England. Given a grant of £264K, the next challenge was to select the mounds to scrutinise. There were c.1000 scheduled ancient monuments which could fall into the scope of the proposed study. It was concluded that a sample of twenty mounds would provide a reasonable number.

Selection of the specific sites was a two-part process. First to choose those which had a good chance of being prehistoric, were at least 6 metres in height, lay in promising topography and had some relationship to known prehistoric monuments. This produced a short list of 50 candidates spread around England. These then were inspected visually to select the final twenty. Each of the twenty sites was accurately surveyed, a process that was not simply mapping the terrain but interpreting and recording the area. Cores were then drilled at each location to look for dating evidence.

The talk discussed several of particular interest. At Hamstead Marshall in Berkshire, three mounds were located close together. Two were examined in detail, the third being viewed as little more than an enclosure. One of these was dated to the period 1168 to 1265, a radiocarbon date supported by pottery found in the drill cores.



*Drilling as core*

(Intriguingly it was found to lie on top of a large hollow, probably a chalk solution cavity, into which it might one day collapse.) The other adjacent mound gave an earlier date of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. (Both sites had associations with William Marshall, “The Greatest Knight” whose exploits made him a medieval legend cf. The remarkable Life of William Marshal, Thomas Asbridge, 2015).

A rather later date was given to the mound at Lewes in Sussex.



Located near the coast on the River Ouse, it was dated to the medieval/post medieval transition, 1446 to 1633 and the evidence pointed to its origin as a garden mound, i.e. an ornamental structure built as part of a large formal garden.

A further site, “seriously unloved”, is located in the middle of the town of Slough. For many years it was the site of a “salt ceremony” where pupils from nearby Eton college and other people of the locality would process and sell salt to raise money. Increasing rowdiness at this gathering led to the event being suppressed. Once more, the date was unexpected and again was reinforced by the unexpected recovery of pottery from the cores. This mound is Saxon, dating from 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. Comparisons were made with the rich royal burial at Taplow not far away. The site needs protecting and further investigation is warranted to see if it contains a similar burial.



*Skipsea*

Summarising, of the twenty sites, seventeen gave good dating evidence but none of them proved to be Neolithic. Most were Norman, dating from the early 11<sup>th</sup> century.

The lecture concluded with discussion of one of the sites examined, located in Skipsea in East Yorkshire. The results here were such that it is planned to extend the scope and period of work into the future. The prime site examined was a 13-metre-high mound dating from the middle of the Iron Age. In that period (unlike the preceding Bronze Age) it is very unusual in England to find burials under a mound. This tradition is much more common in Continental Europe, particularly Austria and Switzerland.

Apart from the mound, the area of Holderness around Skipsea has a host of features which have generated the interest in further exploration. The area is very flat and contains remains of post-glacial lakes which have produced much well-preserved wooden artefactual material. Along with sites such as Starr Carr, not far away, they promise to reveal much more data about the Mesolithic era and form the basis of Jim Leary’s prehistoric archaeology work for some years to come.

*Steve Taylor*



## Leptis Magna, Cyrene and other Roman sites in Libya.

In March, Professor Tony King from Winchester University came to speak about research work carried out by the University in Libya in the year 2000.

Covering several sites, his talk was to be a whistle-stop tour of the area, with a bit of history and emphasis on later Roman times.

He began by showing a map of Libya. It is a very big territory with a vast interior that was largely unoccupied in ancient times. A more recent map showed who rules what! These days it is a state of controlled anarchy with some protection for archaeological sites given by local people. The current advice from the Foreign Office is not to go there. The museums and sites are closed. Sabratha is/was controlled by the Islamic State and there was insufficient policing to control theft. Readers might be interested to check out the “Ancient Near East Today” website for more information.

We then looked at a number of maps that went some way to explaining the chronology.

- Dynasty 26 Egypt. Greek colonies started.
- 480BC Persian Empire
- 323BC Alexander’s Empire
- 145BC Rome established
- There was a distinct divide between East and West.
- AD 14 Huge Roman Empire
- AD 365 Massive earthquake and Sabratha and Leptis under water.
- AD 406 Roman Empire was divided East/West. The dividing line went through Cyrenia.
- The Vandal Invasion
- AD 562 Eastern Roman Empire. Persian Empire
- AD 650 Byzantine Empire. Arab Caliphate.

Professor King then looked in more detail at specific sites.

### **Cyrene**

Cyrene was an ancient Greek colony in present day Libya near Shahhat. It was the oldest and most important of the 5 Greek cities in the region. It was founded in 631BC and was given to Rome in 96BC.

It was the capital of the Roman province, but was badly damaged in the Jewish Revolt. In AD 116 Hadrian rebuilt it, but it declined in the 4<sup>th</sup> century after the earthquake in AD 365.

It is a vast site, and the Acropolis hasn't been properly excavated, although the Italians undertook some excavation, and it's in a good state of preservation with a bit of restoration. The Temple of Zeus was a Greek Temple that was adapted for worship when taken over by Rome. There is a cult statue of Zeus there. The Agora/Forum is the monumental heart of the Greek town. The Greek language and culture remained, whilst additional temples were built when Rome took over. There is more than one gymnasium and some wealthy houses, notably the House of Jason Magnus built in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. There are a number of tombs featuring faceless sculptures, which represent the goddess Persephone or the Soul.



*Cyrene (Public Domain)*

### **Sabratha**

Sabratha was the western-most of the three cities of ancient Tripolis, located near the modern town of Sabratha, west of Tripoli in Libya. Both the Italians and the British have investigated it. It is in a good state of preservation. Founded as a Punic settlement by 500BC it was incorporated into the Roman Empire by the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. The Basilica, Forum, several temples and bathhouses can be seen. The Punic influence remained...it doesn't look Roman. The Theatre dates from the late 2<sup>nd</sup>/early 3<sup>rd</sup> century and has been reconstructed by the Italians.



*Sabratha theatre (duimdog CC BY-SA 2.0)*

### **Leptis Magna (Lepcis Magna).**

Both spellings of the name of this city are acceptable, and it was known by other names in antiquity. It was the largest city and capital of Tripolitania in Western Libya. It was originally Punic and became

a municipium in AD 747 and a colonia in AD 109. It was the home city of Septimus Severus who granted it exemption from taxes.

The long distance Roman road from Carthage runs through it. It was founded in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, but greatly expanded under Severus. It was abandoned in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD.

The ruins are within present-day Khoms, Libya, 81 miles east of Tripoli. They are among the best-preserved Roman sites in the Mediterranean. The old Forum shows that the local culture was not suppressed.



*Severan Basilica. Leptis Magna (Public domain)*

The embellishment of the town by Severus was to enhance his own reputation. The Monumental Arch has been largely reconstructed, but it was originally built in AD 202-204, up to the standards found in Rome. The Severan Forum has arches, which were a new development in architecture. This Forum and the Basilica were later converted for Christian worship. There are significant harbour works and the amphitheatre and circus are right on the coast and in a wonderful state of preservation.

The hunting baths are also in a good state. The amphitheatres and passion for games can still be seen at El Djem Thysdrus (just outside Libya). They were built early in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Zliten Villa (near Leptis Magna) has mosaics of wonderful quality, especially the Four Seasons Mosaic. Another villa with exceptional Nilotic mosaics is the Villa of the Nile built in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

## **Inland**

Inland there were lots of farms... a vast number. In Ghirza, Libya, they were farming the desert and at Wadi Buzra one can see Roman walls, dams and fields.

The Justinianic Reconquest of AD 533-4 cost £100,000 in gold and resulted in the huge decline in the number of farms. Instead, fortified farms were built (gsur). The port of Apollonia took over from Cyrenia and the Palace of the Dux became impressive with more than 100 rooms. It was built in the 5<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. Churches were also

built in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, but were later abandoned.

It was fascinating to hear about these ruins. Some in the audience had been fortunate enough to visit Libya before the current situation made this impossible. Those of us who still have it on our to-do list must wait a bit longer!

*Edwina Cole*



## St Swithun's School Archaeology Conference 2019

Earlier this year WARG were approached by St Swithun's School to see if we could help them as they had several pupils who had expressed an interest in taking the study of Archaeology further, possibly to degree and beyond. Initially we offered a trial group membership so they could attend our talks and, if available, take part in our Big Dig and this was taken up. Their initial aim was to tap our wealth of knowledge and experience so we could tell the pupils (and the staff) what was really involved in the study of archaeology.

Looking at the diversity within our membership and immediately on the committee, I could see that we could be in a position to offer something a bit more substantial, so I looked at the possibility of offering mentoring as well as informative talks specifically aimed at encouraging the study of archaeology but doing so in terms of the real world. WARG has a good track record over the years in encouraging young people in their studies, with several former members now with Masters Degrees etc.

In March, a meeting was arranged between myself and Dr Elizabeth MacIntosh of St Swithun's School where we discussed what other help we could offer. Out of this came the idea of a conference to be held at St Swithun's where we would supply speakers who could talk about different aspects of archaeology and the road to studying this subject further.

The committee was consulted and myself and two other members, David Ashby (University of Winchester) and Maisie Marshall (Pre-Construct Archaeology) agreed to attend and pass on their



*St Swithun's School*

knowledge and experience. After some discussion it was agreed to hold the conference on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June. David was to talk about the science and technology of archaeology, Maisie was to talk about getting into archaeology and her experiences working for a professional archaeology company and I was to give an introduction to

archaeology and the level of work expected in its study.

The day came and we all met up at St Swithun's School at 13.00 for lunch and to prepare the allocated rooms. We were introduced to the girls and some of the school tutors and had a short introductory talk from Dr Elizabeth MacIntosh before going to our rooms to start our talks. There were three groups of girls and we had 45-minute slots to do our talks before they all moved round.

The talks went well and the girls were very engaged, especially with the finds handling. The feedback we had both on the day and in discussions after have been very positive. The aim now is to build on this for next year when other schools in the Winchester area will be invited to attend a slightly expanded conference, possibly with the direct input of the University of Winchester and other local commercial organisations.

*Steve Old*



## Three small churches

This spring Julia, cats and I stayed in a wonderful cottage near Porlock in the Exmoor National Park. It was up a country track, close but out of site of a working farm, with views across Porlock Bay and surrounded by sheep and very young lambs. It was close to the farm where Coleridge was staying when he was writing Kubla Khan and was disturbed by "a person from Porlock".

On our first day the farmer told us that if we walked down the

path in front of the cottage we would come to Culbone church, the smallest church still in use in England. Several guides suggest that the only way to find it is by walking along the South West Coast Path, but there is a track that is used by the residents of the two or three buildings that are all that is left of the hamlet. we discovered this after we had walked there, and, what is even more galling, after we had climbed a very steep path away from the church.



*Culbone Church*  
(Richard Mascall CC BY-SA 2.0)

The church is probably Saxon in origin, but the walls are likely to be 12<sup>th</sup> century. It is a real miniature church with a sanctuary, chancel and nave, altogether only 35 ft long. The rood screen and loft are long gone and there were extensive 19 century “renovations” but it still has a lovely local worthy’s family box pew.

Outside is a tiny spire, said to have blown (or been carried by the Devil – take your pick) from the top of St Dubricius, the parish church in Porlock, which lost the top of its spire in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Like St Dubricius, Culbone church is dedicated to a Welsh saint, in this case St Beuno. The graveyard is still in use and we saw what we later discovered were the stones for our landlord’s grandparents.

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We discovered that Culbone is one of three small Exmoor churches, celebrated in a piece of doggerel

*Culbone, Oare and Stoke Pero,  
Parishes three where no parson ‘ll go.  
Culbone, Oare and Stoke Pero,  
Three such places you’ll seldom hear o’.*

Culbone and Oare are now a joint parish, served by a non-stipendiary priest, who lives in the parish house in return for conducting services in both churches. St Mary the Virgin, Oare is at a T junction in relatively open country unlike the deep wooded valley of Culbone.



The solid nave has a 15<sup>th</sup> century roof and during the 18<sup>th</sup> century was refurbished with box pews, including a box for the squire with seats on three sides, a pulpit and a reading desk. The 19<sup>th</sup> century left the nave alone, but added a chancel and an east window. The lectern is a wooden buzzard, carved to replace the traditional eagle that was stolen at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The church attracts many visitors in search of Lorna Doone, who in R D Blackmore's eponymous novel was shot here on her wedding day. (She survived.) Blackmore's grandfather was rector of Oare and many of the names in the novel are on the gravestones here and in Culbone.



*Oare Church*  
(Marion Dutcher CC BY-SA 2.0)

The third church, Stoke Pero, appears to have no dedication and, apart from a neighbouring farm, is isolated. It is said, at over 1,000 feet above sea level, to be the highest church on Exmoor and it must be one of the highest in England. The 13<sup>th</sup> century church (probably on the site of a Saxon building) was heavily restored in the 1890s. To do this required a large quantity of wood, for the magnificent roof, to be brought up from Porlock (only 150 or so feet above sea level) and it was all carried, twice a day, on the back of Zulu, a donkey who has a little display inside the church.



*Stoke Pero Church*  
(Rob Farrow CC BY-SA 2.0)

The graveyard is on a slope and clearly heavily built up over the centuries. It is kept under control by a very friendly sheep, and it was only with great difficulty we managed to keep it in when we wanted to leave. Perhaps he was descended from the large ram who according to the guidebook, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century once entered the church during a service and knocked the church warden down when he tried to push it out.

I had never been to Exmoor





and was astounded by the moor itself, but also by the coastal strip which rises dramatically from the sea. The A39 west from Porlock rises at one in four (25%) from close to sea level to reach 1,138 feet above sea level and continues west to Lynmouth behind and below the crest of the hills which drop through dense woods to cliffs. The prevailing wind is from the southwest so these woods are well sheltered particularly for a sea shore.

Next autumn we are returning: there is still much to see and good food to enjoy. And there is a seat outside a pub in Porlock with my name on that I have yet to sit on.

*Dick Selwood*



## Barton Stacey - the story so far

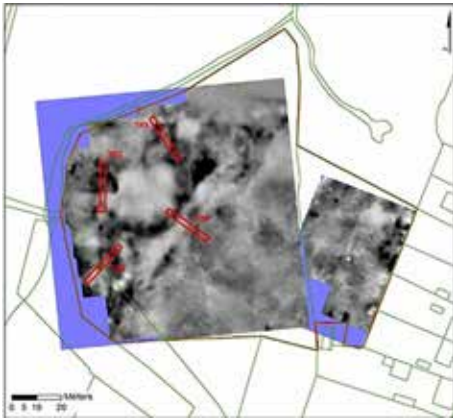
In 2018 the dig at Barton Stacey hoped to:

- Confirm if the site is the location of the Medieval Manor House.
- Determine what archaeology still remains (if any), then identify and date any items found.
- Establish how this archaeology relates to the village as a whole.

### **Main findings**

We found evidence of a long demolished medieval building which would have been grand enough to have been part of the manor complex. On top of this was a substantial later medieval building, constructed (perhaps uniquely) on a chalk mound. A slot cut through both buildings was also of medieval date. The buildings were of unusual design, with features we do not fully understand, so we plan to excavate more in 2019 to confirm they are part of the manor complex and to examine how they fit into the surrounding site.

The underlying archaeology of the paddock is a "head geology" (hard compacted chalk, clay, flint and sand layer) covered in a layer



*2018 trenches marked on the geophysical survey plot*

of flint gravel that showed up in our geophysics as possible building lines (excavation showed them to be natural).

Two of our four trenches came down almost immediately on this head geology and apart from cut features did little to help our understanding of the site.

We expected to find the end of medieval burgage plots in trench 4 but instead, to our surprise, uncovered a substantial medieval ditch, possibly the boundary ditch

of the medieval manor site. In the upper layers of the fill there are potential signs of structures. This year we plan to uncover more of this ditch, hoping to find evidence of its construction date, which might confirm if it is the manor complex boundary.

## **Pottery**

We have more work to do on the pottery, but:

- There were a few Iron age and Romano British shards, as we would expect in Hampshire.
- The majority of the assemblage is medieval, from the 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century to the 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest is a chalk-tempered fabric, common in Winchester in the late Saxon period, while the latest is medium sand-tempered cooking pots, well-known in Winchester from the later 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Glazed wares are not plentiful, but we were able to assemble a near complete profile of a small jug with a rilled neck and applied strip and pellet decoration from the late 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- The most common pottery on the site contains varying proportions and sizes of flint, chalk and sand. Shards are unevenly and inconsistently distributed, making it very difficult to classify them. However, rims have parallels in pottery from Newbury and sites in the valleys of the rivers Kennet and Lambourn. They provided a significant proportion of the ceramics from Faccombe Netherton and Foxcotte to

the northwest and Popham to the east. Barton Stacey is at the southern edge of this distribution. Parallels from these sites date the majority of this pottery to the 12<sup>th</sup> through to the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

- The post medieval pottery appears to be mostly 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Small finds

The small finds support the findings from the pottery and include a pocket-watch chain, a late medieval jetton, a medieval belt mount, an arrowhead, strap end, a buckle and knife and a Roman coin.



*Copper-alloy buckle: likely dates late 14<sup>th</sup> – early 15<sup>th</sup> century*

### Community

The dig was a real community



event with Barton Stacey taking an active role in organising and supporting the dig. We ended with a pizza event with David Ashby explaining to over 100 people all we had uncovered. Even the children of the village took part sifting our spoil heaps for treasure.

### Conclusions

We found:

- evidence for early occupation of the site during the Mesolithic/ Neolithic and Roman periods.
- gravel covering early features, possibly indicating a period of abandonment.
- evidence for the Manor House complex, including large boundary ditch and substantial structure.
- evidence for later medieval use of the site, once the Manor House went out of use.

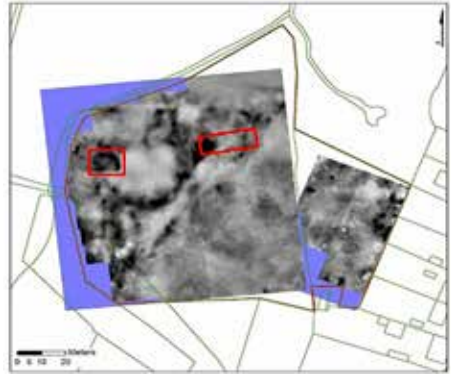
### 2019

In 2019 we will:

- Undertake a Ground Penetrating Radar survey of the field.
- Excavate two large trenches, to further investigate features which possibly relate to the Manor House complex.

Application forms are in this Newsletter and on the web site.

*Stuart Rippon*



*Proposed area excavations for 2019*



## Medieval Gate Apertures

In September, Sarah and I were invited to go on a tour of Winchester College by a neighbour. Not only is she a guide there but she is also a Blue Badge Guide but not one here in Winchester.

One of the things we were shown was the round aperture in the right-hand door of the Middle Gate. The suggestion was that it was to take rolled up scrolls in medieval times. I took this up with the College archivist who said that she had only heard this story from their Guides and has found no evidence elsewhere to support it. She did wonder if the opening was to allow the handing out of tips to those delivering letters.



*Round hole in the Middle Gate, Winchester College (Michael Fielding)*

Her counterpart at the sister foundation of New College said that their gates were probably not the originals. She wondered if the Winchester College aperture was to hand out charitable doles in times of unrest or sickness when the College was unwilling to open its gates. This strikes a chord with me



*Three apertures in the Prior's Gate, Winchester Cathedral  
(Michael Fielding)*

although a College counter-argument is that why, in such times, would the College open the outer gates to allow access to the Middle Gate.

As I passed into the Close one morning early in 2019, I spotted, for the first time, the three apertures in the Prior's Gate. I wonder how many times over the years have I passed through the archway and not noticed them. To my mind, the suggestion by the New College archivist rings true. If any member of WARG has some thoughts on this matter then please would they let me know. Karen Dagwell has kindly asked in the Cathedral but has drawn a blank.

The accompanying photos show the apertures in question.

*Michael Fielding*



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## Vienna

While Vienna has always been on my list of places to visit, it got moved to the top place when it was the venue for the world's biggest exhibition of paintings and prints by Peiter Bruegel the elder. The Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna holds a large collection of his work and managed to gather loans from around the world. We managed to get a slot in the last few days of the show in January, killing two birds with one airline booking.



The exhibition was stunning and although it is now over, with the visitors returned home, the Kunsthistorisches Museum still claims to have three quarters of Bruegel's extant paintings and half his drawings and prints. But the exhibition was the cream on the cake that is Vienna.



Vienna is a big sprawling industrial city along the banks of the Danube. In the train from the airport you can see multiple oil refineries and chemical works, but in the north of the city are vineyards as well. As with most visitors we didn't venture far from the old city centre. Getting around is simple. The centre is compact and there are trams on the surface and the U-Bahn runs underground. The city has been a pivotal point in European history since before the Romans established a frontier fort. In both the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century it was the high water mark of the Turkish invasions of Europe, and the legend is that the croissant was invented to celebrate the lifting of the first siege (1529) and the coffee house created after coffee beans were abandoned by the retreating Turkish army in the second siege (1683).



*Battle of Vienna, 1683*



*Kunsthistorisches Museum (Jorge Royan, CC BY-SA 4.0)*

In the late 19th century Vienna was the capital of the increasingly rickety Austro-Hungarian empire, which extended into the Balkans. As a demonstration of Imperial power, the historic walls were demolished and replaced by a wide road, along which were built massive public buildings, including the Kunsthistorisches Museum, other museums and governmental buildings. Inside this ring are Imperial palaces, the Spanish Riding School (which, with the horse drawn carriages, brings an unexpected rural odour to parts of the city) the cathedral and churches. The ring runs in a curve from north, though west to south with the Danube canal (created to reduce the risk of flooding) making the

eastern boundary. Although Vienna was bombed in 1944/5, when the occupation of Italy brought the city within range of allied bombers, there was a strong attempt to avoid hitting the historic centre and consequently it didn't suffer like Munich, Dresden or Hamburg.

For our exploration of the City we hired a personal guide, Frediano Lepex who turned out to be Italian but besotted with Vienna. In the course of the morning we covered much of the Altstadt, visiting churches, public areas and landmarks, like Hotel Sacher, home of the Sachertorte chocolate cake. We also went into one of the oldest of Vienna's many coffee houses, L. Heiner K.u.K. Hofzuckerbäcker (L. Heiner, a Royal and Imperial sweet-pastry cook). Viennese coffee, a huge selection of cakes and tonnes of cream – classic middle Europe. And surprisingly a view into the kitchen.

On our remaining day, we took a boat trip up and down the Donauer Canal, but to be honest it wasn't great.



We ate at a number of small Gasthäuser within walking distance from our hotel (from which we could see the giant ferris wheel that was so important in the film, *The Third Man*.) Food was not dissimilar to Southern German, Munich is only 4 hours by car or train, but of course the menus all featured Schnitzel – with varying degrees of quality.

Roast pork and other filling food was very welcome in January.

There was much we didn't see or experience – for example although we talked about music and Vienna's music history stretching from Mozart Haydn and Beethoven, through Strauss waltzes to Bruckner and Berg, we didn't attend any concerts or explore the museums. So, we plan a return at some time in the future.

*Dick Selwood*



*Stephans Cathedral  
(russavia,CC BY-SA 4.0)*



## Jennifer Jones

A few weeks ago, just before her 90th birthday, long-standing member Jennifer Jones died here in Winchester. Although she didn't join WARG at the very beginning but towards the middle of the 1970s, Jennifer was a supportive member of our society from its days in the old chocolate factory in Little Minster Street and always willing to "get stuck in". Born in Birmingham to join 2 boys and another girl, when Jennifer was only 6 her mother died so she was sent to live in Southport with 2 aunts. When her father re-married a few years later she re-joined the family. In 1947 she started her working life at the Works and Pensions office in Birmingham and continued in that job until her marriage.

She met Colin at a table tennis match and married him in 1956 and from then on became a full-time mum and wife. However she was always a woman of many interests and talents, and counted charity fund-raising, dressmaking, flower arranging and painting among her activities. In the early 1970s she and Colin moved to Winchester (he got a job in Southampton) where she joined her husband in learning to play golf. She was keen on all aspects of WARG and always attended the evening talks when we met in the old barn of Hyde House. Indeed it was she who nagged me to join WARG's committee in order to bring some further "youth" to the proceedings – I was 45 at the time! – and after a very short period of resistance I caved in, insisting that Dick joined me!

Jennifer remained a member till her recent death and we remember her enthusiasm and support with gratitude.

*Julia Sandison*



## Julia's Jottings

### **Water, Water Everywhere!**

As workers began to prepare a Suffolk field for a windfarm, they uncovered a Neolithic trackway with clear spring water protecting massive timbers still showing the tool marks and in excellent condition. This track of 30m yielded many pieces of pottery and metal, as well as

a horned aurochs' skull. The skull had been shaped either to fit on a pole or for use as part of a headdress and tests show that it was about 2000 years older than the track. There was also evidence of Roman, Saxon and Medieval occupation and although the traditional name of the field was Seven Springs, somehow the fact that the clue was in the name didn't enable the archaeologists to understand that they'd have difficulty in draining the field! The trackway appears to have been laid some 500 years after the first evidence of use of the site and its importance, but the whole area was filled and levelled in the 11th century, thus burying the springs and preserving the timbers.

### **A Beautiful Room**

Nero may have been one of Rome's nastiest Emperors but that didn't mean he lacked an artistic sense. Whilst restoring his palace in Rome, archaeologists have uncovered a secret underground room with its walls covered in colourful animal frescoes. This chamber in the bowels of the Golden House are adorned with panthers, centaurs, a sphinx, aquatic creatures, exotic birds, flowers, fruit, leaves and the god Pan. Nero's massive palace was built almost 2000 years ago following a devastating fire in AD 64 which destroyed large areas of Rome, including the aristocratic villas on Palatine Hill. Well, you all remembered, didn't you, that Nero fiddled while Rome burned?



*A centaur (left) and Pan (right). (Parco archeologico del Colosseo)*

### **A Roman Coin Cache**

I know that there seems to be several finds of Roman coins somewhere in UK every year, but this one's got a connection, albeit somewhat tenuous, to WARG. One of our long-standing members, Ed Jackson, known to many of you for his appearance each year at our Big Dig, moved away from Winchester some years ago to Warwickshire, where he continued his love of digging with a local group. Edge Hill in south Warwickshire is a site of multi-occupation and Ed's been digging there for several years.

AD 68-69 was "The Year of the Four Emperors", a time of huge upheaval in the Roman Empire following the death of Nero in AD 68,

and as a result there was much jockeying for position and subsequent need for funds to pay armies etc. Each emperor struck his own coins and they are incredibly rare. A hoard of 78 silver denarii, buried in a ceramic pot under the floor of a building on this site was the second hoard to be unearthed. The hoard has been declared treasure so the Warwick Museum is raising funds to buy the collection.

The names of the four Emperors? I feel certain only one will be familiar to most of us: Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian.

### **A Surprising Find in an Unlikely Place!**

I may be unkind but I don't really favour Southend on Sea so it's something of a surprise to realise that Anglo-Saxons disagreed with me. One of their burial chambers, on a grassy verge next to a busy road and close to the local Aldi, is being called Britain's equivalent to the tomb of Tutankhamun. Obviously a rich and powerful man, the occupant was

buried with wooden drinking cups and bottles all having decorated gold necks. The man might have been Seaxa, younger brother of Sledd's son Saebert, a king of the East Saxons, who died between AD 575 and 605. As it's in very free-draining soil everything organic has decayed, including the body, and only tiny tooth fragments, too small for analysis, remain. Gold foil crosses indicate he was a Christian and it's known that his mother Rricula was Ethelbert of Kent's sister. Ethelbert was married to the Frankish Christian Princess Bertha.

*Gold crosses from the earliest dated princely Anglo-Saxon burial believed to have been placed over the man's eyes © MOLA*



The burial chamber was built of timbers, now decayed, and it is estimated that 13 oak trees were felled to build it. Those timbers are long decayed but other finds include a gold belt buckle, a copper alloy Mediterranean flagon, a decorative hanging bowl, a pair of glass decorated vessels and some gold coins. Also, a lyre made from maple wood with ash tuning pegs and garnets - probably from the Indian sub-continent - which had been broken and then mended.

For more information visit [www.prittlewellprincelyburial.org](http://www.prittlewellprincelyburial.org).

## A Whale of a Meal

Nothing really surprises me any longer about the Romans – they were amazingly advanced in so many ways. However, I didn't know that they'd had a thriving whaling industry. Bones of Grey whales and North Atlantic right whales – coastal migratory species no longer found in European waters – dating back to the first few centuries AD or even earlier have been found around the Straits of Gibraltar. Pliny the Elder writes of whales calving in the coastal waters off Cadiz, and there are mosaics of humans fishing all sorts of fish including whales. Oppian, the Greek author, writing in the 2nd century AD, describes whales being harpooned in the western Mediterranean, using tridents and axes, lashing the creatures to their boats and dragging them to the shore. Fish featured heavily on the Roman menu though whale hasn't appeared there much.

## An Orkney Treasure

An underground chamber beneath the Cairns Broch on South Ronaldsay, one of the Orkney islands, has revealed a 2000-year-old wooden bowl made from the alder tree. The bowl is believed to date back to between the late 1st and mid-2nd century AD when the broch was sealed and abandoned. Radiocarbon dating will be carried out to try to pin down a date, and the experts hope it will be earlier than the dates given. The bowl is considered to have been used to pass round food or drink at festivities such as weddings. Other finds from this site include a bronze ring and a glass bead.

## Chichester Again!

Amazingly a second copy of the Declaration of American Independence dating to July 1776 has been rediscovered in the West Sussex archives housed in Chichester. The only other known copy is of course held in Washington DC's National Archives. Although so many important documents going back over the centuries were bought by American Universities in the years following World War II, it's wonderful to think that we may still have some documents of world-wide importance lurking unknown in a cupboard somewhere in our island!



*A substantial portion of the wooden bowl lying on its side with the rim to the left (University of the Highlands and Islands)*

## **Even Larger Palace**

Many of us may consider Blenheim Palace to be quite large enough but recent work to stabilise a bridge by draining lakes there has revealed that the Grade 1 listed Grand Bridge contains over 30 rooms that were flooded by Capability Brown's lakes in the 1760s. The building was designed by Sir John Vanbrugh in 1708 and the 30-odd rooms have fireplaces and chimneys, whilst one room is a theatre, and records mention a bathing place and a boathouse. Graffiti from the 1760s is in excellent condition and so are sunken boats used for reed cutting in the 1950s. Although the rooms contain original plasterwork, there's no evidence that these rooms were ever used. Sarah, the first Duchess of Marlborough, fell out with Vanbrugh over his grand plans and he was banned from the estate.

Work to repair the bridge and open the bridge to visitors should by now be completed if you're curious to see this "extension" to a huge palace!

## **Finders Keepers**

Recently we've heard of the Lewis chess piece that cost a fiver at a jumble sale finally being recognised and restored to the rest of the pieces, but did you hear about the farmer who found a 2000 year old Roman statue of the goddess Minerva with silver eyes and kept it in a margarine tub for over a decade? The statue is made of copper alloy and lead and thus rather heavy. The British Museum revealed details of over 1250 finds by metal detectorists around England, Wales and Northern Ireland, including a shimmering gold pendant dating back 3500 years. The Portable Antiquities Scheme has recorded about 78,000 archaeological objects, some qualifying as treasure, with the largest number of finds coming from Norfolk, Lincolnshire and Suffolk. Perhaps we should all buy ourselves a metal detector and get going!

## **The deeper, the older!**

The lines between history and archaeology are hard enough to designate but then where comes palaeontology when I'm doing bits and bobs for the Newsletter? I think that what they've been excavating in Cambridgeshire is fascinating enough to tell you all. Just off the A14 on a large road-building site, over 240 archaeologists have uncovered the bones of mammoths and woolly rhino dating from around 130,000 years or so ago. These are of course

incredibly wonderful enough to find but there's all the finds from above those remains as well. These include whole medieval and Anglo-Saxon villages, not to mention an 8th century comb made of deer antler, dozens of Roman brooches and a bone flute. One "problem" has been the storage of more than 7 tonnes of bone, including human, and about the same amount of pottery.

However, the prehistoric animal bones are the most fascinating, particularly because the mammoth leg bone is intact, as well as a pair of complete mammoth tusks. The latter are seriously difficult to keep stabilised as they've been saturated in wet earth for thousands of years and ivory is made up of layers and thus subject to separating if not stored correctly. This project is due to be completed in December 2020 so who knows what other wonders will come to light?



*Woolly mammoth bone*

### **The Original HMS Victory**

The sinking of this predecessor to Nelson's Victory was discovered on the seabed south-east of Plymouth about a decade ago. The ship's sinking in 1744, claiming the lives of 1100 sailors, is considered to be the worst single naval disaster in the English Channel. Whilst the professional divers from Guernsey were looking for Victory, they found the remains of a passenger steamer, Stella, which sank in 1899 claiming 105 lives. The first HMS Victory was launched in 1737 with 100 guns and was the flagship of Admiral Sir John Balchen. He successfully led a force to relieve a British Convoy trapped by a French blockade of Portugal's River Tagus, but during the return journey his ship became separated from the rest of the fleet and sank with all hands in 1744.



*A bronze cannon from the wreck of HMS Victory (Odyssey Marine Exploration, Inc)*

Lying some 75m below the surface of the sea, two of the ship's bronze guns – a massive 42-pounder and a 12-pounder – have been raised though there are legal battles over what else can be salvaged. Ships are



often considered to be graves and thus not to be disturbed, so this ship may well stay in her final resting place for many years yet to come.

*Julia Sandison*



## Book Review

Anne-Louise Barton and Elizabeth Hill-Goulding, **Secret Winchester**, Amberley Publishing £14.99 ISBN 978-1-4456-7185-7

This book aims to look at the interesting parts of Winchester that most tourists miss, those off the beaten track or those hidden in plain sight! It takes you on a journey through the history of Winchester that even established residents would find interesting and links the buildings and areas to the historic events.

There is a copious use of pictures and illustrations which helps put the words in context. Included throughout the book are “Did you know” sections that are there to explain historical facts and to dispel myths and local “stories”.

In my opinion, there is not enough about the Georgian and Victorian development of Winchester, especially concerning the military importance of Winchester and the growth of the garrison and development of the Peninsula Barracks. Also skipped over is the development of Winchester as an administration centre, including the Guildhall. These buildings are all very important tourist attractions as they house the Military Museums and popular events.

This is an interesting read that treads the fine line between being a tourist guide and an academic tome. Tourists and residents will find something in this book that expands their knowledge of Winchester’s history.

*Steve Old*





## WARG Calendar

**2019**

Aug. 5th

**Afternoon walk: The route of the Lockburn**

Aug. 17th-31st

**Big Dig: Return to Barton Stacy**

Sept. 9th

**New Evidence for the Chronology of Execution Sites in Hampshire**

Jeremy Clutterbuck, MA Osteoarchaeology, University of Southampton

The cemetery at Weyhill Road, Andover had all the characteristics of a Late Saxon execution site, but emerging results from scientific analysis carried out as part of the post-excavation works have provided some surprising evidence which may give us new insights into the duration of such punishment cemeteries in times of political and possibly social and cultural change.

Oct. 14th

**AGM**

**The Fascination of Green Men - Winchester's Contribution**

Julie Adams, Volunteer Guide, Winchester Cathedral

Many puzzle over how and why a symbol which predated Christianity is often found in churches and cathedrals throughout Europe. There are four different forms of the motif and Winchester Cathedral boasts examples of all four. In this talk, Julie will reveal where some of the 60+ green men hide amongst the carvings high in the stone vaulting, and in the leafy wooden carvings of the Quire.

Nov. 11th

**1889 - Trade and Tragedy in a west-country seaport**

Alex Lewis, a former lawyer who trained as a Fowey Harbour Guide after retiring to Cornwall

Inspired by a study of harbour records from the late 1800s, this illustrated talk takes a look at Fowey's shipping industry during the twilight years of sail, at a time when the profits to be made often came at a high price for local communities.

Dec. 9th

**The Amesbury Archer and Boscombe Bowmen: 15 years on. An update on recent discoveries at Amesbury**

Andy Manning MA, Wessex Archaeology Regional Manager South

It is 17 years since the discovery of the richest Beaker burial found in Western Europe – the Amesbury Archer. Within a year another project had found a new, significant Beaker burial group nearby - the Boscombe Bowmen. These individuals are now known to have travelled long distances and may be associated with the later phase of Stonehenge, so why are the burials not there but at Amesbury? Subsequent years' major excavations at Amesbury continue to reveal important Neolithic and Beaker activity and new evidence has come to light which again reinforces the wide links with the continent and perhaps explains why the burials were placed where they were and the dramatic changes these people lived through.

**Meetings**

Meetings are normally in the Hampshire Record Office cinema, starting at 7.30. As the cinema has a maximum capacity of 80, we are unable to allow in anyone who is not a member.

## Down the Drain with John Crook

If you are not claustrophobic, then a YouTube video of Winchester Cathedral Archaeologist, John Crook, exploring the underground run of the Cathedral's Lockburn is fascinating. He wriggles through a section where silting has reduced the clearance to 18 inches and then explores chambers considerably higher.

Sections of the tunnel are of the late 11th century, part of what John claims is some of the earliest structure of the Cathedral, while others are Victorian and even later. 23 minutes of interest at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ilrgc7\\_UVHY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ilrgc7_UVHY)



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