



Newsletter

Summer 2021

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

Contents

Editorial.....	3
Chairman's Notes	4
Stanford in the Vale.....	7
Joseph Bull and Sons.....	12
Counting on Good Practice	17
Medieval Building Myths.....	25
How I know about Southampton's brick marks.....	31
More than just a Roman Roadside Settlement	33
Dorset Natural History Chickerell Medieval Manor...	37
Julia's Jottings.....	38
Book Reviews.....	40
WARG Talks and Events	43
The 2021 Big Dig.....	45
WARG Committee.....	46



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

For more information on WARG or to join, email membership@warg.org.uk or visit www.warg.org.uk

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Editorial

Well, hello again. It seems only yesterday I was writing for the spring newsletter. Where does the time go? Hopefully towards the return of normality, if any of us can remember what was normal.

I have recently had to self-isolate – twice, pre and post op, not the dreaded virus I am thankful to say. It is a very strange experience. However, I did not lack company. As I write this I am sitting in my garden, under the sunbrella, enjoying a lovely spell of hot weather. Even the horses in the field next door have had their wet weather gear removed. The bird song is constant as is the opportunist squirrel and the very hungry rabbit. Blackbirds are being flown off their wings by the big fat fledglings who follow them demanding food, and when the birds go to roost, there begins an aerial display by the bats, never a dull moment and very normal.

At last, I have had the immeasurable joy of tiny people visiting, and being reminded of when their parents used to run around the garden. We also had a delayed Christmas with a picture of a tree and decorations, and the presents, which had been unpacked from the car after a cancelled visit in December. But best of all, as the grown-ups were all vaccinated, lots of hugs.

Now to business. As you will see from Steve's notes, WARG is facing a serious challenge. We urgently need someone to step up as secretary. Maureen has now decided to step down immediately, so a new secretary is urgently needed. This is especially important as next year is WARG's 50th anniversary and there will be much to be done by the committee. Will you help to keep WARG vibrant by taking on this post?

On a much more positive note, we have been very fortunate to have Holly Brown volunteer to take on the post of Events organizer. Holly has an impressive CV which I shall not try to cover here as I hope Holly will introduce herself in the next newsletter, but as a taster, she has experience in cross discipline liaison, organizing social events across a wide range of interest – including a ball, so get your dancing shoes out. She has been an Archaeological collections assistant as well as an assistant wedding planner. The committee is very much looking forward to working with her and we thank Maureen for setting up a programme for the coming year which will help Holly to settle in.

In this issue we cover a multitude of subjects as well as our regular items of Julia's jottings and book reviews. I hope you will enjoy reading it.

All very best wishes, and stay safe.

Janet.



Chairman's report

Welcome to your latest edition of the WARG newsletter which I hope you will find interesting and informative. What a year we have had, and what a difficult task your committee has had to get things changed round in the way we work in order to keep WARG members informed and provide value for your continued support and subscriptions. I must especially mention Maureen O'Connor, Janet Backhouse and Chris Sellen who have been instrumental in pulling all these things together, going above and beyond their role title to deliver.

Some time ago I put out a request for a volunteer to step up and take on the role of “Events and Programming” officer to help share the load. The responsibilities of secretary are enough on their own so we agreed that we needed to split off the events part. This did not elicit a response at the time but we have recently been very fortunate to have Holly Brown volunteer to join us in this role.

We welcome Holly and hope she will enjoy working with us. Remember, all your committee and officers are volunteers, doing WARG work on top of all the other things they need to do, without recompense, other than thanks and knowing they are making a contribution to the continued success of WARG.

There have been some very worrying developments recently with the status of some of our most successful University Archaeology departments as well as some former County Council units that were privatized. I would encourage all our members to voice their opinions on these devastating decisions whenever the opportunity arises, being on a petition, letter to your MP etc. The UK has the very best in the teaching of History and Archaeology, has a wealth of undiscovered sites and a current shortage of over 1,000 trained frontline archaeologists to handle the current projects. As an amateur group, we rely on these academics and professionals for all our local projects.

On a cheerier note, we have had some really good talks over the last year and this is set to continue. The quality of the speakers we are managing to find and persuade to talk to us is fantastic, if you exclude my efforts. We have a picnic planned and are looking forward to getting some visits planned for next year, though see above. Planning for the “Big Dig” is ongoing with the date pushed out to the end of

August/beginning of September to give us more time and hopefully a loosening of the current Covid restrictions.

After about five years I have decided to give up the teaching of the leisure course on archaeology at Eastleigh College and they are looking for someone to replace me. This is a paid role and one that has previously been done by Mr. Don Bryan. If anyone is interested, please contact me and I will give you more details. The current students on this course are a wonderful group.

Now for some very exciting news. next year we have a very special anniversary, we will be 50 years young!! WARG was founded in 1972 as the Winchester Archaeological Rescue Group with the aim of rescuing the archaeology of Winchester from the many developments that were taking place. We have grown and morphed since then and tried to keep abreast of the current thinking, being one of the most prominent and forward-thinking groups in the area. We have a sub-committee that is looking at how we should celebrate this key anniversary and the ideas have started to flow! Please feel free to join in, we want this to be your celebration as it is the members that make the society.

So, looking forward, if we get the right things in place, the right speakers, the right visits, then we can look forward to a bright 50th Anniversary next year.

Steve Old

Chair WARG



Stanford in the Vale – The archaeology of a village by David Ashby – Chris Sellen March 2021

From the pioneering approach to explaining the history of our country of WG Hoskins and the detailed examination of local areas exemplified by Mick Aston at Shapwick in Somerset, the view of ‘the landscape’ is an approach much lauded. WARG was treated to an exposition by long-time WARG member David Ashby in March 2021 as to how the science and processes of archaeology could provide the evidence that enabled such landscape descriptions and the telling of landscape history.

David, a researcher at the University of Winchester’s Archaeology Department, has been leading excavation-based research at Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire, for some 12 years. With a project design based on a toolkit of geophysics, test-pitting and excavation together with desktop research: aerial archaeology, LIDAR and topographical measurement, hypotheses have been tested around the geographical and temporal development of the village, expertly described by David. Most especially the idea that the village was greatly reduced in size and importance at the end of the medieval period.

Begun as a Scout leadership project, early work in a single field soon led to exploration of the whole village. Situated between Faringdon and Wantage, Stanford lies in the fork between two small rivers (Frogmore Brook and Ock River), on Jurassic limestone geology with clays and alluviums in the lower parts.

Immediately apparent from the test pits and excavation trenches is evidence from the earliest times.



Village

©Chris Sellen

Mesolithic flakes and cores lead on to Neolithic finds whose distribution suggests two separate early areas of settlement.

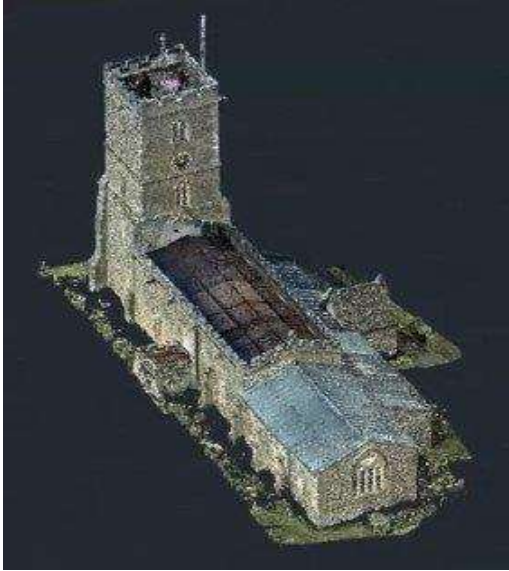
Bronze Age pottery such as scrapers show potential for continuation of settlement, and two features revealed by

radar gave a tantalizing hint of ritual, hengiform structures – one of which has an enigmatic pit between two ditch termini. Pottery concentrations indicate that the south settlement was more densely used.

Evidence for Iron Age settlement was scant prior to 2012 but bringing together geophysical, aerial and geographical ideas seem to indicate a large oval feature which seems to be an oppidum, defined by a 2m deep trench. That it was to the north of the current village indicates a shift in settlement location to slightly higher ground.

There are plenty of Roman age finds. Though little in the way of Roman structures, robbed out ditches with sherds of Samian, floor and roof tiles, hypocaust and tesserae with more pottery show there was a settlement, perhaps associated with a ford (Stanford – *Stoney ford*) with the route of a road straight through the village, much as it does today. Such an important crossing of a river may have a garrison

with the road running through a small fort, and a vicus to the north.



St Deny © Chris Sellen

An early Saxon trench revealed postholes of two differently aligned buildings with pottery, charred barley seeds (indicating brewing), fragments of carved wood

showing evidence of industry and the laying out of a manor and church on the higher ground in the centre of the village.

By Norman times, the Domesday Book entry indicates a village of 120-200 people which by the standards of the day was a large settlement. The place was thriving and by 1230 Henry III grants a market charter, taxes indicating its wealth to be on a par with nearby Faringdon or Wantage, and documentary evidence begins to use the word 'towne'.

The Saxon church was pulled down. In the twelfth century it is rebuilt in stone and in the fourteenth boasts tower and spire (which later collapses). Ground Penetrating Radar work shows the outline of the Saxon church in the current apse. The opportunity was taken to do 3D laser scanning for both presentation purposes but also to show that part of the church had been sinking into a tenth century ditch and needed to be buttressed.

Further techniques of aerial photography analysis show parch marks of medieval ploughing and the layout of burgess plots at Stanford Wick. The 'Wick' derives from '*wic*' which is a market place. This is also shown clearly on LIDAR data, as is potentially one of the two mills which served the area. The LIDAR shows the clear management of the River Ock to create a large mill leat which truncates some burgess plots. Its size is important as it indicates a sizable town as it would have required maintenance. A second mill is shown by paleo-features including a 14m long double-stepped foundation mill building and a spring-fed paleo-millpond, though much of this has been removed by ploughing.

Other buildings include a stone manor house, originally Saxon with later medieval features: well-faced walls and yards. Up to six phases of building can be seen which indicate increasing importance and wealth.

There were thousands of medieval pottery sherds, from day-to-day to fine glazed wares. Much working debris: bone-working, glass, iron (slag and objects) bronze and kiln-working. Evidence of weaving such as loom-weights and whorls; much animal bone from domesticated and wild. Much of the bone is diseased, the reasons for which is still being investigated.

The test pit concentrations of various artefacts give some indication as to the changes of the village 'centres' and areas for particular activity. All this data can be mapped together and this indicates the size of the medieval settlement. It is almost twice the size of the current village. So, the speculation is that Stanford suffered at the end of the fourteenth century: you get a drop in primary wool exports in the Cotswolds. Despite secondary wool products, the economy suffers. Also, this is time of the Little Ice Age at the

end of the 14th century. There was more rain and the village may have flooded more. This can be seen archaeologically by platforms built to house animals. Lower areas are abandoned.

There may also have been political reasons for demise. Faringdon and Wantage had more going for them and there may have been population change. However, post-medieval finds do indicate wealth, for instance, in Ashdown House – Bellarmine ware found (the Cardinal who tried to ban alcohol) – and the structures indicate changes in the walls which may be evidence for aggrandizement. Cox's Hall similarly shows medieval originally but massively changed over time until Georgian times, including evidence for a major fire.



Ashdown © Chris Sellen

In most recent times there was a WW2 airfield in the area. There are ancillary buildings in the village including sick-bays, commanders' houses, messes and latrines.

So, what has been found? Settlements from a Mesolithic/Neolithic settlement all the way through to modern. The sizing and distribution, with changes over time (especially the end of the 14th century) prove the original hypothesis. Every bit of new evidence raises new

questions and poses new theories, and every bit re-writes the history of this Oxfordshire village.



Joseph Bull and Sons - The buildings, family and company by Steve Old. - Edwina Cole April 2021

In a very detailed presentation, Chairman Steve Old introduced us to Joseph Bull and Sons, a true Victorian local company. Interestingly he is related to this family and I for one was fascinated to hear about the buildings they were connected to, many of which still remain in the Southampton area.

Joseph's father was a surveyor/architect and Joseph Bull himself was born in Southampton in 1803. He married Sarah Barnes in 1825. She was already expecting the first of their 12 children, 11 of whom survived into adulthood which was no mean feat at this time! Despite her hard life, Sarah outlived Joseph who was a carpenter, builder and contractor. Sadly, one son died in babyhood of diphtheria, and of the other 7 sons most of them worked for the company in the various capacities of carpenter, contractor, solicitor etc. Thomas Williamson, born in 1838, became a clergyman educated at Kings College London, and whilst there are no occupations listed in the census for the girls, there is some evidence that they were all educated to some degree, probably more than their contemporaries.

Early in his career, Joseph was in a partnership, but in 1840 this was dissolved and he set up on his own. We then heard about some of the early buildings the company constructed. These included **Aslatt's Coach Manufactory** in Above Bar, Southampton built between 1844 and 1846 and demolished in 1898. **Southampton Borough Model Gaol** was built on the Pentonville model in 1853-55. Located in Ascupart Street

it held 112 prisoners and cost £22,000. There is no trace of it to be seen today. **Southampton Corn Exchange** was located on Town Quay next to Geddes Warehouse. It was built in 1852 and survived the heavy bombing of WW2. It is now offices and a restaurant. The **County Court Building** was built in 1852 and butted against Old Southampton Castle on the city walls. It is now converted into flats. The **Philharmonic Rooms** were built in 1864-5 and were described as 'a commodious and well-appointed concert hall.' Situated in Above Bar Street they had decorated ceilings, carved statues and columns, but it was all bombed in WW2. **Southampton Workhouse**, built in 1866-68 cost £31,200 when complete and most of it remains as Southampton City College.



Geddes Warehouse was built in 1866 as a baggage store for the liners and is located on Town Quay. It survived the Blitz almost intact and is now luxury flats.

<https://twitter.com/HistoricalSoton>

Moving on to Hampshire's commercial, industrial and administrative past we heard about other buildings scattered throughout the county. These included **Winchester Guildhall**, built in 1871 with the builders named on the foundation stone. The **Provincial Bank** in Southampton is situated



in the High Street. Erected in 1875 it survives as it was originally designed with no additions. When it was built it had the longest banking counter in Britain.

Hartley Wintney Workhouse was built in 1871 and took 120 inmates.

©RaymondKnapman[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Winchester Guildhall - geograph.org.uk - 1396295.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Winchester_Guildhall_-_geograph.org.uk_-_1396295.jpg)

Hospital Block (now Mons Block) in Winchester was built around 1875 and has now been converted into flats.

In Romsey, the **Corn Exchange** and the **Town Hall** were both the work of this company, along with **Victoria Barracks** in Portsmouth, the **Aldridge Pope Brewery** in Dorchester and the **Keep** (which is now a museum) built in the 1880s.

Joseph Bull and Sons also owned the biggest of the 3 brickfields at Chandlers Ford Brickworks. 35,000,000 bricks from here were used in the building of the **Royal Courts of Justice** in London. The size of each brick was specified to be 10 inches by 5 inches by 2 inches.



The company also built a huge number of churches including a rebuilding of **St Mary's, Southampton** in the 1870s. The dedication stone was laid in 1878 with the new

<https://peter-reynolds.co.uk/2014/04/11/>

church being consecrated in 1879. It was completed in 1884 with the exception of the tower and the spire, which were finished some years later. Henry William Bull was Church

Warden there for many years and the Bull family is interred in the vault.

Other churches include the **Garrison Church, Peninsular Barracks** (1898), **St Peter's Stockbridge** (1866), the **Abbey Congregational Church**, Romsey and **St Augustine of Canterbury** in Northam amongst many others.

A number of important houses were also built locally, including **Netley Firs House** in Hedge End, **The Winslows** at West End, **Headbourne Worthy House**, the **Vicarage** at Froxfield and many more yet to be discovered.

Further afield, we heard that the company built the **Royal Courts of Justice** in the Strand, London. Built in 1873-82 it survived the Blitz and is still fully used for legal functions. The interior is in Church style and Queen Victoria opened it. Henry Bull (who took over the company) and Edward (who, as an architect, designed a lot of the buildings) were both presented to the Queen.

In Cambridge, the **Physical Chemistry Laboratory** was built in 1885. Standing in Pembroke Street, it is still in use today.

Going abroad, the company was also responsible for the **House of Assembly** in Cape Town, South Africa. It is still standing today as part of the Government complex.

<https://www.hippocard.com/listing/house-of-assembly-cape-town-south-africa>



Other notable buildings include **Head Post Offices** in Ashford, a **School** in West London, **Hugh Myddleton School** in Clerkenwell, **Newbury and District Hospital**, **Newbury Grammar School** and the **Edwin Jones**

Department store in Southampton amongst many others.
<http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com>



Engraving from an Edwin Jones & Co. blotter of 1933, commemorating 75 years.

The company was also responsible for a large number of railway buildings, using a corporate design for stations, some of which are still in use. These include **Swaythling Station** Southampton, **St Denys, Woolston, Southampton West (now Central), Portsmouth and Southsea (was Portsmouth Town), Corfe Castle, Swanage, Shawford, Netley and Gosport**. They built the **Central Railway Bridge** in Southampton, as well as **Romsey Tank House** (which is now the Gents toilet at Romsey Station!). This is not an exhaustive list. If you want more information you will need to consult Steve's books.

'The Railway Buildings of Joseph Bull & Sons, Builders of Southampton' "A True Victorian Company"

Both written by Stephen Old and available from the WARG website. Also, at Waterstones.

The Great Fire of 13th October 1882 in Southampton destroyed all the Bull's workshops and all the men's tools. This was a disaster as the men all had to provide their own tools and couldn't work again until they had earned enough money to replace those that had been destroyed. There were also financial problems in 1882 after the completion of the Royal Courts of Justice. Despite this, however, the company recovered only to be felled by a second fire in Southampton

in 1901. Again, all stock and equipment were destroyed and the company faced its final demise.

None of Joseph's grandchildren were interested in the building trade. However, the success of the company in its heyday cannot be denied and the presentation ended with a long list of buildings attributed to them.

Some comments and questions followed including a question about how the company operated. They designed and built their own buildings, but they were also contractors. They did have a pool of workmen, but they also hired locally. A high proportion of their buildings survived the Blitz. The 5 storey jewellers on the corner of East Street was built by them and survived the war but was demolished as part of town planning to make more space. Building many shops and sail lofts this company has left a huge legacy in this area, and I guess I won't be the only one who looks at these buildings with new eyes following this talk.



Counting on Good Practice – Janet Backhouse

One hundred and eleven years ago saw the death of the 'Lady of Statistics and Social Reform'. "Who's she?" you might say, but if I tell you, she was also known as the 'Lady with the Lamp' most everyone will know who I mean.

Born in Florence, hence her name, to wealthy and socially elite parents, she grew up in England. She had an attractive personality, but she was definitely self-willed. Home tutored by her father she was clearly a credit to his teaching skill. She excelled in mathematics and science and her love of recording and organising information was clear from an

early age – she documented her extensive shell collection with precisely drawn tables and lists.

Her parents took her and her sister (Parthenope – born in Naples – which was formerly called by that Greek name) on the Grand Tour, where Florence took delight in recording statistics on population and other ‘unladylike’ subjects. In 1837, Florence had an epiphany and was convinced God had called her to the service of the sick and dying. By 1844, age 34, she had decided she had been called to nursing and proposed training in Salisbury, not far from the family home at Embley Park. This horrified her parents who refused to



allow it. They thought nursing was lowly, immodest work done by the poor or servants, completely unsuitable for a lady of Florence’s social standing. It was not until 1850, when, having declined a proposal of marriage from Richard Monckton Milnes a politician and poet, they relented and she was allowed to follow her destiny going to train as a nurse in Germany.

Florence Nightingale was so much more than a lady with a lamp. The legend of the saintly nurse has long obscured the truth – it was her mathematical genius that really saved so many lives. When in 1854 the Crimean War (1854-1856), broke out, Britain being at war with Russia, the Secretary of State for War appointed Florence to take a small contingent of nurses and 15 Catholic Nuns to Selimiye (aka) Scutari Barracks, the first official recognition of women serving in the Army.

Florence age 34 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence>

On the 4th November 1854, Florence arrived in Turkey with her nurses. The army base hospital at Scutari was unclean, poorly supplied with bandages and soap and the patients did not have proper food or medicine. They found the wounded and dying men living in unspeakably filthy conditions, even the number of deaths was not being correctly recorded. They were sleeping in overcrowded, dirty rooms often without blankets, and shunned as 'scum', by their officers. These conditions meant that they often caught other diseases like typhus, cholera and dysentery. It is estimated that ten times more men died from these diseases than from their injuries. When the nurses arrived at the hospital, the army doctors did not want them helping, and Florence realised that if the doctors were going to let her nurses work, they had to do an exemplary job. The women had to aim higher and be seen, if not acknowledged, to be excellent at their work.

As with all good nursing practice, the starting point was to make the hospital more hygienic and ensure the wounded were clean, fed and clothed, treating them with dignity and respect, regardless of rank. Today we call this infection control and, even in those days, handwashing was central. This of itself did not lower the rising death toll, and in spite of the nurses' brave efforts, over four thousand deaths occurred in a single winter. In the spring of 1855, the British government sent a Sanitary Commission to investigate the conditions at Scutari. It was then discovered the Barrack Hospital was built over a sewer, meaning patients were drinking contaminated water. The hospital, along with other British army hospitals, was flushed out and ventilation

improved, consequently, the death rate began to fall from 42% – 2%.

When a portrait of Florence carrying a lamp around the wards appeared in the press, she quickly gained an army of die-hard 'Florence fans', whilst herself attempting to maintain a low profile by travelling as 'Miss Smith'.



The Lady with a Lamp

Florence Nightingale on her rounds in the Barrack hospital at Scutari during the Crimean war, 1855. Photograph: Illustrated London News Getty Images.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=the+lady+with+the+lamp>

Determined to curb such avoidable deaths, by using applied statistical methods, she made a case for eliminating the practices that contributed to the unsafe and unhealthy environment. Her work in analytic statistics saved lives.

With the backing of Queen Victoria, she persuaded the government to set up a Royal Commission into the health of the army. Leading statistician William Farr and John Sutherland, of the Sanitary Commission helped her analyse vast amounts of complex army data. The truth she uncovered was shocking – 16,000 of the 18,000 deaths were not due to battle wounds but to preventable diseases, spread by poor sanitation.

The Army had thought the men were convalescing, whilst in reality they were going into a mass grave. Her discovery very nearly killed her. Not only had she "killed" the dying soldiers, she felt she had betrayed her nurses from whom

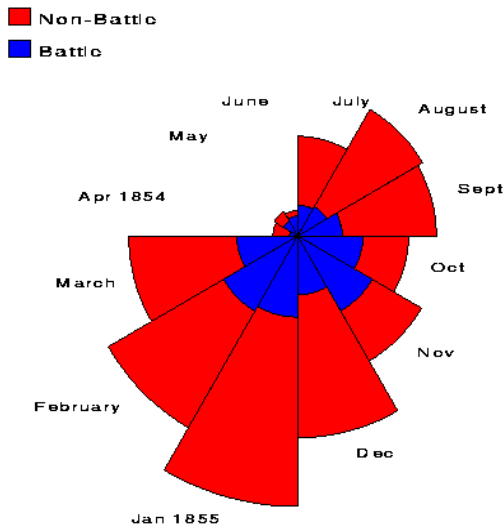
she had demanded total obedience. They had plotted together to steal food for the dying men and prolong their lives for a few days, and when their schemes failed the nurses were so distressed that the dying patients had to comfort them. Sadly, having analysed the overall statistics of Crimean deaths, she concluded she had been responsible for the deaths because she had failed to notify the Army of how many soldiers were dying in her hospital. Memories like these tortured Florence. She took to her bed and remained a reclusive invalid until she died, aged 90 in 1910, working 16 hours a day to save the millions of lives in England that would be needed to pay off her imaginary debt. Although this information has largely been ignored, she tried to destroy her own reputation by leaking information to the public that she had killed patients rather than curing them. Surviving leaked copies of this report are now the only source of this data. The Government hushed up her findings and the public enquiry she led was a sham. As recently as 1974 the Director- General of the Army Medical Department claimed that hospital conditions had nothing to do with the soldier's deaths!

Rather than lists or tables, Florence made this information more accessible to the public by representing the death toll in a revolutionary way. Her 'rose diagram', now known as a pie chart, showed a sharp decrease in fatalities following the work of the Sanitary Commission – deaths decreased by 99% in a single year. The diagram was so easy to understand it was widely republished and the public understood the army's failings and the urgent need for change. In light of Florence's work, new army medical, sanitary science and statistics departments were established to improve healthcare. Consequently, she is recognised as one of the most prominent statisticians in history.

In her analysis of the Crimean War, the chart was divided evenly into 12 slices representing months of the year, with the shaded area of each month's slice proportional to the death rate that month. Her colour-coding indicated the cause of death in each area of the diagram.



**Causes of Mortality in the Army in the East
April, 1854 to March 1855**



From: F. Nightingale, "Notes on Matters Affecting the Health, Efficiency and Hospital Administration of the British Army", 1858

<http://www.florence-nightingale-avenging-nigel.co.uk/GraphicsPaper/Graphics.html>

https://datamining.typepad.com/data_mining/2005/11/gallery_of_data.html

In 1860 The Nightingale Training School for Nurses was established at St Thomas' Hospital as part of Florence's campaign to transform nursing and health care. One of the pillars of making such change was to ensure the workforce was highly skilled, and Florence's school was the first non-religious institution to provide professional nurse training. The school is now part of King's College London.



Nightingale School
of Nursing
graduating class of
1886

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence_Nightingale

By the 1880s, scientific knowledge had advanced to further support her reforming ideas. Like many medical practitioners, she now accepted germ theory, and so emphasised the need for uncontaminated water supplies for people in India. She campaigned for famine relief and improved sanitary conditions to combat a high death toll that she believed was caused by conditions akin to those she'd witnessed in Scutari. Florence received reports from India until 1906.

In 1907, in recognition of her work, Florence became the first woman to receive the award of Order of Merit, named 'the

most exclusive club in the world' having only 24 members at any one time.

In 1910, Florence died, aged 90. She chose to be buried with her family in the churchyard of the peaceful little country church of St. Margaret of Antioch, East Wellow, near her home of Embley Park. Her grave is marked by a simple obelisk with the letters FN engraved on one face.



I still make a visit to respect Miss. Nightingale when I visit the resting place of my aunt in this peaceful place.

I find it sad that there does not appear to be any public memorial in recognition of those original 38 Nightingale nurses, 11 of whom died of illness. They were the ones who rolled up their sleeves but the only record of the total of 229 Crimean nurses is housed in the Nightingale Museum, they remain publicly unsung and deserve a far wider recognition and honour. In the days of a high academic requirement for nursing training, my respect goes to these ladies.
<http://himetop.wikidot.com/florence-nightingale-tomb>

References <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/florence-nightingale-saving-lives-with-statistics/zjksmfr>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/historical-notes-wisdom-florence-nightingale-1174505.html>

Footnote

In the light of the announcement that H.M. The Queen has awarded the NHS the highest possible civilian honour of

The George Cross, I felt it was appropriate to dedicate this item to those Heroine's (I make no apology for using the female adjective – it is of their time), who were in the vanguard of this incredible institution.

The award recognises **“acts of the greatest heroism or of the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of extreme danger.”** And who can deny that has been the case across all NHS, and emergency service staff, in the past eighteen months, as it was also at Scutari. The NHS joins Malta, and the Royal Ulster Constabulary as one of the three collective awards by the Monarch.

Having read the transcript of the Scutari nursing roll, I see that the death rate was around 12 and nearly 30 were sent home because of illness. One lady got engaged to a soldier and another one was pregnant. 3 were considered too old for the job at ages 43-54!! Miss. Nightingale made some very pointed remarks on conduct, both good and bad, and it would seem there was – quite understandably – some problem with insobriety among the nurses.



Medieval Building Myths: Folklore and Archaeology of History Buildings 10th May 2021 - James Wright FSA - Steve Taylor May 2021

There are many misconceptions about some aspects of medieval buildings. Although they have little basis in fact, they are often deep-rooted in folklore.

This phenomenon was the subject of a talk by James Wright, a Buildings Archaeologist with a particular fascination for castles, although his work covers a wide range of buildings from the 11th to the 20th centuries. The WARG lecture looked at three case studies from a forthcoming publication on that

topic, i.e., Secret Passages, Arrow sharpening grooves and Spiral Staircases.

His interest in Urban Myths was raised by a book published in the USA entitled “Made to Stick” written by Chip Heath and Dan Heath.



Although their subject covered more than historical urban myths, they found some common themes in all of them. Generally, the myths were very simple but credible, had memorable elements of the unexpected and played on elements of nostalgia.

In the case of Secret Passages, the myths often had an element of scandal attached. Passages between a hermitage and a pub, a manor house and a nunnery, or a rectory and a brothel all had a whiff of illicit and scandalous behaviour in them. One example of such a passage is found in the town of Stone in Staffordshire (his home town) where a medieval priory is linked to an alleged passage whose entrance lies under a church nearly two miles away. Like many such myths, this one has some antiquity being first mentioned in print by Mr Arblaster, a local antiquarian, in 1719. An 1834 history repeats this legend but both sources were repeating hearsay not relying on first-hand observation. For more on this ‘myth’ you can visit

<https://triskeleheritage.triskelepublishing.com/mediaeval-mythbusting-blog-4-monks-miners-myths-secret-passages-the-catholic-revival/>

The myth is probably linked to the Heveningham family who lived in a local moated manor house and who were

recusant Catholics who survived the dissolution of the monasteries. This ancient link was revived in the 19th century by Catholic emancipation and the local discovery in 1839 of the bones of St Chad, radiocarbon dated to the 7th century. All this added credence to the myth of the medieval passage. Although there is a medieval vault under the church there is no sign of a passage and there has to be some significant doubt about its existence not just because of the distance involved but the fact that a tunnel would have to pass under the river Trent, a challenge even for modern engineers.

However, pouring the cold water of practicability on these myths does not suppress their popularity. Authors such as Enid Blyton, well-known books such as “Wind in the Willows” and the fascinating story of “The Weirdestone of Brisingamen” by Alan Garner all use elements of such passages in their accounts. Of course, there are tunnels extant such as at Ashby castle in Leicestershire but they are very short and have utilitarian explanations.



Ashby Castle and the sunken gardens

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashby_de_la_Zouch_Castle

Another widely held myth relates to arrow stones, particularly at medieval churches such as Holy Trinity (Lambley, Notts) and St James (Aslackley, Lincs). There are clear traces of multiple grooves around the edges of windows and other accessible stone surfaces. These are traditionally believed to be the places where medieval archers sharpened their arrowheads. Traces of such grooves by known battlefield sites reinforce this interpretation, such

as Stoke Golding by the site of Bosworth. Closeness to old archery butts is also cited as evidence as at Chelmsford.

Holy Trinity Church Lambley arrow stones



<https://historytheinterestingbits.com/tag/templar-graffiti/>

Closer scrutiny of these claims does not offer any supporting evidence. As long ago as 1545 an account by Roger Ascham related that archers carried their own whetstone for sharpening purposes, not relying on buildings which were often inconveniently distanced from the point of use.



Early Medieval Whetstone

Further, where archery butts were concerned the arrows were not sharpened, blunt tips being adequate for archery practice.

<https://museum.wales/collections/online/object/88b72831-bc3c-34ae-a98a-b1fa1b85dc82/>

Where there are clear grooves evident, cf. Lambley above, the stone is far too fine grained to be of any use as a whetstone.

Alternative explanations for the grooves are offered by evidence that the stone fragments and dust from venerated tombs were held to have healing properties and that the

marks were due to the efforts of pious believers to obtain such potent material. This sort of evidence is cited in the cases of the tombs of St Hugh of Lincoln and Simon de Montfort at Evesham.

The third case study relates to the phenomenon of spiral staircases in medieval building which ascend with a clockwise twist. The myth is that this direction of staircase rotation is a deliberate defensive ploy on the part of the builders, in that it allowed the upstairs defender to give his right, weapon-bearing arm, the room to attack those ascending.

Widely reiterated in guidebooks and by guides, this is another myth which does not bear close inspection. An analysis of castle architecture shows that 30% of castles with spiral staircases have anti-clockwise rotation. These contrary castles include Norwich castle and the White Tower in the Tower of London, both dating from the Norman Conquest. Such “anti” architecture is also found in all the impressive Welsh castles erected by Edward I in his attempt to subdue to turbulent Welsh.

A further doubt about the accuracy of the myth is cast by a closer understanding of the nature and purpose of castles. Although they appear to be impressive military structures, the prime intention was often to be a residence which impressed visitors and locals. It was not envisaged that they would be the scenes of military engagement. In fact, many castles such as Bodiam in Sussex and Cooling in Kent are totally inadequate as defensive structures .

Recent studies, such as ones by Charles Coulson in 1979 and Charles Ryder in 2011 argue persuasively that the castles are displays of status not military structures. Earlier support for the myth by T.A. Cook in 1902 seems to have lain more in a fascination with spirals of all sorts and a love of fencing (the

form of fighting that was most likely to occur on staircases) and this particular myth was reinforced by the sight of Basil Rathbone and Errol Flynn vigorously fencing in a cinematic account of Robin Hood in 1938.



Although not included in the main part of the lecture, the follow-up questions opened up the topic of another

<https://www.cmrp.com/blog/bending/circular-staircases-up-right-or-up-left.html>

myth covered in his book, that of “Burn Marks”. These marks dating from an era where no electricity or gas was available for illumination, are commonly held to provide evidence for carelessness in the use of naked flames on candles or tapers which, unattended, could burn an adjacent surface. Some experimental archaeology has shown that such an explanation does not work in practice. To create the burn marks shown as evidence requires the candle or taper by held at an angle of 45 degrees to the surface and that it be held in that position for a significant time. The further doubt about the “careless” explanation is that these marks are sometimes found in places which would not be sensible for sources of illumination. Explanations for the burn mark phenomenon are not clear cut. Other possibilities include religious or superstitious origins.

Afterthought - Surely whether a spiral staircase is clockwise or anticlockwise depends on whether you are going up or down? Ed.



How I know about the Southampton Brick Marks - Janet Backhouse

In the May flyer I promised to reveal primary evidence of the brick marks to be found in Southampton. As a child in the 1950s, on Saturday mornings during term time I attended the Southampton School of Music and Drama, but



my delight was during the school holidays, to be able to join my friends as an 'ABC Minor', and go to Saturday morning pictures at the old Broadway cinema in Portswood. We would line up, several deep, down the side of the cinema, waiting impatiently for the doors to

open. The girls, of course, were very well behaved. We exchanged gossip and generally talked 'nineteen to the dozen' about our week and what we would be doing for the rest of the weekend. The boys, not so, they found other ways to pass the time. Regardless of James' comments on the intellectual acuity of 'bored kids' we girls simply regarded the boys as persons to be ignored as they were 'thick as two short planks', (a term probably 'politically incorrect' these days) as they could find nothing better to do with the wait than vandalism, although, I doubt we even understood that word at the time.

Their main activity seemed to involve the brick wall of the cinema and the entrance fee. By pressing a coin against the brick and twisting it from side to side, they could achieve a very neat depression. The taller the boy the higher up the wall – so to speak.

With an entrance fee of 6d (denarius or old pence, whichever you prefer) this created depressions the size of a farthing, ha'penny, penny, thrupence or sixpence. Although the thrupence did not work quite as well because it was six sided.



The red brick wall alongside which we queued in anticipation of the next episodes of Flash Gordon, Batman and Bugs Bunny – nothing particularly for girls, but that did not bother us.

<http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/21344>

Simon Overton writes of the Broadway Cinema at 154 Portswood Road, that *'From 6th January 1936 it became part of the Associated British Cinemas (ABC) circuit. The ever-popular ABC Minors Club presented Saturday morning programmes for children for the price of six-pence and some of their names are clearly seen carved in the brickwork while they queued outside.'*

I hasten to say, I was not there until many years later when



the tradition had changed. Simon gives no names, possibly to protect the guilty!

Pre decimal coins which would get you into Saturday morning pictures. [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)

The ABC Minors' song

The song was sung to the band music 'Blaze Away'. The words were as follows.

We are the boys and girls well known as Minors of the ABC,

And every Saturday all line up to see the films we like,
and shout aloud with glee

We like to laugh and have a singsong such a happy
crowd are we.

We're all pals together. We're minors of the A-B-C.

The final line was shouted at full blast - especially the A-B-C.

Hands up those who remember singing this and did you manage to resist the temptation to sing along as you read the words?



More than just a Roman roadside settlement at Wickham - A presentation by Clare Randall, Senior Publications Officer, Cotswold Archaeology – Edwina Cole

Although she was new to this project, Clare gave us a fascinating insight into the excavations at Southwick Road, Wickham. Located on the south-eastern outskirts of Wickham on the site of Wickham manor, earlier investigations showed Roman activity. Sadly, post excavation work was interrupted by the pandemic, so there is still work to do and publication is expected in the future.

We already knew about the Roman road running from Bitterne to Chichester with a turning to Winchester. Prehistoric flint finds have been found scattered in the area, along with quite a lot of Bronze Age material. The site was bisected by the Roman road, close to where the road crosses the river and near the turning to Winchester.

In 2003 the Wickham manor complex with a moat was discovered. This was followed by a geophysical survey. Evaluation trenches followed, and the central area became the site of the main excavation.

Clare then gave us a brief chronology of the site.

There is evidence of very early activity with a tree throw revealing remnants of dispersed Mesolithic activity. A Bronze Age barrow and burials were found. This discovery was of some interest, but such finds were few and far between. This gives rise to thinking that maybe this was a point in the landscape that was important before the Roman period. There is no particular evidence of funerary activity, but there is clear evidence of burnt or cremated material. A bucket urn has been found, but final details of its contents etc have yet to emerge when the post excavation work can be completed.

The Road.

The road is slightly off the projected line of the road. A hollow way has cut into the road surface, revealing Romano-British material. This suggests it was a well-worn road and indications are that it had been repaired. Well-constructed and well used over time, it is 23 metres across at its greatest extent. There are no clear roadside ditches, and some have wondered if it was expanded in the 2nd century.

A second parallel track-way runs alongside, clearly flanked by boundary ditches and postholes. There is a lot of complexity here!

The settlement.

Also found were a number of enclosures with structures held within them, which makes up the settlement.

There are well laid out parcels of land and timber-built structures. These would appear to be pretty substantial with robust post pits. There are no in situ floor levels, so it's difficult to work out the exact nature or use of these structures. Enclosures are complicated, dated to 1st/2nd century AD. In the southern corner there is a clear recutting of one ditch. It is thought that livestock may have been managed here, but animal bone is very limited, so this is by no means certain.

Other features denote a second phase of Roman activity, but by the 3rd century it was slipping out of use.

Wells and water holes appear later. They are quite large and indicate an interest in the provision of water. One such is a timber lined well, suggesting a need for clean water. There may be a wattle lining and the wood used is oak. This is not suitable for dendrochronology, and radiocarbon dating is not so helpful for dating finds from the Roman period.

Other finds include notched pieces of wood, which lock over one another and lay on top of another robust structure. A lot of effort had gone into creating it.

3 fragments of a wooden writing tablet were found. It was well used and actual letters may be able to be deciphered.

A shoe has been found and some conservation has already taken place. It is made of leather and was waterlogged.

A range of pottery has also been discovered, and in 2003 the remains of 3 possible kilns were found. Most is normal domestic material.

There is a higher degree of material from a distance away, but this will need further investigation, and quite a range of fine wares. Samian is showing the earliest dates, but most is from the 2nd century AD.

There is some ceramic building material, but this is surprising if the buildings were made of wood. Could it be hard-core?

There is no real evidence of a thriving commercial place. There is some limited smithing activity but not very much.

Some coins were found; Denarii of Septimius Severus AD (193-211),

Dupondius of Trajan AD (112-114), together with a few personal effects including a 2nd century brooch.

It is felt that the site may have been going out of use in the 3rd/4th centuries.

There is some evidence of bustum cremations, where a large pit is dug. Layers of wood are placed in the pit and the body is put on the top. When burnt, the whole lot falls into the pit beneath. You would expect to find remains in the order in which they were laid, but the fragments of human remains are very small. There are some structural elements, but the contents are not what would have been expected. It may be that some elements have been borrowed from this tradition, but not totally.

Interpreting Wickham.

It is a roadside settlement, related to traffic on the road travelling between Bitterne, Winchester and Chichester.

Thanks were expressed to the team who worked on this project. Publication is expected in the future.

A number of questions were asked following the presentation.

Why wattle-line a well? The team are not sure and are waiting for a wood specialist to report back to them.

Is the road soft and damp? It may have sunk, making a second track necessary.

Why so little animal bone? Possibly because of soil conditions. The countryside was supplying the towns so animals may have been moved to supply other areas.

Why so many wells? The river may not have been a good source of drinking water, and used only for animals. There isn't much evidence for processes needing water.

Why was Wickham important? Need to look at the context of the Meon valley. It's a really good location for moving stuff around, especially near the road junction.



Dorset Natural History Society – Chickerell Medieval Manor House

For those of you who have been on the Barton Stacey digs, you may be interested in the research on the manor at Chickerell, recently published by the Dorset Natural History Society.

In case some members are unaware the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological society recently published a monograph all about the excavations of a medieval manor

at Chickerell. This will be of interest to anyone associated with the excavations over the past few years at Barton Stacey.

Link to the publication is

<https://dorsetcountymuseum.org/new-monographs-dewlish-roman-villa-and-excavations-of-a-medieval-site-at-lower-putton-lan>



Julia's Jottings

Get your piano tuned regularly!

Finding gold or silver hoards seems to be relatively usual these days but one hoard knocks the spots off all those. A piano tuner in a Shropshire college found to his amazement that the reason the piano sounded so weird when played was because 7 cloth packets and a leather drawstring purse containing over 900 gold and silver sovereigns were stashed amongst the hammers. The piano had been given to the college by a couple who were downsizing and needed to get rid of the piano. The coins dated from 1847 to 1915, numbered 633 full sovereigns and 280 half sovereigns, and have been deemed the largest stash of their kind. The find has been valued at half a million pounds and equivalent to over 6kg of gold bullion – some people have all the luck!

Age isn't the most important thing!

An ancient fort in Aberdeenshire, long believed to be Bronze or Iron Age, has been revealed as one of the largest Pictish settlements of the late and post-Roman periods. It appears to have had 800 dwelling platforms, housing up to 4,000 people. This area is well-known for its concentration of Pictish stones carved with symbols and drawings. The settlement appears to have had timber buildings enclosed

by ditches, as well as banks and an elaborate wall made of oak posts and planks. Finds include shards of late Roman amphorae, shards of glass beakers, and one of the largest collections of metalworking from early medieval Britain. This included moulds for making pins and brooches, as well as tiny animal figurines. Also, in the area they found Pictish burial mounds and the partially preserved remains of an adult female. This fort, the second highest in the country, is an excellent example of a vitrified fort – i.e., destroyed by fire. This fort is surrounded by a massive 16-hectare enclosure, which is itself the second largest hillfort in northern Britain.

So, age isn't necessarily the most important aspect of a site!

An Unusual Find

As you'll be well aware, it's not particularly unusual to dig up old coins, many going back to Roman times, but one such discovery in a Hampshire field (no other details available!) is extremely unusual and therefore most interesting. It's a Chinese copper alloy "cash" coin of the Northern Song dynasty dating from 1008-1016, but a type that remained in wide circulation in China for several hundred years. Being the second Chinese coin to have been found in a medieval context, the experts feel that it was most likely a medieval loss and not dropped by a modern collector. Since China is so far away from Britain, one can speculate what a tale it could tell of its journey from there to here!

Another Anglo-Saxon cemetery comes to light

A large Anglo-Saxon cemetery has been unearthed in Northamptonshire, uncovering a spectacular array of finds spanning over 4000 years. 154 Saxon burials contained nearly 3000 beautiful grave goods such as various kinds of jewellery, beads, chatelaines, spears, knives, shield bosses,

cosmetic kits and combs. Also, some rare pieces of textile which had been mineralised as a result of their proximity to metal objects. Also uncovered has been an Anglo-Saxon settlement of 22 structures and a further 20 buildings scattered around the site. Prehistoric evidence included 3 Bronze Age round barrows, 46 prehistoric burials and 4 Bronze Age buildings. All as a result of more and more house building.

Another Early Bronze Age Tomb

A farm in East Kennett, Wiltshire has revealed an underground megalithic tomb, believed to be around 4,500 years old. It's also believed there may be more in the field. The burial chamber was revealed when the Sarsen capstone collapsed and a small sink hole appeared. The chamber is not very big and is lined with a series of unworked sarsen stones. Given its proximity to Avebury and Silbury Hill, I don't think there's much of a surprise in its finding, but a whole field of these tombs would be something else indeed.



Book Reviews

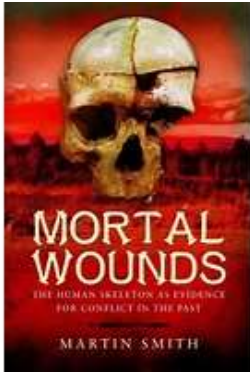
Mortal Wounds: The Human Skeleton As Evidence For Conflict In The Past.

**Martin Smith 2017 Pen & Sword Military ISBN1473823188
Published Price £25.00 – Steve Old**

For someone with an interest in Human remains this is a great addition to my research library, as well as being a fascinating read. Martin Smith approaches the subject in a no-nonsense factual way and takes the emotion out of the

subject by dealing with the facts as they are presented on the skeleton in front of him.

By examining both the evidence of the wound and the



probable weapon that would have caused the wound, Martin Smith brings together two emerging areas of archaeological study, military archaeology and osteoarcheology, but he does this in a seamless way that melds into a cohesive study.

This is not a book for everyone but if these subjects appeal, this is a very well written and researched book that is worth searching out.

Placing my Past – Iris Gould - Janet Backhouse

This book is privately published and can be obtained directly from Iris at irisgould42@gmail.com

Any of you will know Iris as one of our accomplished Scribes, writing up talks for the newsletters. During lockdown, Iris decided to forge ahead with a specific project, to leave a record of her family for future generations.

I guess, many of we family historians, like myself, have looked at our extensively constructed family trees – thank you Ancestry – and realised they are but a sterile record, with the occasional photograph or painting, of past generations of real people with interesting stories to tell. All too often one can regret not having explored and recorded these lives whilst the former generation was still with us.



Iris does not set out to record a family history as such, but sketches the trials and tribulations of an immigrant Ashkenazi Jewish family, fleeing from their homes, into an alien environment, with different traditions and language, where integration was synonymous with survival. She does not paint pictures of sweet old ladies and hardworking family men, but describes them, in

Oliver Cromwell's words, 'warts and all'. Desertions and fallings out were not unusual and the author herself reveals an adventurous life lived to the full. All too often we only get the 'public' view of a biography, here the people are real and vibrant.

I particularly enjoyed the section, 'Walthamstow and beyond'. It brought back many memories of my own childhood, BBC school programmes; school friends- now lost to history; school pens, the lump on the third finger of my right hand an enduring memory; being poor at games but an avid reader – more Biggles than Blyton; special teachers – Mrs. Bennett wearing her husband's RAF flying boots which the boys had to help pull off, and the Festival of Britain, where I was travel sick all over my mother just before reaching London. Past times are recorded lovingly, sweet rationing; Gobstoppers- yes, we all took them out to see the changing colours.

Also recorded is the changing community of London with Synagogues becoming Temples. A tidal wave which continues with world events and the view that Britain is a safe place to run when life is unbearable.

I very much appreciated having the opportunity to read Iris's book during the writing, and I would recommend this as the way to make the family tree much more relevant to future generations.



WARG Talks and Events

Saturday 21 August 2021

Summer picnic at Down Farm Wimborne St. Giles

August 25 – September 4 2021

The Big Dig 2021 – Hursley Park – More information below.

Monday 13 September 2021

'Recording of the Human Remains from the Winchester Cathedral Mortuary Chests' by Dr. Heidi Dawson-Hobbs, Lecturer University of Winchester

Monday 11 October 2021

AGM followed by 'The impact of the Black Death (1348-49) on the clergy of the Winchester Diocese' by PhD candidate John Merriman, University of Winchester

And 'Romano -British religious cults of the Sky Deities' by PhD candidate Danielle Sylvester, University of Winchester

Monday 8 November 2021

'Power by Design – How Hitler dictated his brand' by Charles Harris, International Speaker

Monday 3 December 2021

'Recent Work at Clarendon Palace and Park' by Dr. Amanda Richardson, Chichester University

Monday 10 January 2022 Potentially Via Zoom dependent on the weather

‘Winchester Cathedral Library Connections’ by Rosey Smith, Winchester Cathedral guide

Monday 14 February 2022 Via Zoom regardless of the weather

‘The Winchester Pageant of 1908’ by Brian Hague – WARG Member

Friday 25 February 2022– please note change of day

The June Lloyd Lecture Tickets Members £8

‘The Role of Women in Anglo-Saxon Wessex during the Conversion period’ by Dr. Helen Hamerow, Oxford University

Monday 14 March 2022

‘Recent Archaeological work at Winchester Cathedral’ by Dr. John Crook FSA, Archaeological Historian

Monday 11 April 2022

‘The Hursley Dig 2021

David Ashby, Researcher University of Winchester and Stuart Rippon WARG Dig Committee

Monday 9 May 2022

‘A Review of recent archaeological investigations in Southampton’ by Dr. Andy Russell, Southampton City Council Archaeological Unit



The Big Dig is back 2021 WARG Excavation Digging at IBM Hursley - 25th August to Saturday 4th September

The Annual Dig is back for 2021 so please hold these dates in your diary. The Geophysics for the Elizabethan manor at the IBM Hursley site is very encouraging. More information will be forthcoming (once we know what is happening in the next stage of COVID unlocking) however we have a plan that would allow us to dig under the current rules as a worst case.

So please save the following dates: - **Set up on the 23rd and 24th August. Excavations start on the 25th August and will end on the weekend on the 5th September.**

For the small party that helps with the backfill and return of equipment we plan this to run from the 6th to the 9th September.

Booking in advance will be essential this year to ensure that we can conform to whatever COVID rules apply and as we expect a number of IBM Hursley personnel might want to take part.

Once the rules are a little clearer, we will send out application forms.

You can register for a whole day, or separate morning or afternoon sessions. As in previous years, to help offset dig costs, we shall ask for a daily contribution of £10 for a full day (£5 half day) from diggers and £8 all day (£4 half-day) from finds processors. Advance payment can be by cheque payable to WARG, by direct bank transfer or cash on the day. Payment detail will be on the forthcoming booking form.



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HUGS ARE BACK

