

## East Dorset Antiquarian Society

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*Established 1983*

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### NEWSLETTER – September 2015



## DRUCE FARM ROMAN VILLA

### FINAL OPEN DAY

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2015

10.30am – 3.15pm

More information: [www.dorset-archaeology.org.uk](http://www.dorset-archaeology.org.uk)

### DORSET ARCHAEOLOGICAL AWARDS 2015

EDAS has submitted the Druce Farm Roman Villa excavation for this prestigious biennial award.

This is the third time we have made a submission: in 2011 we submitted the excavation at Worth Matravers, when we came second, and in 2013 we were asked to submit the Druce Farm Roman Villa, even though we thought it was a little too soon. We were not placed but it did introduce us to Sir Barry Cunliffe who was impressed and has since become patron for the site.

We will make the submission report available on our website in the near future.

**COUNCIL FOR INDEPENDENT ARCHAEOLOGY**  
**- CONFERENCE 2015 –**

**Hosted by EDAS**

**Saturday 19th September 2015**  
**9:30am—5:00pm**

at

**East Dorset Heritage Trust,  
Allendale House,  
Hanham Road,  
Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 1AS**

**Programme**

- Lilian Ladle: Druce Farm Roman Villa
- Professor Tim Darvill: Planning and Local Communities
- Philippe Planel: Foundations of Archaeology Project, run by Cranborne Chase AONB
- Hayley Roberts : The Relationship between Professional Archaeologists and Local Societies.
- Katherine Barker: Dorset County Boundary Survey
- Bob Randall : The new Mk2 Resistivity Meter
- Steve Clark : The Lost Lake of Monmouth.
- Advanced Geophysical Resistivity Interpretation
- The AGM of The Council for Independent Archaeology

The weekend will include an optional Saturday evening reception at the Priest House Museum, and a visit to EDAS Roman Villa at Druce Farm near Puddletown on Sunday morning. A lunch provided by No 9 Restaurant is included in the ticket price.

**Pre-booking only (£20 inc all refreshments and Sat. Lunch) contact:**  
**K.Foster, 2 The Watermeadows, Swarkestone, Derby. DE73 7FX**  
**(Tel 01332 704148)**

Further details from CIA - [www.independents.org.uk](http://www.independents.org.uk)

## EDAS FIELD TRIP 2015 – East Anglia, organised by Keith and Denise Allsopp

This year the EDAS Field Trip was based in Bury St Edmund's, Suffolk. There was an encouraging turnout of 25 members, including seven first-timers. Keith and Denise (and yes she did dress like this all week) had arranged a very diverse itinerary including several sites of national importance, that all antiquarians should visit, as well as a number of delightful surprises. As usual local experts were willing to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with our group, something that makes these trips so very special.

The first visit was to West Stow, a recreated Anglo-Saxon village based on the footprints of original buildings, set in the distinctive Brecks landscape. Whilst the site is now offered as a tourist destination, it is foremost a place of experimental archaeology with an international reputation. Here experts have attempted to recreate long lost wooden structures, using techniques that can be better understood through practical application of authentic tools and materials. The original village supported a community of about 50 people, it was without defences and the buildings were well spread out, creating a very attractive living space.



*A timber framed residence*



*Neat and simple locking device*



*Icklingham Parish Church with thatched roof.*

It was suggested the occupants worked their fields communally. There is a Romano-British settlement in the near vicinity but this has yet to be excavated and its relationship to the Saxon settlement is not known. The attached museum was very interesting with a large number of superb finds that were well displayed.

On Monday we explored the charming market town of Bury St Edmunds. Here Keith demonstrated the depth of his research as he explained how the abbey had developed from Saxon times through to the Dissolution of the Monasteries. He told us about King Edmund, who in AD 869 had unsuccessfully fought against the Great Heathen Army led by Ivar the Boneless, how Edmund refused the Danes' demand that he renounce Christ, and suffered the consequences when the Danes shot him with arrows and removed his head. For his sacrifice he later became the first patron saint of England. The abbey is located within the town, and has magnificent walls which now enclose a park featuring remnants of the extensive buildings that once formed one of the richest abbeys in England.



*Bury St Edmund's Abbeygate*



*St Edmund, sculpture by Elizabeth Frink*



*A well used gibbet*

The Abbeygate building was reconstructed after destruction during the Peasants' Revolt of 1327, but the monastery could not survive Henry. These are chalklands and stone is very precious so it was enthusiastically



stripped by the townspeople, leaving stubs of walls and pillars made of flint nodules, secured by lashings of mortar. In the afternoon we visited the Moyse's Hall Museum housed in a building from the 12th century. It has a varied past serving as the town gaol, workhouse and police station. Within were a wide range of local artefacts that document the foundation of the early town - from the creation and dissolution of the Abbey, to prison paraphernalia and artefacts providing intriguing insights into superstition and witchcraft. There was a display about the Suffolk Regiment. There is something intriguing about county regiments, the cocept stretch back to Saxon times, and their list of battle honours remind us how the British Empire was created. I noticed that the Suffolks fought in the New Zealand campaigns, the little remembered Maori Wars.

In the evening we enjoyed a real treat, a talk by Dr Richard Hoggett entitled Discovering Palaeolithic East Anglia. Very knowledgeable and a natural communicator, he explained that archaeology in East Anglia is well served by a team of ten field archaeologists who are independent but well employed to further local heritage. He explained the local landscape and how it has developed through the Pleistocene, from the west with the Fen basin and the Edge of the Fens, and the poor land through to the coast. He covered the ground breaking work of John Frere, a pioneer who identified Palaeolithic artefacts, especially the Hoxne handaxe (c. 400k ya) first published in 1792. Richard mentioned a number of other important sites that pushed back the presence of mankind in Britain, with High Lodge (c. 500k ya), Pakefield (c. 700k ya) and eventually Happisburgh (c. 900k ya). He explained that at Happisburgh volunteers are very important to watch for new geological layers exposed by relentless coastal erosion. But this is a job only for the very conscientious, one keen volunteer had found six flakes in context but it had taken him over six years. These finds have significantly changed our understanding of human occupation in Britain. He also mentioned the amazing find of footprints from a party of three adults and two children; once exposed they lasted only for two weeks but were electronically scanned to enable detailed research, they have since been identified as belonging to Homo antecessors c. 800k ya.

The following day we travelled to Grimes Graves, a landscape with over 400 flint mines, resembling bomb craters. The first mine was probably worked over 5000 years ago and they continued to be exploited through the Iron Age and possibly later. It was really interesting to climb to the bottom of the one open mine, the workers must have been tough and of small stature. At the bottom of the 30 metre mine shaft the chalk walls glistened with jet black flint, small galleries ran at angles, suggesting places where children worked.



*Vanessa providing scale to a mine opening, yes it was huge!*



*David climbs up from the bottom*



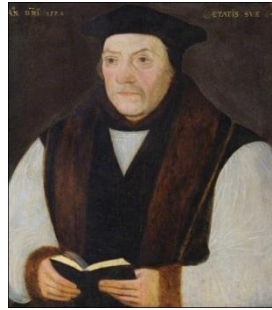
*Thomas Paine and friend*

Tuesday afternoon we visited Thetford, a charming old town with a well curated local museum, where we were well received. It proudly presents a statue to locally born Thomas Paine, one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, his ideas helped develop principles of human rights. A town with many fascinating old buildings, set on the quiet river Thet, but the town is in a state of change and had a certain sadness about it.

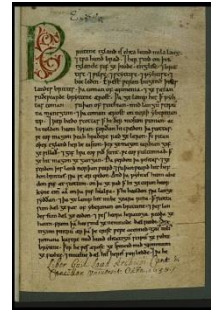
To many in the party, Wednesday was the highlight of the week, when we went to Cambridge where Keith had arranged a visit to the library at Corpus Christi College. This could have been a rather dry experience but no, we were met by a young scholar, with flouncy hair and a confident smile, he was the assistant curator. He enthusiastically led us off, past enormous canvas marquees, being erected in the quad for end of term celebrations, and into his private world of treasures. Our host appeared to enjoy himself as much as his guests as he entertained and informed us with an endless stream of anecdotes, demonstrating his great depth of knowledge about the library and its treasures. The Parker Library of Corpus Christi is found on the first-floor, and is still in use today, it contains bookcases dating from the late 16th/early 17th centuries.



*"Once upon a time there was a little....."  
the group enthralled*



*Archbishop Matthew Parker*



*AS Chronicle*

It is a treasure house of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts and early printed books. It is named after its greatest benefactor, Archbishop Matthew Parker (1504-1575), who was a former master of the College. He donated over 480 manuscripts and around 1000 printed volumes to the college in 1574, including the sixth-century Gospels of St Augustine, the oldest manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the best manuscript of Chaucer's Troilus. His was an astute appointment by Queen Elizabeth who instructed him to promote the legitimacy of the Church of England to minimise the chances of religious conflict that had occurred since the death of her father. No less important to the collection are the Middle English, French and Latin texts on subjects ranging from alchemy and astrology to music and medicine. The whole collection comprises over 600 manuscripts. Another important document is the sixth-century Gospel book from Canterbury, which is used for the enthronement of each new Archbishop of Canterbury, the oldest illustrated Latin Gospel book now in existence. Sponsored by Mellon Bank digital photos have been taken of almost every page of every manuscript in the Parker Library and the images can be viewed online at [Parker Library on the Web](http://www.parkerlib.org). Our considerate host had even displayed for us an early edition of History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset, by John Hutchins. The rest of the day was spent with Keith and Denise showing us round the pleasant buildings and sites of Cambridge, weaving in and around the bright eyed students.

Thursday, so it must be Flag Fen. The site was first discovered in 1982 when a team led by Francis Pryor carried out a survey of dykes in the area. By chance he stumbled upon Flag Fen when he tripped on a piece of wood lying in the bottom of a drainage ditch. He soon recognised a manmade trackway that once ran across the Flag Fen Basin. Here there was a depression of low lying land on the western margins of the Fens which suffered from rising sea level which led the occupants to construct a timber causeway. The causeway and central platform were built by driving thousands of wooden posts with sharpened ends through the peaty muds and into the firmer ground below. The resulting structure covered three and a half acres. Dendrochronological analysis, led to an estimated date for the various stages of construction as between 1365–967 BC.



*Section of Trackway being preserved*



*Bronze Age round house, same features as my rented cottage: timber frame, wattle and daub walls, thatched roof*



*Oldest surviving wheel in England.*

Some of the timbers, such as oak, were not natural in the local environment, so the builders made a significant effort to transport the timbers from distant sources. Many items denoting rank and prestige were deposited in the water surrounding Flag Fen, including swords, spearheads, gold earrings, tiny pins and brooches. There is evidence of intentional destruction before placement, with daggers broken in half placed on top of each other. By the early Roman period, most of the structure was covered and preserved. The anaerobic conditions in the waterlogged soil prevented the timbers and other wooden objects from rotting away.

Excavation commenced in the summer of 1984 and by 1990 had revealed vertical and horizontal timbers, animal bones, a bronze dagger and other metal items and fragments, flint implements and many potsherds. Further finds included items imported from continental Europe and the oldest surviving wooden wheel found in England.

Around 2 kms south of Flag Fen, further archaeological finds have been discovered at Must Farm. In 2011–2012, eight Bronze Age log boats were discovered, deposited in a small freshwater palaeochannel and were preserved due to waterlogging. Radiocarbon dating has indicated that the ages of these boats spanned a period of about 1000 years, with the earliest examples dating to around 1,750–1650 BC. Some of the boats may have been deliberately sunk. They are now being preserved at Flag Fen and were on view. Bronze Age woven wooden fish traps and wattle-hurdle fish weirs were found in the same channel, together with metalwork including swords and spears

Friday started with a visit to Lavenham, in Suffolk. It is a riot of 15th-16<sup>th</sup> century half-timbered medieval cottages, which spring organically all over this small town. In the medieval period it was among the 20 wealthiest settlements in England, forging its wealth from the wool trade in the 15th and 16th century, with the town's blue broadcloth being a special product, the denim of its time.



*Hold me up don't let me fall!*



*Local Estate Agents*



*Even the schools are a little old fashioned in Long Melford*

Its period of supremacy did not last and cheaper imports from Europe saw its decline, and by 1600 it was no longer a major trading town. This sudden and dramatic change to the town's fortune is the principal reason why so many medieval and Tudor buildings remain unmodified; subsequent generations did not have the wealth required to rebuild in the latest styles. Several photographs in the local museum show that by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the town was very dilapidated and it would not have taken much effort to destroy this precious heritage, but local people respected their buildings and gradually they have been carefully restored.

In the afternoon we visited Long Melford, one of the longest villages in England, and we were taken round by two enthusiastic members of the thriving local history and archaeology society, which has its own premises. The village is a string development along the road and is over three miles long. Prehistoric finds discovered in 2011 have shown that early settlement dates back to the Mesolithic period, up to 8300 BC. In addition, Iron Age finds were found within the central area of the village. The Romans constructed two roads through Melford, the main one running from Chelmsford to Pakenham. Roman finds in recent years included complete skeletons, a stone coffin, and part of the original Roman Road. In June 2013, some archaeological evidence of a Saxon and Bronze Age settlement in the northern area of the village was discovered by students from Cambridge University.

Keith held back the biggest surprise of the week to last when we met in The White Hart Inn, Newmarket, for the Final Supper. Traditionally this is when the chairman sends everyone to sleep by praising the organisers for all the effort they have expended for our benefit. But Keith had other thoughts and decided to hold the event in a pub where the local youngsters prepare themselves for a "good" night out. The music was unusual being devoid of notes and melody, just electronic explosions of noise... boomb...boomb...boomb.....grzzzzxxxxxsshhhh. The usual patrons ignored us and enjoyed their evening by shouting at each other but without malice. But the staff recognised our situation immediately and rose to the challenge by their attentiveness and cheerfulness, as though they were looking after friends of their grandparents who had turned left rather than right. Nevertheless the food was good, the company excellent, although I couldn't hear a word spoken, and the words of thanks were short but loud.....THANK YOU VERY MUCH DENISE AND KEITH.....Like all odd experiences this is one we will all remember and by which all future last suppers will be judged.



This was another excellent EDAS Field Trip and we all sincerely thank Keith and Denise for all their hard work preparing the trip. I hope they enjoyed the rest of the summer, and I pray we see them at the next meeting since they had plans to go mountain climbing.

**Andrew Morgan**

### **EDAS VISIT – Grove Prison, Portland**

EDAS members have been invited to enjoy a guided tour of the Grove Prison Museum, Portland. In November 1848, Portland's prison was opened its purpose was largely for the use of convict labour, to help construct the breakwaters of Portland Harbour and its various defences. The convicts, were to "undergo a period of probationary discipline and be employed in the construction of the breakwater prior to their removal to the Australian colonies." The terrible conditions, resulting in the death of many prisoners, would eventually result in penal reform in the UK. It later became a Borstal for Young Offenders.

We have yet to set a date so could anyone interested in viewing the Museum, which has free admission, please contact Karen on [karen.winsor757@btinternet.com](mailto:karen.winsor757@btinternet.com).

### **EAST DORSET ARCHAEOLOGY PLANNING GROUP – Pilot Project**

We are now reviewing planning applications from East Dorset District Council on a weekly basis. Between 1<sup>st</sup> May to 21<sup>st</sup> August we have examined 389 planning applications and of these we have identified 34 when we have recommended that an archaeological condition be applied. We inform Steve Wallis, the county archaeologist who is responsible for planning applications, of our recommendations.

Anybody with an interest in the exercise, whether to join us or with some practical experience that they would like to share, is encouraged to attend our occasional meetings which are held at:

**The Priest House Museum, Wimborne, the Learning Centre.**

**The most recent being 28th August 2015 at 2.30pm**

**For further information please contact Andrew Morgan, email: [andrewmorgz@aol.com](mailto:andrewmorgz@aol.com)**

## Cranborne Chase AONB - Foundations of Archaeology Project : Walk

The CCAONB have had their Heritage Lottery Funding approved and planning has started. The first event will be a walk on Cranborne Chase. Adrian Green, director of Salisbury Museum, will lead this 7-8 km walk:

**Sunday 13 September.**  
**Start time will be at 10.00.**

You can either bring your own lunch or have a pub lunch in the King John in Tollard Royal (the latter not cheap apparently). We aim to get back to the cars at about 16.00 but this will depend on our pace and how much talking we do along the way.

This walk will be a gentle introduction to the complex world of General Pitt-Rivers and will help us get a feel for the landscape he worked in. We will also pass within spitting distance of another of our three key sites, Winkelbury.

You will need to book onto this walk as we have to have some idea of numbers. Once you have let me know that you wish to participate I will give you the OS map reference and a Google map reference to the start point. You can bring friends/family who aren't on our contact list, but please let me have their names when you book.

You can book simply by email [philippeplanel@gmail.com](mailto:philippeplanel@gmail.com) or by leaving a voice or text message on my mobile: 07983279825. There is no charge for this event.

Serious footwear and weatherproof clothing are essential.

## FOUNDATIONS OF ARCHAEOLOGY

[www.ccwdaonb.org.uk/our-work/foundations-of-archaeology/](http://www.ccwdaonb.org.uk/our-work/foundations-of-archaeology/)



The Foundations of Archaeology Project celebrates the work of the pioneering archaeologists who first identified the rich upland archaeology of south Wiltshire and north east Dorset.



Sir Richard Colt Hoare  
(1758 - 1838)

Oversaw and bankrolled the investigation of archaeology in South Wiltshire in the early 19th Century. His talents and resources would have otherwise been employed in classical archaeology on the continent had the Napoleonic Wars not intervened.

Photo credit: National Trust Images



William Cunnington  
(1754 - 1810)

Colt Hoare's right hand man. He had a good reason for being out on the downs - his doctor said his medical condition demanded that he should 'ride out or die'. The result of Cunnington and Colt Hoare's efforts can be seen in two volumes called 'Ancient Wiltshire'

Courtesy of Swindon & Wiltshire History Centre



General Pitt-Rivers  
(1827 - 1900)

Based in the Cranborne Chase Pitt Rivers was able to refine archaeology as a scientific discipline and was not limited, as had been his predecessors in the early 19th century, by the Church of England view that the creation, and hence prehistory, began on 23 October 4004BC. He also was a fervent educationalist.

Courtesy of Swindon & Wiltshire History Centre

The project will train up volunteers to help further investigate and evaluate archaeological sites centred on three focus areas associated with these pioneers



Excavation of the Neolithic Wor Barrow (Crickley Down) by General Augustus Pitt Rivers

### Focus Area 1: Wor Barrow

Wor barrow is one of a number of earthen Neolithic long barrows on Cranborne Chase. Pitt Rivers excavations here were arguably his most ambitious. We will be helping improve the condition of the Wor Barrow and investigating the fields around it.



Earthen ramparts at the hillfort

### Focus Area 2: Winkelbury Hill

An Iron Age hillfort and associated sites excavated by Pitt-Rivers in 1881. Six refuse pits were found and the site of a hut with remains of wattle and daub recorded. We will investigate the area around the hillfort using geophysics.



Sketch of Stockton Works From 'Ancient Wiltshire' 1812

### Focus Area 3: Stockton Downs and Woods

Investigated by Colt Hoare, the area features Iron Age earthworks and a circular enclosure excavated several times. The area also contains a Roman settlement. We will reinvestigate the earthworks and explore the archaeology in the adjacent woodlands.

We have lots of volunteer opportunities starting Autumn 2015 to late Spring 2017 - including practical conservation on ancient sites; learning to undertake archaeological surveys; and following in the footsteps of the first archaeologists. No previous experience necessary - all ages welcome.

**Get Involved:** If you would like to get involved with the project as a volunteer or would simply like to know more then get in touch with us at [archaeology@wyvernheritage.co.uk](mailto:archaeology@wyvernheritage.co.uk) or 01747 870810 or 07983279825

Just ask for Emma or Phil





## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### 2015-2016 Programme

Date	Speaker	Title
Sat 5th Sept 2015	<b>OPEN DAY – Druce Farm Roman Villa</b> , see website for further details	
Wed 9th Sept 2015	Philip Beale FRGS	"The Phoenicians: First to circumnavigate Africa and reach the Americas? The Phoenicia ship expedition as an adventure in experimental archaeology"
Sun 13th Sept 2015	Walk led by Adrian Green	CCAONB Foundations of Archaeology walk across Cranborne Chase (see article in this newsletter).
Sat 19 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2015	<b>Council for Independent Archaeology 2015 Conference, to be held at the East Dorset Heritage Centre, Wimborne</b>	
Wed 14th Oct 2015	Donald Henson, University of York	"Between the lake and forest: Early post-glacial settlers at Star Carr"
Wed 11th Nov 2015	Martyn Barber, English Heritage	"The Battle for Stonehenge: the aerodrome, the monument and the landscape"
Wed 9th Dec 2015	Prof Tony King, Winchester University	"Two villas in Somerset and one in Hampshire: excavations at Dinnington, Yarford and Meonstoke and their contribution to Romano-British archaeology"
Wed 13th Jan 2016	Stephen Fisher Maritime Archaeology Trust	"Forgotten Wrecks of the First World War"
Wed 10th Feb 2016	Dr. John McNabb, Southampton University	"New Insights into Human Evolution"
Wed 9th Mar 2016	AGM	Members evening
Wed 13th Apr 2016	Jane Ellis-Schön Salisbury Museum	"Finding Pitt-Rivers"
Wed 11th May 2016	Dr Alex Langlands, Winchester University	"Mapping the Genius Loci: Exploring the Character of Space and Place in the Ordnance Survey"

**Note:** unless otherwise stated all lectures start at 7.30pm and are held at **St Catherine's Church Hall, Lewens Lane, Wimborne, BH21 1LE.**