

East Dorset Antiquarian Society

www.dorset-archaeology.org.uk

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Established 1983

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NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2016

EDAS APRIL MEETING

Please be reminded that the April Meeting will take place at Bournemouth University, see page 7 for details and map.

EDAS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We'd like to thank everyone who attended our 2016 AGM which was held on Wednesday 9th March, we were encouraged to find such a good turnout.

We offered our sincere appreciation to Helen Brickell, Jan Cosgrove and Dave Stewart who have stepped down this year and welcomed their replacements Sue Cullinane, David Hall and Jane Randall. The committee members are:

Andrew Morgan	Chairman
Vanessa Joseph	Communications Officer
Lilian Ladle	Director of Field Archaeology
Bryan Popple	Programme Secretary
Ian Richardson	Membership Secretary
Geoff Taylor	Secretary
Peter Walker	Treasurer
Sue Cullinane	Member
David Hall	Member
Robert Heaton	Member
Jane Randall	Member
Karen Winsor	Member

We thank EDAS members Edrys Lupprian and Keith Allsopp for their talks on the evening.

If you have any ideas for activities or ways to improve the society please contact one of the above.

EDAS Lecture: Evidence for a Beaker Settlement at Bryanston, Dorset

Bryanston School is located north-west of Blandford Forum in Dorset. Excavation by the Blandford Archaeology group and pupils from Bryanston School in summer 2014 discovered three Beaker pits on the north side of a chalk plateau, which drops steeply down to the river Stour whilst sloping more gently into a dry valley to the south. The pits were initially identified from a geophysical survey and revealed a collection of Beaker pottery, animal bone, worked and burnt flint and some carbonised plant material. They were excavated and half of each pit was removed as a sample for charred plant remains.

An area 150m² was cleared revealing remnants of a geological solution feature filled with clay, 14 stake holes and 3 pits. The pits were about 1 m in diameter, very shallow and less than 1m apart. Pits 4 and 6 had a single fill, but pit 5 had three layers with a later recut Fig 2.



Figure 1: Sampling the 3 pits

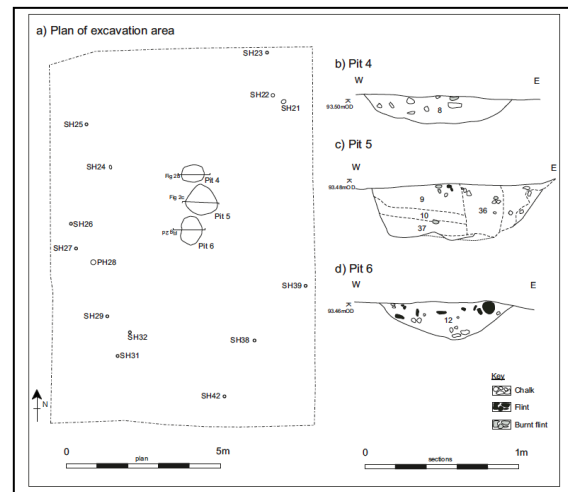


Figure 2: Site plan and sections

Pottery

A moderate assemblage of 51 sherds representing a minimum of 23 vessels is characteristic of the middle to late Beaker period. It included examples of incised line patterns, comb impressions and fingernail indentations (rusticated). Some of the comb impressions had been filled with a white chalky paste, as further enhancement of the decoration. Significantly, the sherds showed considerable edge weathering, suggesting a delay before their incorporation into the pits. Two vessels are represented by several conjoining sherds, which may indicate they were moved in one event.

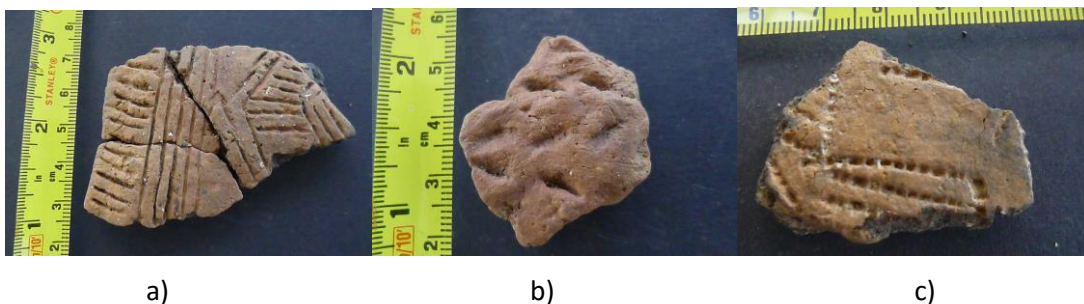


Figure 3: Examples of pottery, a) Incised lines b) Rusticated c) tooth comb pattern with infill

Animal remains

The condition of the bone (like the pottery) was highly fragmented and weathered. The uniformly poor condition of the bone supports the idea of it lying on the surface or in a midden before being incorporated into the fill. In total, 101 pieces of bone were recovered, with all but one bone located in the largest middle pit (pit 5). The middle and upper layers of this pit contained the largest quantities of bone. The re-cut in this pit also contained some bone fragments.

The species identified were all domestic livestock, with no wild species noted. Most bones were of sheep (or goat) and none was burnt. Pig was represented by two fragments with identifiable butchery marks. A single piece of long bone, probably cattle, shows a helical fracture typical for marrow extraction. This assemblage composition is characteristic for the Beaker period.

Flint

An assemblage of 347 flints was recovered, of which a large proportion were waste flakes. The blade frequency is very low but the proportions of scrapers and other retouched flakes is high. The flake scars on the cores were quite large, which may suggest a local source of the flint. The concentration of scrapers suggests domestic activity, possibly processing of animal skins. The presence of characteristic thumbnail scrapers in the assemblage is again highly typical of Beaker assemblages. Overall, the presence of hammer stones, flake cores and chips in all the pits is good evidence that flint was worked and tools produced on site.

Plant remains

Half of each pit was processed by flotation. Charred plant remains were sparse and poorly preserved, but each pit contained either a hulled or partially hulled wheat grain. Hazelnut shell fragments were recovered from all pits and three unidentified charred fragments, possibly remains of tubers, were also found. These few charred hulled wheat grains indicate the presence of this cereal at the site, but cannot be taken as evidence for local cultivation. The hazelnuts could have been collected locally and roasted to improve their flavour and digestibility.

The flots from each of the pits also produced similar assemblages of wood charcoal with oak, hazel, hawthorn and ash. The quantities varied, with oak dominating in pit 4, and a more mixed assemblage with a larger proportion of ash in pit 5. The charcoal probably originated from domestic fires and species composition reflects collection strategies from local woodland resources. Insect tunnels in some fragments suggest that the wood was dead for some time prior to burning – either due to deliberate seasoning or the collection of dead wood from the forest floor.

Environment

The snail assemblage from the pits suggests that the site was established in an open grassland environment, indicating that the woodland was a little distance from the site. The grassland was dry and grazed or trampled. There was no evidence of disturbed ground to indicate tillage.

Dating

One of the aims of the project was to determine whether the pits were in use contemporaneously at the generational (25 years) scale, or whether they covered a more extended period of time, such as centuries. This is significant for understanding and interpreting the nature and character of the Beaker activity here. Samples from dumps of short-lived material (charred hazelnut shell fragments) from two of the pits were submitted for ¹⁴C dating, generously supported by a Prehistoric Society grant. The results are statistically indistinguishable at the 95% confidence limit and indicate that the contents of both pits date to 2200–2020 cal BC (pit 5: 3709±26 BP; pit 4: 3708±25 BP). The later re-cut in pit 5 was dated with the generous support of the Dorset Archaeological Committee grant to 2020 - The dates suggest that the pits could be contemporary, perhaps being filled within a single generation.

The contents of the pit

The pits differ in their composition of artefacts. The largest middle pit 5 contained most of the finds and the two smaller pits either side contained fewer artefacts. Pit 6 contained the fewest artefacts with a single bone, a single piece of pot, a single tool and just 4 hazel nut shells. Pit 4 had no tools and no bone but did have 9 sherds of pottery and 2 hazel shells. In pit 5 the bottom layer contained the smallest number of artefacts with just one piece of pottery and one tool but the largest amount of bone and 16 hazel nut shell fragments. The quantity of hazel

shell increases in subsequent layers and in the later re-cut. The number of pottery sherds also increases in the later layers as do the number of scrapers. Two of the pits had a single cereal grain but pit 4 had evidence of 3 grains.

Artefact	Pit 6	Pit 5		Pit 4
		recut		
Worked flint	39	63	68 44 21	45
Flint tool	1		7 6 1	0
Pottery	1	6	12 8 1	9
Bone	1	15	11 7 18	0
Cereal grain	1	0	0 0 1	3
Hazel	4	33	28 23 16	2

Table 1 Comparison of artefacts

Discussion

The artefacts are very domestic in nature and similar to those found locally at Down Farm on Cranborne Chase and at Middle Farm near Dorchester, Dorset. They represent the accumulation of waste that a typical Beaker occupation site might produce. The people were making and using tools, cooking, herding sheep and pigs and probably preparing animal skins. The artefacts may have been selected and deliberately incorporated into the pits, but may also have ended up there after being thrown away in a midden or lying around on the surface for a period of time. The weathered nature of the pottery and bone strongly support the latter idea. Insect burrows in the charcoal suggest that the wood had been lying on the forest floor and may have been collected rather than stored, indicating that activity at the site could have been transitory rather than representing permanent settlement. The Carbon 14 dates indicate the site was in use for a short period of time, perhaps as little as a single generation. Perhaps a midden needed to be removed and the pits were a convenient place to put the contents, or perhaps after they had been used for some other purpose they were filled in with rubbish to produce a level surface. There is no evidence for the pits' primary use, but it is possible they were used for storage of plant material or water.

The differences in the combination of artefacts in the pits and later recut may be due to chance but it may suggest that different combinations of artefacts from the midden were selected for deposition in the different pits and the different layers in pit 5.

Whilst the overall assemblage from the pits is small, the site as a whole can be characterised as domestic, showing evidence for wider production and consumption practice. Settlement may have been short-lived and temporary. The finds from the pits thus represent a useful, although limited, addition to the understanding of domestic activity from the Beaker period in central southern Britain.

Edrys Lupprian, Blandford Archaeology Group

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Julian Richards, Mike Allen, Clare Randall, Ros Cleal and Dana Challinor for their guidance and support with the project, Dave Stewart for the geophysics and members of the Blandford Archaeology Group and pupils at Bryanston School for volunteering at the excavation. Thanks also to the Prehistoric Society and Dorset Archaeological Committee for their generous grants for the ¹⁴C dates.

Druce Roman Villa - a folding pocket knife

Probably the first Roman feature on the site at Druce Farm, was an enormous ditch which surrounded the villa complex. It was cut in the later years of the first century AD before any of the buildings were constructed and it was huge. The ditch was laid out with great precision, perhaps using skilled surveyors in its setting out. Very large amounts of earth were moved while it was being dug – the average depth is over a metre and it has a width of between two and three metres. As the buildings developed over the next couple of hundred years, the enclosure ditches were used as convenient places to dump rubbish, which consisted of broken pottery, discarded animal bones, building debris, food and fire waste and broken personal items such as hair pins, brooches etc.

Last summer, Janet Bartlet was excavating a section through the southern arm of the ditch (marked by the blue star) when she found an incredibly rare folding clasp knife. It is small, measuring only 77mm long with a width of 28mm and is 9mm thick.



Fig 1: Conserved folding knife

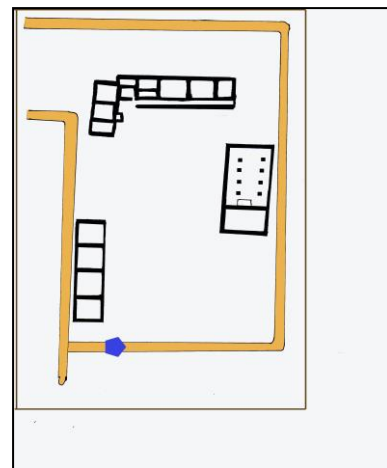


Fig 2: Plan of Enclosure ditches with location of knife

The blade is currently folded into the bone handle which is finely carved into the shape of a lion's head and leg. A band of copper alloy which was once silvered, decorates the knife hinge and the blade is a curved piece of iron. Anthony Beeson who has reported on the knife for us, suggests that it was probably used in the home, perhaps for cutting threads during spinning or sewing sessions. We have found a number of shale and ceramic spindle whorls which give credence to this idea. Its design is almost identical to a much larger object in Dorchester Museum – a carved shale table leg from a tripod table. Pottery which was found with the knife dates this object to no later than AD 300.

It was an urgent matter to have this beautiful but fragile object conserved and consolidated and Janet generously paid for this to be done, taking the knife off to Truro for Laura Radcliffe to do the work. It is now 'back home' leaving us with the task of 'trawling the literature' for other similar knives. When you next see a penknife – remember the design is not new, it goes back at least 2000 years!

Lilian Ladle

EDAS WALKS PROGRAMME

Sunday (am) 17 April 2016: Christchurch Blue Plaques Walk with Sue Newman & Mike Tizzard

Christchurch 'Blue Plaques' walk with our members Sue Newman and Mike Tizzard. This walk around the town should take about 1.5 hours.

Please meet at 10.30 at Saxon Square Shopping Centre where there is a long term car park. Unfortunately, car parking charges apply every day.

Any queries please contact Sue newmansue@yahoo.co.uk 01202 463373 or Mike m.tizzard@ntworld.com 01202 476242.

Sunday (pm) 17 April 2016: Christchurch Priory tour guided with Mike Beams

Mike Beams an EDAS member will give members a guided tour of the Priory where he is a guide and Chairman of the Property Committee.

We need to limit the number attending to 15 so this will be a bookable event.

Please contact Peter Walker at peter@peterwalker.info to book your place and meet at 2.30 in the entrance porch.

The tour will take approximately 2 hours. There is normally charge for the tour of £3 but Mike will just ask for donations if people would like to give one.

2017 FIELD TRIP

This is an opportunity to join a guided tour of Hadrian's Wall, organised and led by Mark Corney, one of the country's leading experts. All members will be staying in the Beaumont Hotel, Hexham with the following costs:

Dinner/bed and breakfast (2 sharing twin/double room) £130 per night (£780 for two)

Single £85 per night (£510). There will be an additional charge for Mark Corney which will depend on the numbers attending (probably in the region of £40 each)

There are limited places – **please let Lilian know if you want to go lilianladle@hotmail.com or tel: 01929 553144**

Draft Schedule

DAY	SITES
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travel north via Wroxeter• Evening lecture: Introduction to Hadrian's Wall and the Roman North'.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arbeia Roman Fort, South Shields.• Segedunum Roman Fort, Wallsend.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brunton Turret, Chesters Fort• Carrawburgh Fort and Mithraeum.• Corbridge Roman town and supply base.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housesteads Fort, Milecastle 37• Vindolanda Fort (Chesterholm).
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peel Gap Tower, Haltwhistle Burn camps• Milecastle 48, Willowford Bridge and Birdoswald Fort.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be finalised
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Return Home stopping at sites en route, such as Binchester Roman Fort.

EDAS APRIL LECTURE **FINDING PITT-RIVERS**

by

Jane Ellis-Schön, the Project Curator for Salisbury Museum

WEDNESDAY 13th APRIL 2016 at 7.30 pm

at

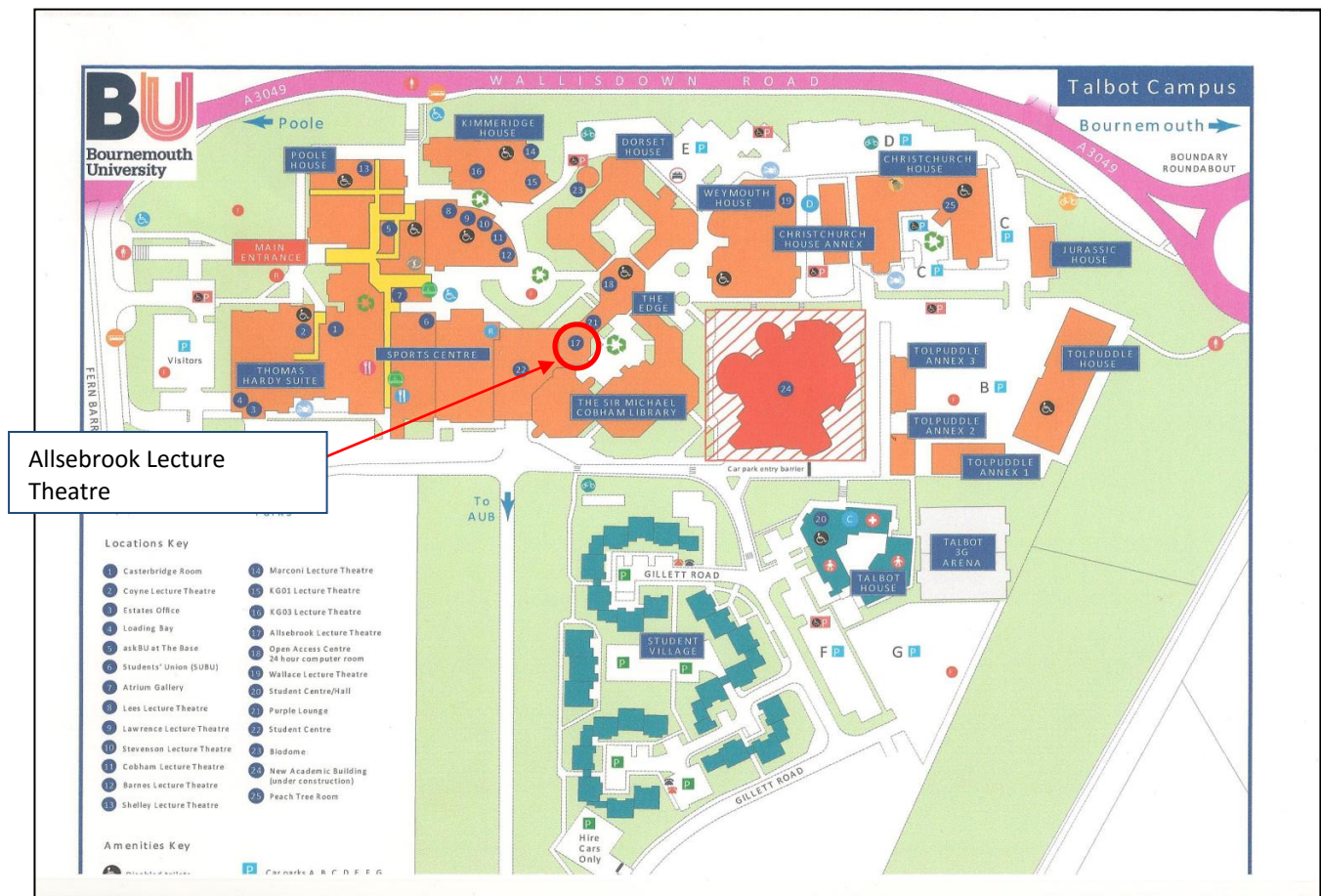
ALLSEBROOK LECTURE THEATRE, TALBOT CAMPUS,
BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY, FERN BARROW, BH12 5BB

EDAS, in association with the Bournemouth University Archaeology and Anthropology Society, is pleased to invite you to this fascinating talk given by Jane Ellis-Schön, the Project Curator for Salisbury Museum's 'Finding Pitt-Rivers' Project funded by Arts Council England and the Pilgrim Trust. Jane's talk describes the project and highlights objects from our landscape in the Pitt-Rivers collections.

Salisbury Museum holds the Pitt-Rivers Wessex Collection, a range of archaeological material that includes excavated artefacts from Cranborne Chase from the earlier part of his career. The collection focuses on the last 20 years of his life and was on display in his museum at Farnham until the 1960s.

Non-members will be invited to make a donation £2

There are several carparks available on the night, the preferred being the Visitors' Car Park at the front. Students and Committee Members will be in place to help. If you have any problems on the night please contact 07748961941





BU's Archaeological, Historical and Anthropological Society
presents
MEGALITHIC MONTH

As part of our growing relationship with the BU Archaeological Historical and Anthropological Society, EDAS members have been invited to attend their Megalithic Month lecture programme. The first of which is the EDAS lecture they will host for us.

1. **EDAS Lecture - Finding Pitt Rivers, Jane Ellis-Schön (Salisbury Museum)** - 7:30PM Wednesday 13th April, held in the Allesbrook LT.
2. **The Stones of Avebury by Dr Josh Pollard (Southampton University), and Stonehenge Rocks! With Prof. Tim Darvill** - 6PM Wednesday 20th April held in the Shelley Theatre.
3. **Seeing Beneath Stonehenge** by Prof. Kate Welham, Harry Manley and Lawrence Shaw -7.00PM Monday 25th April, Room KG03.
4. **Neolithic in the Sun**, Robin Dumbreck (3rd year BU student)-7PM Thursday 28th April, Room KG03,

Free for members, non- members are invited to make a donation.

Email buarchsoc@bournemouth.ac.uk for more details

Behind the scenes on the Finding Pitt-Rivers Project

- “Don’t forget the photo scale!”-

We were very flattered when Sophie, Countess of Wessex said “I understand that some of you are good with a box Brownie ...” - a reference to the fact that Sara and I, as artefact photographers, had been urgently photographing the objects to be placed on permanent display in the new Wessex Gallery of Archaeology at Salisbury Museum.

That was in May 2014. Since then, we’ve been back in the freezing store room most Wednesdays helping to “find Pitt-Rivers” by recording the many other objects from his collection that are currently behind the scenes.

To date, we have photographed hundreds of artefacts ranging from Neolithic flints through medieval horseshoes to Pitt-Rivers’ handwritten labels - often on torn-off letterheads dating and invitations from the 1880s. Each digital image must include a photo scale to record dimensions and one of the worst scenarios is to have placed the object and taken the perfect shot – usually after much effort – and forgotten to include the scale.



Sara busy recording. Clear and accurate documentation is very important as we often take up to 200 photographs in a day.



Vanessa holding a gold armlet of unknown date which weighs 558g. It came from Wales and is an unmistakable symbol of power and status. It was real treat for us when this armlet was placed beneath the lens.

Over the last couple of years, we have pioneered an exciting array of props including numerous plastazote cut-outs which allow us to painstakingly place artefacts either to show off their most important features or to stop them falling over mid-shot. Urns and other ancient vessels are often challenging since tripod work and careful positioning are required to ensure that a view of the inside rim of the pot is achieved. We are very pleased with the end results, some of which are already on Salisbury Museum’s new Collections web site.

Of course, it’s not all glamour ... lowlights include Roman nails and cleats – hundreds of them – and animal bones. Does anyone know the size of a Kerry cow? Pitt-Rivers often wrote notes comparing dimensions of animal bones in relation to Kerry cows.

The Finding Pitt-Rivers Project gives us, as volunteers, the perfect opportunity to increase our knowledge, learn to recognise a wider variety of objects and handle the truly eclectic range of objects collected by Lt.-General Pitt Rivers himself.

Favourite items include: shale objects and early Medieval bead jewellery (Sara) and Bronze Age collared urns and ancient “bling” (Vanessa).

Vanessa Joseph and Sara Marshall

EDAS BARN DANCE

Friday 27th May

from

7.30 - 11 pm

in Corfe Mullen, Village Hall,

Located behind the Co-operative store on Towers Way. There is ample parking.

The entertainment is courtesy of ***The Black Sheep Band*** who are local to Corfe Mullen.

Members are requested to bring their own drinks & glasses & a dish/bowl of food for sharing which could include a dessert of some description if they so wish. Hopefully there will be a nice variety of dishes to choose from. This helps to keep the cost of tickets down.

Tickets are £10 which is to cover the cost of hiring the hall & band.

**We're not sure if EDAS have ever had a barn dance before.
We hope as many members as possible will come along as it should
be a fun, social evening.**

Contact details Karen on 07874 266213 or karen.winsor757@btinternet.com

EDAS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The membership fee is due on 1 April no matter what time of year you joined. Those members who pay by standing order or who joined this year can ignore the remainder of this note.

Please pay your fee to me either at the April meeting or send your cheque (please do not send cash through the post) to me together with the attached renewal form. If you want to pay by standing order please let me know and I will send a form to you. If you have online banking facilities and would like to pay us direct please let me know and I will provide our bank account details.

Peter Walker

EAST DORSET ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM 2016

Please highlight any change of details.

Surname/Forenames

Address and Postcode

..... Telephone No.

.....

E-Mail.....

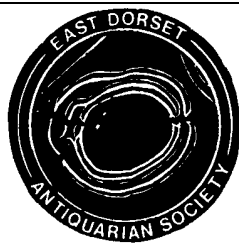
Individual £8.50, Family £12, Student £5 Cheques payable to EDAS. Please return form with cheque to: Peter Walker, 16 Whitfield Park, Ashley Heath, Ringwood, Hants, BH24 2DX or email: mail@dorset-archaeology.org.uk or Tel: 01425 471326 for a standing order form.

Please Note: there has been a change in the programme. Alex Langlands has taken up a position at Swansea University and is not able to travel to Wimborne for his talk scheduled for May. We are delighted that Lilian Ladle will step into the breach and will give a talk to update us about the EDAS excavation of the Druce Farm Roman Villa.

2015-2016 Programme

Date	Speaker/Leader	Title
Wed 13th Apr 2016	Jane Ellis-Schön Salisbury Museum	"Finding Pitt-Rivers" NB. this lecture will be held in the: Allsebrooke Lecture Theatre, (next to the library), Bournemouth University Talbot Campus Fern Barrow Dorset BH12 5BB
Sun 17th April 2016 -AM-	Sue Newman & Mike Tizzard	Christchurch Blue Plaques Walk Please meet at 10.30 at Saxon Square Shopping Centre where there is a long term car park.
Sun 17th April 2016 -PM-	Mike Beams	Christchurch Priory tour Mike Beams an EDAS member will give members a guided tour of the Priory where he is a guide and Chairman of the Property Committee. We need to limit the number attending to 15 so this will be a bookable event. Please contact Peter Walker peter@peterwalker.info to book your place. Please meet at 2.30
Wed 11th May 2016	Lilian Ladle	Druce Roman Villa. Lilian will bring you up to date with the exciting developments of the EDAS excavation of this interesting Dorset Villa.
Sun 9 th Oct 2016	David Reeve	Rediscovering Wimborne's Saxon Foundation: a walk around the Town's early boundaries

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



East Dorset Antiquarian Society

Programme 2016-2017

Date	Speaker	Title
Wed 14 Sep 2016	Zoe Barras, A to Z Archaeology	100 Ways to Die: the diseases and disfigurements of ancient times
Wed 12 Oct 2016	Dr. Miles Russell, Bournemouth University	Finding Duropolis: a new type of Iron Age settlement for Dorset
Wed 9 Nov 2016	Richard Osgood, Operation Nightingale	The Archaeology of World War I
Wed 14 Dec 2016	Lawrence Shaw, New Forest National Park Authority	Shedding light on the New Forest's history: the results of LIDAR and other surveys
Wed 11 Jan 2017	Prof. Peter Andrews, Natural History Museum & Blandford Museum	An ape's view of human evolution: our fossil ape relatives and how they lived
Wed 8 Feb 2017 – at the University	Prof. Tim Darvill, Bournemouth University	A tomb with a view: new investigations on Cotswold-Severn long barrows
Wed 8 Mar 2017	AGM	Members' Evening
Wed 5 Apr 2017 - NOT 2 nd Wednesday	Martin Papworth, National Trust	The late great Medieval manor house of Kingston Lacy
Wed 10 May 2017	Kris Strutt, University of Southampton	Atomic magnetism, current & dielectric permittivity: how Physics has the potential to transform Archaeology: new discoveries from geophysics at Old Sarum and other sites

Meetings are held at:

St. Catherine's Church Hall, 4 Lewens Lane, Wimborne, BH21 1LE

7:30-9:30 pm

<http://www.dorset-archaeology.org.uk/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/dorset.archaeology>