

Established 1983

## East Dorset Antiquarian Society

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### NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2016

#### CHARITABLE STATUS

The committee have started to consider whether EDAS should attempt to acquire charitable status. The immediate benefit is with the fund raising required to complete our two important archaeology projects -Druce Farm and Worth Matravers. These projects require some additional funding to complete the post excavation work, that can only be undertaken by professional experts and to cover the outstanding publication costs to produce two monographs. Whilst there are a number of organisations and individuals willing to provide funds, many will only make payments to organisations with charitable status. This will also give us greater flexibility when we consider future projects.

We have held preliminary meetings and are looking to become a Charitable Unincorporated Association. There is some expertise on the committee and the Charity Commission offers extensive and useful guidance. We are making steady progress and are drafting a revised constitution.

Before we can apply to the Charity Commission the committee must present the proposal to a General Meeting of the EDAS membership to gain their acceptance. Once the committee have agreed a revised constitution we will advise members of the date of this meeting.

Charitable status for EDAS was looked into some years ago but at the time, whilst recognising the benefits, the committee didn't have an appetite to proceed. If you have any thoughts or experience you would like to share then please contact me.

**Andrew Morgan** email: [andrewmorgz@aol.com](mailto:andrewmorgz@aol.com) or Tel: 01202 731162

#### THIS MONTH

We hope there will be a good turnout on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 10.30 on Minster Green, for a guided walk round our home town of Wimborne led Dr David Reeve who is driving down from Bristol to help us rediscover the Anglo Saxon origins of the town.

Our next monthly meeting will be one of the highlights of the year (one of several) with a talk by Dr Miles Russell about the ground breaking excavations at Winterbourne Kingston undertaken by Bournemouth University.

We enjoyed some helpful comments about last month's talk so please keep providing your feedback.

I know many members have been doing interesting things over the summer, once again I ask you to write a short article for publication in this newsletter and share your experiences.

**Andrew Morgan**

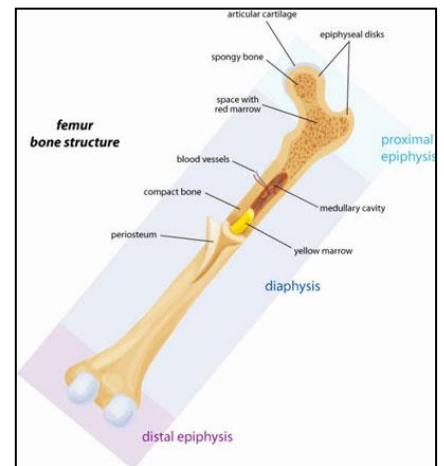
## EDAS Lecture: 100 Ways to Die – diseases and disfigurements of ancient times by Miss Zoe Barras of A to Z Archaeology Ltd.

The first talk of the season was an intriguing if slightly morbid subject but of sufficient interest to attract a very good audience. In the field whenever human remains are found the first questions are age, sex and cause of death, so the talk promised to be very relevant to all practical field archaeologists in the audience.

Zoe is a graduate of Bournemouth University and a director of A to Z Archaeology a new company registered in 2015 that offers a range of archaeological services including osteoarchaeology.

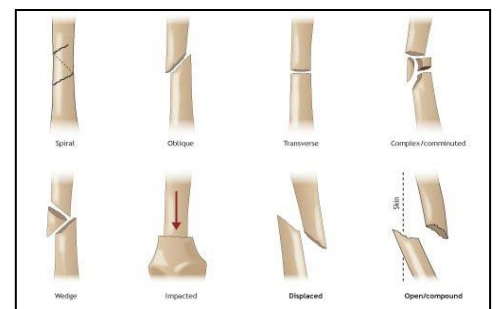
She explained that the main components of bones are an outer hard layer called the cortical bone and an inner spongy layer of cancellous bone which contains bone marrow. There are four types of bone: the long/tubular bones of the limbs which consist of the diaphysis (the shaft) and the epiphys (the rounded ends); flat bones are found in the skull, sternum, pelvis and ribs; irregular bones make up the face and the vertebral column; and sesamoid bones develop within tendons, such as the patella and pisiform.

The human tooth has two anatomical parts: the crown and the root. Enamel covers and protects the crown. Dentine forms the bulk of the tooth and is the cause of sensitivity if the crown is compromised; the pulp in the centre holds the blood vessels and nerves.



The degree of pathological analysis that can be undertaken on a skeleton is totally dependent on the level of preservation. The fine and small bones such as in the skull are often lost but the teeth may remain and can be vital. Once the remains have been recovered and sent to the laboratory the skeletal remains will be laid out in an anatomically correct manner. The skeletons are rarely complete and sometimes multiple skeletons are mingled making the task even more difficult. The first task is to undertake a descriptive analysis examining each bone or fragment individually noting any signs of pathological changes, injury or sign of disease and consider whether it may have contributed towards death. Then attempt to identify the age and sex of the remains.

There are eight main types of bone fracture: stable/incomplete fracture where the ends of the break line up and are barely out of place; open/compound fracture where the skin is broken; transverse fracture featuring a horizontal fracture line in the bone; oblique fracture which has an angled pattern; comminuted fracture – shattered bone, broken into at least three pieces; spiral oblique which is common in the elderly.



Trephination (trepanning) is a surgical intervention where a hole is drilled, incised or scraped into the skull using simple surgical tools. By drilling into the skull and removing a piece of the bone, the dura mater is exposed without damage to the underlying blood-vessels, meninges and brain. Trephination has been used to treat health problems associated with intracranial diseases, epileptic seizures, migraines and mental disorders by relieving pressure. There is also evidence it was used as a primitive form of emergency surgery to remove shattered pieces of bone from fractured skulls after receiving a head wound, and cleaning out the pools of blood that would form underneath the skull. It is possible from examining the hole to determine whether the patient survived the surgery.

Note: Evidence for trephination occurs from the Neolithic period onwards. The main pieces of archaeological evidence are in the forms of cave paintings and human remains. It is the oldest surgical procedure for which we actually have archaeological evidence. At one site in France, burials included forty instances of trephination from around 6500 BCE; one third of the skulls found at the site.

Sometimes evidence is found of artificial deformities imposed due to cultural practises. Head binding will result in cranial deformations by cradle boarding or band wrapping to create a variety of shapes such as: flat shapes, elongated ones, rounded ones and conical ones are among those that have been found. Typically, it is carried out on an infant, as the skull is most pliable at this time and binding begins approximately a month after birth and continues for about six months. The practise is worldwide and the earliest examples are from Neolithic peoples in Southwest Asia. Hippocrates, the Greek regarded as the founder of the science of medicine, wrote about the practise around 400BC. Members of the Huns and the Alans tribal groups were also thought to have practised cranial deformation.



Sometimes skeletons exhibit evidence of a traumatic incident, which they may or may not have survived. Sword cuts, a blow from a blunt instrument, these may have resulted in instant death or maybe the death was caused by secondary infection such as osteomyelitis, a bacterial infection of the bone and marrow resulting in a suppurating open wound which will be very painful and often fatal. Sometimes the wound healed enabling the victim to fight another day.

People have always been victims to a variety of diseases such as; dental caries which when severe can result in a painful death; syphilis (treponematosi) is a chronic bacterial infection that's usually caught by having sex with someone who's infected; leprosy is an infectious disease that causes severe, disfiguring skin sores and nerve damage in the arms and legs and will result in the destruction of the bones which form the fingers and toes. The disease has been around since ancient times.

There are only a few ways to deal with the dead; incarnation, excarnation or cremation. When human remains have been found it is essential to examine and record the setting and style of burial as much as the remains themselves and note any grave goods. Some burial methods leave no archaeological evidence and whole sectors of societies are missing from the archaeological record. Victims of catastrophic events are sometimes dealt with in mass graves, such as victims of the plague or sudden outbreaks of other highly infectious diseases such as cholera or typhoid. Commingled remains are difficult to deal with, the first step is to identify the minimum number of individuals; find the cause of death of each; and identify who they were. Some cultures round the world curate the remains of the dead sometimes parts are rearranged and stored in mausoleums, and the same questions are asked, who were they and how did they die.

Ageing the remains is usually undertaken through analysis of dental wear including tooth eruption and loss across the age groups, and by assessing fusion of the epiphysis and the diaphysis of long bones; for instance the bones of the ankle fuse around 16-20 years of age and the elbow between 13-19 years of age.

One challenge for the pathologist is to find the cause of death but this may not be possible because it may be by natural causes or the cause leaves no sign on the skeletal remains.

This was a thought provoking talk and of particular interest to those members involved in the excavation of the post-Roman cemetery found at Worth Matravers in 2011 when 26 skeletal remains were found. Zoe left the audience forever grateful for the NHS.

**Andrew Morgan**

## The Foundations of Archaeology Project - A Personal View

I first found out about this project from one of the many emails distributed by Peter Walker and find his diligence in this regard a wonderful resource. There are many benefits to EDAS membership and this source of information is definitely one of them. But what is the Foundations of Archaeology project? For those of you not familiar with it, let me start with a brief outline.

The project is run by Cranborne Chase AONB and is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. EDAS has been involved from its beginnings and helped as a stakeholder in the preparation of the original Heritage Lottery Fund proposal and has reported on and promoted it regularly in the newsletter.

From the start, several members have attended the days organised by the project. The project aims to celebrate the work of the pioneering archaeologists Sir Richard Colt Hoare, William Cunnington and General Pitt Rivers. It works with volunteers to help further investigate and evaluate three archaeological sites associated with these pioneers (Winkelbury Hill, Stockton Down and Wor Barrow) in south Wiltshire and north east Dorset. The volunteers learn to interpret the sites, take part in practical conservation and earthwork and geophysical surveys on those sites.



All this and more can be found on the project website at <https://foundationsofarchaeology.wordpress.com/> - but what is the volunteer experience like?

Being a "serial attender", as you might guess I am an enthusiast. Lindsey and I have enjoyed days at all three sites - mainly in glorious weather - trying our hands at all the above techniques, in great company and with expert guidance. It is not until you try something like freehand earthwork surveys that you realise how fastidious the pioneers were. Yes, they used tape measures etc but that only gets you part way. Being buzzed by army helicopters and having to abandon the magnetometry until they went away (the radios and radar upset the sensitive equipment), waiting for a good G4 signal for the survey kit (it relies on the mobile phone network for precision beyond any of the three satellite navigation systems it also uses) all add to the fun. Just laying out the 20m grids is fraught on uneven ground such as Stockton Down because the slopes create errors when using tapes. However, results are starting to emerge and it is fascinating to see these laid over the original earthwork surveys, but a real highlight was the field walking find of a small piece of beaker pottery and a selection of worked flints adjacent to Wor Barrow. Definitely more interesting than the post medieval pair of pliers I found while pacing up and down with the magnetometer.



There have also been days at:-

- Devizes and Salisbury museums (looking at the finds of Colt Hoare and Pitt Rivers)
- Stour Head, the home of Colt Hoare, guided by head gardener Alan Power,
- Martin Down, looking at Bokerley Dyke, the long and round barrows and the iron age enclosure
- Dorset Historic Environment Records with Claire Pinder
- Pitt Rivers Larmer Tree gardens (cream tea included!)
- Martin Green's farm for a session on aerial photography led by Claire Pinder and followed by a walk across the farm onto Gussage Down and back along Ackling Dyke

What's not to like?

We were also invited to assist for an hour or two the Foundations of Archaeology stand at both the Chalke Valley History Festival (in the mud!) and Berwick St John Country Fayre where we were joined by General Pitt Rivers (or rather, an actor in the character of) giving a



short talk to the assembled crowd. The mud at Chalke Valley was "interesting" and I shall long remember the WW2 re-enactors queuing for ice creams! More seriously, it was wonderful to see Simon Meaden's mobile museum at both events. It contains many finds from the excavations on his farm including the 1997 - 2001 EDAS work.

The project continues until late spring 2017, with another day of geophysics at Wor Barrow, a day of conservation (undergrowth clearance) also at Wor Barrow and a day reviewing the geophysics results from all three sites. These are just the days I know about so if you want to get involved, go to the website and register your interest. It is entirely up to you which days you would like to attend, but you need to register to receive the emails as the dates are fluid and can be relatively short notice.

***Alan Dedden***

### **EDAS WALK: Queens and Saints; a Palace and Walls; Kings and Wars: Rediscovering Wimborne's Anglo Saxon Origins, led by Dr David Reeve**

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October**

**Meet on Minster Green at 10.30am**

We are delighted to announce the details of a historic walk rediscovering Wimborne's Anglo Saxon origins led by Dr David Reeve on Sunday 9th October. We will be discussing the original monastic site; the earliest part of the town and its subsequent development; the latest thoughts on the location of the Saxon Royal Palace; the locations of the three early town chapels, discuss the impact of civil war and Viking raids and the foundation of the college for secular canons. He will be talking about Queens and saints, palaces and walls, kings and war!! Much of this work is based around interpretations following the recent archaeological investigations in the town square and Priest House Museum. We will be meeting at the Minster Green at 10:30am and it estimated to be completed by 1pm. It will be a gentle walk around the centre part of the town.

The walk will be led by EDAS member Dr David Reeve who has been a regular speaker and led a number of walks for EDAS. He completed his PhD on 17th Century Wimborne and since then has been working on the town's origins. This is a rare opportunity to hear about David's work since he moved out of the county.

### **2017 FIELD TRIP – Hadrian's Wall**

The trip, between 4<sup>th</sup> June – 11<sup>th</sup> June 2017, now has 23 people who have paid their accommodation deposit. It is possible to take a few more, please contact Lilian immediately if you are interested.

Further details from Lilian [lilianladle@hotmail.com](mailto:lilianladle@hotmail.com) or tel: 01929 553144

### **2018 FIELD TRIP – South East Wales**

Preliminary discussions have started regarding a possible field trip in 2018 to South East/Mid Wales.

Caerleon, Caerwent, Llantony Abbey, Offa's Dyke and as many prehistoric sites as possible may well feature.

If you are interested in joining the trip or have any thoughts about this area please contact Geoff Taylor or Andrew Morgan.

## EDAS PROGRAMME 2016-2017

Date	Speaker/Leader	Title
<b>Sun 9th Oct 2016</b>	David Reeve	<b>EDAS Walk:</b> Rediscovering Wimborne's Saxon Foundation: a walk around the Town's early boundaries  Minster Green 10.30 am start.
<b>Wed 12 Oct 2016</b>	Dr. Miles Russell, Bournemouth University	Finding Duroopolis: a new type of Iron Age settlement for Dorset
<b>Wed 9 Nov 2016</b>	Richard Osgood, Operation Nightingale	The Archaeology of World War I
<b>Wed 14 Dec 2016</b>	Lawrence Shaw, New Forest National Park Authority	Shedding light on the New Forest's history: the results of LIDAR and other surveys
<b>Wed 11 Jan 2017</b>	Prof. Peter Andrews, Natural History Museum & Blandford Museum	An ape's view of human evolution: our fossil ape relatives and how they lived
<b>Wed 8 Feb 2017</b>  <b>at the University</b>	Prof. Tim Darvill, Bournemouth University	A tomb with a view: new investigations on Cotswold-Severn long barrows
<b>Wed 8 Mar 2017</b>	AGM	Members' Evening
<b>Wed 5 Apr 2017 - NOT 2nd Wednesday</b>	Martin Papworth, National Trust	The late great Medieval manor house of Kingston Lacy
<b>Wed 10 May 2017</b>	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

**Note:** unless otherwise stated all lectures are from 7.30 – 9.30 pm and are held at **St Catherine's Church Hall, Lewens Lane, Wimborne, BH21 1LE.**

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