



East Dorset Antiquarian Society

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NEWSLETTER – December 2019

Wishing you all a MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

Editor's Notes

EDAS 11th December Meeting will feature Dr. Miles Russell of Bournemouth University on *Arthur and the kings of Britain*, a look at the links between the legend and reality. Marking the festive season as we always do, there will be no charge for refreshments and, with massive thanks to Lindsey Dedden, lots of mince pies.

Druce Neolithic Site: Andrew has provided an article about the site and the very successful stand that Lilian and he had at the recent CBA Conference at Bournemouth University.

EDAS Programme Change: Unfortunately our April 2020 speaker can't be with us, so we'll be pleased to welcome Francis Taylor of the CBA instead, to tell us about the Mayans.

Dorset Council's Draft Plan 2020-2024: A short article summarises the contents of this recently issued online document. We would encourage you to comment to the Council.

Sweet Chestnuts: On a somewhat Christmassy theme, there's an article summarised from the journal *Britannia* on whether the Romans really did introduce these into Britain. No spoiler alert; you'll have to read it to find out.

A possible new long barrow at Sopley: A recent paper from the Avon Valley Archaeological Society, summarised below, reveals some great work in discovering a likely new long barrow and, even more importantly, a revision to the accepted view of long barrow distribution.

The paper told me of the existence of 'The Christchurch Antiquarians', a society I'd managed to avoid knowing about. They are now in the list of societies towards the end.

Anglo-Saxon 'census': Dr. Sue Harrington of UCL has sent us information about a new resource freely available to search for information about people buried in this period. However, a Sunday Times article tells me that 'woke' historians say the term 'Anglo-Saxon' has connotations of white supremacy! It can't be 'Dark Ages' anymore, so 'Early Medieval' (though I'm pretty sure I'm not 'woke')?

View from Above has its 23rd outing, thanks to the great aerial photographs provided by Sue Newman and Jo Crane (with apologies to them for garbling their names in the last issue).

Weblinks and Highlights: Another in the continuing series for which we have to thank Alan Dedden.

EDAS Committee: We are pleased to welcome Ian Drummond to the Committee as a co-opted member (hence up for election at the next AGM). Ian is a relatively recent member who moved to this area from Gosport and was one of the excavators at Keeper's Lodge. We still have places on the Committee and would love to be able to welcome a couple more members; if you're interested please get in touch with Andrew or me.

THANK YOU to everyone who helps to make our meetings run smoothly, and especially the team providing the refreshments

I'd be VERY pleased to receive any feedback or contributions, however short or long.

Geoff Taylor

DRUCE FARM NEOLITHIC PROJECT – Dorset's First Farmers

EDAS accepted an invitation to have a stand at this year's **CBA Wessex Conference – Sunrise over the Stones: recent research into the Neolithic and Chalcolithic**. It was held on 9th November at the Talbot Campus, Bournemouth University, and our display promoted the Druce Farm Neolithic Project.

You will recall that the excavation took place during 2017 and 2018. We had opened three new trenches to explore concentrations of geophysical anomalies associated with the Druce Farm Roman Villa. In one of the trenches, to our surprise and great delight, we identified a deposit that contained Early Neolithic pottery. By the end of the excavation we had investigated a C-shaped ditch built in five phases (a Neolithic monument), plus three pit groups and 29 small pits aligned in four rows, that have yet to be dated.

We received seed funding from the Mick Aston Fund and the Shaftesbury Archaeological Group. This was used to cover some of the specialist tasks required for the preliminary assessment, which provided the radiocarbon dating evidence for the last phase of the Neolithic monument:

- C14 wheat grain 3941-3715 cal BC (95.4% probability)
- C14 hazelnut shell 3775-3648 cal BC (95.4% probability)

These are the earliest radio carbon dates yet recorded in Dorset for the Neolithic period.



Our display was put together by Andrew and Lilian, and was arranged in four sections:

1. Project background and location;
2. Neolithic Monument: five phases of construction and radiocarbon dates;
3. Pits: comprising three pit groups and four alignments of 29 small pits;
4. Post Excavation: examples of finds and the funding requirements.

The display drew a great deal of interest, not least from Dr Alison Sheridan, doyen of the Neolithic, who offered to provide some support. The photos below



show Alison and some of the other people trying to get closer to the display (or to Lilian?).

Professor Niall Sharples of Cardiff University and Emeritus Professor Richard Bradley of Reading University are providing references in support of our applications for funding from groups such as CBA Wessex and The Prehistoric Society.

The display was also present at the EDAS meeting on 13th November. An updated version will be used for the talk about the project at the EDAS AGM on 11th March next year.



Alison Sheridan takes notes



Mike Ladle shares his growing enthusiasm for archaeology



No shoving please



Rupert Soskin and Michael Bott of www.theprehistoryguys.tv have a sneak preview

Andrew Morgan

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Thanks to Robert Heaton for this photograph advertising our last talk (summary below), which arrived before the talk but just too late to make the last newsletter. Our reach is obviously wider than we thought.



Dorset Council Draft 2020-2024 Plan ‘ignores Heritage, Culture and Arts’

– please respond to the Council; see below

Peter circulated an email from Dorset Natural History and Archaeology Society (“DNHAS”) very recently, which said that the new Council’s Draft Plan hardly recognises the role heritage, culture and arts should play in the life of Dorset’s people. It encouraged recipients to complete the survey in response to the draft, to try to ensure better recognition (and funding!) for this sector of Dorset’s economy.

The draft plan is at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/your-council/about-your-council/dorset-council-draft-plan/dorset-council-plan.aspx>, and is fairly easy to read and not particularly long. However, here is my much shorter summary, aimed particularly at what’s relevant to EDAS:

The *Introduction* talks of the new Council and the savings it has made or expects to make. It says there’s a 10 year financial plan, which is surely what we need to see to understand if, and how, heritage is to be supported. *Understanding Dorset* gives an overview of the area under Dorset Council, about population environment, economy and infrastructure. This section has by far the most words about how important Dorset’s natural and historic environment is, e.g. with the only UNESCO Natural World Heritage Site in England, over half the Council area as an AONB and a “rich historic environment”: more than 5% of England’s protected ancient monuments and around 10,000 listed buildings. It is a pity that this stated importance seems not to be followed through in the rest of the document.

The rest of the plan covers *Our priorities* under five sections: Economic growth; Unique environment; Suitable housing; Strong & healthy communities; Staying safe & well (there’s also a section on Our values, behaviours and principles). Whilst it is hard to argue against any of these as important, I would characterise the vast majority of the statements therein as wish-lists which give no clear feeling of the balance of priorities or how resources are to be allocated. You might judge that based on the first of 34 of the ‘what we will do’ statements in the plan: “enhance Dorset as a place to do business and attract inward investment”. Each section then goes on to give ‘how we will do it’ bullet points (often starting with words like “explore”, “work to” and “support”), a ‘who we will work with’ list and further background information.

The only place within the ‘plan’ that I could see relating to heritage is that the Council intend to “deliver services in a way that protects and enhances our natural, historic and cultural environments”, which includes working “with Historic England” (but museums and other heritage-related organisations aren’t mentioned).

In my view, Dorset already have a very poor record in protecting the historic and cultural environment, and in promoting related education. I have lost count of the number of times I’ve heard something like “why was there no archaeological intervention, even a watching brief, on that development?” or “Dorset’s support/involvement in ... was embarrassing in contrast to other counties”. Following a suggestion from a forum of professional archaeologists based in Dorset, between May 2014 and April 2015 EDAS ran a pilot scheme to advise on planning applications for East Dorset Council. The EDAS team suggested applying an archaeological condition on 10% of the planning applications, which is in line with counties that value their cultural heritage. We were told that Dorset achieves a figure of 2%. This demonstrates that Dorset does not place enough value on its hidden cultural heritage. You’ll have seen the information from DNHAS detailing how little the Council supports it, despite the large benefits accruing, and about the apparent plans to cut funding for museums, heritage and cultural organisations, or to make its continuance uncertain.

The Council suggest you reply to this draft ‘plan’ by the online survey, which would take very little of your time. We would encourage you to do that and, especially, to add your comments at the end or, better, write to the Council or your Councillor. EDAS will, of course, be responding.

Geoff Taylor

Take the survey by 20th December at

<https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=157000427080>

'The Ancient DNA Revolution – waves of migration into Dorset' by Bob Kenyon

Bob was the owner of the land at Compact Farm, Worth Matravers which EDAS excavated from 2006-2011. He has had a long interest in DNA and says he was “seduced into trying to prove his Celtic origins” (he didn’t say when, by whom or by what). In a 2015 talk to The Purbeck Society (see link below), he predicted that we would find 11 migration events that have impacted on Wessex archaeology. The first publications of ancient DNA results from Britain have only come this year; so far they seem a positive first step towards proving the prediction.

Bob gave us an outline about DNA, before using his own family tree to illustrate what we can learn using analysis of modern and ancient DNA. The subject is complex, especially considering the mathematics and statistics used, though he tried to make it as simple as possible. I’ll be doing the same here and ignoring some complications; I hope this makes sufficient sense of what we’re now learning from DNA analysis.

We all have 23 pairs of chromosomes in cell nuclei, one pair of which determines gender. The other, ‘autosomal’, DNA is split up and rejoined with each new generation; this is what is often tested by ‘Ancestry’ or one of other companies providing your DNA information. If you are female the gender pair is two ‘X’ chromosomes, if male it’s ‘X’ & ‘Y’. X chromosomes pass from the mother and do get shuffled to some extent; Y chromosomes come from the father and stay the same except for minor and infrequent mutations. Clearly, then, understanding the make-up of Y chromosomes allows tracking of lineages for very long periods into the past along the male line. X chromosomes can be tracked similarly along the female line, but are rather less specific for individuals.

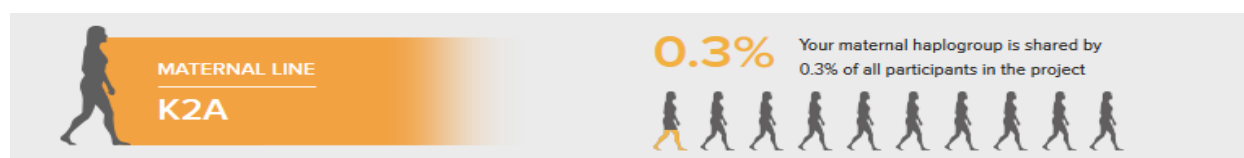


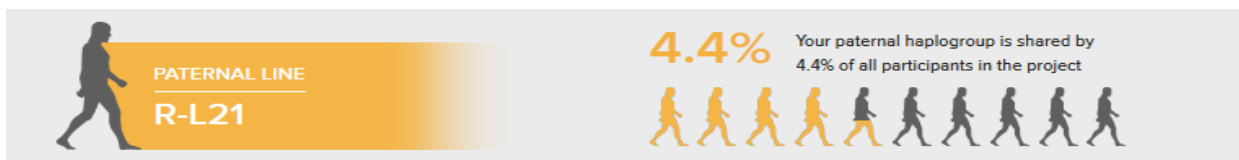
There’s also DNA outside of the cell nucleus that’s called ‘mitochondrial’ (“mtDNA”). That passes from the mother and is generally unchanged, so can be studied for matrilineal descent over long periods. Many of the testing companies can provide mtDNA results, but they’re less used because people follow family trees through surnames that tend to follow the men. The mtDNA results are valuable for long-term evolutionary research and much of the early DNA information came from these, e.g. the ‘African Eve’ around 150,000 years ago, from whom we’re all said to be descended (a definite simplification).

Bob had a documented family tree (part shown) which went back to the 18th century, but wanted to know more. He had his (autosomal) DNA tested with ‘Oxford Ancestors’ (which no longer exists) and got the results that he was 96% European – 77% from Britain and 19% from Scandinavia. He thought the latter may have come from his mother, whose maiden name was Wharnby, i.e. with a ‘Viking ending’. In fact, testing showed that his father had more Scandinavian DNA.

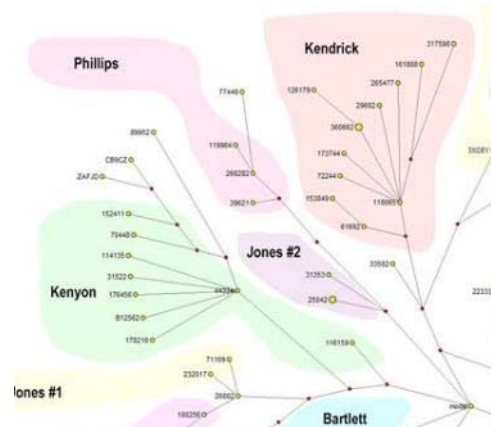
But such autosomal DNA results are only really relevant for the last 6 generations and the ethnic make-up is only a comparison with modern populations. I suspect these points aren’t widely understood.

Later, Bob had both X & Y chromosomes analysed, and was involved with a project which looked at links between individual DNA results from countries around the world. Modern humans started to leave Africa 60-70,000 years ago, in groups that took different paths to many different places. DNA markers can, effectively, trace these journeys. Everyone alive can be assigned to what is called a ‘haplogroup’ for each of X & Y, identifying which branches they belong to. Bob’s branches are shown below.





Interestingly, the same male line also applies to a number of Kenyons in the USA, with a common ancestor born around AD 1400, taking Bob's family back more than 350 years before the documentation. Known ancestors of the USA Kenyons provide information that could allow that common 'grandfather' to be identified. I'm not sure that I fully understood this, but it seems that mutations in the Y chromosome can also be tracked, giving the further extended family tree shown with a common 'grandfather' around AD 1100. With even more previously known ancestors from the other families, Bob's own documented family tree might be extended further. For example, there are a number of people from the 15th and 16th centuries who lived not that many miles apart in Lancashire.



With advances in the analysis of ancient DNA ("aDNA"), we can now start to map similar trees well back into prehistory. Obviously there won't be individual names going back that far, but we can see the different groupings and where modern people fit into them. Only this year, publications have also revealed the genome of a strain of the bacillus *Yersinia Pestis*, which causes the plague, in several Neolithic populations around 5,000 years ago. The infected populations, which are genetically distinct, stretch from Sweden south and eastwards across Asia. This obviously suggests likely early trade routes, as well as a reason for the known decline in Neolithic societies between 6,000 and 5,000 years ago.

Putting Bob's 'DNA family tree' into the results from the project across Western Europe shows descent from a real 'Heinz 57' mixture of ancestors, including Vikings, Anglo-Saxons, Scandinavians and Eurasian hunter-gatherers. There's even 2.5% Neanderthal and 2.2% Denisovan (another extinct human sub-species that lived until at least 50,000 years ago; some suggest as recently as 15,000 years ago). This sort of mixture is likely if you had your own DNA analysed in the same way.

So what, then, of the impact of aDNA research on Dorset and its archaeology? Whilst there are now lots of ancient genomes published across Europe & Asia, there are few from Britain and only 3 in hand from Dorset. The results from Canada Farm (next to Martin Green's Down Farm) were published this year, the paper on the supposed Viking crew found along the new road to Weymouth on the Dorset Ridgeway (shown) is at preprint stage, but little can be revealed of the cemetery at Worth Farm where the results are only in draft as yet.



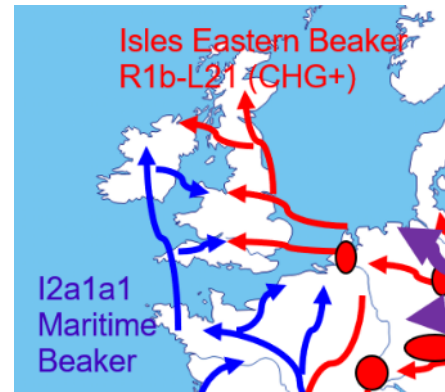
The remains found on the Ridgeway were shown to be Vikings. There were spheres of influence in the Viking world, though with some overlap, such as mostly Danish to southern Britain and mainly Norwegian in Ireland. The Ridgeway Vikings tend to correspond to that, as they are mostly of Danish origin.

Of course, Vikings did migrate to Britain and Ireland and settle, but the standard view of prehistoric cultural change was of a movement of ideas more than people, though increasingly challenged in the last few decades. For example, simplistically, it was thought that the Neolithic revolution from hunter-gatherers to settled farmers was, essentially, an idea that spread westwards from the Middle East around 7,000 BC, not reaching the British Isles for about 3,000 years. It seems, based on tracking increasingly available haplogroups, there's a rather more complex movement of people around Europe.



Bob suggests that mid-Dorset is the meeting point of two Neolithic 'cultures' around 3,600 BC. From the east there are distinctive flints, carinated bowls and causewayed enclosures, such as at Hambledon Hill and, possibly, Worth Matravers. The western 'culture' is more related to passage graves and megaliths like in Brittany, such as the Grey Mare and her Colts chambered long barrow (shown) near Abbotsbury.

The adoption of Beakers over 1,000 years later was also thought to be more about ideas than migration, but the results of research on aDNA, published in 2018, show an almost complete replacement of the 'British Neolithic people' with Continental 'Beaker people', amongst the males at least, around 2,450 BC. Canada Farm aDNA shows these same Beaker people persisting 800 years later. Here, too, there seem to be separate groups coming from the east and the west, as in the diagram.



The suggested replacement of the British Neolithic population is controversial though. At Net Down for example, close to Stonehenge, Beaker barrows were modified by 'Wessex people' with their own burials placed in the top, and vice versa. Grave goods make the distinction quite clear but, critically, the Wessex people cremated their dead, so that there is no DNA recoverable. It could thus be that the Wessex people are the descendants of the British Neolithic people, though it is still clear that a good deal of migration did take place.

What, then, of the Worth Matravers post-Roman burials from the 7th & 8th centuries, where almost half of the 26 skeletons have been analysed? DNA evidence from Cambridgeshire showed the first remains in Britain associated with the Justinianic plague, perhaps the worst ancient outbreak. It started during the reign of Justinian I in AD 541, but didn't entirely disappear until about 750. In Cambridgeshire it was associated with multiple burials in a single grave. At Worth there was one triple burial and three double burials, which may give similar results.



Bob has always wondered whether the man buried at Worth with a stone anchor, carbon dated to 625-663, really is a "descendant of Romano-British inhabitants" as in the earlier display at Dorchester Museum. Rather than a local fisherman, perhaps we'll find that he was a sailor from further afield. Perhaps even more interestingly, it may be possible through DNA to link these ancient populations to more modern ones, even to people living in Purbeck now. As above, if the data permits, it will be possible to tell the date(s) of the common ancestor(s).

The information becoming available from aDNA makes for an interesting future, and may well mean re-interpretations of existing sites. It also means that very small samples of all human skeletons should probably be kept back from re-burial for possible analysis. No doubt Bob will be able to tell us much more in a few years' time, especially about Worth and his predictions.

More information on Bob's talk to The Purbeck Society can be seen on the following link:

<https://purbecksociety.co.uk/assets/V10-papers-read-before-the-purbeck-society-review-2016-1.pdf>

Geoff Taylor

Another result (partly) from Ancient DNA – Sweet Chestnuts!

An article from the recently issued journal *Britannia* (reference below) looks at whether sweet chestnut was actually a Roman archaeophyte, i.e. whether it was introduced into Britain by the Romans.

It is thought that the tree survived the Ice Ages in *refugia* in southern Europe and the Caucasus; there are 3 known gene pools that correspond to these areas. Sweet chestnut therefore doesn't seem to be indigenous to the British Isles. After development for cultivation by the ancient Greeks and Romans, both for wood and food, it was propagated widely across Europe by monastic houses and noble estates. In fact, the earliest documentary references to sweet chestnuts in Britain come from monastic establishments in the 12th century, such as Goldcliff Priory in South Wales.



Dendrochronology shows some living trees to be up to 400 years old, though there are ones considered to be much older. The view that the Romans brought the trees to Britain seems to have begun in the 17th century, though the earliest reference quoted is John Evelyn's *Silva* in 1706. Evelyn provided no evidence for this view, and it was hotly debated by the Royal Society around 1770. Godwin's *History of the British Flora* (1956) said that sweet chestnut was introduced to Britain by the Romans, based on macrofossil remains from archaeological and other investigations. Despite Godwin cautioning that the remains studied could have been imports, this work has been taken as the authority ever since.

The current study comprehensively reviewed all the relevant published archaeological and palaeo-environmental material that suggested sweet chestnuts were growing in Britain before AD 650. That included reports of wood, nuts, pollen and charcoal remains. All were followed up where there was a possibility of specimens having been stored, though there were several cases where museums had accessioned specimens which could not now be found! Specimens included charcoal samples from Pitt Rivers' excavations at both Rotherley and Wodcutts Common, a tribute to his approach in finding and keeping such material, and to Salisbury Museum for preserving the samples for so long.

Issues with the material included a few insecure, misreported or wrongly dated contexts, with one sample that radiocarbon dating showed was very modern. Detailed examination of likely specimens included DNA analysis where it appeared possible, though few results came from this. Sadly, the Pitt Rivers' samples, along with several others, proved to be *Quercus* (i.e. oak); the distinction under microscopic view isn't easy to see.

In all, only 9 Roman period samples could be verified, and one post-Roman. Of these, 8 are from worked wooden artefacts, one is charcoal and only one from nuts. The artefacts/wood might well have been imported, whilst the single food item hardly fits with a food source widely used across much of the Roman Empire. Nothing conclusively demonstrates that sweet chestnut trees grew in Roman Britain, like pollen or a dendro-provenance so, whilst possible, it is incorrect to classify them as a Roman import. But they still taste just as good.

R. Jarman, Z. Hazell, G. Campbell, J. Webb & F.M. Chambers. 2019. Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa* Mill.) in Britain: Re-assessment of its Status as a Roman Archaeophyte. *Britannia* 50: 49-74.



Geoff Taylor

Web Link Highlight November 2019

The "Tutankhamun's tomb intended for someone else" story for me comes under the heading "I am sure I have heard that one before!". And so long ago I cannot begin to remember where I heard (or read) it. As they say, what goes around, comes around. Maybe this is just another Egyptology story in November/December (there are several others in this month's list) timed to coincide with people's holiday-making decisions for next year.

The item about the first tank shell to be fired is definitely one I want to highlight, for several reasons. First, it is an interesting story and quite remarkable that a fired round survived in such good condition, and that they found it after firing it somewhere on the Bovington range. Second, because it is a local story, and we can all go and see this piece of history. Third, because it must resonate with many of us that something we had been looking for was there in plain sight all the time!

Alan Dedden

[The defendants in the trial concerning stolen Anglo-Saxon treasure have now been sentenced; see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hereford-worcester-50516329> – ed.]

November Weblinks

110m Year Old Dinosaur Claw Found In Australia

<https://www.cnet.com/news/scientists-uneath-huge-new-claw-from-110-million-year-old-carnivorous-dinosaur/>

The Ice Man's Final Journey Revealed By Moss

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-50238311>

Bronze Age Monument Found In Forest Of Dean

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-50208092>

Staffordshire Hoard Now Assessed To Be Most Important Anglo-Saxon Find In History

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/archaeology/staffordshire-hoard-most-important-find-anglo-saxon-history-archaeology-book-a9179781.html>

Britain's First City? Home Of The People Who Built Stonehenge?

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2019/11/02/britains-first-city-discovered-archaeologists-say-home-people/>

5 Ancient Shipwrecks Discovered Off Aegean Island Of Kasos

<https://www.archaeology.org/news/8163-191106-greek-island-shipwrecks>

Man-made Woolly Mammoth Traps Discovered In Mexico

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-50330717>

Mystery Of Bird Mummies Solved

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2019/nov/13/experts-crack-mystery-ancient-egypt-sacred-bird-mummies>

Fossil Dinosaur Feathers Found Near South Pole

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2019/11/first-fossil-dinosaur-feathers-found-near-south-pole-cretaceous-australia/>

44 Million Year Old Caterpillar Fossil Found In Baltic Amber

<https://www.dw.com/en/german-scientists-find-44-million-year-old-caterpillar/a-51341040>

Detectorist Failed To Declare Finds That Change Understanding Of Anglo-Saxon History

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hereford-worcester-50461860>

More Than 140 Nazca Lines Discovered In Peru

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/21/world/europe/nazca-lines-peru.html>

First Bible In Welsh Protected From Flood Damage

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/nov/22/welsh-bible-flood-risk-hydropower-william-morgan>

First Tank Shell To Be Fired "Discovered" On Display At Tank Museum

<https://www.bournemouthcho.co.uk/news/18053449.first-ever-shell-fired-tank-rediscovered-tank-museum/>

Restoring Mongolia's Fossil Heritage

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-50131770>

Mummified Lion Amongst Rare Finds At Saqqara

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2019/nov/23/mummified-lion-cats-rare-finds-egypt-saqqara-animals>

Another Tutankhamun Theory?

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2019/nov/27/original-tomb-raider-tutankhamun-treasures-golden-pharaoh-saatchi>

View from Above No 23: Ackling Dyke

**Photo by
Sue Newman
and Jo Crane**



This famous Roman road connected Badbury Rings to Old Sarum, a distance of 35km or almost 22 miles. Of course Roman roads, usually built by the military, facilitated conquest and Rome's continued authority. Otherwise, their main purpose was to serve the *Cursus Publicus*, or Imperial mail service. Express messengers could travel up to 240km (150 miles) a day, changing horses at post houses (*mutationes*) about 15km apart and staying overnight at rest houses (*mansiones*) every 30 - 40km.

This section of Ackling Dyke is much larger than most Roman roads, with an embankment (*agger*) up to 16m wide and 2.5m high (there are traces of roadside ditches (*vallum*) in places). The main practical reason for a high *agger* would be drainage, but that isn't needed on this mostly dry ground, so it seems that the intention was to impress the native people with the power of the invaders. The white chalk bank would certainly have been impressive when first built, while the road crossing, and sometimes obliterating, earlier monuments emphasised who was now in charge.

The road is shown here, looking approximately north-west, as it crosses Wyke Down and continues in a straight line into the distance. The wider band of trees following the road kinks to the right and, for a short distance, respects the line of the Dorset Cursus before turning away further to the east just before the junction of the two cursuses that make up the whole Dorset Cursus – Gussage Cursus nearer to us and Pentridge Cursus beyond. Ackling Dyke, of course, crosses over the cursus here, making it very clear that it was a later construction.

Jo Crane/Geoff Taylor

A Possible Long Barrow at Sopley

I am indebted to Mike Gill and the Avon Valley Archaeological Society (AVAS) for the information in this article, mainly taken from a paper produced by them (reference at end). It summarises the extensive research, leading up to a resistivity survey of the site of a possible long barrow near Sopley, in September 2017, by AVAS and The Christchurch Antiquarians. Several EDAS members have been involved in the work.



There are two main strands of evidence that have led to knowledge of the site and to finding its location, one from the 19th century and the other from the Second World War.

The first meeting of the newly formed Christchurch Archaeological Association took place in January 1861 and was reported in *The Gentleman's Magazine*. It included the description of a barrow intended to be opened in the spring, followed by a later report of the opening of the barrow from the December 1861 meeting:

"A barrow of seventy yards in length, and twenty yards in breadth, in the neighbourhood of Dane-rout, or Danat-lane, in the Clock-field on his [the President's] property, will be opened by him in the course of the spring."

"The President gave an account of the opening of a long barrow on his property at Clock Farm, in which only a silver penny of the time of William III was discovered; but a further exploration will be made in the spring."

Unfortunately no further references to the barrow could be found, and it's not surprising that nothing prehistoric turned up as antiquarians tended to open the centre of the mound, rather than the end. These reports do, though, narrow down the location considerably. The President was Sir George E. Pocock, Bart., who owned Clock Farm, which is now Lower Clockhouse Farm to the east of Sopley. Dane-rout or Danat-lane are variants for Derritt Lane, which runs roughly northeast out of Sopley to the north of the farm.

The OS 6 inch map of 1872 has the farm as Clockhouse, whilst the 25 inch OS map of about 1890 (left) revealed an unusual parcel of land – a small, elongated area of scrub within fields with dimensions similar to those in the report above.



Interestingly, it contained (a difficult to see) triangulation pillar, suggesting raised ground in this flat landscape. Sue Newman was able to track down the original OS record, which describes the pillar as "... erected on a bank of gravel...". It included a sketch map that made it clear that the shape of the parcel of land was dictated by a long

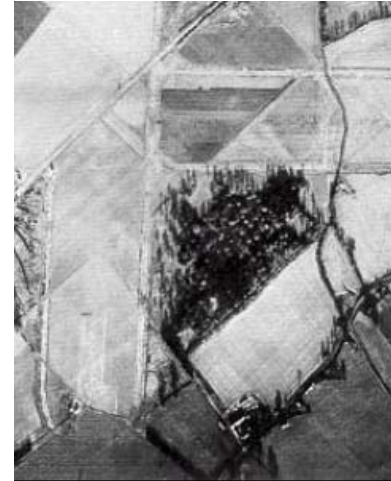
mound. By the 1909 map (right) the same piece of ground, with its triangulation pillar, is within woodland called Clockhouse Copse.



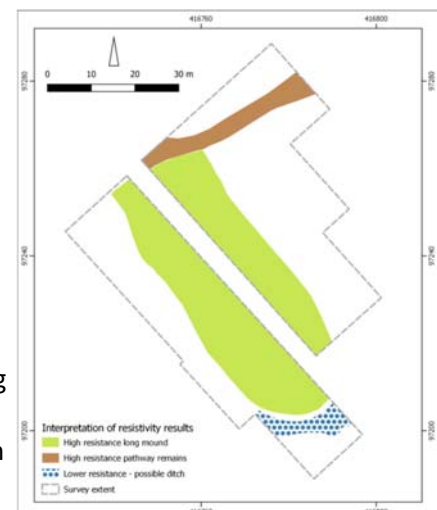
This evidence was reinforced by the Estate Map of 1796, which describes the piece of land as "*Barrow, now Fir Plantation*", with the enclosing field called "*Barrow Close*". The 1844 Tithe Map has changed the latter slightly to "*Burrow Close*", but the accompanying schedule shows the area to be owned by Sir George Pocock. From this, it seems reasonably certain that this parcel of land contained a mound thought to be a long barrow, and that it was the mound opened by Sir George.

Winkton Airfield was built in this area in 1943, as a prototype of the 'Advanced Landing Ground' airfields to be used in France after D-Day. It was the base of an American Air Force fighter group in the run up to D-Day and for a month afterwards. The land was returned to agriculture later that year but, of course,

had been irreparably changed, as shown in the aerial photograph below from 1947. In particular, from a website recording memories of the airfield “... [it] contained an old burial mound ... [which] was flattened during the preparation work ... and Canon Kirkham expressed some concern ...”. The commanding officer apologised and offered to put it back again. Sue Newman tracked down the Canon’s son, an Anglican Bishop, who confirmed the story. The airfield also truncated the corners of Clockhouse Copse, as shown on the photograph and the modern OS map below. The site of the previous mound is roughly along the track that passes through the “s” of Clockhouse.



With this fairly compelling evidence, it was decided to survey the site to see what traces remained, including of any ditches, and obtain a view on the size of the mound. Resistivity was used as the site is unsuitable for magnetometry, partly because of tree cover but mainly due to metallic disturbance. This was from the remains of the metallic ‘netting’ used as the runway cover. The diagram interpreting the results is shown: a large high resistance area straddling the farm track at a slight angle with a lower resistance area to the south, possibly the remains of a ditch. The high resistance area has a band of slightly lower resistance cutting across slightly north of centre, perhaps from later disturbance. The anomaly measures 66m by 22m, very close to the antiquarian report, and fits perfectly into the parcel of land above.



Traditionally, long barrows were thought almost exclusively confined to the chalk of southern England, particularly demonstrated by the 1979 Royal Commission distribution map with long barrows in our area all west of the Avon. The Holdenhurst long barrow, on gravel above the Stour and excavated in 1936, was seen as anomalous. AVAS have recently shown from geophysical surveys that Holdenhurst wasn’t a sole exception, identifying two long barrows on the gravel terrace above the Avon near Fordingbridge. Even more significant would be the possible long barrow seen as a crop mark near Bransgore, 1.5km east of the Clockhouse Copse site, on fluvial sand and gravel. The site covered here would be entirely consistent with the implied revised distribution.

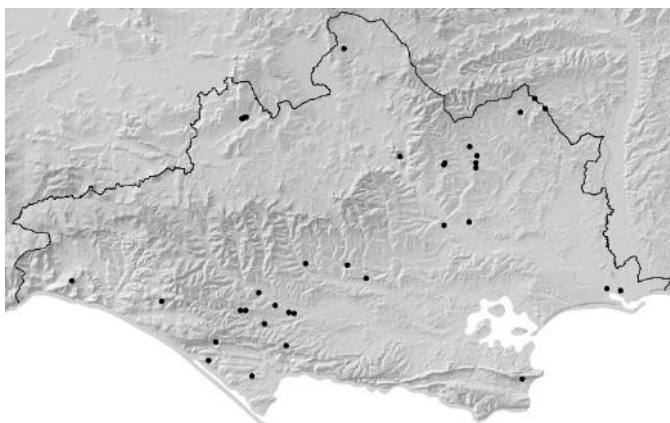
Clearly geophysics alone cannot date a site, and AVAS are currently engaged in excavating a trench across the putative barrow at Clockhouse Copse. I’ll let you know when I hear more about the results. Whatever the outcome, the research to identify the site was an excellent piece of detective work; it only looks straightforward when summarised as I have and, especially, in retrospect.

M. Gill. 2019. *Geophysics survey of a possible long barrow at Sopley*. Avon Valley Archaeological Society.

Geoff Taylor/Mike Gill

Data for an early Anglo-Saxon census of southern Britain released

Fascinating insights into the early medieval people of southern Britain can be gained from their burial practices. In Dorset alone, as shown, there are 35 burial sites consisting of the graves and cremations of at least 250 individuals of the fifth to seventh centuries AD. Associated with these people were nearly 200 objects. Studying these assemblages and their locations in the landscape give us important information about past lives. The sheer scale of this information has been difficult to encompass, but digitisation now allows us to collate and present this data in a publicly accessible and freely available format.



The UCL Early Medieval Atlas is pleased to announce the launch of the *Beyond the Tribal Hidage* burial data. This is the base line research data of the Leverhulme Trust funded project *Beyond the Tribal Hidage: the early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of southern Britain AD 450–650* directed by the late Dr Martin Welch FSA at UCL Institute of Archaeology, 2006–9. The project aimed to bring together in an accessible format all the available evidence for burial and material culture in southern Britain from the fifth to seventh centuries AD. Over the years Martin had compiled a meticulous card catalogue of sites in the knowledge that only the full deployment and accessibility of the data would allow the fundamental questions of the early Anglo-Saxon period to be addressed with clarity. This ambition was realised as a digital census created by Sue Harrington and Stuart Brookes.

The process of data acquisition was one of desk-based assessment by county, followed by discrete searches to both published and unpublished grey literature and other archive material held by county archaeological societies, research libraries, national and county journals, museum day books and accession registers, as well as through various communications with local researchers. In general, it was possible by this level of search to add 10 per cent to the number of sites recorded by national and county archaeological registers. Next, discrete county site lists were assembled, and museum and archive visits arranged to view the relevant objects from these national listings. Data was collected geographically in county sets working clockwise around the study region, beginning with East Sussex in November 2006 and finishing in Kent, Surrey, and Greater London in August 2008. This iteration of the dataset also includes listings of new sites appearing between 2008 and 2017.

The study area extends south from the River Thames and westwards into Somerset. The downloads comprise: Sites table lists of 834 burial sites with grid references; the Individuals table of 12,379 people for whom there are partial or complete burial records; and the Objects table noting their 26,043 associated artefacts. The three tables can be freely downloaded from: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/early-medieval-atlas/map-data/beyond-tribal-hidage-data>. The data enables users to explore the nature, distribution and spatial relationships of burial sites in their landscape context.

The web page also gives a full list of references and suggested further readings. We are pleased to also announce that Dr Audrey Meaney FSA has given us permission to include pdfs of her 1964 gazetteer of Early Anglo-Saxon burial sites.

As originally envisaged, this data is being made public in the expectation that future researchers will be able to enhance and extend its content. The conclusions of the project, as presented in the project monograph (Harrington and Welch 2014) could thus be tested, challenged, revised and extended as others see fit in the future, aware that what is presented there is but one assessment of the wonderfully complex and engaging material for this crucial period of early medieval studies.

If you would like further information, please contact:

Data content: Dr Sue Harrington FSA s.harrington@ucl.ac.uk

Website: Dr Stuart Brookes FSA s.brookes@ucl.ac.uk

Harrington, S. and Welch, M. 2014. *The early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of southern Britain, AD 450-650: beneath the Tribal Hidage*. Oxford: Oxbow Books

Sue Harrington

EDAS PROGRAMME

Unless otherwise stated, all lectures are from 7:30 – 9:30 pm at St Catherine's Church Hall, Lewens Lane, Wimborne, BH21 1LE. <http://www.dorset-archaeology.org.uk/programme.html>

2019			
Wed 11th December	Lecture	Miles Russell Bournemouth University	Arthur and the Kings of Britain
2020			
Wed 8th January	Lecture	Monique Goodliffe	The Aristocrat and the Ironmaster (Dowlais and Wimborne)
Wed 12th February	Lecture	Josh Pollard University of Southampton	Settlement and monumentality in the Avebury landscape AT BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY
Wed 11th March	Lecture	AGM and members talk	The Druce Neolithic Site- Lilian Ladle and Andrew Morgan
Wed 1st April	Lecture	Francis Taylor CBA Wessex	Discovering the Maya (esp. Tikal & Copan sites) NOT SECOND WEDNESDAY CHANGE FROM PRINTED PROGRAMME
Wed 13th May	Lecture	Tim Darvill Bournemouth University	Sticks and Stones and Broken Bones

DISTRICT DIARY

The diary of what I hope are interesting events in the area depends partly on information received from the organisations concerned, some of which organise events at fairly short notice.

Your information is also welcome – do let me know of any events.

PLEASE CHECK RELEVANT WEBSITES/CONTACTS FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION BEFORE VISITING.

2019			
Tue 3rd December	Art and Illustration in Archaeology	BNSS	Lecture by Bryan Popple
Wed 4th December	Miss Bennett's Basket ...and what every young lady should know	Wareham Society	Lecture by Gordon Le Pard, archaeologist and social historian
2020			
Wed 15th January	Purbeck's Early Archaeologists	Wareham Society	Lecture by Bryan Popple

Thu 16th January	Aerial Photography & Archaeology	Blandford Group	Lecture by Claire Pinder, Dorset Council Archaeologist
Sat 15th February	Inflatable Museum at Blandford Forum	County Museum	Dorset County Museum on tour – see p.11 October Newsletter
Wed 19th February	Chedworth Roman Villa – what's new?	Wareham Society	Lecture by Nancy Grace, National Trust archaeologist
Thu 20th February	Portable Antiquities Scheme & the Treasure Act	Blandford Group	Lecture by Coirstaidh Hayward Trevvarthen, PAS Finds Officer, Dorset
Sat 29th February	Inflatable Museum at Lytchett Matravers	County Museum	Dorset County Museum on tour – see p.11 October Newsletter
Wed 18th March	Golbekli Tepe - a Prehistoric Ceremonial Site in Turkey	Wareham Society	Lecture by Tim Darvill, Bournemouth University
Thu 19th March	Title to be decided	Blandford Group	Lecture by Edrys Luprian
Sat 21st March	Inflatable Museum at Corfe Castle	County Museum	Dorset County Museum on tour – see p.11 October Newsletter
Wed 15th April	Life, death and feasting – 6000 years of occupation at Worth Matravers	Wareham Society	Lecture by Lilian Ladle
Thu 16th April	Finding Nero (and other Emperors)	Blandford Group	Lecture by Miles Russell, Bournemouth University
Wed 20th May	Music in Every Home – the disc vs. the cylinder	Wareham Society	Lecture by Gordon Bartlet, specialist in restoring mechanical musical instruments IN WAREHAM MASONIC HALL
Thu 21st May	Pre-Colombian Peru	Blandford Group	Lecture by Tim Brown
Wed 17th June	Portland – Isle of Fascination	Wareham Society	Lecture by Stuart Morris, local historian and author

Archaeology Societies

- **Avon Valley Archaeological Society:** <http://www.avas.org.uk/>
Meetings at Ann Rose Hall, Greyfriars Community Centre, Christchurch Road, Ringwood BH24 1DW, 7:30pm 1st Wednesday of month except June, July & August. Visitors £3.50; membership £10 pa.
- **Blandford Museum Archaeology Group:** <http://blandfordtownmuseum.org.uk/arcacology.html>
Meetings at Blandford Museum, Bere's Yard, Market Place, Blandford Forum, DT11 7HQ, normally 7:30pm 3rd Thursday of each month (although the Museum is being refurbished from November 2019 – please check for alternative meeting location). Visitors £4; membership £10 pa.
- **Bournemouth Natural Sciences Society:** <http://bnss.org.uk/>
Events at 39 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BN1 3NS; lectures Tuesday 7:30pm/Saturday 2:30pm.
- **The Christchurch Antiquarians:** <https://christchurchantiquarians.wordpress.com/>
No lecture programme but involved in practical archaeology projects. Membership £10 pa.
- **Dorset Natural History & Archaeology Society:** <http://www.dorsetcountymuseum.org/events>
Events at various locations in Dorchester, usually ticketed
- **Wareham and District Archaeology & Local History Society:** The website is no longer updated; for information contact Karen Brown at karen.brown68@btinternet.com
Meetings at the Town Hall, Wareham (corner of North Street & East Street), normally 7:30pm 3rd Wednesday of each month except July & August. Visitors welcome for £3; membership £10 pa.

Bournemouth Natural Science Society 2019 Lecture Programme

(Tuesdays @ 7:30, Saturdays @ 2:30)

NOVEMBER		
Saturday 2 nd	Black Holes	Prof Rob Fender
Tuesday 5 th	Hair Analysis in Clinical and Forensic Toxicology	Dr Richard Paul
Saturday 9 th	Flying Raptors	'Liberty's Owl', New Forest Raptor & Reptile Centre
Tuesday 12 th	Cetaceans, Conservation and Cruising: whale and dolphin watching trips to Iceland, Norway, Canada and Alaska	Hazel Pitwood
Saturday 16 th	Queens, Workers and Soldiers, Farmers, Paper Makers and Complex Social Societies in the Insect World	Mark Spencer
Tuesday 19 th	Molecular tools for conservation: study case of red squirrels in Dorset	Emilie Hardouin
Saturday 23 rd	The Wars of the Roses-The First People's War? (Joint Historical Association Lecture)	Dr Gordon McKelvie
Tuesday 26 th	Climate Crisis and Solutions	Mark Chivers
DECEMBER		
Tuesday 3 rd	Art and Illustration in Archaeology	Bryan Popple
Saturday 7 th	Stridulation – a look at Insect Sounds	Jonathan MacGowan
Tuesday 10 th	The Songs of Tin Pan Alley	Richard Hesketh