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East Dorset Antiquarian Society

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INTERIM NEWSLETTER 3 – May 2020

Sad to say that we're now up to the third of these interim 'topical' newsletters, though at least things have relaxed a little. That does mean that some of the items I'd gathered are slightly out of date (or even completely). They'll still be included if they're interesting or funny enough.

Thank you very much to all those who have sent articles or items to include; I'm grateful that you took the time to provide things for our members to read or do.

But I'm still running short of things to include if I'm to continue these through the summer. It would seem that few people have done some form of project, done, seen or heard anything interesting or funny, found an old photograph or item they think people would like, or even enjoyed spring in their garden or the countryside.

**Please send your contributions to geoffnsuehotmail.co.uk
PLEASE DO NOT SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EDAS ADDRESS OR REPLY
TO THE COVERING EMAIL as that just means Peter has to pass them on.**

There are a number of longer items in this newsletter:

- Alan Dedden brings us up to date on **Lockdown** Lingo in case you weren't up to speed or 'down with the kids'.
- Gill Vickery sent a lovely article on **Staying in Bath**, with some of the positive changes that lockdown has brought to the city, though I imagine things have become busier since she wrote this. Archaeological work has been curtailed, for now at least, but Gill's article provides a couple of links of antiquarian interest to add to the ones she sent for the last newsletter.
- If that's not enough and you're running out of things to do, Andrew has provided a list of **Archaeology Lectures for Lockdown - on video**; there's bound to be something here for everyone.
- Gill Broadbent has kindly provided a summary of her recent article in the Proceedings about the **Excavation of Medieval burials In Wimborne Square in 2012**, giving us more information about the use of the graveyard of St. Peter's Chapel and, perhaps, of the impact of the Black Death on Wimborne.
- Vanessa's article on the **old red telephone boxes**, and ways of re-using them, might get you thinking of new ways or you might already know of an innovative use not covered here – let me know.
- Alan has also sent **Who Can You Believe? A Salutory Tale**, an article about the theft of ancient papyri and a reminder that it's all too easy to believe what you want to believe.
- Peter Walker sent me **Pam Ayres' poem on Coronavirus** to follow on from the shorter one in the last newsletter (a small substitute for his postponed evening see her at The Lighthouse in Poole).

Geoff Taylor

Lockdown lingo - are you fully conversant with the new terminology?

Coronacoaster

The ups and downs of your mood during the pandemic. You're loving lockdown one minute but suddenly weepy with anxiety the next. It truly is "an emotional coronacoaster".

Quarantinis

Experimental cocktails mixed from whatever random ingredients you have left in the house. The boozy equivalent of a store cupboard supper. Southern Comfort and Ribena quarantini with a glacé cherry garnish, anyone? These are sipped at "locktail hour", i.e. wine o'clock during lockdown, which seems to be creeping earlier with each passing week.

Le Creuset wrist

It's the new "avocado hand" – an aching arm after taking the best saucepan outside to bang during 'Clap For Carers.' It might be heavy but you're keen to impress the neighbours with your kitchenware.

Coronials

As opposed to millennials, this refers to the future generation of babies conceived or born during coronavirus quarantine. They might also become known as "Generation C" or, more spookily, "Children of the Quarn".

Furlough Merlot

Wine consumed in an attempt to relieve the frustration of not working. Also known as "bored-eaux" or "cabernet tedium".

Coronadose

An overdose of bad news from consuming too much media during a time of crisis. Can result in a panicdemic.

The elephant in the Zoom

The glaring issue during a videoconferencing call that nobody feels able to mention. E.g. one participant has dramatically put on weight, suddenly sprouted terrible facial hair or has a worryingly messy house visible in the background.

Quentin Quarantino

An attention-seeker using their time in lockdown to make amateur films which they're convinced are funnier and cleverer than they actually are.

Covidiot or Wuhan-ker

One who ignores public health advice or behaves with reckless disregard for the safety of others can be said to display "covidioty" or be "covidiotic". Also called a "lockclown" or even a "Wuhan-ker".

Goutbreak

The sudden fear that you've consumed so much wine, cheese, home-made cake and Easter chocolate in lockdown that your ankles are swelling up like a medieval king's.

Antisocial distancing

Using health precautions as an excuse for snubbing neighbours and ignoring people you find irritating.

Coughin' dodger

Someone so alarmed by an innocuous splutter or throat-clear that they back away in terror.

Mask-ara

Extra make-up applied to "make one's eyes pop" before venturing out in public wearing a face mask.

Covid-10

The 10lbs in weight that we're all gaining from comfort-eating and comfort-drinking. Also known as "fattening the curve"

Alan Dedden

Staying in in Bath

It's a long way from the Dorset countryside to a flat in Great Pulteney Street in Bath, and the further away you get from Dorset, the louder and more insistent the noise factor. From the deaf lady upstairs (no sound proofing in a Grade 1 building) to the constant stream of traffic outside; the all night overhead "shouting" alarm clock; street carousers at two in the morning and rumbling wheelie suitcases heading to the station three hours later, there is never a quiet moment – until 24 March 2020, when everything stopped, absolutely.

The lady upstairs, much to our relief, has gone somewhere else to isolate; the clubs are shut; traffic intermittent and public transport discouraged. This has resulted in a welcome improvement to air quality. Even in the heatwaves of the last couple of summers we have been unable to keep open the secondary glazing because of the fumes and noise: the delayed implementation of an official Clean Air Zone has given way to a consequential CAZ and this spring we have the window open all day and breathe in its freshness.

This is a bonus for our once-a-day exercise. Walking in Bath is, on the whole, not an enjoyable experience. The centre is so congested we are nudged in a slow-moving queue along Pulteney Bridge and into the town. Climbing the steep surrounding streets to the Skyline is the best exercise, except we are surrounded by traffic. So, we have not had a tradition of walking too far, until now. Is the blossom brighter this year, or is it the first time we have seen it? Is



Bath on Saturday 18th April at 11:30 am



John on Bathwick Hill 23rd April

the bird song louder, or is it the first time we have heard it? Are the views more beautiful or is it the first time we have paused to see them? Are people friendlier or maybe we never took the time to talk? We are finding paths, history and scenery we never knew existed.

While we have these blessings, practical archaeology isn't one of them. Bath & Counties Archaeological Society (BACAS) normally has a steady programme of practical work throughout the year, mainly in the form of geophysics projects led by members. These have all stopped, but now is the time to write up those reports.

John Oswin from the Geophysics Team has given me an account of some of the more recent projects:

In January in the days of wind and rain, a hardy group were working in Paddock Field on Lansdown at 800 ft AOD. We (I say "we" but I, myself, am not "hardy", definitely) were looking for the eastern half of an enclosure which is bisected by the main road and may be evident as indistinct earthworks. The survey did find a form of enclosure, but the results did not match the earthworks on the other side of the road! However, a Roman road alignment was apparent. This area was also the site of the Battle of Lansdown, 1643, and again there may have been indications in the geophysics, but not strong evidentially. This report and others are on the BACAS website: <https://www.bacas.org.uk/reports/>.



We (I say “we” but again....) have developed a method of profiling (electronic resistivity tomography) over hard surfaces which cannot be penetrated by the probes. This was necessary in our work in collaboration with Bath & North East Somerset Council as part of the redevelopment of the Roman Baths storage areas for an education centre. As the site is scheduled, the probes were not allowed to be pushed into the ground. The Oswin/Lowe Plastic Beer Cup Technique (named for its inventors) solved this problem and obtained excellent results. Consequently, this led to requests for profiles across two church floors to identify vaults. This technique has now modified to become the Oswin/Lowe Plastic Soup Container Technique which is not so jolly but assuredly healthier and more sustainable. We had another couple of church related requests planned for the summer, but these are now on hold.



The Oswin/Lowe Beer Cup technique, in Cameley church, worth visiting for its medieval wall paintings.

Last autumn we (and yes, I do mean “we”) have been involved in an extensive geophysics survey and trial trenches on the land of one of our members near Frome. A metal detector had found a *francisca*, that is a continental throwing axe from around AD 500. This is remarkably early, and indeed unique, for Somerset; they are predominantly found in the south-east and particularly around the coast, while the furthest west had been from the Salisbury area. The geophysics has revealed what looks like a long, possibly Roman, building and we had hoped to carry out further excavation across this area over the summer. The axe is now in the Conservation Laboratories at Chippenham, awaiting a Conservator. Meanwhile John has been busy mapping the provenance of every known *francisca* in England.



We (no!) have also carried out a variety of geophysical surveying techniques in Victoria Park looking for Roman evidence. This work took place over a couple of seasons and the mammoth task of writing it up has kept Janet and John busy these last few weeks. The park area has had diverse usage over the years which has complicated the results and the interpretation, I am looking forward to seeing the completed report.

Finally, BACAS now has a representative on the Bathscape Project, you can find out more about that here: <https://www.bathscape.co.uk/>. We will be looking forward to a time when we will be able to get more hands-on with this initiative, but also to hopefully resurrect our lost programme of Summer Excursions.

Gill Vickery

Lilian still has lots to occupy her in writing up the Druce Farm excavation, so isn't in need of the links above or further down, except for a break. Here she is “wrestling with the North Range”.



Len Norris, on the other hand, clearly has time on his hands to get dressed up for the Bin Isolation Outing, following Vanessa's prompt last month. If only I'd made this a competition, Len would have won hands down (there were no other entries, but there's still time).

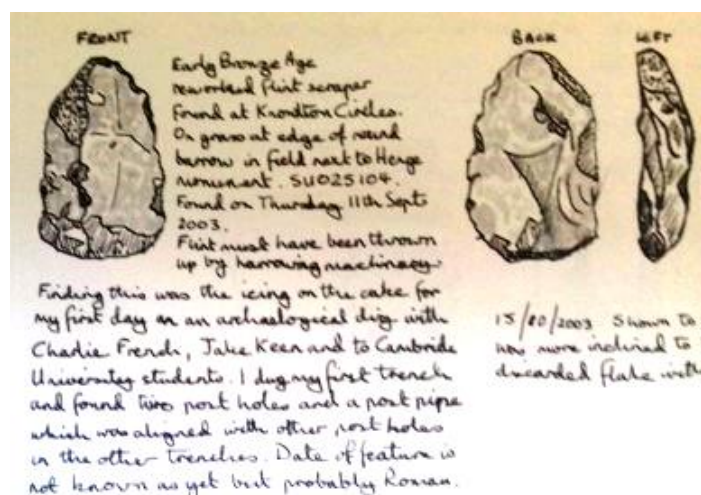
Len is obviously taking no chances after the rather confusing update on 'the rules', though he assures me that he's 'dressed up' underneath all the PPE (actually dressed down, as he mentioned something about a black negligée, though I'm not sure he meant that to be passed on ... once on the internet, always on the internet!).

Len says "When Pam is not pot and bone washing she escapes to her little Studio at the bottom of the garden". He wishes "to be in the middle of nowhere digging a pointless hole with nothing in it - what a joy that would be." Things are obviously getting to him but at least Pam can escape to her 'womanshed'.



Slightly more archaeological:
This flint drawing was one of Bryan Popple's early ones when he was being tutored by Janet Bartlet & Carole O'Hara at Bestwall (if you can't quite read it, it's from 2003). He said that "he loves drawing flint"! You learn something every day.

And after Andrew's 'virtual archaeology', next, there's some real archaeology from Gill Broadbent.



Archaeology Lectures for Lockdown - on video

With the Covid-19 lockdown stretching into the distance, I have compiled a list of lectures available on video via the internet. I have selected a few sites and several talks that I have found interesting for one reason or another. There is much more out there; if you have any recommendations please let us know.

1177BC - The Year Civilisation Collapsed by Dr Eric Cline

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRcu-ysocX4> (70 minutes)

An excellent lecture about a period of radical change in the eastern Mediterranean which saw the collapse of the Hittite and Mycenaean civilisations.

The Epic of Gilgamesh, Lecture by Andrew George

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rd7MrGy_tEg (90 minutes)

Great lecture explaining everything you wanted to know about the epic poem Gilgamesh. It covers the mythology, the poetry and the fantastic archaeological challenge to recover the ancient clay tablets and then decipher them. It is regarded as the earliest surviving work of literature.

CBA Beatrice de Cardi Lecture: Stonehenge Lecture by Mike Parker Pearson

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZ2IR5_N0vc (57 minutes)

A lecture by Parker Pearson from 2016 explaining the development of Stonehenge and Durrington Walls and the origins of the stones.

The Origin of Us: African Climate of the Last 400,000 Years - East African and South African Evidence

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRk_gcNf7jo (58 minutes)

Very interesting lecture explaining the critical relationship between environment and human evolution.

Royal Archaeological Institute: Lectures Online

The RAI has made some of their monthly lectures available online, subject to agreement of the speaker, at <https://www.royalarchinst.org/rai-lectures-online>. There is a great choice of interesting lectures even though some may be several years old, and the following are those I found to be of interest:

Professor John Collis - Celts and the end of Roman Britain

<https://www.royalarchinst.org/rai-lectures-online/9-October-2019> (60 minutes)

Alison Sheridan, Julian Thomas & Alasdair Whittle debate 'How/why did Britain become Neolithic'?

<https://www.royalarchinst.org/rai-lectures-online/8-Jan-14> (77 minutes)

Dr Mark Gardiner - Anglo-Saxon timber buildings: archaeological evidence for the forms and the processes of construction

<https://www.royalarchinst.org/rai-lectures-online/12-February-2020> (53 minutes)

Professor Timothy Champion - The making of the southern English landscape: a prehistorian's view

<https://www.royalarchinst.org/rai-lectures-online/11-May-2016> (46 minutes)

Professor Howard Williams - Hydraulic Borders? The Ebb and Flow of Wat's Dyke and Offa's Dyke

<https://www.royalarchinst.org/rai-lectures-online/13-November-2019> (47 minutes)

The Prehistory Guys

We met Rupert and Michael at the last CBA conference; they work in the media, share a passion for archaeology and have made a series of films available via their website: <https://theprehistoryguys.uk/>. There are several films available and I especially liked:

Dolmens of the Languedoc

<https://theprehistoryguys.uk/output/film-dolmens-of-the-languedoc> (17 minutes)

Boscawen-Un: A Stone Circle in Cornwall

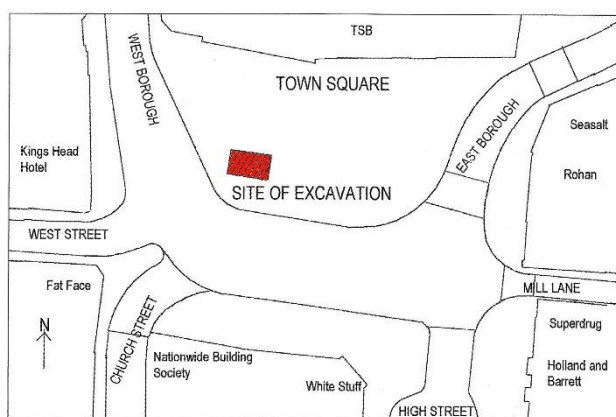
<https://theprehistoryguys.uk/output/film-boscawen-un-stone-circle-in-cornwall-with-michael-bott> (8 minutes)

Andrew Morgan

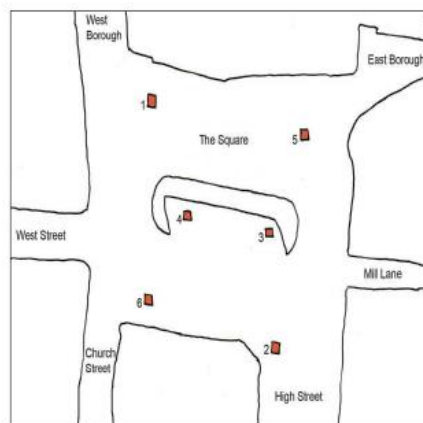
Excavation of Medieval burials In Wimborne Square in 2012

In February 2012 several EDAS members joined volunteers from the Priest's House Museum to excavate a trench in Wimborne Square during its redevelopment. After some unexpected and unavoidable delays, I am pleased to say that a short version of the report on the excavation has now been published in the DNHAS Proceedings¹. The following is a brief resumé of what was found, with the full report and archive held at the Priest's House Museum.

It is known that St Peter's Chapel and associated graveyard existed in the medieval period somewhere within the current town square. Test pits excavated by EDAS members in 2009 uncovered disarticulated human bone in 4 out of the 6 test pits². The redevelopment of the square included the planting of a new plane tree which necessitated the digging of a trench for the "planter". In light of the possibility that human remains and archaeological features existed where the tree was to be planted, it was important that the trench was excavated by hand.



Site location plan for 2012 excavation



Location of test pits in 2009

The trench was excavated to a depth of approximately 1m, the top surface and underlying hard core first being removed by mechanical digger. Disarticulated human bone was found at a depth of only 15cm below the level of the hard core. Preservation of the skeletal material was poor and, in many cases, very fragmentary owing partly to repeated grave cutting but mainly due to the changing use of the locality over time. The development of the area into the town square in the 19th century, and its modern use as a traffic thoroughfare, has meant considerable compaction of the overburden, together with substantial disturbance during various episodes of redevelopment and resurfacing.



A short time limit of only two weeks was allowed for the excavation and, due to the complexity of the site and number of burials found, it was not possible to plan each individual inhumation. However, colour scaled digital photographs of each burial were taken and a photographic log completed. All the human remains were fully excavated with full details entered on the appropriate context forms before being lifted for re-burial at a later date. Although steel fencing was erected around the trench, the site, being in the centre of the town, was not secure. Therefore, it was essential to ensure any exposed burials were lifted at the end of each day in order to minimize the

possibility of overnight interference from the public.

All the human bone was taken to Winchester University for analysis by Dr Katie Tucker. Katie identified a total of 23 burials. Of the burials identified 12 were reasonably intact, with the remaining 11 varying considerably in their completeness.

Where it could be determined, all the individuals had been buried lying on their backs with arms by their sides. Heads were to the west with feet to the east, indicative of Christian burials. The feet and ankles were close together as if the individuals had been bound within a shroud, as was generally the practise during the medieval period. There was no evidence for the presence of coffins and, with the exception of a whetstone found in the fill above one of the burials, most likely a stray loss, there were no grave goods relating to any of the burials.

Whilst there were no signs of individual grave cuts, the majority of the burials had been placed in orderly rows respecting each other. The exception was in the south east corner where the burials were much more closely packed and appeared randomly and perhaps hurriedly placed. As well as the identified burials, a total of 4019 disarticulated fragments of human bone that could not be related to specific burials were recovered. These were examined and the comprehensive catalogue is included in the archive.

In the absence of any associated dating evidence, samples from three of the burials, one from the south east corner of the trench and two from the north west of the site, were submitted to the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre, Glasgow for radiocarbon dating. The results obtained are:

- SK40, SUERC-52440 (GU33580), 610 ± 30 giving a calibrated date of 1310 AD - 1370 AD,
- SK45, SUERC-52441 (GU33581), 658 ± 30 giving a calibrated date of 1262 AD - 1322 AD
- SK53, SUERC-52445 (GU33582), 704 ± 30 giving a calibrated date of 1216 AD -1276 AD

Other finds were few and in non-secure contexts. There was lot of demolition debris, of which a small sample was kept, as well as pieces of ironwork that were mostly very corroded and difficult to identify. 183 pieces of animal bone weighing a total of 2097 grams were recovered which, where they could be identified, came from expected domesticated animals with the exception of two teeth and part of the mandible of a deer.

Two of the more interesting finds were the above-mentioned whetstone or pendant and a Nuremberg Jetton dated to the early to mid-17th century.



A total of 125 sherds of pottery weighing 1943.5 grams was recovered, ranging in date from medieval to modern. The pottery is in a moderately good condition, although the medieval sherds are small and abraded with no diagnostic rims or bases. The bulk of the post-medieval sherds was earthenware of the Verwood type. Here my thanks must go to Lorraine Mephram of Wessex Archaeology, who kindly identified the pottery for us.

The excavation in the square has proved to be invaluable for helping to understand the early history of the town. It allowed the opportunity to obtain radiocarbon dates for three burials which, in turn, has enabled a more precise date for the use of the graveyard to be established. The earliest of the radiocarbon dates, with a date range of between 1216 & 1276 AD, shows that the graveyard was in existence by the middle of the 13th century, and possibly even earlier. By inference this indicates that St Peter's chapel, to which the graveyard was attached, must also have been in existence by this time. This is considerably earlier than the date identified in the documentary sources currently available.

The radiocarbon dates also show the graveyard was likely to have been in use for at least 300 years,

from the middle of the 13th century to at least the decommissioning of the Chapel in the latter part of the 16th century. The relatively large number of burials obtained from the small sample area of 15



square meters would indicate, if the density of burials was consistent over the remainder of the Square, a high use of the burial ground over time.

The radiocarbon date range for the skeleton in the south-east corner of the trench of 1310-1370 AD is interesting, as the middle of this date range is very close to the time of the Black Death, the epidemic which entered Dorset in the middle of 1348. This burial, as shown, is from a group of 7, composed of 3 adults, 1 adolescent and 3 children who appear to have been buried together but in a more random way than the burials in the other areas of the trench. This was, perhaps, a family unit which had succumbed to the disease at the same time.

All the human remains were later re-buried in the Wimborne graveyard at a service conducted by the Rector of the Minster. A

special vote of thanks must go to Nicholas O'Hara, local Funeral Director, for generously donating the sum of money which enabled the important radiocarbon dates to be obtained and for organising the arrangements for the re-burial and for providing the burial caskets.

1. Broadbent, G. 2019. Excavation of medieval burials in Wimborne 2012. *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeology Society* 140: 99-113.
2. Ladle, L. 2010. *Archaeological Observation and Recording at Wimborne Square, Wimborne, Dorset*. Unpublished.

(If you would like a copy of Lilian's paper let me know and I will email you a pdf – geoffnsue@hotmail.co.uk)

Gill Broadbent

A rather brilliant post-script on the Verwood Coronavirus Support Group mentioned before: The Group is going very well and has over 1,000 people on its Facebook page. It has been well supported by both Lloyds and Morrisons in Verwood by, amongst other help, them handing out Support Group leaflets. It has been contacted by people in places such as Australia, America and Europe who have relatives in Verwood who may need their help, but who are not on Facebook.

Some other local news:

Wimborne Market is open Friday-Sunday for food and other essentials (may have been for a while but we missed it – their website is useless but their Facebook page seems to be up to date). They have one-way systems and social distancing. Some of the food-related stalls that were inside (now closed) have moved outside, like the cheese stall.

And something from further away:

In the last Interim Newsletter I reported that gun stores re-opened in Los Angeles and presumably across the country. Apparently sales are at record levels. Marijuana stores, both medical and recreational, are also allowed to be open in states where it's legal. Not a combination to mess with.

In France, chocolate shops are considered essential (who can argue with that?), in Australia toy stores stayed open too, which is where the next bit comes in.

My sister in Australia was getting bored in the evenings as Australian TV is apparently rubbish at the moment. So she got herself an adult colouring book to while away some of the hours. She thinks that's a bit sad, but I always want to have a go when I'm helping our granddaughter do her colouring-in (perhaps it's just that I'm sad too, but I think it's quite therapeutic).

That might well be needed. As the Association of Psychiatrists said:

“During lockdown it is normal to talk to your plants and pets. Please only contact us if they reply.”

Anyway, my family, even some of the in-laws and similar, seems to like having birthdays late April and early May (my father was 25 on VE Day, but didn't get much chance to celebrate as he was rebuilding bridges in Germany), so I've become 'vulnerable' since the last newsletter. You can guess what my sister sent for my birthday, and I was hoping to show my colouring-in efforts alongside hers but didn't quite get round to it. I have to say that my sister is a bit better at colouring in than my granddaughter.



As my eldest daughter might have said: “I know you are missing Mia (granddaughter). When this is over you can have her for a month. Promise!”

A couple of cartoons I couldn't let go even though they're a bit out of date and an odd one from my friend in America (who knows?!):



*Not murder, sarge.
We're searching for a
serial sunbather'*



**Banana is sooo
hard to spell!**



Vanessa sent this photo of St. James' First School in Gaunt's Common, where they've created this big rainbow.

They're around, big and small, wherever you go – more photos please.

Vanessa also sent the next article.



If you had an old telephone box, what would YOU use it for?

When the Museum of East Dorset finally opens again, there will be an almost life size replica of a red telephone box in the new Travel and Communications gallery. I know it's very hard for us to imagine, but many younger people will have never been inside a phone box in their lives.

The exhibition designer posed the question about old telephone boxes when developing ideas for the new interpretation panels. Before social isolation commenced, Dave and I went off on a hunt around some of the East Dorset villages to try to answer this question and take some photographs as well.

At its height, the GPO network totalled 92,000 public call boxes. Today, British Telecom's network has 46,000 call boxes, of which 8,000 are red telephone boxes. The dramatic changes in the telecommunications market and regulations, the advent of smart phones and internet communications, and an increasingly cashless society means that the red kiosks are largely redundant. However, many stand proud in our local area and some still have a dial tone.

For those of you who are interested, you can read the whole history of the British telephone box at www.the-telephone-box.co.uk/story/

For a visual history of the various box designs go to

<https://museumcrush.org/a-visual-history-of-the-british-telephone-box/>

A heritage icon

In March 2006, as part of a competition organised by the Design Museum and BBC TV to find Britain's favourite design icon since 1900, the red Telephone Box was placed in the top ten by the British public.

I discovered that there are 48 Grade II listed telephone boxes in Dorset alone, including the K6 in Cranborne and two K6 kiosks in the Square in Wimborne. The K6 was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the coronation of King George V in 1935.

Adopt a Kiosk

British Telecom's "Adopt a Kiosk" scheme, allowed local authorities to adopt under-used kiosks for £1.00, with the community assuming responsibility for maintaining the kiosk. By September 2011 1,500 communities across the UK had adopted a kiosk. Now they say that more than 5,000 communities across the UK have seized the opportunity to do something wonderful with local phone boxes that had little or no usage. Many were converted into homes for Public Access Defibrillators as part of a scheme between BT and The Community Heartbeat Trust. Some have been turned into mini libraries. With the public libraries currently off-limits, these are a wonderful asset. In other parts of UK, I've heard that phone boxes are also used, amongst other things, as mini-gardens, small coffee stalls or even shops with local produce and honesty boxes.



Still in use: Grade II listed K6 kiosk, The Square, Wimborne.

Our findings

On our drive round, Dave and I came across several examples of how the red Telephone Box is still at the heart of local communities:

- **Telephones:** There were working phones in Wimborne and Cranborne. Sadly, the phone box outside the village shop in Furzehill seems to have been abandoned.
- **Libraries:** I loved the libraries in Woodlands and Hinton Martell. Stephen Tansy told me that the phone box on the green in Sturminster Marshall is also being used for this purpose.
- **Defibrillators:** We came across these in Holt, the Gussages, Witchampton and Shapwick. Sigrid said there are two converted phone boxes in Station Road, Alderholt, both containing defibrillators. Alan

informed me that the kiosk in Tollard Royal (affectionately known as the "Tollard Tardis") now houses a defibrillator and acts as a book exchange. You can also find maps and suggested walks there.



Library in Woodlands.



Defibrillator outside the Old Inn, Holt.

The dark-blue Police Box became famous on an international scale in the BBC science-fiction series 'Doctor Who', when it first appeared on British television in 1963 as the TARDIS. The TARDIS is now firmly part of the Doctor Who culture, story and merchandising.

Next time you go out, take a closer look at your nearest telephone box. What would YOU use it for?

Vanessa Joseph

Alan said that the latest Government message brought to mind the American culture of bumper stickers, in particular, one they saw when living in Seattle 40 years ago: "Stay Alert - America Needs More Lerts".

My friend in America saw someone in their drive, a little while back, scraping the "My son is a great student" bumper sticker off their car. I guess that home-schooling isn't going all that well.

As with one child saying "I hope I don't have the same teacher next year". Mum was offended, though she's probably not Ofsted rated. Or the home where 2 students were suspended for fighting and 1 teacher fired for drinking on the job.

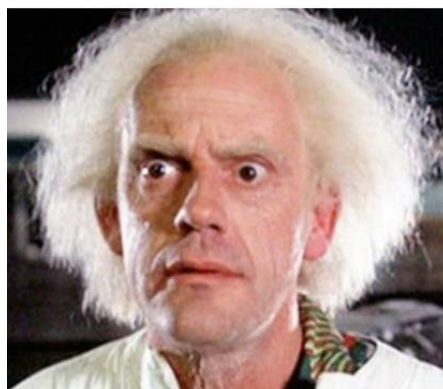
And if you think it's bad now, in 20 years our country will be run by people home-schooled by day drinkers.

Has anyone resorted to cutting their own hair (send pics!)?



*'I was bored in Lockdown,
so I cut my own hair'*

I was hoping to replicate the earlier picture of me with an Afro 50 years ago, but it still isn't long enough (and probably not strong enough either) – more like Christopher Lloyd as Doc Brown in *Back to the Future*. But I did try when I was 18 months old.



Who Can You Believe? A Salutory Tale

You may recall that my weblinks have featured items about the theft of ancient papyri at Oxford, and the subsequent arrest of a professor. Those stories gave little background to the arrest of Professor Obbink, but an article published this month goes into the story in much greater detail. It can be found here:- <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/06/museum-of-the-bible-obbink-gospel-of-mark/610576/>

This is a long and well written account of the reporter's investigation into this story. It presents a horrifying account of how easily people who want to believe something can be deceived, but at the same time is a re-affirmation of the need to always question, and to remember that if it looks too good to be true, it probably is. It also dramatically demonstrates the need for provenance of artefacts and peer review of any 'ground breaking research'. Reliance on a single 'highly acclaimed expert' is always suspect. It is not much better if it is a larger group if the group is structured as a pyramid. I suspect many of us are familiar with the 'monkey tree' description of most organisations – imagine a tree with monkeys on all branches, many on the lower branches tapering to a single monkey at the top (analogous to most organisations). When he looks down, top monkey sees a sea of smiling faces. However, when those below look up, they see a load of



I am old enough to remember the arguments amongst academics in the astronomy community in the



1950s and 60s about the origins of the universe: was it a big bang or was it steady state? Both views had their acclaimed expert adherents and proclaimed scientific rigour in their analysis but, until the evidence for the big bang became available in the 1970s, both sides stuck to their guns. Up to that point, if you picked one view over the other you had a 50% chance of being correct – despite 'listening to scientific advice'.

Closer to home, we are all familiar with 'disagreements' between archaeologists with differing views. Peer review should always be carried out by experts in the same field, who are in no way associated with the person or group under review. For publication in learned journals they use at least three, and the reviewers are anonymous, though this may not be either desirable or possible in other arenas. The peer review approach would have benefitted various other current sagas, such as the current Government's scientific advice and the Boeing 737 MAX MCAS development. These cases are slightly different to that of Professor Obbink in that the prime groups are trying to do their best. Of course, nobody is perfect and the problem is not the individuals, or groups, but the system not providing sufficient truly independent scrutiny. In Professor Obbink's case, he was (allegedly) setting out to deceive, but the same safeguards were needed to prevent him succeeding. Sadly, we may never know the full extent of the damage or loss to the Egypt Exploration Society's collection.

Alan Dedden

<p>I'm normally a social girl I love to meet my mates But lately with the virus here We can't go out the gates.</p> <p>You see, we are the 'oldies' now We need to stay inside If they haven't seen us for a while They'll think we've upped and died.</p> <p>They'll never know the things we did Before we got this old There wasn't any Facebook So not everything was told.</p> <p>We may seem sweet old ladies Who would never be uncouth But we grew up in the 60s - If you only knew the truth!</p> <p>There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll The pill and miniskirts We smoked, we drank, we partied And were quite outrageous flirts.</p> <p>Then we settled down, got married And turned into someone's mum, Somebody's wife, then nana, Who on earth did we become?</p> <p>We didn't mind the change of pace Because our lives were always full But to bury us before we're dead Is like a red rag to a bull!</p>	<p>So here you find me stuck inside For 4 weeks, maybe more I finally found myself again Then I had to close the door!</p> <p>It didn't really bother me I'd while away the hour I'd bake for all the family But I've got no flaming flour!</p> <p>Now Netflix is just wonderful I like a gutsy thriller I'm swooning over Idris Or some random sexy killer.</p> <p>At least I've got a stash of booze For when I'm being idle There's wine and whiskey, even gin If I'm feeling suicidal!</p> <p>So let's all drink to lockdown To recovery and health And hope this awful virus Doesn't decimate our wealth.</p> <p>We'll all get through the crisis And be back to join our mates Just hoping I'm not far too wide To fit through the flaming gates!</p> <p><i>Pam Ayres (sent by Peter Walker)</i></p>
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Don't forget your local food bank – government funds may be coming through but so are redundancies, if the dip and rise in people needing Wimborne Food Bank is a guide

Summarised from Josh Glancy in the Sunday Times: an English man in America

Over the last 4 years he's watched with horror how American-style rancour has found its way into British life – trolling, spite and discord, political arguments becoming personal, Brexit. He finds it heartening that this crisis is revealing the real, solid bedrock of Britain, when all Americans seem to have been able to agree on is that they really, really like our Queen.

We have “nothing like the bitterness and polarisation the defines American public life. We have the NHS – messy, dysfunctional, creaking, but also fair and decent and capable of bringing an entire nation out onto the streets ... in appreciation”. And “we have broadcasters who can tell us the news without launching into partisan attacks.”

OK, so we have flaws too and, no doubt some serious mistakes have been made in handling the crisis, but we are, on the whole, standing together. So let's celebrate us.