



Founded 1983

East Dorset Antiquarian Society

Charity No: 1171828

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

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MIDSUMMER NEWSLETTER – July 2020

EDAS Lectures

EDAS is still here and we'll continue to provide you with a programme of lectures (below), newsletters and other events as far as humanly possible.

As you might expect, we feel it would be safest not to hold any of this year's lectures in St. Catherine's Hall. Instead, we are aiming to provide video lectures to you on the usual nights and to provide member-only access to the resulting film for a period afterwards.

We are hoping that we can resume normal service from January. If so, we'd like to still have the films available to members, so that those who can't attend can continue to benefit from our lecture programme. **Keep reading our newsletters and other communications for the up to date position, or check the website.**

Video lectures will be available on 'Zoom' on your computer, tablet, phone or other device, which is free to use. This is technology that some won't have tried through the lockdown, but it really isn't difficult to use. We'll be providing lots of information to help you, and hope to do a 'dry run' in advance of the first lecture to iron out any problems you might have. Until then, you should find it helpful to familiarise yourself a little with Zoom by downloading the app:

- For desktop or laptop, go to <https://zoom.us/download> and click the **download** button for 'Zoom Client for Meetings', click on **Save** then click on the **Zoom Installer.exe** file to install (if it's not clear how to do this, there's a short help file [here](#)), click the **Sign in** button and you can create a free account by signing in with email and password (or via Google, etc). You don't have to sign up, but it's simpler if you do.
- For mobile devices search the Apple App Store (iPhone & iPad), or the Google Play Store for Android. Simply tap on **install**.

You can download Zoom to more than one device with a single account.

Then there's lots of useful information in the Help Center (*sic*) [here](#), perhaps the most useful being the test meeting [here](#) which will show you the Zoom screen and check out your internet link, sound and video connections.

If you're using a desktop with no camera or microphone, you can still watch and listen to Zoom meetings but, of course, not be seen or interact.

Editor's Notes

After this midsummer newsletter, the usual monthly newsletters will resume early in September.

This time we have a number of continuing series:

- The second of Neil Meldrum's articles on human cultural evolution, **And then there was Light, or perhaps Mind**, taking us from *Homo Erectus* about a million years ago up to about 40,000 years ago, around the earliest time we know of humans developing art.
- A third outing in the **Travels of an Iron Age man** from Vanessa, about the journeys of the Priest's House Museum's TB skeleton.
- Another of Jo Crane and Sue Newman's fascinating photographs in **View from Above 29**.
- More **Weblinks** and **Highlights** from Alan; I'm not sure just how many he's done but it's a lot.
- The fifth short item on **Remembering the Romans**, looking at what we can learn from Roman epitaphs.

There are other items, both in between some of the series and after them, particularly:

- One from Cranborne Chase AONB looking at changed legislation which could lead to the loss of rights of way in the countryside: **Do you have any 'Lost Ways' in your parish?**
- I am grateful to Clare Randall, editor of the Dorset Proceedings, for permission to summarise her paper on the **Excavations at Dorset County Museum in 2018-19** and for providing additional information about progress on the post-excavation work up to a few months ago.

Please send feedback and contributions to geoffnsue@hotmail.co.uk
NOT TO THE EDAS ADDRESS OR BY CLICKING 'REPLY'

Geoff Taylor

Keep being wary of scams, but also watch for symptoms of this new virus:

1. Causes you to send the same e-mail twice. (Done that)
 2. Causes you to send a blank e-mail. (That too)
 3. Causes you to send an e-mail to the wrong person. (Yup)
 4. Causes you to send it back to the person who sent it to you. (Ah-ha)
 5. Causes you to forget to attach the attachment. (Done that)
 6. Causes you to hit 'SEND' before you've finished. (Oh no, not again)
 7. Causes you to hit 'DELETE' instead of 'SEND'. (Hate that)
 8. Causes you to hit 'SEND' when you should 'DELETE'. (OH HECK, NOW WHAT?)
- IT IS CALLED THE "C-NILE VIRUS."

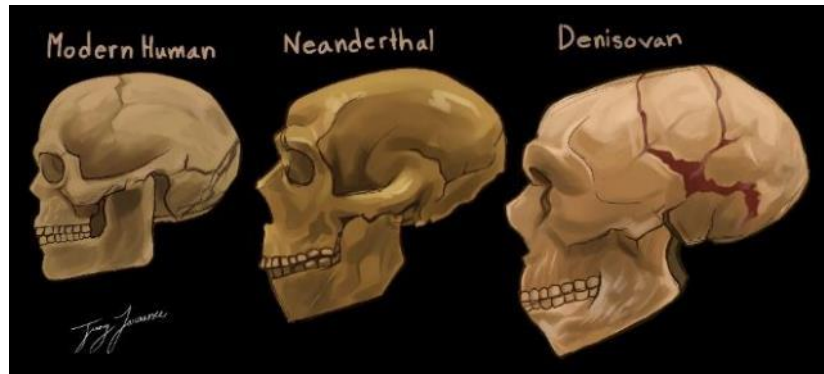
And then there was Light, or perhaps Mind

We left the last article with *Homo Erectus* probably starting to become self-aware around a million years ago. That isn't the end of the *Erectus* story as the species continued to spread from Africa across Europe, Asia and the Far East and survived for perhaps another 500,000 years.

Continuing with our evolutionary account, the next stage is the evolution from *Homo Erectus* into a variety of Archaic Human species, perhaps as much as a million years ago, so that *Erectus* and Archaic Humans were contemporaries for a long time. Later species of Archaic Humans include Neanderthals and Denisovans, whilst *Homo Sapiens* – ourselves – evolved from Archaic *Homo Sapiens* in Southern Africa. Both

Neanderthals and Denisovans were around from approximately 500,000 to 40,000 years ago, with cranial capacities of both ranging from 1150-1550 cc (against modern humans averaging 1350-1450 cc). Contrary to popular

belief, neither species was a direct ancestor of *Homo Sapiens*. They did, however, share habitats in Europe and Western Asia in the later phases, when both species became outplayed and/or outsmarted by *Homo Sapiens*.



But, as mentioned above, that was not before some meaningful relationships between Neanderthals, Denisovans and modern *Homo Sapiens*. There is now clear evidence that modern European populations are anything up to as much as 5% Neanderthal. There is also firm evidence that modern populations in parts of south-east Asia have Denisovan DNA. Therefore, and contrary to what was understood to be the case until very recently, it now appears that we are very much a mongrel species, including DNA from all our various hominin predecessors.

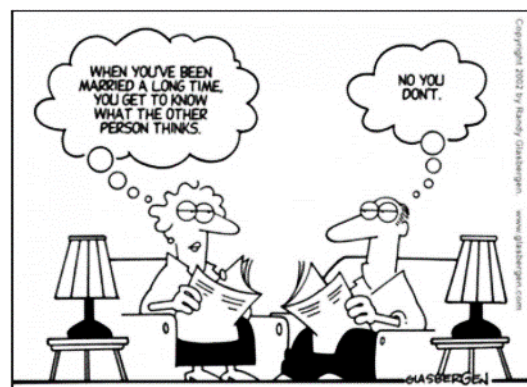
If it is acknowledged that self-awareness was a fundamental step in the evolution of modern humans, then the 'Theory of Mind' might have constituted the next giant psychological leap. Although the jury is still out on this, Theory of Mind may well have developed in the early Archaic Humans, and could have constituted the fundamental departure of Archaic Humans from *Homo Erectus*, so that our Neanderthal and other Archaic Human cousins would have had this capability – the ability to view and understand others in a similar way to how one views and understands oneself. Theory of Mind has been described in many ways, one of which is the ability to understand the desires, intentions and beliefs of others



– not to think that they are

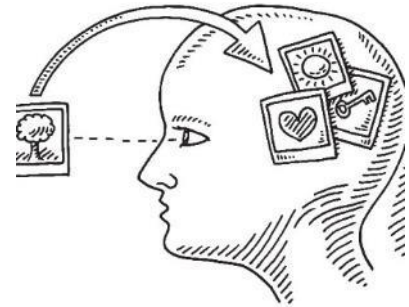
necessarily the same as your own but that the processes are similar. Hence, the reaction of another person can help you to understand what they might be thinking. This is an ability that develops in children around 5-8 years old, but it appears that it is impaired in those children with autism.

Maybe our Neanderthal cousins were not so very different.....



And that brings us to Autobiographical Memory, which is probably peculiar to us, i.e. *Homo Sapiens*. Whilst it's likely that our Archaic Human compatriots would have possessed an element of Theory of Mind, they may not have undergone this subsequent transformation. Is this what has made us what we are; the final nail in the coffin for our Archaic Human brethren?

Very basically, Autobiographical Memory is the ability to relive past events in the mind and project those events into future planning. It is thought that this process might have started around 120,000 or so years ago and, as with Self-Awareness and Theory of Mind, taken many tens of thousands of years to develop. It is unlikely that it is the final process in human consciousness; in biological evolutionary terms the human brain is still at an early stage!



Perhaps the best way of providing an example of this Autobiographical Memory is again to look at the development of children. Prior to the age of about 4 children generally don't have much conception of the past or future; they live life in the present. Although they will recall past events, like hurting themselves, they don't necessarily have the cognitive ability to use the experience of those past events to prevent the same thing happening in the future. That's why we always hold on to a child when crossing a road. As children get older, the past and present begin to merge into a continual stream of consciousness which is utilised to consider and formulate present and future activity.

All these views about the development of the mind are at best theories, since nobody has been able to examine the thought processes of early hominids. The big questions in these evolutionary processes are how early humans benefitted from the accumulation of the knowledge and experience of their ancestors and peers, the essence of cultural evolution. Were these processes influenced by linguistic capacity and, if so, what was the extent of linguistic capacity? How was this evolutionary process influenced by the development of human self-control and the exercise of free will? Indeed when and how did self-control, and free will develop? Too many questions to which there are still no conclusive answers.



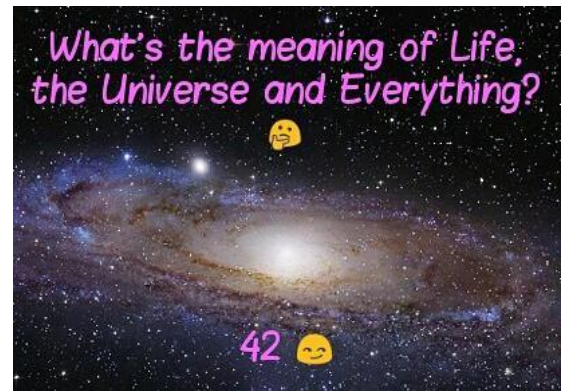
As I said in introducing the first of these articles, I'm particularly interested in cultural evolution, especially in relation to the development of religious belief. We can approach this by considering, at what stage, and how, during this early phase of human development *Homo Sapiens* developed a belief in his own soul. How, then, did this belief, if it existed at all, transmute into 'religion' (i.e. a belief in some form of supernatural power beyond human agency)? Religious belief (in its broadest sense) is universal in all human societies (although presently it seems that something strange is happening in certain human societies with the development of widespread atheism; is this part of the evolutionary process?) but when, and how, did it start?

For some time, perhaps for the last 50-60,000 years, cultural evolution has occurred through what Richard Dawkins has termed 'memes', rather than through changes in the human genotype. Dawkins introduced the concept of 'memes', which essentially are non-biological traits whereby ideas and customs are transmitted from one generation to the next. In his seminal work 'The Selfish Gene', Dawkins view is that there is absolutely no Darwinian rationale for religion; i.e. religion offers no physical benefit to be passed on in the genes. Religion can, and must, only arise through cultural evolution, essentially by memes from one generation to the next. And, despite Dawkins displeasure, religion has come to dominate, certainly up to very recently. But, again, why and how?

In all probability there was no conception of gods, or perhaps even of spirits, until the initial stages of Autobiographical Memory. This Autobiographical Memory probably brought on humankind's awareness

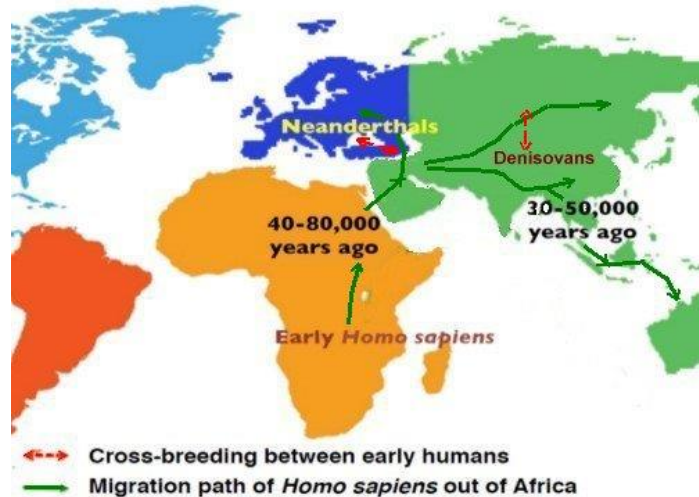
thus leading to the as yet unanswered questions: “Who am I?”, “Why am I here?”, “What does it all mean?” and “What happens when I die?” - the fundamental questions of all religions.

What do we need for culture to develop in addition to the transitions I’ve covered above? Certainly, the development of complex language would be a pre-requisite, both for communication of ‘memes’ and for abstract and complex thought. Possibly, also, the fulfilment of two human emotions which may well have been the latest to evolve, the emotions of guilt and shame, coupled with an increased sense of fear. Take these emotions together, add an acute knowledge of death, an awareness of animal life and a sense of wonder at natural and inexplicable phenomena and is perhaps not difficult to see how our ancestors may have developed some form of magico-supernatural awareness, despite Dawkins view that it is not rational. Perhaps the whole point of the evolution of the human mind, and what sets us apart, is an abandonment of rationality!



We are now somewhere around 75,000 years ago. Modern *Homo Sapiens* still only occupied a tiny part of southern Africa. Our total population may have been no more than 100,000, perhaps rather less. At this point it would have seemed impossible that *Homo Sapiens* would dominate the world 75,000 years later, with a population of over 7 billion.

Something happened around 60,000 years ago, or perhaps earlier – we started to travel the world. It wasn’t the first time that hominids travelled the world as *Homo Erectus* had, of course, turned up in many places, but it was the first time a hominid species travelled so extensively over such a short period of time. We reached Australia about 45-50,000 years ago, by which time we had occupied a large part of the Old World. We got to the Americas as much as 25,000 years ago. Sea levels had reduced by over 100 metres at the height of the last Ice Age and we could simply walk across the Bering Straits. Why this sudden burst of activity? Was it because our brain had at last fully assimilated Autobiographical Memory and had mastered complex speech?



Whatever the reason, by about 40,000 years ago none of our hominin cousins survived – we dominated.

Certainly by about 40,000 years ago we would have had a clear understanding of our own mortality, and no doubt a conception of the supernatural. Possibly a growing perception of deity may also have emerged. But what certainly did emerge was our ability to portray images in our mind graphically, shown in cave art. The proliferation of this art clearly shows the human ability to manipulate and recreate mental images. Is there any correlation between these images and a supernatural world? What do these images represent; are they purely visual or do they also have a spiritual connection?

In my next article I want to examine this art from about 40,000 years onwards, consider what was driving this, and then go on to think about our first tentative steps towards what is now euphemistically called civilisation.

Neil Meldrum

Travels of an Iron Age man - Part 3

The Iron Age TB skeleton at the Priest's House Museum, the Museum of East Dorset, is the earliest identified case of Tuberculosis (TB) from Britain. Over the last 12 months he has been out and about – a great improvement on life in his boxes in the Collections Store. Here is the third of his modern journeys.

In February, the skeleton travelled to Bournemouth University. The purpose of the visit was to establish how the museum would interpret and display the Iron Age man in the new Life and Death gallery at the museum.

Four EDAS volunteers (Sara Marshall, Gill Broadbent, Dave Stewart and myself), all with an interest in the skeleton, met Dr. Martin Smith, Principal Academic in Forensic and Biological Anthropology, who has kindly agreed to help the museum. Our ambition was to lay out the skeleton to represent the way he was found in the chalk grave cut at Tarrant Hinton. Due to the bones' fragility it was agreed that the arrangement will approximate the burial position.

Conservation considerations are key

A new high-specification display case has been specially designed for the skeleton, with a special compartment below the display area to allow the air to circulate over silica gel and into the case. The museum has taken advice from Conservation Development Officer Dr. Helena Jaeschke, who provides conservation and collection care advice to 540 museums across the southwest of England. Dr. Rebecca Redfern, Curator (Human Osteology) of the Museum of London has advised on inert display materials.

Pott's disease

Martin explained that the Iron Age man's TB resulted in Pott's disease. This attacked the front of the vertebrae and caused them to collapse. He showed us the damaged vertebrae, which have an 'angulated kink'. The man must have been in considerable pain, and he may have had difficulty breathing and eating.



As there was no refined sugar in his diet, the man had very good teeth. To add to his miseries, though, he had an impacted wisdom tooth.



Dr. Smith starts laying out the bones. The tape represents a side of the display case.



Re-articulation of the first 3 lumbar vertebrae shows the destructive changes due to Pott's disease resulting in approx. 60° angular kyphosis.

We considered how to explain more about the man and the disease, whilst making panels and interpretation interesting for a wide range of audiences. Dr. Wen Morrison was also at the meeting. She will work on a new Education pack for the Iron Age TB skeleton to link with the science element of the National Curriculum.

Watch this space

No one will be surprised to learn that the project has been delayed due to Covid-19. The museum building restoration has recently been completed and the next phase is the exhibition refit, which will take some weeks.

When the skeleton visited Bournemouth University, the results of the stable isotope analysis were still unknown. They will be revealed in the next few months.

Vanessa Joseph

View from Above No 29: Bronkham Hill

*Photo by
Sue Newman
and Jo Crane*



The hill is about half way between Martinstown and Abbotsbury, with the South Dorset Ridgeway running over it, not far from Hardy's Monument. There are apparently 118 Bronze Age barrows in Winterborne St. Martin (Martinstown) parish, 30 of them said to be on Bronkham Hill – mostly strung along the skyline for about a mile, and including a double-bowl barrow and 4 bell barrows. They are an impressive sight now, but must have been much more striking when originally built, the chalk white against or above the green hillside.

The area is known for its sink (or 'shake' or 'solution') holes that form when erosion of the underlying chalk produces cavities that subsequently collapse, as in the photograph. This is clearly not difficult to distinguish from a possible barrow excavation pit, though smaller depressions may be rather less obvious. There is, of course, a huge cavity in the centre of the largest barrow at the left of the aerial photograph, and seen in the background of the sink hole photograph, a relic of antiquarian treasure hunting in the 19th century (without success it seems). This huge bell barrow, about 30m across, looks to have been heightened by some or all of the spoil being added to the top.

Following a report of a hole the size of a dinner plate in February 2019, the Ridgeway Path was closed off in this area, and investigation showed a cavity potentially 30m wide and 15m deep.

The collapse occurred in April 2019, after which the hole was found to be stable and the path re-opened. This sink hole is believed to have been caused by meltwater following the last glaciation, but more recent rainwater seepage continues to form new ones. It is said that there are around 200 grass-



lined pits or depressions in the area, called 'dolines' – past sink holes where grass has had time to re-establish.

It's possible that the sink holes were once seen as portals into the underworld, ways into the hollow hills of legend. They still seem to be places for 'offerings', with some choked with the debris of farming – fence posts, wire, plastic pipes and so on. In 1974, Christopher Tilley, Professor of Anthropology at University College London, published *A Phenomenology of Landscape* – an integration of philosophical approaches to our perception of landscape with anthropological studies of the significance of landscape. He thought that the placing of the barrows in some way reflected the location of the dolines, occasionally even appearing as if a mound was the inversion of a nearby doline.

The stone wall angling up from the bottom right hand corner on the aerial photograph marks a parish boundary. Above this and roughly parallel to the bottom of the photograph, most obvious in the centre, is a large ditch with a bank nearest to the camera. Although unclear, it runs through the parish boundary and downhill through the gorse, suggesting that it was dug before such boundaries existed (they are first recorded in the 13th century). Since it also runs across the edge of a barrow, it is obviously from after the Bronze Age and may, thus be Romano-British or Saxon. The other linear feature running up from this ditch is a field boundary with no information as to its age.

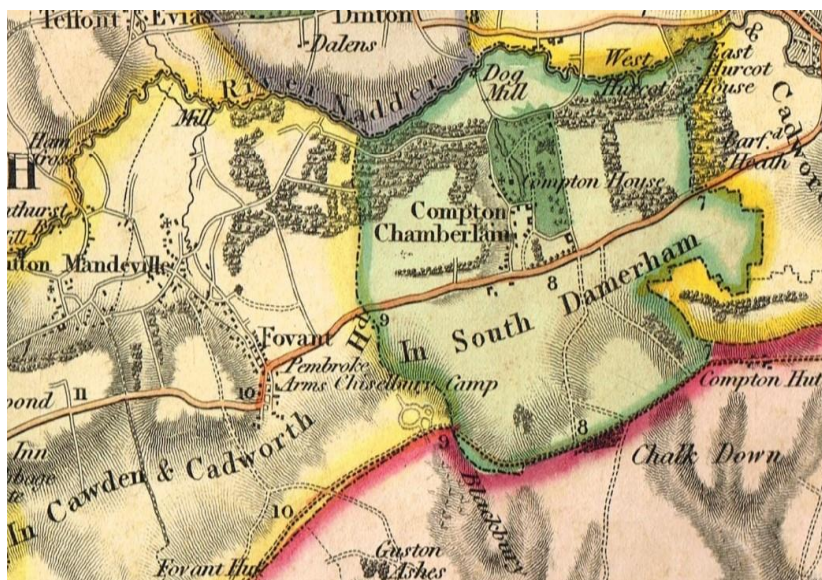
Jo Crane/Geoff Taylor

Do you have any 'Lost Ways' in your parish?

This was in a newsletter from Cranborne Chase AONB which arrived just as lockdown did, so it seemed appropriate to hold it over until now.

Ancient highways criss-cross all parishes; they are the routes that our ancestors took when they travelled to markets, to work, to church and to fairs and festivals.

Today, many of these routes are preserved for public access in the definitive map and statement, a document which started life in 1949. A change in the law in 2000 means that, in 2026, all historic public rights of way not recorded in the definitive map and statement, or the subject of an application to record them, will be lost.



If you are aware of 'Lost Ways' and would like more information on how to help record them, you can get in touch with your rights of way team at your local authority. For more information the contacts stated were as below, but it's possible that things have changed because of coronavirus:

- The Ramblers Association via website <https://dontloseyourway.ramblers.org.uk/>, or
- Sally Madgwick for Wiltshire Council: sally.madgwick@wiltshire.gov.uk, or
- for Dorset Council go to <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/rights-of-way/public-rights-of-way-maintenance.aspx> and follow link to Greenspace Areas & Managers.

Web Link Highlight Midsummer 2020

The news that a large circle of pits surrounding Durrington Walls has been discovered has inevitably triggered more debate about the Stonehenge tunnel, with some now calling for it to be scrapped. After so many years of waiting for this issue to be resolved, it seems there is no end to the possible reasons for yet more delay and, indeed, only days after the find was announced, and the call to scrap the tunnel, a delay of four months on the decision has been announced.

Not for a moment do I downplay the potential significance of the new discovery. Much work now needs to be done to properly place this feature in the overall story of this landscape. However, in the context of the current Covid-19 pandemic, there is perhaps a different argument to be made regarding the tunnel. Given the stated aim of the government to boost spending on infrastructure as an aid to the economic recovery, should the tunnel decision be revisited? But not to scrap it, rather to look again at the limit placed on its length. It is this limit that causes so many of the issues of disturbance at either end. At the Countess roundabout it is the proximity to Blick Mead and at the other end it sits uncomfortably between the Winterbourne Stoke and Normanton Down barrow fields, and also has potential visual impact from the stones. So might the solution be a longer tunnel?

The existing tunnel only threatens potential archaeology at the entrance/exit points, as it is below all these levels through most of its course, so if this principle is followed with a tunnel that goes further at either end it should solve the archaeological problems and provide more economic assistance in this time of need. The increased cost becomes a benefit! Sadly, I suspect that Highways England will veto any such approach as they would not want the extra ongoing maintenance cost of the longer tunnel and its ventilation.

Alan Dedden

Midsummer Weblinks

Evidence Of Cannabis Use In Ancient Jewish Temple

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/02/cannabis-residue-found-in-ancient-jewish-temple-links-hallucinogens-with-religion>

Ancient DNA Helps Solve Dead Sea Scrolls Jigsaw Puzzle

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/2020/06/ancient-dna-offers-clues-physical-origins-dead-sea-scrolls/>

Dinosaur's Last Meal Preserved In Stunning Detail

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/06/borealopelta-armored-dinosaur-last-meal-fossilized-in-stunning-detail/>

Largest Ancient Mayan Structure Found In Mexico

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/2020/06/massive-ancient-maya-ceremonial-complex-discovered-hiding-plain-sight/>

Wreck Of German Ironclad Off Folkestone Scheduled

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-52923441>

Rio Tinto Takes Responsibility For Destruction Of 46,000 Year Old Aboriginal Site

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/jun/05/rio-tinto-blames-misunderstanding-for-destruction-of-46000-year-old-aboriginal-site>

Dorset Treasure Finds

<https://www.bournemouthcho.co.uk/news/18504579.treasure-hunters-luck-dorset/>

Ground Penetrating Radar Shows Roman City In Great Detail

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/jun/09/archaeologists-discover-amazing-details-of-roman-city>

Site Of Earliest Purpose Built Theatre Found In London
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-52983008>

Roman Die Found In Norwegian Cairn
<https://www.livescience.com/ancient-game-pieces.html>

Vast Neolithic Structure Found In Stonehenge Landscape
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-wiltshire-53132567>

Calls For A303 Tunnel At Stonehenge To Be Scrapped In Light Of New Discovery
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jun/22/scrap-stonehenge-road-tunnel-say-archaeologists-neolithic-discovery>

Covid-19 Budget Cuts Threaten Mexican Archaeology
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/23/funding-cuts-threaten-ancient-sites-warn-mexican-archaeologists>

Fossils Of 'Big Boned' Marsupial Shed Light On Wombat Evolution
<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/jun/25/fossils-of-big-boned-marsupial-shed-light-on-wombat-evolution-mukupirna>

Facial Reconstruction Reveals Face Of Swedish Stone Age Man Whose Skull Was Found On A Stake
<https://www.livescience.com/stone-age-man-facial-reconstruction.html>

First Norwegian Viking Ship Excavation In A Century Begins
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-53204948>

Researchers Claim To Find Evidence Of Ancient South America - Polynesia Link
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-53338203>

HS2 Discoveries In Buckinghamshire
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-53366209#:~:text=An%20Iron%20Age%20skeleton%20with,Farm%20near%20Wendover%20in%20Buckinghamshire.>

1.5 Million Finds Reported To The Portable Antiquities Scheme
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/gallery/2020/jul/10/treasures-found-by-the-british-public-in-pictures>

Aztec Palace Found Off Mexico City's Main Zocalo Plaza
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-53397164>

Stonehenge Tunnel Decision Delayed
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jul/16/talks-on-stonehenge-road-tunnel-delayed-by-neolithic-find>

Medieval Leith Cemetery Excavated Ahead Of Tram Extension
<https://www.expressandstar.com/news/uk-news/2020/07/16/excavation-begins-of-medieval-human-remains-unearthed-during-tram-works/>

Please send your weblinks to Alan Dedden at alan.dedden@gmail.com

The 4th, and probably final, lockdown quiz from CBA Wessex, this time photos of places around the UK, can be found [HERE](#) (Ctrl & Click to follow)

REMEMBERING THE ROMANS V

I left the last article with the issue of why and how men were commemorated more often than women in ancient Rome, in Rome itself almost twice as often. Perhaps it was because of women's lesser social status? However, with husbands tending to die before wives, how did women provide the funds for a memorial when that lesser social status meant they may well have had no money of their own? It certainly doesn't seem to be a bias in the survival of epitaphs, with a sample of over 40,000 just in the areas I've looked at. In fact, the pattern is repeated across the Empire wherever studies have been done.

I believe that this was because of women's social status, but indirectly. Men often provided for their funeral in their wills, sometimes buying a burial plot or even building a tomb during their lifetime, so that their heirs would have to set up their memorial. There are standard abbreviations to record this, such as TPI = *testamento poni iussit*, i.e. "ordered it made in his will" and HF = *heres fecit*, i.e. "the heir did it". Unless a woman had her financial independence she wouldn't have had a will, or heirs required to commemorate her, so she would be reliant solely on any surviving husband, children or other relatives.

Marriages may often have been 'commercial' transactions arranged by parents or other relatives, especially among the wealthier classes, but that doesn't mean that partners didn't have feelings for each other. Indeed sentiments could be more moving than the slightly formulaic ones below, such as original poems or elegies.

CALVIO · F · DENTINO CONIVGI · KARISSIMO CVM·QVO·VIXI·ANN·XXX SINE · MACVLA SEPTILIA · PRISCILLA MARITO ·	To the dearest husband who lived with his wife for 30 years without fault in an incomparable marriage! CIL 5.143 X	D.M. TULLIAE P.F. IANUARIAE OMNIUM FEMINA CASTISSIMAE Q VIXIT ANNIS XXXVIII MEN.XX AUG. LIB CONIUGI DULCISSIME
	To the most chaste of all women and sweetest wife who lived 38 years and 20 months (!). She seems to have been a freed slave of Augustus. CIL 6.27755 Rome	

Correctly translating names can be difficult because, amongst other issues, it's not always clear what has been included, e.g. how many of the potential three names (*tria nomina*) and the voting tribe. Abbreviations remain an issue, e.g. "F." for *filius/filia*, i.e. son/daughter (usually after the father's name) could also be Felix or Fabius (etc.). You can, at least, usually rely on the first name being the person commemorated. Here, then I think we have Calvius F. Dentinius being eulogised by his wife, Septilia Priscilla. The second epitaph is to Tullia Januaria, daughter of Publius. Other than Publius, these are fairly uncommon names, although Tullia was also the name of Cicero's daughter.

Given that there's less than a quarter of the children under 5 that we might expect in Cisalpine Gaul, how might we see the 'social worth' of children? In NPI the proportion is a little lower, for Rome nearer 30%. The proportions of epitaphs for babies under a year old are rather lower than these, but there is more commemoration of children as they grow older. In a time of high infant mortality, were parents often reluctant to invest emotionally in their children, at least until they grew beyond the dangerous early years?

This is a subject which we find hard to really comprehend, given the very different society that we live in today, and what we do know can be interpreted in opposing ways that are difficult to judge. For example, we're aware that neonatal babies might be buried under the floors or walls of the house, as we've even seen at the Druce Farm villa. This has often been seen as akin to simply disposing of the baby, showing indifference to its fate. On the other hand, it might be thought of as 'looking after' the baby by keeping it close to its family in the only environment it had ever known.

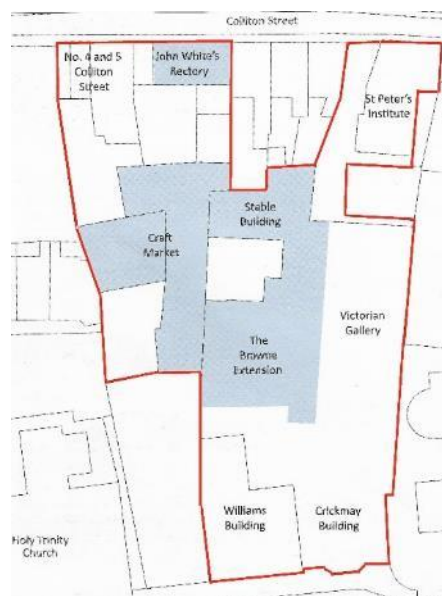
The next article will consider this further, looking at the laws and social conventions surrounding childhood deaths.

Geoff Taylor

Excavations at Dorset County Museum in 2018-19

This is a summary of a longer paper in the latest Dorset Proceedings¹ about the excavations which took place in advance of the major re-development of the County Museum. Post-excavation work continues: it is expected that a monograph will appear in due course and that a number of the finds will be displayed in new exhibitions in 'Tomorrow's Museum for Dorset'.

Few people will have been aware of the full extent of the Museum's site, extending back to Colliton Street, but with many old buildings unfit to be used for future storage. Colliton Street was an established back lane by the late medieval period, on which stands the Grade II listed John White's Rectory, reputedly of 14th century origin but with much of the existing fabric from the 18th or 19th centuries. The Rectory is being retained and repurposed, with buildings behind it planned for demolition as part of the redevelopment. In particular these include the Craft Market/Skyrme's Workshop, a collection of late 19th/early 20th century industrial buildings, the rather earlier Stable Building, and the modernist Brawne Extension built about 50 years ago at the centre of the site. These were all Grade II listed as part of the museum's curtilage.



John White's Rectory



The Craft Market and Secret Garden

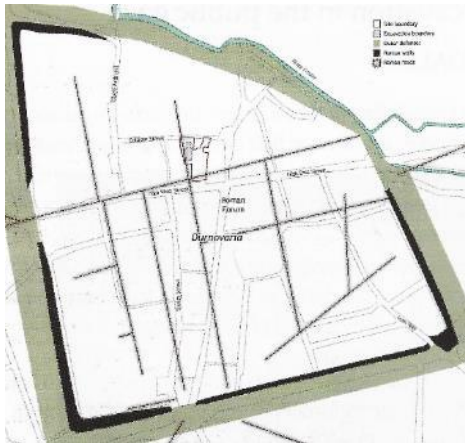
Historic buildings had to be properly recorded before demolition, of course, although safety reasons meant that some had to be left until after the main open area excavation during the summer of 2018 was completed. Context One Heritage and Archaeology ("C1"), who carried out the whole recording and excavation programme, continued work after further demolitions early in 2019, revealing more features, deposits and finds associated with the main excavation.

A key element of the main excavation was to involve the public as much as possible, with thousands able to witness the excavation. The museum remained open during this time, with a purpose-built viewing platform which was rarely empty. A temporary exhibition in the area leading to the platform covered the context of the site within Roman Dorchester and included existing Roman objects from the museum's collection and new ones found in the excavation. Volunteer stewards were on hand to help visitors and deal with innumerable questions.

In addition, 'meet the archaeologists' sessions were run twice a week

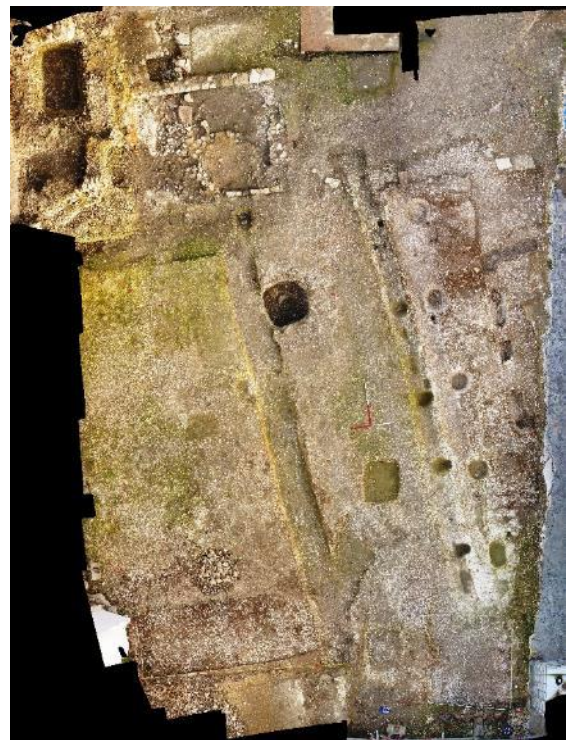


and site tours were arranged for many groups, including school parties. Several student work experience placements were provided, whilst a number of museum volunteers and people new to archaeology were involved in different aspects of the excavation programme. One is now an archaeology undergraduate.



This was, of course, an important opportunity to examine a part of the town close to the heart of both medieval Dorchester and Roman *Durnovaria*, with the site only metres from the edge of the Roman forum. Major excavations have been done at Greyhound Yard and the Old County Hospital site, but they were several decades ago and, although supplemented by many small interventions, the overall picture of the Roman town remains patchy. It is, though, thought that a Roman east-west street runs under part of the main museum buildings near High West Street with a rather more certain north-south street running through the excavation site, initially seen during building work in the 1930s. The street layout is thought to be the earliest part of the Roman town, built directly on the pre-urban soil.

It wasn't surprising that the north-south street was uncovered in the excavations, as shown, particularly well-preserved in what had been an open space south of Skyrme's Workshop. North of that, only a 'pillar' of road material remained because of pits dug in the Victorian period. The clayey subsoil was covered by a compacted chalk levelling layer then a thick dump of unworked flint nodules. The road surface was gravel overlying a series of sandy clays. The roadside ditch to the east also remained in good condition, as can be seen.



Rubbish pits and 19th century construction work in the northern part of the site had left nothing from the medieval period, though there was a huge deposit of 18th and 19th century rubbish, even including a pony complete with horseshoes. However, several features and deposits relating to the Roman town were preserved. These included the remains of at least three timber buildings, aligned with the street but set back from it, and evident from beam slots and post holes dug into the chalk, visible in the aerial photograph. Some of the post holes remained as voids, a few found by stepping on them. An oven to the south presumably showed a later phase as it was above a beam slot.

Deposits were found in the roadside ditch from after it went out of use, including part of a quern stone that seemed to have been deliberately placed there. A large pit in the centre of the site, post-dating the infill of the ditch, may have been a timber-lined cess pit. It's orientation suggested a change of use of the area over time, whilst the wall plaster and clay roof tiles in its upper layers implies that a substantial building was nearby.

A large Neptune mosaic was found in Fordington in 1903 and installed in the floor of the building linking the Brawne Extension and The Stable. It would, of course, have to be removed as the buildings were to be demolished and it sat over part of the new museum basement. The mosaic had been set in concrete, so that removal required specialist knowledge to clear the concrete floor around the mosaic and then lift

it in segments. After conservation it will be displayed on a wall in the new museum. Although the mosaic was over 19th century demolition debris, further Roman features were found below that, including a short length of beam slot. Several pits were found, rich with finds, and then a further large pit which seems to have been 'sealed' with the deposition of an entire cattle skull and several black burnished ware pots.

We would, of course, like to know more, but the Proceedings paper had to be written even before the final parts of the site could be examined. Post-excavation work has started, but it will be some time before a full assessment of the excavation, and of the finds, is completed. This may even reveal a few surprises but will, in any case, add to our knowledge of Dorchester and *Durnovaria*.



1. Randall, C. 2019. Dorset County Museum 2018: Excavation in the public gaze. *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeology Society* 140: 1-11.

Clare Randall/Geoff Taylor

Subsequent examination of the pottery from the site by Mark Corney has indicated that, as suspected, the road and the associated buildings were all early in the sequence. All of this activity appears to have dated to the second half of the 1st century AD. This is intriguing as there appear to have been three timber structures in quick succession built on the roadside. Two of these were very substantial, though their complete dimensions will never be known as they have been truncated at the north end by Victorian terracing and to the south by later Roman activity. The area appears to have then gone largely out of use until a cess pit was dug through the silted up roadside ditch during the later 2nd century AD.

After this, a second hiatus in activity occurred until the 4th century, when the oven in the south-eastern corner of the excavation was constructed, itself reused and remodelled several times and with an accompanying series of hearths adjacent. A few additional features were discovered during the demolition of the Brawne building, mainly 4th century pits, whilst a levelling layer of material of similar date covered the footprint of the original 1st century timber buildings. Work on the material recovered is ongoing, but already there are some interesting questions to be addressed over the apparent lack of use of this area, which was situated right at the heart of the Roman town throughout most of the Romano-British period.

Clare Randall



EDAS 2020-2021 PROGRAMME

Subject to coronavirus restrictions, 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>

2020			
Wed 9 th September	Zoom Lecture	Francis Taylor	Discovering the Maya Change to programme
Wed 14 th October	Zoom Lecture	Andrew Birley	Recent Excavations at Vindolanda and Revealing Magna Roman Fort
Wed 11 th November	Zoom Lecture	Wayne Bartlett	AD871 - The Year of Nine Battles
Wed 9 th December	Zoom Lecture	Mark Corney	Villas, Churches and Baptisteries
2021			
Wed 13 th January	Lecture	Sophy Charlton	Finding Mesolithic Britain: Biomolecular Approaches to Hunter-Gatherer Archaeology
Wed 10 th February	Lecture	Paul Cheetham	300 Miles in the Footsteps of Vespasian – Lake Farm Roman legionary fortress
Wed 10 th March	Lecture	AGM and members' talk	Keeper's Lodge – Andrew Morgan and Lilian Ladle
Wed 14 th April	Lecture	Mike Allen	The Prehistoric Chalkland Landscape of Stonehenge, Avebury and Dorchester - tearing up the textbooks and starting again
Wed 12 th May	Lecture	Julian Richards	Shaftesbury - Alfred's Town, Alfred's Abbey
EVENTS TO BE RESCHEDULED			
tbd	Tour	Devizes Museum	Led by museum director David Dawson
tbd	Walk	Cranborne Chase	9 mile walk from Martin Green's farm looking at the history of the Chase, led by Alan Dedden
tbd	Day trip	London - Sir John Soane's Museum and the Museum of London (tbc)	Coach trip to visit two of London's Museums

DISTRICT DIARY

Your information is very welcome, especially now
– do let me know of any events or if you hear that groups are re-starting.
ALL EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS THEN IN FORCE

Tues 27 th October	The origins of our species	Bournemouth University	Annual Pitt Rivers lecture by Prof. Chris Stringer (6:30 for 7:00) – see p.14 May Newsletter
Sat 24 th Oct - Sun 1 st Nov	Festival of Archaeology	CBA	Events on the ground – see p.13 June newsletter