

# newsletter



Issue number 51

Winter 2001/2002

## The world's oldest iron-framed building in danger

**T**HE WORLD'S oldest iron-framed building, hidden from public view for decades, is in danger of collapsing through neglect, according to a local authority conservation officer.

The 150-year-old boat store in Sheerness Docks is the only surviving forerunner of the modern skyscraper and is so important it was made a scheduled ancient monument many years ago.

Despite this, its condition has continued to deteriorate along with up to 50 other listed buildings in the docks. Now legal action is being taken to force Medway Ports to stop the rot before it is too late.

Conservation officer for Swale Council Peter Bell said: "They are going for profit and ignoring the duty of care they have towards these national treasures. That is morally reprehensible.

"Many of the buildings are in a poor condition and in a deplorable state of



deterioration. It depends on which experts you consult, but it has been said that the boat store is in imminent danger of collapse. I am not an engineer so

The docks looking from the north of the Medway in an easterly direction. In the foreground to the right can be seen the Grade 1 Boat Store (in front of the yellow-roofed warehouses). To the left is the Napoleonic Garrison fort.

I don't know. We need a survey to reveal how serious the problem is before it is too late."

But, more importantly, Mr Bell says it is now crucial that action be taken to stabilise the buildings by carrying out urgent repairs without further delay.

"My fear is that any long-term solution will be expensive and take at least five years to implement. If the rot continues for that long there won't be any buildings left to save," he said.

Talks between Medway Ports, Swale Council and English Heritage have been going on for years in an attempt to resolve the problems surrounding the former Royal Navy buildings.

Until now, the council has always shied away from taking legal action, but matters were brought to a head after councillors saw for themselves the effect

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## Welcome to your new style newsletter

As the new editor, I would like to extend a very big 'thank you' to Lamy and Susan Tott who have worked so hard over the past few years to produce this publication; I now appreciate how time-consuming the task can be! Many thanks to both of you.

Hopefully you will have noticed and enjoyed the new format. Please let me know what you think. We are extremely keen to hear your views. What would you like to see included? Perhaps you are running an event that would benefit from publicity to a wider audience? Could other KAS members' knowledge help with your research? Do you have an interesting story or item to share? We hope the new newsletter will include all of these, in addition to the usual excellent articles.

Your suggestions, queries or contributions are invited!

Lyn Palmer ~ Newsletter Editor & Information Officer



Winter 2001/2

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## The world's oldest iron-framed building in danger

time and weather is having on the fabric of these unique historic buildings.

It is understood that, despite nearly 50 buildings giving cause for concern, Medway Ports is currently facing just three writs, all relating to a tenace of 15 houses in Regency Close. The first is an urgent repair notice; the second is a listed building repair notice and the third, a listed building enforcement notice.

The decision was taken in a closed session of the planning committee and was supported unanimously by members. The move is unprecedented and has been described by one councillor as a "David and Goliath" battle.

Mr Bell, said: "There is a massive outbreak of dry rot in these houses and this is extremely worrying. We cannot let this continue. Every window, every door and pretty much every piece of wood is affected."

The roof is also in a poor state of repair and water is leaking in causing damage throughout the structure. Work began in mid-November on repairing the tenace to comply with the urgent repair notice, with scaffolding and tarpaulin being erected to protect the structure from further damage. Dry rot treatment is also being carried out.

The listed building repair notice is the next step, compelling Medway Ports to restore the houses to their original glory. The bill for this is likely to be many millions of pounds because every room and the entire outside needs work. However, Mr Bell said he has decided not to serve this until the future of the tenace was determined. "The right buyer could solve these problems without us needing to use statutory powers," he said.

Finally, the Enforcement notice has been issued because Medway Ports has replaced some window frames with softwood instead of oak hardwood used in the originals. This notice is to force them

to do the job again to the correct standards.

To underline its determination Swale Council has given Medway Ports four months in which to take the necessary steps or face further action.

Mr Bell said: "I shall be talking to the harbour company in the hope that they will co-operate. We would rather do this by negotiation but I now have the power to force Medway Ports if they refuse."

Part of the problem is that little public pressure is brought to bear because most people are unaware that such an important collection of architectural masterpieces exists within Sheerness docks, because access has always been restricted.

"While it was run by the Royal Navy no plans existed, the Ordnance Survey map just showed it as a white space. It is only in the past 20 or 30 years that experts gained access and realised the significance of the buildings. By then many of them had already been lost forever," said Mr Bell.

"I can see a situation where the remaining buildings are also lost, creating an outcry across the world but hardly a murmur on Sheppey."

Sittingbourne Cllr Bob Baxter, a member of the Council for Kentish Archaeology, is so worried about the situation he wrote to his Sheppey colleagues urging them to stop "being gentle" with the owners.

He said: "We have taken on one of the big boys. But we have to demonstrate that we mean business. We must face up to our responsibilities to safeguard listed properties in the borough. If owners won't keep them in good condition voluntarily, we must make them. I am very satisfied by this decision."

He hopes that continued bad publicity will force Medway Ports to take action rather than face a public court battle.

He was supported by Brian Sinclair, of the Sheerness Society, who said: "We have already lost a lot of buildings and the rest are inaccessible to the public.

"We have been dependent on the good offices of English Heritage and



Regency Tenace (subject of the enforcement notices) is in the centre foreground. Dockyard House is to the left. Slightly above and parallel is Naval Tenace and to its left is the burnt out shell of the Dockyard Church.

Swale Council to ensure that these buildings are saved for the nation. If this cannot be achieved amicably I support the proposal to get tough with Medway Ports before it is too late."

Various schemes have been discussed in the past, including dismantling the Boat Store and moving it to a site outside the docks. None have so far succeeded because of cost or problems with access.

Medway Ports has already sold some buildings, including the Dockyard Church, which was recently gutted by fire. It now has another collection, including Dockyard House, Dockyard Cottage, The Stables, No 1 and 2 Main Gate, and the 15 houses in Regency Close, up for sale.

Spokesman for Medway Ports Maria Clarke said: "We realise that people feel strongly about this issue and we have been seeking a long-term solution with English Heritage. The package we put up for sale is clustered in a non-operational area, however, there are a number of problems associated with selling them. Services, for instance, are tied in with the docks and access is obviously an issue." It is understood however, that a firm offer to buy the properties is now under consideration.

Mr Bell has emphasised that he is attempting to persuade the harbour authority to put together a plan to protect the remaining historic buildings in their ownership.

John Hammond

## A First World War Good Luck Token

During renovation of an old house in Tonbridge, Mr Keith Bristow discovered a medal or token wrapped in a piece of cloth and wedged between two exposed beams. The medal is 2.5cm in diameter. On one side is the regimental crest and motto of the Royal Fusiliers with below it 'Sportsman's Division' and the number 1242. Beside it is the coat of arms of the Cunliffe-Owen family. On the reverse, in a facsimile of handwriting, is the message 'from (?) Cunliffe-Owen (Christian name undecided) but it appears to be

an abbreviation) Oct. 1914. God guard you'.

Research by Mr Simon Griève at the Tower of London found that this medal was a good luck token donated by Mrs Cunliffe-Owen, a wealthy philanthropist. Little is known about the family but it appears that stined by patriotic fever, Mrs Cunliffe-Owen presented these medals to the brave men who signed up for The 23rd Battalion The Royal Fusiliers, The Sportsman's Battalion. The reference on the medal to the Sportsman's Division is a herm mistake.

The recruiting centre was The Cecil

Hotel in London, and it is thought that the number '1242' refers to the numerical position of the recruit on joining and not to the army number. The medal would have been provided with a blue and red ribbon to hang round the neck.

Though these medals are not intrinsically valuable there are few in circulation and The Royal Fusiliers' Museum reports that it has only one or two. In this case the good luck charm seems to have been effective and the soldier, who ever he was, returned safely, bringing his medal back to Tonbridge.

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# Woad, Tattooing and the Archaeology of Rebellion

**A**s part of a series of occasional seminars, Dr Gilly Carr of the University of Kent, (seen recently in the Channel Four RealWizards: the Search for Harry's Ancestors and also in next spring's The Real Boudica) gave a fascinating talk on the above theme.

Dr Carr proposed that the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to 5<sup>th</sup> century AD canoe-shaped 'cosmetic grinders' with bovine, duck and phallic-shaped terminal designs, such as those found at Colchester, were not for Roman use but were instead used for the preparation of woad for body painting by native Britons. She suggested that these tools were in fact symbols of resistance, with their existence in this country pre-dating the occupation, and their continuing use a stance against Romanisation.

The terminal designs perhaps relate to the binding agents used to apply woad; for example, the duck terminal indicating egg white or yolk, and the bovine terminal indicating a binding agent of beef dripping or milk. A call to the audience for volunteers to indulge in a little body painting after a practical demonstration of mixing woad was met with some reluctance after Dr Carr discussed the binding agents suggested by the phallic terminal designs! However, several guinea pigs eventually offered themselves up. The range of colour produced by the different binding agents varied from a steely blue-grey (useful for creeping through the dawn or dusk unnoticed!) to a deep midnight blue.



Other colours can be produced by woad; adding quicklime produces a green colour; rubbing the skin with the plant produces black. An infusion of the plant in hot water with the addition of an alkaline substance, such as ammonia or urine, produces a woad vat. The aim of a woad vat is to produce a reduction reaction, which would reduce the insoluble blue woad into a soluble white form, which would turn blue on exposure to air. If a person climbed into the vat, their immersed skin would turn blue in around three minutes after leaving the vat – surely perceived as a magical process? Dr Carr referred to some of the scenes on the famous Gundestrup cauldron as evidence for this; perhaps even the cauldron itself was a woad vat?

A very entertaining seminar – perhaps the teenagers of today who tattoo themselves or paint themselves with henna should switch to woad in true rebellious British fashion!

If any KAS members would like to receive information about future seminars run by the School of Classical & Archaeological Studies, please contact Dr Patty Baker, Cornwallis Building, UKC, Canterbury CT2 7NF, to be added to the mailing list.

Below: possible woad colouring as depicted on the Gundestrup cauldron.

## LOCAL STUDIES PACK

### Local Studies Resources Pack

The National Monuments Record (NMR), which is the public archive of English Heritage, has designed this offer especially for people interested in finding out more about their local area.

Aerial photography provides a fascinating resource to anyone studying their local landscape. Of interest to historians and archaeologists alike, these photographs reveal a unique view of the history of your locality. Whether you are interested in medieval field systems, wartime defences or urban growth, aerial photography can play an important part in your research.

Choose any site in England – it might be your street, your village or your town centre – and the NMR will provide three different aerial photographs for £15.00 including VAT. The photographs will be copied from the NMR's unrivalled collection of aerial photography, mostly black and white, vertical photographs taken between 1945 and 1975. In addition to the photographs they will supply information from heritage database on the archaeology and listed buildings in your area.

#### The pack includes:

- 3 aerial photographs, laser copied onto A3 size paper
- An index of the listed buildings in your area
- Full listings for the archaeology in your area

For further information contact:

NMR Enquiry and Research Services  
Local Studies Resource Pack  
2GZ

Tel: 01793 414600  
Fax: 01793 414606  
Email: nmrinfo@english-heritage.org.uk

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Winter 2001/2

## ALLEN GROVE LOCAL HISTORY FUND

£1,600 given in grants

Last year the Fund made six grants totalling £1,600 to help work being done by groups and individuals. All but one of the grants were for research for books or for the costs of publication. The exception was one for a display on Faversham's Hey Day 1530-1699 at the Faversham Society's Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre.

The authors who received grants were Mrs H. Allinson who is writing a history of Hollingbourne, and Mrs M. Lawrence who is writing one on St Michael's Church, East Peckham. Gravesend Historical Society also received a grant for a book on the Roman Town at Springhead and Sevenoaks Historical Society was given one for a book on the history of religious belief in the Sevenoaks area which it is producing with assistance from other local groups. Mrs M. Scott's grant was for recording and publishing the histories of houses in Leeds.

Why not apply for one?

Applications are invited for grants.

The late Allen Grove left a legacy to the Kent Archaeological Society to establish this fund to be used for the purposes of research, preservation and enjoyment of local history. The trustees will consider applications for grants for any project with one or more of these purposes. Projects may be practical ones such as presentation, publication and education as well as research.

Grants may be made to societies and groups as well as to individuals and are not restricted to members of the Kent Archaeological Society. They are usually around £200 to £400 each but the trustees would consider a larger grant for a particularly imaginative & innovative project which might not be able to proceed without the grant. Awards may not be announced until the summer or autumn of 2002.

Applications must be submitted, on the official application form, by the 31st March 2002. Application forms and further information may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary: Mrs A. L. Moffat, Three Elm s, Woodlands Lane, Shorne, Gravesend, DA12 3HH, or by email to [secretary@kentarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:secretary@kentarchaeology.org.uk).

## OTHER GRANTS

The Society has other grant programmes. Fieldwork grants may be obtained from the Fieldwork Committee and applications should be sent to its secretary David Bacchus at Telford Lodge, Roebuck Road, Rochester, ME1 1UD or by email to [d\\_bacchus@talk21.com](mailto:d_bacchus@talk21.com).

The Society's Kent Local History Fund makes grants to assist with serious research leading to publication. They are only made to societies affiliated to the K.A.S. or the Kent History Federation and members of those societies or the K.A.S. Professional historians and post graduate students are not eligible to apply. Application forms can be obtained from Miss E. Melling, 81A Bower Mount Road, Maidstone, ME16 5AS.

## TEBBUTT RESEARCH FUND

This fund was established as a tribute to the life and work of the late CF. Tebbutt, OBE., ESA., and applications are invited, from individuals and groups, for grants towards research, including associated expenses, into any aspect of the W earthen Iron Industry.

It is anticipated that approximately £100 plus will be available from the fund and any interested person should write a suitable letter of application giving details of themselves together with relevant information concerning the research envisaged.

Applications should be sent to Sheila Broomfield, 8 Woodview Crescent, Hildenborough, Tonbridge Kent TN11 9HD, Tel: 01732 838698 Email: [sbroomfield@diapipex.com](mailto:sbroomfield@diapipex.com), not later than 31st March 2002 so that she can pass them to the Panel for consideration.

## DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS CHURCH ?

There is a huge collection of unprovenanced images held in the KAS collection.

Please contact the editor on 01892 533661



## BAA CONFERENCE

British Archaeological Association  
Annual Conference 2002  
Medieval Art, Architecture and  
Archaeology in Rochester  
Sat 27th July - Wed 31st July 2002

The BAA Conference for the year 2002 will be concerned with the art, architecture and archaeology of Rochester Cathedral and Priory and the surrounding buildings like the great castle keep. It is exactly one hundred years since Sir William St John Hope published his great study of the cathedral and priory, and it is now time to reassess his work. Rochester Cathedral, though very close to London, is one of the least visited cathedrals in England, but there is much to see for the Association. Visits are also planned to Cobham Hall, Maidstone, Westminster Abbey and Stone Church.

Those wishing to offer papers for presentation at the conference should write, giving a short resumé and an idea of length, to Tim Tatton-Brown, Conference Convener.

The Conference welcomes professional and amateur enthusiasts equally. Members of the Association will receive a booking form with their copy of the journal early in 2002. Non-members who wish to attend should send a stamped, addressed envelope to Robert Gwynne, Conference Secretary, as soon as possible, in order to receive further details and a booking form.

Any other queries should be referred to Anna Eavis, Conference Organiser.

Important addresses:

Conference Organiser:  
Anna Eavis, NMRC, Kenble Drive,  
Swindon SN2 2GZ  
Tel: 01793 414648  
Email: [anna.eavis@rchm.co.uk](mailto:anna.eavis@rchm.co.uk)

Conference Secretary:  
Robert Gwynne, 44 Montagu Mansions,  
London W1H 1LD

## READING

COMMUNITY AND DISUNITY IN KENT; 4 lectures on Kent and the English Civil Wars 1640-1649 by Dr Jacqueline Eales. Dr Eales will be a contributor of one of the articles in the new series 'Ideas and Ideals', the first of which is featured on pages 8 & 9. Published by Keith Dickson Books at £5.99 (hcb&p)

Keith Dickson Books  
Unit 9, The Shipyard  
Upper Brents  
Faversham  
Kent ME13 7DZ

## DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS BUILDING?

There is a huge collection of unprovenanced images held in the KAS collection...

Please contact the editor on 01892 533661



## BAA MEETINGS

### PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2001-2002

Meetings are held at 5.00 pm in the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0HS. Non-members are welcome to attend occasional lectures but are asked to make themselves known to the Hon. Director on arrival and sign the visitors' book.

6 February 2002  
English Castles as Pleasure Palaces in the  
13th and 14th centuries'  
by Jeremy Ashbee

6 March 2002  
Anglo-Scottish Border Churches  
12901690: fortification, security and  
defence  
by Dr Christopher Brooke

3 April 2002  
The ground plan of the English  
Romanesque Church  
by Dr Richard Plant

1 May 2002  
Millennium Review Lecture Series -8  
Monumental Brasses from the 13th to the  
20th century: new directions since Kent  
and Emerson'  
by Sally Badham  
The lecture will be followed by the  
President's Reception

## LETTERS

Dear Editor,

### BENEFACCTIONS BOARDS

For a considerable time, when on my frequent visits to churches in both dioceses, I have become worried about the neglected condition of most of the benefaction boards, usually mouldering beneath towers.

These boards are vital records of parochial history. One would hope that, before their details disappear, records are kept. Ideally, they should be considered as important as hatchments, and conserved. Grants are available for conservation and parishes should take advantage of these.

Perhaps the Churches Committee of Kent Archaeological Society could inaugurate a Benefactions Boards Recording Group. For your interest I originally joined KAS in 1942.

Yours sincerely

John Physick

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**RECRUITMENT OF NEW MEMBERS**

The Society attracts about one hundred new members each year but this number could be increased. A new membership information leaflet has recently been produced, emphasising the advantages of membership, to aid the recruitment of new members.

A copy of the leaflet is enclosed with this Newsletter and I appeal to every member to use it to recruit a new member to the Society. Completed application forms should be sent to the Hon. Membership Secretary, Mrs Sheila Broomfield, 8 Woodview Crescent, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 8HD. Additional leaflets may also be obtained from the Hon. Membership Secretary.

Paul Oikham, President

**CHRISTMAS LUNCH  
2001**

The lunch was held, as in previous years, at the Hop Farm, Paddock Wood, where 60 members enjoyed a truly festive meal. They were entertained most professionally by a group from the Oast Theatre, Tonbridge. The afternoon was spent at Preston Hall, Aylesford, not normally open to the public, guided by our member Jim Sephton who has researched and published the history of the Hall.

**ROMAN VILLA  
ABBEY FARM**

In September, the K.A.S. in association with the Thanet Archaeology Society, held its season of excavation on this complex and important Roman site. Thirty one people attended the dig, plus members of the Dover Archaeology Group and the Thanet Society.

During the two week project the following was accomplished:

- i) Foundations of the boundary wall at the the north-west corner of the villa enclosure were located and planned.
- ii) A final question regarding the villa structure had been posed, was there an apsidal extension at the southern end of the eastern wing? Answer, no.
- iii) How big was building 4? We now have the complete plan, but no idea what the building was.
- iv) A very full resistivity survey was carried out, this revealing the presence of building 5 and a possible 6. The survey will be most useful, as its results will give an insight into the scale of the remains in this large and important villa complex.

The Canterbury Archaeological Trust has generously supported the project for all five seasons. This support has been most appreciated.

For enquiries regarding the Abbey Farm site, please contact David Bacchus at the following address: Telford Lodge, Roebuck Road, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1UD. Tel: 01634 843495 email: d.bacchus@talk21.com

**FOR SALE**

A set of Archaeologia Cantiana (122 volumes) plus index is being offered for sale. The purchase price is £600. Please contact the Editor for further details.

**PADUA**

If any member is planning to visit Italy, including a visit to Padua, would they please contact Margaret Lawrence? Margaret has an historical enquiry which she would like investigated in this beautiful old town. Tel: 01622 871 945

**MEMBERSHIP  
SECRETARY**

Since taking over as membership secretary I have been actively amalgamating the databases that were previously used to manage communicating with members and keeping the membership records. Can you please check that this new sletter was addressed correctly and, if not, please let me know.

If you did not receive the previous new sletter - (Autumn 2001 No 50) please let me know as there has been a slight problem in producing the address labels for that issue and some members may have missed out - apologies for this.

You will find enclosed a membership renewal form - please return this to me with your cheque if you do not pay by standing order.

Anything concerning membership should be sent to me - Mrs Sheila Broomfield, 8 Woodview Crescent, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 8HD.

Telephone 01732 838698. Email - membership@kentarchaeology.org.uk or sbroomfield@tialpix.com.

**A.G.M 2002**

Canterbury will be the location of the Society's annual general meeting on the 18th May this year. The business meeting will be in the morning and we hope to be supported by the attendance of plenty of members.

We are fortunate that Professor Martin Millett of Cambridge University will be giving the afternoon lecture. He is an expert on Roman Britain and is taking a special interest in Kent as one of the leaders of new research and excavations at Richborough which started last year.

The results of the elections will be announced at the A.G.M. There will be some vacancies on the Council to be filled but nominations can be submitted for any office; it is the sign of an active society if there is competition for office.

Any five members can propose a candidate for election as a member of the council or as an officer. Nominations have to be received by the Hon. General Secretary by the 1st March at the latest and must be accompanied by the written request of the candidate. To be nominated as a Vice President the candidate must have given distinguished service to the Society and the nomination has to be accompanied by a citation describing that service.

Further information and guidance can be obtained from the Hon. General Secretary Mr A.I. Moffat, Three Elms, Woodland Lane, Shorne, Gravesham, DA12 3HH; email secretary@kentarchaeology.org.uk. Although an application form does not have to be used he can supply a suitable form.



**You and Your Society**

## WOMEN IN ANGLO-SAXON SOCIETY

The second joint KAS and Canterbury Christ Church University College one day conference, 'Women in Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Society' will be held on Saturday 4th May 2002

The Speakers:

Barbara Yorke is a Professor of Early Medieval History at King Alfreds College, Winchester. She will be speaking on 'The Royal Nunneries of Anglo-Saxon Kent: Anglo-Saxon Kent included amongst its major religious communities five nunneries that were founded by its royal family. These establishments were led by women of the royal house who were able to exercise public power as well as providing for the spiritual well-being of their families.

Caroline Baron is a Professor of History at Royal Holloway, University of London and will be speaking on 'Women in Medieval London: As for many themes in medieval history, London provides our main source of information on women from merchant and artisan backgrounds. This subject forms Professor Behr's current research study.

Sheila Sweetinburgh works as a freelance historian and part-time teacher and has carried out historical assessments for the Canterbury Archaeological Trust. The title of her lecture is 'Joining the sisters: female inmates in Kent's late medieval hospitals: By the late medieval ages hospitals in Kent were housing both the poor and not so poor. The sisters were expected to take an active part in the life of the community. This might mean caring for the pilgrims, poor or sick, or praying for the soul of the benefactor and labouring on the hospital farm, in the brew house, bake house or kitchen.

Toni Mount will be known to many of you from her WEA courses on Social History; her lecture is entitled 'What of the Medieval Housewife? This lecture looks at the everyday life of the medieval housewife. Extensive use is made of original source material for dress, etiquette and recipes. Some Kentish examples will be used.

Charlotte Behr is a senior lecturer in Roman and Early Medieval History at the University of Surrey, Roehampton and will be speaking on 'High Status Women and Pagan Images: Golden amulets with pagan images have been found in wealthy early Anglo-Saxon female graves in eastern Kent. The amulets identify high status women, who adhered to the cult of Odin and claimed Scandinavian origins. These women may have possessed political influence.

KAS members £8 Non-members £10

Tickets available from Sean Greenwood, History Department (Conference tickets), Canterbury Christ Church University College, North Holmes Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1QU.

Please enclose a SAE (22x11cm) for the return of your tickets and make cheque payable to the Kent Archaeological Society.

## ROMAN CONFERENCE

The Theoretical Roman Archaeological Conference 2002 will take place at the University of Kent at Canterbury between Friday 5 April and Saturday 6 April 2002. The conference provides a forum for young scholars to present research and to consider theoretical approaches and new directions in Roman archaeology. Session Proposals include:

- \* Powerful role models/articulation of identity through assimilation
- \* Is ritual but of the ordinary?
- \* Meaningful objects
- \* Breaking Ground or Treading Water? Theoretical Agendas for the 21st Century
- \* Interdisciplinary Approaches to the study of women

Further details are available on the TRAC web site, <http://www.ukc.ac.uk/secl/classics/trac.htm> plain or contact:

Dr Ellen Swift Lecturer in Archaeology, School of European Culture & Languages Cornwallis Building, University of Kent at Canterbury, KENT CT2 7NF tel. 01227 764000 ext. 7898 direct line 01227 827898 fax 01227 823641

## KENT HALF-DAY CONFERENCE

20 April 2002 at the Exchange Lecture Theatre, Maidstone

As part of its continuing drive to keep members informed about archaeological activity in their local area, CBA SE will be arranging a half-day conference next spring on current archaeological discoveries in Kent. The programme will consist of four first-class speakers who are involved in some of the most exciting work currently taking place.

Recent Archaeological Work in the Ebbsfleet Valley - Steve Haynes or Jay Carver (RailLink Engineering)

Canterbury Whitefriars - Recent Discoveries - Mark Houlston (Canterbury Archaeological Trust)

Western Heights: Dover's other great fortress - Paul Pattison (English Heritage)

Archaeology Round-up - John Williams (County Archaeologist, Kent County Council)

A booking form for this event is enclosed with this newsletter.

## LECTURES IN THE LIBRARY

Tuesday, 12th February 2002 at 2.30 p.m. Buying a computer. A discussion group with brief presentations for those contemplating the purchase of a computer or a new user.

Admission Free\*  
Tuesday, 19th February 2002 at 2.30 p.m. The Use of Computers in Local History Research. A discussion group with brief presentations.

Admission Free\*  
Tuesday, 12th March 2002 at 2.30 p.m. GAVELKIND by Karl Wittwer.  
Admission £2\*

\*There are 30 tickets available for each meeting. Members may bring guests. Please telephone 01634 240015 or email [dd@degian.demon.co.uk](mailto:dd@degian.demon.co.uk) to reserve your tickets and, where payment is requested, pay at the door.

The new Lectures in the Library series has been well received by those attending. The first lecture was on Copyright for Archivists and other users of archives. Tim Padfield of the Public Record Office gave a detailed explanation of copyright law with practical examples. His handout was excellent. The second lecture was by Tom Sawyer. The title of his lecture was 'Trajan's Column to Times Roman.' He outlined the history of letterforms, explained technical terms and provided practical advice on the choice and presentation of modern typefaces available to all in modern word processors. For those who missed the lecture he has provided a reading list. If you would like a copy, please send a SAE to Denis Anstey, Lectures Secretary, 86 Mailing Road, Snodland, ME6 5ND.

## RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY

Council for Kentish Archaeology  
50 YEARS OF KENT  
RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY  
Saturday 27th April 2002 2.00-5.30pm  
Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School,  
Faversham.

A celebration of 50 years (1952-2002) in Kent of archaeological discoveries, excavation, preservation and publication, with illustrated talks, displays and bookstalls.  
INFORMATION & TICKETS  
from C.K.A., 7 Sandy Ridge, Borough Green, Kent TN15 8HP

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# Events and Diary







of East Anglia, then north to the Northumbrians. Again we have another Bedean set piece, the marvellous scene where Edwin of Northumbria consults his witan. But Edwin had married the Kentish Æthelbert's daughter: Paulinus' mission was virtually a foregone conclusion. What probably none of the missionaries bargained for (and they were the second generation now) was that when their backs were turned the old gods would creep back. Raedwald put up a temple next to his altar, Mellitus was chased out of his new church of St Paul's in London and in Kent Æthelbert's son reverted to paganism (his grandson was to return to Christianity). To compound matters the frontiers of Christianity were being extended - but by Celtic missionaries. By the middle of the seventh century Aidan and Cedd's mission from Iona, via Lindisfarne, had brought Celtic Christianity as far south as the Thames.

It was a moment of crisis for the Roman church. The initial conversions had been of the top people - kings and their advisers and courtiers. The next generation of rulers, and possibly people lower down the social scale, had rebelled. Only Celtic Christianity, with its directly pastoral approach, was holding its own. The synod of Whitby, called in 664, was a response to this crisis. Ostensibly (according to Bede) it was summoned to iron out problems at the Northumbrian court where king Oswy and his wife wanted guidance over when to celebrate Easter - on his Celtic date (he had been brought up in Iona) or her Roman one. Oswy's brother Oswald had married the daughter of the Wessex king, thereby bringing Celtic Christianity to the West Saxons: Oswy didn't need a map to see how the balance of (Christian) power lay. Was he hoping, nonetheless, for a Roman victory, as it happened (as Bede has it) that put Wilfrid forward as the main defender of the Roman cause while the Scottish Colman, of Lindisfarne, defended the Celtic? Colman needed an interpreter, while Wilfrid combined the adversarial skills of a barrister with the style of the Northumbrian aristocracy he'd been born into, and in his convictions he was 'continental' to his fingertips. When Oswy came down on the side of St Peter (Roman), the future shape of the church in England was sealed. Fault-lines from the pre-Whitby era were, for the moment, buried - though they would surface repeatedly throughout English history. With the mission to the South Saxons twenty years later (again, Wilfrid's work) the conversion of the English was complete.

Fate now placed Theodore of Tarsus, St Paul's own city, in Canterbury, in 669 (he was the third choice for the archbishopric). Theodore brought all the skills and wisdom he had acquired in

Byzantium to strengthen the English Church. Eastern Christianity had many similarities with Celtic; some of the practices Theodore introduced (like private confession) were common to both. He was a man of enlightened, organising genius and, even at the age of sixty-six, huge energy. He toured the county, creating new dioceses and appointing new bishops (there were three when he began, fifteen when he died twenty years later). At the synod of Hertford, the first attended by all bishops, his canons set up a unified structure for the whole church which was later complemented when he prescribed detailed rules of conduct for religious houses in his Penitentials. (In one of the latter he recommended that judgement of those accused of capital offences against monks and clerics should fall to bishops, a legal point whose later variants would tear church and monarchy apart - but that was in the future; at this stage king and prime lived for the most part in happy symbiosis, each benefiting from the other's strength.)

Theodore's achievement, mirrored by the mission of his northern contemporary, Cuthbert, who combined Roman allegiance with Celtic practices, was the catalyst for a unique cultural flowering which followed. It was not an accident that Kent was in its vanguard: lucrative trading links and exposure to continental cultural influences made it far and away the richest kingdom. The school Theodore founded at Christ Church Canterbury became the cultural pacesetter for the whole country. It had a uniquely broad curriculum which included classical studies, Roman law, maths and music. Other foundations followed. At Wearmouth and Jarrow Benedict Biscop built up the library which Bede later used. The outstanding relic of this time, the Lindisfarne Gospels, bears witness to the rich cross-cultural flowering of this golden age.

But such relics are rare: the 'golden age' lasted barely a century. The background to it was the ever-shifting military balance of power - Northumbria to Mercia, Mercia to Wessex. The Church might have achieved a measure of unity, but at a political level the country was still a patchwork of warring kingdoms which was one of the reasons among many for the Viking raids that began at the end of the eighth century. It was no coincidence that the first major raid was on Lindisfarne. The monasteries were honeypots to the marauders. Kent, with its wealthy abbeys at Reculver, Mincer and Canterbury and its accessibility (the sea-frontier was suddenly a hazard) was an obvious target; the Danish armies also found Thanet and Sheppey convenient wintering quarters. Canterbury was sacked twice during the ninth century (once by Mercia), and again at the beginning of the eleventh when the

archbishop, Aethelheah (St Alphege) was captured and murdered and the raiding army had to be paid off with 48,000 pounds of silver. According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, all Canterbury's churchmen and women were seized and no one can say how great a part of the inhabitants that was!

The effect on church life was devastating. The carefully built-up complexly cracked. Demoralisation in the monasteries showed in the gradual dispersal of monastic lands, while the destruction of buildings and libraries virtually eradicated the centres of learning.

This is the sad end of the first phase of the christianising of England. Regeneration was to come, with the tenth century revival of monastic life. And we, with hindsight, know that the radical notions that erupted in Kent in 597 were to shape lives and institutions, and be continuing elements in our national consciousness, up to the present day. But contemporaries who prayed for delivery from the fury of the Norsemen had only their faith to sustain them.

One example of such faith can be seen in the gift of an eighth-century gospel book, the illuminated Codex Aureus, donated to Christ Church Canterbury some hundred years later by certain ealdorman Alfred and his wife Werburg. They had bought the Codex back from one of the Viking armies (who had stolen it or been paid off with it) because we were not willing that these holy books should remain any longer in heathen hands', says their dedication in Old English; and they'd given it to Christ Church.

How much did it cost, one wonders, how did they negotiate the deal? In these details, which we will never know, lie all the realities of life two centuries before the Conquest. The details we do know, however, tell us that it was as thanks to the Alfreds and the Werburgs - as well as the Wilfrids and the Cuthberts and the Theodores - that Gregory I's high enterprise, in spite of all vicissitudes, succeeded.

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle translated and edited.  
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Penguin Classics 1990  
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Richard Eales & Richard Gameson Vikings, Monks and the Millennium Canterbury Archeological Society 2000  
Richard Gem (editor) St Augustine's Abbey Canterbury English Heritage 1997  
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Eric John Reassessing Anglo-Saxon England Manchester University Press 1996  
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Liz Nusbaum

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# YAC grows in 2001

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If the good folk of Kent's past had been blessed with foresight, I wonder how they would have viewed some of the events of AD2001? Would it ever have occurred to them that some of their communal activities would provide our children with archaeological activities?

In March 2000 the inaugural meeting of the North Downs Young Archaeologists Club took place. The leaders, usually a configuration of Susie Lee, Lyn Palmer, Janet Donald and Kate Kersey, were slightly uncertain just how many children would turn up. Worries vanished as children came in steadily, keen to dig (and even more keen to dispose of parents). We even had a couple of parents attend whose children were unable to come that day but who were desperate to register their interest!

Attendance figures at subsequent activities have banished any lingering queries as to whether there really is a surge of interest in archaeology by youngsters. For some the initial spark is generated by television programmes such as 'Time Team' and 'Meet the Ancestors'. Others are inspired by work encountered through the National Curriculum. What is obvious though is that the interest is genuine and providing it is treated properly and respected, should be life-long.

North Downs YAC is organised under the umbrella of the Council for British Archaeology but with as much local input as possible. We have around 25 children attend meetings aged between 9 and 16. Meetings are usually held on Saturday mornings, roughly once a month and our base is at Maidstone Museum. All children have to be members of the national YAC before they join our local branch. We conform to the CBA's regulations for YAC and to designated safety codes and have fully qualified First Aiders within the leadership team.

Archaeology is a diverse term and YAC acknowledges this by encompassing many activities. Although it is not always possible to provide excavation experience (top of the children's wish-list!), we do try to provide practical hands-on activities.

We have experienced the joys of field-walking and glorious mud at Thunham as we have become friends with the KCC archaeologists involved in the development of the new White Horse Wood Country Park. We then washed our finds and discussed the lives of our Thunham ancestors, whose relics spanned at least 5000 years; from a Neolithic polished axe to modern ploughshares, the children were fascinated by them all. On National Archaeology Day in July we celebrated in costume in a Medieval manner at Thunham's motte & bailey castle.

One of our most outstanding and enjoyable events was the resistivity survey at Otford Palace where the children were able to experience the presence of a number of buildings through 'geophysics', electronic trickery and computer imagery. They also learnt to use a theodolite and produce digital images of finds. A great mix of the practical and technological.

Over the past 18 months we have built pyramids in the grounds of the museum, excavated a Medieval egalith and dug a boat and a shown round the Time Team Live excavations in Canterbury by some YAC's Presidents, Mr Weston. Our Christmas party on 20th was enlivened by Phil Harding showing us how to knit flint for unique Christmas presents!

We have also examined manuscripts in Canterbury Cathedral library, visited the 'Big Dig' and have pretended to be 'Brother Cadfael' whilst on a 'WhoDunnit?' evening. The 'The 7th' and his bone collection. The desire of some of our members of demarcation appealed to the boys... At an aerial photography event, we assembled the kit to grow our own crop marks, which should be busily sprouting evidence in many conservatories by now. The children have learnt about the SMR and looked up the data near their home addresses. We have found out about the history and restoration of flintlock pistols and fired miniature cannons and have listened to the guest me and

grisy history of the Tower of London before trying on some of the (smaller!) armour from there.

We were privileged to be given a 'behind the scenes' tour at the Natural History Museum by Andy Cunant; the wonder on the children's faces whilst examining bones from Darwin's own collection will stay with me for a long time.

Our plans for 2002 include a visit to the Map Room at the British Library, an exploration of Oldbury hillfort and our long postponed visit to Avebury and Stonehenge, cancelled due to foot and mouth last year. In March we hope to help in the clearance of castle walls at Thunham.

Naturally, all this achievement has taken a lot of time and planning. A ready-made group of a sensible number of people to thank! We are very grateful to the Kent Archaeological Society and individual members for all their support and enthusiasm. We would also welcome the opportunity to hold our YAC meetings with other Kent groups.

We are always keen to hear from any KAS members or archaeological contacts that have a special interest in the field that we might use for a meeting. Perhaps your interest in archaeology was developed because some one on an excavation, in a museum or library took the time to talk to you? Unlike school activities, our YAC children attend because they really want to be there, are genuinely interested and ask the sort of questions that occasionally stump our experts!

Kate Kersey  
Assistant Leader North Downs YAC



Copy deadlines for the next three issues are: April issue - Monday March 4th, July issue - Monday June 3rd, October issue - Monday September 2nd. Submission of inclusions by email would be much appreciated if possible. The editor wishes to draw attention to the fact that neither she nor the Council of the KAS are answerable for opinions which contributors may express in their signed articles; each author is alone responsible for the contents and substance of their work.

EDITOR : LYN PALMER  
55 Stone Street, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2QU  
Telephone: 01892 533661  
Email [evelyn.palmer@virgin.net](mailto:evelyn.palmer@virgin.net)

