

newsletter

Issue number 68

Spring 2006

GIANT HANDAXES from Cuxton

SYMBOLIC
CAPACITY
COMPATIBLE
WITH
EXPRESSION
THROUGH
LANGUAGE?

Inside

- 2-3 Cuxton Handaxes
- 4-5 Ice Age Network
- New Books
- KAS Websites
- Library Acquisitions
- 6-7 What's On
- 8-9 Notice Board
- 10-11 Ringlemere 2005
- 12-13 Shorne Heritage Project
- Letters to the Editor
- Gravesend Archives
- 14-15 St Mildred's Tannery
- 16 Strawberry Wood Culvert

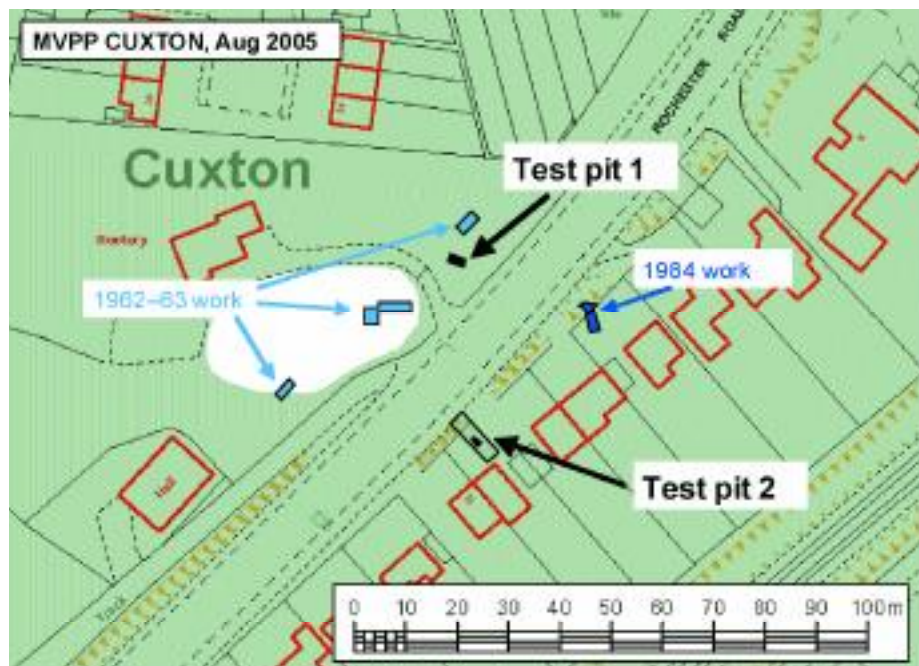


CUXTON GIANT HANDAXES

Background

In August 2006 two small test pits were dug at the Lower Palaeolithic site at Cuxton Rectory. The site was first identified in 1889 when, as reported by George Payne (*Collectanea Cantiana 1893*), "on entering the rectory garden I picked up a fine Palaeolithic flint celt that lay upon the bank". Further finds within a few yards of the same spot led Payne to conclude that the site represented a Palaeolithic settlement. But it was not until the 1960s that the importance of the site was fully recognised. Tester (1965) recovered an incredible 210 handaxes from three small test pits, as well as numerous cores, flake-tools and waste flakes. The finds came from a thin bed of river gravel close beneath the ground surface at c.17m OD. Typologically, the collection was dominated by pointed handaxes. Therefore Tester concluded that the site was probably of the same age as the Middle Gravels at Swanscombe, despite the great difference in elevation and the presence at Cuxton of ficrons and cleavers, types absent at Swanscombe, and the relative abundance of flake-tools.

Further work took place in the 1980s on the opposite side of Rochester Road (*Cruse et al. 1987*). Closer attention was paid to the river gravel that contained the artefacts. Lithological analysis confirmed it was laid down by the Medway, and, controversially, it was correlated with the Binney Gravel on the Hoo, attributed [at that time] to only around 45,000 BP. Contradictory dating (besides the abundance of mint or fresh handax-



COVER : *The ficron.*

ABOVE : *Location and layout.*

LEFT : *David Norwood watching excavation of his front lawn.*

Below : *Sondage section with cleaver in situ and holes left by other handaxe finds.*

OPPOSITE PAGE : *The cleaver*



es!) was provided by TL-dating of loam capping the gravel to at least 100,000 BP. Overall, the second phase of work did little to resolve the date of the site.

Therefore, as part of the Aggregates Levy *Medway Valley Palaeolithic Project*, a small reinvestigation of Cuxton took place. The main objective was merely to dig the smallest possible trenches to gain access to sand-rich deposits for optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) dating. If in the course of this work we recovered further well-provenanced artefacts, that would be a bonus.

We were kindly permitted by the present vicar, Rev. Roger Knight, to dig a test pit to the north of the rectory drive. And we dug a second test pit at 21 Rochester Road, directly opposite, which produced the spectacular finds discussed below. We, and the archaeological community, are forever indebted to David and Sarah Norwood for allowing us to excavate on their front lawn.

Two giant handaxes

After clearing away overburden of turf and made ground, a sondage was carefully dug by machine. The upper levels comprised fluvial sands, lacking artefacts. About 60cm down, the sands came down onto a more gravelly layer. As this level was being reached, the scrape of the machine bucket revealed the butt of a large handaxe in the bottom of the trench, with the tip buried by the recently disturbed spoil. Upon retrieval, the handaxe was found to be a monstrous ficron, 307mm long, making it the second longest handaxe known in Britain (after a pointed specimen from Furze Platt found in 1919 — Wymer 1968: 224). Besides its extreme size, the workmanship is exquisite, almost flamboyant. The

narrowed waist of the ficron is approximately two-thirds towards the butt. From the waist to the tip, both sides are straight and perfectly symmetrical. As a final flourish, one side of the tip has been finished with two tranchet blows, creating a sharp edge extending 75mm, without affecting the overall symmetry.

A sharp-edged flake was also found, well-embedded in the section, and removal of this was left until the section had been recorded and OSL sampling completed. Upon excavation it quickly transpired that we were dealing not with a flake, but another giant handaxe, this time a cleaver 179mm long by 134mm wide at its widest point and with a transverse cutting blade 110mm wide. The workmanship is again extraordinary. Despite the large size, there are no mistakes such as step fractures across the wide expanse of the faces. The cross-sections along the long axis and across it are perfectly symmetrical. The cleaver edge, straight and perfectly orthogonal to the long axis, has been achieved by two immaculate opposing tranchet blows, one from each edge. The cleaver came from exactly the same thin gravel band as the ficron, and was found within one foot of it.

Language in the Lower Palaeolithic?

What can we make of these finds? There is debate about whether Palaeolithic handaxes genuinely reflect deliberately made types, or whether the varied types most analysts perceive are the accidental by-product of the application of a general bifacial knapping approach to flint nodules of varying shape. As a relatively experienced flint knapper I can confidently assert that, particularly at this scale, the clear point, straight edges and symmetrical waist of the ficron would not arrive except by design. Above all, the use of diverse

approaches to tranchet-sharpening in each of these contrasting types of handaxe is inconceivable other than as a finishing touch to deliberately create a much sharper cutting edge than would result from continuing the more natural bifacial knapping pattern orthogonal to the main axis of each tool. If one accepts that these handaxes were deliberately shaped into a desired form, then, many would argue (eg. Davidson & Noble 1993), this reflects a symbolic capacity compatible with expression through language.

Dating and cultural development

We don't yet know the date of the site. Preliminary indications of the OSL sampling are for a final Lower Palaeolithic date, between 200,000 and 300,000 BP. It is beginning to look as if this period was characterised by an increasing diversity of handaxe types, and specifically the co-occurrence of cleavers and ficrons at many sites. Perhaps, the Lower Palaeolithic is not, therefore, the period of stasis that is often suggested, but incorporates a trajectory of cultural, cognitive and behavioural development that is continued into, and through, the Middle Palaeolithic.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to David and Sarah Norwood for permitting us to excavate; to Martin Bates, Gilbert Marshall, Marcus Hatch and James Cole for help with the fieldwork; and to Lis Dyson (of Kent County Council) and Peter Kendall and Helen Keeley (of English Heritage) for their support of the Cuxton fieldwork and the Medway Valley Palaeolithic Project.

References

- Cruse, R.J. 1987. Further investigation of the Acheulian site at Cuxton. *Archaeologia Cantiana* 104: 39–81.
- Davidson, I. & Noble, W. 1993. Tools and language in human evolution. In K.R. Gibson & T. Ingold (eds), *Tools, Language and Cognition in Human Evolution*, 363–388. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tester, P.J. 1965. An Acheulian site at Cuxton. *Archaeologia Cantiana* 80: 30–60.
- Wymer, J.J. 1968. *Lower Palaeolithic Archaeology in Britain as represented by the Thames Valley*. John Baker, London.
- Web-links: Medway Valley Project:
<http://www.arch.soton.ac.uk/Research/MedwayValley/welcome/index.php>
- A more detailed report on these new discoveries is published in April in *Lithics* 25: *Essays in Honour of R.J. MacRae*, a special issue of the Annual Journal of the Lithic Studies Society

Francis Wenban-Smith
(Department of Archaeology,
University of Southampton)



THE NATIONAL ICE AGE NETWORK (NIAN)

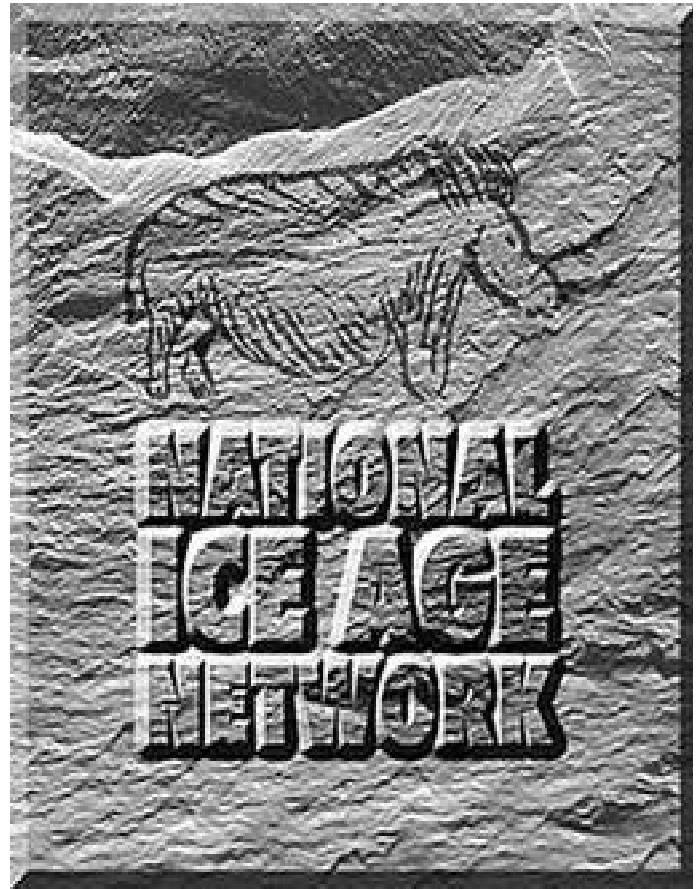
The NIAN is an Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund initiative administered by English Heritage. It seeks to strengthen contacts between, and create an inclusive and supportive network for everyone interested in the Ice Age. The initiative focuses on the Pleistocene (Ice Age) remains to be found in England's sand and gravel quarries, including sediments containing fossils relating to past environments as well as archaeological evidence for some of the country's earliest human inhabitants.

Although a resource of great importance for science and of widespread public interest (eg mammoths, Neanderthals, climate change), these remains have often not received the attention devoted to more recent environmental and archaeological evidence.

Sand and gravel quarrying has benefited geology, palaeontology and archaeology enormously. Deep excavations for commercial quarrying have revealed geological sequences, the fossil remains of plants and animals, and the stone tools of our ancestors – the raw materials needed to reconstruct the Ice Age world. Quarrying, however, is also a destructive process – much is lost without record – and the benefits of aggregates quarrying to reconstructing the Ice Age world cannot be realised unless the fossils and archaeological remains are recorded. The challenge of monitoring these quarries for significant finds can only be achieved through partnership: between geologists, palaeontologists and archaeologists, between professionals and amateurs, but most of all with the aggregates industry. It is the quarry workers themselves who, day in and day out, have the best chance of making the important discoveries. The inclusive grouping of organisations and individuals sharing the goal of bringing the Ice Age world to light will be known as the National Ice Age Network.

The NIAN currently operates from regional centres at Royal Holloway University of London and the University of Birmingham, with responsibilities for research and monitoring in the south-east and Midlands respectively.

Information from www.iceage.bham.ac.uk



CANTERBURY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION GRANTS

The Society has limited funds with which to support individuals researching any aspect of the archaeology and history of the Canterbury district. It is envisaged that grants would not normally exceed £500 each and would be awarded annually. Preference would be given to work resulting in publication.

Please apply in writing to the Honorary Secretary of the Grants Committee as soon as possible, and in any case not later than 30 June 2006. Your letter should mention your qualifications, the nature and length of your research,

the amount you are applying for, any additional funding anticipated and proposals for publication. You may be asked to name a referee with whom the Committee making the grants could consult. If successful, you would be expected to account for the money spent and give a copy of any article, pamphlet etc. to the Society's library.

For further details please contact the Honorary Secretary of the Grants Committee:

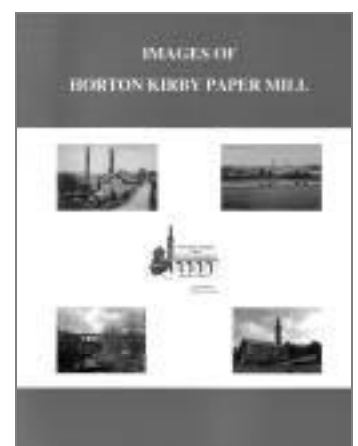
Mrs C M Short, 3 Little Meadow, Upper Harbledown, Canterbury CT2 9BD.

NEW BOOKS

Images of Horton Kirby Paper Mill by the Horton Kirby and South Darenth Local History Society. £6.00 (+ p&p).

For the better part of two centuries, Horton Kirby Paper Mill dominated South Darenth, not just physically through its buildings, but also economically and socially as the major local employer. This book provides a selection of images from its foundation to the present, tracing its growth through Ordnance Survey maps and photographs of both the mill and the families connected to the workings. The final chapter is an account by an apprentice in the mill in the 1960's of his working days.

Available from Mr K Saunderson, 'Appledore', Rays Hill, Horton Kirby, Dartford DA4 9DB. Tel: 01322 862056.



KAS ON THE INTERNET: WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Over the last five years, enthusiastic KAS members have been hard at work building up a presence for the Society on the world-wide internet through the Society's two websites, kentarchaeology.org.uk and kentarchaeology.ac.

The 'org' site is primarily devoted to information about the Society, its constitution, activities, meetings, lectures etc, together with sections affording researchers increasing access to some of the Society's records, while the 'ac' site provides on line publishing of articles and books about Kentish history and archaeology, together with searchable databases of the KAS library's books, visual records and other collections. These facilities aim not only to provide ready and easily available services to members, supplementing contacts by other methods, but also to enable the Society to reach out, on a national and world-wide basis, to non-members who may be interested in the History and Archaeology of the Ancient County of Kent, by offering access to the Society's accumulated knowledge and expertise.

The summary below of the content of the Society's websites should demonstrate that the Society has made a very respectable start on the process of entering the internet, and may help to encourage members to take advantage of the facilities digitally provided. It is certainly the intention to continue to develop further facilities available through computer access, complementary to contacts with members by other methods.

CONTENTS OF kentarchaeology.org.uk

This site covers four broad areas:-

About KAS. What the Society does, operational structure, grants available, membership issues.

Activities and Information. Meetings diary, conference notices, news items, copies of back issues of the KAS Newsletter for downloading.

Publications. Information on KAS publications offered for sale; monograph series, new Kent Records series, occasional volumes, *Archaeologia Cantiana*.

Research. Lists and transcripts of records of various types of interest to researchers on Kent history and archaeology, genealogy and family history, including:- visual records from the KAS collection, monumental inscriptions from churches and churchyards, transcripts and indexes of wills, Kent place names extracted

from OS maps, population figures 1801 to 1921, Roman pottery of Kent, Kent subsidy roll 1334/5.

CONTENTS OF kentarchaeology.ac

This site covers five broad areas:-

eArticles. Posting of original articles on Kentish matters, subject to approval of the society's Editor, supported by his editorial advisers. A dozen such are already posted on a variety of subjects.

eBooks. Publication online of complete books, approved and sponsored by KAS Publications Committee. A book on Hadlow town is the first such. (See advert on page 15).

Records. At present posted are:- Names and dates of Canterbury Consistory Court wills; Kentish Dialect and Provincialisms.

Collections Data Bases. Catalogues of Library Bookstock; KAS Visual Records; Gordon Ward collection; KAS document collection at CKA.

Researchers. List of researchers in history and archaeology willing to undertake paid work.

CLICK ON TO OUR WEBSITES, AND GIVE US YOUR VIEWS ON HOW THEY MAY BE IMPROVED TO GIVE BETTER SERVICE TO YOU.

Available now to
download at www.kentarchaeology.ac

Sir Edward Dering, 1st bart., of Surrenden Dering
and his 'Booke of Expences' - 1617-1628
By Leatitia Yeandle, Curator of Manuscripts Emerita,
Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC.

Literatim transcription of his account book when he was married first to Elizabeth Tufton and second to Anne Ashburnham. Detailed entries of the expenses he incurred in running his household, managing his estates, carrying out his official responsibilities and indulging his interests. M.P. for Hythe, a muster-master, a member of the Privy Chamber, and Treasurer for Household Compositions in Kent. A rising antiquary, buying books and copying records. Enjoyed the theatre and liked to dress well.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARY November 2005 to January 2006

Otford in Pictures. (Otford and District Historical Society).
Crown Yard, Canterbury, First Police Station.
Excavation of the Roman Fort at Reculver (Brian Philp).
Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History. Proceedings. Vol XLI P.1 2005.
Somerset Archaeology and Nat.History. Vol 148 (2005).
Anglo Saxon Cemetery at Eastry. (Brian Philp and Peter Keller).
Prehistoric and Monastic Site at Minster, Sheppey.
Discovery of Archaeological Site at Hayes, Kent.
Scratch Dials in Kentish Churches (Compact disc; Trevor Copestake).
Lincolnshire History and Archaeology. Vol 38 2003.
Bygone Kent Vol 26 Nos 11, 12 and Vol 27 No.1.
Britannia Vol XXXVI 2005.
Journal of Roman Studies Vol XCV 2005.
Archaeologia Cambrensis Vol 152 2003.
Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeology Vol 5 2005.
Interim report on excavations, Ringlemere Farm 2004.
Prehistoric Society Proceedings Vol 71 2005.
Antiquaries Journal Vol 85 2005.
Medieval Archaeology Vol XLIX 2005.
Montgomeryshire Collections Vol 93 2005.
Wye Local History Vol 1 No4 2003
Leicestershire Archaeology and History Society Vol 79 2003.

Archaeologia Aeliana Vol XXXIV.
London and Middlesex Archaeological Soc. Vol 55 2004.
150th Summer Meeting of R.A.I., Channel Islands 2004.
Transactions of the Lower Medway Archaeologica Research Group 2003.
Lost Railways of Kent (Leslie Oppitz).
Jahrbuch des Romisch-Germansichen Zentral-Museum Mainz No 51 Teil 1 & Teil 2, 2004.
Journal of the British Archaeological Association Vol 155 2003.
Materielhefte zur Archaeology im Baden-Wuerttemberg Stuttgart.
Fornvannen; Swedish Antiquarian Research. 2005 1/2/3/4.
Yorkshire Archaeological Journal Vol 77 2005.
Wiltshire Studies Vol 99.
St Andrew's Church, Wickhambreaux (Dick Bolton).
The Annunciation Window at St Andrew's Church (Dick Bolton).
Farningham and its Mills (Hilary Harding).
Journal of the English Place Name Society Vol 37 (2005).
Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland Vol 133.
Cornish Archaeology Vol 41- 42.
Archaeology of the Channel Tunnel Railway.
Hampshire Studies Vol 60.
Post Medieval Archaeology Vol 39 p2.
Journal of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire Vol 154.
Woolhope Naturalist and Field Club Vol L pIII.



KAS EVENTS

KAS Summer Social Meeting **Boughton Monchelsea Place, near Maidstone** **Thursday 15 June**

Members are invited to join in a tour of this 16th century stone-built manor house, which overlooks its own deer park and fifteen miles of unspoilt countryside. Walled gardens and a lake add to its beautiful setting. Picnic lunches may be eaten in the gardens. Small groups will alternate between a tour of the house and the church, after which cream tea will be served. Full details of times will be sent with tickets. Cost is £10 and a booking form is included in this issue.



KAS Churches Committee Visits **Monday 19 June** **St Dunstan's Church and the Congregational Church, at Cranbrook**

You are invited to visit these two Cranbrook churches. Meet at 6.45 for 7pm, at St.Dunstan's. Cost £2 (students £1). Tea & biscuits £1 per person. A booking form for this visit is enclosed and return by 10 June would be appreciated.

Saturday 30 September **All Saints, Eastchurch and Harty, at Sheppey.**

You are invited to visit these two Sheppey churches. Meet at 1.45 for 2pm, at Eastchurch. Cost £2 (students £1). Substantial tea £3.50. A booking form for this visit is enclosed and return by 15 September would be appreciated.



KAS Summer Excursion 2006 **Return to Northumbria, 12 – 17 June inclusive**

Last chance to join - only a few places still available
After too long an interval, the Society plans to visit Northumbria for its 2006 excursion, which, for one year only, will last for six days. Since our last visit to Northumbria, many new sites, from the Roman period to the nineteenth century, have become available; for example, Segedunum (where the Wall meets the North Sea), Cherryburn, the birthplace of the wood engraver and naturalist Thomas Bewick, and the revolutionary Cragside House. For further details and a booking form contact the Hon.Excursions Secretary, Joy Saynor on saynor@shorehamkent.wanadoo.co.uk.



KAS Place-Names Committee Day Conference **Saturday 15 July, 10am – 3.30pm at Snodland**

The Place-Names Committee are holding another Day Conference with completely new examples. The speakers will be Dr Paul Cullen and Dr David Parsons, the Director of the Institute for Names Studies, University of Nottingham. David's talks will be 'Reintroduction to English Place-Names' and 'Place-Names and the Church', while Paul will speak on 'Current Research in Kent' and 'Place-Names in and around Snodland', where the conference will be held. Please see the

enclosed flyer for details and how to book your place. Remember – the last two conferences were sold out!



KAS Charing One-day Conference **Historic Buildings of Kent** **14 October in Charing Church Barn, 10.30am – 4.30pm**

Due to unforeseen circumstances the previous 'coastal' theme of this day has been changed and we will now be looking at historic buildings within the county. Speakers will include Geoffrey Harvey, David Carder and Mike Cockett. Cost is £5.00, to include coffee and tea. A booking form for this conference is enclosed.

OTHER EVENTS AROUND KENT

CONFERENCES

Bronze Age Connections: Cultural Contact in Prehistoric Europe **The Dover Bronze Age Boat Trust: Second Conference** **Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 October** **at the Dover Harbour Board Cruise Terminal, Dover**

To mark the occasion of the Ringlemere gold cup being placed on display alongside the Dover Bronze Age Boat in Dover Museum, a two-day conference will take place in Dover in October 2006. The theme is 'Bronze Age Connections: Cultural Contact in Prehistoric Europe', in celebration of these two iconic symbols of Bronze Age life. The symposium will bring together a wide range of scholars from many different specialisms to explore the economic, social and symbolic nature of cultural contact along the NW European seaboard in prehistory and the practical means by which cross-channel relations could be maintained. More details can be found at <http://www.can->



ABOVE: *The Dover Bronze Age Boat under excavation.*



terburytrust.co.uk/conference.htm. For booking, contact Denise Ryeland, DBABT Conference Co-ordinator, Tours of the Realm, Hammond House, Limekiln Street, Dover CT17 9EE; telephone 01304 240374; email bronzeageboat@btopenworld.com. Accommodation booking is available, with special conference accommodation rates, through the Dover Visitor Information Centre, telephone 01304 245400

TALKS & LECTURES

Bexley Archaeological Group

18 May

The New Medieval Gallery in the Museum of London Hedley Swain. In the Bexley & Sidcup Conservative Club, 19 Station Road, Sidcup at 8pm. Non-members welcome, admission £3.



British Archaeological Association Meetings

3 May

Worcester Cathedral: architecture and historiography Dr Ute Engel
All meetings are held at 5pm in the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly. Non-members are very welcome but are asked to make themselves known to the Hon. Director on arrival and to sign the visitors book.



Loose Area History Society

8 May

Kent Women – Famous, Infamous and Unsung Chris McCooley

13 June

Guided Perambulation of Rolvenden

11 July

Guided Perambulation of Lenham

9 October

History of the Victoria Cross Lt.Col. Mike Martin

13 November

The Caged Lady Lee Ault

11 December

Shakespeare's International Globe Anne Carter

All meetings are held at Loose Infant School and start at 7.30pm. All welcome. Admission £1.50, pay at the door. For more details tel: 01622 741198.

OTHER EVENTS

Field trip to the ISLES of ORKNEY 3 – 8 July 2006

In July 2006 the Friends of Canterbury Archaeological Trust are planning a six-day trip to Orkney, just off the north coast of Scotland. The tour will encompass some of the best-preserved and spectacular archaeological monuments of all periods anywhere in Europe, set in a beautiful landscape of gently rolling islands, seascapes and astonishing wildlife.

Our guide will be Peter Clark FSA, deputy-director of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust. Between 1978 and 1985 he spent every summer season excavating sites of many periods throughout the islands. The tour will visit many of the great sites of European archaeology. It will be based in the Norse town of Kirkwall and visit both Orkney mainland and the small islands of Hoy and Rousay. Included will be Birsay, seat of Norse power in Orkney, the round church of Orphir, St. Magnus in Kirkwall, the important Neolithic village of Skara Brae and as many other sites as can be fitted into the time available.

We travel direct from Gatwick to Kirkwall, with independent travel to Gatwick.

There will be rough walking and ever-changing weather, so stout walking shoes and waterproofs are essential. The cost is £825 and the group is limited to 30.

For Orkneys booking form apply to: CAMINO JOURNEYS Ltd., PO Box 292, Broadstairs, CT10 2WY.



National Archaeology Week 15th – 23rd July

An annual nation-wide event organized by the Council for British Archaeology and the Young Archaeologists' Club. *If your Museum, Society, Club or venue is holding an event please let the editor know, so that it can be included in the July edition of the Newsletter.*

National Archaeology Week at Shorne Woods Country Park, near Gravesend.

Excavation during the whole week of the medieval site of Randall Manor .

Saturday 22 July

The medieval theme continues, with craftworkers, musicians and dancers and lots of hands-on creative activities for all the family. Guided tours of the excavation.



Crofton Roman Villa, Orpington

Special Guided Tours for Societies

Sunday afternoons from April to October 2006

Visit the Roman Villa at Orpington, the remains of ten rooms within a covered building, with graphic displays and Touch Table of Roman artefacts. Special offer to pre-booked societies – a guided tour by the excavation director, Brian Philp. Normal admission charges (80p/50p) plus donation to Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit. Information and booking from KARU, 11 Penshurst Green, Bromley BR2 9DG, tel: 020 8460 1442.

EVENTS ELSEWHERE

Ruskin Public History Discussion Group

A Militant pit – what made Betteshanger colliery in Kent special? The case of the 1960 stay-down strike

Saturday 10 June at Ruskin College, Walton Street, Oxford OX1 2HE. Coffee at 10.30am, session starts at 11. Finish by lunchtime.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Thank you to those who have recently renewed their membership. If you haven't yet renewed you will shortly be receiving a reminder letter. If you pay by banker's order please check your statements to make sure that you are paying the correct amount only once a year.

The current subscription is £10 for students under 21; £20 single membership (optional £15 if you are a pensioner and have been a member of the society for more than ten years); £25 for two adults living at the same address (optional £23 if you are both pensioners and have been members for over ten years). Those who have been members for over fifty years (ie joined before 1956) are entitled to free membership – a reward for loyalty and long service. We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

JOINT MEMBERS

Austin, Mr D, and Mrs, 25 Fairway Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 5LG
Brazier, Mr P, and Mrs, Lenham Court, Old Ham Lane, Lenham, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 2LS
Brown, Mr K, and Mrs, 20 Cripple Street, Loose, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6B
Doel, Dr G L, and Mrs, Owl House, 3 Charlton Terrace, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1PG
Loveday, Mr R, and Mrs, Old Pound Manor, The Street, Newington, Folkestone, Kent, CT18 8AU
Pullen, Mr A J, and Mrs, Bartlett Farmhouse, Great Chart, Ashford, Kent, TN23 3DW

INSTITUTIONAL SUBSCRIBERS

West P I O, Mr, House Record, 16 London Road, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 1NA

JUNIOR MEMBERS

Brazier, Mr P, Lenham Court, Old Ham Lane, Lenham, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 2LS

ORDINARY MEMBERS

Allen, Mrs P, Walnut Tree Cottage, Lympe, Hythe, Kent, CT21 4JP
Baker, Mrs A, Bounds Pitch, Much Marcle, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2P
Ball, Mr J, 18 Portman Park, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1LL
Cook, Mr C, The Old Post Office, Ruckinge, Ashford, Kent, TN26 2NY
Cooke, Miss L, Hill Side, Broadstreet Hill, Hollingbourne, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 1QY
Davies, Mr A J, Partridge Farm, Water Lane, Harrietsham, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 1LL
Edwards, Miss S C, 70 Hilton Close, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8NN
Hodgkinson, Mr N, 6 Lake Street, Rockingham, Western Australia, WA6168, Australia
Hurst, Mr R W, 16 Kewlands, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 5R
Johnson, Mr C, Collingwood Farm, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 4RR
King, Mr D J, 5 Mallard Way, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 6BJ
Klevnas, Ms A, Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB2 3DZ
Louw, Mrs C, 34 North Road, Hythe, Kent, CT21 5DA
Macklin, Mrs P J, 22 Stoney Road, Dunkirk, Faversham, Kent, ME13 9TN
Mann, Mr L W, 7 Homefield Close, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7J
Mascall, Mr G E C, 39 Queen's Road, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 5H
Mountfield, Mr P, Marchants, Church Street, Seal, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0AR
Owlett, Miss C A, Absaloms Oast Cottage, Underriver, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0SL
Parris, Mr S J C, 21 Christy Road, Biggen Hill, Westerham, Kent, TN16 3DE
Paulick, Mr M R, 76 Creekside Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903-1055, California, USA
Ratcliffe, Mr J, 33 Bower Mount Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8A
Stringer, Mr P, 2 Searchlight Bungalows, Ware, Near Ash, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 2NA
Thomas, Mrs D, 21 Bayham Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5HR
Vass, Mrs D, 2 Westhorpe Mews, Byfield, Daventry, Northants, NN11 6U

For all correspondence relating to membership please contact Mrs Shiela Broomfield, KAS Membership, 8 Woodview Crescent, Hildenborough, Tonbridge TN11 9HD. Tel: 01732 838698. Email: membership@kentarchaeology.org or s.broomfield@dialpipex.com.

KENT HISTORIC BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

The inaugural meeting of the KAS Historic Buildings Committee was held on 21 January. Christopher Proudfoot agreed to take on the role of Chairman, and Mike Clinch the role of Secretary. The Terms of Reference of the Committee were agreed, as follows: In relation to

historic buildings (excepting churches) in Kent, to promote and undertake:

- (a) study of their history and archaeology;
- (b) publication of such study;
- (c) the spread of knowledge of, and interest in them. These are to be implemented by various

liaison, research and education activities.

The Committee met again on 18 March, when aspects of its remit, method of working and programme of activities were discussed. As soon as plans for activities are a little firmer, more information will be provided.

A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS IN 2006

We are pleased to announce a special opportunity for KAS members to participate in the final phase of excavation at the Ringlemere site in early summer 2006.

The site first came to attention with the discovery, by Cliff Bradshaw, of the now famous Ringlemere Bronze Age Gold Cup in 2001. After several seasons of excavation, sponsored by the British Museum and by Cliff, it has been established that the site is one of international importance. It now appears that the Cup was not part of a Bronze Age round barrow burial, but was placed inside a much earlier ditched enclosure, probably the first real 'henge' in Kent. Recent work has shown that this henge, over 40 metres in diameter, enclosed a central mound (with a wooden structure, perhaps not unlike the stone 'cove' at Avebury), which was, in turn, over part of a Neolithic settlement. Excavation has revealed one of the largest collections (several thousand pieces) in south-east England, of 'grooved ware' pottery, dating from about 2600BC. More than twenty thousand struck flints have also been found. It is also clear that the site remained of significance for a very long time, with more than fifty burials of Anglo-Saxon date already having been found in the area around the henge. For more detailed information see the article on page 10 and 11.

With funds from other sources running out, the KAS Fieldwork Committee has agreed to support one final two-week period to provide an opportunity for members to work on this unique site. This session will run from 22 May to 4 June this year, and will be supervised by Keith Parfitt and other staff from the Canterbury Archaeological Trust. Part of the excavation will focus on the ditch terminals and area around the henge where votive deposits might be expected. There will be the opportunity for the most active members to participate in some serious digging and for the more genteel to assist in finds preparation and recording.

There will not be any charge for participation in the dig, simply a registration fee of £10 to cover administrative expenses, insurance etc.

It is expected that a maximum of 15 places will be available on site at any time and places will be allocated to those registering an interest on a 'first come, first served' basis. It will be possible for members to attend for the whole two-week period or just one week (or even just the weekends). If you would like to take up this unique opportunity to work on such an important site, you should register your interest as soon as possible. In the first instance please email Mike Howard at mike.howard3@tesco.net or ring Mike on 01622 686972, or ring Chris Pout on 01227 860207.

FIELDWORK COMMITTEE

During the winter the Fieldwork Committee has supported the KAS History and Archaeology Show and the Metal Detectorist Conservation Day. Both these events, which took place in Maidstone Museum, received good attendance from the public and fee-paying metal detectorists on their day.

Ringlemere has been the site of most interest, with some fine artefacts found by Keith Parfitt and his band of volunteers at this most exposed of Kentish locations. For further details see the article on pages 10 & 11. The first draft report on the site, including the gold cup, has gone to the British Museum and should be published for the October Bronze Age show in Dover.

Reports on the Abbey Farm, Minster excavation are being finalised and prepared for print, including the final text for Building Four in this year's *Archaeologia*

Cantiana, and for Building Six, which is in the final stages for publishing. To date there are 225 boxes of wall plaster catalogued by context, and 220 still to be catalogued. Altogether there are in the region of 7000 pieces of plaster.

Excavations for 2006 include the expected two week dig at Ringlemere at the end of May (details on this page), the continuation of the East Farleigh Roman Villa excavation starting after Easter (contact Albert Daniels, tel 07966 172807 if interested), and the Lenham Archaeological Groups excavation of a possible Medieval Manor just outside the village during the weekend 22 to 24 April (contact Lesley Feakes, tel 01622 858837 or email lmfeakes@tiscali.co.uk).

Mike Howard (Sec)

Archaeologia Cantiana For Sale

A run from 1980 to 2005, including Memorial volumes for 1993 and 2001, plus two volumes for 1984, 1988 and 1993, a total of 30 volumes altogether. Price £125.00. Also available, 1927, 1935, 1953, 1964, 1972, 1976, 1977 and 1978 at a cost of £4.00 each.

Please contact 01732 463659
or email
hengistthegnome@hotmail.com and
mark the subject as 'Arch Cants'.

RINGLEMERE 2005

In 2005 the sixth excavation on the Bronze Age barrow site at Ringlemere, near Sandwich, took place. It was here that the now famous Bronze Age gold cup had been discovered by Cliff Bradshaw in 2001. The new excavation, Trench 6, was funded by the British Museum, the British Academy and a generous donation from Cliff Bradshaw. Supervisors from Canterbury Archaeological Trust led the team and were joined by staff from the British Museum during October, under Dr Stuart Needham. Much of the digging was carried out by volunteers, notably from Dover Archaeological Group, several other local societies and the Archaeology Departments of various Universities. Regular reports on progress again appeared in the ever-popular Ringlemere Director's Diary (see www.canterburytrust.co.uk).

Trench 6 was located in the south-western sector of the barrow, with two

extensions to investigate further segments of the enclosing barrow ditch. Overall, the excavation lasted considerably longer than planned due to the unexpected discovery of a large number of important features, including Anglo-Saxon graves and 125 pre-barrow, Neolithic features, all of which required careful investigation. On site, the jokes about "being here until Christmas" became less and less amusing as the weeks rolled by and on a cold, wet New Years Day seemed decidedly silly! The investigations were finally completed in the middle of March 2006, with some highly important results.

The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery

A few Anglo-Saxon graves had been discovered in 2004 but many more were discovered this season. Over 40 burials were excavated. Most were inhumations, but there were also several cremations.



ABOVE: *Large grooved ware sherd.*
BELOW: *Ringlemere diggers hard at work.*



THE DIG THAT REFUSED TO END

From the grave-goods, the bulk seem to be of fifth century date. Objects recovered included glass vessels, beads, brooches, silver rings and pins, buckles and various iron objects. Some exceptionally important graves appear to be represented. All the grave finds have been sent to the British Museum, where they have been stabilized, pending more detailed examination.

The Bronze Age Barrow

Another large portion of the turf core of the prehistoric barrow was examined. A very substantial collection of prehistoric pottery and flintwork was recovered. The great bulk of this material, however, appears to be derived from pre-barrow occupation on the site (see below).

Two sections across the 5-6 metre-wide ring-ditch enclosing the barrow mound were cut. Excavation showed that the ditch was almost two metres deep, but

as in previous seasons, it contained comparatively few finds. The ditch seems to have been completely silted and invisible by the Iron Age-Roman period.

The Neolithic Grooved Ware settlement

Preserved below the barrow mound was a buried soil and sealed below it were about 125 cut-features, in the form of variously sized hollows, pits, post-holes and two sub-rectangular hearths. Collectively, these remains provide clear evidence for occupation on the site prior to the erection of the barrow mound. Associated Grooved Ware pottery shows this occupation occurred during the late Neolithic period.

Trench 7

Since annual ploughing continues to erode the site, a seventh and final season of excavation at Ringlemere is now being

planned for the early summer of 2006. It is intended that this will investigate the last portion of the remaining barrow mound and the entrance on the north side of the enclosure, where it is hoped that some significant structures and/or deposits may be discovered. The KAS is helping to sponsor the work this year and all volunteers will be very welcome (see page 9 of the Newsletter).

**Readers will also be interested to know that the Ringlemere gold cup will be on display at Dover Museum towards the end of the year.

*Keith Parfitt, Canterbury Archaeological Trust
Stuart Needham,
Dept of Prehistory and Europe,
British Museum*

BELOW: Pre-barrow features.



SHORNE WOODS HERITAGE PROJECT

Shorne Woods Country Park, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty between Rochester and Gravesend, is one of the most widely-used amenities that Kent County Council own. Many visitors arrive each year to enjoy walking, cycling or fishing, to follow marked trails or simply explore the ancient woodland, meadows and wetland. A new state-of-the-art, self-sustainable visitor centre is due to open this summer, housing a café and educational resources.

A recent Heritage Lottery Fund grant has been awarded to the Park, enabling investigation, conservation and interpretation of the historic environment. A Community Archaeological Officer has been appointed to co-ordinate work on the archaeological features within the varied landscape. Your Newsletter editor was delighted to have been offered this role.

Shorne contains archaeology of many periods, from Mesolithic flint scatters to the remains of the modern clay extraction industry which shaped the contours of some of the Park. The medieval Randall Manor, likely the original seat of the de Cobhams, lies hidden in the woods, its fishponds gracefully dipping alongside the house platform. On the high heathland, looking north to the Thames and south to the Medway, is a probable Bronze Age barrow, perhaps re-used as the footings for a medieval post mill belonging to the Manor. Remnants of World War II military structures cluster together, the sound of passing traffic on the A2 echoing in the bunkers, whilst the route of the former carriage drive from Cobham Hall resounds with the chatter of walkers. All these, and other features, will be investigated.

Our aim is to involve as many local people as possible in the project. Over the coming months contact will be made with history and archaeology groups, schools, social clubs, children's clubs; anyone that might enjoy either practical experience 'on the ground', or research into the various archaeological elements, is very welcome. The eventual interpretation of the archaeology, on boards and in leaflets, will add an extra dimension to visitor's enjoyment of the Park, providing new opportunities for access and education.

The Park area is to be widely extended during 2007, when new land will be opened to the public with rides and footpaths extending throughout, also linking the Park to nearby Cobham Park, Ashenbank Wood, Jeskyns Farm and Ranscombe Farm.

During National Archaeology Week, 15th – 23rd July, some excavation of Randall Manor will take place, and participation by interested local groups or individuals will be encouraged. The Park will also host other activities on Saturday 22nd July, based around a medieval theme; living history, 'make and do' activities for families, artefacts for handling and guided walks of the archaeology.

For more information contact Lyn Palmer on 01622 696934 or Shorne Wood Country Park on 01424 823800.



ABOVE: *World War II bunker*

BELOW: *Volunteers hand-clearing rhododendron on archaeological features.*



Dear Editor

Cattle droving in the early nineteenth century.

P J Ovenden in his article (issue no.67, Winter 2005/6), refers to a late 'Roman' road from Wrotham on the Pilgrims Way (North Downs Ridgeway) to Tunbridge Wells and beyond and quotes I D Margery in *Roman Ways of the Weald* as his source.

Although we have evidence of a Roman cemetery just north of Borough Green railway station, there is nothing to suggest a Roman road in the vicinity of the village and Margery does not mention it. It is true that there were contemporary trackways, including the North Downs ridgeway, which will have come through Wrotham, but no indication that they were Roman.

In our Society's booklet *Farming in Wrotham through the Ages* (July 2004), reference is made to Dr D A Baker's treatise *Agricultural Prices, Production and Marketing with special reference to the Hop Industry of North East Kent 1680 – 1760* (1976), and the importance of droving and the annual migration of cattle. No ancient drove roads have been discovered in Kent and it is apparent that the Welsh drovers used the main roads – for example the road from London which passed through Lewisham, Sidcup and Wrotham en route to Maidstone and Ashford.

Clive Thomas
Wrotham Historical Society

Dear Editor

Following the discovery of the Plough Inn, Sittingbourne, artefacts (issue no. 64, Spring 2005), I am planning to carry out a study and survey of period clothing and other artefacts that have been found in Kent houses, either hidden under floors or in wall spaces, fireplaces etc. Many museums hold such items and I would very much like to hear from them, as well as from private householders that may have come across such things during renovations and rebuilding work. My contact details appear below.

So little is known of this curious social phenomenon that such a study and survey would reveal not just new artefacts, but discover patterns of deposition, both chronologically and typologically, and may offer

insights as to why particular garments feature more than others. Kent is home to the largest cache yet discovered in England and I am learning almost daily of other local finds. Yet despite the number of known artefacts we still do not have any firm understanding of the reason and thought behind this surprisingly widespread cultural fad. Several periods of deposition can be found in one house or even wall space, which indicates that all involved had some understanding of the practice at least, something we seem to have lost completely today. Part of the study will also include the creation of a dedicated website to encourage further study and allow new artefacts to be recorded as they are found. This will provide an online database for finds, fully searchable by all interested parties.

I am hoping to make this study and survey the basis for my MA and I would appreciate it if any of your readers can help. No find is too small and all are relevant. The artefacts can be clothes, hats, shoes, leather straps, tools, books and letters, shoes, anything that appears where it shouldn't in a house or outbuilding. I am also not adverse to any offers of funding for this work, and would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to know more about the project, or myself, with a view to financial support.

Alan Abbey
ajabbey@blueyonder.co.uk
01795 553608

Dear Editor

The recent Time Team visit to Eastry surprised me in one respect. During the programme there was not a single mention of the underground caves that some forty to fifty years ago were open to the public.

I realise that the caves related to a different era from the Time Team research, but I would still have expected at least a passing reference.

Can anybody tell me what is the current position of the caves, both as to accessibility and understanding of their significance?

Brian P Turner
Whitstable

GRAVESEND PUBLICATION AND ARCHIVE

The Gravesend Historical Society still has copies available of its well-illustrated booklet 'Vagniacis', about the Romano-British religious centre at Springhead. (Price is £4.25, including postage. Cheque or postal order payable to Gravesend Historical Society).

The Society is building up a photographic archive of the various archaeological investigations which have taken place over the years at Springhead and the Ebbsfleet Valley. Images of the excavations and artefacts, as well as 'social' views, are being collected. Many photographs were taken by visitors during open days or by partici-

pants in the excavations. The Society would be grateful for the loan or donation of any photographs or negatives in the possession of readers or others. Anything received would be carefully looked after, with loans returned after copying, and postage refunded.

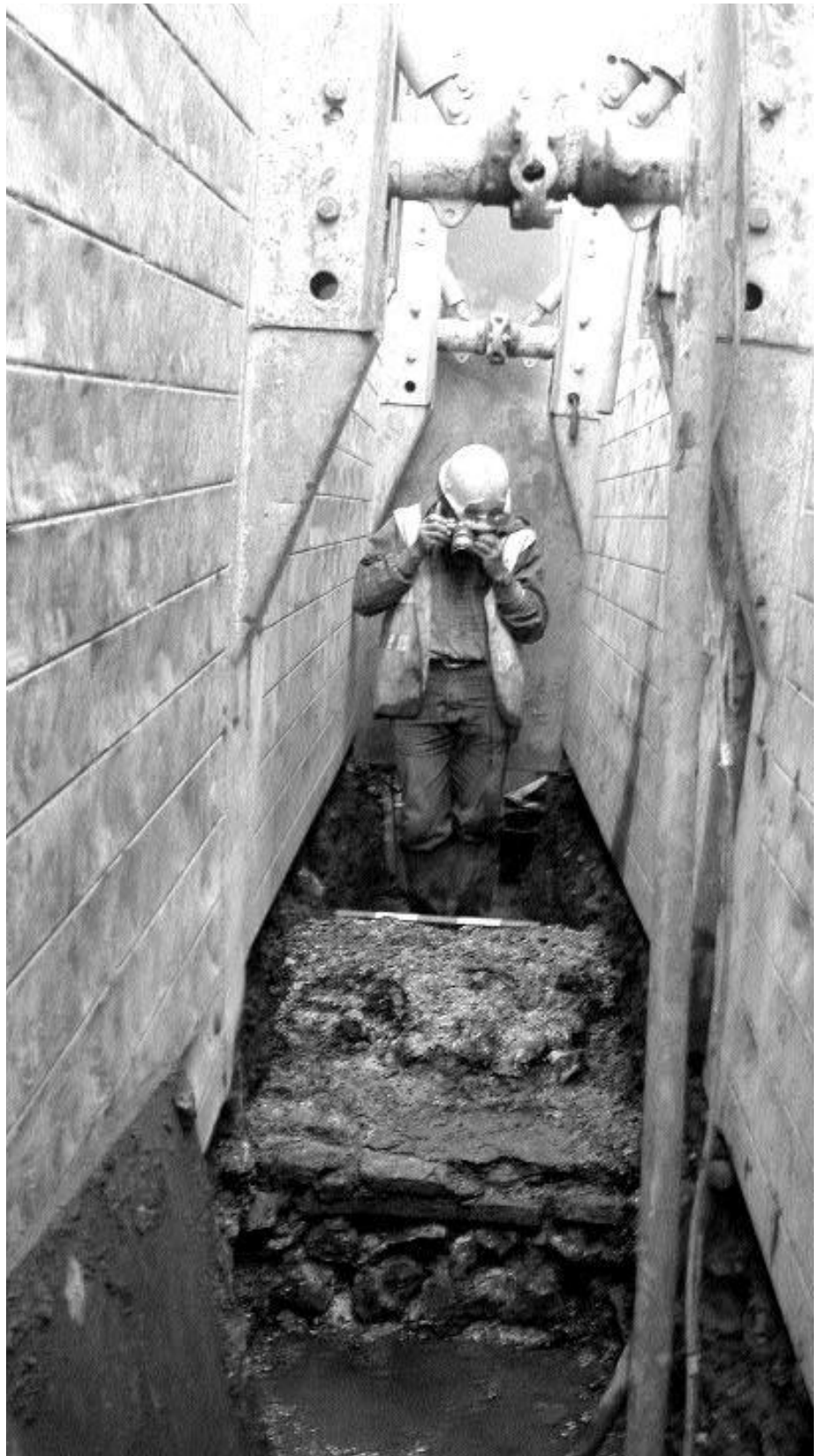
The address for both requests for the book and for the sending of any images for the archive is:
Victor Smith,
65 Stonebridge Road,
Northfleet, Kent DA11 9BA.

ST MILDRED'S TAN

Since co-writing a desk assessment in 1999, St Mildred's Tannery (TR 145577) has taken up more of my time than can possibly be healthy, and it's not over yet. It was soon clear that large scale excavation was neither feasible nor necessary. Most of the 3.5 hectare site lies just west of the intramural branch of the Great Stour, where the water table is very high: perfect for organic remains but difficult and expensive to excavate, even in areas cleared of tanning waste, and no basements or underground car parks are being built. Preservation *in situ* has been preferred, with engineers and architects designing around and above the archaeology where possible and minimising impact where not.

Between earlier excavations, evaluation trenching, augering, probing, geophysics and ongoing watching briefs on de-contamination and construction work, we can show much of the site west of the river was built on by the Romans, with several properties lining Watling Street and side roads. A possible watermill projected into the river upstream, forcing the Stour to run faster and cut deeper. This may not have pleased the residents overmuch as Watling Street probably crossed it at a ford (through traffic would have taken a different route, via Westgate). The final phase of a building excavated in 1987 was apparently razed in the late third century, perhaps because downstream riverside developments were causing flooding. Most of the surrounding area was also probably abandoned, though one large (public?) building, with walls over a metre wide and solid oak piles over half a metre square, might have continued in use. Demolition material may have found its way into the town wall, built about the same time, crossing the site's southern-western end.

Six acres, granted as a refuge to the nuns of Lyminge in 804, were bounded by the river to one side and the wall to the other. The third side of the plot probably ran along Watling Street: a ditch was cut along its crest where the road was still on dry land and a brushwood trackway continued its line across the marshland which had developed closer to the river. This trackway, like a later one on another line, led to an island of drier ground formed by the oak-piled Roman building: two mid-Saxon bronze pins were recovered from the final surface within its walls. Another brushwood trackway, which continued across a wide watercourse as a stilted causeway, may relate to patchy early medieval reoccupation of the



TANNERY, CANTERBURY



LEFT:
The wall of the large Roman building revealed in a new sewer trench.

ABOVE:
'Under starters orders.' Team GSB with GPR and resistivity rigs.

site but, from the thirteenth century, the neighbouring Franciscan Friary gradually turned the land west of the river into a huge farm, providing food for the city's poor. Though a few small buildings have been identified, this area remained open until the Tannery expanded from its origins on Stour Street in the mid-nineteenth century.

Sincere thanks are due of course to the developers, Bellway Homes, and their various contractors and consultants, but most especially to the gallant field crew contending with foul weather, flooding trenches and contaminated ground: may your respirators never leak.

*Simon Pratt
Canterbury Archaeological Trust*

www.kentarchaeology.ac

The online publishing site of the Kent Archaeological Society



Hadlow: Life, Land & People in a Wealden Parish 1460 - 1600

A hitherto unknown survey of Hadlow manor in 1460 turned up out of the blue in 2002, and this book, edited by Joan Thirsk and four co-authors, describes what it tells us about farms, getting a living, lords and their management of the manor, along with the Latin text and an English translation. It is full of maps, plans, and illustrations.

available for download now!

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STRAWBERRY WOOD CULVERT PROJECT

Can you help shed some light on this fine stone structure over a chalybeate stream in Strawberry Wood, south of Benenden? The site is on private land but is crossed by what is now the High Weald Landscape Trail and walkers along the route may have noticed an impressive culvert bridging the stream.



Now sadly being destroyed by spates of heavy floodwaters, efforts are underway by local volunteers to record and preserve this striking feature before it is lost. It has been suggested that it may be an example of what was once a more common structure in The Weald and local people are keen to learn more about it.

The culvert is around 5.2m long, 0.8m high and 1.9m wide and carries the remains of a metalled track. The sides are built in a close-fitting drystone wall technique and the builders were careful to shape the stones, giving them flat sides to keep the inner sides even. The walls are topped by a row of 6 to 9 very large sandstone lintels, 0.2m thick, which are themselves covered by a clay and rubble capping.

The size and structure of the culvert, coupled with the presence of the metalled road, suggests it was built to support heavy cart-



loads, making an association with the Wealden iron industry tempting. Cindery slag has been found on the surface nearby and a pond bay is known a little further downstream. No date has yet been ascribed to the culvert although early maps suggest the road that crosses it had likely fallen out of use by the late eighteenth century and that it was not re-established.

Depressions in the surrounding woodland may attest to ironstone quarrying and a nearby outcrop of Ashdown Beds sandstone could be the source of the building material for the culvert.

Over the last few years, floodwaters have begun to severely damage the culvert, washing debris into it and dislodging many of the stones. A significant part of the overlying clay has been scoured out and despite mitigation efforts, there are worries that it may not survive another winter.

Recording of the surviving culvert, including archaeological intervention, is proposed but the volunteers are appealing for help and advice from any KAS members who may have information regarding such structures. Conservation measures involving sympathetic repair work are then intended. Any reader who has seen a similar culvert elsewhere or who has experience in engineering, building with stone, archaeological survey or conservation work would be very welcome to join the project, to help out in a programme of work proposed for the summer.

Ultimately, it is hoped to preserve the culvert and present it as a feature for walkers and local people to enjoy. The site is located at NGR TQ 81302 31866 and information or expressions of interest should be directed in the first instance to Ernie Pollard, who can be emailed at ernie@pollardweb.com.



CLOCKWISEFROMTOPLEFT.

Back end of the culvert - a chink of daylight reveals the entrance. The post is a recent repair.

Remains of the track that the culvert carries, scored away by floods.

Back end showing some of the loosened stones.

Copy deadline for the next issue in July is Thursday June 1st.

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.

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