

KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

newsletter

Issue number 74

Autumn 2007

RAMSGATE'S ROMAN HERITAGE

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GROUPS
LINED
ANCIENT
TRACKWAYS

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RAMSGATE'S ROMAN HERITAGE

In 1800 Edward Hasted wrote:

'.. The ville and town of Ramsgate... the inhabitants, of which... are fond of having it famous for its antiquity ... have fancied the name of it to have been derived from Romans gate, that is, from its being used as a port, or landing place, by the Romans; but.... it may well be doubted, whether during the time of the Romans frequenting this island, there was here any way or gate at all to the sea...no Roman coins & c. have been known ever to have been found here... might... a station [have existed] in this island.'

At a meeting of the Numismatic society in May 1841 a Captain Martin exhibited Roman coins and plans of features discovered during the excavation for the construction of a patent slipway. The coins were found 'among the piling of an ancient jetty' which Captain Martin asserted was of Roman date.

As the town expanded in the 19th and early 20th century, the East and West Cliffs of Ramsgate frequently provided antiquarians with tantalising glimpses of late Iron Age and Roman remains. In 1878 Robert Hicks M.R.C.S. published a lithograph of vessels and objects he had collected from archaeological features he had examined on the East

and West Cliffs. All were encountered during the construction of houses in the growing town and Hicks lamented that:

'it seems always necessary to build a house in order to discover them; for whenever we have made an attempt by trenching, in a likely spot, we always draw the covers blank'

A sentiment many archaeologists past and present will have sympathy with!

The descriptions of the circumstances of discovery of these features made by Hicks reveal his diligence. Careful observations were made of the location of archaeological features and the vessels contained in them providing a record of three groups of cremations of Late Iron Age and Roman date and a single Roman inhumation with nails from a coffin all within a radius of two hundred yards on the West Cliff. Hicks also recorded at least four inhumations



ABOVE & BELOW: *Virtually intact pottery vessels in a woman's grave*



and several cremation groups on the East Cliff near the Granville hotel.

Two further burials on the West Cliff are reported by Cotton, encountered during building works in the grounds of St. Augustine's college in the later 19th century and in 1902 C. H. Woodruff published a report of the discovery of a disturbed grave in *Archaeologia Cantiana* (Payne 1902). This grave, located further to the west of Hick's discoveries but still on the West Cliff, was cut three feet into the chalk and apparently originally contained a large amphora in which had been placed four pottery vessels, a vessel of lead and one of bronze shaped like a bucket with a ring soldered to its base.

The finds encountered in the excavation of a chalk pit in the late 1870's at the northern end of the High Street, were reported by James T. Hillier in the 1889 edition of *Archaeologia Cantiana*. His description of pits, ditches and a well in what he called a 'British Village' include many finds of Roman date including coins, pottery, animal bone, and a bronze vessel.

Between 1922 and 1923 the development of the Royal Esplanade area on the West Cliff by the Borough of Ramsgate produced several Late Iron Age and Early Roman finds, most probably originating in cremation or inhumation groups. Excavations in this area by the Trust for Thanet Archaeology in 2002 discovered a curving ditch of Roman date and other minor features of the same period.

A skeleton with a poppy head beaker was unearthed in the grounds of the National Sunlight Laundry in Willsons Road on the West Cliff at Ramsgate, possibly during the excavation of an air raid shelter in 1939. Recent development of the site produced no further burials but the area had been extensively terraced in the 19th century.

It had been clear since the late 19th century that Ramsgate was the site of an extensive Roman settlement of some size but there have been few opportunities to explore the central area further because of the extent of early suburban development.

In recent years there has been an increased level of development in Ramsgate often exposing areas of the town long built over to scrutiny by archaeologists.

Excavations carried out during August on a small development site on the West Cliff has afforded the Trust the first opportunity to investigate the nature of the burials occurring in this area using modern excavation techniques.

Five inhumations and a small pit; which may have contained an infant burial, were encountered on the site. All the graves were aligned approximately northeast-southwest. Previous erosion of the site through agricultural processes and subsequent building and demolition had truncated the graves to a depth of less than half a metre and two in particular only survived to 10 centimetres deep. Bone preservation was very poor and it is likely they will render limited information. All of the graves showed evidence for deposition of grave goods, mostly consisting of fragmentary pottery vessels. Each of the skeletons was buried within a coffin or coffin-like structure as nails were present around the inside edge of the graves.

One grave provided a virtually intact assemblage of pottery vessels, placed on a board at the end of the grave, over the feet of the female occu-

pany. The vessels were accompanied by a copper alloy bracelet formed by twisted wire strands and a further single strand of copper alloy wire with two knots, which may have been used to seal a fabric pouch. A copper alloy bracelet was around the left wrist of the female skeleton and she may have been wearing shoes, as hobnails were found beneath the pottery vessels at the foot of the grave although none of the foot bones survived.

It is clear from the discoveries made by the antiquarian pioneers that they were recording the gradual destruction of funerary groups dating from the Later Iron Age to the Roman period. The location of these groups suggests that they once lined the ancient trackways that intersected at the three valleys forming the sea gate at Ramsgate.

The plotting of the discoveries made by the antiquarians described above and the recent excavation by the Trust, along with other records on the Thanet Sites and Monument register's GIS database is now

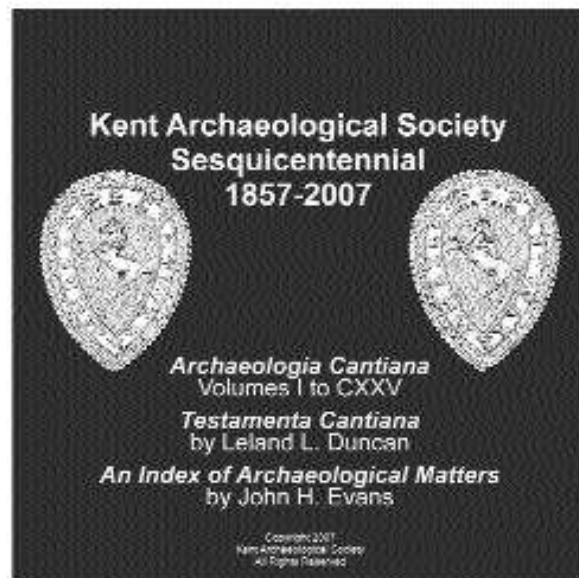
putting Roman Ramsgate firmly back on the map. Whatever the true etymology of the place name Ramsgate, Hasted would perhaps not have been so sceptical if he had known what we do now of Roman Ramsgate.

*Ges Moody and Emma Boast
Trust for Thanet Archaeology.*

References

- Hasted, E. 1800. *The History and Topographic Survey of the County of Kent*. Volume X. p.385.
Hicks, R. 1878. *Roman Remains found at Ramsgate*. *Archaeologia Cantiana*. Volume XII p.14-18.
Hillier, J. T. 1889. *A British Village at Ramsgate*. *Archaeologia Cantiana* Volume XVIII p. 1-4.
Payne, G. 1902. *Researches and Discoveries in Kent 1900 - 1901*. *Archaeologia Cantiana*. Volume XXV p.lix-lxxii.

ARCHAEOLOGIA CANTIANA DVD



- Celebrate the KAS Sesquicentennial with the Sesquicentennial DVD containing volumes I-CXXV of *Archaeologia Cantiana* at the amazingly low cost of £30 for individual members and £75 for institutional members plus £1 postage and packaging.

- To order your copy, send a cheque, payable to Kent Archaeological Society to James M. Gibson, 27 Pine Grove, Maidstone, Kent ME14 2AJ.

KAS LIBRARY ACCESSIONS MARCH-SEPTEMBER 2007

Bygone Kent Vol 28 no 2, 3, 4.
 Journal of the English Place Name Society. Vol 38 2006.
 Monumental Brass Society Transactions Vol xvii p3 2006.
 Norfolk Archaeology Vol 155
 KAR no167.
Herne Bay Pier, Harold Gough.
Milton Church (Milton Regis) John Clancy.
 Community and Disunity. Civil War 1642-1649 Jacqueline Eales.
 Kent on Film. Images of Kent 1895-1965. (DVD)
 Kent Records Vol 3 p10, 4 p5.
 Archaeologia Cambrensis Vol 154.
 Post Medieval Archaeology Vol 40 p2.
 Bonner Jahrbuch Band 204.
 Kent Family History Journal Vol 11 no 10, no11.

Derbyshire Archaeological Journal Vol 127.
 Archives Vol 29 (Orpington and District Arch. Soc.).
Rosherville Gardens Lynda Smith. Gravesend Hist. Soc.
 Bulletin de l'Institut Archéologique Liegeoise Tome cxiii.
 Canterbury's Archaeology 2005-2006.
 Glaas - E.H. London Region Archaeology 2005-2006
 Friends of Rochester Cathedral Report 2006/7.
 Archaeometry Vol 49 p2.
 Records of Buckinghamshire Vol 47 p1 2007.
 Monumental Brass Society Bulletin 105 May 2007.
History of Lingley in Kent. Anne Clinch.
 Photographic Record of KAS Twysden/Twisdens Portraits.
Cases in the High Court of Chivalry 1634-1640 Harleian Society new series Vol 18 R.Cust and Andrew Hopkin..
Letters from Redgrove Hall - the Bacon family 1340-1746,
 Sussex Record Society Vol I 2007.
 Suffolk Record Society, 50 year and 50th celebration volume.
Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of Kent Vols i and ii. Andrew Richardson.
 Economics and Social Change in Anglo-Saxon Kent Stuart Brooks.
 Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Vol 128.

The South East Research Framework Public Seminar Series

Contribute to the future of our region's past! The SERF public seminars will be held at the Institute of Archaeology, 31-34 Gordon Square, London, on Saturdays from October to December 2007. The meetings will provide an opportunity to discuss what we think is important about the historic environment of south-east England: and also to begin planning new directions for research. The programme will be as follows:

The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic	13/10/07
The Middle Bronze Age – Iron Age	20/10/07
The Roman period	27/10/07
The Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods	03/11/07
Historic rural and urban landscapes	17/11/07
Defence and Maritime Themes	24/11/07
Post-Medieval, Modern and Industrial	01/12/07
The Neolithic and early Bronze Age	08/12/07
Environment and environmental archaeology	15/12/07

No charge will be made for attendance, and tea and coffee will be available at each meeting. Directions to the venue can be downloaded from the Institute of Archaeology website at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology> and further details about each of the seminars will be posted on the SERF website (<http://kent.gov.uk/serf>) as soon as they become available. For more information about either the public meetings or the project generally, don't hesitate to contact us at serf@kent.gov.uk.

MORE GUNPOWDER; NO TREASON, BUT A PLOT FOR VOLUNTEERS

Some months ago, I reported on the Leigh Gunpowder works. Our local historical society had received a grant from the Lottery to help it look into what, at first sight, appeared to be an overgrown wood with some overgrown waterways. Yet the experts of English Heritage thought it might well be a nationally important site and it is clearly proving to be just that. This article is, therefore, very much to seek help from groups and individuals.

Four months ago, with a documentary filmmaker on hand to record our progress throughout the coming year, we ceremoniously cut the barbed wire and started digging – guided by instinct and Paul Bennett, the Director of Canterbury Archaeological Trust.

The site that we are excavating is half a mile long, with about twenty main buildings marked on a large 1916 map. However, virtually all of these buildings were carefully and professionally demolished to their brick foundations at ground level in 1934 when ICI moved their explosive factories to West Scotland. We have a contemporary description which notes with sadness that all the buildings were knocked inwards and then burned, “with young boys being employed to rake through the ashes to find the copper nails”. In spite of the efforts of the young boys, we are still digging up copper nails. However, perhaps the most ironic find – in view of the large number of explosions recorded in local papers during the mid-19th century – is an old clay pipe, almost certainly banned from the works.

I say “almost certainly banned” because there are virtually no papers or documents from any part of the hundred and twenty years of operation. All the ICI historical records were destroyed in the Second World War. We are, therefore, often finding ourselves relying on second-hand sources when we try to interpret what we are uncovering.

In one building we have recently come across a pile of circular brass ends of shotgun cartridges. They have 12 ELEY 12 NOBEL on them. Nobel was the name of the Powder Mill owners in the first half of the 1920s, so it seems likely that the works were packing/making 12 bore cartridges for the firm Eley in this building at this time.

However, we still have a long way to go and would welcome more volunteers – either as a group or as individuals; beginners or experienced diggers/archaeologists. We have one musket expert; a good number of people who have worked on other sites; and recently the Dover Archaeological Society arrived and in four strenuous days completely excavated a double mill: many thanks to everyone. So we can allocate a new building to a group if that provides a challenge!

We meet about three times a fortnight with some weekdays and some weekends. There are sessions at 10.00am - 12.30 pm and 2.00 – 4.30pm, with an excellent pub nearby. We are all finding it great fun.

*Chris Rowley
Chairman, Leigh Historical Society*

For more information please contact
Dr David Hansell
Tel: 01732 354802
email: dphansell@uwclub.net
www.leighhistorical.org.uk



ABOVETOP :Base of mill in eastern half of the building.
ABOVEBOTTOM :Buttressed south wall of the building.



KAS EVENTS

KAS HISTORIC BUILDINGS COMMITTEE HISTORIC BUILDINGS CONFERENCE

Saturday 20 October
Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way, Lenham

Illustrated talks:

Hip to Hearth: an Examination of the Complexities of Buildings Archaeology; Andrew Linklater (Canterbury Archaeological Trust)

The Window of Time: Dating by Detail; Charles Brooking (creator of the Brooking Collection of architectural features)

Tracing the History of Buildings at the Centre for Kentish Studies. Elizabeth Finn (Centre for Kentish Studies)

Followed by a short introduction to Kentish barns and a visit to Lenham Barn.

The day starts at 9.30am for 10am and finishes at 4pm. Tickets are £8 each including refreshments. Payment can be made at the door.

INTRODUCTION TO KAS ORGANISATION, ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

A study morning for new and recently joined members

Saturday 27 October

We are holding a Study Morning in the KAS Library within Maidstone Museum from 10am to 1pm on Saturday 27 October at which Officers and experienced members of the KAS will give presentations designed to familiarise new members with the organisation, activities and resources of the Society. Talks will include a short history of the Society and its present administrative set-up; activities of the various committees and groups; resources of the Library, including the Societies web-sites; artefacts and finds, documentary, manuscript and visual record collections owned by the Society. There is no charge for the event.

New and recently joined Members wishing to attend this meeting should apply to Dr. Frank Panton, tel: 01795 472218, email dr.fh.panton@grove-end-tunstall.fsnet.co.uk.

CHURCHES COMMITTEE STUDY SESSION

Saturday 3 November

The Village Hall, East Peckham

A Study Session is being held entitled 'A Parish Pump Revolution.' The talk, illustrations and role-playing given, or guided by, Dr Andrew Foster of the University of Chichester deal with the local impact of the Reformation and promises to be a novel and lively appraisal of how great issues affected communities.

We meet at 1.45 for 2pm at the Village Hall, where there is ample parking. The charge is £6 per person (including tea and biscuits) and early booking is suggested because numbers are limited. Cheques payable to KAS should be sent to Philip Lawrence at Barnfield, Church Lane, East Peckham, Tonbridge TN12 5JJ by 10 October.

A booking form is included in this Newsletter

The following local pubs serve meals – The Bush, Blackbird and Thrush; The Man of Kent; The Bell.

OTHER EVENTS AROUND KENT

Council for Kentish Archaeology KENT IN THE FRONT LINE

The role of Kent in conflicts through the ages, from the Romans till the World Wars of the last century

Saturday 3 November

Canterbury Christ Church University

Caesar & Claudius Gerald Grainge

Front Line Kent in the Civil Wars, including a presentation of Civil War weapons National Army Museum, Chelsea

Threat, Action & Potential 1900-1919 Major Guy Taylor

The Beleaguered Years of the Second World War Victor Smith

Tickets £4, available from CKA, 7 Sandy Ridge, Borough Green TN15 8HP.

Cheques payable to CKA, with SAE please. More information on 0208 777787 or www.the-cka.fsnet.co.uk.

The CKA Spring conference will be held on **19 April** at Sevenoaks – further details in the January Newsletter.

CBA South East ANNUAL CONFERENCE & AGM

'UNDER THE PLOUGH; THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE TOPSOIL'

Saturday 10 November

Medway Campus of the University of Kent

Registration from 9.30. Refreshments available

Introduction by John Mills, CBA SE Chairman

The South East Research Framework: Project Update Jake Weekes, Heritage Conservation, KCC

Interpreting Lithic Scatters Chris Butler

Field Survey on the Lincolnshire Wolds: characterizing Roman settlement in a downland setting Steve Willis, University of Kent

Fieldwalking: Theory, Method & Practice Jeremy Taylor, University of Leicester

CBA SE AGM - All welcome to attend

The Portable Antiquities Scheme: more than just small finds Liz Andrews-Wilson, FLO, Sussex

Digging Hoards & Scatters; some case studies David Williams, FLO Surrey

Hands Across the Divide: Detectorists and Archaeologists working together Derek Page, Brighton & Hove MD Club

Interpreting Anglo Saxon Metalwork Scatters Laura McLean

The Archaeology of Ploughsoil: Theoretical Overview Christopher Evans, Cambridge University.

Tickets £15 for CBA SE members, £17.50 non-members, available from Steve & Eva Corbett, 4 Ditchling Close, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN23 8LS. Cheques payable to CBA SE please.

Friends of Canterbury Archaeological Trust Talks

Wednesday 21 November

The Kent Archaeological Society - the earlier years Paul Oldham 7pm at Darwin College, University of Kent, Canterbury.

Saturday 26 January 2008

Frank Jenkins Memorial Lecture given by Paul Bennett (Director, CAT) at 6pm at the Old Sessions House, Canterbury Christ Church University, Longport, Canterbury (Joint lecture with the Canterbury Archaeological Society).

Wednesday 27 February

The Work of the KAS Historic Buildings Committee by David Carder (KAS). 7.00 pm. At the Dominican Priory, St Peter's Lane, Canterbury.

Wednesday 26 March

Metal Detecting in Kent by Andrew Richardson (Kent Finds Liaison Officer) at 7pm. Canterbury venue to be announced – ring 01227 462062 or 450426.

Talks are all £2 for Friends of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust and £3 for non-members.



FCAT have also arranged Canterbury Festival Walks throughout the festival (14 - 27 October). Information available from the festival website or Canterbury Bookings (01227 378100).



Tenterden & District Local History Society Town Tours

Why not visit the beautiful Wealden town of Tenterden and have a guided tour which highlights some of the most interesting buildings in the town?
For further information call Jean Sugden on 01580 765581.



**Centre for Kentish Studies
Local History Talks 2007-2008**

The Centre for Kentish Studies continues to present a joint programme of talks together with Maidstone Library and Maidstone Museum and Bentriff Art Gallery, under the title of "Time Talks". For more information about the talks being held at the Library and the Museum, please see the leaflet for the whole programme or contact Maidstone Museum on 01622 602838 or Maidstone Library on 01622 701943 for more details.

**Monday 12 November at 6.30pm
Hadlow Manorial Survey by Joan Thirsk**

A recently discovered survey, dated 1460, of the manor of Hadlow, next door to Tonbridge, sheds light on its farms alongside the Medway, its hunting park and inhabitants, and opens up a fresh view of life on this northern edge of the Weald.

**Monday 14 January 2008 at 6.30pm
Historic Kent Films by Frank Gray**

Dr Frank Gray, Director of the Screen Archive South East will show a selection of films from the archive that reflect the changing nature of life and work in Kent over the last century.

**Monday 18 February at 6.30pm
"What I am I want you to tell me": the 'telling' relationship of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf by Lyndall Gordon**

2008 is the 80th anniversary of Orlando, the novel Virginia Woolf based on Vita Sackville-West and Knole. In Vita's amorous relationship with Virginia Woolf, reciprocal imaginative play and 'telling' were, I want to suggest, paramount. There will also be a book-signing at this event. All talks £3.00 each. Please make cheques payable to Kent County Council and send to The Centre for Kentish Studies, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XQ, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.



**Tonbridge Historical Society
Thursday 25 October 7.45pm**

Lady Anne Clifford & Knole Peter Milton Thompson

Saturday 17 November 2.30pm

Suffragettes – National & Local Elizabeth Crawford & Dr Anne Logan
Two presentations will be given with a tea interval. Booking necessary – ring 01732 838698 or email s.broomfield@dial.pipex.com.

Thursday 20 December 7.45pm

Christmas Antiques Ian White

Thursday 21 February 2008 7.45pm

Archaeology of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link – Part 2 Helen Glass

Thursday 10 April 7.30pm

AGM followed by *The British Slave Trade & Abolition* David Killingray

The Lady Penelope – the lost tale of love and politics in the court of Elizabeth I

30 November at 2pm

Kippington Church Centre, Sevenoaks

Organised by Friends of Knole. Talk by author Sally Varlow on the research and findings within her book (featured in New Books).

Tickets £3.50, including refreshments, pay on the door.



Egyptology Courses

With Frances Williams M.A., M.I.F.A.

Cairo to Aswan: a journey down the Nile

6 week course - £50

Canterbury 2- 4pm on Tuesdays, from 23 October

Tonbridge 11am – 1pm on Thursdays, from 25 October

Reading Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphs on Museum Collection Artefacts

6 week course - £50

Canterbury 7-9pm on Tuesdays, from 23 October

Tonbridge 2-4pm on Thursdays, from 25 October

University of Kent dayschool: The Tomb of Tutankhamun

Tonbridge, Saturday 10 November

Egypt & the East Mediterranean – Egypt's New Kingdom Age of Empire

12 week course from January 2008

Canterbury – days to be advised

Tonbridge, 2-4pm on Thursdays

University of Kent dayschool: Tutankhamun III: Egypt's Warrior King

Canterbury, Saturday 15 March

Study Tours to Egypt

1) the Western desert: Cairo-Baharya-Farafra-Dakleh-Kharga-Luxor

2) the Archaeology of Luxor – exploring a sacred landscape

More details available from fwpetiset@hotmail.com or 01892 723013.
For University of Kent dayschools contact v.j.woolnough@kent.ac.uk.



Crayford Manor House Historical & Archaeological Society Talks

10 November

Mrs Beeton's Victorian Christmas Toni Mount

8 December (buffet also – contact number for details below)

Kent Characters – Wacky, Weird and Wonderful Chris McCooley

12 January 2008

Plays and Players in Medieval Kent James Gibson

9 February

Lord Mayors of London John Halligan

8 March

The History of John Lewis and Waitrose A speaker from Waitrose

12 April

Behind the Scenes at the National Trust Patty Judge

All meetings are held at the Baker Trust Hall, Maxim Road, Crayford at 7pm for 7.30pm. Non members of CMHHAS are welcome to attend - £2 each. Enquiries to Mrs J Hear-Gillham on 01322 551279.

The Society also has a summer excursion programme – please contact Mr Davies on 01322 525335.

YOU AND YOUR SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

At the Annual General Meeting in May it was agreed that the subscriptions are to be increased from January 2008 – the first increase since 2000 and still wonderful value compared with several other county societies.

The new rates are as follows: Ordinary membership £25; Joint membership £30; Affiliated Societies £25. There is no alteration to those claiming the under 21 rate or the reduced rate if you have been a member for more than 10 years and over state pension age.

If you pay by banker's order please do not contact your bank – you should have already received a new form to complete. Please return to me in the stamped addressed envelope as soon as possible. Please also check your bank statement in January/February to make sure that the correct payment has gone through and that your bank is not paying twice (or even monthly!).

I shall be sending out the usual renewal letter to those of you who prefer to pay by cheque in early December.

You will see from the list of new members that there are three from overseas – please note that membership is open to anyone wherever they live!

Shiela Broomfield

The address for all correspondence relating to membership is – Mrs Shiela Broomfield, KAS Membership, 8 Woodview Crescent, Hildenborough, Tonbridge TN11 9HD.

Tel: 01732 838698, email: membership@kentarchaeology.org.uk or s.broomfield@dial.pipex.com.

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

JOINT MEMBERS

Crawford, Mr C S, and Mrs, Gillingham, Kent

Dickson, Mr J T, and Mrs, Wrotham Heath, Sevenoaks, Kent

Milton, Mr A, and Mrs, Canterbury, Kent

ORDINARY MEMBERS

Austen-White, Mrs J,	Maidstone, Kent
Bennett, Mr J,	Amarillo, Texas, USA
Bird, Mr T,	Wateringbury, Maidstone, Kent
Britchfield, Mr D J,	Wouldham, Rochester, Kent
Chadwick, Mr T,	Ashford, Kent
Fischer, Mr H,	J.B. Hoeilaart, Belgium
Hitchman, Mrs V,	Orpington, Kent
Hurste, Mrs E A,	Dunkirk, Faversham, Kent
Marshall, Dr K C,	Greenford, Middlesex
Palmer, Ms E,	Messinias, Greece
Sperlinger, Dr D,	Lee, London

WE NEED A NEW TREASURER

The Society will have to elect a new Hon. Treasurer at its AGM next May as Robin Thomas will not seek re-election. Ideally a candidate will be identified well before then so that he or she has a few months of tuition, rather than be thrown in at the deep end.

At the moment we do not know of

anyone interested in the office and it is very important that a candidate is nominated before the AGM as the Society cannot operate without a treasurer. If you have suitable experience please give consideration to volunteering for this important post which includes membership of the Council.

If you are interested in taking this position or would like more information about it, then please contact Robin Thomas on 0207 680 8100, email abchurchyard1@btinternet.com or the Hon. General Secretary, Andrew Moffat, on (01474) 822280, email secretary@kentarchaeology.org.uk.

COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT

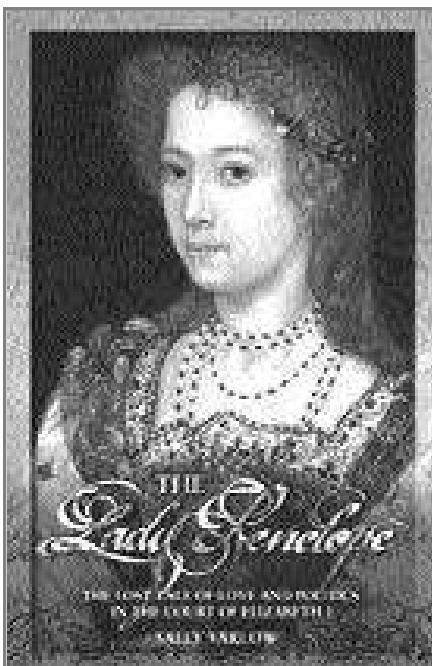
NEW BOOKS

**The Lady Penelope:
The Lost Tale of Love and Politics in the
Court of Elizabeth I by Sally Varlow
André Deutsch £18.99**

It is 400 years since the death of Penelope Devereux, the brightest star who ever shone at the Court of Queen Elizabeth I.

Forced into marriage with the very rich Lord Rich at the age of 18, when she had just become a maid to her godmother, the queen, Penelope Devereux was the most beautiful woman of her generation and the muse of countless poets and musicians. With her lover, Lord Mountjoy, greatest of all Elizabethan generals, she had five children. She and her brother, the Earl of Essex, Elizabeth's favourite, planned a coup against the government; and when Essex was executed, Penelope walked free, her part in the plot quietly buried. Yet her story ended in tragedy: she died in disgrace, a widow, outcast from court and stripped of her titles. Since then she has been remembered, if at all, simply as "Stella", the heroine of Sir Philip Sidney's sonnets. Now the full story of her politicking and her royal ancestry is revealed.

The author has discovered new evidence that Penelope was a direct descendant of Henry VIII. Penelope's grandmother was the love-child of the king and Mary Boleyn, subject of *The Other Boleyn*



Girl, starring Scarlett Johansson and Kristin Scott Thomas.

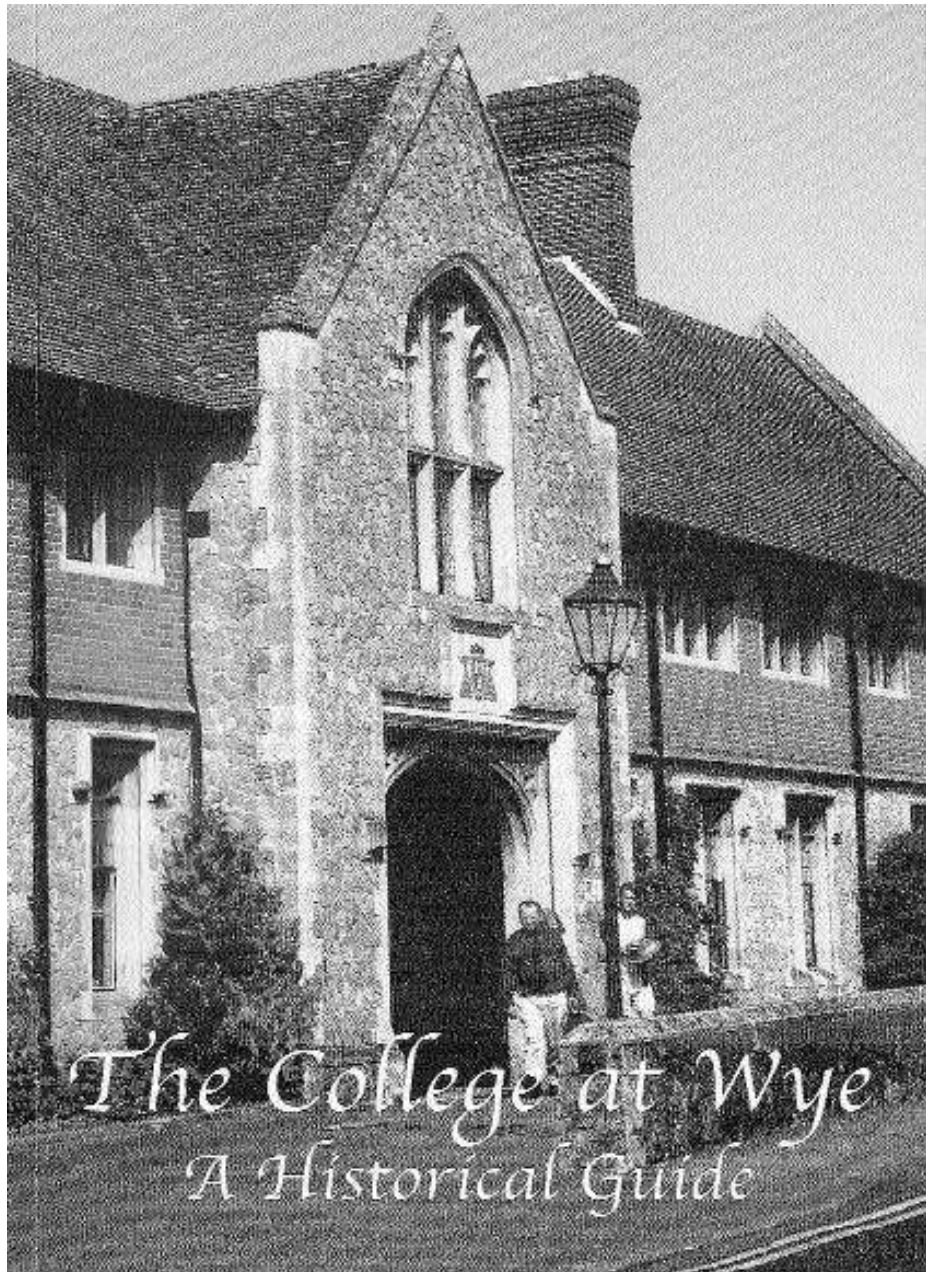
Sally Varlow will be talking about her research and the book at Sevenoaks on 30 November; further details on the What's On pages.

**The College at Wye – A Historical Guide
by Paul Burnham.
ISBN 0 9546499 0 9**

A new history and guide to the older buildings published by the Wye Historical Society. This 74 page book, illustrated in

colour throughout and including many previously unpublished pictures, comprises a concise history of the College from 1447 to 2007 and a 'walk round' guide to the older buildings. Written with the help of Donald Sykes, its former Estates Bursar, it will be treasured by all who have been connected with the College.

Copies may be obtained from the Wye Historical Society, c/o Dr Paul Burnham, 24 Chequers park, Wye, Ashford TN25 5BB. Cost is £6.00, including p&p. Cheques should be made payable to 'Wye Historical Society' please.



KAS CHURCHES VISIT TO MAIDSTONE

ALL SAINTS AND THE UNITARIAN CHURCH

The KAS Churches Committee run a series of very successful visits to places of worship around the country, after which a short report appears in the committee round-up. This expanded article on recent visits highlights the expertise of the guides and analysis of the buildings which KAS visitors enjoy so much.

The town of Maidstone provided two unusual and contrasting churches as subjects for the Churches Committee evening visits of Monday 25th June. The period, setting, size, and character of the parish church of All Saints, and the unassuming Unitarian church (tucked away within the Market Buildings) and the associated ideologies could hardly have been more diverse!

The history of All Saints is that of a new, imposing, building on the earlier site of St. Mary's church, the concept of a medieval archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop William Courtenay, together with the simultaneous foundation of a secular college with master and twenty-four clerks (as permitted by pope and king in 1395) within the archiepiscopal manor of Maidstone, in a prominent situation adjacent to the Archbishop's Palace by the River Medway. The task of completion fell to Courtenay's successor, Thomas Arundel; interestingly, each of these archbishops had, prior to accession, been chancellor to Richard II. Impressive as this cathedral-like church is – probably the largest parish church in Kent – there had been plans for an even grander scheme, which originally included vaulting for which evidence survives in the south choir aisle, and porch.

The Rev. Christopher Morgan-Jones' interest and depth of knowledge regarding the history of the church, and its relationship with the town, were evident during his account to visitors. Enlarging on the relevance of various features and images, he told of the inclusion in the church of four chantry chapels, including one for the town's Fraternity of Corpus Christi guild; decorative sedilia and original choir stalls in the chancel dedicated for use by college and clergy; the vast area of nave and aisles for the parishioners, with benches along the walls, for the weak; of how the latest perpendicular building style was followed, with design of windows comparable with near-contemporary work at Winchester, and of a connection with Henry Yevele, who was responsible for work at Canterbury Cathedral. In Maidstone, though, the archbishop was "lord of all he surveyed", and could exercise patronage here to reward his servants and favourites.

The form of the medieval building is large-

ly unchanged, despite Victorian re-roofing, other than alterations to decoration, and removal, or insertion, of fittings. The Reformation, and dissolution of religious houses and chantries that followed, brought most change to Maidstone's church: a staircase being left, however, as evidence of the earlier position of a rood screen; the plate and valuables of the church were sold to found a gram-

the later duty of officially announcing the restoration of the monarchy, visitors were told, before fleeing the country! From that time, two maces were used during official ceremonies held in the church: one with, and one without, the royal crown. Church monuments include that of the royalist Astley family, a brass enumerating generations of the locally important Beale family, and a memorial to Lawrence



mar school at Corpus Christi hall in the town, and the church left with only a curate to minister to the parish.

National political upheaval had local repercussions: it was probably responsible for later damage to features within the church, including defacing of the unusual wall-painting over the tomb of John Wotton, first master of the College of All Saints, in the south choir aisle; Andrew Broughton, mayor, one of the signatories to the death warrant of King Charles I, had

Washington (related to George Washington).

The Unitarian chapel, apparently first-built of Maidstone's non-conformist churches, in 1736, has also had connections with characters of national importance. William Hazlitt, essayist, was son of one of its early ministers of the eighteenth century. There is a parallel with All Saints in that it suffered a lack of a resident minister, and in this case the stipend apparently never reached the level of £200 per annum required to induce Alexander Farquharson, a

Liberal M.P., and minister from 1905 to 1926 ("A Peerless Preacher of Righteousness" commemorated by one of the few wall-plaques in the building), to take up residence locally instead of in London. Visitors were told, too, of a period when seats were in such demand that a charge was made, despite a capacity of well in excess of two hundred. (There had been record of past near-capacity congregations at All Saints numbering as many as two thousand in the early nineteenth century.) Beyond this, similarity between the two appears to end.

In addressing his audience, albeit not from the pulpit originally high enough to be on a level with the balcony on three sides, Mr. Preece explained the liberal attitude of the Unitarian Church, with emphasis on religious freedom and denial of self-interest, with no creed or dogma, such that it is often a choice

OPPOSITE :All Saints.

BELOW :The Unitarian Church.

for mixed-religion marriages. Lay preachers might come from London or elsewhere; there is no adherence to any church calendar. Regarding the building, he drew attention to the roof and its elaborate framing - apparently of an unusual early form of suspended ceiling - with details recently photographed during renovations. There had been a past extension of accommodation at the west end, and two additional rooms provided. The general impression is of mostly plain decoration, but with some stained glass windows. Ground-floor seating consists of high-sided pews, with benches in the balcony, where a Bevington organ replaces the original organ.

Mr Alan Larcombe, through research using church minute-books dating back to the late 1700s, was able to recount a variety of events and local history aspects: members of the Barcham-Green paper mill-owning family, and their workforce, attending the church; the opening of a bank account in 1888; formation of the

ladies' sewing circle in 1889 to raise funds; the raising of the stipend to £150 in 1907; an organ recital held in 1909. These books record numbers of the congregation on different occasions, and attribute poor summer attendance to wet weather in 1910, but to the dry weather in 1911!

It is interesting to note that in a book called *Kent's Capital*, dated 1899, there is a record of the number of places of worship in Maidstone, many of which still exist, even if their use has changed. These would have had an impact on attendance at both churches: All Saints was one of ten Church of England churches, and The Unitarian one amongst thirteen that were non-conformist.

The knowledge and enthusiasm of those currently involved and caring for these two churches, with their lively and informative talks, made a valuable contribution to a revealing and fascinating evening visit.

Deborah Goacher



'HAPPY BIRTHDAY' THOMAS TELFORD

The 250th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Telford is being commemorated this year, but although he was associated with such important projects in Kent as improvements to Dover Harbour and Whitstable Harbour, a modest bridge over a tiny stream near Maidstone was the scene of the county's only celebration in honour of the great – arguably, Britain's greatest – civil engineer.

On June 21 Quentin Leiper, president of the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), unveiled a plaque on Loose Viaduct, opened 177 years ago on what was then one of Kent's first bypasses.

Previously the Maidstone to Cranbrook turnpike road had run up and down Old Loose Hill, through the heart of the village. This was a steep and dangerous road for heavily-laden horse drawn carts and wagons, and would have been even more hazardous for the steam-powered traction engines and road locomotives that would soon become a common sight on our roads.

In 1820 Henry Robinson Palmer, one of the founders of the ICE, surveyed the route for a new road through Loose, for the Maidstone-Cranbrook Turnpike Trust. He did this on behalf of Telford, who had recently become the institution's first president.

Robinson's plan comprised diverting the dangerous stretch of the turnpike road on to a gentler gradient to the east of Old Loose Hill and crossing the Loose stream and Salts Lane with a simple, single-span bridge, which subsequently for no convincing reason became known as a 'viaduct'.

Although the design of the structure is generally attributed to Telford, no detailed plans or drawings have survived to prove this. It is likely that the great man delegated what was, by his standards, a small job, to one of his assistants.

Loose Viaduct opened in 1830 – four years before Telford died – and today looks much as it did then, except for a footpath added to its west side in the 1930s. Thanks to Palmer, Telford and their clients, the noise, congestion and pollution created by constant traffic on the old turnpike – now the A229 – passes way above the heads of those who live in the quiet, picturesque heart of Loose.

Paul Tritton

ABOVE: Loose Viaduct – here correctly called a bridge on an old picture postcard – sometime before 1918, when the papermill in the foreground was demolished

BELOW: Loose Viaduct from the same viewpoint in 2007



CAN YOU HELP US PRESERVE TONBRIDGE'S PAST?

The Tonbridge Historical Society (THS) is building a permanent collection of material relating to the town's history and the past way of life of Tonbridge people. They would welcome offers of items to go into it. They are interested in: items associated with the town and people who were born or lived or worked there; items made or traded in Tonbridge; items showing what life was like for Tonbridge people, eg small domestic items, fashion accessories, souvenirs of events, photographs; ephemeral items such as tickets, event programmes; items connected with schools, sports, churches, clubs, etc.

If you have anything you would like to offer for the collection, please either: bring it (if portable) to our store at Castle Lodge (green gate in Castle

Street, adjacent to 'Gift Box' shop) between 10am and noon on the first Wednesday of any month, starting in October 2007, or contact us by e-mail: info@tonbridgeshistory.org.uk or phone Anthony Wilson on 01732 354500. Space is limited so we regret we cannot at present accept large items.

The THS website is beginning to take shape. It can be visited in its embryo form at www.tonbridgeshistory.org.uk. The aim is to provide a site at which people can find out about the Society and about the history of Tonbridge, and also be guided towards doing their own local history research. Click on the 'pictures' link if you would like to browse among several hundred of the Society's historic photographs. More content will be added to the site over the coming months.

Dear Editor

I read with great interest the report of Dr Paul Wilkinson's recent excavations at Bax Farm near Faversham (Newsletter no. 70). The one element of his report that I feel needs to be discussed further is Dr Wilkinson's belief that the large bath discovered on the site is possibly either a Christian or Jewish ritual bath. Whilst I have great respect for Dr Wilkinson's interpretation of his excavation, I must disagree with his theories concerning the baths.

I have excavated two Jewish ritual baths, at Yavane Yam and Appoliona in Israel; the pictures of Bax Farm bear no resemblance to these baths

Ritual baths in the Jewish tradition and in the early Christian eras were used to ritually cleanse an impure body or for baptism. It was believed within the Jewish tradition that the body could become unclean through childbirth, during certain times of a woman's menstrual cycle, and through contact with unclean animals or people. The only way to cleanse these impurities from the body was to bathe in a mikvah or in simple English, a ritual bath.



Jewish ritual bath (mikveh) from the Roman period at the Arab village of Cana.

There were very strict rules about the construction and use of these baths, but from the description and pictures given, they bear no resemblance to the ones found by Dr Wilkinson. Firstly, the average size was 2 x 2 meters, designed to hold one person at a time. The dimensions of the Bax Farm bath, at over 5 meters, are much too large and it was without doubt designed to hold more than one person!

Secondly, a ritual bath had to be constantly fed directly from a natural water source, which flowed directly through the bath to replicate a river or stream and would not have been heated. Dr Wilkinson's description is of a bath designed to hold a large quantity of heated water for communal bathing in the traditional Roman style.

A distinctive and key feature of a Jewish bath, that I believe was not located during the excavation, is the foot-cleaning basin. This basin would have been positioned at the entrance to the bath and was used to ritually clean the feet before immersion.

Finally, the bath would normally have only one set of steps leading into it, which would also be used to exit after the cleansing ritual. The pictures provided seem to suggest all-round steps leading directly into

the bath. This would rule out these baths having been constructed with a Jewish religious function in mind.

The one tangible link with a possible Jewish connection was the discovery of a seal that may contain the image of the 7-branch candelabra. I would be surprised if this image does turn out to be of Jewish origin, as after the second Jewish revolt of 163AD most Jewish individuals were treated with distrust and suspicion. This was the result of their history of revolt against Rome and their refusal to engage in the worship of the emperor as a deity. In addition, after the declaration of Christianity as the state religion, Jews were actively persecuted and discriminated against within late Roman society as the "Killers of Christ". The owner of this high status villa would have done irreparable damage both to his social and political standing by having any Jewish connection.

If we consider a possible Christian bath, we again must look at both construction and function. In the early Christian tradition, full immersion was used to baptise adults (not children). Whilst the construction was very similar to a Jewish bath, they had one entrance for the un-baptised person to enter and an opposite exit to leave as a full Christian. Again, the bath is too large, and does not have a defined entrance and exit to match existing baptism pools. One of the best-preserved examples of this type of pool can be found in the Bardo Museum in Tunisia; it does not match the discoveries at Bax Farm.

I would suggest that instead of the Bax farm discoveries having a religious function, they reveal a standard Roman-style bath, albeit on a much larger scale than normally found in the UK.

I hope my observations help in the assessment and debate in connection with these fascinating excavations at Bax Farm. I also look forward to Dr Wilkinson's continuing reports from this exciting site.

Diarmaid Walshe

Dear Editor

I wish to contribute to a debate which has been circulating amongst some KAS members regarding *Archaeologia Cantiana*; an important issue and worthy of real consideration.

The current format is no doubt cherished as a link with the past, when *Archaeologia Cantiana* was an outstanding example of the technology of its time, reflecting the interests, enthusiasms and academic credentials of those who contributed to and read it. However, in my opinion, the publication definitely no longer fulfils 21st century expectations. In fact, the format almost certainly hinders what is now possible in terms of modern computer graphics, thus possibly discouraging contributors more used to modern formats, with all the possibilities for presentation that these offer.

The hard-back format is expensive and unnecessary. I cannot think of a journal of equivalent standing which continues to publish in hard-back. The content of the journal, surely, is of far more worth than the cover, however aesthetically pleasing this may be.

It is time to revise the production of *Archaeologia Cantiana* and to use all that modern technology offers to produce a journal that is worthy of a society operating in the 21st, not the 19th, century.

Angela Muthana

SMITHSONIAN FO

Canterbury Archaeological Trust has just returned from two weeks participating in America's largest cultural event, the annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival, held on the National Mall in Washington DC. Forty local people illustrated Kent's rich cultural heritage alongside 80 Virginians at the festival's 'Roots of Virginia Culture' programme to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the establishment of Jamestown, Virginia, widely regarded as the first permanent English settlement of what would become the United States of America.

The Festival has been an annual production of the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage since 1967 and each year celebrates cultural traditions of communities across the United States and around the world. This year saw 'Mekong River: Connecting Cultures' and 'Northern Ireland at the Smithsonian' programmes alongside the 'Roots of Virginia Culture'. The Festival is a free event over ten days and commonly attracts over a million visitors. This year saw 1.6 million - the second largest visitor number in its history.

The Kent party of the 'Roots of Virginia Culture' programme was managed and supported by Kent County Council. During the past three years, researchers from the Smithsonian Institution have worked with KCC to identify cooks, musicians, fishermen, story tellers, craftspeople and others to illustrate aspects of our culture and inform festival visitors about attractions they can expect from a trip to Kent. Canterbury Archaeological Trust was invited to contribute to the theme of 'Recreating the Past'. We (Marion Green, Education Officer and Enid Allison, Environmental Archaeologist and Education Service support) delivered a package designed to attract both adults and young people and over nine hundred children and thousands of adults took part in the activity over the ten days. The Festival attracts considerable media coverage and we were filmed and interviewed by local FOX News and by KCC and BBC Radio Kent.

For children, our Little Dig involved excavating and identifying parts of reconstructed buildings and real archaeological finds in two 'trenches' built by the

Smithsonian's Tech Crew (many thanks to Jen, Matt and Greg) to CAT's specification. The idea was originally brought to Canterbury by the Museum of London Archaeological Service during the Whitefriars excavations and our own Little Digs are often used at public events.

The 'digs' were further adapted for the 'Roots of Virginia' theme of the Festival. American children learn about the English settlement of Jamestown in school and many of the young visitors had been on trips to the archaeological site of Historic Jamestowne. So the top 'layer' had 17th century pottery fragments found on Kent excavations - pieces of the same kind of domestic jugs and jars the English settlers took with them when they sailed across the Atlantic in 1607, eventually to become lost in the Virginian soils and discovered by American archaeologists some 400 years later.

Kent's archaeology goes a lot deeper of course and the Little Dig had a medieval and a Roman layer as well - more than enough for little diggers to take in!

The unearthed fragments were then taken to reference tables of complete objects (again all from Kent excavations) to identify them. Many of the children came expecting to find dinosaurs but gained some experience of archaeology - and a great certificate.

The reference collection plus photographs, reconstruction images and a running powerpoint presentation of '30 Years of Canterbury Archaeological Trust' also served as a 'stand alone' display for adult visitors. There were conversations with people who had been to Britain as tourists or had relations here. Some people had been on training digs and others wanted to know about places they could visit in Canterbury and Kent. Although we weren't allowed to give out flyers, we did have posters publicising Canterbury, Dover and Maidstone museums - so there may have been some American visitors to the 'Hidden Treasures' exhibition!

Several people with education, archaeology and anthropology interests made themselves known to us and the Little Dig trenches have now gone to the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History where they will be used for public education programmes in

the Discovery Room, following the CAT example.

Sharing the 'Historic Archaeology' marquee with us was Amanda Danning, a facial reconstruction artist from Texas working on the skull of a 15 year old boy believed to be one of the first English settlers of Jamestown. Day by day we saw the features take shape. Alongside Amanda were people from Historic Jamestowne, the educational visitor centre at the original site of the James Fort, featured earlier this year on a Time Team special in the UK.

We had some great volunteers to help with re-instating the 'digs' throughout the day, chatting to the visitors and making lemonade runs. The weather was hot and steamy when we arrived and the day we left the temperature hit 100F, but in between was mostly in the low 80s and the locals said it was like April weather. Enid and I were kept very busy on site. Working daily with a constantly changing audience (and episodes of song, dance and story telling on a nearby stage!) was demanding stuff, but we definitely rose to the challenge and the American visitors really appreciated our contribution and that we had brought original things of such antiquity for them to see and handle.

We found occasions to see what other participants in the Festival were doing. There was some great music from the Virginians and I could have spent a long time watching the Mekong River potters! We also had two days break when we took in Washington's key sites and the free Smithsonian museums lining the mall - with air con.

This was a successful and enjoyable venture and I would like to thank both the Smithsonian Institution and KCC's Smithsonian Project team for this opportunity to share knowledge and experience with so many people and promote in particular, the work of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust.

To hear a podcast about CAT and the Festival go to the US Embassy site at: <http://www.usembassy.org.uk/rss/index.html> and for pictures go to www.canterburytrust.co.uk

*Marion Green
Education Officer
Canterbury Archaeological Trust*

OLKLIFE FESTIVAL

TOP AND
BOTTOMLEFT:
*Unearthing and
identifying
finds with CAT
in the 'Historic
Archaeology'
marquee.*

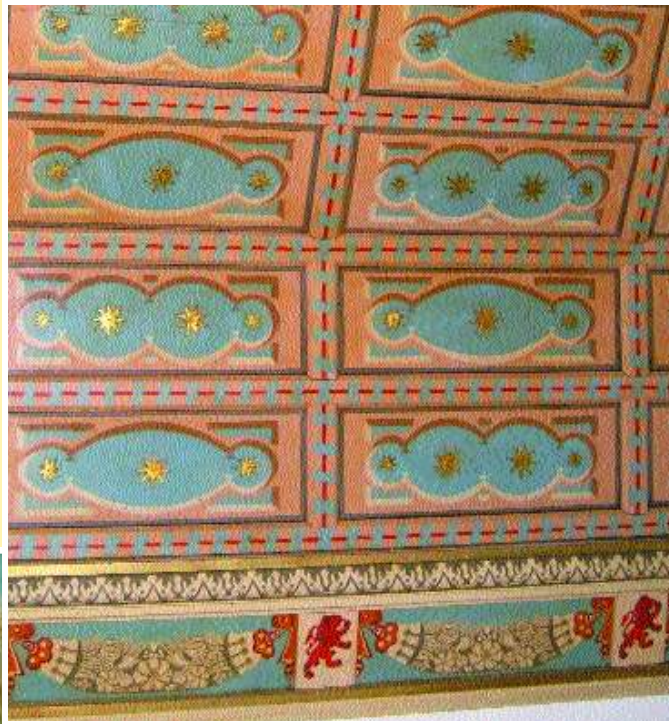


BOTTOMRIGHT:
*Marion and
proud
certificate
holders.*



STARS TWINKLE AGAIN

Addingington PCC has just finished a major conservation project at St. Margaret's Church. The 15th century South (or Watton) Chapel, has a seven cant wooden barrel roof with a mid-Victorian painted design on it. The 147 individual sections of the roof contain golden embossed stars viewed, as it were through a window, whilst scarlet heraldic lions and colourful swags alternate on the border below. The photograph shows how light and bright the colours are. The painting was probably inspired by the work of Owen Jones (1809-1874) who visited the Alhambra in 1832 and brought back Moorish designs to England. He was a superintendent at the Great Exhibition of 1851, and the church was substantially renovated later in that decade. For many years the intended effect was obscured by layers of dark varnish. When the ceiling was featured in the 1954 book 'Kent



Churches' by H.R. Pratt Boorman, the stars could hardly be discerned.

For many years the PCC had planned to undertake this restoration, but had been prevented by more pressing matters such as a dangerous tower and leaky roof. In late 2005 the decision was taken to raise the funds to do so, as part of a plan to remove the pews and screens from the chapel, to obtain a more flexible space for the congregation. The work, which also included cleaning the monuments in the chapel and the stone reredos, has been carried out by the Wall Paintings Workshop of Faversham. The seven brasses in the church can all now be fully accessed – some had been previously hidden under carpet.

The church is unfortunately normally closed except for services, but if you would like to visit, please contact KAS member, Patricia Richardson (01732 842303) to gain access.

*ABOVE TOP:
Detail of the roof.*

*ABOVE BOTTOM:
The roof showing the mid-Victorian painted designs.*

Copy deadline for the next issue in January is Friday November 16th.

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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