



# CAMBRIDGE ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD GROUP

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[www.cafg.net](http://www.cafg.net)

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## LECTURES

Lectures are normally held on the first Wednesday in the month in the seminar room of the McDonald Institute, Division of Archaeology, Downing Street, Cambridge, at 7.30pm. Parking is available on site from Tennis Court Road. The season continues with:

5 March Dr Rob Wiseman, Oxford Archaeology East, on: *Who's at home? Reconstructing prehistoric family relationships in ancient settlements.*

"If the goal of archaeology is to reconstruct the lives of past people, then one outstanding challenge is to reconstruct their social relationships. These relationships leave no direct trace in the archaeological record, but are fundamental to understanding the day-to-day lives of ancient people, because they control who people work with and share resources with; who they marry or go to war with; and who helps bring up children and provide care in old age. The problem of social relationships and kinship was famously declared "an unobtainable luxury" in the 1970s, and has received only occasional attention since.

"In this talk, Rob will present work-in-progress on a new method, based on the organisation of settlements. A number of large prehistoric settlements have been excavated around Britain over the last twenty years, and Rob will show how his method can be used to shed light of the family organisation of their inhabitants. He will also present examples from communities around the world, to illustrate how the same principles are used by people worldwide. "

23 April AGM followed by Dr Paul Spoerry, our president on: *Finding, and not finding, Medieval Huntingdon!*

7 May Jody Joy, British Museum, on: *Celtic Art, the site of Snettisham - 100's of Iron Age torcs*

4 June Sarah Poppy, English Heritage, on Roman barrows

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will be held in the McDonald Institute seminar room on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014. The delay is due to issues of access to the room. The agenda and accompanying papers will be sent out nearer the time.

## SURVEY OF MEMBERS' VIEWS

The Wimpole project has shown that the Group can, amongst its membership, undertake a number of activities beyond those at its core. The question is, how best to proceed from here?

In order to help answer this, a survey of members will be sent out shortly, asking for views on the Group's activities and on members' own particular interests. The results can then be discussed at the AGM. Please watch out for and respond to this opportunity to say what you want.

## **BAR HILL PROCESSING EVENINGS**

Processing continues at the Oxford Archaeology East HQ at 15 Trafalgar Way, Bar Hill on Wednesdays when there is no lecture. We meet from about 7.15 pm. A plan can be provided.

## **FIELDWORK**

Before Christmas we spent several weeks fieldwalking near the Roman Road at Fulbourn. We found a few worked flints but little pottery. There were some interesting nodules we thought might be slag, but they turned out to be marcasite. There is a short article on the website.

After Christmas we returned to the Childerley Estate. For the first few weeks, the most significant find was mud, but a few pieces of Roman pottery have now been unearthed.

## **WIMPOLE: SILENT VOICES AND DESERTED HOMES HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND "ALL OUR STORIES" PROJECT**

2013 was a year of gathering information on the former settlements at Wimpole. We completed as much fieldwalking as we could; had ten days of test pitting (with volunteers) in one of the hottest weeks of the summer; had pottery identified and dated; spent hours in archives and museums. The question then was how to present all this information. After some discussion, we decided on an exhibition of posters themed by activity, rather than attempting to arrange it by date.

Over the weekend of the 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> January 2014, we presented to local people, National Trust staff and volunteers a summary of our findings as an exhibition at Wimpole Hall in the restaurant building. There were posters on all the aspects of our work: landscape investigation, fieldwalking (with distribution maps), test pitting, documentary research, excavations at Mr Ratford's house and the search for Wratworth. The posters can be viewed on our website. We also displayed a selection of the finds. This was a successful venture, with some 250 visitors. A couple of comments: "it was a roaring success, and a wonderful display of your project. The display was absolutely professional; you must all be very pleased." "The exhibition display boards were very clear and informative and the displays contained an astonishing range of finds from the prehistoric to the 18th century. Warmest congratulations to everyone involved at the CAFG."

The poster exhibition was also on display in Cambridge Central Library for a week and at the Cambridge Antiquarian Society spring conference on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, when it drew appreciative and admiring comments.

We also produced a booklet expanding on the themes of the posters. The booklet is available for all members: if you are not able to get to a meeting and would like a paper copy, please let the secretary know. It will shortly be available on our website.

A meeting open to all members was held on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> February to consider the next steps. Further comments about the professionalism of the exhibition were reported. About £400 of the grant is as yet unspent, and it was agreed to ask the HLF if this could be used later towards further specialist help on the Wimpole results.

The main item for the meeting was to consider how to prepare a "grey" report: this is a technical report containing all the information found during the project, to be deposited with the Historic Environment Record and the National Trust and available to members and researchers. It is from this report that any

journal publications will be taken. The aim is to complete the grey report in four months and is to be tackled in sections based on the themes of the posters. Progress will be reviewed at a meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> April.

The themes and those members who have so far volunteered to help write up are:

<b>Landscape/geology/topography</b>	Robert Skeen and Barrie Fuller
<b>HER records and archaeological background</b>	Terry Dymott
<b>Fieldwalking</b>	John Waterhouse
<b>Test Pits</b>	Jayne Nelson and Mike Coles
<b>Documents/Wratworth/families</b>	Dudley Pusey, Susan May, Richard Cushing
<b>Metalwork</b>	Dominic Shelley
<b>Geophysics and air photos</b>	Richard Cushing
<b>Earthwork survey</b>	reference to earlier report
<b>Excavation of Mr Ratford's house</b>	to be referenced, but full report to be separate
<b>Photographs</b>	Barrie Fuller to collate and catalogue

Most themes will need notes on the methods used; the results of the activities; what the results might mean; and lists of data, whether it be tables of pottery types or lists of documents researched.

The more members who can help, the faster we will achieve the aim.

#### **VOLUNTEERS WANTED! CAN YOU HELP ?**

**THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVE THE ACTUAL WRITING. FOR EXAMPLE, YOU COULD BE MAKING SURE THAT WE HAVE PROPER RECORDS OF ALL THE INFORMATION GATHERED.**

## **HASLINGFIELD ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT**

The full "grey" report containing notes on all the finds has been undergoing final editing. The report includes the results of fieldwalking over many years, some casual observations and the test pitting carried over the weekend of 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> June 2012. We hope to have it available for members shortly and, hopefully, a report will be published in PCAS next year.

Finds imply a long-lived settlement from the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age; more certainly, the number of known/suggested mid/late Iron Age and Roman sites has increased dramatically and more detail has been added to the extent of the suggested Roman estate centre. Settlement then appears to have been largely in dispersed farmsteads. In contrast, while Saxon finds are sparse, they tend to suggest settlement around the former green, although with the continuation of a Royal estate centre. Saxo-Norman pottery and features have been found within and immediately outside the area of the former green, and it is suggested that the final nucleation of the village around the present church took place at this time – no artefacts of this period have yet been found beyond the limits of the present village.

An increasing number of sites are dateable to about the 12<sup>th</sup> to mid-14<sup>th</sup> centuries, mostly within and around the former green, but with a new hamlet at Brook Farm. This seems to have been a period of expansion. However, a decline in population from the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century can be seen in the lessening number of sites containing late medieval pottery. The settlement on the River Farm fields, for example, appears to have been abandoned at this time; although that at Brook Farm continued until the 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> centuries, when it diminished to a farm. The current manor house was bought by Thomas Wendy in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and indications of his works were seen in several test pits. The report does not really cover the period after 1600 as this has been discussed elsewhere, other than evidence for the continuation of the Brook Farm hamlet.

## **FLINT FROM OILY HALL**

Lawrence Billington's full report on his analysis of the 1436 worked and 1202 burnt flints found fieldwalking on the fen edge at Oily Hall, Lode, will be made available to members shortly.

Lawrence states that the assemblage includes a substantial Neolithic and Early Bronze Age component but is dominated by flintwork of Mesolithic date. The site clearly constitutes a westward extension of a complex of lithic scatters discovered during the Fenland Project (Hall 1996), which are strung out on the Fen Edge in the parishes of Lode and Swaffham Prior on a sand ridge adjacent to a palaeochannel of the river Cam. The peat north of Cambridge was formed largely in the Bronze Age, and the site seems to be on the peat fen, although overlying gault clay.

The activities represented by these and other finds along the fen edge are part of a regional context of extensive earlier prehistoric use of the lowland river valleys in the East Midland and East Anglia, rather than specialised and rich fenland economies. What is particularly interesting is that David Hall in the Fenland Project, completed in about 1994, found nothing on these fields. The flints have therefore been brought into the plough soil since that time, and it is important to look again at the areas covered in that project.

All the Mesolithic flint is corticated (the later material is not) and is mostly “waste flakes”. All the major tool types are represented, which suggests that this was not a specialised site, but possibly domestic, the flints accumulated over many visits, possibly with extended occupation periods.

Lawrence talked to us on the 4<sup>th</sup> December, not only about our finds, but also with some provisional findings about the Mesolithic in Cambridgeshire generally, the subject of his current researches. This period covers 9500 – 4000 BC, at which time the landscape in this area was mostly dry land, with vegetation changing over the period. There was a low population density and people moved around. Most sites are recognized by scatters of artefacts, bones, occasional postholes and plant remains. Most scatters are incorporated into the plough soil. Few sites are found on heavy clays or chalk and more on light gravel and sand, and are generally associated with watercourses.

## COMMITTEE MEETING

A committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30 pm at Bar Hill, to which all members are welcome. If you have issues you feel the committee should discuss, please let the secretary know as soon as possible.

## VAL WHITTAKER MEMORIAL PRIZE

There is still time to enter the 2014 competition, as the deadline is 2<sup>nd</sup> May. If you or anyone you know is interested in entering, the forms and requirement details are going on the website. If you have any outlets to inform other people, I would be very glad to know.

## CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

CAS lectures are held in the Law Faculty, West Road, Cambridge, on Mondays at 6.00pm. The season continues with:

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|---------|---|
| 3 March | Jamie Cameron, David Kay and Pamela Jane Smith on <i>Eight decades and still thriving: a history of the Archaeological Field Club (student body)</i> (AGM at 5.45pm)  |
| 7 April | Brian Dix on <i>Here's one made earlier: Archaeology and Garden reconstruction</i>  |
| 12 May  | Oliver Caroe and Alison Dickens on <i>The School of Pythagoras: groundbreaking archaeological insights and the new St John's College Archive Centre. The workings of archaeological understanding with architectural development.</i> |
| 2 June  | Anwen Cooper on <i>The English Landscape and identities project: linking diverse datasets, unraveling prehistoric legacies</i>  |

The excursions programme features:

- 1 May A walk around Great Shelford
- 19 June Religion in Bedford
- 23 September Some Huntingdonshire churches
- 8 October Walpole's Lynn

The secretary has more details and booking information.

## JIGSAW CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Jigsaw now has 17 affiliated groups; the new groups are in March and the Gransdens. Meetings are being held with the aim of forming new Archaeology Action Groups in East Cambridgeshire and North Cambridge (Arbury, Kings Hedges, Chesterton).

The website has best practice users' guides which can be downloaded.

The courses for 2014 are free but places must be booked in advance at [www.jigsawcambs.org](http://www.jigsawcambs.org)

## THE COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

CBA East has a number of events coming up:

- 12 April *Medieval graffiti in East Anglian churches.* Parham, Suffolk
- 10 May *AGM and Colchester archaeology tour.* Circus House. Colchester
- 14 June *Saffron Walden Museum, castle and Audley End tour with English Heritage staff*
- 20 September tbc. *Roman Archaeology in the East of England conference.* Godmanchester

For more information see: [www.cbae.archaeologyuk.org/events](http://www.cbae.archaeologyuk.org/events) ; to join as a member in your own right (£5 a year) email the secretary, Alison Tinniswood at: [Alison.tinniswood@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:Alison.tinniswood@hertscc.gov.uk)

## LOCAL EVENTS

The University of Cambridge Science Festival runs from 10<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> March. There are events at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research. The programme is available around Cambridge (and at park and ride sites), or at: [www.cam.ac.uk/science-festival](http://www.cam.ac.uk/science-festival)

## CONFERENCES/COURSES

Cambridge University's Institute of Continuing Education runs short courses on a variety of topics on archaeology, the historic environment and local history. Examples:

*Humps and bumps, houses and hedges* – 5 week courses, Wednesdays 10.00-12.00, starting 26 February (with virtual field trips) and 30 April (with actual field trips). £150.

- 14-16 March *Stonehenge: time after time after time*
- 25-27 April *Reading the landscape: find medieval in modern villages*
- 16-18 May *Art, architecture and landscape in Anglo-Saxon England*
- 25-27 July *The Sutton Hoo treasure, the Staffordshire Hoard, and the golden age of Old England*
- 10-12 October *Ordinary people and ordinary lives in the Roman world*

See [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) for details.

- 28 Feb-1 March Current Archaeology Live! 2014. The Senate House, London. [www.archaeologylive.co.uk](http://www.archaeologylive.co.uk)
- 31 May-1 June Metals used in Personal Adornment. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. <http://tinyurl.com/lgmqvqm>

## EXHIBITIONS

Native and Roman coins, 15 in all, buried around the time of the Roman conquest and found near Owermoigne, Dorset, are on display in the British Museum's Citi Money Gallery.

The Crosby Garrett Roman helmet is on display in the British Museum until 27 April.

"Vikings: Life and Legend", including the Roskilde 6 ship, will be presented in the British Museum's new Sainsbury Exhibitions Gallery from 6 March until 22 June.

An exceptionally well-preserved fine carved Roman stone eagle excavated near the Tower of London can be seen in the Museum of London until the end of April.

"Britain: One Million Years of the Human Story" began at the Natural History Museum on 13<sup>th</sup> February and runs until 28<sup>th</sup> September

"After the Ice: Exhibiting Life at Star Carr" is at The Yorkshire Museum, York until May

"Eastbourne Ancestors", the result of an HLF project studying bones from excavations around the town, is open at The Pavilion, beside the Redoubt Fortress in Eastbourne until 16 November

## EXCAVATIONS

For details of continuing excavations, go to: [www.britarch.ac.uk/briefing](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/briefing) (Council for British Archaeology) and [www.archaeology.co.uk/digs](http://www.archaeology.co.uk/digs) (Current Archaeology).

A local community project is at the Itter Crescent Roman villa, Peterborough, from 9 May to 8 June. Residents will be given priority for places, but for volunteer applications, contact David Crawford-White on [david.crawford-white@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:david.crawford-white@oxfordarch.co.uk) or tel 01223 850500.

Oxford Archaeology East is digging off Newmarket Road, Cambridge and is looking for volunteers to wash finds at Bar Hill. See: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com/community-projects/283-harvest-way-cambridge> for more details, or contact Jemima Woolverton on 01223 850542.

## NEWS

In case you missed it, footprints in the mud at Happisburgh have been dated to over 800,000 years ago, the oldest human footprints outside Africa. From the 49 footprints identified, the group comprised adults and juveniles.

## LIBRARY ADDITIONS

- British Archaeology November/December 2013 and January/February 2014 (including an article by and about Jigsaw Cambridgeshire)
- CBA Newsletter, issues 25 early autumn, 26 winter 2013; 27 early spring 2014
- Jigsaw Cambridgeshire newsletter No.4, December 2013

## AND FINALLY

Who wrote "I absolutely hate bones" on a 16<sup>th</sup> century cow's shoulder blade excavated at St Neots in 1961 and now in the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology? The finds assistant also drew an angry stick figure. (*British Archaeology*)

Susan May, Secretary