

FRIENDS

of the

CANTERBURY ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



local archaeology workshop with secondary students.

Newsletter 108 spring 2019

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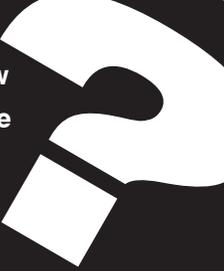
The next Newsletter will appear in July 2019. Please send contributions to: chairFCAT@canterburytrust.co.uk by the beginning of June 2019.

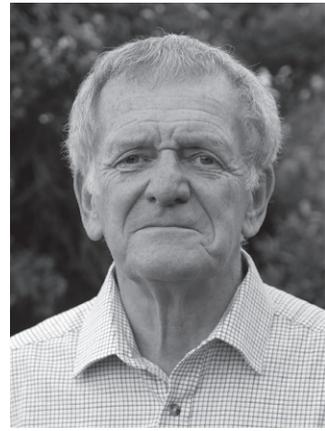
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Please note
Donation suggested in support of the Trust for all talks: FCAT members £2; non-members £3; registered students and CAT staff very welcome without charge.

Have you moved house or changed your bank?
Don't forget to let our Membership Secretary know
(via memsecFCAT@canterburytrust.co.uk, or leave a message at 92A Broad Street, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2LU, tel 01227 462 062) so that our records are up-to-date.





Dear Friends,

It is always pleasing to have good news and we can see in the Director's letter that considerable progress has been made with the transfer of finds to the new Archaeological Resource Centre in Wincheap. The Friends have been able to make a grant of £15,000 towards the installation of a lift for getting finds between floors and also for trolleys and other aids for moving the finds around the building. The ARC will benefit greatly from this investment.

As usual, you will find in this Newsletter contributions illustrating the variety of involvement in archaeology of the Trust and its staff. It is really good to be able to recognise the immensely valuable work undertaken by the Trust in the field of education, particularly with schools. Marion Green, CAT's Education Officer for three decades, is retiring from the role but will be undertaking pottery spot-dating for the Trust. CAT and indeed Kent schools owe her considerable thanks. In this newsletter Marion shares some memories of her time with the Trust. Annie Partridge is taking on management of the schools work as part of her community archaeology brief. It is sad, however, that one of Annie's first tasks will be to assess the CAT KITS and CAT BOXES, following the break-in and vandalism at the Kingsmead stores. Marion will support her in this though and Annie then plans to go on and reconstitute the collections.

In thinking about historic aqueducts our thoughts immediately turn to the Romans, but significant water management schemes were undertaken by medieval religious communities, as for example the supply to Canterbury Cathedral Priory evidenced by Prior Wibert's octagonal tower and indeed the plans surviving in the Eadwine Psalter. Andrew Richardson discusses an intriguing man-made watercourse at Folkestone which dates back at least to the twelfth century.

Alison Hicks, who directed the Slatters excavations and has recently been appointed Deputy Director of CAT alongside Peter Clark, took time in the autumn to go and work on an archaeological project near Basra. She provides us with a fascinating account of investigating a port-city founded by Alexander the Great and shares her experience of working in present-day Iraq.

Peter Clark, who has been much involved with the study of the Dover Bronze Age Boat, last September attended the the fifteenth International Symposium on Boat and Ship Archaeology in Marseille, aided by a training bursary from the Friends. He tells us about some of the amazing ancient boat remains that have come to light in recent years particularly in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

One of the joys of archaeology is that one never knows what tomorrow may bring and new discoveries are continually changing our established view of the past or aspects of it. Perhaps I may be allowed here to reflect a little on sunken-featured buildings (SFBs), which have sporadically been part of my consciousness for a very long time. I can remember, getting on for fifty years ago, SFBs or *grubenhäuser* being very much considered to be continental 'imports' associated with Germanic migrations in the fifth and sixth centuries. These structures were simple, generally rectangular scoops in the ground, commonly between 2 and 3 metres in length and perhaps 2 metres wide, with most frequently just a single post at each end to support an elementary ridged roof. The classic sites were West Stow in Suffolk and Mucking on the Thames estuary in Essex. Keith Parfitt described such a structure at Kingsdown in the last Newsletter and three early Saxon examples on the Slatters site (Newsletter 106) can be added to the growing corpus of such buildings found within the city walls of Canterbury, particularly to the north of the bus station. There has been much debate whether some of this type of structure had a raised floor above a cellar or whether the base of the cut was indeed the floor.

In the 1970s I excavated some tenth-century examples in Northampton, extending the date range of this simple form of SFB, and with the more intensive urban excavations of the later twentieth century deeper more sophisticated cellars became fairly common discoveries on late Saxon sites across the country. Two fine examples on the Slatters site were illustrated in the last Newsletter.

We can today see that SFBs are not confined to Anglo-Saxon times. In 1994–5 a small 'village' with over twenty SFBs was excavated by CAT ahead of the dualling of the A253 between the Monkton and Mount Pleasant roundabouts in Thanet (CAT Occasional Paper no 4). The main occupation was between the mid-second and early third century AD. Very few Roman period SFBs have otherwise come to light and the site remains unique. In 2007–8 CAT excavated about 47 hectares of the Thanet Earth site, the extensive development of greenhouses that straddle the parish boundary between Monkton and St Nicholas at Wade. Here a remarkable collection of about seventy SFBs, mainly twelfth- and thirteenth-century in date, was excavated. Many were fairly deep and contained a well-constructed oven. About twenty similar SFBs have been excavated in Kent in recent years, but this type of structure seems presently to be confined to Kent. We will look forward to the final publication of this remarkable site.

With all these encounters with SFBs it was thus very interesting to watch the latest series of the BBC's *Digging for Britain* and read the November 2018 issue of *Current Archaeology*: examples of SFBs dating to 1756–7 have been found at Barton Farm, just outside Winchester (Web search: The Hessians of Barton Farm). During the Seven Years' War troops from Hesse, near Frankfurt were stationed there to help guard against French invasion. The officers' accommodation seemed to be quite comfortable – the

dugouts, some 2m deep with fine fireplaces and a curved stepped entranceway leading down in one corner, evoking some memories of Thanet Earth. It would appear, not unexpectedly, that over the centuries dugouts offered an effective shelter from the elements, provided that the site in question was well drained and the structure was suitably roofed.

So, where, in what guise and dating to when will the next SFB make an appearance? And, more generally, what new archaeological discovery will tomorrow indeed bring? Please keep supporting the Trust and perhaps encourage others to do the same!

John Williams, Chair FCAT

Dear Friends,

I have just come from Granville Dock where, since before Christmas, I have, with my colleague Terry Buchan, been giving the Dover Bronze Age Boat replica a thorough refit in readiness for taking it to sea. A number of us re-stitched the boat with new willow withies last year, and although we did an excellent job (the late Richard Darrah, the builder of the boat, would have been proud), we should have taken the opportunity to thoroughly re-caulk the seams with tallow and moss and re-stop the mortice holes with beeswax. As a consequence, in the period leading up to Christmas the vessel was leaking so badly that it was for a period more a submarine than a boat, requiring it to be laboriously emptied of seawater with a bucket and scoop – on average 300 buckets and 100 scoops – an exhausting process. I'm pretty sure our Bronze Age seafaring forbears would have laid their craft up in the autumn and winter months by pulling it ashore, or even sinking it close to shore and placing large rocks in the hull to keep it *in situ*.

Friends will remember that the replica was built as an archaeological experiment as part of the Boat 1550 BC project, with Interreg funding and in partnership with the University of Lille III, the University of Ghent and Canterbury Christ Church University. The experiment continues into a fifth year, with the boat now in the ownership of the Trust. Eventually I hope the replica will become another exhibit in the Dover Boat Gallery in Dover Museum, but not yet! We have a fair amount of paddling to do before that happens, including a Channel crossing and one or two more Great River Races on the Thames through central London. I can tell you now, dear reader, that we will never make the replica boat dry – it will always leak, just as the original boat leaked. Paddling the boat is a fantastic if exhausting experience, but you will always have wet feet!

It is some nineteen years since, with mainly Lottery and English Heritage funding and help from many other organizations, we opened the award-winning Boat Gallery

in Dover Museum. Although we are immensely proud of the gallery, we are now, after nearly two decades, seeking to refit, improve and update it. Christine Waterman, who with the late Dr Frank Panton led the team setting up the gallery, is heading a team of Trustees, putting together a refit proposal to submit to Lottery and other funding bodies, to equip the gallery with new exhibits, interactives and up-to-date 'bells and whistles' to take the boat and gallery on a new journey into the future. We have been interviewing visitors to the gallery to find out what

they think of the existing offer and how it might be improved. If Friends would like to visit the gallery soon and give us the benefit of their advice and thoughts, we will be very keen to hear from you.

As for the replica, I hope the refit is now complete and we can ask the excellent Harbour Board staff to crane her back into Granville Dock, where she has her own special mooring and an information board explaining what she is – a working, half-scale replica of one of the oldest seagoing boats in the world.



From Dover Boat to the new Wincheap store and office: since the last Newsletter we have moved a huge quantity of archaeological materials from the old Kingsmead store to the new store, which I hope in time and with funding will become an Archaeological Resource Centre for Canterbury (the Canterbury ARC). Our Titan portacabin is now on site and contains our outreach materials, which will soon be made available to schools countywide. All our tools and equipment are neatly stored in a second large metal container; an internal yard with racking contains our stone store and a parking place for umpteen wheelbarrows. Within the building, with all the archaeological materials in place on purpose-built racking, and small finds in an environmentally controlled space, we have started to repair and decorate the offices. We are immensely grateful to Terry Buchan for assisting with the fit-out, ably assisted by Ian Anderson.

We are also extremely appreciative of the generous grant from the Friends to help with the installation of a goods' lift to carry heavy boxes from the ground floor stores to the first floor offices, where finds will be processed by our finds' team and wonderful band of volunteers. The goods' lift is an essential but expensive piece of equipment; without it I am not at all sure we could operate effectively from the new premises.

From the volunteers' perspective, it is true that the Wincheap store and offices are at some remove from Broad Street and the centre of town, but there is car parking on site and local buses from the Park and Ride pass by our door every few minutes throughout the day. We hope the new and attractive premises will encourage more people to volunteer their help, particularly when we begin the mammoth and hugely interesting process of systematically reviewing the collections.

The store will be staffed initially by our finds' and outreach teams, with our doors opening to volunteers and visitors from early April onwards. We will be organising a number of Friends' visits to the new premises, so stand-by to put a note in your diary to come and see us.

Paul Bennett, Director

Handing over after 30 satisfying years of teaching and learning

At its meeting last night, the Management Committee heard about the role you play in running the office at 92a Broad Street. I was asked to thank you most warmly for all you do for the Trust. We all appreciate your devoted and cheerful work and hope you will be with us for many more years. Yours very sincerely, Lawrence Lyle, Hon Secretary, Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 28th July 1982.

I still have this letter from Lawrence. It means a lot to me that the sentiments were committed to paper. Back then I'm not sure I had any thoughts of still being with the Trust nearly forty years later!

I had originally trained as a primary school teacher but was lured into archaeology by a flyer asking for volunteer excavators on the Trust's earliest sites and my first year of Trust employment was a combination of site and finds work. I then went travelling and returned to the Trust in 1979. In the 1980s I had the opportunity to work on extensive pottery assemblages from current excavations under the tutorship of Nigel Macpherson-Grant and Dr Richard Pollard. I learned how to identify pottery types from the past 2,000 years, eventually focusing on Roman ceramics and in the early years I got to know a lot about Canterbury's archaeology.

As many Friends will know, the Trust's primary charitable aim is to 'promote the advancement of public education in the subject of Archaeology' and it has been doing this in various ways from the start. I am a firm believer that there is absolutely no point in digging stuff up unless you make it available for others to enjoy and learn from it.

In 1990 I had a change in direction when, bringing together my education background and experience of local archaeology, I became Education Officer for the Trust. This was a pivotal time for England's schools, 1990 being the year the National Curriculum was introduced and suddenly Kent's primary school teachers had to be subject specialists.

We could certainly help them and so, with the valuable guidance of the late Ian Coulson, Kent County Council (KCC) Lead Consultant for History in Kent schools, and also some financial support from the Kent Archaeological Society, we began to develop a number of teaching and learning activities and resources, specifically to help meet the new demands. The KAS Education Committee was established as a result of this early liaison and the Trust has continued to receive grants for educational work since those early days.



Kiln firing with Barton Court students.

'It was a brilliant experience for the children, they were enthralled...'

'I liked finding out so many facts that I didn't know and the activities were fun.'

Tailored site visits, workshops in the classroom and elsewhere, teaching guides and supporting personal studies were achieved, with the support of other Trust staff, depending on time and funding available. I liaised with other resource providers and the Trust formed a special relationship with Andy Harmsworth, a former secondary school Head of History and schools' History Adviser, who, in co-operation with us, wrote 'Roman Canterbury, a Journey into the Past' and 'A Journey to Medieval Canterbury'. 'Roman Canterbury' in particular is still in demand today and is currently being reprinted with a grant from the Friends.

A successful long-term relationship grew with the Education Department of Canterbury Christ Church University, where annual workshops were given to trainee teachers, showing students how to build an archaeological element into their teaching programmes.

We built the Trust's first website in 2000, with KCC funding secured by Ian Coulson. Its primary aim was to be an educational resource and the British Library asked to hold it in the UK web archive (UKWA) as an example of an educational website in the field of Archaeology; the archive is still periodically updated with snapshots of our site.



CAT KITS launch with Ian Coulson.

An extensive collection of loans then followed, which were made available to Kent schools and interest groups. CAT KITS were built, using original archaeological bulk finds superfluous to academic study (pottery sherds, animal bone, building materials) and boxes of quality multi-themed replica objects, originals and models inherited from KCC were rebranded as CAT BOXes. All added a valuable hands-on dimension to the Education Service and we have been consulted about the collections by other educators at home and abroad.

'It was using the CAT kits that made all the difference.'

Several funded partnership projects meant we could do that little bit more for formal and informal learning and I have been fortunate to work with like-minded professionals and volunteers in Kent and abroad. 'National Science, Engineering and Technology Week' (Canterbury Museums and UKC), 'Canterbury Whitefriars THE BIG DIG', 'A Town Unearthed, Folkestone before 1500' (Canterbury Christ Church University and Folkestone People's History Centre), 'Adopt a Monument' (English Heritage and EU partners), 'CSI Sittingbourne' (Dana Goodburn-Brown), 'DigIT' (KCC), 'Roots of Virginia, Jamestown 400th Anniversary', Washington DC (Smithsonian Institution and KCC) and 'Boat 1550 BC' (Canterbury Christ Church University and partners in Lille, Ghent and Velzeke) are all



Little dig activity at Whitefriars BIG DIG.



Andy with Lyminge school children.

memorable. I learned a lot during these projects and it has been a pleasure to spend time with like-minded people.

I very much enjoyed my time as Education Officer. I learned a great deal and found the sharing of knowledge and experience very satisfying. The 'sharing' is something I've always been passionate about and still am. Last year, however, I decided I wanted more flexibility to do some other things in life ☺ and stepped away from this role, although I haven't left the Trust completely. I was asked to continue the spot-dating for pottery from current excavations and in doing this I'm revisiting my earlier interests.

Annie Partridge has taken on management of schools' work in her expanded role of Community Archaeologist at the Trust and will be engaged in various activities in both formal and informal learning. Annie is supported by Martin Crowther joining the Learning team, in particular to deliver primary school workshops on our behalf. Now working freelance, Martin was previously in charge of Learning at Canterbury Museums and we have often joined forces for public and school events.



Thanet Earth site visit.

I'm going to round off with a couple of nice quotes -

From Mike Corbishley, consultant and Heritage Education lecturer, UCL Institute of Archaeology:

'Canterbury Archaeological Trust deserves the excellent reputation it has for its long-lasting commitment to formal and informal education... Its resources for teachers are invaluable and its projects for young people and the general public are inspiring... That the Canterbury Archaeological Trust has been able to

sustain a long term programme of community involvement is a testament to the work and commitment of its management and its Education Officer.'

And to finish, while Information Technology has undoubtedly enabled global access to knowledge and information, as a teacher said recently:

'The children have done the internet now and want to experience the real thing'.

Yes, there's nothing quite like it and I hope that the Trust will enjoy many more opportunities to share its knowledge, discoveries and experience.

Marion Green



Our Friends' photo archive needs refreshing. If you have any good photographs taken at Friends events or Festival Walks that you are happy to share and which could be used to promote future events, do send them in. Send your snaps, with details of when and where taken, to jane.elder@canterburytrust.co.uk.

A Bounty of Drink to Men and Beasts: St Eanswythe's Water, Folkestone

Until the late 1800s, the main supply of fresh drinking water to the town of Folkestone came via a cleverly engineered artificial watercourse that diverted a natural stream and carried it, along a constant, gently falling gradient, nearly one and a half miles to the heart of the ancient town on the Bayle. The stream that fed the watercourse rises to the west of Cherry Garden Hill and still flows as a tributary of the Pent Stream, from which water could also be diverted into the artificial watercourse. This watercourse, not to be confused with the Pent or its tributaries, is 'St Eanswythe's Water', abbreviated on maps as early as the 1500s as 'St Ens Water'.

The first record of the watercourse is found in John of Tynemouth's *Sanctilogium* of the 1340s, which includes a number of earlier Saints' Lives, including that of St Eanswythe. This saint is recorded as 'Eanswith' in the various tenth- to eleventh-century versions of the Kentish Royal Legend as the daughter of King Eadbald of Kent (r.616/18 to 640) and



Excavation on the line of St Eanswythe's Watercourse, Folkestone.

his Frankish wife Ymme. The Life, or *Vita*, of Eanswythe was probably compiled at some point in the twelfth century and, like that of all saints, it includes a number of miracles. Most of these appear to be relatively common 'stock' miracles, which writers would insert to demonstrate the sanctity of their subject. However, Eanswythe's *Vita* includes a very specific miracle in which she causes a stream to flow uphill to supply her nunnery (the minster established in Folkestone at some point around the mid-seventh century):

"With her staff preceding her, she conducted a watercourse, as though by word of mouth, from the lowest places to the heights, through the cliffs and summits of stones to her oratory, and it has not ceased abundantly to give a bounty of drink to men and beasts."

(Translated by James Lloyd)

The watercourse is described in the miracle as originating at *Swetton*, which we now know was an obscure manor immediately below the Downs at Cheriton, an area today largely covered by the Channel Tunnel terminal. There are also a number of documentary

references to a now-lost chapel dedicated to St Eanswythe near to the source of the watercourse. There can thus be no doubt that the miracle relates to the watercourse that in later centuries formed the Town Ditch or Dyke. If we are correct in thinking that the St Eanswythe's *Vita* was written in the twelfth century, then the watercourse must have been constructed by then at the latest. There has been much speculation as to whether it could date to as early as the seventh century and have been constructed to supply the Minster founded there and with which Eanswythe's name has long been associated (but see below). Some have even suggested it might be of Roman origin, despite the lack of any obvious Roman settlement on Folkestone's western headland which the watercourse supplies. Whatever its age, maintaining such a long watercourse was no easy task; municipal records from the 1600s onwards record a constant battle against leaks, silting, errant cattle (and ducks!) and locals illegally diverting water from it.

For the past year the Trust has been working on an HLF-funded project led by Dr Lesley Hardy of Canterbury Christ Church University entitled *Finding Eanswythe: the Life and Afterlife of an Anglo-Saxon Saint*. As part of this work, in October 2018 a community excavation was undertaken, with the kind permission of Folkestone and Hythe District Council, across the line of the watercourse at Morehall Recreation Ground in Cheriton. This focussed on what seems to be a junction of a ditch carrying the waters of St Eanswythe's Water with another that appears to have been able to take water from the main Pent Stream. Over the course of ten days, CAT staff led thirty volunteers to excavate by hand a 4m square trench. The trench revealed a clay-lined ditch cut into the underlying natural sand; there was a complex sequence of ditches and recuts indicating that the watercourse required regular cleaning and re-cutting over a long period to keep it flowing. Ultimately, stoneware pipes were laid sometime after 1850, to make it somewhat easier to maintain.

The dig confirmed that the watercourse survives as a major archaeological feature of considerable antiquity. Very few finds were recovered from the earlier ditches but an animal bone from the base of the second phase ditch produced a radiocarbon date of the later thirteenth century. Thus, at least at this point, there is no evidence of the watercourse dating back as far as the seventh century. Indeed, in 1095 the site of the former Anglo-Saxon minster, now situated within the circuit of an earthwork castle (the bailey that gives its name to the Bayle) was granted by the Lord of Folkestone to Lonlay Abbey in Normandy, which established a Benedictine priory on the site. A few years later, in 1137-8, this was moved a short distance to a new location on the site of the current parish church. It may be that the watercourse was first constructed at some point in this period to supply the priory, but that subsequently its name became linked with St Eanswythe, the *Vita* conveniently promoting this association. It is hoped that future work will allow this picture to be refined.



The excavation, which took place in very good weather for the time of year, was an excellent example of people from the local community coming together to explore an important but neglected part of Folkestone's heritage. Everyone worked very hard, in particular digging through some very stiff clay that had been used to infill the watercourse at some point in the twentieth century. Especial thanks must go to local resident Margaret, whose garden backs onto the recreation ground. Although unable to dig herself, she became the hero of the site by providing a steady supply of not only teas and coffees but an incredible range of home-baked food. This contributed to making a very happy team!

If you want to learn more about the long history of St Eanswythe's Water and its importance for the town of Folkestone, then you can join a guided tour for Friends on Thursday 18th July. See the Events guide for details.

Andrew Richardson

Charax Spasinou

excavating an Alexandrian city in southern Iraq

In the autumn of 2018, I was fortunate enough to take extended leave from the Trust to head off to the warmer climes of southern Iraq. There I formed part of an international team exploring the site of Charax Spasinou, a port city formerly known as Alexandria-on-the-Tigris located some 40km north of Basra. As its name suggests, the port was originally founded by Alexander the Great in 324BC, later becoming the capital of the kingdom of Characene, part of the Parthian empire, and an important trading port exchanging goods with places as distant as India, Palmyra and Petra.

The site today, covering an area of some five square kilometres, comprises a flat plain partly bordered to the north and west by a vast mudbrick rampart. It is pockmarked by earthworks from the Iran-Iraq war (1980–88), the modern day state border lying only a few kilometres away to the east. The ramparts were cut into for tank and other military emplacements, whilst within the former city itself the Iraqi army used bulldozers to



Three of the column bases of the palace complex, and the collapsed column.



Early morning, and the track to the site after rain.

form berms, banks and vehicle emplacements. Recording of these remains forms part of the current project.

Much of the work of the Charax Spasinou Project, however, involves geophysical mapping of the site, a vast undertaking within such a landscape. It requires the surveyors to walk up and down 40m square grids, carrying a magnetometer weighing 17kg, covering literally hundreds and hundreds of square metres over the course of a season. The results, however, are spectacular, showing that below the salt-encrusted plain there lie rectangular blocks of buildings divided by regular streets.

But of course it is not sufficient to record streets and buildings without understanding their date, and that was where the work of myself and a colleague came in. We left the surveyors to their tasks and worked with a team of workmen from the local village to open a few evaluation trenches, with the aim of putting flesh to the bones of the geophysics results.

This season, the first couple of trenches were disappointing. Despite finding the lines of mud brick walls, the remains within the walls were shallow and fairly ephemeral, comprising just a few scrappy plaster and beaten earth floors, some pots set into the ground and a few scatters of pottery. A small collection of coins provided initial optimism that a secure date could be obtained from the primary deposits, but the harsh salt environment ensured that most were heavily corroded and their depictions largely illegible.



Base camp of portacabins. 'Home' for seven weeks.

Fortunately, movement to another area of the site proved more fruitful. Here, the geophysics results suggested the presence of significant building remains; what we found was almost certainly part of a palace structure, comprising a central courtyard surrounded by arrangements of square-based columns. The column bases were impressive, being built of horizontally laid triangular bricks rendered with thick white plaster. But not only the bases survived – also uncovered within the trench was one of the collapsed columns, resting on the underlying plaster floor, formed of bricks rendered with fluted plaster perhaps designed to mimic a carved marble column. Pottery recovered during the evaluation suggests that the palace was in use around the first to third century AD, curiously going out of use whilst the city remained in occupation and showing no evidence of later re-use.

The ancient city was prone to flooding – it was re-founded twice, as Antiochia in 166BC and in 141BC as Charax Spasinou – and working in the field during a very wet season it was not difficult to see why! Access to the site was along a long dirt track which became impassable after any significant rainfall, leading to many frustrating days back at base camp kicking our heels waiting to get back to site. Towards the end of the season the situation was remedied – by employing a tractor and trailer to transport us to the excavation area!

Working in Iraq is a fascinating experience, because of the work, the place and the people. The work, not only because the remains we excavate are entirely different to anything I experience in the UK – uncovering the line of a mud brick wall which has decayed mud brick wall debris immediately adjacent can be quite a challenge – but also because the dig is entirely digital. All mapping is undertaken with a Total Station,

ToughPads and Penmap, and context information is directly entered into a database installed on individual ToughBooks, minimising the amount of time required in post-excavation work. And the ToughBooks are indeed tough, surviving heat, rain and dust without complaint. A drone is used extensively for photography, and 3D mapping forms a key part of the work. For me, it's interesting to experience these varieties of technological use.

And the place is of course fascinating. Whilst I was there this season, we paid visits to the newly refurbished Basra museum, located in one of Saddam Hussein's former palaces on the banks of the Shatt al-Arab, took a boat trip to the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris, and visited the 'Tree of Knowledge' at Al Qurna., supposedly surviving from the time of Adam. We ate at restaurants in Basra, toured around the souk and visited other archaeological sites run by the Iraqi State Board for Antiquities and Heritage.

Perhaps the best part, though, is working with colleagues who are passionate about this ancient country. Iraqi archaeologists form a core part of the evaluation and survey teams, and live with us in our base camp of portacabins set in the grounds of a municipal building. We also benefit from the input of a variety of Iraqi specialists and state officials, and even get visited by tourists (largely American) on their route round southern Iraq. Being part of a multi-national team, and helping to contribute to the knowledge of this country's history, is a privilege.

Alison Hicks

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ISBSA 2018: Conference Report



Gyptis Fort St Jean.

The fifteenth *International Symposium on Boat and Ship Archaeology* was held this year in Marseille, southern France. Nearly 250 maritime archaeologists from around the world attended the event, at which were presented 77 papers, organised into eight themes; 'Open Sea, Closed Sea', 'Ship Construction', 'Recent Discoveries', 'Nautical Ethnography', 'Dendrology', 'Experimental Archaeology', 'Research Methods' and 'Asian Studies'. The opening paper by Francesco Tiboni from the University of Genoa considered the boatbuilding traditions of the Mediterranean during the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age. He challenged the widely-held assumption of the pre-eminence of the 'Naval World' of the Levant and the characterisation of the Western Mediterranean as an 'empty sea' during this period, open to conquest by Greek and Levantine traditions. Through close study of naval iconography, written sources and later prehistoric shipwrecks he identified the very first regional shipbuilding traditions of the Western Mediterranean which developed independently in distinct regional zones. Furthermore, he suggested that these regional traditions survived until the rise of Rome; but quite how these distinct boat types continued in a world characterised by maritime connections and exchange, where mobility of people and ideas was commonplace, remains a fruitful topic for further reflection.

The conference also hosted a travelling exhibition of the late Bronze Age sewn-plank boat from Zambrajita on the north-western coast of the Istrian peninsula in Croatia. The boat has now been dated to 1264–1053 cal BC, and this was an ideal opportunity to learn more about the details of the vessel and to discuss the boat with the excavators, Ida Koncani Uhač and Marko Uhač. Although I was initially intrigued by the discovery of another Bronze Age sewn-plank boat so far from Dover and the other British examples, it was clear that the Zambrajita boat is completely different in its technology and conception from the Dover boat and sits comfortably as an early example of Adriatic boatbuilding traditions that developed in later periods.

Several speakers reported on (often spectacular) Roman period shipwrecks. Marc Guyon from the University of Aix-Marseille described the conservation of the Gallo-Roman barge 'Lyon Saint-George 4', dated to the beginning of the third century AD. This was one of 16 boats (six of which were Roman in date) excavated in Lyon on the right bank of the Saône in 2002–2004. An 18m length of the hull survived, (originally 28m long and over 5m wide), which was lifted in six sections and then immersed in a small lake near Lyon for ten years before proper conservation could begin. As part of the conservation process, each of the boat sections was completely dismantled, allowing the detailed recording of every plank repair and caulking maintenance, enabling the team to draw up the barge's maintenance 'log book' and estimate the lifespan of the boat. This made me think of the many patches and repairs to the Dover Bronze Age boat, which, although meticulously recorded, have never been thought about in this way - perhaps a new study for the future. The caulking on the Lyon barge consisted of recycled woollen sails; remarkably, the stitching pattern of the Roman sails showed that exactly the same sail-making technique was still in use in the eighteenth century AD!

Another Roman barge was described by Krunoslav Zubčić from the Croatian Conservation Institute. A 12m length survived of the boat, dated to AD 85–234, lying on the bed of the River Kupa at Kamensko, in Croatia. Its oak planks were joined together using numerous closely-spaced iron clamps, a construction technique that can be distinguished from the sewn-plank traditions of the Adriatic. The barge had foundered along with its cargo; several hundred Roman bricks (*lateres sesquipedales*) were tightly packed into the hull, inadvertently protecting the timbers from damage and decay.

More river finds were presented by Andrej Gaspari from the University of Ljubljana; a 12m long, 2m wide log boat, with features of presumed Mediterranean origin dated to the second century AD, was revealed on the bed of the Ljubljanica River at Vrhnika in Slovenia, along with part of a contemporary sewn-plank cargo ship, one of the earliest known examples of the Northern Adriatic shipbuilding tradition. Also in the riverbed near Sinja Norica (just north-east of Vrhnika) was an early first century AD cargo ship constructed using iron clamps similar to the Kamensko boat in Croatia. Vrhnika is the site of the ancient *Nauportus* (Νάμφορτος), an important port described by Greek

geographers as the centre for large-scale waterborne cargo traffic between the Latin colony of Aquileia and the Transalpine Celts in the hinterland of the Northern Adriatic.

Another Roman wreck was recorded off the coast just north of Split in Croatia. Irena Radić Rossi (University of Zadar) explained that the first century AD flat-bottomed cargo ship of mortice-and-tenon construction had been deliberately scuttled by filling it with rocks to form a support for the adjacent sea wall. The site lies close to ancient Salona (Σάλωνα), the Roman provincial capital of Dalmatia, today the small town of Solin.

Carlos de Juan (DRASSM) reported on a huge shipwreck 1km off the coast of La Vila Joiosa, in Alicante, Eastern Spain. This boat was around 30m long with a potential cargo capacity of 230 tons, and probably represents one of the large cargo ships plying from Spain to Italy at the end of Nero's reign in the 60s AD. The hull is partly obscured by the cargo it was carrying when it sank: between 2,500–3,000 Dressel type 7–11 amphorae, each of which would have originally held forty litres of fish sauce! In addition, twelve ingots of lead, each weighing around 64 kilograms, were found placed on either side of the false keel.

A major highlight of the conference was a series of papers describing the recent discoveries of the Black Sea Maritime Archaeology Project, built around a partnership between the Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Sozopol, Bulgaria, and the Centre for Maritime Archaeology in Southampton. I have been following this work with interest for some years now, but the most recent discoveries are truly spectacular. Kroum Batcharov (University of Connecticut) and Julian Whitewright (University of Southampton) led us through a selection of the 67 shipwrecks that have been found deep in the anoxic waters, ranging in date from the twentieth century back to the fifth/fourth century BC. The images and videos of these near complete and perfectly preserved vessels were quite breath-taking, reminding me of the impact of the images of the excavations of the Bronze Age settlement at Must Farm in Cambridgeshire. Three Roman shipwrecks have been found thus far: a 30m long cargo vessel dated to AD 140–355 with a partial cargo of amphorae and a large void perhaps suggestive of an organic cargo, such as grain; a 20m long late Roman boat without cargo that left the details of its construction exposed; and a virtually complete ship of the first–second century AD, lying over 2km below the surface of the sea, with its mast still standing and the tillers in place on the *in*



Gyptis Vieux-Port.

situ steering oars. But most spectacular of all was, at a similar depth, a Greek ship which has been radiocarbon dated to around 400 BC; its rudder, rowing benches and even the contents of its hold remained intact. The team was obviously very proud (if not slightly stunned) by the discoveries, but also expressed some frustration; many of the wrecks are too deep to be reached by divers, and in some instances they are covered by a thin layer of silt, obscuring details. It might be possible to blow this away using a remotely operated underwater vehicle (ROV), but the underlying timbers, though astonishingly well preserved, are also very fragile and easily damaged. So, for now and for the foreseeable future, these miraculous survivals from the past will remain undisturbed.

Considering that nearly all historic and prehistoric boats and ships were made of wood, it was surprising that the first ever session on dendrology took place this year at the 15th ISBSA. New techniques were examined for identifying where trees used in building a ship came from and the problems of establishing dendrochronological sequences for the Mediterranean basin were considered.

The primary reason I attended the ISBSA was to present the preliminary results of our work on re-assessing and reconstructing the Dover Bronze Age boat to an audience of experts in maritime archaeology. This work started over ten years ago, when we joined forces with the eminent Danish maritime archaeologist Ole Crumlin-Pedersen and our old friend Richard Darrah, an internationally renowned expert in ancient timber technology. Alas, as I have previously reported, neither is with us today. Ole died in October 2011 and Richard in February 2017, without having had the opportunity to write up and publish the results of their work. All we have are some notes that Ole prepared before he passed away and Richard's archive, a mass of drawings, notebooks, files and scale models that Richard's widow donated to Dover museum. Working through this material in order to articulate a formal academic account of this exercise in experimental archaeology will take a considerable time, but some provisional statements can be made.

In contrast to the great majority of ancient boat and ship reconstructions, many of which were described at the Marseille conference, our approach to the Dover boat (at least in the first instance) was not to build a boat at all, but rather to understand better the original shape of the boat timbers we had found. There was no blueprint for the eventual boat reconstruction, no boat 'lines drawings' that are usually at the heart of most boat reconstructions. Careful re-assessment of the original timbers — compressed and distorted after millennia of burial — allowed us to refine our understanding of the shape of the original planks, and judicious use of scale models permitted us to see how they fitted together in three dimensions.

This information was the starting point for the actual boat reconstruction itself which took place early in 2013. Once the corrected elements of the boat planks that had been excavated were assembled, we could see the spaces where the missing parts would

have been. Working from the known, the shapes of the missing pieces were revealed and could be fabricated accordingly. Once the reconstructed boat had been assembled, and some of the issues about caulking and waterproofing resolved, by happy chance the boat proved to be seaworthy, stable and manoeuvrable. The project was an endorsement of working strictly from archaeological data and using that data in a formal way to find the most probable hypotheses for reconstructing missing elements. The presentation elicited some interesting and useful discussion, and it was interesting to hear other speakers in the same session adopting a similar approach, most notably Vibeke Bischoff from the Viking Ship Museum in Roskilde. The reconstruction of the Viking ship from Oseberg (launched in 2012) was initially dismissed as unseaworthy by sailors using principles employed for handling traditional square-rigged boats from Western Norway. Vibeke returned to the archaeological evidence and reconfigured the rigging and ballast accordingly, whereupon the boat behaved perfectly. It was another excellent example of how we should allow archaeological data to 'speak' to us and not force our modern-day assumptions on the evidence.

So, all in all a very important and useful conference, but best of all was the opportunity to go for a short sail in *Gyptis*, a full-scale replica of a sixth-century BC Archaic Greek sewn-plank boat; quite splendid! Many thanks to the Friends for their assistance in allowing me to attend.

Peter Clark



Our sincere thanks go to our brilliant Hon. Librarian for the last few years, Jane Blackham. Jane stepped down back in the autumn and has been greatly missed: a great colleague. The good news is that we are very pleased to welcome Brenda Marshall into this much appreciated volunteer role. Brenda, who read archaeology as part of her degree, has already been helping out in the finds department. She is a Fellow of the English Association and a passionate supporter of libraries, involved with the maintenance of other local libraries as well as our own.

Jake Weekes

EVENTS

FCAT lectures with the Centre for Kent History and Heritage

Thursday 28 March, 7pm, Newton NG07, Canterbury Christ Church University
The Medieval Monastic Death Ritual: the Cluniac experience, Dr Ellie Williams

At the heart of Cluniac monastic life was death. The funerary rites documented in their eleventh-century customaries convey the extent to which the monks were to immerse themselves in the world of the dead, and to actively confront the emotional and biological realities surrounding the passing of a brother. Integrating osteoarchaeological and documentary evidence, this talk will explore the Cluniac response to death and burial.

Thursday 30 May, 7.00pm, Newton NG07, Canterbury Christ Church University
Dover Defences in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries
Jon Iveson, Museums and Tourism Manager, Dover District Council

Recent research by Dover Museum on the development of the fortifications defending the town of Dover.

Other events

Wednesday 8 May, 10.00am, National Trust, White Cliffs, Dover
An excursion to the White Cliffs of Dover, Andrew Richardson

We will visit the First and Second World War sites managed by the National Trust. Includes a guided tour of the Fan Bay Deep Shelter, and tour of Wanstone Battery, site of the 15 inch guns Jane and Clem, the largest coastal artillery pieces ever deployed by Britain.

A few seats will be available on the CAT minibus, departing from the new offices at Cow Lane, Wincheap at 9.00am. Please contact Andrew Richardson to book a seat if you would like a lift, or for directions for where to meet on site (andrew.richardson@canterburytrust.co.uk or 01227 826276).

Thursday 18 July, 10.00am, Crete Road West, Folkestone
Saints and Springs: a guided tour along the course of St Eanswythe's watercourse, Folkestone, Andrew Richardson and Annie Partridge

This guided walk will follow the course of St Eanswythe's Water, a natural stream that was diverted into a cleverly engineered channel that ran across the landscape from the downs to the sea, and that supplied the town of Folkestone with fresh water until

modern times. As well as exploring the history of the watercourse and its association in legend with the seventh-century saint, Eanswythe, we will cover an archaeological record dating back 125,000 years, when hippos roamed in Folkestone!

A minibus will depart from Wincheap offices (Cow Lane) at 9am. Contact Andrew Richardson to book a seat on a first come, first served basis.

For those travelling by car, we will meet at 10am on Crete Road West, on the stretch above Holywell Coombe, Folkestone (just off the A260 Canterbury Road at grid reference TR 2212638433). I'll then lead people on from there.

People will need to be either in the minibus or following in their own car. People wishing to attend should contact me on andrew.richardson@canterburytrust.co.uk or on 07876 307681.



Saturday 6 April, 10.00am, 92A Broad Street, Canterbury
NEW COURSE: Exploring the Medieval and Early Tudor Cinque Ports, Sheila Sweetinburgh

Drawing on work previously undertaken by the Trust and documentary sources, this one-day course will provide students with the opportunity to explore the development of the Kentish Cinque Ports from the Norman Conquest to the Reformation, with a special emphasis on the later Middle Ages. This period saw the Cinque Ports reach their pinnacle of importance to the Crown, yet was also a time when the Ports had to defend their privileged status against outside lords such as the Archbishop of Canterbury and the abbot of Battle Abbey. Many Cinque Ports still contain medieval and 16th-century buildings, and, as well as churches and guildhalls, there are fine examples of the houses which belonged to merchants and craftsmen who lived, worked and worshiped in these towns. Through a combination of lectures and workshops, students will learn about the Ports, their citizens and communities of ward and parish, as well as having the opportunity to work with a range of primary sources. Fee: £45 (£40 for FCAT). See www.canterburytrust.co.uk/community_archaeology/archaeology-courses or contact annie.partridge@canterburytrust.co.uk to book a place

Saturday 13 April to Sunday 14 April, Canterbury Christ Church University,
Tudors and Stuarts History Weekend

A host of world-renowned historians, including Dr Helen Castor, Dr David Starkey and Alison Weir will visit Canterbury to give talks and tours on the momentous changes that took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the characters behind them.

Lectures and guided tours are classified under four themes: kings and queens, war and politics, the church, and social history and will give audiences new understanding and interpretation of this period of history.

To book visit www.canterbury.ac.uk/tudors-stuarts



This post-medieval die stamp, possibly for stamping bread, was recovered during an evaluation at Furnace Mill, Hook Green, near Lamberhurst. Weighing 83.67g, it is made of brass, is 38mm square and 8.5mm thick.

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