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Commercial

Mint Yard, The King's School, Canterbury

Although the main excavation at Mitchinson's House, Mint Yard was completed during the autumn of 2020, CAT staff recently returned to the site as part of a watching brief to monitor groundworks associated with services for the new building and ahead of installation of a new paved walkway.

Foundations of the Almonry Chapel built in c 1317-18 had been recorded and subsequently removed during construction of Mitchinson House in 1980, however the recent works exposed further surviving elements of this structure. This has included at least one phase of the southernmost wall of the chapel, built using stone and flint, with evidence for a number of buttresses extending from the outer face. The stonework included the reuse of earlier architectural fragments within its make-up and showed evidence for post-medieval brick refacing of the internal wall at the western end, along with other later brickwork additions inside the building.

In some places the structural remains lay less than 0.2m below the existing ground surface. The presence of significant archaeology surviving at such a high level complicated the build as Historic England (HE) indicated that the structural remains were to be preserved in situ. Following consultation with HE, The King's School and Coniston (the principal contractor), preservation in situ of the wall was achieved, though much of the site was excavated down to formation level. One area revealed a glimpse of what appears to be an early paved surface, perhaps contemporary with construction of the chapel, whilst others exposed patches of a much later post-medieval cobbled surface with a built-in drainage channel that pre-dates the modern tarmacked driveway which now extends from The Borough through to the Green Court.

Jess Twyman



Much praise for the design of CAT's stall at two recent Expo events



CAT's recent attendance at two construction industry exposition and networking events, the Kent Construction Expo near Maidstone and the South East Construction Expo near Crawley, provided great opportunities to try out the newly designed stall and associated marketing material that CAT's commercial team have been working on. These events provide great opportunities to engage with fellow professionals working in the construction

industry and the feedback from them was uniformly positive. The clarity of the design was praised and the underlying message that CAT offers high quality, client-focused, services, clearly understood.

The Kent Expo is the largest annual event of its type held in the southeast and attracts leading figures from across the construction sector. Many of the architectural practices, planning consultancies, small building firms and major construction companies represented are well known to CAT and the event provided a good opportunity to reconnect with some old friends, meet others known only from email correspondence and, most importantly, meet new ones. The South East Construction Expo is smaller but also attracts a good mix of companies working in the sector. There were proportionally more organisations with stalls that CAT hadn't worked with before, so going a little bit further than we have before certainly proved worthwhile. We came back from both events with piles of business cards and notebooks full of ideas for potential future projects.

A big thanks go to Frances and James who, along with Alison and Mark, maintained their enthusiasm and professionalism during some long and tiring days.

Outreach

Archaeological Evaluation at East Wear Bay 2022: Evidence of a Possible Roman Barrow and One of the Earliest Examples of Sophisticated Art in Kent

After a break of several years, archaeological investigations at Folkestone Roman Villa resumed in late August and continued throughout September. The work was led by Keith Parfitt, Andrew Macintosh and Adelina Teoaca from the Trust, but the bulk of the fieldwork was carried out by unpaid local volunteers and students from the University of Kent.

deposits. Finds from these layers included a CLBR stamped tile, a fourth century coin, painted wall plaster and Roman pottery.

2. Copt Point

Overlooking the Roman villa site from the south stands the rising ground of Copt Point. Was there activity here in ancient times? One point of particular interest was a mound visible on the summit, surrounding the Coastwatch lookout bunker. Was this actually the remains of a prehistoric or Roman barrow overlooking the villa, which had been extensively remodelled during the Second World War, when the bunker was first built?

In order to assess something of the archaeological potential of Copt Point, a series of hand-dug trial trenches was cut across the area in tandem with the investigations going on at the villa site. On the northern slope of the hill Trenches 1 and 2 produced a light scatter of prehistoric flintwork and one or two pieces of prehistoric pottery, together with more recent material (including golf balls lost from the adjacent putting greens).

On the summit of the hill, Trench 3 cut into the tail of the visible mound surrounding the Coastwatch lookout, confirmed that the extant earthwork was in part the product of modern soil dumping but also suggested that the basis of the mound was a heap of earlier stone rubble that included some Roman building material and tile. Precisely how this information is to be interpreted is still being considered and further work will probably be required before things can be fully understood.

Keith Parfitt, 10.10.22



The work this year was in two areas:

1. Roman villa

At the main Roman villa site overlooking East Wear Bay, the mosaic floor in Room 40 - the grand summer dining room at the centre of the villa complex - was re-investigated. The mosaic was first discovered and fully exposed in 1924 but it was covered over in 1957 and, accordingly, has not been seen for more than sixty years. The work here in 2022 was designed to determine what, if anything, survived of the mosaic. Eyewitness accounts from the early 1950s suggested that the floor was in a very poor state when it was reburied, but the new work established that some reasonable amount of the floor remains, and it was found to be in a rather better state than expected. In reply to an email update from Keith Parfitt, Steven Cosh, one of the leading authorities on Romano-British mosaics, noted:

My understanding is that the mosaic dates to the later second century - it certainly does by style. In this it is one of very few mosaics indeed still surviving from an villa of that period (there are many more urban examples, of course). I can't off-hand think of another in south-east Britain, unless one counts Fishbourne which is scarcely typical. As you are well aware, there were several other exceptionally large villas in second-century Kent, including Boxted, Farningham 2, Minster and Eccles (and others in SE Britain) but none of their mosaics survive. Exceptionally fine quality were found at Eccles and fine ones at Minster, but only at Folkestone have they been found in situ and still survive. Therefore, if regarded as a work of art rather than merely a floor design, it is one of the earliest examples of sophisticated art in Kent.



Future work



Without doubt, there is a great deal more work to be done at the Folkestone site, both on the Roman villa and the probably more important late Iron Age remains that underlie and extend beyond it. But the clay cliffs upon which the site stands are not stable and continuing coastal erosion means that everything will slowly fall into the sea over the coming years.

Although a direct threat to the site is thus readily apparent, there is no ready source of funding for any programme of rescue excavation. Accordingly, if work is to continue at this crucial Kent site substantial sums of money will need to be raised to finance any future investigations. A good start on fund-raising has already been made, with CAT Friends pledging substantial support, but much more will be needed.

For more information and stories on East Wear Bay go to www.canterburytrust.co.uk/news



When the open villa ruins were covered over in 1957, ash from the municipal incinerator was used as backfill. This material is dry, loose and dusty and tends to blow about in the wind when exposed. As a consequence, our diggers were required to wear full overalls, face masks, gloves and goggles to protect them from the dust when working with the ash. Intense summer heat made this an especially arduous task, and we are grateful to everyone who assisted. Supplies of custard creams and chocolate biscuits went some small way towards to keeping everyone going!

Trenching by the students from the University of Kent outside the villa to the north-west located undisturbed stratified Roman

The Ghosts of Other Things. Works by Bryan Hawkins.

We are delighted to announce the opening of a new exhibition 'The Ghosts of Other Things', created by CAT artist-in-residence Bryan Hawkins.

Archaeological investigations conducted in 2021/22 in advance of the development of the new #InnovationParkMedway near Rochester Airport formed the basis of this exciting exhibition. Expanding beyond the archaeology and history of site, visitors are invited to explore Rochester's history and its 'ghosts'.

Spookily in time for Halloween, the exhibition at Rochester Art Gallery opened 28 October and runs until 14 January 2023.

Bryan will also be leading some events at the art gallery during the exhibition (see below for details).



FREE Events led by artist Bryan Hawkins



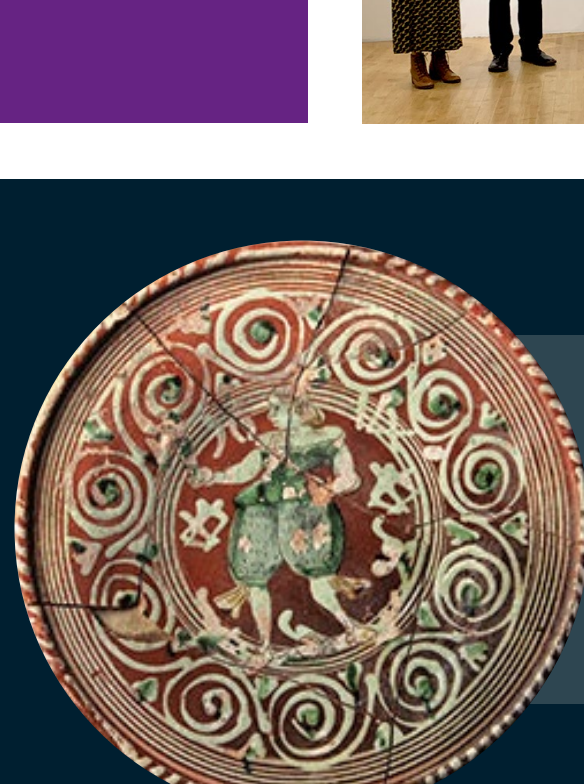
Art, Archaeology & Myth

Talk, Draw and Explore
Sat 12 November 10.30 - 12.30 and 1.30 - 3.30

Informal Artists Talk

The inspiration, techniques and stories behind the show
Sat 19 November 2-3pm

All events are open to all - adults, families and young people, no need to book. For further details go to medway.gov.uk/art



Finds showcase

Werra-ware plate

Go to unlockingourpast.co.uk to find out more

Remember to follow us on social media for all our latest messages, campaigns, on-site and in-office news.

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