



Colchester Archaeological Group

NEWSLETTER

Registered Charity No. 1028434

January 2019 No. 001



Jonathan giving a guided tour on the Members open evening at Fordham

Welcome to the CAG Newsletter. Last year it was decided by the Committee to produce a Newsletter every six months to keep members in touch and informed about the group's activities and then sent to them by email. It is not intended to be a technical bulletin as these will be covered by specific reports as and when they become available. The Newsletter welcomes articles and event reports and pictures from members for inclusion. Members will still receive their regular emails as new events unfold.

MEMBERS EVENTS

Annual CAG Weekend away: 10th to 13th May 2019

At the moment the itinerary is to call at Avebury stone circle on the way. To visit St David's and Pembroke Castle on the Saturday and the Gold Mine and Carmarthen on the Sunday. Our homeward journey would take in Waddeston Manor (NT) or Hughenden Manor (NT). We would be staying in the Aberavon hotel. Depending on numbers shared rooms would be about £265 per person and single rooms about £300 per person to include transport and dinner, bed and breakfast at the hotel. For any queries or to reserve a place, please contact Barbara Butler on: barbara@peterbutlerdesign.co.uk

Volunteers are needed to help organise, with support, this years CAG's Summer programme, Please talk to a member of the Committee who will explain fully what this entails.

The Winter lectures are as popular as ever and we are now half way through the season. Ideas for speakers for next season are always welcome.

Members Events	1	Roman Roads group	4	Dates for your Diary	6
Field Work	2	Young Archeaogists	5	Interesting finds	7
Cropmarks group	3	Obituary	5	Committee & Notices	8
		Publications	6		

This years Christmas Party took place at the Hawkins Rooms, St Botolph's Church. A buffet was provided by the members, this was followed by a quiz and a raffle. A total of about 45 members attended. There was plenty of time left for old friends to meet and to catch up on gossip.

On a dark Tuesday night at the beginning of December as is traditional for this time of year the Fordham site Diggers gathered at the Officers Club for a Christmas Feast. All were satisfied and promised to return to the site in the New Year. Thanks to Denise for organising.

The Annual Winter Solstice Watch on Tuesday morning, 21st December. See Sally's report in The Cropmarks Group report

It was good to see so many members visit the Fordham site on a hot sunny night in July and thanks to Jonathan Oldham for his knowledgeable talk and guided tour. Everyone seemed impressed.

We enjoyed a Summer Party in the West Mersea garden of CAG members Pat and David Moore. The evening was warm and our hosts were very welcoming so a pleasant time was had by all. Our thanks go to Pat and David.

The Coach trip to Peterborough and Kimbolton Castle; 42 members and guests enjoyed a morning in Peterborough, most of them visiting the cathedral and the newly refurbished museum; the afternoon was spent at Kimbolton Castle, now a private school, which was something of a revelation, with a very interesting social and architectural history; we were fortunate to have two very informative and entertaining guides. As the number attending was higher than anticipated, and as the entrance charge for Kimbolton Castle was less than the originally planned visit to Elton Hall, we were able to make a refund of £10 per head.

Summer Solstice Watch 2018: Ten of us met at Wormingford to observe the sunset on 21 June. It was a lovely evening with no cloud. It was a little disappointing so few could make it this year.



Kimbolton Castle, Inner courtyard

CAG Library, A message from David Walton

I had acquired quite a large number of Current Archaeologist magazines which I have managed to give to members and in the last resort take to Charity Shops, most do not take magazines. We still have a lot of old CAG annual reports in

FIELD-WORK REPORT

FORDHAM HALL UPDATE

The dig at Fordham Hall Roman Villa site is continuing through the winter when weather permits. The track beside the site is now too muddy for vehicle use so access is by foot across the field. A good set of waterproofs and thermals is also recommended if you are thinking of joining us.

The Excavation of the Villa site continues to move northwards and it's footprint is started to becoming clearer, smaller than first thought. It seems there was a number of rebuilds of the Villa during it's lifetime which is giving us a complicated picture to investigate.

This season has found evidence of pre-Roman occupation in the form of a number of shards of Iron-age pottery and a pit on the west side of the Villa site together with a coin found on the eastern side. There has also been a selection of worked flints uncovered during excavation.

Frank Lockwood has taken charge of the recording of the Ceramic Building Material (CBM) already collected and will report on it at a later date.

We are indebted to Mike Hamilton-Macy for the provision of a portable office, which he has fitted out for the site. This has become very useful for keeping the paperwork (and members) organised and dry and can be locked up at night.

A Small Highlight of My First Year, By Neil Short

As a starting context, I must state that from an early age I have held a great enthusiasm for history and archaeology. My involvement in this field was, however, heavily impacted by my school careers advisor some 50 years ago who suggested my future would be better served by concentrating on core subjects offering greater career potential. For the best part of the next 50 years my life centred on physics/science and military aerospace. The career was enjoyable but the "itch" remained. Some 13 months ago my mind and finances confirmed and delivered retirement. Within a couple of weeks I had made contact with CAG, joined and made my way to the dig site at Fordham.



I'm was not sure what to expect so I guess I was somewhat surprised that I was allowed to have a go at trowelling from day one, albeit in a region I would get to know well – the east end “cobbled zone”. With no great expectation of finds the first weeks and months were devoted to the clearance of soil (well let's call it mud) from around a cobbled surface. Finds were found, pot sherds and animal bone and even an exciting (assumed) Roman nail before, on a bright summer July day, my limited life in archaeology was transformed by my first real “quality” find; a real “Time-Team” moment.

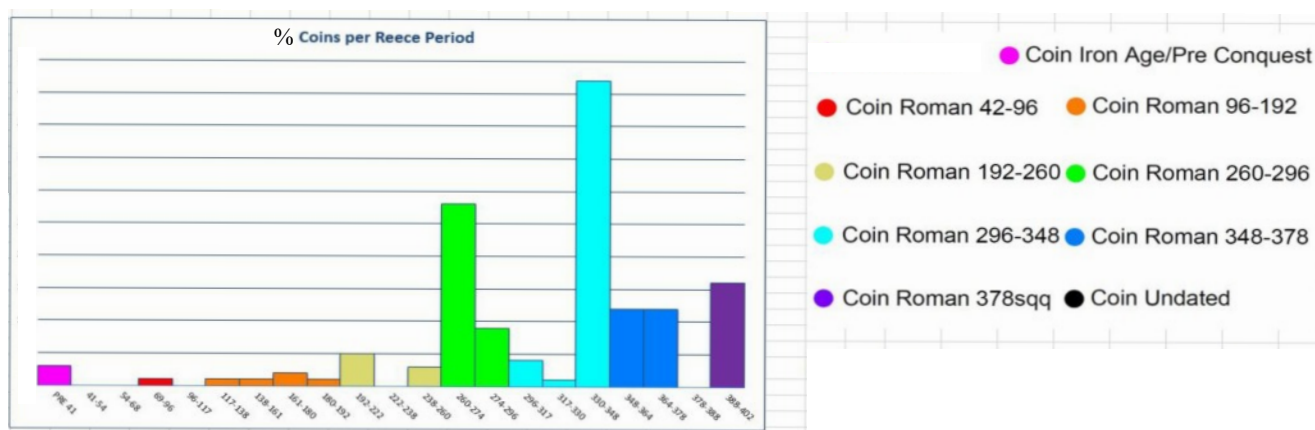
Following removal of an initial cobbled surface to look for another surface below. A metal detecting indication target was found to be an Iron Age coin, To be precise, it was a Cunobelinus “Severed Head”

bronze unit with a Sphinx on one side and a figure carrying a severed head on the other. Further investigation shows the coin was minted in Colchester in the period 20-40AD. (Picture: Frank Lockwood).

A longer version of this article can be found on the website.

A snapshot of the current coin loss histogram, Peter Lancaster

From 2015 to the 4th December 2018 of the coins found scatted around the site, 88% were dateable, thanks to Mark Curteis. Unfortunately 30% of them were found on the spoil heap so we don't have locations for them. We do have locations for approx 68% of the coins which obviously helps with understanding the development of site.



St John's Abbey additional information from John Moore

The final CAG Bulletin, number 56, dated 2016, contained a long item on the visual history of Colchester's St John's Abbey and its precinct; further information has recently come to light about the appearance of the medieval Abbey and an article detailing this further research has been added to the CAG website. To view it, go to <http://caguk.net/bulletins/>

PREHISTORIC CROPMARK STUDY GROUP

The PH Cropmark Study Group continues to meet every six weeks. Our next meeting is at 10.30am on 30th January at the Wormingford Crown.

As a result of Ellie Mead's presentation of Members' Activities at the AGM we were pleased to welcome Adrian and Maggie to our meeting on 29th November. Both would like to be regular members of the group.

Winter Solstice Watch 2018: Over 20 members and friends gathered at Wormingford just before sunrise on 21st December. Unfortunately the skies were heavily overcast and no glimmer of sunrise was observed, however the overnight rain had eased by 7.30 and many of the group walked to Metlands and back before enjoying a splendid breakfast at the Crown.

Due to breakfast being booked and paid for in advance it was necessary to hold the main 'event' on the 21st despite the unsuitable weather. However members of the CM Group were on standby to meet at the western end of the 'cursus' if suitable weather conditions were forecast for a morning either side of the 21st. The clear morning



of the 22nd provided us with the opportunity to record the time that the sun first appeared (8.27am) and to take photos (as above) identifying the spot where it first appears on the horizon. Like photos taken in 2013 these appear to confirm that the linear cropmarks across Metlands field align with sunrise at the winter solstice. Our plan to walk towards the rising sun, and record the line walked, was thwarted by a standing brassica crop growing in Metlands which was too densely planted to walk through easily.

The Prehistoric Stour Valley Book: A few copies continue to be sold at events like the Winter Solstice Breakfast and also at outlets like Red Lion Books.

Practical Archaeology: The Beaker style pots made by members of the CM Group in August were taken to Gestingthorpe where they were fired by the Gestingthorpe History Group in their reconstructed Medieval Kiln. The firing was 100% successful and all 5 pots were on show at the November meeting. We intend to make more pots during the coming months and plan to experiment further by firing them ourselves in a clamp or bonfire.

Geophysical Surveys: The group has identified two sites where we'd like to carry out further work. Permission will be sought from the landowners in the near future.

Aerial Photos: Anna Moore has added photos taken on 11th July 2018 to the CAG database. Work is still needed to link them to the EHER. Anna has recently found copies of Ida McMaster's original indexes which will be scanned and saved in PDF format. Anna, Tim Dennis and Geoff Lunn plan to liaise to determine the best way to keep AP records in the Cloud.



Anna, Sally & Carole making Beaker style pots in August

Extension of Study Area: Anna's analysis of the APs has identified sites that could be investigated. Sally Bartrum has asked Helen Saunders at ECC if she could let the group have copies of the NMP (now AIM) maps for the areas to be studied, but to date has had no response.

Ongoing Work: The analysis of the aerial photographs from both flights by members of PH Cropmark Group and the Roman Road Group continues. Members of the group continue to research and write reports on Ceremonial Practices and Climate Change during the Neolithic and Bronze Ages. The photos taken at Metlands on 22nd December will be used to determine the correlation of the linear cropmark with the sunrise.

Sally Bartrum, Dec 2018

ROMAN ROADS GROUP

Work focussed last year mainly on the aerial photography exercise undertaken by Francis Nicholls and Philip Cunningham on 11th July 18. The aim of the flight was to try to spot and photograph cropmarks and parch marks which may relate to roman roads or tracks in our area. In addition, any other unusual marks were photographed along the way.

The areas of Via Devana, the Fordham dig site, the possible extension to the Great Tey Roman Road, Gosbecks, and the road to Mersea Island were investigated. Results were patchy, but some possible road marks were noticed

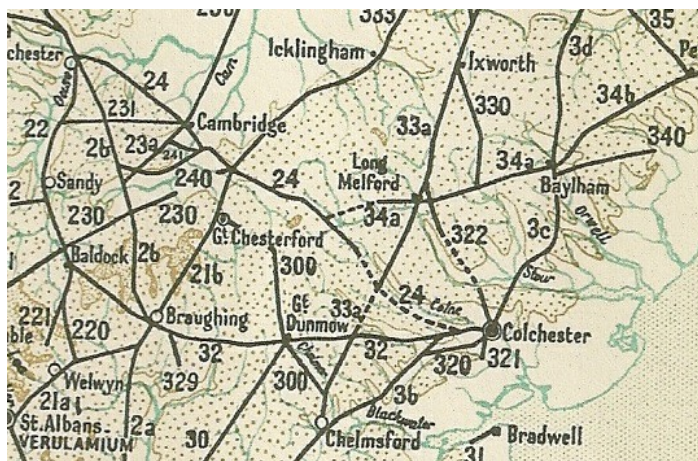
along the Via Devana and around Fordham. (The Via Devana is the Roman Road that ran from Colchester in the south-east to Chester in the north-west. Via Cambridge).

In addition, a number of interesting marks of pre-historic origin were noticed and photo-graphed. Work is ongoing to locate the marks on the map, and to document these. Marks will also be cross-referenced to existing databases such as the HER and any marks which appear to be new or undocumented will be reported to the appropriate body.

The RRG plan to make use of Google Earth for plotting and recording of roads and tracks, with the support of Tim Dennis. These will be divided into known roads and uncertain roads requiring further investigation. Map overlays will also be recorded on paper to avoid future legacy issues with Google Earth and other software.

Work has also been started on a document to aid identification of Roman Roads by referring to a checklist of indicators. These will be used by the group in the future to help determine if suspected roads and tracks are likely to be of Roman origin.

Forthcoming Project?: This idea has been put forward for investigation. Is there any relationship between local churches and their construction of Roman building materials, the remains of nearby Roman villa's or buildings and the presense of a later Manor House or Hall in the same area? (Such as Fordham). Are we looking at the continuation of the Roman farmstead into a later period? Geoff Lunn. (geoff.lunn@ntlworld.com)



The route of the Via Devana: (24)

THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS CLUB

We now have about 30 members of the YAC, but this may change as the membership comes up for renewal this month. The dig at Fordham was very popular and all members of the YAC to attended it would like to thank CAG for making this possible. We have two 16-year-olds who are volunteering to help with meetings. In October, we were able to start our mosaic project. With advice from Peter Herring who organised the making of the circus mosaic, we have acquired A1 size outdoor quality boards, PVA glue and grout. We have the resources to make more than one mosaic. CAG member and YAC volunteer Gillian Brown has been overseeing the project in the finds room at Roman Circus House and as Gillian was unable to attend the December meeting, volunteer YAC leader Pawel Wolinski led a team of members to sort the various sized tiles. The deviser of the game based on the one excavated in the "doctor's" grave at Stanway, Alex, came to our last meeting and will come to the next one. He instructed most of the members how to play. YAC member Niles is applying to become a volunteer leader. He had a week's work experience at Roman Circus House in the summer and devised a game, based on the chariot racing circus. This was constructed by staff at CAT and painted by CAT archaeologist Emma Holloway. Barbara Butler (barbara@peterbutlerdesign.co.uk)

Obituary

Richard Shackle 1945 – 2018

We were sorry to hear of the death of Richard Shackle in November of last year. Richard had been a member of CAG for over thirty years and served on the committee for twenty of those years, from 1987 to 2007. He edited the Bulletin from 1988 to 1997.

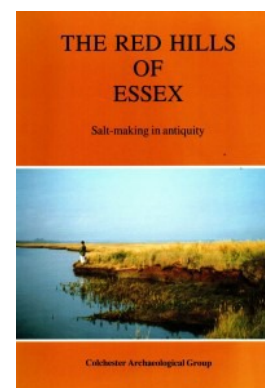
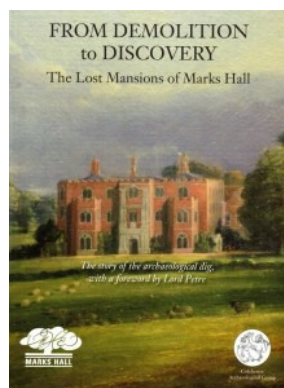
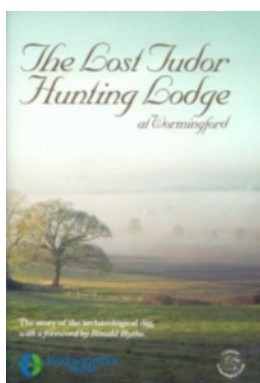
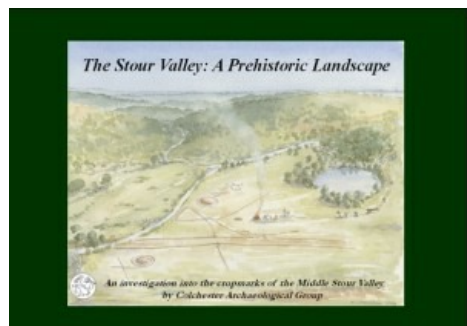
Richard was an authority on timber-framed buildings and surveyed (along with Dave Stenning) most of the medieval buildings in the town, as well as many rural ones. His knowledgeable surveys, accompanied by beautifully detailed drawings appeared in CAG Bulletins for many years, and he contributed to many Members Activities evenings during the Winter Lecture season. In 2008 he led a very popular Study Day on the Carpentry of Timber-Framed Buildings in Essex.

Our condolences go to Richard's partner Catherine and his family. *Anna Moore*

CAG PUBLICATIONS

The Stour Valley: A Prehistoric Landscape.

A 40 page summary of investigations by CAG into the cropmarks of the Middle Stour Valley (Bures – Wormingford area). This covers evidence of a Neolithic Cursus, a Long Barrow and Bronze Age rings. Each section of the flood plain is covered in detail with maps, aerial images and explanations. £3.00 plus p&p.



The Lost Mansions of Marks Hall – From Demolition to Discovery.

The story of the CAG Archaeological dig at Marks Hall. 26 colour pages. £5.00 plus p&p.

The Lost Tudor Hunting Lodge at Wormingford

The story of the excavation of a Tudor Hunting Lodge on the Essex/Suffolk border. A4, 24 pages, fully illustrated throughout in colour. A4, 24 pages and fully illustrated throughout in colour. ISBN 978-0-9503905-2-9. £2.00. plus p&p.

The Red Hills of Essex

The Survey of Essex Salt making red hills by CAG published in 1990 is still a key reference book for anyone studying this subject. 100 pages, £5.00 plus p&p.

The full set of four publications can be ordered for £10 plus p&p.

Contact CAG Sales – sales@caguk.net Also available at Monday night Lectures

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2019 WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME

- Jan 21 Ancient Wonderings: Journeys into Prehistoric Britain**
Dr James Canton local author who works in the Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies University of Essex
- Jan 28 GPR Westminster Abbey**
Erica Carrick Utsi GPR consultant who specialises in archaeological and forensic investigations
- Feb 4 Verulamium**
David Thorold Keeper of Prehistory to Medieval St Albans
- Feb 11 The Angel Roofs of East Anglia**
Michael Rimmer Classics graduate of Oxford University
- Feb 18 The Minster Church of SS Peter & Paul West Mersea**
Daniel Secker Researcher on early churches in Essex
- Feb 25 Beeleigh Mill Restoration Group**
Paul
- Mar 4 The Thomas Plume Manuscripts and Library, Maldon**
Helen Kemp Lecturer at Essex University

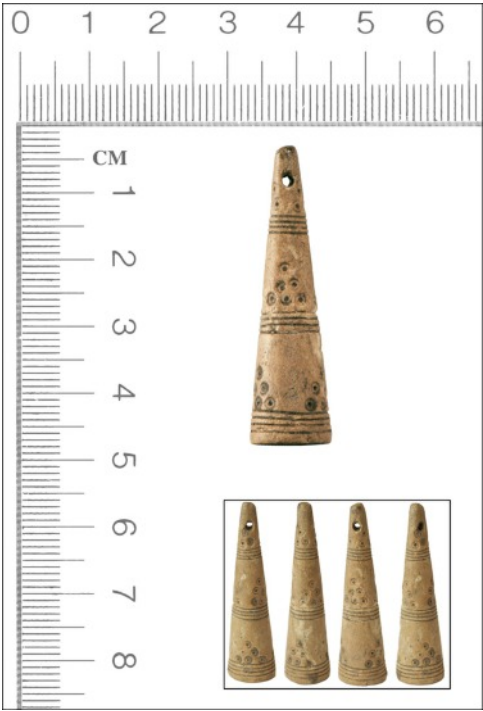
SUMMER PROGRAMME

May 10 - 13 Annual weekend away

July 21 Summer Solstice watch

The complete summer programme is now being prepared and will be emailed out to members when completed

SOME INTERESTING FINDS FROM THE FORDHAM HALL SITE



Carved bone cone with hole in top



Reconstructed roman chimney or roof vent
found near the Bath house



Roman die or dice



Carved Hair Pin



Roman Key



Spear head



Hook

Images from Frank Lockwood

COMMITTEE

President	Philip Crummy
Chair	Christine Piper
Vice-Chair	Vacant
Hon. Treasurer	Geoff Lunn
Hon. Secretary	Ellie Mead
Membership Secretary	Sally Bartrum
Lecture Programme	??
YAC & Weekend trips	Barbara Butler
Crop Marks	Andrew White
Librarian	David Walton
	Chris Farndell
	Don Goodman
	Francis Nicholls
	Andrew French
	Alan Chaplin

General enquiries – enquiries@caguk.net
Membership – membership@caguk.net
Sales – sales@caguk.net

Please use the contact emails above and mark for the attention of specific committee members.

Notices

Membership for 2019. There are still some outstanding renewals. If they have not been received by the end of February their contact details will be removed from CAG mailing lists.

Membership fees. As agreed at the AGM the membership fees from the 31st March 2019 will be: Single member £12.00. Student member £4.00. Joint members £20.00

If you would like to set up a special interest group within CAG please contact the Committee and we can let other members know

If you have any comments or items you wish to see in the Newsletter or on the Website please contact alanchaplin2@sky.com Don't forget the Group has a Facebook page where you can post your comments and pictures of events

GDPR act. For a copy of our Data protection policy please contact the Membership secretary Sally Bartrum, membership@caguk.net



The Cropmarks group Beaker style pots finished and ready for firing