



ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER Autumn 2018

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Autumn Lecture Series to Start Next Month

11 Oct – The Roman Baths Archway Project – Peter Davenport

Peter is Senior Historic Buildings Consultant at Cotswold Archaeology and was formerly Senior Field Officer at Bath Archaeological Trust with responsibility for the **Roman Baths Museum**.

Earlier this year Cotswold Archaeology (CA), completed the latest phase of archaeological work for the Archway Project, in collaboration with **BACAS**. The construction of an impressive new heritage and learning centre will ultimately reveal to the wider public hitherto hidden parts of the Roman bathing complex at Bath.

The brief to Cotswold was challenging: to create a comprehensive record of each archaeological feature and to correlate all the existing records of the site. This has included a laser scan and photogrammetric model of the entire space. Other requirements included a geophysical survey, conducted by **BACAS**, a complete clean of the area by hand, emptying earlier archaeological trenches, modern drains and intrusions and, in February, twice-hourly public tours every day, including weekends. The photogrammetry is the most ambitious and detailed piece of 3D modelling CA have ever undertaken and resulted in over 11,000 photographs and the most detailed high resolution 3D models imaginable!

New discoveries include a fragment of mosaic on the threshold of a previously unseen doorway (discovered by BACAS member, Fiona Medland no less!), and the discovery of a series of sand layers, suggesting a covered running track or exercise area.

8 Nov -- Childrens' remains - Paleopathology of children - Mary Lewis

Dr. Mary Lewis, Associate Professor at the University of Reading, has pioneered the study of child and adolescent remains and shown how answers on age and disease can often be identified in the young more accurately than for adults. She will be reviewing the techniques used for child bio-archaeology and how our understanding of subjects like diet, trauma and puberty has advanced in recent years.

13 Dec - Upton Cheney Excavations - Tony Roberts (Archeoscan)

The 'Hanging Hill Excavations' to the east of Upton Cheney have been carried out as a training dig by Archeoscan since 2012 when a trial excavation verified the presence of some significant Roman buildings and material of high status.

Archeoscan is a private company founded by Tony Roberts, a former Air Traffic Controller, now a professional archaeologist specialising in providing opportunities for community involvement in all aspects of archaeology on several sites in the South Cotswolds area.

Tony will tell us the results of the most recent digging season and explain the findings. It has been suggested that this site may be associated with the Roman pewter works on Lansdown, which **BACAS** may investigate further in the future after the March geophysics report is released.

10 Jan - Mendip Mounds at Priddy - Jodie Lewis

Dr. Jodie Lewis is a Principal Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Worcester. She has been researching the prehistoric archaeology of Mendip for 20 years and has published extensively on this topic, including her 2011 monograph *The Archaeology of Mendip; 500,000 years of continuity and change*. Her talk will consider the results of her recent excavations in the parish of Priddy, which encompasses the Neolithic to post-medieval periods. The project has run since 2012 and has shed new light on the development and utilization of this upland landscape.

4 Feb -- AGM - Members Projects

Details to be announced later.

14 Mar -- Rev Skinner in the Bath area - Sophie Hawke

'Excursions in the 1800s with Rev John Skinner: Rector and Antiquarian'

Rev John Skinner was appointed Rector of Camerton, Somerset in 1800. He was a keen antiquarian and a prolific writer, producing over 130 manuscript notebooks detailing accounts of his life as a clergyman and his numerous trips to archaeological sites at home and abroad.

Sophie Hawke will discuss her research into the life of Rev Skinner, a man often frustrated by his parishioners, and she will examine his manuscripts of visits to archaeological sites in Bath and the surrounding area, together with an evaluation of Skinner's contribution to local archaeology.

Sophie Hawke is a long-standing member and former committee member of BACAS. She has also been a Trustee of Bradford on Avon Museum since 2005, during which time she studied Landscape Archaeology at University of Bristol. With the support of Bradford on Avon Museum and assistance from the Art Fund, Sophie has been researching Rev Skinner's journals at the British Library.



The Man himself

'From Radstock, Midsomer Norton and District Society Collection at Radstock Museum'

THE BACAS LECTURES AND EXCURSIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

This sub-committee specialises in organising the Society's Winter Lecture and Summer Excursions Programmes on behalf of **BACAS** Main Committee. It is headed by Les Hayes, who is also a member of the Main Committee, supported by a small group of ordinary members – only four at present including Henry Lowe, the new **BACAS** chairman.

The Sub-committee meets approximately four/five times a year in order to plan and organise the forthcoming Lectures and Excursions. In addition it arranges to publicise them in the Newsletter and on the BACAS website.

The sub-committee's aim in the Winter Lectures is to find and book interesting speakers to talk about subjects related to local, regional and international archaeology, and if possible to link them to the Summer Excursions and/or BACAS Projects.

The Summer Excursions are each arranged by a sub-committee member. This usually includes one or more pre-visits to finalise, followed by the preparation of information sheets and a booking form for posting or downloading from the BACAS Website. The bookings are then collated and the cheques/cash paid in. The viability of the excursion is checked by the leader before taking charge on the day.

The sub-committee works as a team and members get great satisfaction from successful and popular Lectures and Excursions. However, the number of sub-committee members has diminished in recent years putting pressure on those remaining, and also the programmes are in need of fresh ideas, especially as the sub-committee is now a major source of income for BACAS.

We invite anyone who feels they could contribute to our efforts to join us! **Roger Wilkes**

Society News

BathNES Archaeologists Leave -- Positions to be Eliminated?

For the past number of years the Senior Archaeological Officer at BathNES has been Richard Sermon. He has been assisted in recent times by the Historic Environment Record Officer, Rod Millard. September 6th was Richard's last day in office, having been offered voluntary redundancy; Rod left earlier in the year. The society has benefitted from having a close professional relationship with them and we're sorry to see them go. We wish them both our best wishes for the future.

The loss of these two posts at BathNES now means there is no dedicated local expert on hand to help and guide us, nor to put the case for archaeology in the council's planning department. For the wider community this reduction in expenditure on archaeology (part of the council's need to make savings) provides us all with new challenges and, for the moment, a measure of uncertainty as to who we will be working with on the issues which concern us.

We all realise that savings are having to be made at a local level and throughout the council as part of austerity. But the cutting of the archaeology posts in such an historic place as BathNES seems a serious step backwards. If we wish to push for maintaining the council's archaeology budget (much as other interest groups do for other matters) we can start by talking to our councillors and MP.

Henry Lowe Chair

Salford Coffin Field Dig

Volunteers from BACAS and SEG (Salford Environment Group) have completed a trial excavation at this site where geophysical surveys had indicated the possible footmark of a Roman building. Originally planned for October, the dig had to be brought forward to August, and scaled back, because of a change in the farming programme.

A limited dig, involving the excavation of one trial trench, was carried out over 3 days from 13 to 15 August. The trench uncovered an uneven limestone floor a little above the bedrock which was itself less than 1 metre below the field surface. Items discovered included two small bronze Roman coins, pottery sherds dating mainly from the Roman period, numerous hobnails, roofing nails and a variety of bones mostly from cattle and sheep, some of which had clearly been butchered (clean cut). A third Roman coin was later found in the spoil heap.

Although the results of the dig have still to be analysed, it appears that the site may have been used for various purposes including livestock holding/meat processing, workshops and light industry supporting agricultural and other activities. [A more detailed report will appear in a future edition of *Camertonia*.]



More Society News

Spinney Close Keynsham Excavations

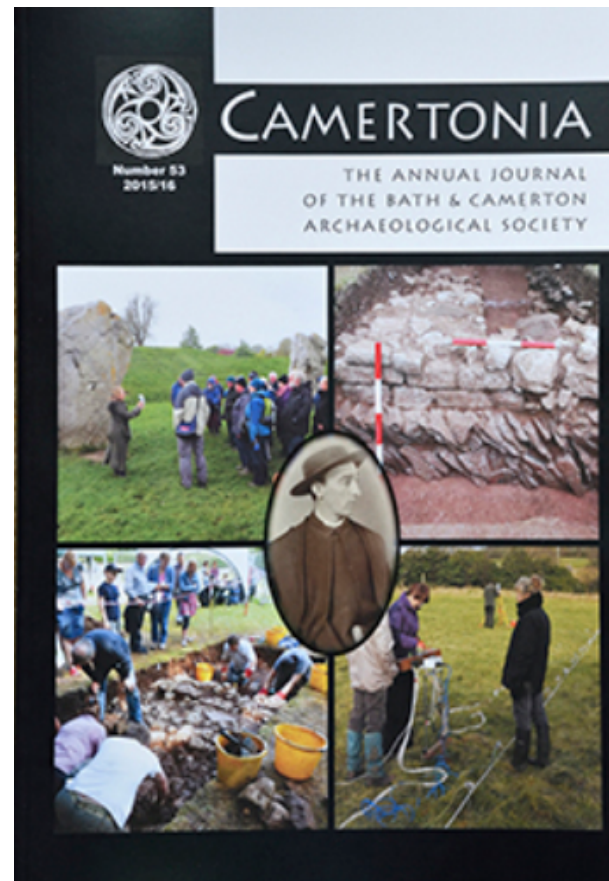
Over Bank Holiday Monday 27th and the following Tuesday 28th August volunteers from **BACAS** and **ARA** (Association for Roman Archaeology) excavated a single trench and several small test pits at the northern end of Spinney Close field which is to the west of the Durley Hill Cemetery and the A4175 road embankment from Keynsham to Bristol.

The aims and objectives of the excavation was principally to ascertain if this was the location of the channels or conduits which carried water from a spring to the NNW of the site to the Romano-British buildings located in the cemetery grounds and secondly to investigate the construction of the large stone built linear wall which truncates the field at its northern end.

A large amount of rubbish and vegetation growth was cleared from the area to fully expose this wall, which might be Roman or Medieval in date?

The trench uncovered an uneven stone surface laid directly onto the natural reddish coloured clay but failed to find any signs of water channels, the exposed wall revealed the stone its construction and bonding method which will be appraised by a specialist later.

Finds recovered included Roman tesserae, pottery, pennant sandstone roof tiles and possible a part of an RB coin, but also recovered were numerous pieces of glass, pottery, animal bones, iron objects and other detritus dating from the last hundred years.



New direction for Camertonia

The **BACAS** committee has been trying to find a new editor for Camertonia for over a year with no success. In fact, there has been no response from the membership at all to our efforts.

With this in mind, the committee would like to try a different approach to producing Camertonia. We feel a joint editorship involving a number of members is the way forward. This would reduce the amount of work the current editor model requires of one person.

We are therefore looking to recruit a roster of members who would be willing to help with our magazine. One position will be an organising editor, who will receive and review submissions. We will then need a list of members who would be willing to edit articles. Our most gifted production editor, Brigit Hetzel, will continue to put it all together for printing.

Please help us move forward with Camertonia. **BACAS** does important work and it is imperative to publish this information somehow. We have a bumper crop of activities to publicise.

Contact any committee member or email communications@bacas.org.uk

New Treasurer Urgently Required

Lawrie Scott will be giving up the **BACAS Treasurer** post as of the next **AGM** in February. If you have an interest in taking on the Treasurer post, please let Lawrie or any committee member know. The position doesn't require very much time, and you don't need extensive bookkeeping skills. Training will be provided. This is an essential post to fill as BACAS cannot continue to operate without a treasurer.

Geophysics

Janet Pryke is returning to **Royal Victoria Park** this September for several days. She has obtained permission to continue the geophysics into a next section the Park in Bath on Tuesday 11, Wednesday 12, Tuesday 18, Wednesday 19, Tuesday 25 and Wednesday 26 September. The plan is to do resistance and magnetometry surveys along to the north of the Ornamental Lake and over into the grassed areas to the west. We will also be taking measurements to complete a few resistivity profile lines in the area we worked on before by the Lake. Timings will be from 9.30am to early/mid afternoon, as previously. Please contact Janet if you are interested. projects@bacas.org.uk

Work this summer included a very hot and dry project at Temple Cloud, organised by **Fiona Medland**. Looking for a possible Roman Temple, the team encountered hard, cracked earth that caused some resistance grids to take 3 hours. There was also a cattle invasion! Preliminary results are good,



The Temple Cloud project will be starting phase 2, in October. They will be working there Tuesdays and Wednesdays for the first few weeks of the month. Contact Fiona fimedland@hotmail.co.uk or John Oswin if you are interested.

Jphn Withey's Bathampton Arch Project report is finished and will soon be on the website.

A joint project with the **Bradford on Avon Musuem Group** has finished a survey on a field near Cumberwell Golf Club. Roman coins and large quantities of pottery sherds and cbm have been found there, so the team, led by Sophie Hawke, was looking for evidence of Roman buildings. Results are promising.



Working in Brickstitch Field

Tim Lunt is working toward some survey work on Monument Field in Prior Park. When the permissions are in place, Tim will announce the schedule.

We had a request from the **East Dorset Antiquarian Society** (EDAS) for help edm-surveying in their latest work at Druce near Dorchester. **Lilian Ladle** (EDAS) gave us a talk on Druce Roman villa a couple of years ago, but this new site is a bit older...a neolithic structure c 3800 BC. John Oswin did the survey on 30th Aug.



EDM at Druce, Dorset

Summer Party Fund Raiser Success



D-Day, June 6th, saw 40+ members and guests gather for a BACAS Summer Party as an initial fund-raiser for our new equipment campaign. The weather was warm and sunny; we were not to know this was to continue – making 2018 the warmest on record. Sun hats were required and an early evening of chat was made all the more enjoyable with tasty snacks provided by Janet Pryke, Jackie Thomson and Fiona Medland, as well as Edith Lowe. Fiona even found some bunting without which no self-respecting drinks-do is complete. Many thanks to all who helped and those who attended, including a couple of generous donors. We raised £670, which, added to other donations this year, now makes a total of £1170 for 2018.

We need to renew several of pieces of the society's geophys equipment (a number were originally gifts to the society) due partly to age, wear and tear, and changes in technology. Those members who've participated in geophysical surveys will know some of the issues first hand and, as geophys is an aspect of the society's activities which allows for easy participation, I would urge all who've not yet tried it to join the merry band next time.

Autumnal season greetings to all.

Henry Lowe
Chair

Photo by Elpitha Lemnos

BATH & COUNTIES ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Out and About

The **Roman Baths Museum** now has its own YouTube channel featuring videos about the recent work in the Baths and archaeology in general. **BACAS** members figure prominently on video 2 on Geophysics. See:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zqbRUGrDug&index=2&list=PLW5plxFaVQFTbQDQB_Qq mEdokxPEujeKn

If you've missed any **Bath Quays** talks, Carl Mason, Senior Project Officer Wessex Archaeology, will be covering the subject in Bristol on 12 September at 7.30 p.m. The Apostle Room, Clifton Cathedral, Pembroke Road, Bristol, BS8 3BX. Contact the Bristol and Avon Archaeological Society Rob Iles 07930 5103873.

The **Saltford Brass Mill** is open on 15 and 16 September for touring. 1000-1600 hrs, no booking required. The Brass Mill, The Shallows, Saltford, Bristol, Bristol, BS31 3EY

The Friends of Cameley Church are starting a project to save the church's medieval wall paintings. Find out about it at 6:30pm 16 September. More info: hirundo.bm@gmail.com

The South Wiltshire Roman Temple and an update on fieldwork in the Verlucio area by Dr David Roberts is a lecture at the Wiltshire Museum on 25 September. For more details see: <http://www.wiltshiremuseum.org.uk>

The **Atlas OF Hillforts** has won a **GIS** industry award, coming out ahead of Transport for London and Atkins, an international design and engineering company. BACAS contributed more information to the project than any other local group. See what it is all about: <https://hillforts.arch.ox.ac.uk>

Tours of the **Bath Records Office** take place on Wednesday 10 October. Booking essential. Call 01225 477421 or email archives@bathnes.gov.uk

Where next for Bristol's Archaeology? will be discussed by Bob Jones and the Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society at 7:45 on 22 October. The Apostle Room, Clifton Cathedral, Pembroke Road, Bristol, BS8 3BX.

Contact Robert Jones for more information at roberthjones@blueyonder.co.uk

A talk on **Map Hunting, the history of maps in Somerset and Bath** will be given on 29 October at 2:30pm in the Brunswick Room, the Guildhall, Bath.

Booking is now open for the **Industrial Archaeology Conference** on Saturday 27 October 2018 in the Town Hall, Devizes. The theme this year is *Buildings*, for more information and a list of speakers please visit <http://www.wiltshiremuseum.org.uk>

Early prehistory is the subject of the **CBA Wessex 60th Anniversary Conference** on **03 November** in Southampton. The conference is titled "**Dawn: New Light on our Earliest Ancestors to the Hunter-Gatherers of the Mesolithic**" and includes Steve Mithen, Chris Stringer, Alice Roberts and others as speakers. These conferences tend to sell out, so book early. For more information: <http://cba-wessex.org.uk/cba-events/annual-conference-2018/> or contact Andy Manning at events@cba-wessex.org.uk.

If you like flint, a lecture on **The Scandinavian Flint Axe Type in Britain** by Dr Katharine Walker will take place on 10 November at the Wiltshire Museum. Details at: <http://www.wiltshiremuseum.org.uk>

Bluff your way in Pottery - Anglo Saxon to late post medieval is an excellent day course given by Lorraine Mepham at Wessex Archaeology near Salisbury on 10 November. For more details see: <http://cba-wessex.org.uk>

Highlights from the Archaeological Excavations at Finzel's Reach, Bristol is the subject of a lecture by Ben Ford, Senior Project Manager Oxford Archaeology, on 14 November. Finzel's Reach sat within the northwards loop of the River Avon and upstream of Bristol Bridge. 7:30pm The Apostle Room, Clifton Cathedral, Pembroke Road, Bristol, BS8 3BX. Contact the Bristol and Avon Archaeological Society Rob Iles 07930 5103873

Members may recall the fascinating talk on **Starr Carr**, one of the best Mesolithic sites in Europe, given a few years ago. The full report on Star Carr is now available on line. Be forewarned: there are large files and the report is quite thorough and technical.
[universitypress.whiterose.ac.uk/site/booktext](https://www.whiterose.ac.uk/site/booktext)

Rare medieval floor tiles have been discovered by archaeologists working on the **Bath Abbey Footprint Project**, which some of our member are involved in. See Wessex Archaeology's news release:

<https://www.wessexarch.co.uk/news/bath-abbey-archaeologists-floored-floor-under-floor>

Excursion Season finishes

This year's excursion schedule is now over. Members enjoyed a variety of different outings over the spring and summer. For summaries of some of the visits go to <https://www.bacas.org.uk/category/events/>

Photo of North Somerset Churches Excursion by Gill Vickery



BACAS Committee Members

We continue to seek new members to support the Society's activities. Areas where members might offer time and support are equipment maintenance, communications, *Camerton*, and continuing our tradition of interesting and varied lectures and excursions. If you would like to be a part of building the Society for the future, please contact one of the relevant committee members.

Elected Members

Henry Lowe	Chair	01225 443065	chair@bacas.org.uk
John Richards	Honorary Secretary	01179 551912	office@bacas.org.uk
Robin Holley	Director of Archaeology	07975 948729	robinholley863@gmail.com
Les Hayes	Operations Manager	01225 312510	havercroft@talktalk.net
Lawrie Scott	Treasurer	01225 421045	treasurer@bacas.org.uk
Laurence Chadd	Membership	01666 826160	membership@bacas.org.uk
Bob Whitaker	Archaeological Advisor	01225 462718	dewhitacre2@btinternet.com
Janet Pryke	Society/Members' Projects	01225 315407	projects@bacas.org.uk
Rick Buettner	Newsletter Editor	01225 862532	communications@bacas.org.uk

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Les Hayes	01225 312510	havercroft@talktalk.net

Camerton Sub Committee

Rick Buettner	01225 862532	communications@bacas.org.uk
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Other Key contacts

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BACAS Website			web@bacas.org.uk
Gill Vickery	Facebook	01225 462966	gillvickery@gmail.com