

Thirty years of Hampshire Field Club & Archaeological Society Field Trips and Special Events

My contribution to the 'Coronavirus Lockdown' website was suggested by a member of the Archaeology Section Committee who has probably been a committee member as long as I have. He said that over all the years he had rarely seen me without a camera in my hand and I must have a sizeable collection of images recording past events. These 'historical' pictures, he believed, might be of interest to long-standing and new members alike.

Fine, I thought, as I visualised my archives, clearly compiled by an enthusiastic amateur! I began planning the project in my mind and decided on a selection of site images in chronological order with the occasional picture of members enjoying their day out. However, it was not long before I realised the request was mainly for pictures of HFC members attending Field Trips covering the last 30 years and not the archaeology - a little difficult, as I had spent most of the early years avoiding having people in pictures - concentrating purely on the archaeology...perhaps we could have a mix?

I only realised just how many pictures I had when I started gathering them together. University research excavations accounted for the majority. Prof Sir Barry Cunliffe followed 20 years of excavations at **Danebury Hill Fort** with the **Danebury Environs Programme** in the 1990s, the final excavation being at **Dunkirt Barn**, Abbots Ann, in 2006. In 2009 he was excavating again at **Brading Villa**, on the Isle of Wight. Prof Mike Fulford's excavations at the Roman town of **Silchester** began in the 1970s with work on the amphitheatre & Forum/Basilica and in more recent times Insulae IX and XXX, and latterly on the Public Baths between 2018-19.

In addition, there were other University-led projects in Hampshire such as the excavations in 2009-15 at **St Mary Magdalen Leper Hospital**, Winchester, directed by Drs Simon Roffey & Phil Marter. Further excavations by the University of Winchester continued between 2016-20 at **Meonstoke**, following the discovery of the Roman hexagonal temple and bath-house complex, which caused great excitement. This excavation was directed by Prof Tony King with students and the Meon Valley Archaeology and Heritage Group. He had previously excavated, in the 1980s, a Roman aisled hall on the other side of the road which splits the site in two.

Archaeological excavations have taken place at the Tudor and Civil War site of **Basing House** over many years. Between 1978-1991 the County Museums Service continued these investigations, with David Allen, Keeper of Archaeology, supervising on and off between the years 1983 and 2010. He excavated parts of the Norman ringwork, Postern Gate, Walled Garden, New House stables and Grange. The Field Club visited on several occasions and in 2008 many will remember the impressive work undertaken on the citadel ditch. David also hosted, in 2010, a visit to **Rockbourne Roman Villa** in the New Forest, another Museums Service site, to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the HFC.

Other excavations visited were outside the county and included **Barrow Clump**, Wiltshire. These were led by Richard Osgood, with volunteers from the Operation Nightingale programme, as archaeology was used to help aid the recovery of sick and wounded service personnel. Some commercial excavation units were also involved, such as Wessex Archaeology. The excavations included a Bronze Age barrow that also became the focus for Anglo-Saxon burials.

Petersfield provided interesting field trips in 2016-17 when the '**The People of the Heath**' project was undertaken by Dr Stuart Needham & George Anelay. They excavated four barrows in the Bronze Age barrow cemetery and other non-barrow sites on the heath, and the finds are destined for display at Petersfield Museum. We also travelled to Dorset in 2016-17, to see the fascinating dig

at Winterbourne Kingston led by Dr Miles Russell. The site was popularly called '**Duropolis**' as it was suggested it might be the 'capital' of the Durotriges tribe.

Closer to home, WARG, the Winchester archaeological group, has excavated an impressive number of sites in and around the city over the years. They worked at **St Cross** between 2007 and 2013 and the Chantry Chapel at **St Elizabeth's College** in 2011-14. More recently, in 2016, they went to **Warnford Park** in the Meon Valley to explore the site of a demolished 18th century house, believed to be based on the remains of a Tudor mansion. Finally, in 2018-19, in conjunction with the local archaeology group, they have been uncovering a Medieval chapel and other features at **Barton Stacey**.

There are of course many other active societies in the county excavating important sites and publishing their results. Some I have visited, particularly the Basingstoke Archaeology & History Society and their work is impressive. Unfortunately, the HFC&AS has not visited these projects, so Images have not been included.

I found it a delight to look again at some of the faded old images of the earlier Field Club visits, not up to today's standards, but a lovely reminder of bygone years. If there is room, I will be tempted to put a few in the collection! Faded they might be, but they will bring back many happy memories to some of our members. One site that will forever be etched in my memory is **Boxgrove**, in Sussex. I clearly remember the visit in the early 1990s to see the Palaeolithic site where two pieces of tibia (human shin bone) and two human teeth were found, dating these early hunter-gatherers to half a million years ago. It was an exceptional visit and I can still remember the excitement of the day. At the same time there was also a visit to the early Roman military camp excavation at **Fishbourne Roman Palace**.

Durrington Walls was another fascinating site - visited in 2007. Prof Mike Parker-Pearson who was excavating there showed us the evidence for the Neolithic structures believed to have housed the builders of Stonehenge. In 2008, Richard Osgood led us around some of the famous archaeological sites on **Salisbury Plain** not generally open to the public. It was a rare opportunity to explore the area as it is on Ministry of Defence land and only accessible because Richard is the MoD archaeologist.

From the 1990s onwards we also visited a number of the very interesting Danebury Environs sites excavated by Prof Sir Barry Cunliffe, such as **Nettlebank Copse** 1993, **Houghton Down** 1997, **Grateley** 1998-9, **Fullerton** 2000-2001, **Thruxton** 2002, **Rowbury** 2003-4, **Flint Farm** 2004, & finally **Dunkirt Barn** at Abbots Ann, which brought the project to a close in 2006.

I have also included pictures of a very special event, the **HFC&AS 125th Anniversary Conference**, held at St Swithun's School, Winchester on 22nd May 2010. The day was opened by Dame Mary Fagan, Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire and speakers included Prof Sir Barry Cunliffe, Prof Chris Woolgar, Prof Maurice Howard and Prof John Beckett. It was very well attended, as you can see from the number of members relaxing in the lunchtime sunshine.

I'm sorry if I have left out your favourite field trip. I have many more images, but space limits their inclusion. If these periods of quarantine and isolation continue, I may have to assemble 'chapter two'.

Kay Ainsworth



1990's Boxgrove, Sussex



1995-9 Fishbourne, Sussex. Roman Military
Camp excavations



2003 Rowbury Farm, Danebury Environs Project. Supervisor Cynthia Poole



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2006 Dunkirt Barn, Abbots Ann. Prof Barry Cunliffe's presentation on completion of Danebury
Environs Project



2007 Durrington Walls, Wiltshire Neolithic Housing Director Prof Mike Parker Pearson



2008 Basing House The Citadel Ditch Director David Allen



2008 Salisbury Plain, Wilts

MoD Archaeologist Richard Osgood directs group around sites



2008 Insular IX, Silchester Roman Town



2009 Brading Roman Villa, Isle of Wight

Director Prof Barry Cunliffe



2009 Leper Hospital, Winchester

Katie Tucker explains it all



2010 HFC 125th Conference

Past Presidents cut the cake



2010 HFC 125th Anniversary Conference



2010 Rockbourne Roman Villa David Allen directs HFC members around site

125th Anniversary Field Trip visit



2010 Insular IX, Silchester Roman Town

Director Prof Mike Fulford



2012 Silchester Roman Town



2012 WARG Elizabeth College, Chantry Chapel, Winchester Dedicated to St Elizabeth of Hungary



2013 Barrow Clump, Wilts

Director Richard Osgood



2013 Silchester Church, members enjoy tea after excavation visit



2014 WARG. Elizabeth College Chantry Chapel, Winchester Don Bryan explains the site



2014 WARG. Elizabeth College, Chantry Chapel, Winchester HFC Members



2016 Duropolis, Winterborne Kingston, Dorset



2016 WARG Warnford House Chris Sellen explains the site



2017 Duropolis, Winterborne Kingston, Dorset



2017 Petersfield Barrows Director George Anelay



2018 Silchester Roman Town The Baths Director Prof Mike Fulford



2018 Silchester Roman Town The Baths



2018 Meonstoke, Roman Hexagonal Temple

Director Prof Tony King



2019 Silchester Roman Town. The Baths.



2019 Meonstoke Roman Hexagonal Temple Director of excavations Prof Tony King



2020 Meonstoke Roman Bathhouse Social distancing & face masks the order of the day