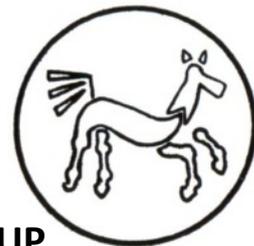


Newsletter 131



GLouceSTER AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP

Charity no.252290

www.gadarg.org.uk

Summer 2012



LOTTERY FUNDED

For an update on the reorganisation of GCC Archaeology Service and how it cannot support projects like this in future see p 3

KINGSHOLM PROJECT

Anna Morris

KINGSHOLM PROJECT GEOPHYSICS SURVEYS

Tony Roberts

We are now well under way with the project and have completed our artefact training sessions with Kurt Adams the Finds Liaison officer for Gloucestershire and Avon. Over 45 people attended and enjoyed finding out about and handling artefacts from the earliest handaxe of 700,000BP to modern bottles and badges. Our pottery identification and Behind the Scenes at the Archives sessions are now fully booked and proving very popular. The attendees at the first Archives session have decided to have a further in-depth visit and undertake some research into Kingsholm. Many of them are also intending taking up some Archive research of their own too which is really positive! Jane Timby has run two of her pottery workshops and the practical element is proving taxing but enjoyable. Having over thirty years experience in the field certainly shows when trying to identify a tiny sherd of pottery!

Geophysical survey sessions have taken place on the Civil Service playing field site, Kingsholm Tennis Courts and the Civil Service bowling green and have been reported on elsewhere in this newsletter. Over 61 people have taken part and we now have the agreement of a number of householders in Dean's Way to survey their back gardens where we hope to find the western boundary of the Roman fort.

The first training dig has been run with the Kingsholm Project steering group and even though we only dug down 17cm from ground level we found a range of pottery from Roman to modern, including some clay pipe bowls. The training sessions for the Kingsholm residents will now take place over the next few months with the digs taking place in the summer and autumn.

Members of the Kingsholm community and GADARG members have been conducting geophysical surveys in the area of Kingsholm in the search for evidence of the original Roman fortress that stood on the site. Investigations to date have concentrated on the former Civil Service playing field and Kingsholm Square. Surveys on the former sports ground have revealed the potential for archaeology and a programme of test pitting over the summer will confirm whether this is indeed the fortress. A recent survey led by GADARG revealed the old path that ran across the sports field in the 19th century.

A survey of the tennis court area in Kingsholm Square indicates that the southern defensive ditch identified during a watching brief on 24 Kingsholm Square (Glevensis 28) may indeed run across the south of the site with an east-west alignment. A harder surface 16m further to the north of the ditch has the same alignment and could well indicate a road surface running parallel to the defences. A north-south aligned low resistance feature could be the cut of a service trench. Further surveys will be conducted over the summer.



GADARG welcomes Andrew Armstrong, Gloucester's new City Archaeologist who started on 28th May after leaving GCCAS. We look forward to working with him.

For more information on the project or to find out how to get involved contact me, Anna Morris on 01452 426245 or anna.morris@gloucestershire.gov.uk or visit www.kingsholm.info

MARTIN ECCLESTONE

Mike Milward

As announced at the AGM, the Committee decided to recognise Martin's years of exceptional service to GADARG by awarding him honorary life membership. Beside his 17 years as Secretary, which made him the public face of GADARG in the wider archaeological community as well as the reference point for GADARG's members, he also edited *Glevensis* for some of that time, maintaining the high standard and reputation of that publication. At the same time, he has always been well to the fore when it comes to fieldwork, instigating and participating in many surveys and fieldwalking events. Beyond GADARG, he has also been a leading light on the CAG, and, as he announces his decision to step down from the GADARG Committee, we feel that honorary life membership of GADARG is the least we could do.

Martin felt that he should respond to the Committee's kindness in awarding him an honorary life membership and since there was not an opportunity to do so at the AGM, he has written the following comments for this Newsletter.

"My gratitude is not only for the award itself, but for all those Committee members and many other GADARG members who have helped to maintain GADARG's good reputation among archaeological societies. When Brenda and I came to live in Stroud in 1990, I was delighted to find such a lively group, and the welcome that Eddie Price offered, to take part in his highly regarded excavation at Frocester. I was also impressed by GADARG's early enthusiasm for resistivity surveys, field-walking, and more recently, exploiting Lidar's potential, all of which activities have been well recorded. The Editors and contributors to Glevensis should also be congratulated for producing excellent, readable issues, well balanced between archaeology and history (which I value equally as supporting each other).

There have also been the many valuable contacts between GADARG and professional archaeologists and historians, though I fear that the County Archaeology Service is now facing harsh decisions that I personally deplore as vandalism. Altogether, I was lucky to come to Gloucestershire when I did."

LINTON EXCAVATION UPDATE

Terry Moore-Scott



Linton trench looking east after machine removal of top soil and with hand excavation underway



Cleaned up trench ready for recording. The bands of mudstone outcrop can easily be made out.

The planned excavation to investigate geophysics evidence of a possible Roman road at Linton (as forecast in the last newsletter) was duly carried out in early March 2012. Weather conditions were good and (assisted by a machine digger) a team of excavators from GADARG and Archeoscan, under the direction of Tony Roberts, were able to complete the task within one day. It was always uncertain what precisely we would find. As it turned out, it did not take long to establish that the magnetometry had in fact detected bands of clay between natural rock outcrops, whilst the resistivity, although perhaps not so clear-cut, had detected the intervening rock outcrops. Not an exciting outcome then, but the object of the project was achieved successfully. The project was carried out following procedures approved by the County Archaeologist and proved to be valuable experience for all involved. A full report is being produced.

LIDAR NEWS

Ann Maxwell

A small group of members have looked at the remaining potential archaeological sites in Upton St Leonards and not found anything that needs further investigation. Some of the anomalies on the LiDAR results were not visible on the ground and others were caused by contrasting vegetation. Apart from ridge and furrow, some former field boundaries and possible lynchets, the most interesting feature we found was a pillow mound in Prinknash Park. (*Pillow mound* is the name given to the mounds that were purpose-built accommodation for rabbits when they were being farmed. They were used for many centuries in the medieval and post-medieval periods.)

The next parish for investigation is Brockworth, where there are 11 potential sites. Any member who would like to come and help should get in touch with me at dandamax@waitrose.com or on 01386 751662. Bear in mind that the only thing I can guarantee is a walk!

UPDATE ON THE FUTURE OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Marta Cock

Since I reported to the AGM in March about Gloucestershire County Council's review of its Archaeology Service (GCCAS) it has become clear that the Council is unwilling to review its decision to cut the current team of twenty to a core team of five. All project work will cease as soon as its current contracts end so, unless there is a complete change of policy, there will be no more excellent, community enhancing Heritage Lottery Funded (HLF) projects such as the one outlined above at Kingsholm led by Anna Morris of GCC Archaeology Service. Contacts with key County Council managers and Councillors indicate the formation of a liaison group consisting of The Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society (BGAS) and GADARG to work on ways that archaeology can be commissioned and funded in future. More co-operation between the County and the City is also possible, especially in relation to the Historic Environment Record (HER). While we understand the Council's difficult financial circumstances we suggest that GADARG members continue to lobby their County Councillors to mitigate the County Council's decisions, in writing, with copies to the Leader of the County Council bearing in mind the following:-

- As for all local government services, the County Council Archaeology Service is for the ultimate use of the people of Gloucestershire.
- The value contributed by archaeology to this historic county's culture and tourism revenues;
- The strength of GCCAS over the years is that it has been able to attract funding from e.g. English Heritage, Natural England, Forestry Commission etc., and the HLF to work on projects which have not only enhanced the HER but have given the wider community the opportunity to be involved in this work and so develop a wide range of new skills and understanding. The reduction in staff will inevitably result in loss of expertise and knowledge in the county's archaeology, in the bidding for and managing of projects as well as advising Societies such as ours to bid for and manage projects;
- The County Council's decision to disallow GCCAS to bid for external funding appears perverse when it retains staff to encourage other departments to apply for external funding: all the more so when the Heritage Lottery Fund, post Olympics, will increase by 20%. Such radical cuts to the service, in particular the loss of external funding for key HER enhancement and outreach, provide no financial benefit to the County Council;
- The Historic Environment Record (HER) is the principal nationally recognised method of recording any archaeology in Gloucestershire and provides essential information to advise on development, determine future land use, safeguard the historic environment of Gloucestershire for its residents as well as to provide a service to local communities who will increasingly need this information to determine local development under the Localism Act. All HERs in England depend on external project funding to provide the information necessary to inform the development process and implement local and national planning policy. This is particularly the case with large area-based and county scale projects;
- There is no way that BGAS and GADARG can do more than plug very few holes in provision. As GADARG learned through our recent HLF funded LiDAR project we could not deal with the HER aspects other than by buying in GCCAS expertise with use of its IT facilities.

GLEVENIS *There has been a delay putting together the next Glevensis but all members will be receiving their copy soon. The issue will be an interesting one containing, for example, articles on 'Medieval Tibberton', 'Privies', book reviews and a range of reports on work undertaken in the past year.*

A PARTICIPANT'S VIEW OF KINGSHOLM HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY *Martin Ecclestone*

Newsletter 130 outlined the purpose of the Heritage Lottery Funded project "History on your Doorstep" which will continue till next summer. The 'Day School' held in Gloucester on 17th March was attended by 135 people so there is no doubt that Kingsholm people are interested, particularly those who have found Roman sherds while digging their gardens. On 17th May five professional archaeologists and two others, (Alan Lubanski and myself) met to become familiar with digging a 'test pit' 1.5 metres square and not more than one metre deep, how to recognise different types of soil (known as 'contexts', and how these should be recorded, along with the finds in each context (all of which is sieved). The amount of detailed recording is quite daunting, but necessary, and careful excavation means that each test pit will require as much as two days of work. It is hoped that 20 test pits in Kingsholm will be dug and recorded, beginning in early June. If GADARG members in the Kingsholm area would like to be involved, contact Anna Morris or Tim Grubb on 01452 425705.

AUTUMN/WINTER PROGRAMME

The programme accompanying this newsletter is emailed or posted to members who have not given us email addresses. Members on email can pick up a printed programme card at meetings, from any member of the committee or by sending a SAE to the Secretary (address on p4)

GADARG AT GLOUCESTER CITY CENTRE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP'S GREYFRIARS DIG

Les Comtesse

Five Gadarg members took part in an excavation of the Gloscat Redevelopment site adjacent to the ruined Greyfriars Priory church. This Community dig was organised by the Gloucester City Centre Community Partnership (CCCP) as a learning experience for a small number of volunteers and amateur archaeologists, closely supervised by six professional staff from Cotswold Archaeology (CA). The results obtained were intended to complement information obtained from an existing professional project on this site. After the dig's completion the area would be landscaped and the archaeology preserved in situ.

During the allotted three week period the basements of two late 18th century houses were exposed and one (Bowling Green House, adjacent to Friar's Orchard) found to contain a cement lined tank or water cistern. The other, a mirror to existing houses in Priors Place, revealed a rubbish pit containing domestic debris such as pottery and clay pipes.

A third area exposed a yard mostly covered in small, reused red medieval tiles, occasionally decorated and possibly originating in the Priory itself. Close by a long substantial wall foundation, over a metre in thickness, containing a stone door frame into the tiled area, provoked much discussion. Eventual exposure of the associated construction trench showed lower stone brickwork to be arranged in a regular arch formation, a configuration previously noted by CA when excavating Blackfriars Priory cloisters. The tentative identification of a section of Greyfriars Cloisters was announced, thus achieving one of the major aims of the dig, namely to locate the previously unknown whereabouts of the cloisters range.

Whilst the dig inevitably left many questions unanswered all volunteers taking part found the experience an extremely absorbing and valuable fieldwork experience and one worth repeating.



ROUND AND ABOUT

FRIENDS OF DEERHURST ANNUAL LECTURE

St Mary's Church Deerhurst on 8th September 2012 at 7.30 pm.

Professor Nicholas Brooks, University of Birmingham

St Aelfheah: from Deerhurst to Martyrdom

Tickets: £5, students £3 on the door or visit www.deerhurstfriends.co.uk

THE FIELDING AND PLATT COMMUNITY ARCHIVE PROJECT

This HLF funded project, led by Gloucestershire Archives and Gloucester City Centre Community Partnership, will work with volunteers to record, preserve, and celebrate Fielding and Platt's history and its impact on the city. The project is recruiting and training volunteers to enable them to gather and share the spoken memories of people who worked for or lived near the company whose former site lies under what is now Gloucester Quays Shopping Centre. These memories will then be preserved at Gloucestershire Archives and presented on a new community-led website. Anyone with memories of or memorabilia concerning Fielding and Platt, or who would like to volunteer with the project, are asked to contact the project officer by email at oliver.taylor@gloucestershire.gov.uk, telephone on 01452 427591, or by writing to Ollie Taylor, Gloucestershire Archives, Clarence Row, Alvin Street, Gloucester, GL1 3DW.

BRISTOL & AVON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Saturday 21 July

SEA MILLS ROMAN OPEN DAY

Displays, finds identification & handling etc. along Sea Mills Harbour, 11.00am-4pm.

Kingsweston Roman Villa, Long Cross will be open on the same day. To find out more contact

Gundula Dorey on 01179276812 or aghdorey@blueyonder.co.uk

(Those of you who could not join GADARG's visit last year might like this)

YATTON, CLAVERHAM, CLEEVE AND CONGRESBURY ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH TEAM (YCCART)

These meetings at 9.45 until 12 every Thursday morning are open to anybody wishing to help with the various research activities. Please telephone Brian Bradbury 01934 838018 or Chris Short 01934 833764 for venue and programme.

Committee

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MEETINGS SECRETARIES :

Autumn/Winter programme

Marta Cock : contact details as above

Spring/Summer programme

Mike Milward: contact details as above

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