



## Newsletter 150

## Autumn 2022

Once again, Summer is drawing to a close and it is time for the GlosArch Autumn newsletter, number 150, a small milestone.

Since the last newsletter, we have held the AGM, finished the 2021-22 hybrid lecture series, started exploring our requirements for an updated website, published *Glevensis*, processed the magnetometry from the hillfort on Cleeve Common performed with our new Frobisher gradiometer, and attended visits to the Roman temple at Littledean and to Deerhurst and its famous Saxon church.

We are looking forward to returning to Brookthorpe for a further excavation and to a new dig at Minsterworth. There is also the 2022-23 lecture series, which promises to maintain the high standard we have become used to. The preliminary programme for this can be found at the end of this Newsletter.

### **55<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

This year the Annual General Meeting of GlosArch took place using a hybrid format, both in person at St. Andrew's Church hall in Cheltenham, on on-line via Zoom. The meeting preceded the final lecture of the 2021-22 series. A total of 39 members attended, almost equally split between the room and on Zoom.

This was John Rhodes' final AGM as President, a role he has ably filled since 2008. His successor, Michael Hare, thanked John for his tireless efforts on behalf of GlosArch and previously GADARG, of which he was a founder member. This was followed by a round of applause from the membership. We are delighted and honoured that Michael has accepted the invitation to take on the presidency. Michael is an Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at Bristol University and is a well known local expert in Mediaeval archaeology and history as well as a longstanding member of GADARG/GlosArch. His particular passion is the Saxon church of St Mary, Deerhurst.

The Annual General Meeting also agreed that the Executive Committee should start the process of changing the charitable status of GlosArch from an Unincorporated Association to the more secure Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

Alongside this, GlosArch will be changing bank in the near future, to one with a more supportive approach to charities. Membership fees will rise to £20 per annum from 2023

however we will no longer charge members to attend our lectures (prior to Covid it was £2 per lecture) so we believe membership remains very good value. When the bank has changed I will let you know so you can amend your annual subscription payment. Sue Clemmitt, the retiring Treasurer reported that the finances remain in good order, whilst Angie Newcombe, Membership Secretary, indicated that membership remains stable at 144 with the number of new members matching resignations and deaths. This is actually an increase from 2018 when the membership stood at 130, so we are going in the right direction.

**Please Note that GlosArch is currently without a Treasurer, making the day to day running of the organisation very difficult. This situation cannot be sustained for long and is not compatible with the proposed change to a CIO. PLEASE - if you can step up and take on this vital role, please contact the Secretary by phone (07725695381) or email.**

### **CIO Application - Progress report**

Following the decision to change GlosArch's charitable status from an Unincorporated Association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, the Secretary has produced a constitution for the 'new' organisation, which meets the requirements of the Charity Commission (CC). He is now in the process of setting up Gloucestershire Archaeology CIO with the CC and once this has been completed, the current incarnation of GlosArch will be dissolved and its assets transferred to the new CIO. Whilst our existing constitution does not require the members to approve this, we will be seeking the assent of our membership before we proceed.

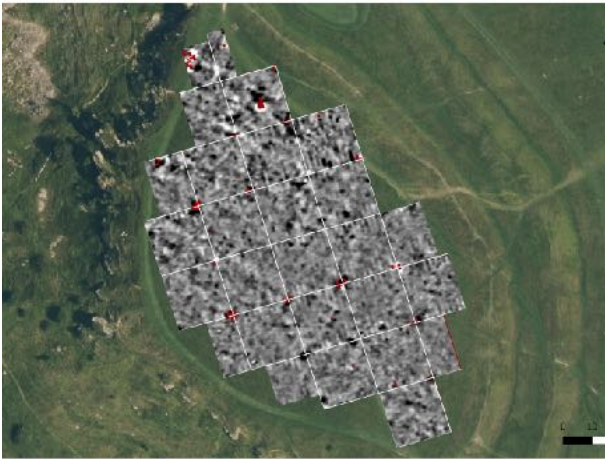
### **Website**

A subcommittee has been at work, preparing the ground for a major upgrade of the GlosArch website. We are looking to modernise the look of the site, make it more user-friendly and add some new functionality. If you have any suggestions or have expertise that would be useful for this project, please contact the Secretary.

## **Fieldwork**

### **Cleeve Common update**

Processing of the repeated magnetometry from the Cleeve Cloud hillfort shows clearer features compared to our previous effort (which is pleasing since it was done with the new Frobisher magnetometer). In addition to many dark spots, possibly pits, several lighter linear features can be seen, perhaps representing the remains of structures or boundaries within the hillfort. The final report on our surveys of the hillfort and the nearby Ring for Historic England is in preparation and the findings will be published in *Glevensis*. Thanks to everyone who has helped with this work over recent years.



### **Forthcoming Excavations**

Neil Cathie has organised two excavations in the next two months.

#### **Brookthorpe**

In September we will be returning to the site of last year's dig at Brookthorpe alongside the M5 outside Gloucester. Last year, four trenches were opened which yielded some

exciting Roman finds. We shall focus this time

on field two (the south-western of the two fields) and shall firstly excavate a 4\*4m

trench over and around the 1\*1m test

pit (trench four) we completed last year. 90%

of the painted plaster and 67% of the

tesserae came from this small

trench, and indeed including the

larger trench three, also in field two, 89%

of all tesserae came from field two.

Trench four also generated by far the highest

weight of finds per m<sup>3</sup> of soil excavated (ie

the highest density) of all four trenches.



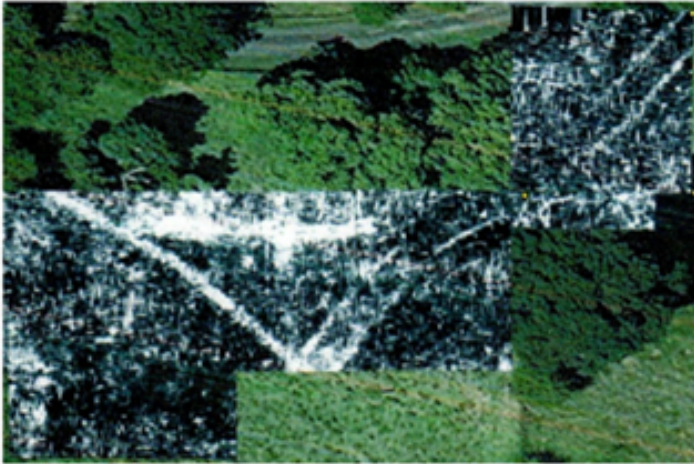
We could also see (but ran out of time to explore) what looked like a jumble of construction stone in a 0.25\*0.25m sondage at the bottom of our excavated level, see attached photo.

There are still spaces available on Monday 12<sup>th</sup>, Friday 16<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September.

#### **Severn Bank, Minsterworth**

In October we will be excavating at Severn Bank, on the edge of Minsterworth. This site is in extensive grounds of a large late Victorian House and bordering the River Severn. Maps

from 1757 and 1839 and the presence of a very well-constructed stone lined well still visible today suggest that substantial building existed on a location to the south east of the current house, and which were investigated in 2019 by GlosArch using GPR and resistivity. The geophysics uncovered a possible trackway, an oval feature and what are likely the remains of walls, paths and surfaces of the older buildings.



We are trying, on behalf of the owner, to determine what if anything exists below ground of the medieval/post medieval buildings shown on the old maps, and also to get some dating evidence. This will be done by opening at least two 1m wide trenches to investigate the most interesting of the features found via geophysics. The owner has offered to

de-turf using his mini excavator, and to put spoil back.

There is still space on this dig on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> and Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October.

**If you would like to take part in either of these digs please contact Neil Cathie by email [neil.cathie@btinternet.com](mailto:neil.cathie@btinternet.com) or phone 07802 272035. No previous experience of excavation is required.**

## **Audience Survey of 2021-22 Lectures**

Thanks to everyone who responded to the viewer evaluation survey relating to the 2021-22 hybrid lecture series, supported by the grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. We had an impressive 75 responses and the feedback was excellent. Compared to our lectures pre-Covid our audience was doubled. The new format allowed us to switch to on-line only in response to an upsurge in Covid and on another occasion for the presenter to change from presenting in person to giving his talk by Zoom when his car broke down! For a number of respondents, the hybrid format had allowed them to access the talks, when otherwise they would not have been able to attend for a variety of reasons. In addition to the choice of viewing methods for the live lectures, the option to watch a recording was also appreciated, either as a chance to see the talk again, or to view it at a more convenient time. The full report will be available on the GlosArch website soon.



## 2022-23 GlosArch Lectures

Once again, Neil Cathie has come up trumps, with another excellent series of lectures for forthcoming Autumn-Winter season. The season starts on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September with Emma Start of Corinium Museum talking about the Corinium mosaics. Once again all lectures will be held at St. Andrews URC church hall, Montpellier St, Cheltenham, GL50 1SP, starting at 7.30pm and they will also be live-streamed on Zoom. GlosArch members will continue to receive the Zoom link free of charge as part of their membership. Since we no longer benefit from the Heritage Lottery Fund grant, non-members will be asked to pay £5 per lecture - although for £15 GlosArch membership they will get all lectures for free, along with many other benefits.

The provisional programme from the 2022-23 series can be found at the end of this newsletter.

## Summer Visits

Two visits to sites of interest took place over the summer, with a final visit, to Tony Roberts' excavation at Slimbridge, planned for 4<sup>th</sup> September.

### Littledean Roman temple

Two groups of twelve GlosArch members spent a fascinating couple of hours on a guided tour of the site of Littledean Roman temple, which is situated close to the top of the escarpment of the Forest of Dean, overlooking the Arlingham horseshoe bend in the River Severn. The tour was led by Don Macer-Wright, discoverer of the site and the driver of the excavations there over the last 38 years.

The tour started with a walk out to the edge of the ridge to look out across the Severn Valley, River and the great horseshoe bend towards the Cotswolds on the other side. This is an awe-inspiring landscape which would have been rendered mystical and dangerous by the behaviour of the River as the Severn Bore charged up the river and eddied and swirled as it came around the bend. Don recounted a local legend of the Roman army becoming trapped in the river when trying to cross to the western bank and being swept away by the tumultuous rising waters. This strange place probably goes a long way to explain the importance of the

Littledean site from the Neolithic through to Roman times.

Returning to the temple site through the woodland with some ancient sweet chestnuts, possibly descended from Roman ancestors, Don proceeded to describe the discovery of the site, and its excavation, which is still on-going.

The Roman temple is centred around a spring, which, along with others arising, through a quirk of geology, near the top of the ridge, fed a large



ritual pool within the temple precincts. The site appears to have gained significance in the Neolithic based on the discovery of a large number of carved stone artefacts, axe and mace heads in relation to the spring. Occupation in the Bronze Age is attested to by more carved stones bearing a number of motifs along with a series of cremations which have been 14C-dated to the Bronze Age, thanks to a Frocester Fund grant from GlosArch. In the Iron Age, it has been proposed that Littledean was the site of a temple to the river goddess Sabrina. This is supported by the finding of many small carved human heads in relation to the pool. With the arrival of the Romans, the Celtic site was replaced by a stone-built temple or nymphaeum in the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. This impressive temple had walls 1.2-1.5m thick with a peristyle courtyard, pool and cella. The temple appears then to have been dismantled and rebuilt in the 4<sup>th</sup> century before being replaced by a wooden structure, possibly a church in the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century. During the site visit, excavations were still on-going. The tour concluded at the local pub, The Belfry, where Don brought a selection of the amazing Neolithic, Bronze Age, and Iron Age stone artefacts along with some of the Roman finds. Following an enormous buffet lunch we all headed for home.



Phil Cox

### **A Visit to Deerhurst Church with a talk by Michael Hare Wednesday 13th July 2022**

The GlosArch visit to Deerhurst church had been arranged around a talk to be given by GlosArch's own president, Michael Hare, who is an eminent research scholar, widely recognised as a great authority on the subject. He was educated at Bedford and Corpus Christi College, Oxford and was Hon Research Fellow, Dept of Anthropology & Archaeology, University of Bristol (Retired).

Among his publications is EXCAVATIONS at ST MARY'S CHURCH, DEERHURST in 2012 with Richard Bryant and Carolyn Heighway.

Once the gathering of 13 people, among whom were GlosArch stalwarts Ann Maxwell and Les Comtesse, seemed complete outside the church gate, the author introduced Michael and the talk proceeded. The church's architectural history is complex and multi-layered as Michael explained, but a substantial part of the building is considered to belong to the first half of the 9th century.



The original rectangular church of around AD700 had a semi-circular apse added for which the foundations of which are still visible beyond the present east end. In the ninth century the apse was rebuilt as a seven-sided structure.

The walls were then raised to their present impressive height. Michael explained how, before then, an external projecting wooden gallery would have surrounded the western tower. Everyone was given two handout diagrams of the site plan and illustrations of how the church might have looked.

There is some magnificent 9th century

Anglo-Saxon sculpture including a series of carved beast-heads, including two at the west end and two on the chancel arch. The Saxon font is thought to belong to the 9th century and is arguably the finest in existence, but Michael has his doubts about its current system of illumination. There are many magnificent surviving Anglo-Saxon arches, doorways and windows some like the later west door offset into an earlier rounded arch. Another notable feature is a particularly fine Virgin and Child inset above the nave doorway, which is in such a perfect state of



preservation it is surely one of the finest in existence. Michael treated us to a tour of the original semi-circular apse, later rebuilt as a seven sided with decorated by pilaster strips and finally, the now, almost hidden, but ever famous “Deerhurst Angel”.

David Jones

## The Gloucester Archaeology Festival at the Folk of Gloucester 30th July 2022

GlosArch had been invited to present a stand at the Festival of Archaeology at the ‘Folk of Gloucester’, which was previously called the Folk Museum in Westgate Street, and after a shaky start due to no one being available on the day, Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July, with Phil Cox’s help, a collection of items were hurriedly put together at the last minute and presented by the author.

The ‘Folk of Gloucester’ was still wrapped in scaffolding and plastic sheets for the programme of restoration that will hopefully bring it back to looking more like it’s Tudor origins. GlosArch had a table in the tower view window upstairs in the ‘Ed Shed’ next to a



splendid display put on by the Taynton Metal Detecting Club, enthusiastically headed by Andy Frappe. And although our display was comparatively small there was still plenty of interest shown from those curious enough to climb the stairs.

Also on our floor was a display of rebuilding old Gloucester in Lego put on for children, but the main display of Roman Glevum in Lego was down stairs in the Ed Shed, which I would have liked to have seen properly, but could only glance at in passing as I was kept pretty busy for most of the time.

Inevitably, little children always like to examine animal bones and the few on our table caused great excitement in trying to identify which “dinosaur” they came from? But it was the piece of painted Roman wall plaster taken “from a house somewhere in Gloucester” that drew most people’s attention and questions like “where did you find it” and “why have you got it” I had to plead ignorance to. Some were interested enough to take our leaflets with details of membership and asked a





lot about what we were doing in the region. I told them about how they could find out about archaeological work in the county and also recommended Andrew Armstrong's excellent video clips on Youtube about various aspects of finds in Gloucester.

At the end of the day we were visited by some of the organisers, the Operations team manager Alex Cooke, who had helped us with the set up and later, by trustees Gareth Jayne and Marc Waters who came by to thank us for being there and putting on such a good show at short notice.

David Jones

*GlosArch is keen to have a presence at more local events as we attempt to raise our profile increase public awareness of archaeology and gain new members. If you know of an forthcoming event where you think we should be present (and ideally if you are willing to help on a stall), please contact me (Phil Cox, Hon Sec) or David Jones.*

## Glevensis

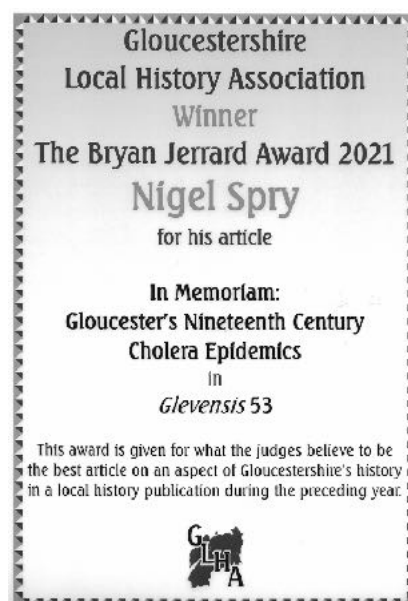
Volume 54 of *Glevensis* was published in April. It contains articles on the historic Inns of Gloucester, Churchdown Hill, a previously unreported excavation from the 1980s in Kingsholm and a villa at Bisley. There is also an obituary of Harold Wingham, longstanding and recently honorary member of GADARG/GlosArch and nationally important aerial photographer.

Volume 55 is in preparation and looks like being another excellent edition. If you have a paper in preparation or some work you wish write up for publication, please contact me (Phil Cox) or the Tim Copeland, Editor in Chief, via [glevensis@glosarch.org.uk](mailto:glevensis@glosarch.org.uk).

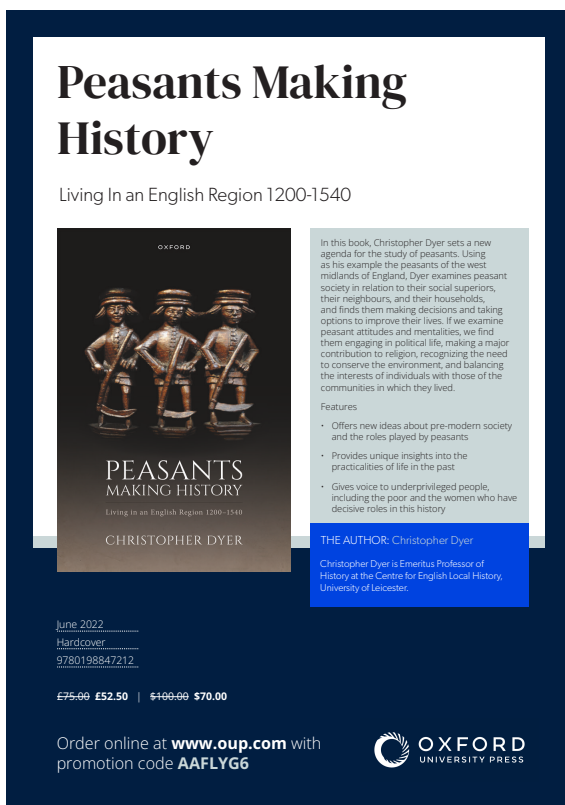
## Other News

We were delighted to learn that the 2021 Bryan Jerrard Award, presented by the Gloucestershire Local History Association, was awarded to GlosArch member Nigel Spry, for his article in *Glevensis* 53, 'In Memoriam: Gloucester's Nineteenth Century Cholera Epidemics'. The award is given for the best published article on an aspect of Gloucestershire's local history in the previous year.

The Award was presented by Bryan Jerrard (left) and Dr Steve Blake (centre) chairman of GLHA.



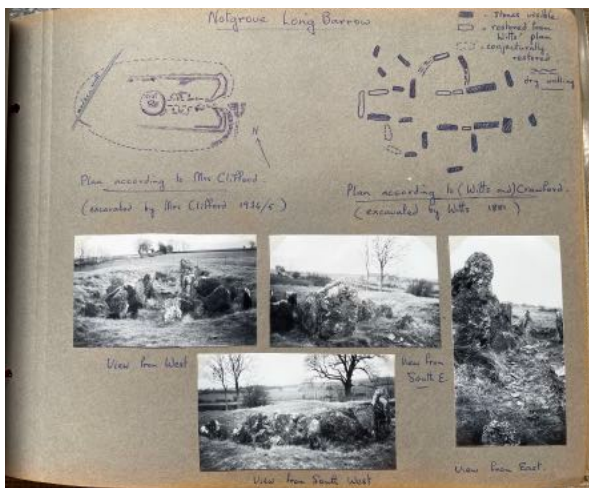
## A New Book that may be of Interest



Professor Chris Dyer, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Leicester and a former GlosArch lecturer has a new book out which may be of interest to GlosArch members. It contains a fair bit of information on Gloucestershire.

If the medieval is your field and you would be interested in writing a review of this book for *Glevensis* please contact as I have negotiated access to the online version for review.

## A Collection of Archaeological Photographs



A few weeks ago I received a mysterious phone call about some old photographs. The call was from a relative of John Maurice Wood of Minchinhampton. I met the gentleman and his mother, Mr Wood's niece, at a cafe in Minchinhampton and have taken possession of several albums of his photographs of archaeological sites in Gloucestershire and as far afield as The Orkneys taken in the 1950s and 1960s. The photos are annotated and accompanied by drawings of the sites. If you recall Mr Wood, and can tell me any more

about him, or have any ideas how we could use this interesting collection please let me know.

Phil Cox

## Frocester Fund

Applications are still open for the 2022 Frocester Fund Grant. The fund was set up with gift from our former president, Eddie Price. The grant of up to £1000 must be used to support work leading to publication of archaeological findings.

Previous grants have been made to:

- David Evans towards analyses of material from his 2004-05 dig at Kings Stanley,
- Michael Philpott towards carbon dating of bone from his 2012 dig at Churchdown.
- Tom Moore of Durham University (2) for analysis of brooches (2015-16) and iron slag (2016-17) from excavations at Bagendon.
- Roger Townsend of Crickley Hill Archaeological Trust (2018-19), towards publication of further volumes of the report on excavations by Philip Dixon in the 1980s and 1990s.
- Tony Roberts (2019-20) for radiocarbon dating of samples from the Archaeoscan excavation of a Roman site at Slimbridge
- Don Macer-Wright (2020-21) for radiocarbon dating of skeletal remains from pits beneath the Roman temple at Littledean.

If you wish to apply for the 2021-22 award please complete the application form which can be downloaded via this link: [https://1drv.ms/b/s!AjckKcl6\\_SYkgknl-Baifgm8Vqh\\_](https://1drv.ms/b/s!AjckKcl6_SYkgknl-Baifgm8Vqh_)

## Membership Fees

Membership fees for 2022 became due on 1 January 2022. If you haven't received your copy of *Glevensis* this may be because your subscription hasn't been paid. Please check your bank account and pay if it is outstanding. Once you have paid, or if you have paid but have not received *Glevensis* please email our membership secretary, Angie Newcombe: [anewcombe283@gmail.com](mailto:anewcombe283@gmail.com)

At the AGM it was agreed that the subscription will increase to £20 per year for ordinary members, £10 for associate and student members from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023. This increase will enable GlosArch to continue to provide the hybrid lectures free of charge to members.

## 2022-23 Lecture Series - Provisional Programme

Neil Cathie is awaiting confirmation of the speakers for October and November. The final list will be circulated soon.

### GlosArch – dates and location details for autumn/winter lectures 2022/2023

Date	Location	Title	Presenter	Comments
Monday, 26 <sup>th</sup> September, 2022	Physical and Zoom meeting	An introduction to Corinium mosaics	Emma Stuart, Learning Development Officer, Corinium Museum.	
Monday, 24 <sup>th</sup> October, 2022	Physical and Zoom meeting	TBA		
Monday, 28 <sup>th</sup> November, 2022	Physical and Zoom meeting	TBA		
Monday, 19 <sup>th</sup> December, 2022	Physical and Zoom meeting	Summary of GlosArch field work during 2021 and 2022 – Brookthorpe, Severn Bank and Cleeve Hill	Neil Cathie, Phil Cox, Mike Milward.	
Monday, 30 <sup>th</sup> January, 2023	Physical and Zoom meeting	In search of the tiles that built Roman Cirencester	Peter Warry	Bernard Rawes memorial lecture
Monday, 27 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023	Physical and Zoom meeting	Key Gloucestershire and Avon PAS finds of 2021-2022	KURT Adams, PAS Finds Liaison Officer	
Monday, 27 <sup>th</sup> March, 2023	Physical and Zoom meeting	Summary of field work done 2023-2023 at Guiting Power, Slimbridge (Stanborough Mead and Lynch field), Wickwar.	Tony Roberts, Archeoscan	
Monday, 24 <sup>th</sup> April, 2023	Physical and Zoom meeting	'Cold-case' Archaeology: Gambier Parry Gardens alias 'Coppice Corner', 9/83	Tim Cope land	The Eddie Price memorial lecture

All meetings are on Mondays and start promptly at 19.30pm. **Fees are £5 per talk for non-members paid by bank transfer in advance, members go free. Join GlosArch for £15 annual subscription and you can then attend all eight lectures for free!**

All meetings planned to be physical but with live Zoom broadcast in parallel for those that cannot attend in person.