



## NEWSLETTER 142

Spring 2018



Includes details of the 2018 Summer programme of visits to points of archaeological interest, far and near. See pages 6 and 7.

**Important Notice** At the end of May the new data protection law comes into effect and in order to comply, Gloucestershire Archaeology, along with other societies, needs to have your permission to retain certain information in order to contact you. Please see the form at the back of this newsletter and complete the lower portion and return it to the Hon Treas; this may be done by post or as an email attachment.

## HILLFORTS

The Nov/Dec edition of British Archaeology included an article on the online Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland project. The article included a reference to the structured survey forms sent out to various groups at the start of the project, and states as a highlight that "...Gloucestershire Archaeology returned over 40 (completed) surveys...". This credit for Glosarch was earned by **Alistair Hodcroft**. Below, he gives an account of the work he put in.

*Between October 2014 and April 2016 I visited nearly all the currently known hill forts in Gloucestershire as a volunteer contributor to the University of Oxford's recently-published Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2017-06-23-online-hillforts-atlas-maps-all-4147-britain-and-ireland-first-time> ).*

*A detailed study of the relevant Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 maps (numbers 150, 162, 163, 172, 173 & 174) suggested that there were almost 50 sites that would merit a visit. I decided at the outset to concentrate on the smaller forts because the map evidence suggested that many of these were hidden from casual view. I then planned a set of trips, one every second or third weekend, trying to take in two or three forts each time.*

*Some of the sites were easy to access, some required a great deal more effort. Most were easily accessible from a public right-of-way, but in a few cases I identified the land-owner in advance and obtained written permission to visit. If you plan to visit any of them yourselves take good footwear and rain protection. If the site is situated in woodland, a hand-held sat-nav is essential to prevent you getting lost. During my visits I was careful to observe the old adage of "leaving nothing but footprints and taking nothing but photographs".*

*I am gratified to be able to tell you that most of the 45 "hill fort" sites that I was able to visit in Gloucestershire (and in some cases just over the border into adjacent counties) survive and are generally in a good state of preservation. Each and every one of them proved to be worth the visit although some were more interesting than others. Several of them, especially those to the east of the county and into Oxfordshire, are not situated on hills.... Here are a few of my favourite Gloucestershire forts....*

*Easily accessible from the car, with only a short walk, I would recommend:*

- *Beckbury Fort (OS sheet 150, SP 064 299, 2 miles South-East of Toddington cross-roads) - a well-preserved scarp-edge fort. Approach along the Cotswold Way from the East.*
- *Cleeve Cloud Fort (OS sheet 163, SO 985 254, 2 miles South-East of Bishop's Cleeve) - a lovely scarp-edge fort with wonderful views over Cheltenham and into Wales.*
- *Horton Camp (OS sheet 172, ST 764 844, 2 miles East of Chipping Sodbury) - a beautiful scarp-edge fort with wonderful views over the Severn. Approach from the road to the East of the site.*

*If you fancy a longer walk:*

- *Conderton Hill Fort (OS sheet 150, SO 972 384, 6 miles North-East of Tewkesbury). A well-preserved fort. Approach from the South along the right-of-way. It's a steep walk up-hill but worth it as this is one of the very few small forts that has not only been excavated in modern times but the detailed results also published!*
- *Ranbury Ring (OS sheet 163, SP 090 009, 1 mile South-East of Ampney St Peter) - a classic fort that is not on a hill top, 'hidden' in open sight in the midst of farmland.*

*Finally, if you are willing to trek through woodland then I would recommend visiting the truly astonishing Welshbury (OS sheet 162, SO 677 156, 2 miles North-East of Cinderford) - a multi-vallate fort hidden on a wooded hilltop (a sat-nav is essential) with well-preserved banks and ditches hidden in the woods. Approach the site from the road to the North.*



Ramparts at Beckbury.  
Photos by Alistair Hodcroft



Bank and ditch at Welshbury



by Neil Cathie

Nearly four hundred people including myself attended the

Archaeology Live conference in London on the 23rd and 24th of February 2018. We enjoyed 21 lectures on the most recent field work led by some of the most eminent archaeologists of the day and mingled with them during tea breaks inside a separate hall holding an archaeology fair.

One of the highlights for me was the excellent and humorous presentation by Richard Osgood of the MoD about his finds at East Chisenbury midden on Salisbury Plain. Here, despite the site having been ravaged by badgers and rabbits, he has primarily used ex service men and women with various physical and mental disabilities to excavate multiple stratified remains yielding hundreds of fascinating finds from Neolithic to Anglo Saxon. The most heart warming and amusing part was his description of how sceptical ex-squaddies with little knowledge of archaeology or history became avid and enthusiastic amateur archaeologists in 24 hours.

On a similar vein, Professor Carenza Lewis, (ex-Time Team) and now at the University of Lincoln, gave a convincing presentation supported by lots of statistical data on the health and well-being benefits of community based archaeology. Apart from the obvious health benefits of getting people outside and doing physical activity, the real examples of the development of pride in local history and of a sense of place, and the benefits of team working that community based archaeological projects engendered were encouraging.

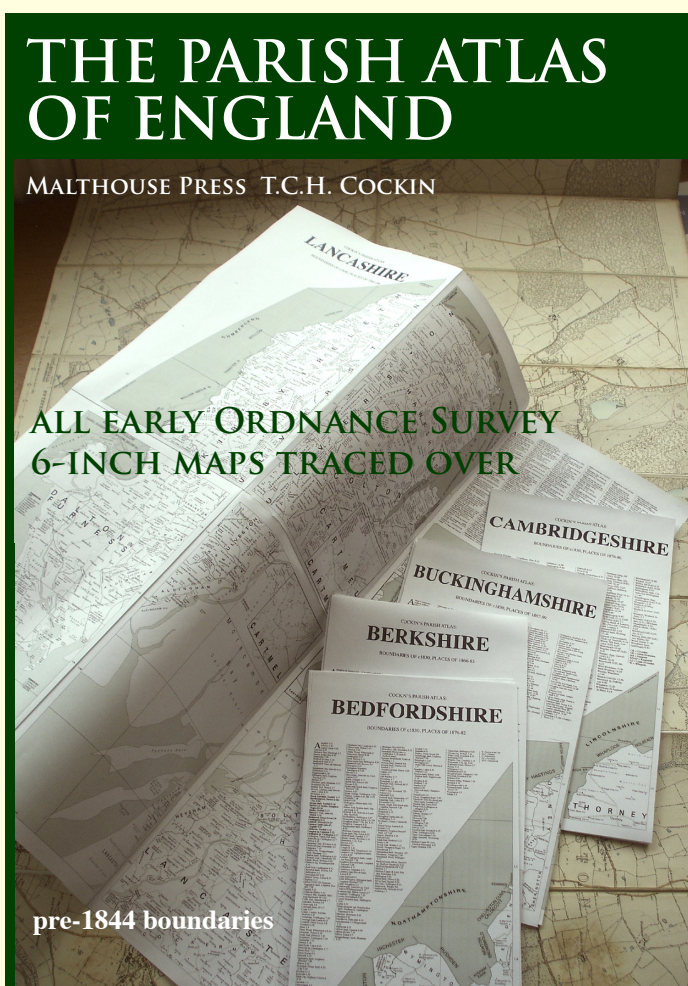
There were too many excellent presentations to cover them all in detail here, but as a foot note, I did catch Tim Darvill during one break and he confirmed that he and Bournemouth University will be returning to The Sisters long barrow in Cirencester this summer, and that volunteers will be able to apply.

#### **Subscription Reminder**

Subscriptions are now due for 2018-19, if you have not renewed please do so or let the Hon Treas know that you do not intend to do so either by post or email (A Newcombe, 2 Warren Close, Churchdown GL3 1JP [anewcombe283@gmail.com](mailto:anewcombe283@gmail.com)). The rates are as follows: Ordinary Member £15 and with an Associate member £22.50.

The Parish Atlas of England advertised below is offered to Glosarch members at £45 (25% off cover price of £60.00) - further discounts off 2 or more shipped to one address. A copy has been deposited at Gloucestershire Archives.

## ***Malthouse Press*** presents



### **THE PARISH ATLAS OF ENGLAND: AN ATLAS OF ENGLISH PARISH BOUNDARIES** Tim Cockin

THE PARISH is the territorial unit for most public registering in local history. In this seven-year, solo, labour of love project, Tim Cockin has traced over all the early Ordnance Survey 6-Inch County series maps at 16.8mm (0.6619 inch) to 1 mile using desktop publishing and high capacity memory personal computers. Putting in the text of all key and secondary places, than if the original maps were reproduced shrunk. In addition, thousands of tithe maps have been researched to take those counties (such as Devon, Glos., Norfolk, Lincs., Shrops., Som. etc) back to their pre-1844 states (*for they were surveyed after boundary changes in the 1876 and 1882 Acts*). All 39 counties of England are represented, with consideration to panels making wall charts or fold-outs for separate publication.

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## GLOUCESTERSHIRE'S TEMPLE DOGS by David Hughes

Most people will have seen by now the reports of the fantastic “Licking Dog hoard” found by two amateur metal detectorists at an as yet unreported location somewhere in the County on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2017. The finds were reported under the Portable Antiquities Scheme and assessed initially by our own liaison officer Kurt Adams of Bristol Museums Service under reference; Adams, K (2017) *GLO-BE1187: A ROMAN HOARD* Web page available at: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/865434> [Accessed: 5 Mar 2018 11:21:32]

It is most likely a group assembled by a metal smith or at least with a view to subsequent reworking as it comprises many relatively small pieces of bronze. Some of the pieces (20) may be fragments of a single statue but the immediate stand out star is a complete figure of a dog with its tongue outstretched as if in the action of licking. If you haven't seen the photographs yet they are definitely worth a look.



'Licking dog' photo by [Eve Andreski](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

Could the licking dog have some association with the Lydney Park Roman Temple site? There are nine alloy objects representing dogs in the small museum at the site including the famous Lydney Dog which led the original excavators to speculate that sacred dogs were involved in some kind of healing cult or ritual perhaps involving dogs licking the supplicant. Analogies were made with the massive healing sanctuary of Asclepios at Epidaurus in Greece. More recently in August 2013 at Llys Awel in Conwy, North Wales excavations produced two fine dog figures also with tongues revealed. These beautiful objects are in the Museum of Wales and you can see images at; <https://museum.wales/articles/2014-03-05/The-Healing-Power-of-Dogs/>

The discovery of more evidence for licking dogs must make it more likely than less that ritual activity involving man's best friend took place in our county but what form this took is speculation. Did dogs living in the temple literally lick physically injured supplicants? Some have claimed that dog saliva has antiseptic properties. Or is this view too narrow, perhaps the dog's close physical presence as manifestations of the temple deity helped to cure people of problems of the mind. Perhaps the supplicants had nothing wrong with them at all; they just believed that the dog's presence would facilitate contact with the deity through dreams or portents which would help them better understand their own lives and emotions. The very common deposition of votive offerings at temple sites such as coins, pins, representations of body parts as well as the fine figurines themselves reinforce the idea that the ancients wanted a much more tangible relationship with their deities rather than a simple thought or prayer.

**YouCaxton New Books** has recently published *The 1926 General Strike in the Black Country* and *The Impact Of World War One on the Smestow Vale Villages* both by David Taylor, and *An account of the achievements of John White, one of the true founding fathers of America* by David Cuckson. We continue to specialise in well-researched books by self-published authors and have several further titles on hand for later in the year. We would be very interested to hear from any members of Gloucestershire Archaeology who have projects of this nature in hand. Contact Bob Fowke, Editor, at <http://www.youcaxton.co.uk/>

## CLEEVE COMMON

The Conservators of Cleeve Common, on top of Cleeve Hill above Cheltenham, have agreed to a programme of geophysical surveys of the archaeological sites on the Common. The Scheduled sites include the well-known hillfort (if that is what it is), a mysterious circular feature (The Ring) and a deep ditch which runs for some hundreds of metres across the hilltop. There are also other mounds, banks and crop marks to be investigated. Tim Copeland will advise Glosarch and will be the link with the Conservators, but the resistivity surveys will be done by Glosarch members. Scheduled Monument consent has already been obtained and we will start work this Spring. All members will be offered the chance to participate in this significant fieldwork opportunity. Look out for email circulars announcing the date, time and place.

### SECRETARY WANTED\*\*\*SECRETARY WANTED\*\*\*SECRETARY WANTED

Glosarch benefits from the willingness of members to serve on the committee and run the society. The committee needs to be refreshed from time to time, and Mike Milward will announce his resignation as secretary at the forthcoming AGM. The society would find it hard to operate without a secretary, but it is a function any of our members would be capable of performing, supported by committee members and past secretaries, so please consider coming forward and volunteering. Mike will answer any questions about what is involved, contact him at [m.milward1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:m.milward1@yahoo.co.uk).

## SUMMER PROGRAMME 2018

### DAY TRIP

#### Saturday 2 June

#### Devizes

The trip this year will be to visit the stunning **Gold from the Time of Stonehenge** exhibition at the Wiltshire Museum in Devizes - *"...largest collection of Early Bronze Age gold ever put on public display in England....new displays transform public understanding of Stonehenge..."* We will have a presentation on the exhibition by the Museum's Director, David Dawson, followed by a guided tour of the exhibition galleries. There is plenty more besides to see in the Museum, and following that, there is the rest of Devizes, most notably the Church of St John the Baptist. The church has been described thus: *"...cannot claim to be anything like a complete Norman church, but what it lacks in Romanesque completeness is more than compensated for by the quality of what remains. It is one of the most significant fragments of Norman architecture in England."*

Pick up by Applegates Coaches will be 8.00am from St George's Road, Cheltenham, and 8.25am from Oxstalls Campus in Gloucester. Return to Gloucester should be by 7.00pm and to Cheltenham 7.30pm. The cost for the trip will be £27.00 per person, which includes entry to the Museum and the presentation.

To book, send cheque to M W Milward, 1 Chase View, Prestbury, Cheltenham, GL52 3AL with a note stating how many people and where you will join the coach. Closing date for booking is Tuesday 1 May. Please make cheques payable to Gloucestershire Archaeology. Please book early so I know as soon as possible that we have the minimum number needed to ensure the trip goes ahead.

## **EVENING/WEEKEND TRIPS**

### **Sunday 13 May**

#### **Lydney Roman Temple**

Tim Copeland will be our guide to this famous Roman site in the grounds of Lydney Park, which is to the east of Lydney on the A48 (GL15 6BT). When you reach the pay point, say you are with Gloucestershire Archaeology and part of a group, and you will be charged the group rate of £4 per head. Aim to be in the visitor parking area by 2.00 pm. Tim will take us round the site (short uphill walk), and afterwards we can visit the museum in the main house.

### **Tuesday 19 June**

#### **Coln Valley churches**

Steven Blake has agreed to show us three of the most notable Saxon/Norman churches of the Coln valley: Coln Rogers, Coln St Dennis and Chedworth. Meet at Coln Rogers (GL54 3LB) at 7.00 pm, park in the village. Some car-sharing may be necessary.

### **Tuesday 26 June**

#### **Conderton Hillfort**

Alistair Hodcroft will show us the hill fort at Conderton, his selection from the 45 he has visited (see his article above). Meet at 7.00 pm. Alistair advises stout footwear as some of the path is boggy. Directions: (coming from Beckford) very soon after entering the village of Conderton, the main road turns sharply left by the Yew Tree Pub - do not turn left here but go straight ahead and follow the minor road (in a NNE direction) for about another 700 metres to a sharp left turn (at SO 968377). The path up to the camp leads directly ahead at this junction. About three cars can be parked at this junction without hindering access. If you follow the road to the left, another three or four cars can be parked on the grass verge on the left of the road. Further up the road, more cars can be parked on the left, half off the road. The uphill path to the fort takes about 20 minutes to walk.

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### **Gloucestershire Archaeology**

### **Data Protection Consent Form**

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