



## Newsletter 149

## Spring 2022

Spring is here and thoughts are turning to getting out in the field again. We have made a start already with three days surveying with the new Frobisher magnetometer at the hillfort on Cleeve Common (see below). We are planning two excavations in the coming months: a return to the site at Brookthorpe and a new excavation in Minsterworth. Once dates are confirmed we will be looking for volunteers.

The winter just gone has at least been a little less difficult than the winter of 2020-21. We launched our hybrid lecture series thanks to the grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund which has been a success with increased attendance compared to previous years despite the continued pandemic. We have now ironed out most of the teething problems with the technology and things seem to work well, whether we have a speaker in the room or remotely. Links to recordings of several of the lectures were circulated to members and are still available to view. We will continue with this mode of delivering lectures in 2022-23.

There will be an expanded (compared to 2021) summer visits programme although no coach tour is planned owing to the continued uncertainty about Covid.

Finally, we are looking into updating our website in the coming year and if anyone has experience in this field please contact me as we would value your help to take this forwards.

Can I remind members that subscriptions are due. Details of how to pay can be found at the end of the newsletter. Also please keep me updated if you change your address of email so we can keep in touch.

Phil Cox

Hon Sec

### Lecture series

Despite the continuing COVID-19 pandemic we managed a full lecture series between September 2021 and April 2022 (still to come), with only one lecture having to go 'online only' due to a surge in case numbers. We had four lectures presented by remote speakers and four with the speaker in the room. The programme covered topics ranging from

Neolithic Mendip, through Iron Age Somerset and Gloucestershire, Roman Gloucester and Slimbridge, a mediaeval manor, church graffiti and will finish with 10,000 years of archaeology along the Milford Haven to Tirley gas pipeline. Our in person audience was generally outnumbered at least 3-to-1 by the Zoomers, probably reflecting the pandemic, people's familiarity with zoom and the wider spread of our audience thanks to the technology.

The season started with a members' evening presented by Neil Cathie and myself on recent and forthcoming fieldwork. October's lecture, by Dr Jodie Lewis, then of Worcester University (now Bradford) described some exciting new neolithic sites on the Mendip. She was followed in November by Cat Lodge, senior archeologist for North Somerset, who described recent work to uncover Worlebury Camp, the Iron Age hillfort above Weston-super-Mare. In December, Henry Hurst treated us to a tour de force with his lecture on Gloucester City in Roman and early medieval times. January stayed with things medieval as Wayne Perkins described his work on graffiti in some notable Gloucestershire churches (Remember to take a torch next time you visit an old church). Professor Tom Moore of Durham University was February's speaker. The subject was his work on the vast late Iron Age site oppidum (?) at Bagendon near Cirencester. He gave us a fascinating insight into the nature of site and its function in late Iron Age society. In March Tony Roberts of Archeoscan updated us on last season's work at the newly discovered Roman site at Slimbridge and the medieval site at Guiting Power. At Slimbridge early indications are of a sizeable Roman building, whilst at Guiting Power he and his volunteers have uncovered what appears to be a previously unknown medieval manor house. In the final lecture, Jon Hart of Cotswold Archeology will be describing the discoveries along the route of the Milford Haven to Tirley gas pipeline, ranging from the mesolithic to medieval. Overall this was an exciting programme. Several of the lectures were recorded. Links were circulated to members so the lectures can be viewed at leisure.

In order to fulfil the requirements of the Heritage Fund grant we have to report back on how the lectures were received and as a result we will be circulating a short questionnaire to members and the non-members who also joined the zooms. It would be very helpful if you could respond and give us your views.

## **Summer Outings 2022**

Mike Milward has been busy putting together a programme of visits for the summer. The details are as follows:

- 11 June - Tour at Littledean Hall (fully booked)
  
- 16 June - Evening walk at Uley from the village taking in the hillfort and temple site
  
- 2 July - Tour at Littledean Hall (fully booked)

One further walk is also being planned. Further details to follow.

## One for the Archive

Group photographs of GlosArch members taken out in the field engaged in excavation or geophysical surveying are not unusual, but this photograph is a bit different and quite special:

*Back Row - Richard Sermon, Jim Haslem, Harold Wingham, Phil Moss, Jo Spry, Ruth M-S, Terry M-S, Gill Moss, Barbara Rawes, Brenda Ecclestone, Martin Ecclestone, Babs Dodd. Front Row – Carrie Sermon, Kate Haslem, Lesley Dodd (now Brain), Bill Chouls, Bernard Rawes, Val Chouls.*



It was taken by group member Nigel Spry on the occasion of a BBQ garden party given by Nigel and his wife Jo, way back in 1994, to welcome Richard Sermon as new head of the Gloucester City Excavation Unit. It is special because it provides a rare visual rollcall of prominent figures in the development of GADARG (now GlosArch) since its founding in 1967. Inevitably, some are no longer with us but their achievements and contributions to the life of the group and to archaeology locally are well remembered and widely recorded not least in past *Glevenses*, and in Nigel's article 'The First FiftyOne years of GlosArch' in *Glevensis* 49 (2016) (<http://www.glosarch.org.uk/Glev%2049.pdf>). Happily, a number are still with us, including founder member Phil Moss (a noted illustrator and recorder of Gloucester's history and archaeology) and Nigel himself, also a founder member (who as the taker of the photograph doesn't appear).

Four in the group merit a special mention:

**Bill Chouls** (d.2001): Another founder member and the group's first vice-chairman, Bill was responsible for starting *Glevensis* and was its first editor. He is remembered for his exploratory excavation of the so-called Whitminster RV site at Eastington in the 1970s and for his enthusiasm for introducing young people to archaeology.

**Bernard Rawes** (d.1995): For many years, invariably assisted by his wife Barbara (herself an accomplished local historian), Bernard was a committed independent excavator of numerous sites around north Gloucestershire, always placing high priority on fully publishing all his work. Over time he came to occupy a pivotal role in Gloucestershire archaeology. At various times he was Hon. Secretary of GADARG, editor of *Glevensis* and Secretary of the B&G's Committee for Archaeology in Gloucestershire. He will also be remembered for the considerable work he did (again assisted by Barbara) compiling a detailed card index of all known archaeological sites and features in the county, a resource that eventually became the official Sites and Monuments Record managed by the County Archaeological Service. He received the accolade of being elected not only as President of the B&G but also as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquaries (FSA).

**Harold Wingham** (just recently passed away): Distinguished for the magnificent aerial photography of archaeological sites, especially in Gloucestershire and surrounding areas, carried out over many years, Harold was a long-time member of the group. In his early years as an aerial photographer, he is believed to have collaborated with O G S Crawford, the renowned prehistoric archaeologist and archaeological officer of the Ordnance Survey.

**Martin Ecclestone** (d.2017): Martin will be remembered by his GlosArch colleagues as an inexhaustible researcher and field worker, never easily deterred by obstacles, ready to take the lead in any new initiative taken by the group and a forthright spokesman on archaeological matters local and national. His interests were wide-ranging; he was at home transcribing and interpreting medieval written documents as he was doing earthwork surveying and excavating. In time he came to be widely known and respected for his work, one of his more productive contacts being with the late Prof. Mick Aston on the latter's Shapwick Project. He was Hon. Secretary of GlosArch for a record period of 17 years between 1993 and 2010; also a member of the B&G Council and Hon. Secretary of the B&G's Committee for Archaeology in Gloucestershire. A full tribute to Martin can be found in *Glevensis* 50 (2017).

As the group goes forward, it is good to be reminded in this way of erstwhile colleagues and their special contribution towards making the group what it is today.

T. M-S

(with grateful thanks to Nigel Spry)

## Fieldwork

### Brookthorpe

In September 2021 members of GlosArch undertook a resistivity survey in two fields adjacent to the M5 in Brookthorpe at the site of a Roman villa discovered when the motorway was being constructed. The aim was to locate any remains of the villa that had not been destroyed by the construction.



The survey was inconclusive so in November Neil Cathie led four days of excavation in the fields. Four trial trenches were sited over the likely site of the villa's remains and three other sites of interest from the resistivity. Magnetometry was undertaken in one of the fields concurrently with the dig (the other field had proven

unsuitable due to large amounts of ferrous metal in and around the field).

Although the remaining walls of the villa were not located, the trenches yielded Roman remains including roof tiles and painted plaster, tesserae as well as Roman pottery and scanty small finds.

We aim to return to Brookthorpe during 2022 to undertake a wider excavation in field 2.



An interim report has been prepared by Neil and will be available on the GlosArch website.

### Cleeve Cloud hillfort

In March GlosArch members undertook a magnetometry survey of the hillfort at Cleeve Cloud on Cleeve Common using the new Frobisher magnetometer. This was a second go

at the site, with the aim of improving on the results from 2019. 28 grids were surveyed over three days in the sun and wind. Although the terrain made surveying difficult improved results were obtained and are being analysed. A final report on the fieldwork on the hillfort and nearby ring is being prepared for submission to Historic England and the



Cleeve Common Trustees.

## **GlosArch Osteoarchaeology Training and Recording**

Despite the difficulties created by the Covid pandemic Sophie Beckett has succeeded in running 10 Osteoarchaeology recording sessions at the EdShed in Gloucester in the Autumn of 2021 with a further 10 sessions in the Spring of 2022 in collaboration with SHARP, making full use of the Gloucester County Council grant money. SHARP has kindly loaned the learning and recording resources throughout this project. SHARP is running two five-day osteoarchaeology courses at the EdShed in Gloucester in June and October of this year. For more details of the courses please go to the SHARP website: [WWW.SHARP.org.uk](http://WWW.SHARP.org.uk)

## **Glevensis**

Volume 54 of Glevensis will shortly be landing on your doormat with the usual mix of interesting papers and reports.

The editors of Glevensis are always on the lookout for papers for the forthcoming editions of our GlosArch annual journal. If you are thinking of writing or submitting a paper please contact the editors via: [mailbox@glosarch.org.uk](mailto:mailbox@glosarch.org.uk) .

## **Membership Fees**

If you haven't yet paid your membership fee for 2022 could you kindly make payment to the membership secretary, Angie Newcombe, 2 Warren Close, Churchdown, GL3 1JP or bank transfer to: Gloucestershire Archaeology; Sort Code 40-17-53; A/C no 81131095. £15 for full member, £7.50 for associate members and student members.