



Registered Charity number: 1201251

Newsletter 151

Spring 2023

Welcome to the GlosArch Spring Newsletter. Winter seems finally to be loosening its grip and our thoughts can turn to longer days, warmer weather and getting outside.

GlosArch members have managed to continue some fieldwork over the late autumn and winter months. A report on fieldwork since the last newsletter can be found below. We are planning further geophysics and will be returning to the excavations at Brookthorpe and Minsterworth in the coming months. All members are welcome to take part, so look out for the emails seeking volunteers to help out.

Well done to Neil Cathie who has been successful in his application to BGAS for a grant to support post-excavation costs relating to the fieldwork and to purchase a more robust gazebo for use on site.

There are still two lectures remaining in the 2022-23 lecture series. On Monday 27th March Tony Roberts will be presenting an update on the 2022 excavation season at Guiting Power, Slimbridge and Wickwar. He has some exciting news on these sites ahead of the 2023 season. The final lecture will be at 7.45pm on Monday 17th April, following the Annual General Meeting (which will start at 7pm). The speaker will be Ed Biddulph of Oxford Archaeology, whose subject will be 'Exploring Glevum's hinterland: Roman settlement and agriculture at Innsworth and Twigworth'.

The Summer excursions programme is now finalised. Details can be found below.

Work has also started on the new website, which is looking good. Although it may not be quite ready to 'go live', I hope to be able to demonstrate it at the April meeting.

AGM - Change of Charitable Status

As you will be aware the last AGM agreed that Gloucestershire Archaeology should apply to change its status from an Unincorporated Association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). I am pleased to inform you that the application was successful and the new CIO came into existence at the end of last year. The forthcoming AGM will therefore be the last of the old iteration of GlosArch and the first of the new CIO. I will be circulating papers for the AGM in the near future. Following the AGM I will apply to close 'old' GlosArch. All of its assets will be transferred to the new organisation. We are also in the process of opening a new bank account and I will circulate the new bank details once

it is active. In the meantime the HSBC account is still functioning so you can continue to pay subscriptions into that account.

2022-23 lectures

The Autumn-Winter lecture series has been another great success. The hybrid format has continued to be popular, with an average of around 50 viewers, either in person or on Zoom. Whilst most lecturers have presented over Zoom we have also had some speakers 'in the room'.

The season started with Emma Stuart from Corinium Museum, with "An introduction to the Corinium Mosaics". She described some of the fabulous mosaics that have been found in and around Cirencester and talked about the techniques employed to produce such fine designs.

In October, we heard from Mark Brett of Cotswold Archaeology, whose talk "Friends, Rovers, countrymen..." presented the results of Cotswold's excavations at the site of Forest Green Rovers' new training facility by the M5. Several of our members had experienced the mud at the site last summer so it was nice to hear what they had found. It was an interesting insight into a commercial archaeology dig.

November's speaker was the notable medieval expert Professor Chris Dyer of Leicester University who discussed the role of the peasantry in mediaeval Gloucestershire. It turns out that the peasants played a much more active role in their own destinies than one might imagine.

December saw the annual round-up of GlosArch's fieldwork from 2022. Neil Cathie presented the results of the excavations at Brookthorpe, the site of Roman villa destroyed by the building of the M5, and Minsterworth, where we were looking for the remains of lost farmhouse. At both sites the excavations raised more questions than they answered, so we will back at both sites in 2023. Phil Cox presented preliminary findings of geophysics from Cleeve Hill where we are looking for the grandstands of the original Cheltenham Racecourse.

In January, Peter Warry delivered a tour de force on the roof tiles that built Roman Cirencester. Who knew that Corinium had its own tile factory at Minety, to the east of the city. It was fascinating to track the tiles through their makers' marks. We also learned that the Romans were keen recyclers of building materials.

This was followed in February by Kurt Adams, the local Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Kurt presented his annual review of the best finds reported to the scheme from Gloucestershire. The finds included a Neolithic polished stone axe from Kempford, a Bronze Age axehead and an Iron Age coin of the Atrebates. There were also some fabulous Roman finds: a denarius from nearly 200 years before the conquest; a beautiful mount in the form of medusa's head; and an owl figurine that was probably once mounted on a sceptre. A full report can be found in the forthcoming edition of *Glevensis*.

I am looking forward to the final two talks of the season. Thanks are due to Neil Cathie for putting together such an interesting and varied programme.

Most of the lectures have been recorded and are available to members. Contact me for the links.

Summer programme 2023

Mike Milward has been putting together a programme of activities for the summer.

Wednesday May 17

Uley

Andrew Holley

Meet 7pm outside the church entrance opposite the Old Crown Inn (GL11 5SN) at the top of the village, where we can park in the street. A walk around the Uley Valley, taking in the Romano – British shrine site on West Hill, the Iron Age Hill fort and views across to Downham (Small Pox) Hill. The walk (3.4 miles) should take up to 2 hours depending on the amount of talking time. It will be generally off road but with good underfoot conditions, a steepish climb and descent to the Bury / West Hill.

Saturday June 3

The Folk Museum, Gloucester

Meet 2pm at the Folk Museum (The Folk of Gloucester, Bishop Hooper House, 99-103 Westgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2PG). The tour lasts 90 minutes and is conducted by a qualified Tour Guide dressed as one of the characters who lived or worked here, or someone who owned the building (see below). There are over 600 years of history in this row of three timber-framed buildings and there are lots of stories about the characters, which bring the place to life.

In addition to the history, the guide will explain some of the plans for the future. The Folk of Gloucester is very much a "work in progress" and it will take a number of years to achieve these plans. The tours are advertised as Behind the Scenes Tours because they include rooms not normally open to the public. This includes going down into some of the cellars. There are lots of stairs and different levels so it is not suitable for anyone who is not able to climb stairs easily.



The charge for the tour is £12 per head which includes tea/coffee/cake. The tour group is limited to 10 people. If more than 10 wish to attend, we can organise a second group, but this will have to be done well in advance, so please book early. (***Please contact me or Mike, m.milward1@yahoo.co.uk as soon as possible if you wish to attend so we can book additional tours if needed***)

Wednesday June 7

Winchcombe

David Aldred

Meet 7pm at Back Lane car park behind the library (free after 7pm). David will take us on walk around Winchcombe with the objective of “Searching for traces of Winchcombe Abbey in the landscape”. The walk lasts about an hour and a half.

Saturday June 24

Gloucester Roman Walls

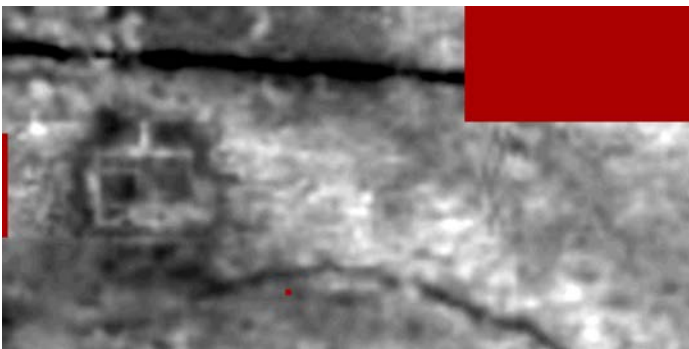
Andrew Armstrong

Meet 2.30pm at the Cross. Gloucester City archaeologist Andrew Armstrong will walk us from the Cross down Westgate Street, through the Cathedral close, round King’s Square and eventually back onto Westgate Street, on a tour of some of the course of the Roman wall, showing us what is visible and explaining how the city has developed in the centuries since.

Fieldwork

Cleeve Hill - the Grandstand

Since the presentation at the December meeting we have been back twice to the site of the original Cheltenham Racecourse to undertake further resistivity surveying. Despite the usual windy conditions and a bit of rain we have managed to survey a larger area, which shows some interesting ditch-like features and some possible structures, in addition to the clear outline of the foundations of the second grandstand. On Monday 20th March we were interviewed by Martha McCracken of BBC Radio Gloucestershire and her report appeared on the radio the following morning.



We are still not confident that we have located the first grandstand, burnt down in 1829 probably in response to Dean Francis Close's sermons decrying the evils of horse racing. Therefore we hope to return to the site in the near future to undertake a magnetometry survey to try to locate the burnt remains.

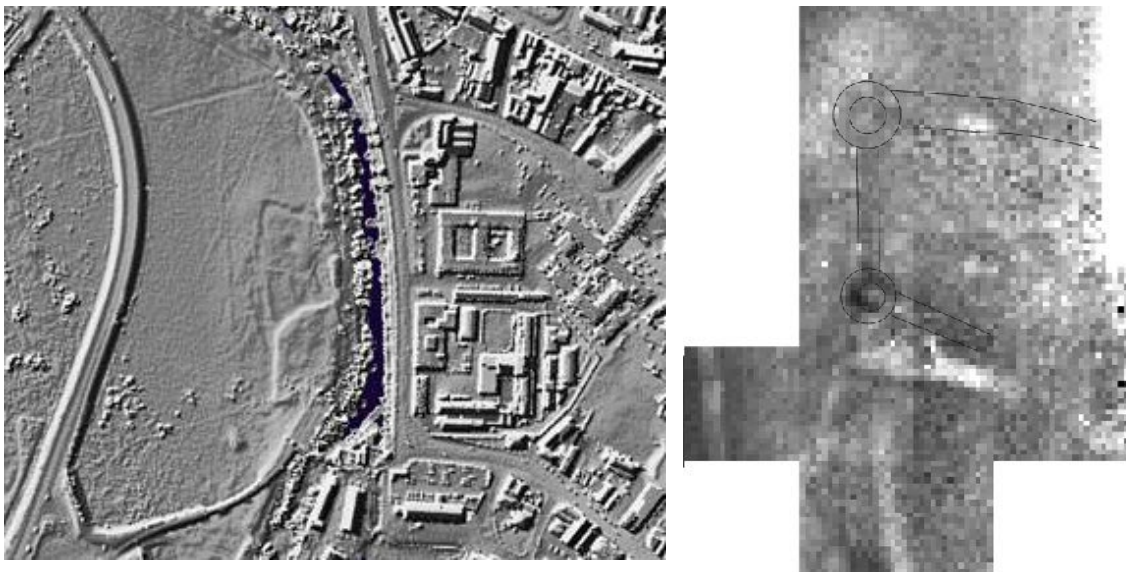
Brookthorpe and Minsterworth excavations

Neil Cathie is planning further excavations at both sites in the coming months. At Brookthorpe the landowner has cleared the brambles and scrub from the fence line abutting the motorway embankment so he will be putting in some new trenches here that should get closer to the site of the remaining part of the lost Roman villa.

At Minsterworth, new LIDAR images showing the ghostly outlines of earlier hedge lines have helped to locate the likely site of the 17th century farmhouse which is shown on historic mapping. Using this new information we will be returning in the hope of finding this lost building.

Castlemeads, Gloucester

We are also planning to revisit this site, where LIDAR and resistivity carried out by GlosArch previously has shown evidence of remains which may relate to the siege of Gloucester during the English Civil War. We have decided to undertake a magnetometry survey of the area, to see what further evidence of previous structures can be gleaned.



Once dates for these various fieldwork activities have been fixed we will be looking for volunteers, so keep an eye on your emails as spaces, as always, are limited.

Cold Case Archaeology

Tim Copeland has been busy piecing together the archive from a previously unpublished excavations by Patrick Garrod and others, in Kingsholm, Gloucester, dating from 1983.

Gambier Parry Gardens: (centred on S0 83606 19860)

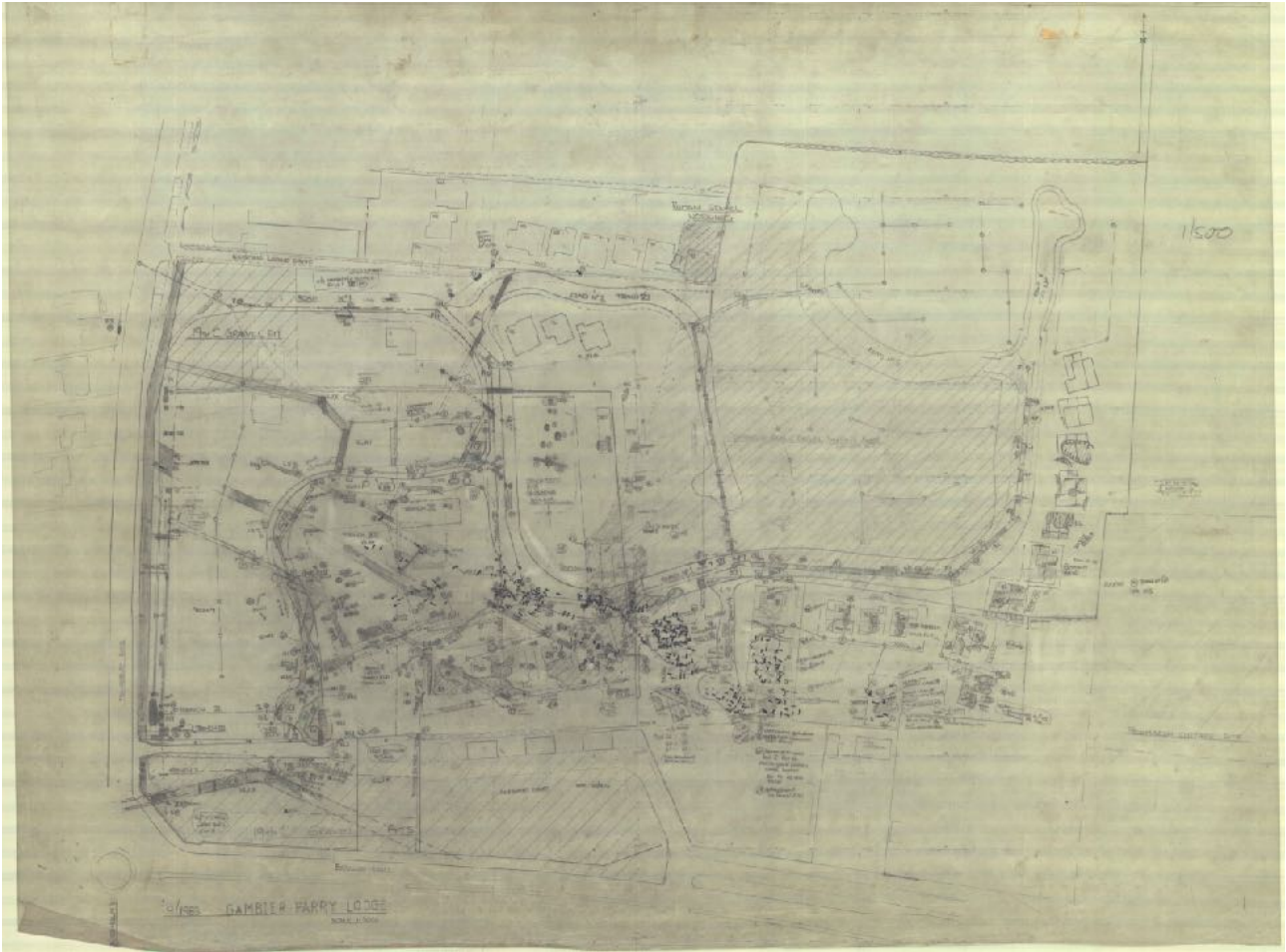
The area of the site northeast of the junction of Estcourt Road and Tewkesbury Road, Kingsholm consisted of fields bordering a large mansion named Gambier Parry Lodge

owned by a philanthropist and art collector who died aged 72 years in 1888. In 1983 the mansion building was demolished and the playing fields to the south and east of it were acquired by Bryant Homes for the 'proposed residential development at Gambier Parry Lodge'. However, the plan, sections and some of the finds' reports from the site are designated as being from 'Coppice Corner' which may refer to a small-holding on the edge of some woodland, both destroyed before 1946.

Although occasional finds of Neolithic and Bronze Age flint artefacts had been found, features of these periods had not been discovered. The site was thought to have been well outside the Roman military complex and little archaeology was expected, as it had been heavily quarried for gravel in Roman times, and the 16th and 19th centuries and as a result formal interventions were not projected. There were two archaeological investigations in the area to be developed, the first being 9/83, a watching brief undertaken by A. P. R. Garrod of the Gloucester City Museum Excavation Unit, of the whole 6.23 hectares which was on-going in some form at least between May 1983 and January 1987. The second, 9/83W, was the excavation of a roughly triangular area of approximately 370m² that was designated to be a public open space. It was organised by the Western Archaeological Trust and its successor The Crickley Hill Archaeological Trust, from September 1984 until April 1986. There was also a polygonal structure whose date and purpose remains uncertain. Sometimes, after new houses had been completed, Garrod undertook further trial trenching to solve outstanding problems with the extent and chronology of the ditches.

Besides the quarrying, the site had been subjected to large areas of stripping off (sometimes twice) of soil to provide level surfaces for housebuilding and roads, as well as trenching for all the major services; water, gas, and electricity, and sewage. The watching brief revealed a series of parallel ditches crossing the site orientated southwest-northeast; another later one running north-south; a possible building, perhaps of a first century date; and a cemetery of perhaps 2000 burials and cremations, some in wooden coffins. The excavation, 9/93W, was undertaken to rationalise the relationship between the structure and the cemetery.

The only published outcomes are two annual reports in *Glevensis* (Vol 18, 1985:49-51 and Vol 19, 45-6) both described as 'minor sites'. The archive for both ventures is incomplete and all of our work is 'cold-case': matching different drawings for the same and different enterprises; finding corresponding sections to excavation trenches; rationalising the various finds reports; harmonising the results of the watching brief and excavations, and there are problems in this task with various base lines not corresponding. There some 200 stunning small finds, mainly from the cemetery, that were drawn by Phil Moss after the excavation which need to be published and for which we require a grant(s). Two important reports resulting from this project will be published in *TBGAS*, as the authors wanted a wider readership: Martin Henig on the Attis Plaques from the cemetery which appear to be major influences on the 'Cotswold Hunter God' sculptures from Chedworth and other villas; and Colin Haselgrove on the Late Iron Age Coins from Kingsholm, which form a major international collection from the period. Otherwise, finds reports have been



digitised and where the authors can be located, permissions asked for publication, although usually it is preferred to let the original stand rather than be up-dated. We hope to publish in the next edition of *Glevensis* and be able to comment on the whole area outside the northwest quadrant of the Kingsholm base along with the Cotswold Archaeology's Denmark Road excavation (<https://reports.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/content/uploads/2022/08/CR0032-Denmark-Road-Excavation-report1.40-FINAL.pdf>) and Sandhurst Lane (*Glevensis* 54: 45-62).

Tim Copeland, Spring 2023

Subscriptions

Members are reminded that Annual Subscriptions are now due. At the 2022 AGM it was agreed that the subscription fee would increase from £15, where it has been for some 10 years, to **£20** for ordinary membership from this year. Associate and student membership will increase from £7.50 to **£10**.

Please make sure you pay the new amount when you renew.

We are currently still using the HSBC bank account. The account details are:

A/c name: Gloucestershire Archaeology

Sort code: 40-17-53

A/c number: 81131095

Gloucester History Festival - Spring Weekend 2023 Friday 21 April to Sunday 23 April 2023

Gloucestershire History Festival are holding a Spring Weekend from Friday 21st to Sunday 23rd April at Blackfriars Priory in Gloucester.

A line-up of speakers over the festival's three days includes Andrew Armstrong, David Carpenter, Phil Moss, Janina Ramirez, Professor Alice Roberts and Martin Sixsmith.

A brochure containing information on all the speakers and topics which will feature at this event, along with ticketing arrangements, can be obtained by visiting the Gloucester History Festival's website, which may be accessed *via* the following link:

[Spring Weekend 2023 - Gloucester History Festival](#)

The main History Festival is scheduled to run from 25th-29th July 2023. Details will be available in due course.

CBA Festival of Archaeology

This year the CBA Festival of Archaeology runs from 15-30th July. The theme of this year's festival is "Archaeology and Creativity".



'Archaeology at its heart is a creative process. It's about exploration and imagination, it's visual stimulation and inspiration; it's the process by which we create memory and meaning. By drawing on innovative technologies and

using a wide range of tools archaeology helps us think about the world we live in.

Archaeology is about storytelling and archaeologists use creative practices such as art, music, creative writing, poetry and theatre to bring to life the material we uncover and the stories of the places and people around us.'

Details of the Festival can be found here: <https://www.archaeologyuk.org/festival.html>

In recent years GlosArch has run events or produced resources as part of the Festival. If you have an idea for an event with a 'creative' slant - or even better would like to run one - please let me know.