



Registered Charity number: 1201251

Newsletter 154

Autumn 2024

Welcome to the Autumn 2024 GlosArch newsletter.

What a busy time we have had since the Spring Newsletter. As well as completing the 2023-24 lecture series, there have been four sessions of fieldwork, totalling 15 days, and three group visits. It is great that we are such an active group. Reports on the various activities can be found below. We have attracted a considerable number of new members, both professional archaeologists and enthusiastic amateurs, some with lots of experience and others with none. Our membership now stands at over 150 and continues to increase.

The Annual General Meeting passed off uneventfully. Michael Hare and Sally Nicholas were re-elected as President and Treasurer respectively and I will continue as your Secretary for a further year. There is always scope for members to assist with the running of the society, so if you would like to get more involved please contact me.

Also in this issue you will find information on the Kingsholm Legacy Project, a GlosArch initiative, led by Tim Copeland to make available the digitised archive from archaeological work in the Kingsholm area of Gloucester since the late 1970s, currently held in The Museum of Gloucester.

57th Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM took place on Monday 29th April in St Andrew's Church Hall, Cheltenham and on-line via Zoom. The meeting was well attended with 24 members in the room and a further 34 on-line. This year, the business of the meeting was straightforward as the CIO status is now fully in place. Last year's minutes were approved and reports were received from the Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Fieldwork Director. GlosArch is in a strong position, with a stable or growing and increasingly active membership and healthy finances. The three officers were re-elected, unopposed, for a further year.

Following the AGM, Tony Roberts presented the final lecture of the 2023-24 series, an update on Archaeoscan excavations at the major Roman site at Slimbridge and the medieval manor at Guiting Power.

Summer Visits

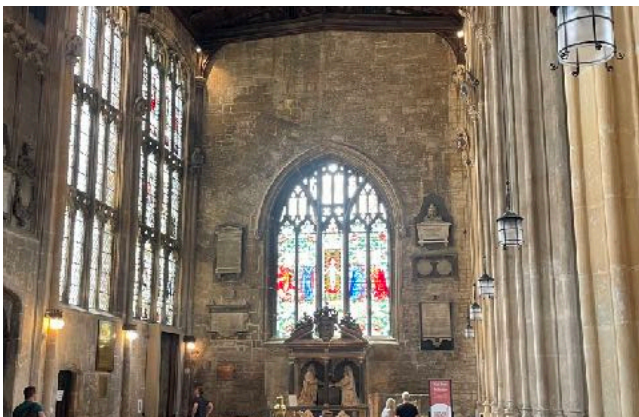
This summer there were three visits arranged by Mike Milward, including a return, for the first time since the COVID pandemic, to full day coach trip. Mike has done a great job organising our summer outings for a number of years, but has expressed his wish to hand the mantle to someone new. I should like to express our gratitude to Mike for his hard work.

This opens up an opportunity for someone new to take on this role. The summer programme usually comprises two or three evening or weekend afternoon visits relatively locally and a full day trip at a weekend to somewhere a little further afield. The committee

members will be available to advise as required. If you are interested, or want more information, contact me at phil.cox@doctors.org.uk

St John the Baptist Church, Cirencester

On 11th May a small group of us were given a fascinating guided tour of this imposing church in the centre of Cirencester. St John's dates back to the 12th century, when it began life as the church of the nearby abbey, which was destroyed during the dissolution of the monasteries. It is one of the country's largest parish churches and a fine example of perpendicular gothic architecture. The church survived as the parish church despite being laid siege to during the civil war, when food was thrown to those inside by breaking windows. Some of the noteworthy features include: Norman pillars; fragments of vibrant



wall paintings uncovered during renovations; and the beautiful Boleyn cup, gifted to the church by the family of Dr Richard Masters, Anne's physician, who had received it from Elizabeth.

We also visited the great south porch, built in the 15th century, which has served as the administrative centre of the abbey, the town hall and a courthouse. Many thanks to our guide, Deidre Waddell, for an informative and engaging tour.

Coach Trip to Avalon Archaeology and Wells

Heather Holt

On Saturday 8th June, a coach-load of GlosArch members enjoyed a superb day trip to Somerset, with a morning tour of the Avalon open-air archaeology museum, followed by an afternoon spent independently exploring our chosen highlights within the medieval City of Wells.



We were extremely fortunate to have Dr Richard Brunning of the South West Heritage Trust as our guide to the reconstructed Iron Age roundhouse, Roman *triclinium*, and Saxon longhouse that form the current centrepieces of the Avalon museum. An enthusiastic team of volunteers built, decorated and furnished these structures, in line with predominantly local archaeological evidence, over an eight-year period from 2015.

The Avalon project continues to raise innumerable intriguing questions, and has provided valuable opportunities to

investigate the plausibility of potential answers. For instance, the roundhouse incorporates shuttered windows, based upon the idea that a short pivoted oak plank excavated at Glastonbury Lake Village might have functioned as a shutter. In the case of Avalon's Roman-style building, the financial constraints of the project influenced the decision to construct walls of mass cob on the stone foundations, and to paint them after rendering to imitate a wall of ashlar blocks. Might this, as much as subsequent stone-robbing, explain why Roman foundations for relatively low-status buildings are so often found without any evidence for stone walls?

In addition to the reconstructed buildings, Avalon also houses 'The Walrus', a full-size replica of an eleventh-century Danish trading vessel, made in 2016 for an exhibition at the National Maritime Museum in Falmouth. Our group photo was taken as we listened to Richard explaining its structure and seaworthiness. In the background can be seen Avalon's unique original building, the site hut occupied by Arthur Bulleid and Harold St George Gray during their excavations of the Meare Lake Village, which provides a fitting monument to the work of archaeologists themselves. The hut's interior incorporates a reconstruction of Grey's office as it might have looked in the 1950s.



Moving on to Wells, we were given several hours' free time to explore the city. Many of us made a beeline for the magnificent cathedral, either to join a guided tour, or to enjoy a quiet wander around at our own pace. Not only its harmonious English Gothic architecture, but also the medieval stained glass, most notably the stunning 'Jesse window' at the eastern end of the choir, exceeded expectations. For those opting to spend the sunny afternoon outdoors, the rare late medieval street that is Vicars Close, and the fourteen acres of glorious gardens at the Bishop's Palace, were just as impressive. And if anyone found themselves flagging after such a full day, ice creams and afternoon teas were readily available in the town's cafes.

All in all, this was an excellent day out, and warm thanks are due to the organiser, Mike Milward, for his hard work in planning and leading the trip. If you missed out for any reason, both Avalon and Wells are highly recommended for a visit of your own.

Roman Walls of Gloucester Walk

The final summer excursion for 2024, on 1st June, was a guided tour around the route of the Roman walls of Gloucester, led by city archaeologist, Andrew Armstrong. Having gathered by the Cross, we moved quickly to the Shire Hall having been out-competed by street musicians. Here the western walls have been located running across Berkeley St and under the Shire Hall. From here the walls continue northwards, beneath the cathedral and its precinct. Then we turned eastwards, tracing the line of the northern wall, with a stop by the rather inconspicuous plaque in the doorway of a charity shop, which marks



the site of the North Gate. At the other end of St Aldate's Street, we reached the redeveloped King's Square, where the walls and corner towers were identified during recent excavations. The highlight of the tour was when we descended from the King's Walk mall to see the well preserved remains of the eastern wall. This gave a great feeling of how imposing these walls must have been. Our final stop was in the Gloucester

Furniture store in Parliament Street, where the only above ground remains of the walls survive. As ever, Andrew's enthusiasm for the archaeological heritage of Gloucester shone through and we all had a great afternoon.



The Kingsholm Legacy Project

Under current planning regulations, the developer is required to pay for archaeological assessment ahead of development of a possible archaeologically sensitive site. This includes funding for post-excavation analysis and for the writing up of the results for dissemination through journals or books. Prior to the introduction of PPG16 in 1990, much archaeological work was funded the Ministry of Works, (now the Department of the Environment) if the site was already known to be significant or if it was discovered to be of importance through a watching brief or observing the on-going work. During the 1980s much was happening in Gloucester and the City Archaeological Unit monitored and investigated these on-going developments. It was under great pressure moving from threatened site to threatened site. Volunteers, especially from GADARG, the precursor of GlosArch, contributed greatly on their sites. The funding for publication was a separate issue. Sometimes the developer might contribute to a short, glossy, pamphlet to show that they were public-minded. However, there was little or no funding (or time) for writing up fully the results of the discoveries. In 1985 Henry Hurst produced 'Kingsholm' detailing the results of his 1972 excavations at Kingsholm Close (44/72), as well as from Dean's Way (81/73) and St Mark Street (10/72) (Hurst, 1985). For later sites brief annual reports from the Gloucester Archaeological Unit appeared in *Glevensis* and the Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, and interim reports of individual sites were published in *Glevensis*. However, final reports never appeared.

With encouragement and advice from Andrew Armstrong the present City archaeologist GlosArch members are collating those drawings and reports from later Kingsholm watching briefs and excavations as survive and can be located in the Museum archive. This aim of this initiative, 'The Kingsholm Legacy Project', is, at last, to produce as full a written report on these sites as the surviving records allows and to make the archive available as a free-to-access on-line resource for researchers of the Roman military and later development of the area. A start has been made with the publication of two sites in *Glevensis* – Sandhurst Lane (4/89) (Copeland, 2021) and Gambier Parry Gardens (9/83) (Copeland & Cox, 2023) – and if enough surviving records are available others will follow. Even if the excavation cannot be published in full some of the records such as those of the pottery type and distribution or the state of human remains will be available via the GlosArch website and invaluable to researchers working in those fields.

To access the currently available material go to: <https://glosarch.org.uk/kingsholm-ii-excavation/>

Hurst, H. (1985) 'Kingsholm', (Gloucester Archaeological Reports, 1.) Gloucester: Gloucester Archaeological Publications.

Copeland, T. (2021) Land to the rear of agricultural house, Sandhurst Lane (4/89), Gloucester: a reappraisal. *Glevensis*, 54, pp.45-62

Copeland T, Cox P (2023) Gambier Parry gardens, Kingsholm: Early Roman military features and a 2nd to 4th century cemetery. *Glevensis*, 56, pp. 19-46



Fieldwork Update

Excavations

Cleeve Common Grandstand

More than twenty members took part in this excavation in April, which generated a great deal of interest from passers-by on the Common. We exposed much of the western end of the grandstand and gained a clearer view of the orientation of the building. Amongst the more interesting finds were a racing plate (horseshoe) and a clay pipe with the maker's mark. An application has been made to Natural England to allow us to return to the site next spring, when we hope to work on the main entrance to the grandstand.



Honeycombe, Miserden

Over a total of nine days of excavation more than 30 volunteers worked on this site in a secluded Cotswolds valley. By the end of the dig we had uncovered large parts of well-built, two-roomed building and shifted a great deal of stone from the building's collapse.



Features of the building include flagstone floors, a fireplace, two doorways and a possible stair. The walls had been plastered internally and there were many fragments of window glass. We will return next year to find out more about this building and to look at nearby features.

Neil Cathie, dig director, sent this message:

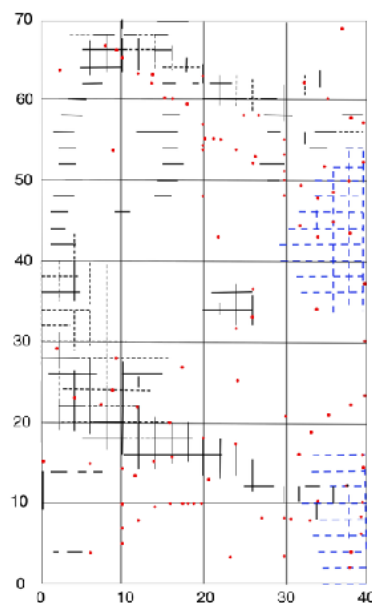
Thanks to all who have helped and continue to help in many different ways with our background research, excavations and post excavation finds processing. Having three different people cleaning, sorting, bagging and marking finds on site at Honeycombe, while others were excavating, was very successful. If any members would like to do this instead of digging on any of our sites next year, please let me know via my email (neil.cathie@btinternet.com) so that I can draft a list of possible helpers. Big thanks also to our new member Jo Moody who has started going through the dozens of documents and texts we have accumulated relating to the history of Honeycombe, with a view to establishing a chronology of the occupants, owners and uses of both our site and of Honeycombe House next door. Jo has already started visiting the Gloucestershire Heritage Hub to view relevant documents.

Subject to approval by Natural England we hope to go back to Cleeve hill in 2025 to continue our excavations, this time focusing on the main frontage and vestibule area. We will almost certainly be back at Honeycombe extending the area already exposed and investigating buildings to the north of the site and also plan to return to Severn Bank to carry on from where we left off in 2023.

Over the cooler autumn months I plan to work (hopefully not alone!) at Honeycombe for a few hours at a time every now and again clearing the two large islands of stone and soil in the centre of the two part excavated rooms. I will do this on a drop in basis – I will let you know when I will be on site and if you are free, come and help for as long or as short a time as you want. Please e mail me if you would like to be added to a list of people to be notified when I plan to be on site doing this work.

Geophysics - Castlemeads, Gloucester

In August, GlosArch members and students from Exeter University returned to Castlemeads in Gloucester to undertake a ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey of the features originally identified by LIDAR and subsequently subjected to resistivity and magnetometry survey. Over two days an area 70m x 40m was surveyed. The scan confirmed the presence of the electric cables and also demonstrated a shallow sub-surface solid structure appearing to correspond to the LIDAR. We should like to thank the Archaeology Department of Exeter University for the loan of the equipment. Further work is being considered.



GlosArch 2024-25 Lectures

Glosarch – dates and location details for autumn/winter lectures 2024/2025

Date	Location	Title	Presenter	Comments
Monday 30 th September 2024	Physical and Zoom meeting	Lordship in the Landscape: Medieval Manors in the Cotswolds	Dr Simon Draper, Editor, Victoria County History of Gloucestershire	
Monday 28 th October 2024	Physical and Zoom meeting	The "Cults of the Head?" Project. Analysis of artefacts from Dean Hall Romano-Celtic Temple.	Dr. Reb Ellis-Haken, Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of York	
Monday 25 th November 2024	Physical and Zoom meeting	Honeycombe – the story so far. Brookthorpe Roman villa site – some surprising conclusions from the post-ex finds analysis following 3 years of excavations.	Neil Cathie	
Monday 23 rd December 2024	Physical and Zoom meeting	Members meeting – field work updates and plans for Cleeve Hill racecourse grandstand, Castlemeads, Honeycombe, Severn Bank.	Neil Cathie, Phil Cox and others.	
Monday 27 th January 2025	Physical and Zoom meeting	Summary of key finds recorded by the PAS in Bristol and Gloucestershire during 2023 and 2024.	Kurt Adams, Bristol and Gloucestershire PAS	Bernard Rawes memorial lecture
Monday 24 th February 2025	Physical and Zoom meeting	Brandiers Tillery, Minety – the source of Roman Cirencester's CBM	Peter Warry	
Monday 24 th March 2025	Physical and Zoom meeting	Update on the latest results from Archeoscan excavations on Medieval and Roman sites around Gloucestershire in 2024.	Tony Roberts, Archeoscan	
Monday 28 th April 2025	Physical and Zoom meeting	Review of 2023-2024 developer archaeology around Gloucester City	Andrew Armstrong, Gloucester City archaeologist	The Eddie Price memorial lecture

All meetings start promptly at 19.30pm and will be in Cheltenham (address below) but with live simultaneous Zoom broadcast for the benefit of those that cannot or do not wish to attend in person.

Meetings location: St. Andrew's United Reformed church hall, Montpellier Street, Cheltenham, GL50 1SP

Ample on street parking in Montpellier street on both sides of the road. Free after 7pm.

Other forthcoming events

Gloucester History Festival. 7-22nd September.

The Gloucester History festival is back with a huge range of talks from many well-known speakers over the two weeks. In person tickets are still available for many events and for those that are not, you can book to livestream the event at home. For more information go to: <https://www.gloucesterhistoryfestival.co.uk/autumn-2024/>



Cirencester History Festival 26th October-3rd November

The first ever Cirencester History Festival takes place this autumn with a range of talks and other activities. Tickets go on sale on 6th September. For more information go to <https://cirencesterhistoryfestival.org/>



The Folk of Gloucester Museum

The Folk of Gloucester have loads of events coming up, including some free talks for Heritage Open Days. For more details go to: <https://www.gloucestercivictrust.org/the-folk-home/>

Heritage Open Days 6-15 September 2024

Across Gloucestershire there are many events going on as part of this major celebration of history and culture. To find out more go to the website and search for event near you. <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/>

2024 Deerhurst Lecture, 21st September, 7.30pm

Professor Michelle Brown: The Mercian Marches and their Manuscripts.

St Mary's Church, Deerhurst. <https://deerhurstfriends.co.uk> £10 (£5 for students)