

Sussex Archaeology Round-up (January – March 2008)

East Sussex

***Arlington: Roman ‘Small Town’** (NGR TQ 541068). Continuing excavation has taken place over the winter but no update is available. More work is planned for 2008. (ESCC with BHAS, ENHAS and MSFAT). Contact Greg Chuter (Gregory.Chuter@eastsussex.gov.uk).

Ashburnham: Kitchenham farm (north of Castle Croft/Castle Croft). The first phase of geophysics is almost done. An interim report of work there so far can be seen in the recent HAARG journal (No. 24). (HAARG).

Ashburnham: Yew Tree Cottages, Compass Lane. A watching brief revealed only C19th- and later artifacts. (HAARG).

***Barcombe, Pond Field/Culver Mead, Culver Farm.** Further excavations are planned for summer 2008 on this Roman roadside settlement. Due to adverse weather conditions delaying the crops the excavations have been put back a week so they will now start Saturday 9th August, finishing on the 13th Sept. The project will provide volunteers with opportunities in excavation, recording, survey, geophysics and finds processing. Experience is not necessary as training/help will be given where needed. There will be a one off charge of c. £30 per person for however long they are on site for. (If they are weekend end volunteers c. £15). These charges are there to try and cover cost. Campsite/washing/cooking facilities will be available. Please contact Rob Wallace on 07958971453 or WallaRh@aol.com (Culver Farm, Church Road, Barcombe, East Sussex BN8 5TR) (Rob Wallace/Uni of Sussex).

***Barcombe Roman Villa.** The 2008 season is due for July/August and hopes to examine the possible bath house in Church Field. Weekly/weekend training courses and volunteer positions available 14th July to 8th August. (CCE/MSFAT). (Enquiries to: si-enquiries@sussex.ac.uk)

Beckley: Blackland Wood. An undated bloomery site has been discovered at NGR TQ 8527 2171. (WIRG).

Beddingham. (NGR TQ 456 070). Considerable amounts of fire-cracked flint, flint flakes and Roman pottery were noted in the field to the south west of the Roman villa site. (BHAS).

***Bishopstone Tidemills.** The 2008 fieldwork season is due to resume in May 2008. Volunteers are still welcome, please contact Luke Barber on research@sussexpast.co.uk (SAS).

Bodiam: Bodiam Castle. (NGR TQ 7856 2563). A photographic survey and excavation took place on a section of the moat retaining wall adjacent to the bridge abutment in the north west corner of the moat. An area of collapse and slumping in the north west corner was excavated and the surviving extent of the wall uncovered and recorded. (ASE).

Brede: Thorp's Wood. An undated bloomery has been discovered at NGR TQ 7832 2034. (WIRG).

Brighton: Albion Street. (NGR TQ 531524 104823). Monitoring of ground reduction and foundations did not reveal anything of archaeological interest. (ASE).

Brighton: Black Lion Street. (NGR TQ 531080 104340). Geoarchaeological monitoring during the excavation of a basement to c. 12m depth revealed decalcified Head Gravel across the whole extent. The rounded nature of these gravels did however suggest the possibility of some fluvial reworking of the gravels at this location. The conclusion was reached that a component of the gravels within the Head Deposits were introduced through high-energy flow, perhaps as part of the bed-load of braided channels forming on the flanks of the Steyne valley during the Quaternary. These fluvial deposits were then reworked through solifluction to cover the coastal plain in this locale. An inspection of the original cellar at 8 Black Lion Street, Brighton after the almost total stripping out of the structure, including most of the intervening floors, revealed several areas of walling constructed in a material known locally as 'Bungaroosh' which comprises substantial walls of mortar with intermittent brick and flint, sometimes coursed, created in a similar manner to modern shuttered concrete. The adjacent Old Shop Assembly Rooms building of 1767 abuts the property to the west and externally, the fabric of the north wall of the Assembly rooms was of the same type as that in situ within the cellar indicating a possible contemporary origin for construction. (ASE).

Brighton: Piddingworth Manor. Geophysical survey is planned in 2008. (BHAS).

***Brighton: Rocky Clump.** (NGR TQ 328 101). More excavation is planned for 2008. (BHAS).

***Brighton: Varley Halls.** (NGR TQ 332 088). Small-scale excavations are planned on this Bronze Age settlement and a few volunteers are needed. Saturday 12th July until Sunday 3rd August. Contact - Lisa@prehistorygirl.freeserve.co.uk Lisa@prehistorygirl.freeserve.co.uk (L. Gray/CCE with BHAS).

Brighton: Whitehawk Hill. (NGR TQ 337346). A watching brief found no features but a small collection of late Neolithic flint work including a rough scraper. (BHAS).

Catsfield: Catsfield Church. A resistivity survey to locate the medieval chapel, failed to find anything other than a possible demolition rubble spread. (HAARG).

Cooden: Grey Habits, Maple Walk. A watching brief revealed only C19th- and later artifacts. (HAARG).

Etchingam: Burgh Hill. Recent fieldwalking by a new group has recovered Roman material. (Independent Historical Research Group).

Falmer: Land north of Horseshoe Plantation. (NGR TQ 349 117). A circular feature consisting of a ditch about 20 metres in diameter was revealed and a considerable collection of flint work and fire-cracked within the boundary recovered. Future plans here are for a geophysical survey. The site is not far from the Plumpton Plain settlements excavated by Burstow and Holleyman. (BHAS).

Fletchling: Ann Wood and Masketts Wood. Fieldwalking (March) noted two bloomery sites at NGR TQ 4267 2804 and TQ 4262 2791, both undated; 15 charcoal hearths and two sawpits were also noted. (WIRG/Sussex Univ. Ouse Valley Project)

Hartfield: south of Sussex House Farm. A walkover survey (January) has discovered two bloomery sites at NGR TQ 4719 3929 and TQ 4718 3922, both undated; a small pond bay at TQ 4723 3934; and a large area of minepits (iron ore pits) immediately to the north of the A264 just west of Colestock Crossroads. (WIRG).

Hazards Green Transfer Pipeline. (NGR TQ 651 119 to 683 124). Evaluation and watching brief. Trenches have revealed as yet undated (but either Roman or Medieval) iron working, along with probable iron stone and clay extraction pits. (ASE).

Heathfield: Dudslan and Scocus Farms. Walkover surveys are planned for April 2008. (WIRG).

***Herstmonceux Castle Project.** This is a new project which hopes to survey the Castle estate over the next few years, by sampling some of the areas around the Castle. The likelihood of ground disturbance/distruction since Fiennes (the Castle builder) enclosed his estate in the early C15th is slim and land-use prior to that is unknown, so it is hoped preservation of any remains should be good. The first series of geophysical surveys of a moated site (Mota Piece, Pevensey Levels) and an area to the south and east of The Science Centre (resistivity and fluxgate gradiometer), have hi-lighted anomalies that we hope to further assess via evaluation excavations in the form of test pitting and evaluation trenching. (P. Whitehill with ISC).

Lewes: Baxters Printworks, St Nicholas Lane. (NGR TQ 416 101). Excavations now complete but final watching briefs being undertaken. (ASE).

Maresfield: Hollybush Wood and Funnells Wood. Fieldwalking (February) discovered no ironworking sites, but pond bays were noted at NGR TQ 4381 2735 and TQ 4366 2720. (WIRG/Sussex Univ. Ouse Valley Project)

Mayfield: Little Furnace Wood. Archaeomagnetic dating of Furnace 1, carried out by Museum of London Archaeological Service and GeoQuest, has produced dates: 40AD-60AD (C14 dated to 80AD – 240AD). Furnace 2 is dated to 60AD-220AD or 270AD-480AD (C14 date awaited). (WIRG).

Ninfield: Castle Croft. The resistivity survey did not confirm the anomalies seen from aerial photographs. This could be due to the anomalies being geological, despite surface finds suggesting human activity. (HAARG).

Ovingdean. (NGR TQ 354 036). Work is planned at the site in 2008. (C. White/Uni of Sussex/ BHAS).

Ovingdean: St Dunstons field. Geophysical survey is planned in 2008. (BHAS).

Peacehaven. (NGR TQ 4305 0025). The continued excavation of a barrow threatened by coastal erosion is to be undertaken in 2008. There will also be surveying and investigations into the surrounding landscape. (S. Birks/Uni of Sussex with MSFAT & BHAS).

Playden: Windmill Cottage, Saltcote Lane. A watching brief revealed only C19th- and later artifacts. (HAARG).

Rottingdean: Beacon Hill. A geophysical survey is planned for in 2008. (BHAS).

Rye: 24 Church Square. A watching brief revealed only C19th- and later artifacts. (HAARG).

Waldron: Possingworth. Two bloomery sites have been discovered at NGR TQ 5402 2042 and TQ 5406 2053, both undated. (WIRG).

Wartling. Excavations have now finished on this early post-medieval house. Processing of building materials is nearly complete. Excavations began in 2004 and resulted in the exposure of the footprint of a building (one of two recorded in a late 17th century survey), in the form of a sub-wall made up of local, mixed sandstones (and large lumps of forge bottom material and bloomery slag, pers.com. Jeremy Hodgkinson). Although the construction techniques used for the foundation wall could suggest a building of the late medieval period, the material culture recovered suggests a post-med. date is more likely. David Martin (ASE) has visited the site and interpreted the remains as that of an upper-end 'Average' house. Full report hopefully by the end of the year. (P. Whitehill).

Woodingdean. Geophysical survey is planned for 2008. (BHAS).

West Sussex

Aldingbourne: Westergate House, Denmans lane, Fontwell. (NGR SU 9437 0703). A small-scale trial trench excavation close to Westergate House, where a Roman cist burial was reported in the mid-19th century, revealed only a possible 19th-century garden bedding/ planting trench. (DAS).

Angmering: St Margaret's Church. (NGR TQ 506728 104362). An ongoing watching brief during demolition and construction works has revealed numerous *in situ* human remains and several brick tombs. During demolition works around the mid 19th century office extension a George III coin dating to 1807 was found to have been placed within masonry during its construction. (ASE).

Arundel: Former Texaco Garage, Queen Street. (NGR TQ 02008 06905). A watching brief during redevelopment of the site, just south of the main bridge into Arundel, revealed no surviving archaeological features. (CgMs Consulting and PCA).

Beedings, near Pulborough. This is now a nationally important Early Upper Palaeolithic site. It produced an extensive assemblage of flint work, including Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic artefacts, which were collected during the construction of a large country house during the early 20th century. Importantly the assemblage, studied and reported on in detail by Roget Jacobi (Jacobi 1986, 2007), contained elements of a distinctive leaf-point assemblage characteristic of the *Lincombian-Ranisian-Jerzmanowician* industry dated to around 38-40 Kyr and known from only a small number of sites across northern Europe. This period sits at a key watershed in the evolutionary history of northern Europe. The tools could equally be the signature of pioneer populations of modern humans or the traces of the last Neanderthal hunting groups to occupy this region.

Of the original 2300-strong assemblage from Beedings only 200 survive in museum collections. Of the context or original arrangement of the finds, little is known except that they were recovered from a fissure exposed during the construction of the monumental house 'Beedings Castle'. The hill also produced evidence for prehistoric cremations and evidence relating to high-status late Iron Age activity during the 1st century AD. However, research excavation under the direction of the Boxgrove Project and Caroline Wells recently established both the presence of further fissures on the hill and associated Middle and Early Upper Palaeolithic archaeology, some of which has been shown to be *in-situ*.

In 2006 it was established that a threat to these nationally important stone artefact scatters and later archaeology had emerged in the form of ploughing, vinyard planting and landscaping scheduled for early 2008. The Beedings Survey, funded directly by English Heritage and run through ASE and the the Boxgrove project (UCL), has therefore been conceived to meet this threat directly and to assess the wider Heritage Management implications of fissure sites elsewhere in south east England. The possibility exists that sites such as Beedings, along with related Pleistocene sites from Lower Greensand fissures at Ightham and Oldbury in Kent, are indicating the potential of a little considered archaeological resource.

The project will provide.

- A field walk and geological/geophysical survey of the threatened area.

- Detailed environmental sampling of fissure sediment sequences.
- Test pit sample excavations of identified artefact concentrations.
- An assessment of wider potential in fissure contexts in south east England.
- Outreach with both professional, amateur and curatorial bodies at a local and national level.

February 2008 saw the first phase of this project begin with a field walk of fields to the south of the site. Under the direction of Matt Pope and Caroline Wells, this phase was conceived to determine the wider presence of Mesolithic, Late Iron Age and Romano-British activity in an area away from the main Palaeolithic finds. Fieldwalking drew upon the expertise and efforts of a 35 string team drawn from Worthing Archaeological society, Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society, Chichester District Archaeological Society and the UCL student body. The huge contribution made by these volunteers allowed the recovery of a wide range of material which is now being processed. The finds include high-status Late-Iron Age material, Mesolithic and Neolithic hunting equipment and some surface finds of Palaeolithic material. Further excavation, focusing on the fissures containing the original Palaeolithic finds are planned for the early summer. (Matt Pope/UCL with WAS/BHAS).

Bersted: Land at North Bersted. (NGR SU 9169 0146 – 9327 0124). The first stage of archaeological excavation, following earlier trial trench excavation and geoarchaeological investigation and monitoring (Archaeology South-East, 2005, 2007), revealed parts of Bronze Age and Iron Age field systems, a concentration of burnt flint of possible Bronze Age date, a Romano-British enclosure and a shallow sunken subrectangular Romano-British structure (?timber building). Work continuing. (TVAS).

Bolney: Chapel Road and The Street. (NGR TQ 25638 22004 – 526170 123208). Monitoring of excavations for a foul sewer, in connection with a flood relief scheme, has so far not revealed any archaeological features or finds. At the far (northern) end of the foul sewer route, waterlogged timbers of a 10th-century causeway across a stream were reported in 1948. Work continues. (CgMs Consulting & ASE).

Bosham: Bosham Hoe. (NGR centred SU 812 018). A watching brief (October 2007) on geotechnical boreholes revealed Pleistocene silt and gravel deposits over London Clay and Reading Beds, but (not surprisingly), no artefacts within the borehole samples. (Oxford Archaeology).

Chichester: Festival Theatre. (NGR SU 48610 10545). An evaluation and subsequent excavation and watching brief took place at the above site. Features uncovered included ditches and pits containing Romano British finds along with a probable RB cremation and a section of possible RB roadside ditch. (ASE).

Chichester Harbour Survey. Monitoring the condition of recorded monuments within the Chichester Harbour AONB continues. Nothing of significance has been found recently during the fieldwalking programme. (CDAS).

Chichester Harbour AONB. (NGR SU 72680 05854, 74475 75050, 84020 00890, 84230 04605). Intertidal coring and environmental analysis in June-July 2006 formed part of the Heritage Lottery funded *Rhythms of the Tide* project, which intends to increase knowledge of prehistoric landscapes, shoreline evolution and sea level changes leading to a better management of Chichester Harbour AONB. In total fifteen boreholes at seven locations (Tournebury Creek; Coniger Point; Thorney Island; Marker Point; Bosham Channel; Bosham Hoe and Horse Pond) were drilled and showed good potential for reconstruction of the Late Quaternary environment of (what is today) Chichester Harbour from the Late Glacial to the historic period. (MoLAS. Ref: WS-CHB06)

Chichester, Hunston: Land at Kingsham. (NGR centred SU 864 034). Trial trench excavation has revealed several small foci of archaeological remains, of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Early Saxon date. (DAS).

Coldwaltham: Ingram's Farm, Hardham. (NGR centred TQ 038 176). The first part of a watching brief during construction of a machinery shed, near the Hardham Camp Roman posting station on Stane Street, revealed only the sleepers belonging to a former railway siding for a small brickworks. Further work to follow on an adjacent site. (ASE).

Crawley: Barley House, Brighton Road. (NGR TQ 26786 36136). During monitoring of geotechnical test pits, brick foundations relating to the former Crawley Cottage/Charter Hurst were revealed. Further work anticipated. (ASE and MoLAS Oct 2007).

Crawley: Frogshole Farm, Maidenbower. (NGR TQ 2978 3604). Archaeological monitoring of the excavation of a new cellar adjacent to a standing 16th-century timber-framed building has so far revealed no surviving archaeological features. (PCA).

Crawley: 48 High Street. (NGR TQ 26737 36572). Small-scale opening-up within the ground floor of the 16th-century jettied timber-framed corner building previously examined by David Martin of ASE has revealed a former doorway. (J Lytton & WSCC).

Emsworth. The project to record the oyster beds, using both historical research and fieldwork has continued. Recent weather conditions were quite helpful during the survey, as some of the beds were revealed in places where they were not expected to be. This also confirmed that earlier plans were actually sketch plans and therefore not as accurate as thought. The result of the survey is that (as in most archaeological surveys) some questions have been answered and some remain to be. The report has now been written up (CDAS with Emsworth Maritime and Historical Trust (EMHT)).

Fishbourne: Old Portsmouth Road. (NGR 483498 104695 to 483621 104669). Monitoring of pipe trench excavations along the A259 and monitoring of topsoil stripping for a contractor's compound west of Salthill Road has not revealed any archaeological remains. Currently monitoring pipe trench excavations along Salthill road. (ASE).

Haywards Heath: St Francis' Hospital. (NGR TQ 3352 2254). A watching brief on topsoil stripping within two areas of the future residential redevelopment has so far

revealed no significant archaeological features or finds (a few small brick structures relating to formal gardens). (ASE).

Haywards Heath: St Francis Hospital/Princess Royal Hospital. (NGR 533953 122735). Two palaeochannels and 19th- century features were located during the excavation of trenches to the south of the PRH. (ASE).

Horsted Keynes: Freshfield Brickworks, Freshfield Lane. (NGR TQ 3841 2676). A site on the other side of the Danhill Brook from previous casual finds of Iron Age pottery. Geophysical survey, taking place within an unwooded part of the site, revealed a number of linear and circular features. Trial trench investigation has revealed most of these to be entirely superficial, within topsoil. One large ditch, on the edge of the site, appears to be ancient, pre-dating the historical field system, but contained no finds in the excavated section; it is hoped to attempt to date this through scientific dating methods. (ArchaeoPhysica & SLR).

Hurstpierpoint: Land west of Kemps. (NGR TQ 27533-16921 to 27816 17215). A watching brief on a Southern Water sewerage scheme, close to the find-spot of mid-late Saxon pottery, revealed no further ancient archaeological finds. (ASE).

Lancing: New Monks Farm. (NGR TQ 1949 0534). The watching brief on the construction of the new golf course continues. Ground works are to avoid the sites of most of the former saltern mounds; no surviving remains of further saltern mounds have been revealed. (ASE).

Pulborough: A29 Stane Street at the former Riverside Concrete Works. (NGR TQ 05134 19343). A watching brief on the laying of a pipeline across Roman Stane Street, on the present alignment of the A29, revealed no remains of the Roman road. The road is here in a cutting, and the Roman road structure may have been removed during post-medieval road improvements. (ASE).

Shoreham: Harbour Way. (NGR TQ 522530 104785 to 523475 105075). Monitoring of direct drilling launch and receptor pits for a pipeline revealed only made ground and beach sands and gravels. (ASE).

Shoreham: Shoreham Toll Bridge. Work has started on substantial repairs to the late 18th-century timber bridge across the River Adur. The existing bridge has been fully surveyed, and repairs will be recorded. Archaeological recording will concentrate on remains, where exposed, of the World War 2 “hairpin” road block at both ends of the bridge. The still visible road block rail at the west end of the bridge will be retained *in situ*. (Royal Haskoning).

Shoreham: St Mary’s Church. (NGR TQ 521625 105125). Ongoing watching brief during cable trenching uncovered two walls, one north south flint wall - the west face of which was rendered - thought to be part of a vault and one east west flint wall aligned with the upstanding remains of the ruined nave. (ASE).

***Slinfold: Dedisham Manor** (NGR TQ 1112 3287). Volunteers are sought to become involved with a new 5-Year project investigating the manor and its environs (which is a working farm) in the civil parish of Slinfold, West Sussex. The project will consist of topographical surveying, landscape studies, geophysics, fieldwalking, hedgerow dating and any other non invasive archaeological techniques that may become applicable to the site during the course of the project. Experience is a benefit but not essential as training will be given on the various techniques required though this project is not primarily a training course. The site offers a possible fortified Manor House with surviving earthworks. In 1329, Thomas Tregoz was granted a licence to "fortify with a wall of stone and lime, and to krenellate (sic) his manse of 'Dachesham' in the county of Sussex." (the license is given in length in SAC. Vol. XIII., p. 112). The "Great Park" has been converted into farms, and the Manor House, situated to the north of Slinfold village, is said to have been ransacked by Sir William Waller's soldiers in 1643, and afterwards went to decay, though a few of the offices remain as a farm-house. This site has been suggested as Great Dixter but tenurial history suggests it is the "Mainly C18 house enclosed by a semi-circular moat which joins the River Arun to form the north side. A Medieval fishpond is present to the southeast of the house. There was also the possibility of at least three watermills (at different periods in history) having been in existence on the estate and there still survives a complicated maze of watercourses possibly associated with the former mills and also a nearby iron-working forge. Of the manor-house, a long parallelogram forms the plan and the walls are half-timbered, though now partly covered with weatherboarding. For further information see my weblog on the manor, (with photos) which can be visited on:<http://wasfu-man-dedishamhistory.blogspot.com/> Volunteers who wish to join this team are invited to contact me via the email address to be found on the weblog above. To be covered by insurance all volunteers will need to enroll as members of WAS. (Richard P Symonds/ WAS).

Steyning: former Croft Meadow care home, Tanyard Lane. (NGR TQ 0176 0112). Small-scale trial trench excavation between the Late Saxon and medieval parts of Steyning revealed no surviving archaeological features; the site had been extensively truncated during construction of the care home. (AOC Archaeology).

Steyning to Beeding Cable Trench. (NGR TQ 18354 11759 to 19558 08896). A watching brief was carried out on the route of a new 132Kv cable trench running between Steyning Grid and the Southern Cross to Worthing Overhead Line between July 2007 and April 2008. The cable followed the route of a disused railway track running along the A283 and through fields previously used for medieval salt reclamation in the River Adur valley. Four pieces of prehistoric worked flint and a piece of Roman building material were recovered from topsoil close to the junction with the Steyning Bypass. A piece of heat-treated clay, and a thin spread of ashy silt, which may be associated with the Medieval salt production industry were recorded close to where *in-situ* hearths had been recorded during previous excavation in 1996. (MoLAS. Ref: WX-SBE07)

Westhampnett: Gravel Pit Site. (NGR SU 88350 06400). A watching brief in February 2006 indicated that the gravel pit had removed most of the archaeological material from the site, although three pieces of fire-cracked flint suggested that some evidence for prehistoric activity may have survived. Within the north-eastern part of the quarry, an illegal dump of post-medieval cemetery soil was found, including fragments of tomb slabs and a small number of human bones which had been buried under a dump of quarry fill, possibly to hide its presence. The probable 19th-century walls of the brickworks which existed in the southern part of the site were also recorded. Nine evaluation trenches excavated in December 2006 on the northern side of the site revealed a range of cut features of probable late Bronze Age date including pits, post-holes, ditches and possible tree-boles. These features were small and shallow in nature and may represent small scale Bronze Age agricultural activity, while the tree-boles may be the result of later Roman localised forest clearing. (MoLAS. Ref: WX-CLW06)

Worthing: Warwick Gardens. (NGR TQ 515176 102787). A watching brief uncovered finds dating from the 19th century but no other archaeological features/finds.