

# SUSSEX Past & Present

Official magazine of the Sussex Archaeological Society

Issue No 156 | Autumn 2023

## Michelham Priory

Get into the Christmas spirit at one of our beloved historic properties

---



SUSSEX  
PAST

The Sussex Archaeological Society  
is a registered charity.  
Reg. Charity No. 207037

# Welcome

**Leanne O'Boyle**  
*Executive Director*  
*The Sussex Archaeological Society*



for our Autumn and Spring talks, and to p14 for an update on our Conference.

As Members, you are the heart of this organisation. I've had the pleasure of meeting a number of you at various events and activities over the past few months. We are exploring new ways of involving the Membership in the life of the Society and look forward to updating you on this shortly.

I also want to thank those who so generously donated following receipt of SAC 160. As a charity, these contributions really make a world of difference and are very much appreciated.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the AGM on 2nd December.

*Leanne*

**AGM Saturday**  
**2nd December 2023**  
**Michelham Priory**

**[www.sussexpast.co.uk/  
event/sussex-archaeological-  
society-agm](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/event/sussex-archaeological-society-agm)**

I am delighted to welcome you to the newest edition of Sussex Past & Present.

The Society has been extraordinarily busy over Spring and Summer and we are keeping up the pace as we head into the colder months.

This edition comes packed full of new research – both emerging from the Society and across the county: Sussex Archaeological Collections (SAC) Editor, Dr Jaime Kaminski, gives a sneak peek of SAC 161 with an article on the Lewes Hoard on p4; Louise Rayner, Director of Archaeology South-East, writes on the upcoming launch of two new books which detail the results of years of excavations in Lewes and Eastbourne (p16); and Dr

Rob Symmons provides an insight into the fascinating social history contained in the photographic archive at Fishbourne Roman Palace (p10). On p12 you'll see the exciting update on Bull House and our plans there.

You will recall in the last edition there was an article on our plans for volunteering. Funded by the Good Space project, we have recently welcomed Chloe Andrews as Volunteer Co-ordinator to drive this important work forward – do turn to p9 to read more about how you could get involved.

The nights might be drawing in, but there's loads of events and activities to get involved with. Turn to p25 for details of what's coming up, including the dates



Published by  
The Sussex Archaeological Society,  
Barbican House, 169 High Street,  
Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1YE

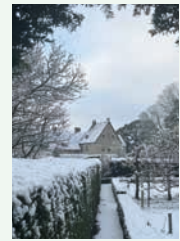
Editor: [marketing@sussexpast.co.uk](mailto:marketing@sussexpast.co.uk)

ISSN 1357-7417

# Contents

The Sussex Archaeological Society Magazine

Issue No 156 | Autumn 2023



Front cover:  
Michelham Priory  
in the snow

## Features



### 14 Sussex Archaeology: A 175 Year Heritage

An overview of the Society's 2024 conference, taking place in February

### 16 New research from Archaeology South-East

A sneak peak of two upcoming books on Sussex archaeology

### The 'near Lewes' Hoard

Dr Jaime Kaminski details this extraordinary detecting find

### 18 Michelham Priory

Get into the Christmas spirit at one of our beloved historic properties



### Covering the Collections

We shine a spotlight on 30 years of SAC covers

### 25 What's On

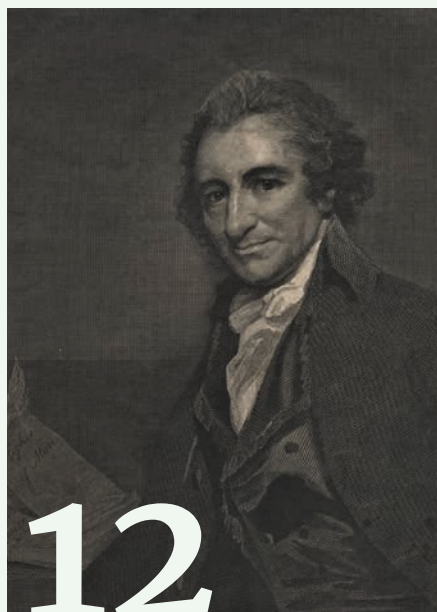
Listings of walks, talks and events relating to history and archaeology in our area

### 28 The Podium

The High Sheriff of West Sussex, Andy Bliss, on the importance of heritage in the county

### 10 In the Frame

A year-long digitisation project at records Fishbourne's recent past



### 'Citizen of the World'

Tom Paine at home in Lewes and recent opening of Bull House

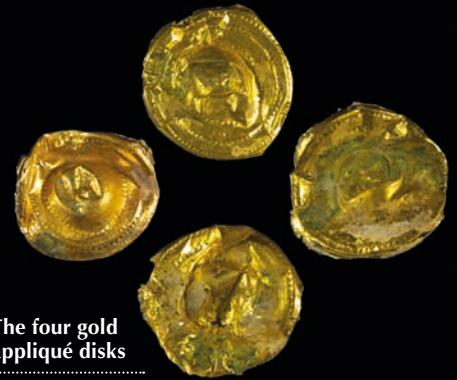
We are delighted to include articles from contributing authors. The opinions they express are their own and do not purport to reflect those of the Society.

# The 'near Lewes' Hoard



A selection of  
artefacts from the  
near Lewes Hoard

**Discovered in March 2011 by metal detectorist David Lange, the 'near Lewes' Hoard was found in the remains of a ceramic vessel on land owned by the Glynde Estate near Lewes. There will be an in-depth analysis in SAC 161, but Editor Dr Jaime Kaminski gives a sneak peek here...**



The four gold appliqué disks

**T**he hoard included five Sussex Loops, four gold appliqué disks, four twisted torcs, three palstaves, eight coiled rings, four conical tutuli mounts, two spiral coiled necklaces, and at least four different types of pins. The assemblage would have comprised a minimum of 27 complete artefacts.

The hoard was reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme and subsequently declared treasure. As one of the most important Bronze Age finds from Sussex in decades, the assemblage was acquired in its entirety by the Sussex Archaeological Society in 2014.

Dating to c. 1400–1100 BC, the hoard belongs to the 'Ornament Horizon'. This period of the Middle Bronze Age was marked by the deposition in hoards of bronze and gold personal ornaments such as rings, torcs, bracelets, and pins alongside the more well-established range of tools and weapons. Many of these ornaments were inspired by forms current in northern Germany and Scandinavia. Often, these were objects of adornment designed to be worn by individuals.

The near Lewes Hoard is a rare example of a deposit that was both undisturbed and structured. Different artefacts belonging to several individuals were grouped together according to type and placed within an undecorated bucket urn. The structuring within the vessel, including threading of rings onto torcs, is reminiscent of that seen in the Hollingbury Hoard, which readers of the Collections can learn about in volume 160.

But it is the number, quality and diverse geographical origins of the artefacts that places the near Lewes Hoard in a league of its own.

Many of the objects are extremely rare. The gold appliqué disks are unknown in Britain, with the closest analogies coming from central France and Italy. The two spiral-coiled necklaces

come from northern Germany and incorporate amber that probably came from the Baltic. The tutuli mounts are of a type found in northern Germany, Denmark and southern Scandinavia. These artefacts reveal complex trade relationships spanning long distances.

It is not only the exotic international objects that make the assemblage special. The near Lewes hoard contains examples of specific locally produced artefacts, such as the Sussex Loops. These recurved bracelets or armlets are found along the South Downs and coastal belt between Lavant and Catsfield, but the greatest concentration is found in the Brighton–Lewes hinterland. The near Lewes Hoard has the largest number of Sussex Loops found in a single location.

Another local object is the mysterious 'lozenge pin', which is only known from one other site between Brighton and Lewes. All of these objects were of the highest quality and made by skilled crafts people.

With its combination of local traditions and continental influences, the hoard is an important addition to the corpus of 'Ornament Horizon' assemblages. Readers can look forward to an in-depth analysis of the near Lewes Hoard in the *Sussex Archaeological Collections Volume 161*.



# Covering the Collections

## Designing the covers for the Sussex Archaeological Collections

Since 1994, designer and illustrator Andy Gammon has volunteered his time to create the covers for the *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. To mark nearly three decades of cover design, we asked Andy to tell us about how he came to volunteer his time and how he approaches cover design for the *Collections*.



Andy Gammon and Vesuvius

“In my early years in Canterbury, Kent, I showed great interest in drawing. At school, I often won prizes for Art. After leaving school I attended the College of Art in Canterbury, where I took Foundation and a three-year course in Graphics, achieving a Diploma in Art and Design in 1969.

After college I went to London to seek work and, following several freelance commissions, I achieved a permanent position

at Michael Tucker & Associates design studio in Marylebone. When I left London for the south coast, I developed a skill for product design in the employ of Lewes Design Contracts Ltd., Glynde, specialising in spiral staircases and produced all their publicity brochures. In 1980, after leaving LDC I became freelance and have stayed working for myself ever since.

Living in Lewes, and with my interest in history, I met John Houghton, CEO of the Sussex Archaeological Society, and through him, I produced various leaflets for the Society's properties. Through this association, I was asked in 1985 to help design the new Town Council's official guidebook, *Historic Lewes and its Buildings*, in collaboration with writer and historian Dr Colin Brent. This small book is still in print and available from the local

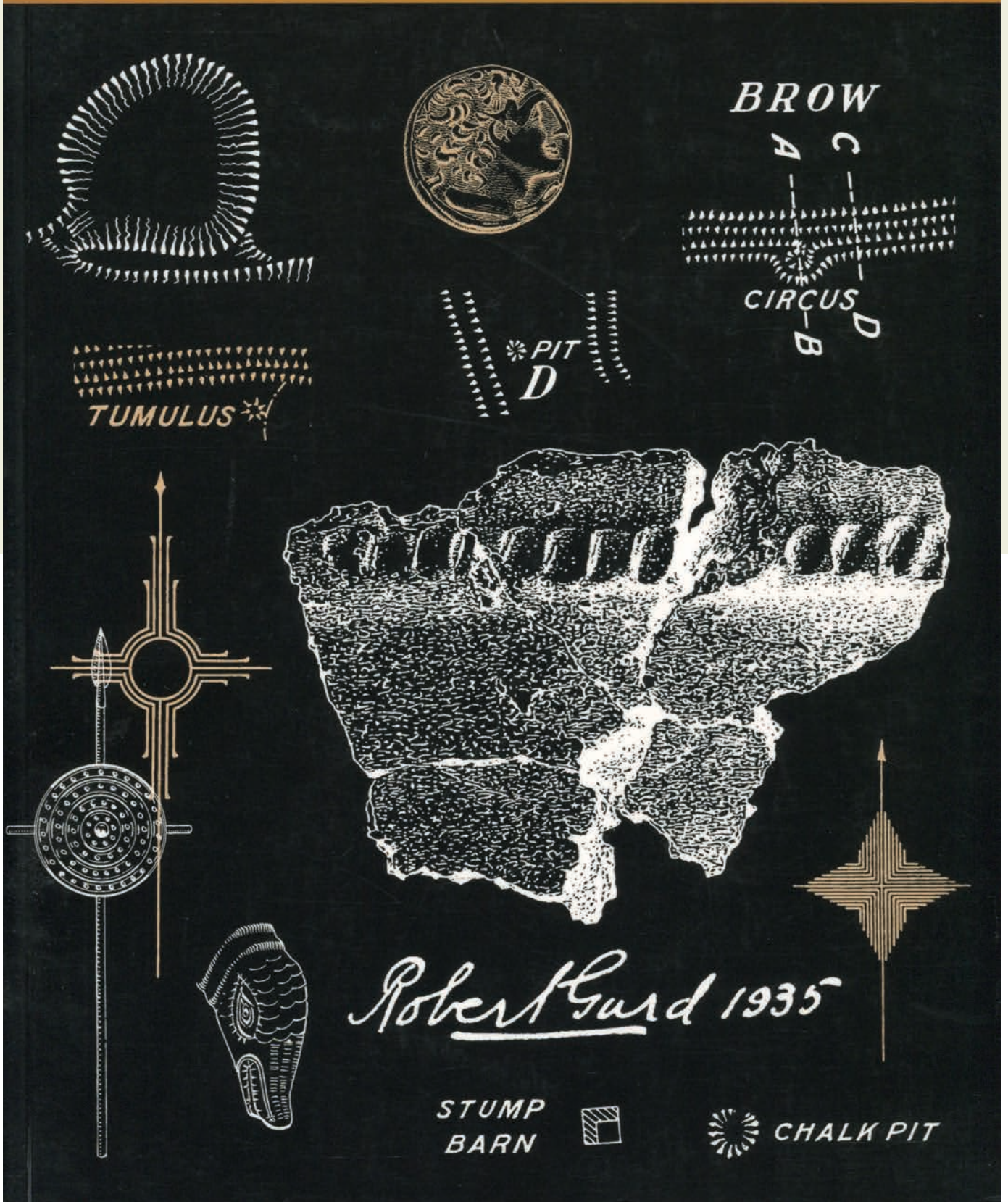
Tourist Information Centre.

Continued contact with the Society led to being asked to work on the audio-visual sequence, exhibition panels and literature to accompany the exciting and ambitious Town Model project set up inside a purpose-built space beside the Barbican Gate. This was opened in 1990 by the Minister for the Arts, Richard Luce MP. This walk-through exhibition and audio-visual experience was taken down when the Model was moved into the main building and a new audio-visual commissioned by others, but the Model remains the same.

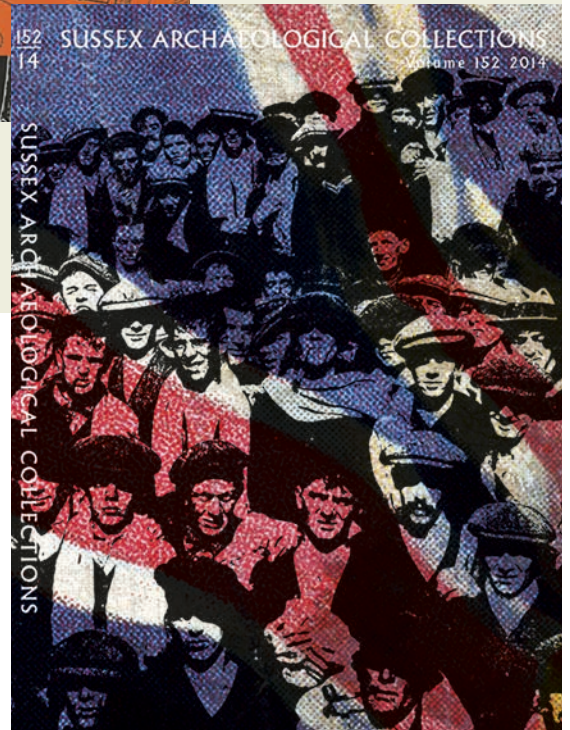
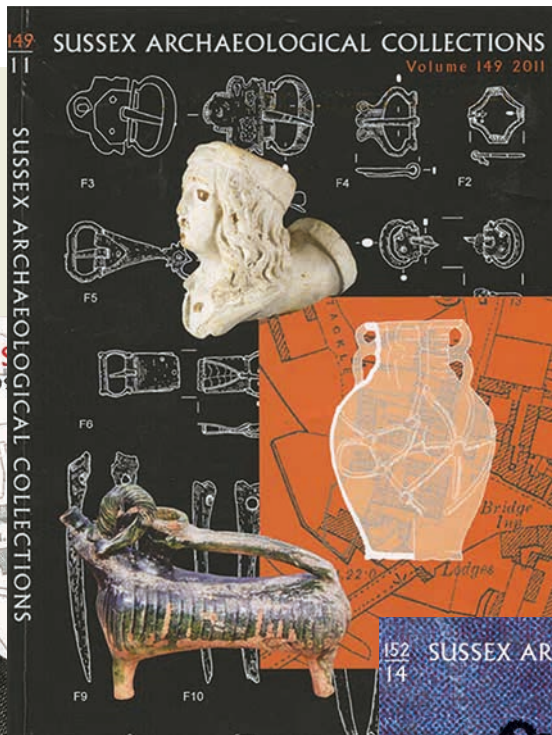
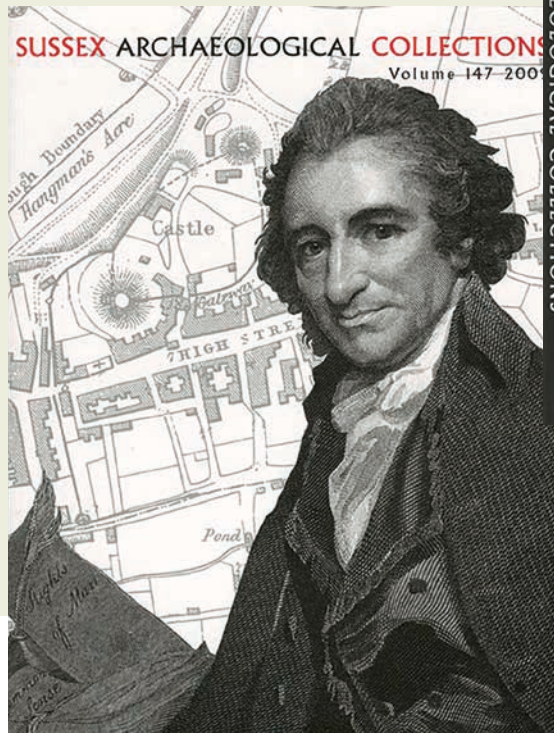
I also met John Farrant, who, on behalf of the Society, was keen to bring *Sussex Archaeological Collections* up-to-date with a fresh layout and typographic style. He asked me to supply style sheets and typeface instructions and to freshen up the cover designs on ►

# SUSSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS

Volume 138 - 2000



“ I also like putting a collection of small drawings or symbols together, as with Volume 138, featuring the illustrations of Robert Gurd from the 1930s. ” Andy Gammon



the soft-back versions. The first newly designed SAC was Volume 134, launched in 1994.

Over the years I have worked with editors Gwen Jones, Sue Hamilton, Luke Barber and now Jaime Kaminski. With each, I have approached the design scheme by selecting images from contributors' articles. From these, I might fashion 'collage' arrangements highlighting a particular article. By using colour underlays, cropping or enlargement techniques, images can be sensitively transformed into suitable cover material. I particularly like using maps juxtaposed with cut-out images. Volume 147 comes to mind, featuring an article on 'Paine at Bull House'. I also like putting a collection of small drawings or symbols together, as with Volume

138, featuring the illustrations of Robert Gurd from the 1930s. Volume 149 also worked well, featuring artefacts from the Ropetackle excavations in Shoreham, and Volume 152 in the centenary year of the start of WWI, where I used an enlarged Union Jack flag as an underlay for a photographic image of a crowd of recruits about to embark from Seaford.

With these types of designs, I hope to achieve visual interest

and character and hopefully encourage readers – as all good designs should – to venture inside the cover."

Some examples of SAC covers and other items of Andy's work for the Sussex Archaeological Society can be seen on his website ([andygammon.net](http://andygammon.net)) – see the section: Archaeological Society Literature and Graphics. There are, in addition, other examples of Society work in other sections of the site. ■

# GET involved



## In particular:

- Do you have a particular expertise you would be happy in sharing? Whether that would be the paleolithic, Norman castles, care of historic buildings or flora and fauna, we want to be build a knowledge bank we could draw upon
- Would you be interested in leading tours or giving talks?
- Any other expertise you may be willing to share from marketing to administration!

Our volunteers are a hugely important part of the Society – we simply couldn't operate without this crucial part of the team.

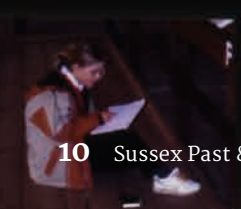
**If you are interested in sharing your skills and expertise as a volunteer or, indeed, trying your hand at something new, please email [volunteers@sussexpast.co.uk](mailto:volunteers@sussexpast.co.uk).**

**Like Andy, giving his time and expertise to create a visual identity for SAC, or Jacquie at Fishbourne making new discoveries in the Collections Discovery Centre, we have amazing opportunities to help shape the future of the Society as well as getting involved with conservation, archiving and research. This is *your* Society and we are interested in hearing if you would be happy in sharing your skills and expertise.**



# In the Frame

Fishbourne's curator, Rob Symmons, details a hugely important photographic archive at the Palace.





**Top: Ben Cooper hard at work digitizing 35mm slides**

**Bottom: Recording handwritten information on each slide is as important as the image itself**

As well as nearly a million artefacts, the Collections Discovery Centre at Fishbourne is home to over 11,000 35mm photographic slides. Many of these slides are part of the archives from the various excavations since 1960, which relate to the artefact collections. Predictably, while an invaluable record of the archaeology at and around the Palace, these are dominated by carefully composed images of walls, ditch sections and postholes, complete with scales and north arrows. All are documented in each site's photo register.

However, there is another class of image: more informal shots of excavations, visitors and events over the last 60 years. Together these represent a vital social history of the site but are also useful for conservation, showing elements of archaeology that can be compared to the present day so that changes in condition can be monitored. These "non-archive" slides are also an often-entertaining window into a past when excavations and museums were very different from today.

This second class of images has grown organically over the years and certainly don't appear in any formal photo register. That is why it is crucial to record each on the site's catalogue so they can be located when necessary. Over the last year Fishbourne's curator has been overseeing our placement student, Ben Cooper, who has been digitizing these slides and adding the digital images to this catalogue. This makes browsing the collection significantly easier, as well as providing a shareable backup of the analogue originals.

The process is a complex one and progress has been slow. Each of 3,505 slides had to be individually digitized, the filename edited, uploaded to our server and linked to the catalogue, before refiling the original and updating the new location information. After a year's work we now have a searchable database of images, in a transferable and useable format, that document the history of the Palace since 1960 and preserve this history for future generations.



# 'Citizen of the world':

## Tom Paine at home in Lewes



Top: Bull House, Lewes High Street

Bottom: Spectrum Drama brings Tom Paine back to Bull House

**O**n Lewes High Street, just up the hill from Lewes Castle, sits an unassuming 15th-century former inn. Adorned by carved satyrs, this timber-framed building hides a marvellous secret. There are few places in the world where you can walk in the footsteps of one who helped change the course of history. Bull House is one such place.

Between 1768 and 1774, Bull House was the home of 'citizen of the world', Thomas Paine. A political writer, pamphleteer, theorist and thinker, Paine was a key influence in the American War of Independence, the writing of the American constitution and

is considered a father of British Radicalism.

A year after he left Bull House for the American colonies, Paine published *Common Sense*, a 47-page pamphlet advocating independence from Great Britain. Published on January 10, 1776, at the beginning of the American Revolution, the clarity of his fiery prose captured the imagination of people in the colonies and lit the touch paper.

A man ahead of his time, he played a crucial role in campaigning for universal suffrage, the abolition of slavery, free education for all and old age pensions. His work and words are still influencing democracy and human rights today.

Owned and cared for by the Sussex Archaeological Society since 1936, the building has had several uses, owners and tenants throughout its history. Used for many years as the Society's Head Office, we have now opened this extraordinary building to the public for a trial period.

2024 marks the 250th anniversary of Paine leaving Bull House and heading to America, beginning the countdown to the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 2026. We hope to open the building permanently and will shortly be launching a campaign to raise essential funds for both building repairs and the development of a visitor experience and programme of events that will tell Tom Paine's story and help to inspire the next generation to "to make the world anew."

For details on visiting please visit: [www.sussexpast.co.uk/attraction/bull-house-lewes](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/attraction/bull-house-lewes)

“ Let it be told to the future world ... that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive ... that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet [it]. ”

Thomas Paine quoted in Obama's inaugural speech, January 2009

“ We have it in our power to begin the world over again. ”

Ronald Reagan quoting Paine, 1980 Republican Convention

Tommy Paine

W. Sharp Sculp

THOMAS PAINE

# The Sussex Archaeological Society Conference 2023 –

# Sussex Archaeology: A 175 Year Heritage



**In 2021 The Sussex Archaeological Society marked its 175th anniversary. It was an occasion that members were unable to come together to celebrate because of the restrictions of the Covid pandemic.**

**Sussex Archaeology:  
A 175 Year Heritage,**

will celebrate the history of archaeology in Sussex and some of the people who shaped the study, protection and explanation of the past in the county and more widely.

The day will feature passionate heritage professionals and enthusiasts from the present talking about key figures in the history of Sussex archaeology, many of whom are well known, but some less so.

It will be a day to recognise the impact individuals had in the formation of our approaches to the past.

The day is above all an opportunity to come together and celebrate the people who have helped shape our understanding of the county's past and celebrate the role the Society continues to play as a guardian of our shared heritage.

.....  
**Booking tickets**

**Sussex Archaeology: A 175 Year Heritage will take place on 17th February 2024 at the University of Sussex from 9am to 5pm.**

**Tickets are £30 and include a buffet lunch.**

**To book tickets and for a list of speakers visit [www.sussexpast.co.uk/event/conference-2024](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/event/conference-2024)**

## Speaker Programme

**Sue Hamilton TBC**

Peter and Lys Drewett: Transforming Sussex Archaeology

**Emma O'Connor**

The Founders of the Sussex Archaeological Society

**Dan Robertson**

On the Willetts and Sussex Archaeology

**Richard Bradley**

General Pitt-Rivers and Herbert Toms: Contrasting Encounters with the Past

**Harriet Tait**

From Walks to Works: L.F. Salzman as Prodigy, Pioneer and Protector of Sussex's History

**Martin Hayes**

Marian Frost: The UK's Most Accomplished and Influential Female Curator and Librarian in the Early 20th Century

**Miles Russell**

Charles Dawson and Piltdown Man: A Brief History of Crime

**Judie English**

Eliot and Eliot Cecil Curwen – 50 Years of Fieldwork on the Downs

**Matt Pope**

Veronica Seton-Williams and Sussex Prehistory

**James Sainsbury**

The 'Amateur' Archaeologists of Worthing: Pull, Roper and Wills

**Iris Rosas De Oliveira, Sakshi Surana, Molly Pye & Kayt Hawkins**

The Participation of Women in the Journal *Sussex Archaeological Collections*: 1950 to Present

**Janet Pennington & Pamela Platt**

Memories of Sussex Archaeologist Hilda Holden (1916-1995) by her daughters

**John Adams**

On Margaret Rule

**Mike Pitts TBC**

Sussex Archaeology: Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future

# New research from Archaeology South-East



**BETWEEN THE TWITTENS**  
From Iron Age origins to burh and borough  
Excavations in Lewes, East Sussex

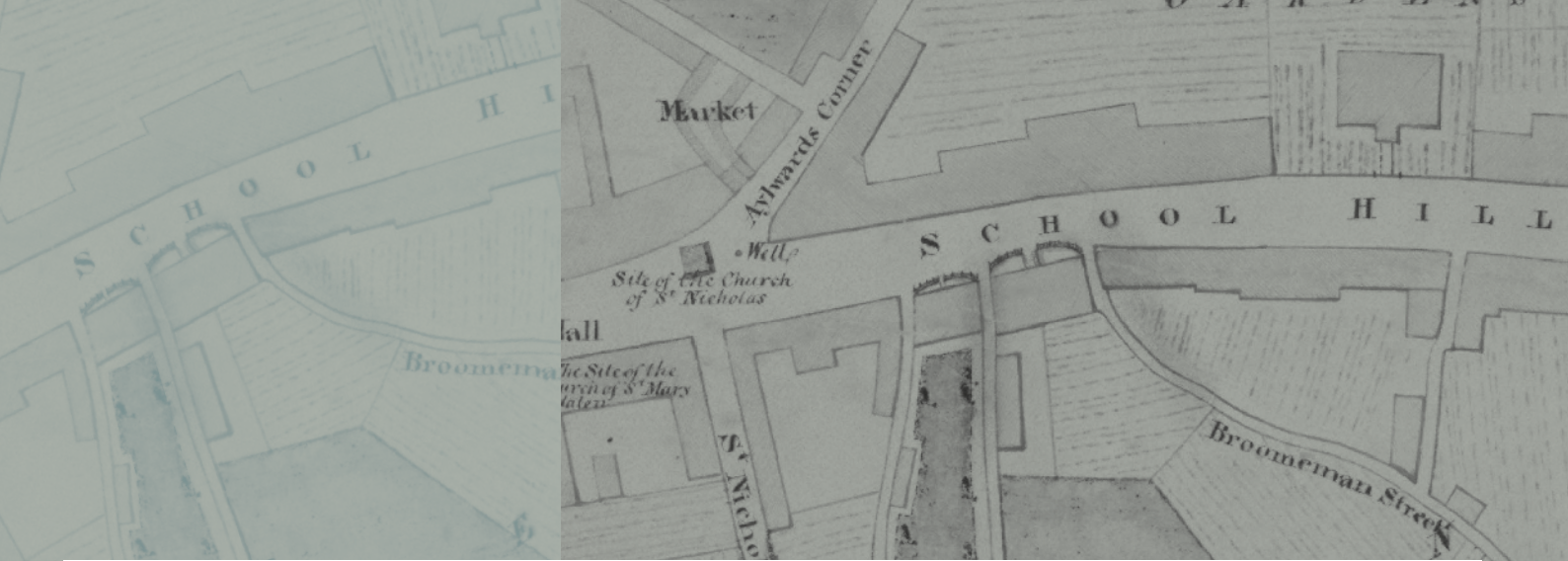
Dan Swift



**TWO MILLENNIA OF MARSHSIDE SETTLEMENT**  
Excavations at Pocock's Field, Eastbourne, East Sussex

Giles Dawkes, Anna Doherty,  
Alice Dowsett and Trista Clifford

Archaeology South-East (UCL) is launching two new books this autumn on significant archaeological excavations in two key East Sussex towns, Lewes and Eastbourne. The books follow years of fieldwork and post-excitation research, bringing together detailed landscape studies and historical documentary analysis to present new narratives for the prehistory and history of these important locations. Louise Rayner, Director of Archaeology South-East, tells us more...



'Between the Twittens', reports on four excavations undertaken between 2004 and 2008. With sites in key central locations, including to the rear of Lewes House and School Hill House and on land where buildings of Baxter's Printworks and the old Sussex Express Offices were located, this book presents new evidence for the Iron Age origins and evolution of Late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval Lewes.

The most unexpected discovery was the evidence for a Middle to Late Iron Age agricultural settlement, with associated finds for a mixed subsistence economy. Equally significant was the identification of a large Late Saxon ditch interpreted as part of the Late Saxon burh at Lewes – the first archaeological evidence for the burh to be identified in the town.

The archaeological findings at these excavations chart the rise in activity in Lewes, derived mostly from numerous backfilled quarry and refuse pits, and wells, mapping Late Saxon Lewes' evolution into a thriving high medieval urban centre at the head of the newly formed Rape of Lewes, and how it fared in the late medieval and early post-medieval periods. Very large finds assemblages of both artefacts and environmental material evidence the rise and fall in the development and economy of the town.

The Eastbourne volume covers the 3-hectare, multi-period excavation at Pocock's Field, on the edge of the Willingdon Levels, undertaken in 2014–15. The earliest activity was a probable Bronze Age inhumation burial, interred on a conspicuous chalk promontory, with cremation burials added in the Middle Bronze Age. The first settlement was a substantial Early/Middle Iron Age enclosure, where large-scale saltworking was undertaken as a specialist activity. The associated briquetage assemblage is one of the largest uncovered for this period.

A subsequent enclosure settlement was established by the Late Iron Age, which continued in use throughout the Roman period. By this time, the settlement had a specialist focus on crop-processing and storage, possibly as part of the wider estate of a villa located to the immediate north.

This excavation uncovered significant evidence for medieval building traditions starting in the later 6th–7th centuries, when five sunken-featured buildings and a post-built hall were constructed. This is the long-anticipated, first identification of Early Anglo-Saxon settlement at Eastbourne, and represents the second largest settlement of the period identified in East Sussex.

A small 'croft and toft' type farmstead occupied the site in

the high medieval period, before a substantial masonry farmhouse was built in the mid 15th century. In the 16th century, this was converted from an open hall to a fully floored building with the addition of a stair tower, walled courtyard and brewhouse.

Across much of the timespan of occupation, a droveway and then holloway, long-lived and persistent, provided access and connection between the South Downs and the marsh of the Willingdon Levels. The archaeological discoveries at this resource-rich location have enabled an in-depth study of the communities that exploited and interacted with these different landscapes.

G Dawkes, A Doherty, A Dowsett and T Clifford, 2023 *Two millennia of marshside settlement: Excavations at Pocock's Field, Eastbourne, East Sussex*, ASE Spoilheap monograph 26

D Swift, 2023 *Between the Twittens: From Iron Age origins to burh and borough. Excavations in Lewes, East Sussex*, ASE Spoilheap monograph 28

**More information about ASE books, including free-to-download titles, can be found at:**  
[www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology-south-east/our-research/publications/monographs](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology-south-east/our-research/publications/monographs)

# Get into the Christmas spirit at Michelham Priory

by Front of House team member,  
Jeremy Hedger



Over its history Michelham Priory has witnessed many forms of Christmas celebration. For the founding Augustinian Priors and their household it was a joyous religious festival. For us in the 21st century, we might celebrate it differently, but it is a time of wonder, joy, companionship, storytelling, and a hint of mystery.



**In keeping with these traditions, the Sussex Archaeological Society is delighted to be hosting an exciting and intriguing weekend programme of craft, mystery, suspense and entertainment at Michelham Priory from the 3rd – 10th December 2023.**

### **A Christmas Carol 3rd December**

Join us for an enchanting theatrical experience as This Is My Theatre presents the much-loved Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

Through mesmerising performances, live music, and a touch of holiday magic, it tells how the ghost of his former business partner and three spirits take Ebenezer Scrooge on an extraordinary journey to rediscover the true spirit of Christmas, transforming him into a kinder, gentler man.

### **Ghost Stories 8th December**

Michelham Priory is said to be one of the most haunted places in Sussex. For countless generations the Priory has been synonymous with spin-chilling haunting tales to captivate the imagination.

Step into the enchantingly eerie candlelit Barn and embrace the rich heritage of these age-old Christmas ghost tales. Performers bring them alive through a mixture of storytelling and immersive theatrical performance.

### **Murder Mystery Dining Experience 9th December**

Immerse yourself in mystery and camaraderie!

Can you unravel an intrigue at the Priory in a Cluedo-themed Murder Mystery? It's Christmas 1941 and Doctor Black has invited his closest friends to the Priory for the holiday...during the evening Doctor Black goes missing... where is he? What has happened to him?

This captivating three hour dinner event is centred on an interactive theatre performance, offering a unique the opportunity to experience the Priory at night. Over dinner and drinks, interrogate the characters, work with other audience members to identify the murderer and decide the motive and method of the crime: all will be revealed over coffee!

### **Wreath Making 10th December**

Discover the craft of wreath making at the Priory's Great Barn.

It is believed that Advent wreaths were first used in 16th-century Germany and became part of the UK Christmas tradition during the 19th century.

In days gone by evergreen trees were a species looked upon with awe and admiration since they survived the harshness of winter. Together, the circular shape and the evergreen material make the wreath a representation of eternal life.

Why not unearth the artist within; let nature's winter bounty inspire you to make a wreath of your own (all materials supplied).

**For more information or to reserve your place on any of these events please go to: [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)**

## Tim Cornish 'MEDIEVAL MAYFIELD – Archbishops and peasants'

By Robin Milner-Gulland, Emeritus Professor, University of Sussex

If we know Mayfield, it's no doubt as a well-groomed, sizable village, nearly a town, in the still-wooded Wealden landscape south of Tunbridge Wells. Its main road, with nice period buildings, runs along a ridge, itself crowned with a late-medieval parish church. Certainly it would seem to be deserving of the attention of a local historian, like other Sussex places of similar size. So far, so normal. But a history over 300 pages long, thoroughly referenced, and reaching only as far as the Reformation? There must be something more going on.

What that is – and midway through, it reaches an astonishing climax – Tim Cornish reveals in this self-published volume, clearly more than just a 'labour of love', rather a life's work; he has lived in Mayfield for 36 years. He has given thought to the nature of historical writing, and bookends his volume by citing first E.H. Carr, saying that if a writer has no 'bees buzzing in his bonnet', he's a 'dull dog'; and finally, in his acknowledgements, our own Christopher Whittick, 'arguing strongly against speculative history'. But Cornish's method doesn't really follow either of those contradictory approaches; rather he is creating a work in the spirit of the 'Annales' school, looking at the 'long duration' of the historical process – over 500 years – and rooting it in social and geopolitical constants. The scope is wide, involving all of Great Britain, and reaching to Bordeaux and Avignon, but focussed on a long and narrow strip of land, stretching from Lewes to Lamberhurst on the Kent border, thence to

Canterbury via Cranbrook, in the middle of which Mayfield is situated: it is the Deanery of South Malling.

If this doesn't sound impressive now, for a half-millennium it was highly significant. Malling, since before the Conquest, was a 'peculiar' of the Archbishops of Canterbury, who derived much of their vast wealth from their estates, rents and resources. Cornish lists in often fascinating detail the idiosyncrasies of these successive characters, their relations with king and papacy, and above all their peregrinations, with frequent stays at Mayfield. Why there? Partly for the paradoxical reason that the high Wealden ridges were agriculturally impoverished. Arable fields were limited to river valleys; otherwise, resources were limited to timber, some iron-smelting and maybe quarrying. The foundation of many an inland settlement was owed to pigs. Swine would be herded along drove roads in late summer to fatten themselves for slaughter on acorns. There was also plenty of territory to be converted into deer parks – Mayfield acquired four. When an archiepiscopal visit came, its retinue almost as worrying as King Lear's 'hundred knights', it could feast on pork and venison, with fish on Fridays, and any left-overs for the local poor (whose condition Cornish outlines in detail, as he does the incredible hierarchy and duties of the members of such a retinue).

In the early 14th century, under Archbishop Winchelsey – evidently a Sussex man, who visited Mayfield many times – an amazing transformation

of the settlement's appearance took place, whose consequences are with us still. An archbishop (or indeed a travelling king) would need a 'palace' when he and his retinue stayed anywhere: lodgings, a chapel, kitchens and a hall, a gatehouse, maybe a dovecot and whatever structures were needed for hunting. Winchelsey rebuilt Mayfield's palace on the grandest scale. There survive: a gatehouse, a fine tower and several ancillary buildings – but crowning them all is the Great Hall: 'one of the most spectacular medieval halls of England', in Pevsner's words. It would be used for feasting, of course, but many members of the retinue slept there. It is set back a short way north of the High Street, E. of the parish church, and now serves as the chapel of a convent school: you can see it if you ask (best in holidays). When the convent was established in the mid-19th century, much of its walling had collapsed; reconstruction methods were less precise than nowadays, but a decent job was made of it; at least it escaped being pulled down. In post-Reformation times much of the stonework had been robbed out, to reappear in the sleeker houses of the High Street (not to mention various agricultural buildings); but the great interior arches stand to this day, together with much carved stonework.

How could large quantities of building material, not to mention barrels of Gascon wine, once that trade got under way in the 14th century, get to out-of-the way Mayfield? It may come as a surprise that the Eastern Rother is navigable to a point below the Mayfield ridge, but it is, or was with the help of canalization. Here Cornish uncharacteristically misses a trick: the river didn't then have its modern name (a back-formation from Rotherfield), but was the Lymme; it still has a tributary called Limden. The Ouse at Lewes and Malling, incidentally, was the Midwynd. Names, of course, carry interesting and

sometimes puzzling historical baggage. A family name prominent in this book is that of the Waleys of Glynde. Like their successors the Trevors they must have been Welsh, surprising enough for Sussex landed gentry. I'd always assumed they must have been among the Welsh troops enlisted by Edward I to help him fight the Scots. But the dates don't fit – our Waleys were here earlier. Incidentally the Scottish hero William Wallace spelt his name the same way. Was he possibly from Strathclyde, where a Brythonic language lingered on into the early middle ages? So far as I'm aware, nobody knows. We quickly get deep into speculative history!

After Winchelsey, Cornish has to hurry through many more archbishops, never without interesting details (did one know about the old feud between the sailors of Winchelsea and those of Yarmouth, leading to a battle?). Mayfield gradually became more prosperous. After a fire, the parish church underwent major rebuilding. Horrible as the Black Death was, it led to a labour shortage, and effectively the end of serfdom. But times became more generally turbulent, with several revolts, notably Jack Cade's, and eventually the harsh period of the Reformation, where the story ends (maybe to be taken up again, Cornish hints). It remains to sum up the volume. It's so packed with detail that it would be easier to dip into it, taking one theme at a time, than tackle the narrative sequentially. But everything is helped along by the superb, mostly coloured, illustrations, with several maps; the whole designed by the Sussex specialist Andy Gammon (a minor complaint: one needs a list of these illustrations, and sometimes fuller captions). As it is, what Cornish has given us is a remarkable panorama of medieval life, with all its ceaseless movement and contradictions summed up in the ripples that emerge from a single, apparently ordinary village.

**Mawefeld Books, 2022;**  
**purchase details:**  
[www.mayfieldtimshistory.org](http://www.mayfieldtimshistory.org)



Watercolour illustration of the Archbishop's household on the road  
 © Andy Gammon

# Hilaire Belloc

## an appreciation by Chris Hare

Today it would be considered a sure sign of success in life if you were able to move to Slindon: a beautiful village, nestling in the South Downs, yet within easy reach of the coast, nearby towns and the mainline railway to London. It was not quite like that in the 1870s, when a widow and her young children arrived here to rent a property. The family were the Bellocs and one of the children was Hilaire, who would grow up to be one of the most controversial and influential figures of his day. Madame Belloc was, not to put too fine a point on it, on her uppers. Her French husband had died. The family then fled France following invasion and revolution, and then, to cap it all a 'family friend' in the City of London had embezzled most of her savings. Arriving in Slindon 150 years ago was not a sign of success, but rather an indication of a serious fall from grace in terms of social status.

Hilaire was a precocious yet lonely child. As a boy he would wander off for hours, exploring the still quiet and peaceful country landscape. No cars, no planes, no mechanised farm machinery. All was still much as it had been for centuries. In later life, Belloc would return here to find peace and succour and to renew himself for his latest battle or campaign. He rarely rested from his conflicts, but when he did, his rest was total and he lost himself – if only for a moment – in the sublime tranquillity of the South Downs.

He found joy and comfort and escaped from the cares of the world at Gumber, Halnaker Hill, 'No Man's Land,' and the ancient old road of Stane Street. Belloc marvelled to find a Roman Road, resting among the fields of Victorian Sussex, and yet he was anxious too that the solitude he was able to enjoy would not be there

for future generations, that the brooding leviathan of industrial capitalism would shatter even this bucolic idyll.

Today, Belloc is not to everyone's taste, or to be explicit, he is probably not to most people's taste. Even in his own day, his apparent contradictions and paradoxes frustrated and bewildered many, and simply outraged others. Here was a devout Roman Catholic whose core beliefs seemed pagan; a great opponent of industrial capitalism who also reviled socialism; a lover of England who damned all her recent history; an enemy of puritanism, who lived an austere life and remained a widower, dressed always in black, for nearly 40 years.

I love Belloc very deeply, despite his faults. We are all flawed and so was he and he knew it. But he was brave, unyielding in the face of

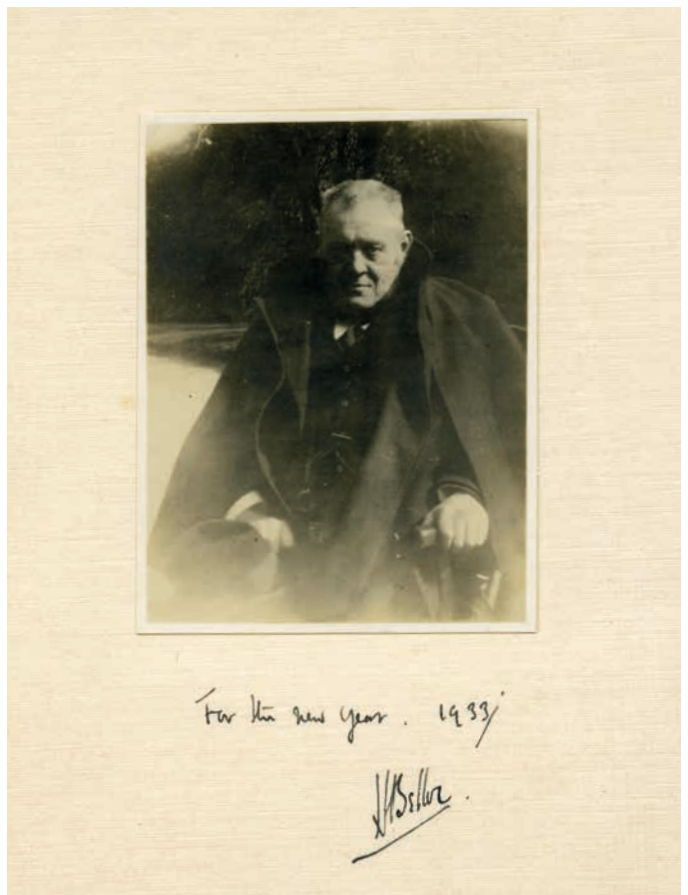


**Belloc on board The Nona**

opposition, and infinitely kind and generous to family and friends. He was also, which is rare, able to comprehend mortality and to accept death and suffering in much the same way as he accepted a change in the weather. Not because he was callous but because he had faith in a better world to come.



**Belloc as a young man**



**Belloc in his 60s** Photographs courtesy of West Sussex Record Office

## Celebrating Hilaire Belloc and 'The Four Men' as part of the Friends of the South Downs Centenary

Dramatic adaptation by Ann Feloy  
Article by Chris Hare

The centenary of the Friends of the South Downs coincides with 70 years since the death of Hilaire Belloc, one of Sussex's greatest writers. So, staging two performances of Belloc's beloved book 'The Four Men', now out of copyright, seems a perfect marriage of these two milestones.

Belloc's farrago is set in 1902 at the time of Halloween and is steeped in the beauty and mysticism of the landscape. To keep to the spirit of the book, the performances are taking place this October at the medieval Sullington Tithe Barn at the foot of the Downs.

Belloc, as the character 'Myself', takes a journey on foot across the breadth of the county, from east to west, marvelling at the splendour of the South Downs and Sussex countryside. He encounters three companions along the way – the whimsical Poet, the rumbustious Sailor and wise,

old Grizzlebeard. Together they meet some remarkable rural characters on their four day, 92-mile long folk odyssey. They drink copious amounts of ale at the inns they stop at; they laugh, quarrel, tell tall tales and sing Sussex folk songs. They recount the legends of the Downs, describe their first loves and draw ever closer in friendship.

Playwright Ann Feloy's stage adaptation of Belloc's book was nominated as one of the top ten plays at the Brighton Fringe Festival when it was first performed in 2010 and received a four star review in 'The Stage' when it was performed by the Conn Artists. [www.conn-artists.co.uk/the-four-men](http://www.conn-artists.co.uk/the-four-men)

The dramatic reading this October of her stage play is being sponsored by the Friends of the South Downs. There will be special emphasis on the traditional folk songs and music of Belloc, alongside famous

pieces of classical music by Sussex-inspired composers such as Vaughan Williams and Edward Elgar.

Beforehand, historian Chris Hare will lead a five mile guided walk up on to the steep slopes near Sullington, over to Washington and then back in time for the performance, in order to see some of the sights mentioned in the book. He has recently published 'Hilaire Belloc – The Politics of Living' which will be on sale.

There will also be a photographic exhibition of some of the places in the book by photographer Dean Sephton.

Bernard Smith in his book, 'Writers of Sussex', writes that 'Belloc loved Sussex as few other writers have loved her; he lived there for most of his 82 years, he tramped the length and breadth of the county, slept under her hedgerows, drank in her inns, sailed her coast and her rivers and wrote several incomparable books about her.'

Belloc lived for most of his 82 years in Sussex, growing up as a child in Slindon, and then settling at Shipley, near Horsham. He said of 'The Four Men' – "I put my whole heart into that book but no one cares about it".

Ann hopes the dramatic readings of her stage play will take the audience on a captivating journey that touches the soul, as Belloc no doubt intended.

**'The Four Men' performances take place at 2 pm on Saturday and Sunday, October 28th and 29th at the Sullington Tithe Barn, Storrington, RH20 4AE.**

**For those who wish, there is a walk beforehand up onto the Downs at Sullington, to see some of the sights in 'The Four Men', starting at 10.30 am on both days. There are steep gradients and places are limited.**

**To buy tickets for Saturday, October 28th go to: [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hilaire-bellocs-the-four-men-dramatic-reading-with-music-and-song-tickets-649804943077](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hilaire-bellocs-the-four-men-dramatic-reading-with-music-and-song-tickets-649804943077)**

**To buy tickets for Sunday, October 29th go to [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hilaire-bellocs-the-four-men-dramatic-reading-with-music-and-song-tickets-650204508187](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hilaire-bellocs-the-four-men-dramatic-reading-with-music-and-song-tickets-650204508187)**

## Sussex Writers in their Landscape: Self-fulfilment in the Age of the Machine

By Peter Brandon, edited by Brian Short

Dr Peter Brandon (1927-2011) will be remembered by many within the Sussex Archaeological Society. He was a member of Council and Hon. Editor of the *Collections* during the 1970s, as well as a consistent contributor to the journal from the 1960s. A fervent campaigner for the Sussex countryside, he wrote many books about Sussex, its people and their landscape and was engaged on yet another right up until his death. The text remained unfinished but, as time allowed, I have now completed it. I am grateful for the ready help afforded by his long-time friend the late Ann Winsor, and by Esme Evans

and her colleagues.

The book deals with the period 1850-1939. In literary terms this was a time of great change as Romanticism gradually gave way to an early 20th-century modernism. But through it all, from William Hay on Mount Caburn, James Hurdis and Charlotte Smith, there remained the lure of the Sussex landscape, and in whatever style adopted, writers strove to capture the essence of this remarkable county. The result was an explosion of literary creativity which rejected modernity and the London scene and instead developed writing imbued with a sense of nature and

landscape, themes which Peter Brandon spent so much of his life exploring.

Many sought the tranquillity of a rural retreat, but one within reach of London for visits to seek publishers, urbane society and literary friends. Chapters in the book therefore show the affinity of writers to their Sussex environments: there is Kipling at Rottingdean and Burwash; Belloc in the Weald and downland around Shipley; and Virginia Woolf at Rodmell. And the Great War also brought those seeking solace and peace, such as Ford Madox Ford, recuperating around Bedham and Pulborough. Here too were poets such as the extraordinary Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, who saw himself as a latter-day squire in the deep Weald near the modern Broadbridge Heath. Many others are included, such as the visitor D.H. Lawrence to the Meynells at Greatham or

Richard Jefferies at Crowborough and Goring. And there is a chapter on Dr Habberton Lulham whose medical skills were devoted to travellers and shepherds along the Downs and whose melancholy end came in Hurstpierpoint.

The book includes more than 80 illustrations of writers and Sussex countryside, and I hope that Peter would have approved of my efforts, as his one-time undergraduate and postgraduate student, to bring his final words on his beloved Sussex to a wider audience.



**Sussex Writers in their Landscape was published in October 2023 by The History Press at £25.**

## A tribute to Dr Harriet O'Neill 1980–2023

### Sussex Archaeological Society Vice Chair Matt Pope pays tribute to Dr Harriet O'Neill, who died this summer after a short illness.

When Harriet applied to be a trustee of the Society, she wrote of how her school trips to Fishbourne Roman Palace and Lewes Castle sparked a lifelong love of history and paved the way for her career in heritage. She wrote: "It would be a privilege to serve as a Trustee for the Society and in so doing contribute to the area I grew up in."

Well, for me it was a privilege to work with Harriet for three years and get to know her as a colleague and a friend. I want to take a moment here to reflect on her path to the Society and the contribution she made to the heritage and arts sectors, both professionally and through her example as an engaging, warm, and deeply thoughtful person.

Harriet was born, not in Sussex, but in Tunbridge Wells and often joked that she hoped the Society wouldn't hold this matter of geography against her. Her childhood was however spent growing up in the Downland village of Steyning and even at a young age she loved the buildings and artefacts of the past. The rich heritage of Sussex contributed to shaping Harriet's young imagination with an appreciation of the human past, of the power of art to touch people's lives and the fragility and beauty of the Sussex landscape. This foundation was something Harriet took into adult life both in her studies and in her path towards a professional commitment to heritage and the arts.

Harriet was intelligent, hardworking, and enthusiastic, and she gained a BA in Modern History from the University of Oxford and MAs in both History of Art (UCL) and Art Museum and Gallery Studies (University of Newcastle). In 2015, she was awarded a PhD in Art History from UCL which she undertook in collaboration between UCL and the National

Gallery, an institution she was passionate about and eventually went to work for. She loved giving public talks on its collections and research and delivered them with her customary enthusiasm.

Harriet entered professional life working for Christie's and Bonhams auction houses, becoming the youngest ever Head of Department at the latter. One of her highlights was an internship at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, which was a magical time for her. Harriet then held two prestigious curatorial roles. At the National Gallery, London, she worked in curating and interpreting its collections, while at Royal Holloway she oversaw the creation of new exhibition spaces, a dedicated art store, and the documentation in preparation for formal Museum Accreditation.

In 2018, Harriet was appointed Assistant Director for the Humanities and Social Sciences at the British School in Rome. Not only was this a chance for Harriet to work in a country and city she loved, but also to be closer to the Roman antiquities and Italian Renaissance masterpieces she was so passionate about. Helping to coordinate and support the activities of visiting researchers, many far from home, took on an urgency when Harriet found herself in this role during the opening months of the Covid-19 pandemic. She continued to deliver her responsibilities and support the BSR from Sussex, and despite the challenges of the time, she loved being able to get out at the end of the day and walk her dog on the Downs that she loved so much.

It was during this time that Harriet put herself forward to be a Trustee for the Society, explaining to her family that she wanted to do more for the places she grew up in and loved.

Elected with much support later that year, Harriet brought with her the vast breadth and depth of her academic studies and work experience to the Society and we were lucky to have been able to draw on this experience through the challenges of the pandemic. Harriet joined the Society's Collections, Engagement & Research Committee and directly worked with our curatorial team bringing her expertise to review new accreditation documents and procedures.

In addition to her professional skills Harriet brought her own human qualities which were much needed. In the all too short period we got to work with Harriet we were impressed by her commitment to care for the people of the Society as well as its collections. Harriet brought both an infectious sense of humour and thoughtful insight to all discussions. She was always there to balance tough decision-making with our responsibilities to plotting the most ethical course possible.

Harriet was passionate about making sure that everyone could access and benefit from heritage, the arts and culture, believing that the sector was strengthened by different voices. In her own words, in applying to be a Trustee, Harriet said: "My commitment to inclusivity, equality and diversity and ensuring research into heritage moves beyond the Academy underpins the content of my public talks, films, commissioning of interpretative interventions from artists, poets and musicians, teaching and walks." An ethos so important to Council and to Harriet's role within it.

Harriet moved back to England in 2022, taking up a new role in public engagement at the National Gallery. We were delighted to work in person with Harriet and attend



events with her, albeit for far too short a time. She started a new job as a curator at English Heritage in April 2023, based at Chiswick House and had already attacked her role with her customary vigour and enthusiasm. She was so excited about working there and I am not at all surprised to hear from her colleagues how much she had come to mean to them in a short time.

Harriet passed away in May 2023 after a short illness. Her death has come as a huge shock to all of us who knew and cared for her, and the Arts and Heritage community lost a bright star. We are honoured that Harriet, a child of Sussex who had a huge workload and all the challenges of precarity the sector brings with it, chose to spend some of her precious spare time on an organisation she valued, and with the collections, landscapes and properties of the county it cared for and she loved. We were very lucky to have had the opportunity to get to know Harriet and learn from her, in that way her influence in the Society, and the wider Arts and Heritage sectors, will continue.

The Society is developing plans to honour Harriet's memory, and we would love to hear members' memories and thoughts.

**Dr Harriet O'Neill served as trustee for the Society between 2020 and 2023. She is greatly missed by all of us.**

**Matt Pope  
Vice Chair of Council**

# Looking

for the perfect gift for

Sussex heritage  
lovers?

- ◆ Gift memberships
- ◆ Christmas cards
- ◆ Fantastic books
- ◆ Unique gifts
- ◆ Postage available

Support the Society this Christmas  
and treat a loved one to a truly unique gift

Visit [www.sussexpast.co.uk/shop](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/shop)

# Coming Up

## October

### October Half Term Family Activities – Roman Army Week

23rd to 27th October  
Fishbourne Roman Palace  
Free for members

Enlist in the Roman army and find out what life was like as a new recruit.

[www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

### Chichester & District Archaeology Society Monthly Talk – Bronze Age finds from Chichester and Sussex

25th October, 7.30pm  
New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester PO19 7XY  
Free for CDAS members, £5 non-members

Speaker: Jaime Kaminski

[www.cdas.info](http://www.cdas.info)

### Haunting Tales & Craft Ales: Ghost Story Stroll, Beer, and Burgers

27th October, 6pm  
Michelham Priory House & Gardens  
£42

Enjoy a burger and craft ale followed by a Ghost Walk around Michelham Priory. Adults only.

Pre-booking essential at [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

### Magical Light: 'Same Sky' Lantern Workshop

27th & 28th October,  
11am/3pm  
Michelham Priory House & Gardens  
£15 adults/children

Family-friendly creative workshop, lantern walk and wererabbit trail with award-winning community arts organisation, Same Sky.

Pre-booking essential at [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

### Greensand Rangers Tudor Reenactment

28th October, 11am to 3pm  
Anne of Cleves House  
Free for members

Take a step back in time at Anne of Cleves House as Tudor soldiers set up camp in the gardens.

[www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

### Modern Bestiary Art Workshop

28th & 29th October, 9am  
Fishbourne Roman Palace & Gardens  
£5

Art workshop exploring historical and contemporary narratives about animals feeding which go all the way back to medieval bestiaries.

Pre-booking essential at [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

**Sussex Archaeological Society Autumn Talks – fortnightly from 17th October. Spring talks fortnightly from 16th January.**

**Head to [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on) to register your space**

## November

### Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Lecture – Crete: The Myth of the Minotaur and the Archaeology of the Minoans

10th November, 7pm  
Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton BN1 1UF  
Free for BHAS members, £4 for guests

Speaker: Sarah Green

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

### Fishbourne Festive Fayre

18th November, 10am  
Fishbourne Roman Palace & Gardens  
Free entry

Community fair with craft market from local sellers, food and a choir.

[www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

### CBA South East Conference – What is new from Commercial Archaeology in the Southeast?

18th November, 10am  
Kings Church, Brooks Road, Lewes BN7 2BY / online  
£13 for virtual tickets and £20-25 for in-person tickets

Conference with talks from Hayley Nicholls, Jon Baczkowski, Letty Ingrey and more.

Book at [www.cbасouth-east.org](http://www.cbасouth-east.org)

### Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society Local History Talk – The Fearless and Fabulous Women of Brighton & Hove

18th November, 2.30pm  
United Reform Church, Blatchington Road, Hove BN3 3YF

Speaker: Louise Peskett

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

### Chichester & District Archaeology Society Monthly Talk – Finds Liaison Officer for Sussex: Recording our Past. Recent Finds from the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Sussex

22nd November, 7.30pm  
New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester PO19 7XY  
Free for CDAS members, £5 non-members

Speaker: Jane Clark

[www.cdas.info](http://www.cdas.info)

### University of Sussex Archaeological Society Online Lecture – Roman Imperial Sculptures in Sussex (and beyond): New Research

22nd November, 7.30pm  
Online

The Sally Christian Lecture for 2023 with Dr Miles Russell.

[www.usas.org.uk](http://www.usas.org.uk)

### Christmas Market

25th & 26th November,  
10am to 4pm  
Michelham Priory House & Gardens

Craft market with local makers and tasty food and drinks set in the Elizabethan Great Barn.

[www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

## Coming Up

### December

#### The Sussex Archaeological Society AGM

2nd December  
Michelham Priory House & Gardens

Join the Society's Annual General Meeting, followed by mince pies and a festive drink.

[www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

#### A Christmas Carol

3rd December, 2.30pm & 5pm  
Michelham Priory House & Gardens  
£12 – £15

Enchanting theatre performance of Charles Dickens' classic story of redemption, with traditional carols and live music arranged by Simon Stallard.

Pre-booking essential at [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

#### Marlipins Christmas Fair

8th & 9th December  
Marlipins Museum, Shoreham  
Free entry

Charming Christmas fair run by Friends of Marlipins Museum with handmade wares and the group's famed Mulled Apple Punch.

More at [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

#### Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Lecture & AGM – A History of the Adur Valley

8th December, 7pm  
Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton BN1 1UF  
Free for BHAS members, £4 for guests

Speaker: Dr Janet Pennington

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

#### Mr Fezziwig's Christmas Murder Mystery

9th December, 7.30pm  
Michelham Priory House & Gardens  
Tickets £52 including a two-course meal

A 1940s Cluedo-themed murder mystery night with an exclusive dining and drinks experience in the Great Barn.

Pre-booking essential at [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

#### Festive Wreath Making Workshop

10th December, 10.30am  
Michelham Priory House & Gardens  
Tickets £45

Make your own wreath using natural materials grown on site, whilst enjoying a hot chocolate and a mince pie.

Pre-booking essential at [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

### January

#### Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society Day School – Flint

13th January, 10am  
Patcham Community Centre, Ladies' Mile Road, Brighton BN1 8TA  
£75 or reduced rate for BHAS members when booking all three day schools

Tutor: Chris Butler

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

#### Twelfth Night Tudor Wassail

20th January  
Michelham Priory House & Gardens  
Tickets on sale soon

Join us for a magical evening of dancing, drumming, fire and feasting to bless the trees and wish them good health for the year ahead.

Pre-booking essential at [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

#### Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society Finds Processing

20th January, 10am  
Patcham Community Centre, Ladies' Mile Road, Brighton BN1 8TA

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

#### University of Sussex Archaeological Society Online Lecture – Flint Story with Diana Jones

17th January, 7.30pm  
Online

[www.usas.org.uk](http://www.usas.org.uk)

### February

#### Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Lecture – Saxon and Highdown Hill

9th February, 7pm  
Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton BN1 1UF  
Free for BHAS members, £4 for guests

Speaker: James Sainsbury

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

#### Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society Day School – An Introduction to Environmental Archaeology

10th February  
Patcham Community Centre, Ladies' Mile Road, Brighton BN1 8TA  
£75 or reduced rate for BHAS members when booking all three day schools

Tutor: Dr Mike Allen

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

#### February Half Term Family Activities

12th to 16th February  
Across Sussex Past sites  
Free entry

[www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

#### The Sussex Archaeological Society's Annual Conference: Sussex Archaeology: A 175 Year Heritage

17th February, 9am  
University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9QU  
Tickets £30 including lunch and refreshments

A full-day conference exploring the history and archaeology of Sussex, featuring guest speakers.

Pre-booking essential at [www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/whats-on)

#### Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society Local History Talk – Daniel Defoe's tour of South East England 1724

17th February, 2.30pm  
United Reform Church, Blatchington Road, Hove BN3 3YF

Speaker: Geoffrey Mead

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

## Volunteering at our sites

Share our passion for the history and heritage of Sussex? Why not apply to become a volunteer for the Society?

Volunteers generously give their time to help preserve, protect and promote the history of our region.

As a registered charity, we simply couldn't deliver our mission without them.

We're currently looking for people to support our work in a range of roles across our heritage sites including welcoming visitors to our properties, providing guided tours, supporting events and gardening.

For a list of current vacancies at our properties and sites, visit: [www.sussexpast.co.uk/become-a-volunteer](http://www.sussexpast.co.uk/become-a-volunteer).



**University of Sussex Archaeological Society Online Lecture – Early Prehistoric Occupation at Wogan Cavern**  
21st February, 7.30pm  
Online

Speaker: Dr Rob Dinnis

[www.usas.org.uk](http://www.usas.org.uk)

**Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society Finds Processing**  
24th February, 10am  
Patcham Community Centre, Ladies' Mile Road, Brighton BN1 8TA

### March

**Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society Day School – Post Roman Pottery Day School**  
2nd March, 10am  
Patcham Community Centre, Ladies' Mile Road, Brighton BN1 8TA  
£75 or reduced rate for BHAS members when booking all three day schools

Tutor: Luke Barber

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

**Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Lecture – Life, Death and Times in the Bronze Age**  
8th March, 7pm  
Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton BN1 1UF  
Free for BHAS members, £4 for guests

Speaker: Mike Parker Pearson

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

**Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society Local History Talk – Further Images of Sussex**  
16th March, 2.30pm  
United Reform Church, Blatchington Road, Hove BN3 3YF

Speaker: Cherry Gillingham

Contact [john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk](mailto:john.funnell@brightonarch.org.uk)

**Sussex School of Archaeology & History Conference – Disposal of the Dead During the Iron Age and Roman Periods in South East England**  
23rd March, 10am to 5pm  
Kings Church, Brooks Road, Lewes BN7 2BY / online  
£15 for virtual tickets or £20-30 for in-person tickets

A Sussex School of Archaeology & History conference run in association with the Roman Studies Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society. Speakers include Prof Tim Champion, Dr John Pearce and Dr Claire Hodson.

[www.sussexarchaeology.org](http://www.sussexarchaeology.org)

### April

**Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Lecture**  
12th April, 7pm  
Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton BN1 1UF  
Free for BHAS members, £4 for guests

Speaker: Adam Wightman

[www.brightonarch.org.uk](http://www.brightonarch.org.uk)

# The Value of Heritage: Shaping our Present & Future

**The High Sheriff of West Sussex is former Chief Constable Andy Bliss. Here he shares some reflections on his year in office thus far, along with his thoughts on the importance of heritage in the county. With a lifelong interest in history, Andy holds a degree in History and Archaeology from Durham and a Masters in Medieval Archaeology. He is a Member of the Society.**



The High Sheriff of West Sussex, Andy Bliss

As the first High Sheriff to be appointed by HM King Charles III, a role that dates back over 1,000 years to Anglo-Saxon times, my main focus has been on the charities and voluntary groups, that protect the public and keep them safe from harm. But, holding an historical office in a county rich in history, it also seems very appropriate that I should also support the organisations, mostly charities, that care for and promote the distinguished history and cultural heritage of West Sussex. That's why I invited quite a few representatives of those organisations to a Summer Reception in the Roman Garden at the fabulous Fishbourne Palace to celebrate what they contribute to our interest and quality of life.

West Sussex has a wealth of 'heritage assets' – grand historic estates, two splendid cathedrals, castles, forts and, of course many modest old buildings. That's not to mention the many significant archaeological sites and the array of museums, large and small, across the County; plus the impressive range of historic maps, plans and documents held at the Record Office in Chichester.

So as I have travelled around West Sussex meeting curators, archivists, archaeologists, volunteers and public visitors what have I learned?

I found that many of the charities had, like many other sectors, struggled financially during the Pandemic and are striving to attract more visitors and funding. Many are using technology to enhance people's appreciation of and access to heritage. And many are engaging communities in new ways – archaeology walks run by Worthing Museum where people get a chance to handle actual artefacts while visiting sites, are just one example of this approach.

At every single place I visited I was greeted by dedicated and knowledgeable staff, and frequently supported by brilliant and enthusiastic volunteers who contribute so much to our historic places. Some venues are finding it hard to recruit volunteers as working lives have changed post-Covid and as cost of living pressures oblige some people to return to paid employment.

Understanding the past can help us to understand the present and inform our plans for the futures. So, it was heartening to see many heritage organisations thinking about how to explain history from a contemporary perspective and also ensuring that history is for everyone – including people who are less well off or from new communities.

In challenging times economically, many people are looking for inexpensive ways

to sustain their morale. Beyond the necessity of a warm dry home and adequate food, for most of us enjoying music, watching sport or in this case, visiting historic places enriches our lives. Many of the places I visited were free or inexpensive to visit and can offer fun, interesting and informative days out for families and friends

Having lived in the County for the best part of 40 years I am slightly ashamed to say that some of my visits to heritage venues – some very local to my home – were for the first time. They were all very well worth the visit. I'd encourage you to give one a try.

Photographer Andrew Mardell



From left to right: Jessica Keeley, Sam Pettifor, Leanne O'Boyle, Andy Bliss, Penny Horsfield



The Sussex Archaeological Society is a registered charity. Reg. Charity No. 207037