

# KAFS Newsletter: No.11.

The Kent Archaeological Field School: Spring 2016

Have you seen  
the KAFS website?  
It is amazing...



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Dear Member, we will be sending a Newsletter email each quarter to keep you up to date with news and views on what is planned at the Kent Archaeological Field School and what is happening on the larger stage of archaeology both in this country and abroad. For more details of courses and trips see [www.kafs.co.uk](http://www.kafs.co.uk) I do hope you enjoy this newsletter which looks forward to a summer of exciting 'digging' opportunities. Paul Wilkinson.

## Breaking News: Great Crested Newts holding up development

Matt Ridley writing in the London Times says that green bureaucrats cannot continue to use Great Crested Newts or Bats as a way of stopping useful development.



Natural England, the government body charged with protecting Britain's wildlife, is currently consulting on reforming the way protected species are rescued from bulldozers. The rethink is focused on the great crested newt, the bane of developers everywhere, and it sensibly suggests giving the newts new ponds so their populations can expand, rather than the futile gesture of surveying, trapping, deporting and excluding them from development sites one by one.

This might seem a trivial tale to disturb your bank-holiday breakfast with, but don't be fooled. Newts are big business and very, very controversial. There are about 1,200 licences issued each year to fence newts out of development sites and then trap those inside and remove them to safety, though they hate being moved and often don't survive.

Such fencing and trapping directly costs business about £60 million a year. The actual cost is much higher if you add in the delays that newts regularly cause, because a developer must trap newts on a development site for at least 30 days after the newt-exclusion fence goes in and then for five clear days of zero catches, which might take weeks or months to achieve.

Yet, despite this, Natural England is frequently taken to court both domestically and in Europe by people in the green movement who have too much money and not enough to do, for not being zealous enough in enforcing the law on newts. Greens see newts, precisely because they are so common, as a useful weapon to stop people engaging in economic activity. (I tell you, compared with newty politics, party politics is tame.) Until recently, Natural England itself was split down the middle between the pragmatists and the dogmatists. Aided by new DNA technology, allowing ponds to be tested for newts without trapping, the pragmatists may now have the upper hand.

Great crested newts are common. You find them in every part of England, as well as much of Wales and Scotland. They inhabit Northern Europe as far east as the Urals, but are scarcer on the continent, which is where these things are decided. (Yes, we are being punished for success again.) In 1994, Britain implemented a European directive defining great crested newts as a "European protected species" (EPSX meaning that you can go to prison for six months for harming them.

This means, because they are so widespread, that housebuilders and other

developers go to great lengths to ensure that any newt living on or near their development is excluded or rescued so that it is not run over by a bulldozer.

Developers live in terror of breaking this rule. In one case in Milton Keynes, a house builder incurred £1 million in costs and a year's delay just to remove 150 newts from a site. There's a vigorous industry selling "solutions" to developers. These include fences lined with heavy plastic sheets partly buried in the ground to prevent newts entering sites. The fences can be miles in length and are often cruel barriers to the movement of wildlife. When lapwing mothers are calling plaintively to their babies that are stuck on the wrong side of a fence, you have to wonder if we have our priorities right. Lapwings are of much more urgent conservation concern than newts.

The incentives from this policy are perverse. One water company spent tens of thousands of pounds on newt fencing to keep newts out of a natural habitat. No wonder similar legislation is known in the United States as the "shoot, shovel and shut up" act. Nothing has done more to alienate businesspeople from wildlife than this sort of newt-statism.

Suppose, Natural England says, that a minerals company wants to extend a quarry into what is now farmland, but the extension comes within 200 metres of a newt-infested pond. The pond will not be affected and the farmland is currently useless for newts, so what's the problem?

Indeed, the quarry extension will turn the farmland into something much more attractive to newts: with scattered ponds to breed in and heaps of rocks to hibernate in, so the newt population might rise despite the odd bulldozer accident. Yet if newts move in, the quarry owner faces a choice between going bust and going to jail. So he keeps them out.

Natural England's four proposals in the current consultation (which closed last week) suggest: reducing the need to exclude and relocate newts so long as compensatory habitat is provided elsewhere; allowing that habitat to be built off site rather than immediately nearby; allowing newts to use temporary habitats on site that will be developed at a later date; and reducing the cost of, and need for, surveys for newts and other EPSs.

All very sensible ideas.

Newts are to be the pioneers, Natural England explicitly hoping that these measures will also help with other EPSs. In the case of the surveys, Natural England gives the example of somebody trying to add an extension to a house. To get planning permission the owner has to do a bat survey. Bat surveys are expensive and can only be done at certain times of year. If the survey is inconclusive, you may have to wait another year and get another survey.

The incentive is strong for the bat surveyor to suck his teeth like a costly plumber and say, as he takes his fee: "Looks like soprano pipistrelle droppings, squire. Might be just using it as a day roost, but I can't rule out that they might be hibernating here too. See you next year."

Instead, suggests Natural England, the house owner should be allowed to go ahead and build his extension so long as he does the right thing by the bats that might or might not turn up for hibernation: providing bat boxes, say, and making sure the work is not started in hibernating season. Common sense, in other words. But common sense does not always prevail in the countryside.

The green pressure groups, the newt-fencing industry and the dogmatists within officialdom all have vested interest in the current system. The Department of the

Environment even formed a great crested newt "taskforce", boasting (and this is beyond parody) "several parallel work streams, each involving a committee to deliberate and progress aspects of policy and capacity".

Meanwhile, British industry is hobbled by a wholly unnecessary source of cost, delay and uncertainty - wearing a yellow waistcoat, a jagged crest and a pointy tail.

## **Breaking News/2: Lack of trained archaeologists threaten progress of development**



SWAT Archaeology at work in Sholden, Deal UK

Many issues have threatened to derail HS2 and Crossrail2 before so much as a metre of track has been laid. Cost, route and impact have all been debated exhaustively. However, the latest potential for delay is also one of the most unusual: a shortage of archaeologists. With contractors bound by law to fund their investigations, Duncan Wilson, head of Historic England, has warned that the number of archaeologists must increase by 25 per cent if supply is to meet demand. "HS2," he says, "is a transept across the country which, in living memory, has never been done. It is a real opportunity to learn about that landscape." The study of history and prehistory does not always march hand in hand with a cutting-edge infrastructure project. In HS2, archaeologists are faced with the enticing prospect of a 350-mile excavation trench, stretching across the country from urban Victorian London, through rural landscapes unchanged in centuries, to the industrial midlands. The line passes near Roman villas and medieval villages, scheduled ancient monuments and a Wars of the Roses battlefield, Edgecote.

English Heritage has said that it is likely that construction of the line will unearth as-yet-unknown archaeological remains of national importance.

To do so requires archaeologists, of which there are currently only 3,000. Historic England is doing valuable work to increase that number, and anticipates a surge in demand over the next six years. If excavations cannot go ahead, development is delayed and costs rise.

The time has come for archaeology to shake off its bearded image. Those who harbour doubts might heed the words of Beattie, the grandmother played by Maureen Lipman in a 1988 advert for BT. "You get an ology," she told her

grandson, "you're a scientist!" Archaeologists: scientist or not, your country needs you.

**From the leader in the London Times of May 14<sup>th</sup> 2016**

### **Breaking News/3: Oplontis excavation about to start**

The Oplontis Project began in 2006 with the study of the site known as Oplontis situated at Torre Annunziata, Italy. The work is sponsored by the Center for the Study of Ancient Italy at the University of Texas in Austin. Its two directors are John R. Clarke and Michael L. Thomas. In addition the Kent Archaeological Field School, Faversham, Kent UK under its director Dr Paul Wilkinson has been involved in fieldwork at both villa sites since 2008.

The aims of the project are to enable an understanding of the two buildings, one of which is Villa 'A', the other Villa 'B' to be enhanced through a comprehensive study of the buildings, the fabric, the artefacts and human remains, their location, and their function including a 3-d model (above) with interactive database which will enable scholars to write a series of comprehensive volumes which will be published by the Humanities eBook series of the American Council of Learned Societies. The first is scheduled to appear in 2014.

Villa 'A' is now recognised as one of the most sumptuous and extravagant Roman villas overlooking the Bay of Naples. It is thought by many that the villa was the property of Poppaea Sabina the Younger who was born in Pompeii in AD30 and married Nero in AD62. The evidence is somewhat circumstantial and consists of graffiti found on an amphora which said '*secundo poppaea*' which in translation means 'to the second [slave or freedman] of Poppaea'.

The villa was excavated by an Italian team over twenty years ago, and although it was impossible because of modern development to find the limits of the villa some 99 rooms and spaces were excavated including a sixty metre swimming pool and formal gardens. The villa is probably best known for its wonderful Second Style wall frescoes which can be found in a number of rooms located around the atrium, itself dating back to about 50BC.

Villa 'B' is located about 300 metres to the east of Villa 'A' and is not a villa. Its likely function was a warehouse where wine would be processed and shipped out in amphorae. Some 400 amphorae still litter the site. Around the warehouse are roads and streets of town houses still waiting to be excavated.

The plan of the warehouse is focused on a central courtyard surrounded by a two-storey peristyle of Nocera tufa columns. The eastern side of the peristyle includes an entrance opening onto an unexcavated road running north south and detected through our coring campaign. Ground floor storage rooms open up into this central space whilst above on the second floor are residential rooms. To the south lies the remains of a colonnade and portico and, set back, a series of large barrel vaulted storage rooms which faced the sea. In these rooms, just as in the Roman port area of Herculaneum, dozens of skeletons were found of people waiting to be rescued by boat from the eruption of Vesuvius in AD79.



In 2008 I was invited by John Clarke to join the team and started work on site at Villa 'A' helping with a small evaluation trench located in the southern area of the large swimming pool. One of its aims was to attempt to date the adjacent foundation wall of Room 78, the large *diaeta* (private room) to the south-west of the swimming pool. We excavated through demolition layers of Roman material which included fragments of exquisite fresco, painted stucco fragments and, the most wonderful of all, beautiful oil lamps with a variety of designs. To an archaeologist who normally excavates Roman sites in Britain the quality and quantity of finds was staggering. The Fourth Style fresco fragments indicated a *terminus post quem* date of about 45AD for the construction of the *diaeta* (above).

The following year I returned to Oplontis with a small team from the Kent Archaeological Field School (KAFS) and a Landover full of archaeological kit. The drive from Kent, through France, across the Alps and down the spine of Italy was memorable and is something I still look forward to every year. In a way it is a drive through a historic landscape, and gives one a feel of how extremes and opportunities of landscape moulded the lives of past peoples. The 2009 season was busy and eight trenches were excavated at Villa 'A'. In addition Giovanni Di Maio who had already undertaken some work on the geological formations below the villa cored three additional areas to the south of the villa and proved that Villa 'A' was situated on a cliff about 13 metres above the Roman sea level. Our work in 2009 included a test pit dug through the north-west corner of the pool. We found that the pool had originally been larger and had been reduced in width presumably to allow the colonnade of porticos on the west side to be built. In addition we excavated part of a circular fountain in Room 20. It had been revealed by workmen laying cables in 2007 and not recorded. On investigation we found a partly demolished fountain buried under a metre of demolition debris. The fountain had quite a pronounced tilt to it which might suggest Villa 'A' had been subjected to serious earthquake damage in the years before AD79. All the piping to the fountain had been robbed, and in addition a statue which graced the south edge of the

fountain was no longer there, but its concrete 'footprint' was!



Another of our trenches was located in the north-east corner of the north gardens and for once we were digging through layers of pumice deposited by the volcanic eruption of AD79. Underneath we found an open canal 80cm in width and finished in coating of *cocciopesto* (pink waterproof cement), known to archaeologists as *opus signinum*. The canal runs north with a slight curve to the east under the modern car park. The function of the aqueduct fed canal cannot be proved, but it is likely that it was an open water feature, part of an elaborate garden which went out of use in antiquity when it was backfilled with earth and debris.

Another garden we looked at was in Room 32, the peristyle in the servants quarters located to the east of the main atrium. We discovered evidence for an earlier peristyle that matched the footprint of the later build. The trench produced copious amounts of marble mosaic flooring, *opus signinum* slabs, and the exquisite marble nose from a small statue! The water features investigated in 2009 suggest that the first phase of the villa dated to about 50BC, and was seriously damaged in the earthquakes of AD62 with the water features decommissioned and either demolished or backfilled. In 2010 we excavated nine trenches with a view to unravelling the complexities of the water supply to the villa. In the south-east of the north gardens we excavated a large cistern with a capacity of about two cubic metres of water. It seems the cistern, constructed of *opus signinum*, was to prevent flooding in this part of the garden, to hold a water supply for the garden, and for use as a drain to the nearby portico that once lined the eastern side of the north garden and its adjacent room. The finds from the infill of the cistern were dazzling with large fragments of a Doric frieze constructed of super fine stucco, two types of antefixes, and part of a column constructed of wedge-shaped bricks and with stucco flutes. It was decided to excavate in the centre of the 60m swimming pool which required crowbars to remove the large basalt blocks which made up the substructure of the pool. Our daily water consumption went up from two litres a day in the shade to six litres! The reason for digging was that the ground penetrating radar had found a significant anomaly underneath the pool foundations. Unfortunately we did not find any anomaly but we did expose and record the two phases of pool construction, the eruption layers and the palaeosoils.

Our attention then focused on the area immediately south of the pool. Four trenches were dug that exposed a portico at the south end of the pool, part of a

wonderful marble floor of *opus sectile*, a room not recorded before with marble steps and a Doric column with stucco fluting still in situ. Found on these steps were copious amounts of pottery and a large piece of marble architrave with part of an acanthus scroll or volute (opening picture).



Our work at Villa A has gathered additional evidence that after the earthquake of AD62 large areas of the villa were badly damaged. The finding of part of a column drum from the adjacent east wing in the cistern, the lifting of part of the *opus sectile* floor prior to the eruption of AD79, and the remodelling of the swimming pool suggest that major re-building work was being undertaken. The villa also had problems with its water supply which may suggest that the villa was not habitable at the time of the eruption in AD79.

### **Excavation in Villa B (above)**

Initial GPR work had detected a series of anomalies that suggested the presence of earlier structures under the present exposed buildings. In particular the investigation suggested that the complex lay just a few metres from the ancient shoreline. The wider settlement may have been a small town (Oplontis) or a commercial harbour serving the Pompeian countryside, and will be the first of its kind discovered in the Bay of Naples area.





Work started in 2012 in the courtyard area with the aim of exposing the stratigraphy, and to examine the foundations of the building which may produce evidence of its function and chronology. We expanded the trench to the entire width of the courtyard and soon had to resort to crowbars as the original surface of the courtyard comprised large and occasionally very large basalt boulders with the gaps between boulders infilled with large sherds of amphorae. Some of these still retained residue which were bagged for analysis.

Immediately under the basalt pavement was the first of many pyroclastic flows, the first dating to the Late Bronze Age. As we excavated down we exposed and recorded sequence after sequence of eruption strata and palaeosoils dating as far back as 1500-1600BC. Some of these surfaces had carted or sled ruts along with pottery sherds and remains of mud bricks. The lowest strata were littered with Bronze Age artefacts, and suggest there was a high level of Bronze Age activity in the environs of Oplontis B.

Both ends of the trench gave an opportunity to investigate the foundation design of the colonnade which was unusual to say the least. A thick tufa stylobate sits on top of foundation blocks (sterobate) spaced to coincide with the joins between the blocks of the stylobate with the entire assemblage sitting on the same pyroclastic stratum which we found under the basalt paved courtyard. Sherds of Campania A Black Gloss pottery found in the foundation trench date the build of this colonnade to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.

In 2013 we returned to this area and expanded the trench to expose a complex water system with a settling tank plus two water channels and various drains. Of some importance is the fact that this complex water system cut through two previous floor levels which suggests the function of the building may have changed through time. Another team undertook the task of removing tons of modern debris in the area of the south portico. A thankless task undertaken in the glare of the Italian sun! But well rewarded by exposing layers of volcanic debris

from the eruption of AD79. Underneath this layer we found the original floor surface with numerous Neronian and Flavian coins. Below that a complex of barrel vaulted drains was exposed which will need further investigation. Our final investigation was to examine part of the street north of the main complex. Originally excavated by the Italian team in the 1980's, who discovered a street running east to west lined on both sides with simple town houses on both sides, it is apparent that these houses have ground floor rooms, some with the foundation step of a staircase leading to upstairs rooms, and some of which have a simple shrine dedicated to the household gods. Our investigation showed that some areas of the ground floor still retained debris from the AD79 eruption and had not been excavated. Underneath we found a simple beaten earth floor, the step for a staircase, a toilet and washing area and probably a kitchen area. The road outside the house was also excavated and showed it had two construction phases which may correspond to the two identified phases of the adjacent building, the first probably dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC when the building were probably used as workshops with a wide entrance, and the second phase when the entrance was narrowed and the building turned into domestic quarters. Indeed, three houses show walled up entrances, it now became a typical Roman street that included stone benches outside of each entrance

The last season of excavation will start early June for three weeks and anyone can join our team. The only criteria is that you are a member of the Kent Archaeological Field School [www.kafs.co.uk](http://www.kafs.co.uk) and that you have some experience or enthusiasm for Roman archaeology, Italian food and Italian sunshine! See also the website for the project at [www.oplontisproject.org](http://www.oplontisproject.org).

**Paul Wilkinson**



**Breaking News/4: New areas of Pompeii now open to the public**



Tourists in ancient Pompeii have freshly restored marvels to admire, including a merchant's luxuriously decorated home and a more modest middle-class dwelling. A business where Pompeii residents brought fabrics to be cared for and a structure with thermal bathing areas are also among the six buildings opened to the public on Thursday after a €105m (£77m) restoration.

In 2008, the Italian government declared a "state of emergency" at the crumbling site and in 2010 the House of Gladiators collapsed. But a Unesco report in 2012 found little had been done. Pompeii in recent years has been plagued by union disputes, which left tourists locked out, and the collapse of some ruins, with a chronic shortage of funds for maintenance.

But the Italian Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, expressed optimism at the unveiling of restored ruins in the city destroyed in AD79 by a volcanic eruption. He said: "We made news with the collapses, now we are making news with restoration."

One of the most eagerly anticipated restorations is of the Fullonica di Stephanus, a specially designed laundry equipped with large baths for rinsing dirty tunics and basins for dyeing fabrics. There was a press for ironing and a place to store urine, which was collected in public toilets and used to get out tough stains. Clothes would be trampled by workers in tubs at the back of the premises.

**The Guardian**

## **Breaking News/5: Roman villa found in Wiltshire**



It started off as a bit of basic home improvement, but it ended up with the discovery of one of the largest Roman Villas ever found in the UK.

While laying an electricity cable beneath the grounds of his home, near the village of Tisbury, in Wiltshire, Luke Irwin found the remains of what appeared to be an ornate Roman Mosaic.

But what emerged when archaeologists from Historic England and Salisbury Museum began excavating the site was even more of a surprise.

They found the mosaic was part of the floor of a much larger Roman property, similar in size and structure to the great Roman villa at Chedworth.

But in a move that will surprise many, the remains – some of the most important to be found in decades - have now been re-buried, as Historic England cannot afford to fully excavate and preserve such an extensive site.

Dr David Roberts, archaeologist for Historic England, said: “This site has not been touched since its collapse 1400 years ago and, as such, is of enormous importance. Without question, this is a hugely valuable site in terms of research, with incredible potential.

“The discovery of such an elaborate and extraordinarily well-preserved villa, undamaged by agriculture for over 1500 years, is unparalleled in recent years. Overall, the excellent preservation, large scale and complexity of this site present a unique opportunity to understand Roman and post-Roman Britain.”

Excavations at the site revealed a large Roman property, similar in size and structure to Chedworth

He added: “Unfortunately, it would cost hundreds of thousands of pounds to fully excavate and the preserve the site, which cannot be done with the current pressures.

“We would very much like to go back and carry out more digs to further our understanding of the site. But it’s a question of raising the money and taking our time, because as with all archaeological work there is the risk of destroying the very thing you seek to uncover.”

Mr Irwin, a Dublin-born designer who makes hand-made silk, wool and cashmere

rugs, made the fortunate find last summer while laying electricity cables beneath a stretch of ground to the rear of his property, so that his children could play table tennis under lighting in an old barn.

His builders had barely begun to dig a trench for the cables when they hit something solid, just 18 inches below the surface.

On closer inspection it appeared to be a section of a Roman mosaic in remarkably good condition.

Intrigued, Mr Irwin called in experts from the Wiltshire Archaeology Service, Historic England (formerly English Heritage) and nearby Salisbury Museum.

Further exploratory excavation of the site - now known as the Deverill Villa after the name of Mr Irwin's 17<sup>th</sup> century house – revealed surviving sections of walls, one and a half metres in height, confirming that the mosaic formed part of a grand villa, thought to have been three-storeys in height, its grounds extending over 100 metres in width and length.

It is thought the villa, which had around 20 to 25 rooms on the ground floor alone, was built sometime between 175 AD and 220 AD, and was repeatedly re-modelled right up until the mid - 4<sup>th</sup> century.

The remains at Deverill are similar to those found at Chedworth, in Gloucestershire, suggesting that the building belonged to a family of significant wealth and importance.

Chedworth was built as a dwelling around three sides of a courtyard, with a fine mosaic floor, as well as two separate bathing suites – one for damp-heat and one for dry-heat.

The villa was discovered in 1864, and it was excavated and put on display soon afterwards. It was acquired by the National Trust in 1924.

The discovery at Mr Irwin's home also revealed a number of fascinating objects from the Roman period.

Among the artefacts discovered during the excavations were a perfectly preserved Roman well, underfloor heating pipes and the stone coffin of a Roman child.

Another was the stone coffin of a Roman child, which had long been used by the inhabitants of the adjoining house as a flower pot, most recently for geraniums.

Archaeologists believe that during the post-Roman period timber structures were erected within the ruins of the once-ornate villa.

They say further research of what was found at Deverill would throw light on what remains one of the least understood periods of British history - between fall of the Roman Empire and the completion of Saxon domination in the 7<sup>th</sup> century.

Simon Sebag Montefiore, one of Britain's leading historians said: "This remarkable Roman villa, with its baths and mosaics uncovered by chance, is a large, important and very exciting discovery that reveals so much about the luxurious lifestyle of a rich Romano British family at the height of the empire.

"It is an amazing thought that so much has survived almost two millennia."

Mr Irwin was inspired by his discovery to create a series of rugs based around the theme of the Roman mosaic he unearthed. His collection will be put on display at his showroom in central London, in May.

He said: "When I held some of the tessaras, the mosaic tiles that were found, in the palm of my hand, the history of the place felt tangible, like an electric shock. The brilliance of their colours was just extraordinary, especially as they have been buried for so long.

"To think that someone lived on this site 1,500 years ago is almost overwhelming. You look out at an empty field from your front door, and yet centuries ago one of the biggest homes in all of Britain at the time was standing there."

But while the artefacts have been removed and are now in the care of Salisbury Museum, the remains of the villa and its mosaics have been re-buried and grassed over to protect them from the elements.

To expose and preserve the mosaics and fragments of walls would be prohibitively expensive and beyond the budget of Salisbury Museum. Even if it was financially possible, Mr Irwin does not want his garden turned into an open-air museum.

So the villa at Deverill, found after so many years, has been lost from sight once again, awaiting future generations

**Zeeya Merali Smithsonian Magazine**

**Research News:** Aerial survey of Kent. Paul Wilkinson reports on a research project by the Kent Archaeological Field School

'If you are studying the development of the landscape in an area, almost any air photograph is likely to contain a useful piece of information'  
*(Interpreting the Landscape from the Air, Mick Aston, 2002).*

Students of the KAFS have started a two year programme of collating Google Earth aerial photographs from 1940 to 2013 to enable focused information which can then be followed up by ground survey. The fruitfulness of this can be appreciated by the work of the field school along Watling Street in North Kent where hundreds of important archaeological sites have been identified. The ultimate aim is to publish the results online. Aerial photography is one of the most important remote sensing tools available to archaeologists.

Other remote sensing devices that will be used are satellite imagery and geophysics. All of this information can be combined and processed through computers, and the methodology is known as Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

A news story of last year was the discovery of WWI practise trenches in an area to the west of Gosport at Browndown, A place the writer knows well as a small boy he lived nearby and played in the very same trenches. A replica World War One battlefield where soldiers trained in trench warfare before being sent to the front has been discovered in Hampshire.

Two sets of opposing trench systems, with a no man's land between them, were found beneath heathland at the Ministry of Defence's Browdown site in Gosport.

Gosport Council's conservation officer Rob Harper spotted the trenches on a 1950s aerial photograph recently. Armed forces volunteers are now helping to map and record the battlefield site. The size of 17 football pitches, each trench system had a 200m long (660ft) front line, supply trenches and dug outs.

Describing his discovery, Mr Harper, said: "I was looking for something else. I was looking for Second World War pillboxes and features associated with an airfield nearby and I came across this 1951 plan in the office of this area in Gosport.

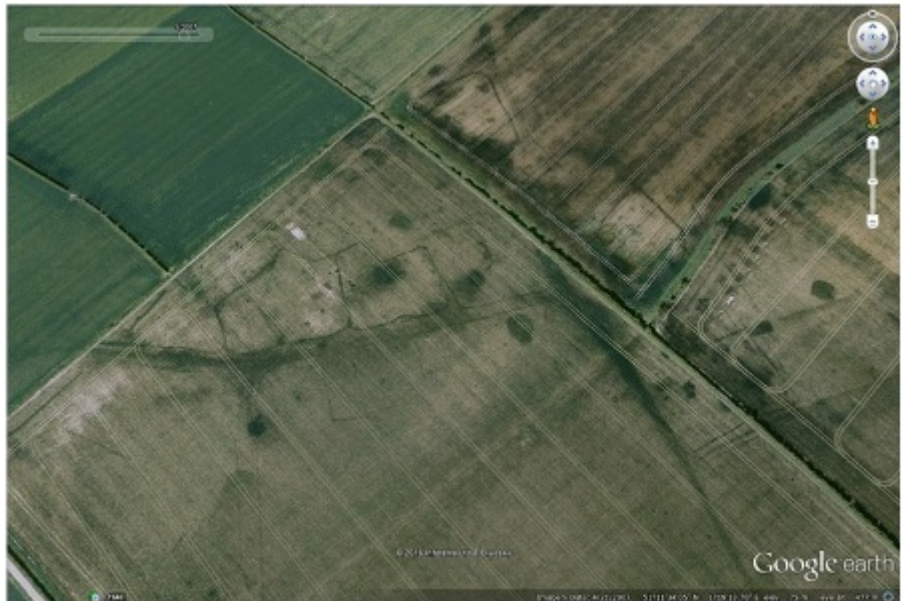


Now research by students of the Kent Archaeological Field School (below) has found much better evidence in Kent. To the east of the Roman Dover road and to the south of Bridge can be seen.....





Adjacent to the WWI trenches and to the north and south the Roman road from Dover to Canterbury can be easily seen with the road dividing.



To continue to Richborough, and the other branch to Dover. The road passes through a Roman roadside settlement just south of Eastry.





The 1940 Google Earth aerial photographs are a rich resource for WWII researchers and the picture above shows a Spitfire about to take off at Manston.

## **Courses at the Kent Archaeological Field School for 2016 include:**

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### ***May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 17<sup>th</sup> 2016 excavating at 'Villa B' at Oplontis next to Pompeii in Italy***

We will be spending three weeks in association with the University of Texas investigating the Roman Emporium (Villa B) at Oplontis next to Pompeii. The site offers a unique opportunity to dig on iconic World Heritage Site in Italy and is a wonderful once in a lifetime opportunity.

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### ***August 6<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> 2016. The Investigation of a substantial Roman Building at Abbey Barns in Faversham***

Ongoing excavations at a previously unrecorded Roman building in Kent have uncovered evidence of an emporium serving the port at Faversham – then called Durolevum.

Discovered in 2012 by the Kent Archaeological Field School (see CA 261), recent work has shown that the waters of the Swale estuary lapped the buildings, which during the Roman period sat beside a large tidal inlet deep enough to harbour ships.

Current work on the complex's bathhouse has yielded prestigious small finds including silver jewellery, exotic glass vessels and large quantities of coloured wall

plaster which, together with the structure's impressive dimensions, measuring some 45m by 15m, suggests a building of some importance.

A silver finger ring found in the demolition rubble has been dated to the Anglo-Saxon period and similar rings found at Dover have a date of c. 575-625 AD. The ring, only big enough for a child's hand suggests the building was demolished in the late 6<sup>th</sup> century to make a platform for a timber hall found in last year's excavation. Pottery in the cill beam slots dated this building also to the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

KAFS director Dr Paul Wilkinson says the latest findings suggest it had rather humbler origins, however.

'The building was originally built in the 2nd century AD as an aisled barn with a concrete and chalk floor,' he said. 'We have found the remains of stalls used to house farm animals in the Roman estate. But very soon afterwards the building was rebuilt as a huge bathhouse, with plunge pools, hot rooms, steam rooms, and warm rooms for massage.'

'The decoration has the feel of a municipal baths with none of the luxurious features one would expect of a private enterprise bathhouse,' he added. 'Given the size of the bathhouse it is far too large for a Roman villa estate and must have catered for another set of clientele. It is probably too far from the main Roman road to London (Watling Street) to have been an Imperial posting house with hotel but it probably sits astride the Roman port of Faversham and may have catered for the crews of visiting ships.'

Pottery from the site has been dated by Malcolm Lyne which indicates the building continued in use to the late 4<sup>th</sup> century and into the early Saxon period being demolished in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. 'Latest investigations have unravelled some of the mystery of the building's function but this work is still ongoing,' Wilkinson said. 'Field walking has indicated there are other Roman buildings alongside the inlet and future investigation – including geophysical survey – will focus on their chronology and function.' Cost is £25 a day for non member and free to members. Membership is from £15 per year- see [www.kafs.co.uk](http://www.kafs.co.uk) for membership details.



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***August 8<sup>th</sup> to August 12<sup>th</sup> 2016 Training Week for Students at the Roman, Faversham in Kent***

It is essential that anyone thinking of digging on an archaeological site is trained in the procedures used in professional archaeology. Dr Paul Wilkinson, author of the best selling "Archaeology" book and Director of the dig, will spend five days explaining to participants the methods used in modern archaeology. A typical training day will be classroom theory in the morning (at the Field School) followed by excavation at the Roman villa.

Topics taught each day are:

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> August: Why dig?**

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> August: Excavation Techniques**

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> August: Site Survey**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August: Archaeological Recording**

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August: Pottery identification**

**Saturday and Sunday (free) digging with the team**

A free PDF copy of "Archaeology" 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition will be given to participants. Cost for the course is £100 if membership is taken out at the time of booking. Non-members £175. The day starts at 10am and finishes at 4.30pm. For directions to the Field School see 'Where ' on this website

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***September 3<sup>rd</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> 2016. Investigation of Prehistoric features at Hollingbourne in Kent***

An opportunity to participate in excavating and recording prehistoric features in the landscape. The week is to be spent in excavating Bronze and Iron Age features located with aerial photography and Geophysical survey. Cost is £25 a day for non members and free to members.



### **Pottery from Hollingbourne excavations so far-**

Overall, 205 sherds weighing 3kgs.593gms were the recovered during this trial excavation. Only two periods are represented with a predominant essentially Early-Mid Iron Age presence (201 sherds) from *Area 2* and a rather uncertainly dated one, but probably Early Medieval (4 sherds), from *Area 1*. The latter are from the same vessel and made using a rather coarse quartzsand clay containing - *probably* - naturally-occurring sparse flint inclusions. With such a small sample further research into a likely source is back-burnered – however its general fabric type is broadly in keeping with other recognised contemporary fabric types from the eastern part of the region. Its firing colour *could* suggest a later twelfth-earlier thirteenth century production date, rather than earlier.

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#### *The Early-Mid Iron Age component*

The recovered total is fairly small – however the frequently moderate-fairly large sherd size, the presence of several inter-context same-vessel equations between *Contexts 019* and *026*, together with the generally only moderately or slightly worn condition, all indicates that most sherd-assemblages are derived from undisturbed contemporary contexts.

In terms of *fabric types* there are two main deliberately-added ingredients – crushed flint represented by the majority and one vessel with a mixed, flint-and organic, tempering. However at least 3 main clay types were recorded – non sandy, clays with a varying quartzsand and greensand component and purely greensand with/without sparse quartz. All three clay types occasionally had additional inclusions of both ironstone and probable fossil shell. The ironstone component occurs as both hard fragments and softer ‘rotting’ iron oxides. The relative rarity of these inclusions suggests either different sources from the ones principally used or, perhaps more probably, they represent only sporadically occurring re-deposited elements. All three main clay types were used for the coarsewares but the basically pure greensand clay type appears to have been principally favoured for the production of fineware vessels – probably because the

dense fine greensandy matrix with mostly fairly sparse fine flint tempering allowed for the application of a good quality smooth burnished finish.

In terms of *form, decoration and finishing* types – the sample is fairly small but, as recovered, *coarsewares* predominate. Amongst the latter, most elements are from jars with high-set mostly angular shoulders mostly below distinctly curving necks and everted rims – although in one case the shoulder angle-concave neck profile is so weak as to be virtually non-existent. There are also several deep bowl forms with high rounded shoulders and simple rims. Finishes are rather rough-and-ready but reasonably competent with, externally, vertical or diagonal fluted finger-smoothed rustication below shoulders and light horizontal smoothing above. A few bodysherds have a light rather more slurried type of rustication. Interiors finishes consists of rather minimal vari-directioned smoothing. Two same-vessel jar bodysherds from *Context 026* have a more deliberately decorative finish of, apparently, continuous fine vertical combing. One large jar element from *026* has its rim decorated with shallow cable-style finger presses and its neck hollow unusually decorated with a set of randomly horizontal small stabbed dash impressions. *Finewares* are mostly represented by plain body, angular shoulder or base sherds with fairly light but even and adequate burnishes. One small scrap from *Context 021* has traces of a probable combed chevron design. Two rims, both from *019* – one fineware class, one sub-fineware, are rather less mundane and from small-diameter bowls or possibly cups with upright profiles tapering inward slightly towards the base. Both share the same trend for a flat-topped rim with a markedly beaded inner lip.

In terms of *parallels and dating* the combed finish on the coarseware sherds from *026* is a *fairly* typical component of a number of unpublished Kentish Early-Mid Iron Age assemblages – particularly those from the eastern part of the region. It occurs on coarsewares from a number of contemporary northern French sites eg Neuville-sur-Escaut and Fontaine-Notre-Dame, both in the Department Nord, and Duisans, Pas-de-Calais (Hurtrelle 1990, 18, 23, 56 and 64). Neuville and Duisans were dated to c.500-450 BC and Fontaine-Notre-Dame to 450-400 BC. It has also been recorded from a western Kentish settlement at Cuxton, dated to the Middle Iron Age, c.400-200 BC, (eg. Morris 2006, Fig. 3.8a). The range of jar and bowl forms available are broadly paralleled from the Early-Mid Iron Age assemblages at White Horse Stone (Morris *op.cit.* Fig.3.7d) and Highstead, Chislet (Couldrey 2007, Period 3B) – both placeable between 600-400 BC. This dating could also be applied to the little cups or small bowls from with prominently-moulded inner lips from *019* which are reminiscent of a neatly-made cup from Highstead Period 3B with straight flaring sides.

There is an apparent absence from Hollingbourne of any fineware bowls with complex-moulded shoulders – both recorded from Neuville and White Horse Stone - and more likely to date between c.600-500 or 450 BC than later (pers.comm. Peter Couldrey). As a result it is currently felt that this little assemblage should post-date the sixth century BC. The quoted Mid Iron Age parallel for the comb-finished elements could indicate a similar date here. However not only is the present material definitely not like MIA-type forms of third century date (ie between c.300-200 BC and possibly from c.350 BC) but also the forms from Cuxton, despite their 400-200 BC dating, is much more in keeping with EMIA material. The implication is that there is an inter-style transition period, arguably datable to between c.400-350 BC. With the latter likelihood in mind – and lacking a more diagnostic range of forms - it is felt the present assemblage from Hollingbourne is initially best placed to between **c.500-350 BC**.

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