



Kent Archaeological Field Schools: Easter & Summer 2010

The KAFS is pleased to announce two important Archaeological Field Schools in 2010. The first will take place at Easter and the second in late Summer. Both of these will give you an opportunity to work on sites of major importance and of different periods situated in Kent- the Garden of England.



Archaeological investigation at Bax Farm 2006

Who can join the Kent Archaeological Field School?

The KAFS enables many people to join an archaeological investigation to acquire new skills and to achieve academic accreditation. We aim to ensure that every participant enjoys their time with us and experiences the thrill of an archaeological investigation. If you have not participated in a 'dig' before then we insist you sign up for our **Training Course** which runs from Monday 23rd August to Friday 27th August 2010. You will then have the opportunity to develop a set of skills that will allow you to participate effectively on archaeological fieldwork projects, both amateur and professional. The KAFS welcomes people on-site from all walks of life over the age of 16.

What is involved?

You will be part of a team working together in a serious academic exercise with defined objectives and working to a budget and timetable. The work of the KAFS conforms to the Guidelines and Standards for Archaeological Field Schools published by the Society of American Archaeology and the Code of Practice for Fieldwork Training published by the European Association of Archaeologists. All staff teaching at the KAFS have many years of experience in the field: the Director is Paul Wilkinson BA(Hons) PhD MSIA FRSA MIFA who is a professional archaeologist of many years experience.

What will you do?

You will be expected to participate in every aspect of archaeological investigation, in particular:

- *Hand excavation of deposits and features
- *Deposit sampling for environmental data

- *Context and feature recording including written and photographic descriptions
- *Production of measured scaled sections and plans
- *Landscape survey of extant and relict features
- *Finds processing and recording including logging, marking and packaging
- *Documentary research
- *Geophysical survey for detecting buried features

Do you need field experience for your undergraduate studies?

Many academic programmes of archaeology and related subjects require students to gain a number of weeks of field experience. If you need to do this then the KAFS is well suited to fulfil your needs. Most universities both here and abroad accept our Certificate of Attendance which will itemise the skill zones you have participated in. These will include:

- *Hand excavation techniques including feature excavation and interpretation
- *Single Context Recording and soil identification
- *Site illustration including scaled plans and sections
- *Wet and dry sieving of environmental samples
- *Finds recording and processing
- *Post-excavation procedures and methodology



Just want to have a go?

An awful lot of people volunteer to join archaeological excavations just for the fun of it and to pursue an interest or hobby. The KAFS has for the last ten years enabled people to participate and enjoy the thrill of excavation as well as weekend courses as diverse as Flint-knapping to Archaeological Drawing. As a member you will also be able to join in the half dozen or so Field Trips we organise each year from destinations as diverse as Hadrian's Wall, Ravenna, Pompeii, and Roman Germany.

When do the Field Schools take place?

There are two excavations taking place in 2010. The first is at Easter, the second late August, and there is also a **Training Week** in August.

August 14th to Sept 12th. Investigation of Watling Street, the associated Roman cemetery and Roman monuments at Syndale Park, Faversham, Kent.

The Summer investigation in 2010 is going to continue our work from 2009 on defining the limits of the possible Roman town of Durolevum. The site is situated in Syndale Park just to the east of Faversham. Work so far has not confirmed the extent of the Roman town or the limit of the Roman cemetery. Of particular interest is the finding

in our investigation of 2007 of Anglo-Saxon artefacts and a Roman cremation pot with a Christian cross scratched onto its surface. A Roman mausoleum was also uncovered with a shaped terracotta lid.

Other important features, located in 2007, will also be investigated and these include a deep defensive ditch full of late Iron-Age and early Roman pottery. Cost for members is £20 a day, 'five year' members free. For non-members £30 a day.

To become a member is £15 a year.



Project Design for Archaeological Investigation at Syndale Park, Faversham, Kent.

Project Type: **Archaeological Training Excavation**

Date: August 14th to September 12th 2010

Author: Dr Paul Wilkinson

1. Background

This project design concerns an area of pasture land at Syndale Park, near Faversham, Kent ('Study Site'). The site centre is taken as NGR 9981 6096 (Fig. 1). The land is in the ownership of trustees and is currently under pasture grazed by sheep. However, plans have existed for many years for KCC Highways to build a road bypass over the area under investigation and an extensive hotel development is planned for some areas of the park.

In 2003 the Kent Archaeological Field School ('KAFS') was invited by the trustees to investigate the park with a view to enabling them to be informed on the extent and quality of the archaeology surviving in the park. The area had attracted the attention of archaeologists from as early as the 18th century with Hasted, Hawley, Philp, and Time Team all making their own contribution to our knowledge of the park.

The KAFS is a non-profit making organisation with about 800 members. It is growing rapidly and committed to disseminating information about the techniques used in practical fieldwork and recording. To this end a number of training excavations have been carried out on an annual basis on sites either not fully understood or under threat from farming or development activities.

The proposed project will take place during August and September 2010, and access to the site during this period has been agreed with the landowner and tenant farmer.

A programme of field survey and geophysical investigation supported by limited excavation by the KAFS has shed new light on the nature and extent of monuments within the park, which in turn has led to a wider investigation of the land north and south of the Roman Watling Street which itself runs east/west through the park. The current focus of attention is located at the eastern edge of the park and south of Watling Street (Fig. 2).

During Easter 2007 archaeological investigation by KAFS began on the Study Site. This area was originally investigated by Colonel Hawley in September 1922, where he reported that: "a paved hearth and wall foundations" had been revealed (Whiting & Hawley 1931). On investigation of his trench by KAFS the 'paved hearth' turned out to be a monumental sarcophagus built out of chalk blocks and Kentish Ragstone with a terracotta ceramic lid covering the grave slot. The monument is late, having been built over the remains of a 3rd century kiln. The terracotta lid has been damaged sometime in the past, but the grave has not been robbed and the burial is most likely still in situ (KAFS Newsletter No. 5. 2007).

Other features exposed were a Roman kiln or oven, Roman cremation burials, Roman Watling Street and a large Roman ditch dated by coins and pottery to the early 1st Century AD.

2. Aims and objectives of the project

2.1 Research Design

The study site lies within a rich archaeological landscape. To the west the standing remains of Stone Chapel are a Scheduled Monument and were subject to a recent investigation by the KAFS who concluded it was built as a Romano-Celtic temple, and then probably rebuilt as a Christian church (Wilkinson 2006).

Investigation by Hawley in 1926-31 within Syndale Park found the remains of Roman houses alongside the A2 (Watling Street). In Syndale Park he found the remains of two skeletons (Whiting & Hawley 1931).

In 2004-7 the KAFS found a number of Roman cremations, the remains of Watling Street and adjacent Roman buildings which may be the Roman small town of Durolevum (Practical Archaeology Issues 2-7).

To the east of the study site is the Anglo-Saxon cemetery of Kings Field which in the 19th century was destroyed by workmen constructing the railway. Our only survival, from what is probably the most important Anglo-Saxon cemetery in Kent, is what Mr Gibbs, the local grocer, managed to buy from the workmen.

Of particular interest at Kings Field was the range of the grave goods which ranged from late Roman pottery, gold Anglo-Saxon jewellery, probably made at Faversham, to Christian British-made hanging bowls from western Britain. This diversity of material culture was recognised at Kings Field in the 19th century (Blair 2005) and was again clearly in evidence during the 2007 investigation of the study site .

One of the Roman cremation pots retrieved from the Study Site had Christian graffiti on it and close by, a gilded copper alloy decorative mount was recovered probably dating from the early Anglo-Saxon period (c.450-650). Interestingly the gilded repousse decoration had a symmetrical design of what appears to be two opposed animals or birds which is reminiscent of designs found on late Roman or early post-Roman buckles (Andrew Richardson pers. corres.).

The study site lies within a rich archaeological landscape which at present is little understood, and unfortunately there is not as yet in East Kent a research agenda led by English Heritage or KCC. It is anticipated that the investigation of the site at Syndale in 2010 will contribute towards an understanding of this wider landscape. There will an opportunity for monitoring by English Heritage and Kent County Council on a more formal basis.

The Study Site has the potential to:

A. Contribute to an understanding of the Roman to Anglo-Saxon transition of burial practices including spatial arrangements.

Specific project objectives which relate to this aim are:

Identify the chronological origins of the site.

Characterise the processes of change in burial practice.

Assess the evidence for the extent of the burials of all periods.

B. Contribute to an understanding of Roman and Anglo-Saxon rural settlement through landscape survey and limited excavation.

The study of rural settlement is identified as an area for further research (English Heritage 1997). The limited evidence for rural settlement layout and economy rarely extends beyond the footprint of the Roman villa or settlement enclosure. At Syndale Park there is a research opportunity to explore the relationship between the Roman settlement and the nearby Roman/Anglo-Saxon settlements in the surrounding environs of the Syndale Valley.

Specific objectives which relate to this aim are:

Characterise processes of economic and social change and development during the later Roman/Anglo-Saxon transition.

Assess the extent to which the site has undergone spatial change and re-organisation.

Assess and characterise the evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity.

Assess the evidence for settlement shift over time.

Attempt to identify the relationship between the Roman settlement (Durolevum?) and other settlement sites.

Assess the sites relationship to the Scheduled Monument of Stone Chapel and the Roman road (Watling Street).

C. Promote public appreciation and enjoyment of archaeology.

This work will enable us to promote public appreciation and enjoyment of archaeology by involving the local community, school children and families in the on-going investigation. Tours of the site will be advertised in the local press and schools will be invited to visit.

Specific project objectives which relate to this aim are:

Provide information in the form of leaflets and guided tours

Provide opportunities for the public to get actively involved through the KAFS in the excavation.

Provide lectures to local historical societies, clubs and parish councils.

Provide a suitable archaeological site for the purposes of teaching field techniques to students.

Encourage local schools to use the archaeological resource.

After the investigation an interpretative display will be on display at the local museum in Ospringe.

2.2. Publication and Presentation

An interim report on the 2007-10 campaign will be available to interested parties within 12 months of completion of the fieldwork. The finished report, following completion of the project, will be peer-reviewed to a standard agreed by English Heritage before publication as a monograph. Deposition of the Site Archive and finds will be with the Faversham Society in accordance with *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (UKIC 1990).

3. Objectives of the 2010 campaign

3.1 Assess the evidence for settlement shift over time

Building on the work done in 2007, this campaign will focus on looking for evidence of settlement shift at this location during the Roman and Anglo-Saxon period. We will concentrate on investigating the function of the early Roman double ditch found last year, working on the hypothesis that it might represent a marching camp from the Claudian invasion of AD43.

3.2 Assess the evidence for the extent of the burials of all periods

In the course of this work we also hope to establish the chronological relationship between the Roman double ditch and the second century cremations which it surrounds and also between the ditch, the Roman road, and the adjoining third/fourth century mausoleum with its late Roman ditch.

4. Methods statement for the 2010 campaign

4.1 The study site at Syndale Park, Faversham, Kent is centered on NGR 9981 6096 and covers an area of approximately two hectares. All of the land is in the ownership of Trustees. The position of the proposed excavation area is located (Fig. 1) so as to elucidate the relationship between the Roman road, the late-Roman ditch, and the Roman and possible Anglo-Saxon cemeteries.

4.2 Geophysical survey carried out by the KAFS in 2002 shows the Roman road running east/west through the park with numerous areas of archaeological or geological activity. A landscape survey of the immediate area by students will be implemented, and the results incorporated with the geophysical survey and re-plotting of aerial photographs at a scale of 1:2500 by Ges Moody of the Thanet Archaeological Trust. This will also enable areas of excavation undertaken in 2007 to be incorporated within the 2010 GPS site plan.

4.3 After the aerial photo re-plotting, an area 20m by 20m will be planned out by a GPS survey team, and at every 5m intersection shovel testing will be undertaken by students to ascertain the depth of archaeological features. This will allow the spatial disposition of features to be collated with the aerial photographs and geophysical survey. A full retrieval programme of artefacts will be implemented in the shovel test pits with artefacts recorded to one centimetre of find spot.

4.4 Following on from the shovel pit testing any area identified as having archaeological potential will be excavated by a mechanical tracked excavator with a flat bladed ditching bucket, and under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist. A 'mattress' of soil will be left above the subsoil as protection of features against inclement weather and unauthorised interference with archaeological contexts. By placing the excavation area at a key point within the practical constraints of the Study Site and in conjunction with keyhole excavation and aerial photographs it should be possible to contribute towards the project research aims.

4.5 The stripped area will be hand cleaned after an area sweep by metal detector and the spoil sieved through a one centimetre screen and again scanned by a metal detector.

4.6 Scale plans will be produced to a scale of 1/100 for the site plan, 1/50 for grid areas, 1/20 for large features, and 1/10 for section drawings and smaller features. Single context planning and recording sheets to be used where appropriate. All drawing will be produced on plastic film using a 6H pencil and annotated with OD or TBM heights, grid reference points and context numbers.

4.7 GPS survey equipment will be used to tie the site into the Ordnance Survey whilst taped triangulation from site grid markers will be used to record features.

4.8 Archaeological features will be selectively excavated and sampled to determine the character, date and degree of truncation for the Study Site. The degree of intrusion into archaeological features will be decided after consultation with English Heritage and Kent County Council.

4.9 Samples will be taken for botanical, faunal and other environmental data as appropriate and in consultation with English Heritage and/or Royal Holloway, University of London.

4.10 Where more than one phase of activity is present, a representative sample of the range of phases will be excavated and relationships between feature intersections will be investigated.

4.11 All drawings to be indexed using the KAFS pro-forma index sheets. All excavated archaeological deposits will be described using the KAFS pro-forma context recording sheets. An index of contexts will be maintained using the KAFS pro-forma sheets.

4.12 A complete record of 35mm and digital photographs will be created of every feature using

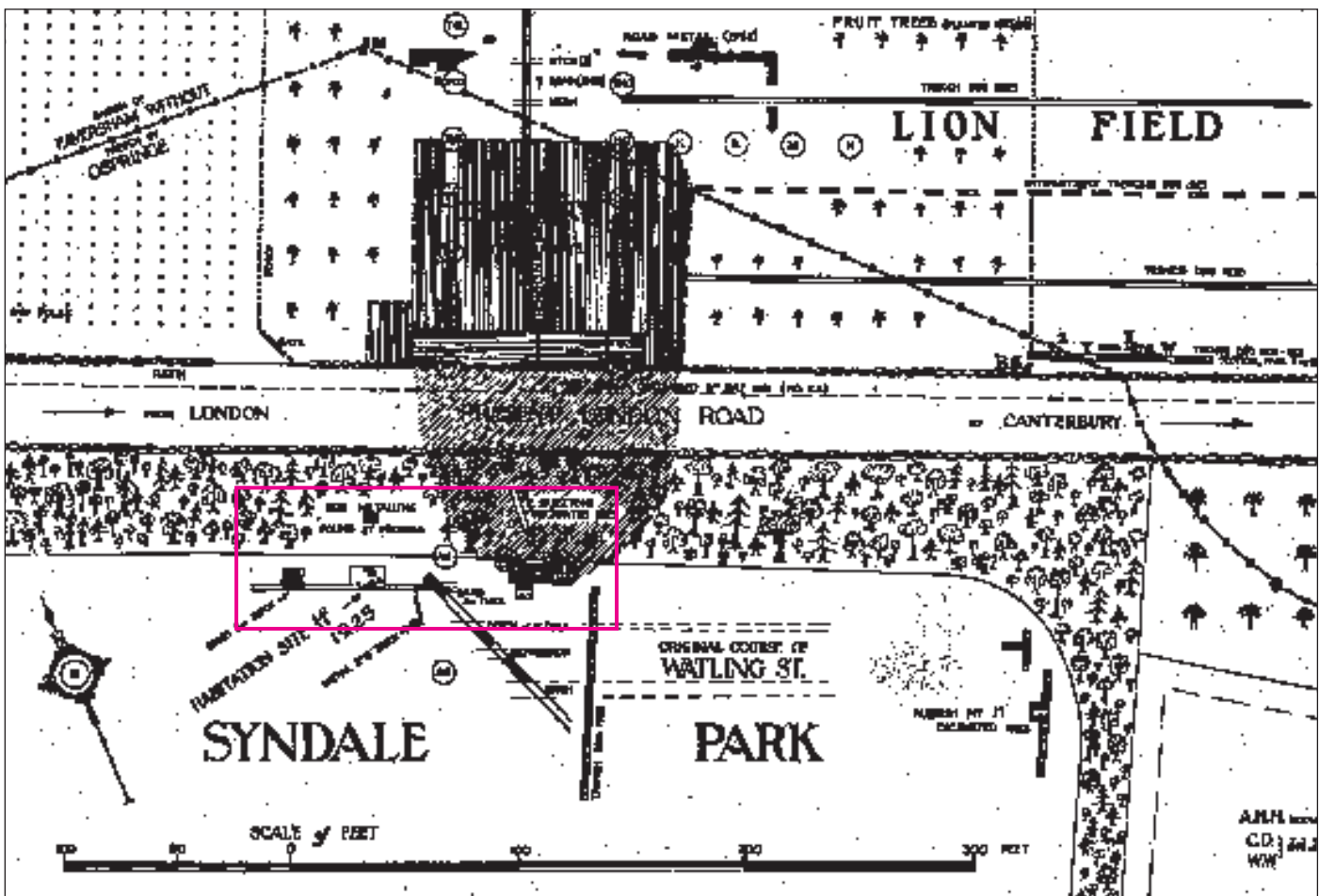
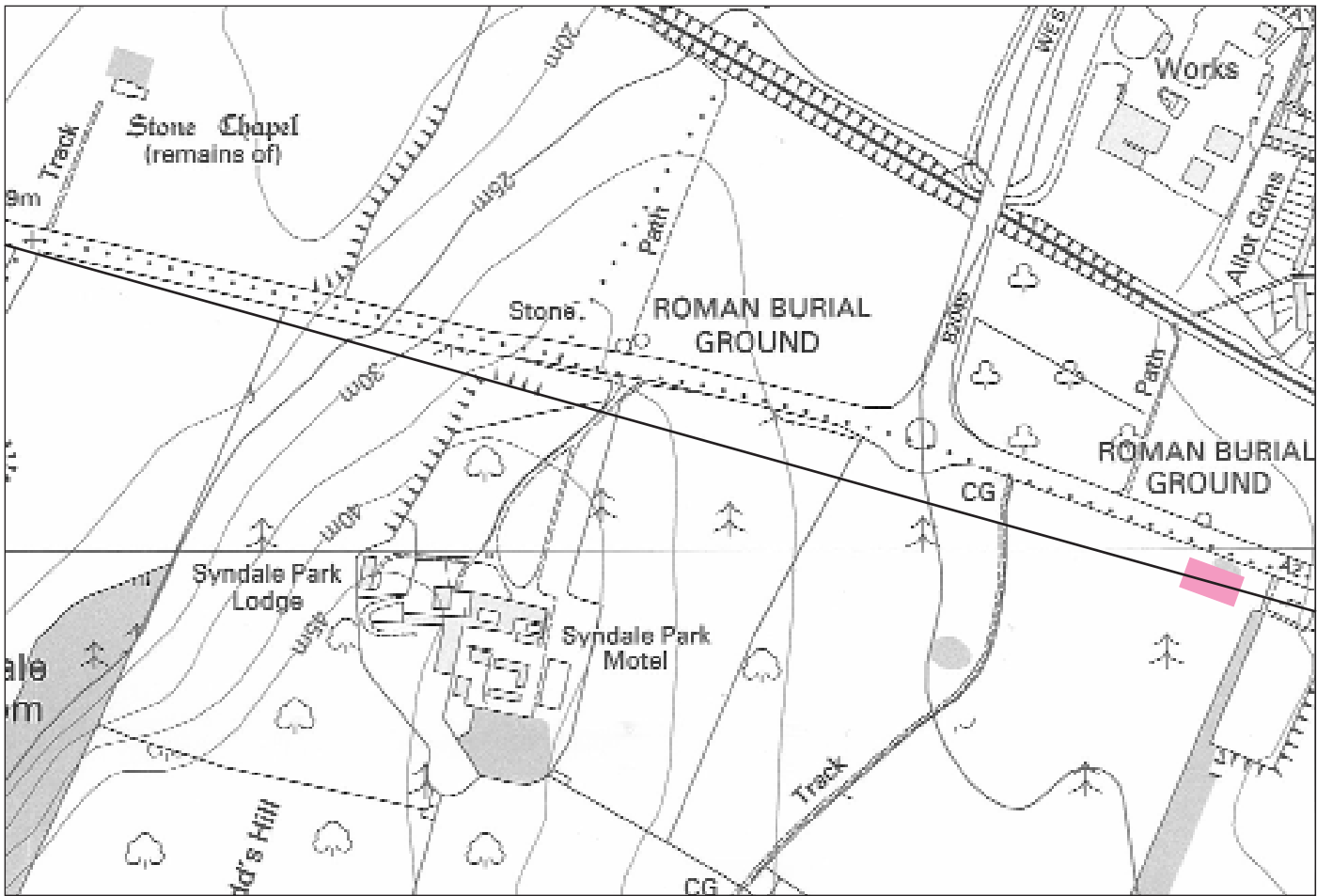


Fig. 1. (top) Location of the Easter investigation in the north-east corner of Syndale Park, Faversham, Kent.

Fig. 2. Whiting & Hawleys map of excavations carried out in Syndale Park and published in 1931. The 2008 Study Site is shown highlighted.

appropriate scale bars. The 35mm and digital photograph number will be entered on to the appropriate context recording sheets and drawings index sheets.

4.13 All environmental samples will be doubled-bagged and marked with site and context codes and will be described using the KAFS pro-forma Sample Recording sheets.

4.14 All finds will be marked with site and context codes and kept separately by context and material type. Washing and sorting of finds will take place off site at the KAFS centre.

4.15 Treasure as defined by the Treasure Act of 1996 and its revision of 2002, will be reported immediately to the relevant Coroner's Office and the Kent Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) or the DCMS website.

4.16 For further details of appropriate methodology, both on and off site, students will be referred to the Museum of London Archaeological Services (MoLAS) Site Manual (1994), and other relevant English Heritage/Institute of Field Archaeologists publications.

4.17 Health & Safety Risk Assessments have been prepared.

4.18 Indicative trench location plans, site plan and location are attached to this document.

4.19 The project will start August 14th and run to September 12th 2010. Backfilling of the site will take place immediately after, weather permitting.

4.20 Consultant project specialist personnel will include: Malcolm Lyne, Roman pottery. Nigel Macpherson-Grant, Prehistoric pottery. Paul Blinkhorn, Anglo-Saxon pottery. John Cotter, Medieval pottery. Ian Betts, Roman building materials. Richard Abdy, Roman coins. Gareth Williams, Anglo-Saxon coins. Andrew Richardson, small finds. Chris Green, geoarchaeology. Ges Moody, site survey. James Madden, GPS survey. David Britchfield, plans and section specialist. David Martin, geophysical survey. Nigel Summers, ground-penetrating radar survey. Royal Holloway, environmental archaeology with Lisa Gray and MoLSS. Human bones UKC. Small finds Ian Riddler. Barry Bishop, lithic material with Chris Butler. Dana Goodburn, conservation specialist.

4.21 Should the archaeological remains warrant it the results of the investigation will be brought to the attention of English Heritage who may wish to schedule the exposed monuments.

Insurance

The Kent Archaeological Field School (KAFS) is covered by Public and Employer's Liability Insurance. The underwriting company is RBPM, policy number 2006/010. RTT228766. Details of the policy can be seen at the KAFS office.

Dr Paul Wilkinson
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