



East Dorset Antiquarian Society

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NEWSLETTER – March 2020

Editor's Notes

Our meeting this month will, of course, be the **AGM on the 11th**. As previously, this will no doubt be quite short, and is followed by the undoubted highlight of the evening, Lilian and Andrew's presentation on the important **Neolithic site at Druce Farm**.

Andrew sent round a note recently inviting members to join the EDAS Committee. We'd be pleased to have more nominations and there is still time – just let me (i.e. Geoff) know you're interested and we can finalise completion of your nomination form at the start of the meeting. The notice of the AGM and the supporting documents have already been distributed. If you want to send apologies, or if you'd like another copy of the committee nomination form, please email – geoffnsue@hotmail.co.uk.

Because the hall isn't available on our usual night, next month's meeting will be before the next newsletter is issued, on **Wednesday 1st April**. Francis Taylor of CBA Wessex will be speaking on **Discovering the Mayans**, particularly looking at the Copan and Tikal sites.

There is the usual summary of last month's lecture here, our 6th Annual Archaeology Lecture at Bournemouth University - Josh Pollard's **Settlements and Monumentality in the Avebury Landscape**.

The **26th View from Above** links to the lecture as it covers Sue & Jo's photograph of Windmill Hill.

Following on from Vanessa's article last month, updating us on the progress of the Priest's House Museum's extensive makeover, we now have the **Travels of an Iron Age man** from the museum, on the earliest identified case of tuberculosis in Britain.

Alan continues to provide **Weblinks** to interesting and relevant news he has found on the internet, as well as **Highlights** to point to those he found most intriguing. Send him your links.

There's also a **Different sort of Weblink**, with news about Wimborne Food Bank. I should say that I have no connection with Wimborne Food Bank, though my wife, Sue, used to volunteer there.

I have to thank AVAS, Mike Gill and David Field for more information on recently discovered long barrows in our region, following the articles in recent newsletters, covered here in **New long barrows in and near Dorset**.

And we can't go without something Roman – another article in the **Remembering the Romans** series.

Finally, I'd draw your attention to the **District Diary** and the charity presentation by the interesting and amusing Julian Richards on Friday 20th March.

Send me your contributions & feedback – I will run out of things to include at some stage!

‘Settlement and Monumentality in the Avebury landscape’ by Prof. Josh Pollard

We were pleased to welcome Josh Pollard from Southampton University for our 6th annual lecture in conjunction with Bournemouth University Archaeology, History and Anthropology Society. Josh has spent over 20 years investigating the prehistoric archaeology of Wessex, and spoke to us about his work around Avebury; actually the work of many people, jointly with a number of organisations and other universities, including Bournemouth.

There is a tendency to think that we know places like Avebury, but it is often just the case that we ‘know’ the monuments, and then not necessarily all that well. Monuments like the causewayed enclosure at Windmill Hill, as shown (and see *View from Above* below), are seen as the defining feature of the British Neolithic. However, construction of monuments actually falls into specific periods – in Wessex most evidently 3700-3400 BC, 3100-2900 BC and 2500-2400 BC. In other periods people would not have been involved in construction and, although monuments will obviously have been visible, it isn’t necessarily the norm that the inhabitants were directly engaged with ceremonies there in any particular period.



Josh’s fieldwork has been focused on trying to improve chronologies and better understand monumentality versus the landscape and the lives of the people living there. Whilst monumental construction offers insights into beliefs and ceremonies, and even into social relations on a larger scale, quotidian social life is less obvious. Part of the problem is the ostensibly ‘difficult’ archaeological evidence of settlement and routine, daily social life; structures are rare, or just difficult to identify.

Perhaps, though, the issue is really about how we interpret the archaeological record; that we tend to see a dichotomy between monumentality and attendant ceremony as against settlement and daily routines. Ethnography, or even just thinking about where you live, shows that settlements are places for meetings, discussions and decisions, for construction, gatherings, socialisation and ceremonies. Tarung village, on Sumba Island, Indonesia, is one example where it is clear that the settlement is also the focus of the inhabitants’ ceremonial activities. The photograph shows one group of family houses set around the stone tombs of their ancestors.

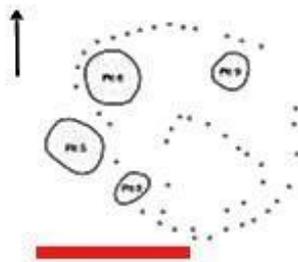


Clearly, people had to live somewhere nearby before and during monument construction, and similarly whilst the monuments were in use. The construction phase, if not the period of use of a monument, would have impacted both the scale and composition of settlement, presumably drawing people into the region as well as resources. Avoiding the dichotomy above leads to the thought that dwellings might be the templates for monuments, that places where people lived were then transformed into monuments. In fact, some of what we see as monuments due to their scale may actually have been dwellings/ settlements. We certainly have difficulty deciding whether some structures are domestic or ‘ceremonial’, such as the 10x28m

Neolithic hall shown, at Claish Farm near Stirling in Scotland.

Of course, monumental architecture is easy to see compared with the smaller dwellings we might more usually expect, and it seems likely that evidence of dwellings has often been found but not recognised. Josh showed us several examples of possible Neolithic houses in the Avebury region, where dwellings are likely to be defined by stake holes, as with those found at Durrington near Stonehenge. Another indicator is the presence of pits, as it seems that they were often dug at the entrance to abandoned buildings with items then buried in them. In any case, dwellings produce waste material, often buried close by: a midden might well show where there was a house.

Some or many of the pits in this old survey might suggest that there were buildings there. The survey was by Alexander Keiller, heir to the family marmalade business, whose interest in archaeology led him to buy almost 1,000 acres of land around Avebury in the 1930s, which passed to the National Trust in 1943. Patterns of holes that cluster within what we might think of as 'house dimensions' are certainly worth further consideration, i.e. in the region of 5m across – the red lines on the plans.



A more obvious example is this plan of stake holes and pits at Roughridge Hill, about 5km southwest of Avebury. But the best indicator of dwellings is when these are combined with concentrations in the scatter of artefacts across the landscape – such as pottery and antler tools, but especially worked flints. However, we have tended to see lithic scatters as more about landscapes than sites, and surface collection has become much less common in the last 20 years or so. In fact, with the advent of developer-funded archaeology, the easier approach has tended to be

used of machining off the surface and looking for pits.

Even where surface collection has been used, the spacing of transects has often been quite wide. The not uncommon 50m spacing could, for example, have completely missed the important Neolithic settlement at Barnhouse on Orkney Mainland. Even at 25m or 10m, working areas within a settlement that is perhaps around 60m across may not be obvious. The project's work has found that machine stripping, as in most commercial work, removes about 90% of the remaining artefacts. Even with surface collection and around 5% of remaining artefacts on the surface, and assuming that all visible artefacts are found, a 10m collection grid will still only provide a 0.5% sample of the total.

Obtaining better resolution is clearly needed if settlements, and especially individual dwellings, are to be found. The project's approach has, thus, been to choose excavation sites based on doing structured surface collection or on information from earlier work, then excavate in metre squares and collect all the artefacts. This is time consuming, although the competitive element does give excavators an incentive and seems to keep students happy. The project has excavated 5 sites so far, in a variety of types of location, which have produced some very interesting results.



The West Kennet Avenue excavation targeted an occupation site about 1km along the avenue, first discovered during Keiller's excavations in 1934. Worm action meant that many artefacts had sunk and escaped the plough, so that there was lots of fresh flint and even surviving pottery, as well as more

exotic items such as part of a mace head. Despite this being a flint landscape, some flints were identified as coming from as far away as Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, suggesting people may have ranged further than often thought. Although thought to be Late Neolithic, the project showed that settlement was actually Middle Neolithic (3400-2900 BC), i.e. after Windmill Hill but before Avebury henge, with some Mesolithic/Early Neolithic activity but relatively few signs of the Late Neolithic.



Avebury Down excavation, just over 1km east of Avebury, targeted an area where many worked flints from the Early and Middle Neolithic, including a large number of axes, were found in the 1920s. A very high density scatter was found here, c.30,000 pieces in 420m², with a range from the late Mesolithic to the Bronze Age. This seems to have been mainly a flint production site, though there were few flints from the Late Neolithic, when Avebury henge was built. There were also many Neolithic pits and possible evidence of structures, especially a Late Neolithic double post hole with a structured deposit, including a human skull and Aurochs bone. This could be a timber setting related to the henge, so that perhaps the significance and use of the site changed around the time Avebury henge was built.



Butler's Field site, in the Winterbourne Valley just west of Avebury, had Roman or later deposits up to 2.5m deep sealing the prehistoric layers. Flint densities were rather lower than in the previous sites, and were mostly Mesolithic, covering much of the period and suggesting repeated visits during the early Holocene. The less common Neolithic flints were mostly early and many could be refitted, showing they were *in situ*. Perhaps there was settlement in the early 4th millennium BC with little occupation after that.



Flint densities at their 2018 Knoll Down site, about 3km west of Avebury, ranged up to 1,500 pieces per square metre. This was 50 times the highest densities at Butler's Field; in some places there was more flint than soil! With 100,000 flints already needing full analysis, there is clearly much remaining to be done, but an initial review suggests a flint production site from the Middle Neolithic. Preliminary results for their 2019 excavation, just south of West Kennet, suggest by far the greatest activity was in the Late Neolithic, linked to the major monument building then taking place.

As with this latest excavation, whilst activity connected with the main phases of monument construction in the Late Neolithic is clear, it is much more difficult to see sustained settlement in that period. Settlement is much clearer in the Middle Neolithic when few monuments were built, with sequences suggesting that some settlement areas were transformed into monuments and that settlement locations were restricted once building of the major monuments commenced. Much more study and analysis is still needed on the tens of thousands of flints the project has found, but these early results show that the project's approach is very promising in improving understanding of the people's lives in the landscape.

Information from several of the questions Josh answered is included above, but it was particularly interesting to hear that some flint scatters cover greater areas than some of the major monuments. Large numbers of people were obviously living in the locality, and Josh concluded that Windmill Hill is a primary candidate because of the intensity, scale and duration of activity, especially the large flint scatters on its southern slopes. Have we missed it being a focus of settlement by just seeing it as 'a monument'? It's really 'watch this space' for more information.

Geoff Taylor

View from Above No 26: Windmill Hill

*Photo by
Sue Newman
and Jo Crane*



Windmill Hill is a classic Neolithic causewayed enclosure, part of the Avebury World Heritage Site and about a mile northwest of the stone circle. Enclosing an area of about 8.5 hectares (21 acres), with three intermittent ring ditches, it is the largest known causewayed enclosure in Britain.

“Causewayed enclosure” is now the preferred term, as ‘causewayed camp’ implies human occupation and there isn’t always evidence for that. The concentric ditches, up to four in some cases, have internal banks and seem to have been excavated in sections to leave the causeways intact, then left to silt up, with periodic re-cutting and deposition of pottery and bones. Various functions have been suggested, including communal meeting places and cattle compounds. Evidence of a defensive function is rare, though the remains of timber palisades have been found at some sites, like Hambledon Hill.

There is evidence of human occupation at Windmill Hill c.3,800 BC, before the enclosure was dug around 100 years later. It remained in use until about 2,500 BC. The site has been excavated from the 1920s, with large quantities of animal bones found in the ditch fills, together with pottery from different periods in the Neolithic. This might suggest that it was used for feasting and/or animal trading, perhaps as part of periodic social or ritual gatherings. Subsequently, two Bronze Age barrows were built within the enclosure, seen in the photograph, as the focus of a larger Bronze Age cemetery around the site.

To the left can be seen the remains of a crop circle, a common sight in the summer in this area. Although often beautifully designed and carefully executed, they’re a real problem for the farmers, especially in the archaeologically rich areas on Cranborne Chase and around Stonehenge and Avebury. Rather than aliens, they often contain people out for a walk or picnic.

Jo Crane/Geoff Taylor

Travels of an Iron Age man

The Iron Age TB skeleton at the Priest's House Museum in Wimborne is the earliest identified case of tuberculosis (TB) from Britain. The museum is undertaking further research, which has been part-funded by a grant of £1000 from South West Museum Development using public funds from Arts Council England and contributing Local Authorities.

The results of the isotope analysis are still to be released. In the meantime, we chart one of his modern journeys on a **Visit to Southampton University in August 2019:**



Dr. Sonia Zakrzewski explains the effect of TB on the man's vertebrae.



Professor Alistair Pike takes tooth enamel samples for strontium and oxygen isotope analysis.



Sampling from the long bone (from the same area as the original sampling in 2001).



Professor Pike and Gill Broadbent discuss the analysis process in the lab at the National Oceanographic Centre in Southampton. Nice slippers, Gill!

Vanessa Joseph

Tarrant vs. Winterborne

Did you know that there are 8 villages in Dorset with Tarrant in their name but 14 Winterbornes? They are, of course, named after the rivers on which they lie, and some are very small. This is rather unfair to the Tarrants though, as there are two Winterborne rivers, the northern being a tributary of the Stour (8 villages), the southern of the Frome (6 villages), and a couple of the villages are spelt with a "u" (as asterisked below from the Ordnance Survey, though there is some confusion):

- **Tarrant:** Gunville, Hinton, Launceston, Monkton, Rawston, Rushton, Keynston, Crawford
- **Winterborne (north):** Houghton, Stickland, Clenston, Whitechurch, Kingston, Muston, Tomson, Zelston
- **Winterborne (south):** Abbas*, Steepleton*, St. Martin (Martinstown), Monkton, Herringston, Came

Web Link Highlight February 2020

The item about HMS Erebus is of personal interest because Lindsey and I spent many happy hours at various folk clubs, and the ballad "*Lady Franklin's Lament*" (also known as "Lord Franklin") was a regular choice for a number of the club singers. The song first appeared on a broadsheet around 1850 (author unknown), not long after the fated expedition disappeared while trying to find the Northwest Passage. Although the immediate cause of the loss of both HMS Erebus and HMS Terror was due to them being trapped in ice, it has been suggested that the reason nobody survived was weakness (and even death) caused by lead poisoning. Many of the rations were tinned to preserve them, but this was in the very early days of preservation by tinning, and the tins were badly sealed using lead solder. Previous efforts to discover the reasons for the disaster have found burials of some of the crew, and found lead traces in the remains, but more evidence is needed to tell the whole story.

Only one month after I commented on the supposed discovery of the home of the Ark of the Covenant, including listing some of the discrepancies between the various accounts of the Ark, a separate excavation casts doubt on another bible story. This time, there appears to have been more than a single temple during the time of Solomon, and the famed Temple of Solomon probably was not the first either.

And by the way, as of the 28th February the Daily Mail article about the devil's footprints still had not been corrected (the volcano erupted 350,000 years ago, not 50,000 as stated in the Daily Mail), so I have now used their facility to notify the error. Seems a trivial point, but who knows how long this article will be accessible on the web, and who will come across it and not notice the error?

February Weblinks

Shirt Worn By Charles I At His Execution To Go On Display

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/jan/30/shirt-worn-by-charles-i-for-his-execution-to-go-on-display-in-london>

340 Million Year Old Shark Fossil Found In Kentucky Cave

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/340-million-year-old-shark-head-found-mammoth-cave-kentucky/>

The Neanderthal-Homo Sapiens DNA Story Gets More Complicated

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/01/more-neanderthal-dna-than-you-think/>

Locals Protest To Preserve Roman Villa At Gloucestershire Housing Development

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7968771/Bovis-Homes-faces-protests-plans-build-137-house-estate-Roman-villa.html>

10,000 Year Old Skeleton Found In Mexico Challenges Current Theories Of First Americas Population

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/skeleton-mexico-tulum-paleoindian-population-americas-anthropology-a9319641.html>

Board Game Piece From Time Of Viking Raids Found On Lindisfarne

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/feb/06/boardgame-piece-first-viking-raid-found-lindisfarne-archaeology>

Swedish Runestone May Allude To Extreme Winter

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/08/viking-runestone-may-allude-to-extreme-winter-study-says>

"Reaper Of Death" Tyrannosaur Discovered In Canada

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/02/new-reaper-of-death-tyrannosaur-discovered-canada/>

"Ghost Population" Of Ancient Hominids Found By Scientists

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/feb/12/scientists-find-evidence-of-ghost-population-of-ancient-humans>

Giant Turtle Fossil Found In South America

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/feb/12/giant-turtle-fossil-south-america-stupendemys-geographicus>

Iron Age Temple Uncovered Near Jerusalem Challenges Bible Version Of History

<https://www.ancient-origins.net/news-history-archaeology/iron-age-temple-0013296>

Archaeologists Claim To Have Found Tomb Of Rome's Founder, Romulus

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-8014645/Tomb-Roman-Forum-final-resting-place-Romulus.html>

Were The Vikings Fuelled By Herbal Tea?

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8014713/Rampaging-Vikings-fuelled-hallucinogenic-herbal-tea-feel-pain.html>

Cromwell Letter Talking About Loneliness To Go On Display At Refurbished Museum

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-51475089>

Mass Grave From The Black Death In Rural Lincolnshire

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/feb/18/mass-grave-shows-how-black-death-devastated-the-countryside>

70,000 Year Old Neanderthal Skeleton Found In Iraq

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-51532781>

14th Century Chapel At Auckland Castle Excavated

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-8016375/Stunning-14th-century-medieval-chapel-uncovered-County-Durham.html>

Ancient Humans In The Sahara Had Fish Diet

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2234637-ancient-humans-in-the-sahara-ate-fish-before-the-lakes-dried-up/>

Walls Built With Human Bones Discovered Under Belgian Cathedral

<https://www.livescience.com/bone-walls-belgium-church.html>

Reborn Persian Empire Takes Rome's Lands And Captures Its Emperor

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/magazine/2020/01-02/reborn-persian-empire-captured-rome-emperor/>

Artefacts From The Ill-fated Franklin Expedition Recovered From HMS Erebus

<https://bdnews24.com/science/2020/02/21/shipwreck-yields-artifacts-of-missing-seafarers-in-canadas-arctic>

Lost Ancient Kingdom Found In Turkey

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-8037935/Lost-ancient-kingdom-defeated-King-Midas-battle-discovered-Turkey.html>

What Do The Large Number Of Stone Tools Found In India Tell Us?

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/02/did-early-humans-in-india-survive-a-supervolcano/>

Secret Doorway In Palace Of Westminster Rediscovered

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-51630630>

Chinese Seaweed Is Oldest Green Plant Fossil Ever Found

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/feb/24/tiny-chinese-seaweed-is-oldest-green-plant-fossil-ever-found>

Increase In Illegal Metal Detecting At English Heritage Sites

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2020/feb/28/illegal-metal-detecting-at-english-heritage-sites-doubles-in-two-years>

PLEASE SEND YOUR WEBLINKS TO ALAN DEDDEN AT alan.dedden@gmail.com

A different sort of Weblink....

<https://wimbornefoodbank.org.uk/>



I really hope that no-one reading this newsletter needs the Food Bank, but this website will tell you how to access it. It also tells you how you might donate to help Wimborne Food Bank continue its good work (of course, other food banks are available in the area). I'm sure many of you already donate.

A recent development is the **Wimborne Community Fridge** in the environmental & recycling area of the Allendale Centre. It takes surplus food from local supermarkets and other unwanted fresh food, e.g. donated by people going away who can't use it or excess from people's allotments or gardens. You might see a 'buy one get one free' and not really want the free one, but why not take it and put it in the fridge? There's also a rack next to the fridge for bread and bakery items from the supermarkets, etc.

Everyone can take items they need from the Community Fridge (but bring your own bags). It's a really good way to help people in need and to reduce food waste.

The website also tells you how you might donate money or, as importantly, food, e.g. using the donation boxes at Waitrose, the Co-op and Allendale Centre. The current 'shopping list' is on the website, but some things that are almost always needed are hygiene and cleaning products, both for the home and for people, such as toilet rolls, sanitary products, washing up liquid, washing powder, shower gel & shampoo, toothpaste & toothbrushes.

You may have heard of The Reverse Lent Challenge – don't give something up but give something, in this case food or a donation to your local Food Bank.

Geoff Taylor

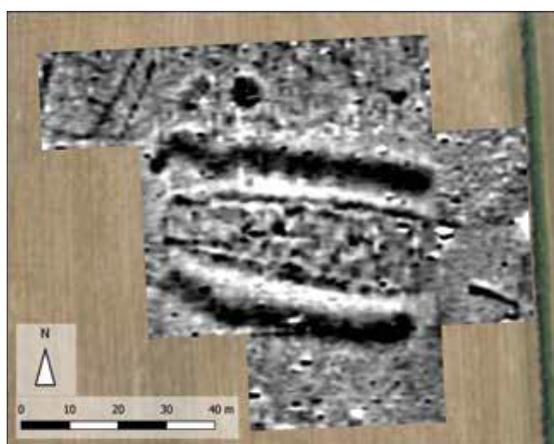


New long barrows in and near Dorset

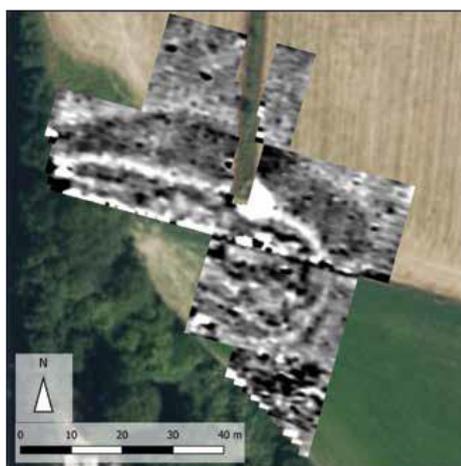
This is a summary, with the authors' permission, of an article that appeared in a recent issue of the Prehistoric Society's newsletter¹. It 'follows on' from newsletter articles on the discovery of new long barrows by the Avon Valley Archaeological Society (AVAS), helped by The Christchurch Antiquarians, especially at Sopley (December 2019 pp.11-12 and January 2020 p.8).

The lower ground of the Wessex chalklands had long been thought lacking in significant Neolithic activity, but work under English Heritage's National Mapping Programme (now under Historic England) showed prehistoric monuments in almost every parish. Large scale geophysical and LIDAR surveys are helping to fill gaps, such as two newly discovered long barrows investigated by the Damerham Archaeology Project around 10 years ago. The impressive programme of landscape investigation and geophysical surveys undertaken more recently by AVAS has brought to light several new long barrows, covered in this article.

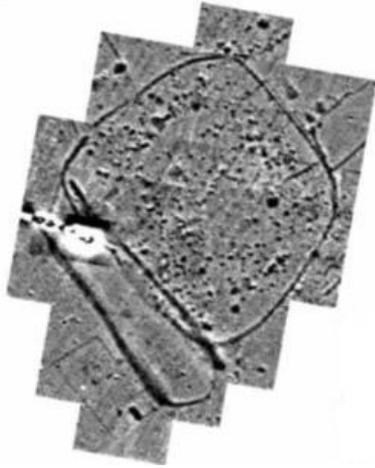
AVAS suspected that cropmarks seen near Fordingbridge on an aerial photograph showed a long barrow. That was confirmed by a site visit and a gradiometer survey by the LoCATE Project, a partnership between Bournemouth University and the New Forest National Park. The two side ditches are very clear, with a curious kink in the northern one. Perhaps more interesting is the trapezoidal feature under the mound, about 54m long; its apparently slightly different orientation suggests a possible two-phase construction. It has parallels with an enclosure defined by a palisade bedding trench under Fussell's Lodge long barrow about 5km northeast of Salisbury. A closer parallel is probably the trapezoidal timber 'house' at Cat's Brain long barrow in the Vale of Pewsey, between Avebury and Stonehenge.



When LIDAR data for the area became available, another elongated mound was seen only 220m north, previously partly obscured by a field boundary and partly destroyed at the west end. A gradiometer survey showed a wide curving ditch at the north, with suggestions of internal features and a possible enclosure. The two Fordingbridge barrows are on a gravel valley floor in a large meander of the River Avon, showing that long barrows weren't exclusively built on the higher chalk downlands, as mentioned in the December 2019 article. Other long barrows not on the chalk downs were covered in both that article and the Prehistoric Society's newsletter: an excavated example at Holdenhurst, a probable long barrow only 18m long near Bransgore in the New Forest National Park, seen clearly in cropmarks, and the now confirmed example at Sopley.



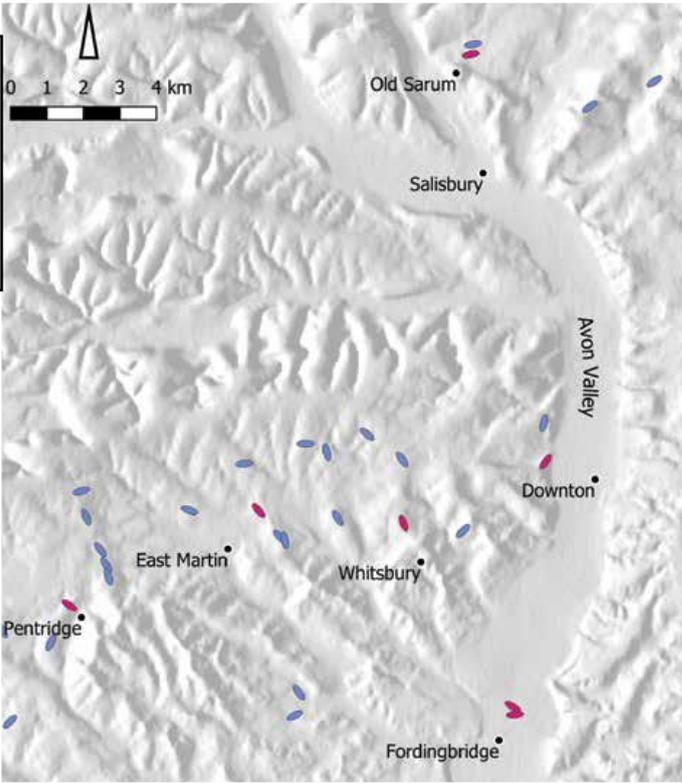
LIDAR images show the slight remains of an elongated mound near Downton, with field boundaries diverted around it. This probable long barrow is 1km south of a well-preserved example, both with wide views across the Avon valley. A ploughed-out long barrow had been known for some time just northeast of Old Sarum; crop marks in 2018 showed this very clearly, but also suggested that there was a shorter one in the same field. This pairing of long barrows, often of longer and shorter examples, is obviously present at Fordingbridge, as well as at Damerham and at several sites elsewhere, such as Danebury in Hampshire.



An elongated mound near to East Martin on Cranborne Chase has long been thought to be related to a Romano-British enclosed settlement. However, aerial photographs taken relatively recently suggested to AVAS that the mound was regular, trapezoidal and with flanking ditches. Their 2017 gradiometer survey showed that this was, indeed, a long barrow – a very substantial one around 112m long and thus one of the longest in Wessex. Although there is no obvious sign of it here, very long mounds sometimes seem to be the result of extending an existing long barrow or of placing two end-to-end, as might be the case at East and West Kennet (see January 2020 newsletter, p.9). There could well be large pits at the southeast ends of the flanking ditches, similar to Cat’s Brain, whilst the large Romano-British enclosure cuts across the northern ditch, perhaps silted up or otherwise filled by that period.

Aerial photographs and LIDAR have shown other likely or possible long barrows, yet to be tested through survey or excavation. One, around 50m long, is near Whitsbury, where a destroyed ‘tumulus’ is shown on the 1870 Ordnance Survey map. Further west, ‘Pentridge 26’ is a scheduled bowl barrow but actually appears to have straight side ditches, and is related to the spring-lines and streams that feed into the River Stour, as with other long barrows in the area.

The distribution of long barrows in the middle Avon valley and on Cranborne Chase.
Blue = recorded long barrows
Red = unrecorded barrows covered in the text
(Holdenhurst, Bransgore and Sopley are off the map to the south)
Contains OS data ©Crown copyright and database right (2018)



It seems entirely likely that there are more long barrows and, indeed, other Neolithic features to be found in the area of the map shown, which has perhaps had insufficient archaeological attention until fairly recently. The large numbers of chance finds of axeheads and flint arrowheads, and especially the superb jadeite polished axehead found near Breamore, might serve to underline the importance of this part of the Avon valley in the early Neolithic.

And if you want to know a little more about long barrows and the work AVAS have been doing, take a look at this just-released blog on their website: <https://blogavas.wordpress.com/2020/02/28/survey-of-a-long-barrow-on-cranborne-chase/>

1. Gill, M., & Field, D. 2019. New long barrow discoveries in the vicinity of the middle Avon valley and Cranborne Chase. *PAST* 91 (Spring 2019): 5-7.
http://www.prehistoricsociety.org/publications/publication/past_91_spring_2019/

Michael Gill (AVAS) & David Field (formerly English Heritage)

REMEMBERING THE ROMANS III

Relatively few inscriptions give a date, though clearly the more monumental ones often relate to a specific emperor or event. Epitaphs are very rarely dated and I've only seen a few that can be, usually by reference to the consular year of the emperor. A rough date can sometimes be suggested by the style of the lettering or the terms used, as we saw with ANNORUM vs. ANNOS (etc.). The best we can say from studies is that the vast majority of pagan, Latin epitaphs are from the two centuries starting AD 50, with much lower numbers from the 50 or more years either side of that. Christian epitaphs are, of course, increasingly common after AD 250.

Unusually, this poorly spaced epitaph for Maurentius can be 'dated', though it is a Christian one – "here rests in peace ...". By the Roman system for days, he was buried on 18th October in Emperor Justinian's reign, but which year? (DN is Dominus Noster, "Our Lord", i.e. Emperor). *CIL* 5.694 X

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IND · V · PC · DN · IVS
TINI · IMP · +

The epitaph above illustrates the difficulty of fully understanding inscriptions without a fairly wide knowledge, and I've glossed over the calculation of the date, and Maurentius' age, for now. The abbreviation "PC" has many meanings but could suggest the year of Justinian's 5th consulship, except that he only had 4, the last one in AD 534. The abbreviation "IND.V" probably means 'in the 5th year of the indiction', which is a term for 15 year periods originally used for tax purposes. As far as I can tell, this seems to be AD 528. If anyone knows better, please let me know.

I mentioned previously that a cursory inspection of epitaphs with ages suggested proportions that were unlikely to match actual deaths by age. This is clear, even with the relatively small sample of 608 epitaphs from Cisalpine Gaul, if you compare ages with likely deaths on a plausible Roman mortality table. For example:

- There's not much more than a quarter of the expected number of children under 5,
- yet there are more than 5 times as many as expected for those aged 15-19 and similarly for 20-24.
- The numbers of epitaphs for older people is too small to draw strong conclusions, though there's obviously a distortion between 11 deaths in their 50s, 9 in their 60s but 15 aged 70 or more.

Northern Peninsular Italy's 1,068 epitaphs with ages show a similar pattern, though not quite as high in the later teens and early 20s, and with the older deaths a little more obviously overstated. Rome's 9,476 epitaphs with ages show the same sort of pattern.

Our conclusion was that epitaphs were biased towards the deceased's perceived importance in Roman life; that commemorators were concerned to memorialise what we might call 'social value'. The Romans were certainly interested in permanently displaying information about a person's life. Burial, for much of this period predominantly of the cremated remains, had to be outside the town or city, and roads leading out were often lined with tombs and memorials. The most famous are probably the large tombs of the wealthy along the Appian Way south of Rome, such as that of Cecilia Metella, whilst those who have visited Pompeii may have seen the 'Street of Tombs' outside the Herculaneum gate at the north.

Of course, the tombs I have mentioned are of the wealthy, and even those outside Aquileia in the photograph couldn't have been cheap. In the next article I'll look at who might have been able to afford an epitaph and start to consider how 'social value' may have been defined and expressed.



Burial plots at Aquileia, Italy, originally lining the road from the town so as to be visible to passers-by. The closest plot has a tombstone, designed like an altar and, although not visible here, with a prominently displayed epitaph.

EDAS PROGRAMME

Unless otherwise stated, all lectures are from 7:30 – 9:30 pm at St Catherine’s Church Hall,
Lewens Lane, Wimborne, BH21 1LE. <http://www.dorset-archaeology.org.uk/programme.html>

Wed 11th March	Lecture	AGM and members’ talk	The Druce Neolithic Site – Lilian Ladle and Andrew Morgan
Wed 1st April	Lecture	Francis Taylor CBA Wessex	Discovering the Maya (esp. Tikal & Copan sites) NOT SECOND WEDNESDAY CHANGE FROM PRINTED PROGRAMME
Wed 13th May	Lecture	Tim Darvill Bournemouth University	Sticks and Stones and Broken Bones

DISTRICT DIARY

The diary of what I hope are interesting events in the area depends partly on information received from the organisations concerned, some of which organise events at fairly short notice.

Your information is also welcome – do let me know of any events.

PLEASE CHECK RELEVANT WEBSITES/CONTACTS FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION BEFORE VISITING.

Wed 4th March	The earliest farming villages in the Middle East	AVAS	Lecture by Sarah Elliott, Bournemouth University
Sat 14th March	Insights into the way of life of our ancestors: geochemical analysis of archaeological materials in the field	BNSS	Dr. Sarah Elliott, Bournemouth University
Wed 18th March	Golbekli Tepe - a Prehistoric Ceremonial Site in Turkey	Wareham Society	Lecture by Tim Darvill, Bournemouth University
Thu 19th March	Australian Aboriginal Art – from 20,000 years ago to modern	Blandford Group	AGM & Lecture by Edrys Luprian
Fri 20th March	A Potted History of Britain – ceramics from Neolithic to replacement teeth, and more; 7:00 for 7:30	Verwood Memorial Hall	Charity lecture by Julian Richards. Tickets, incl. supper selling fast at £12.50 - Lindsey Dedden: lindsey.dedden@gmail.com or 01202 824473
Sat 21st March	Inflatable Museum at Corfe Castle Village Hall	County Museum	Dorset County Museum on tour – see p.11 October 2019 Newsletter
Sat 21st March	Bronze Age CSI: A very cold case from Knowlton	BNSS	Gabrielle Delbarre, Bournemouth University
Sat 28th March	Dorset History Day – projects and research on Dorset history; 9:30am – 4:00pm	BU Lansdowne Campus	Tickets on sale (£10) at https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dorset-history-day-tickets-91638923487
Sat/Sun 28/ 29th March	Pre-History Weekend – life from the Stone to Iron Ages; 10 – 4	Cranborne ATC	See Ancient Technology Centre website https://ancienttechnologycentre.com/
Wed 1st April	The large animal bones of the Caistor Roman Project	AVAS	Hands-on workshop by Paul Clarkson, Bournemouth University
Wed 15th April	Life, death and feasting – 6,000 years of occupation at Worth Matravers	Wareham Society	Lecture by Lilian Ladle

Thu 16th April	Finding Nero (and other Emperors)	Blandford Group	Lecture by Miles Russell, Bournemouth University
Sat 18th April	Inflatable Museum at Corfe Castle Village Hall	County Museum	Dorset County Museum on tour – see p.11 October 2019 Newsletter
Sat 25th April	Inflatable Museum at Childe Okeford Village Hall	County Museum	Dorset County Museum on tour – see p.11 October 2019 Newsletter
Wed 6th May	AGM & lecture (tba)	AVAS	Speaker tba
Wed 20th May	Music in Every Home – the disc vs. the cylinder	Wareham Society	Lecture by Gordon Bartlet, specialist in restoring mechanical musical instruments IN WAREHAM MASONIC HALL
Thu 21st May	Pre-Colombian Peru	Blandford Group	Lecture by Tim Brown
Wed 17th June	Portland – Isle of Fascination	Wareham Society	Lecture by Stuart Morris, local historian and author

Archaeology Societies

- **Avon Valley Archaeological Society:** <http://www.avas.org.uk/>
Meetings at Ann Rose Hall, Greyfriars Community Centre, Christchurch Road, Ringwood BH24 1DW, 7:30pm 1st Wednesday of month except June, July & August. Visitors £3.50; membership £10 pa.
- **Blandford Museum Archaeology Group:** <http://blandfordtownmuseum.org.uk/arcaeology.html>
Meetings at Blandford Museum, Bere's Yard, Market Place, Blandford Forum, DT11 7HQ, normally 7:30pm 3rd Thursday of each month (although the Museum is being refurbished from November 2019 – please check for alternative meeting location). Visitors £4; membership £10 pa.
- **Bournemouth Natural Sciences Society:** <http://bnss.org.uk>
Events at 39 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BN1 3NS; lectures Tuesday 7:30pm/Saturday 2:30pm.
- **The Christchurch Antiquarians:** <https://christchurchantiquarians.wordpress.com/>
No lecture programme but involved in practical archaeology projects. Membership £10 pa.
- **Dorset Natural History & Archaeology Society:** <http://www.dorsetcountymuseum.org/events>
Events at various locations in Dorchester, usually ticketed
- **Wareham and District Archaeology & Local History Society:** The website is no longer updated; for information contact Karen Brown at karen.brown68@btinternet.com
Meetings at the Town Hall, Wareham (corner of North Street & East Street), normally 7:30pm 3rd Wednesday of each month except July & August. Visitors welcome for £3; membership £10 pa.

Bournemouth Natural Science Society 2020 Lecture Programme

(Tuesdays @ 7:30, Saturdays @ 2:30)

MARCH		
Tuesday 3 rd	Written in Stone: a social, sentimental & architectural history	John Hubbard
Saturday 7 th	'Back from the Brink' project update – ladybird spiders	Caroline Kelly
Tuesday 10 th	How well can you hang a picture frame?	Sharon Docherty
Saturday 14 th	Insights into the way of life of our ancestors: geochemical analysis of archaeological materials in the field	Dr. Sarah Elliott
Tuesday 17 th	100 Years of Bournemouth News 1920-2020	Hattie Miles
Saturday 21 st	Bronze Age CSI: A very cold case from Knowlton	Gabrielle Delbarre
Tuesday 24 th	Dorset after Dinosaurs	Mike Earle
Saturday 28 th	Cassini at Saturn	Prof. Carl Murray