

KAFS Newsletter: No.2.

Kent Archaeological Field School: Spring 2005



Welcome to the Spring issue of the Kent Archaeological Field School Newsletter. Our first course, due to be held on 5th & 6th March, was supposed to include fieldwalking, but, as the picture of the field school (right) shows, the fields were under a foot of snow! We had to cancel and most members transferred to the course on 'Discovering Archaeological Sites'. Our Easter excavation

Excavation will continue at Syndale in Stone Chapel Field (right) from July 30th to August 14th. The extent of the Roman town of Durolevum has now been identified by the Field School and excavations in this field will continue to reveal about this important site. The chapel is a ruined Roman building that was extended in the Saxon period and is unique in Britain. The map dates from 1795 and shows Watling Street and the old road into Faversham.



course was fully booked for the first weekend. The site, at Bridge, revealed Anglo-Saxon graves from the seventh century. It was the experience of a lifetime for many

people. As you all know, to excavate a site rich in finds — gold and silver artefacts, glassware, pottery, spears — is really as good as it can get. Do join us this summer on more superb courses.



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FIELD SCHOOL NEWS



Our Easter dig this year focused on investigating a possible prehistoric site at Star Hill, just to the east of Bridge, near Canterbury. On the first day, and with the first spade cut, we found an Anglo-Saxon spear in an east-west orientated grave carved into the chalk. As the week unfolded, we uncovered a further eleven graves, all of which respected the profile of the hexagon feature and so must have been made after the feature. All the graves contained many artefacts such as gold pendants (below), glass and amber beads, buckles, knives, spears, scissors, cowrie shells, beautiful



The gold pendant (left) of bracteate form, circular with a cruciform filigree pattern, was found still attached to the neck of a male skeleton. Close to his right shoulder was a well-preserved spear.

The hexagon shape (above and right) is shown on this 19th-century map by Vine in 'Caesar in Kent'. Vine thought it was a small fort, but excavation by the KAFS has shown it to be Roman.

glassware and decorated pottery. There were also about sixty Anglo-Saxon silver coins (top left), they were dated by Andy, our metal detectorist, to the seventh century.

We had gone to Bridge to investigate the hexagon-shaped feature that appears on aerial photographs (above right). According to the National Monument Record, held by English Heritage, the hexagon feature had been interpreted as dating from the World War II, but our research indicated that it could date from the late Iron-Age. We thought that it could not be a

World War II feature, as we had found a map dating from the nineteenth century (above) which showed the hexagon feature and another one to the south-east. Previous work by the Field School had uncovered part of the hexagon and retrieved Iron-Age sherds of pottery from the fill. It was also noted that the ditch had been dug using antler picks, not spades.

The seventh-century graves can be precisely dated by the Anglo-Saxon coins that we found. Also, some of the graves had been cut into the fill of the hexagon ditch, proving beyond any doubt that the hexagon ditch pre-dates the seventh-century graves.

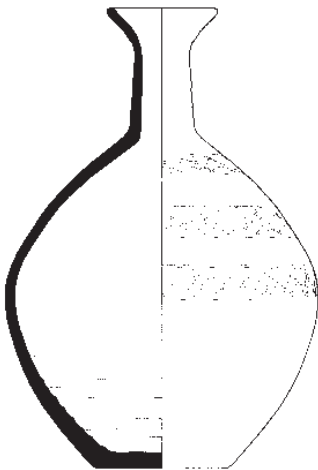
The graves are orientated east-west with the head at the west end. This is usually thought of as a classic Christian position, because it ensures that when the incumbent of the grave sits up on the Day of Resurrection, and the first thing they

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will see when their eyes open is the rising sun. However, the sun has been a powerful religious symbol since the earliest times. In the Roman period, the sun was portrayed as one of the most powerful pagan gods, Sol or Sol Invictus.

Pagan gods influenced the east-west orientation of burials in the pre-Christian period. Sol or Sol Invictus offered its devotees resurrection, just as the Christian faith does. Interestingly, the festival of the sun god's birthday was held on 25th December. Maybe it is not a coincidence that we worship our Christian god on Sunday, named after Sol, who was also worshiped on this day.

If the graves are for Christian burials why the plethora of grave goods? Maybe the Anglo-Saxons were hedging their bet.



One of the pots (above) found in the graves is wheel-turned and decorated with a repeat pattern of classic Anglo-Saxon design. It probably contained food or drink.



Brooches of gold (above) similar to the finds at Bridge were also found at Faversham 'home of the metalsmiths'.



Eleven Anglo-Saxon graves were discovered abutting the hexagon feature. The graves had been cut into the fill of the hexagon ditch so must post-date it. The students are lying the same way as the

burials were found, with their heads to the west. Most burials had grave goods. Laid by the feet of the women were a bag of silver coins, cowrie shells, spindle weights, shears, keys, and a small knife.

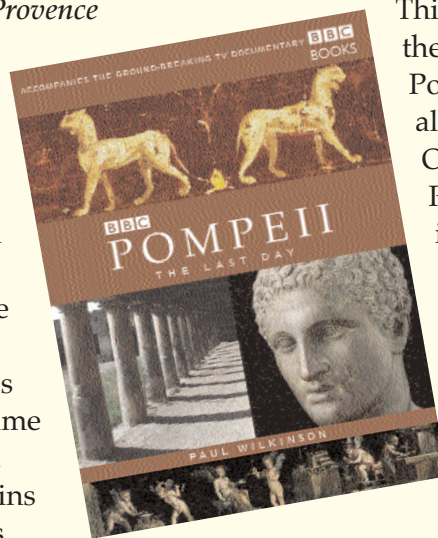
The hexagon feature is a fine example of Roman survey, utilising levels and geometry. It was probably used for a high-status cremation. The location is superb, and visible from the main Roman road.

FIELD SCHOOL TRIPS



June 18th to June 25th, Roman Provence

A wonderful combination of beautiful Provencal scenery, the relaxed ambience of lovely towns and some of the most spectacular Roman remains in Europe make this an incredibly exciting holiday. We will stay at a historic hotel in the centre of Arles, regarded as the Rome of the north at the time of the Roman Empire. We will guide you to the Roman remains of Arles, Pont du Gard, Nimes, Glanum, Orange, and Vaison-la-Romaine. The trip costs £1,247 per person (single £1,492).



the Roman world. After the Romans, other waves of traders and invaders came to Spain and left their imprint, especially the Moors, whose mosques and palaces we will explore. We will stay in a converted palace in Ecija for 6 nights and a lovely hotel in Jerez for 2 nights. The tour costs £1,640 per person (single £1,815).

September 17th to 24th, Pompeii and the Bay of Naples

This trip includes guided tours of the well-preserved Roman towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum. We will also visit Cumae, Baiae, Pozzuoli, Oplontis and the Greek temples at Paestum, there is a day trip to the isle of Capri, to see the Villa Jovis, and a visit to Naples archaeological museum. We will stay in Ravello, an elegant resort on the Amalfi coast. The trip costs £1,400 per person (single £1,645).

October 15th to 22nd, Rome and

Ravenna — Roman and Early Christian Mosaics
A tour that reveals the mosaics of ancient and medieval Italy. This two-centre trip will take us to some of the hidden gems of Rome and Ravenna. We will explore the early Christian architecture of Ravenna and see some of the



September 4th to 12th, Roman and Moorish Spain

A two-centre tour of the amazing ruins in the towns and countryside of southern Spain. We will unravel the rich cultural heritage of the region as we visit Italica, the first Roman settlement on the Iberian peninsula. We will travel through the area that became

Baetica in 19 BC. The province grew wealthy by producing oil, wine, metals, and wheat for



best early Christian mosaics in the world. Then we fly to Rome where we will discover some of the magnificent mosaics surviving in small churches as well as in major collections, such as the Vatican museum. The tour costs £1,465 per person (single £1,745).

Prices include flights, b&b, dinner, most lunches, entrance fees and coach travel. For further details and to book see www.romanolidays.co.uk or call 01795 532548.

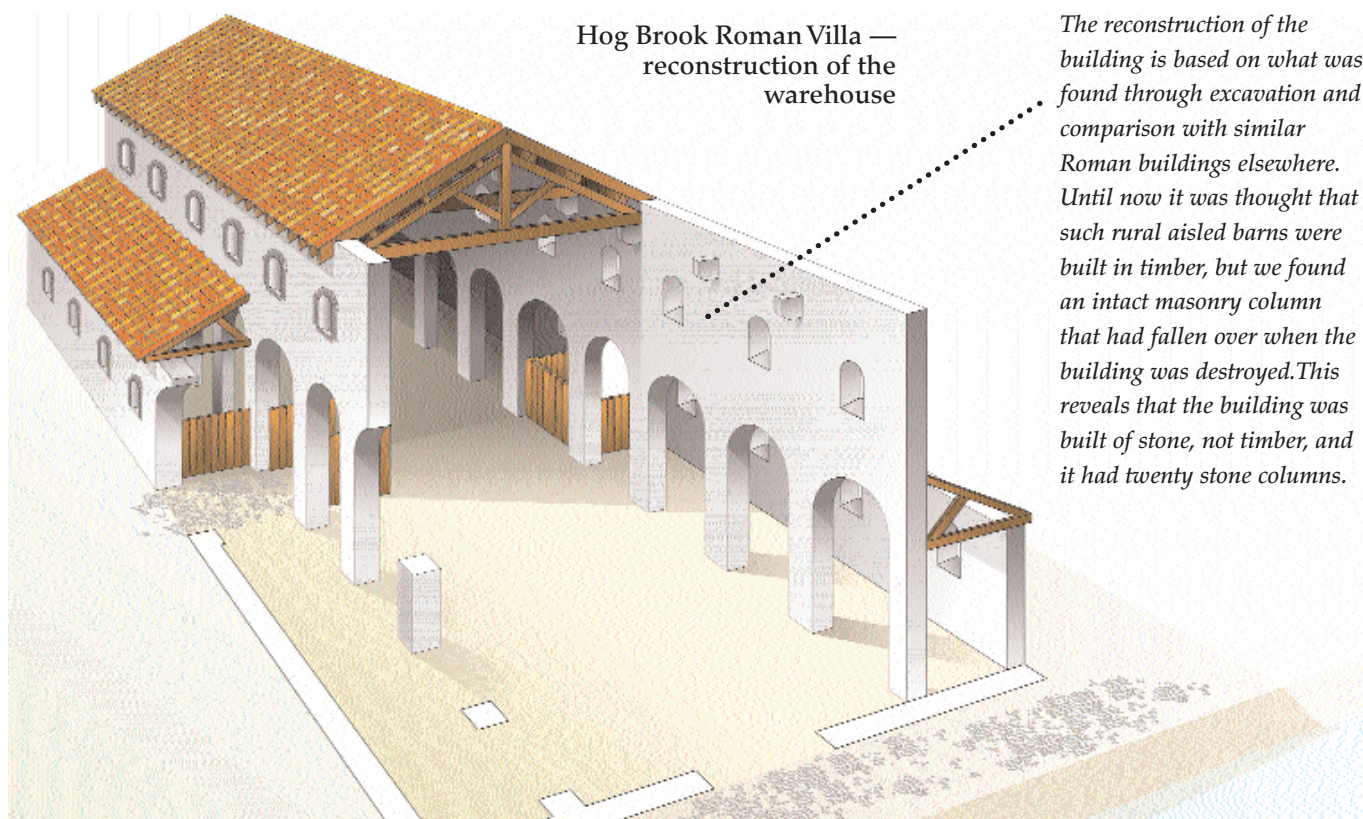
FIELD SCHOOL COURSES

KAFS two-day courses cost £70, three-day courses cost £105. Unless otherwise stated, KAFS members enjoy a 10% discount on full prices, except field trips. To book, fill in the form on page 8. For further details of courses and membership, see: www.kafs.co.uk

May Bank Holiday 28th, 29th, 30th, Surveying for Archaeologists

Archaeological survey plays a vital role in fieldwork. It provides a framework for detailed recording and helps us to analyse a site. Many methods, from the correct use of basic optical site levels to laser technology, will be taught by Ges Moody from the Trust for Thanet Archaeology and Paul Wilkinson. Practical exercises will take place at Stone Chapel, a unique Roman and Anglo-Saxon building.

in rural Kent (see below). We will concentrate on the eastern end. Beginners are welcome on the Monday to Friday courses, with the option to continue for further days (same daily fee applies). Experienced participants may book the days they wish. Topics taught each day are: Monday: History of the Site & Why dig? Tuesday: Excavation Techniques; Wednesday: Site Survey; Thursday: Archaeological Recording; Friday: Small Finds Recording. KAFS member's special fee £30 per day, non-members £35 per day.



June 4th to 17th, Further Excavation of a Roman Building at Hog Brook

This year we will spend two weeks excavating and recording a high-status Roman building at Hog Brook near Faversham. The aisled building was discovered by KAFS archaeologists last year and was previously unknown. It is the largest and most spectacular aisled stone building ever found

June 18th to June 25th, Roman Provenance
See page four for details.

July 2nd & 3rd, Geophysical Surveying for Archaeologists

A course on the theory and practice of geophysical survey. Methods from basic optical site levels to laser technology, resistivity and

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Ground Penetrating Radar will be taught. Practical exercises will take place at Syndale, our late summer excavation site.

July 9th & 10th, Interpreting the Roman Villa
Course led by Paul Wilkinson author of *Roman Villas in Kent*. The course will concentrate on how and why villas played such an important part in the Roman landscape. We will visit the Roman villas at Lullingstone, Fishbourne and Bignor.



July 16th & 17th, An Introduction to Archaeology
We shall look at how archaeological sites are discovered and find out how different types of finds, such as human bones and prehistoric flints, reveal the lives of former peoples. This course will be run with *History Today* magazine. Anyone over the age of 11 years old is welcome, but under 16s must be accompanied by an adult.

July 30th to August 14th, Excavation at Syndale, Site of the Roman Town of Durolevum
The site of the lost Roman town of Durolevum is now established at Syndale, near Faversham. The town appears in the Antonine Itinerary, but its location was later forgotten, until it was re-discovered and confirmed as the site of the town by the activities of the Kent Archaeological Field School. This year we will spend two weeks



excavating and recording Roman buildings on the west side of the town, in the area called Stone Chapel Field. Stone Chapel is a scheduled monument and is a Roman building attached to a later Anglo-Saxon church. The building was excavated in the 1970s by Meates of Lullingstone Villa fame. Beginners are welcome on the Monday to Friday courses, with the option to continue for further days (same daily fee applies). Experienced participants may book the days they wish. Topics taught each day are: Monday: History of the Site & Why dig? Tuesday: Excavation Techniques; Wednesday: Site Survey; Thursday: Archaeological Recording; Friday: Small Finds Recording. KAFS member's special fee £30 per day, non-members £35 per day.



August 20th & 21st, Roman Building Techniques and Materials

An intensive course on Roman buildings and Roman building material to be found in early Christian churches in Kent. In the afternoons we

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will visit St Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury, Richborough and the Dover Pharos and a number of East Kent churches including Lower Halstow, Teynham, and Stone Chapel.

August Bank Holiday 27th, 28th, 29th, Identifying Field Systems and Boundaries

We can trace the history of the landscape by studying the development of field and parish boundaries. During the course of the three days we will trace, excavate and record a new site in the very best traditions of *Time-Team*. This is a recently identified, enigmatic, field and parish boundary at Bax Farm that runs for 22km and divides Kent.

September 3rd & 4th, Geology for Archaeologists

An intensive course on the geology of the south-east. Archaeologists need to understand the local rocks and soils if they are to completely evaluate an archaeological site. There will be field trips in the afternoons to Pegwell Bay and the cliffs of Reculver. Course led by Peter Golding.

September 4th to 12th, Roman and Moorish Spain

In association with *History Today* magazine. See page four for details.



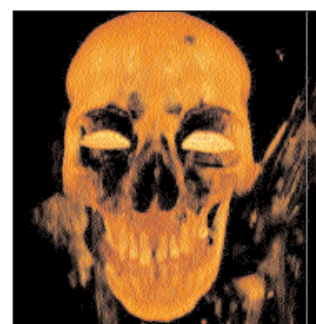
September 17th & 18th, Natural History: Habitats of Prehistoric Kent

Over the centuries, human activities have shaped and altered our landscape. We will consider the changes in land use, the different types of

farming, and see how the pressures of a rising population have affected the natural environment of East Kent over the last two thousand years. The course will be led by John Weavers, a specialist in landscape studies and the weekend will include afternoon field trips.

September 17th to 24th, Pompeii and the Bay of Naples

In association with *BBC History* magazine. See page four for details.



October 1st & 2nd, Bones and Burials

Osteo-archaeology is the study of human remains. The course will be led by Trevor Anderson, consultant to Canterbury Archaeological Trust, who has appeared on *Meet the Ancestors*. The course will cover the on-site recording of human remains and how they can reveal information about the person's age, sex and state of health. Excavated skeletons will be available for study and analysis in practical sessions.



October 8th & 9th, Archaeological Drawing

A beginner's and refresher course introducing participants to drawing archaeological artefacts. The reasons for drawing artefacts and the principles of archaeological illustration will be taught. There will be practical sessions each day demonstrating how to illustrate pottery, bone, metal and other artefacts found on archaeological sites. Course led by Jane Russell, who was senior illustrator of the UCL Field Archaeology Unit.

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October 15th to 22nd, Rome and Ravenna — Roman and Early Christian Mosaics
See page four for details.



October 29th & 30th, How to Identify Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Pottery

The course, led by MoLSS tutors, will introduce students to the practical problems of identifying Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval pottery. The types of pottery from each period will be described and examples will be available for

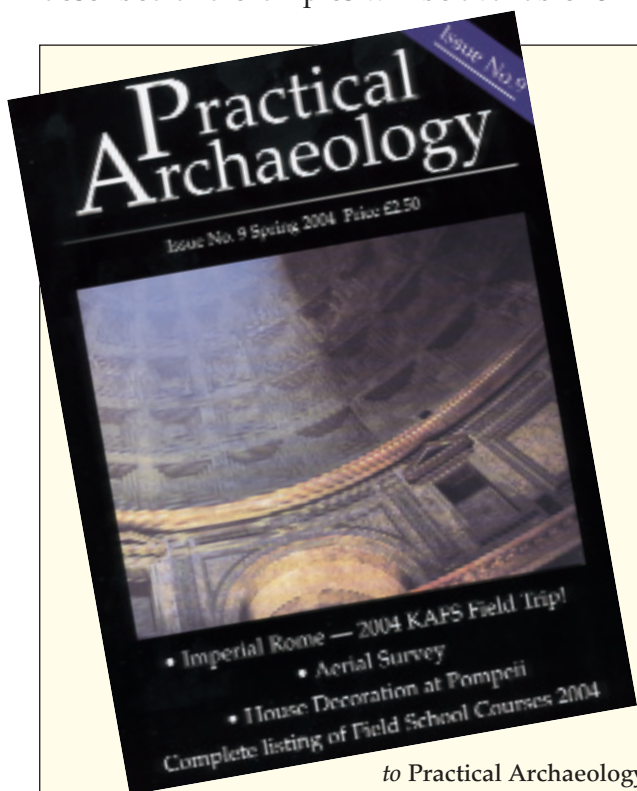
examination. An ideal course for those who want to distinguish the many types of pottery found on British sites.

November 5th & 6th, Bronze-Age Axe and Pottery Workshop

On Saturday, this workshop will explore many aspects of bronze age metal working, with the smelting of copper and tin ores. Each person will work on their own axes. On Sunday, we will fire our own prehistoric 'beaker' using bronze age methods and learn how to build a simple kiln to fire your own pot at a later date. Course led by Neil Burridge a specialist in bronze age crafts.

November 26th & 27th, Meet Your Ancestors

A course designed to enable you to research your family tree. Genealogy is the study of your past and this weekend course will enable you to find out who your ancestors were.



To become a member and enjoy a 10% discount on courses plus a subscription

to Practical Archaeology, tick the box on the right and the forms will be sent to you, or download them from our website — www.kafs.co.uk.

KAFS COURSE BOOKING FORM

Name of Course.....

 Date of Course.....
 Your Name.....
 Address.....

 Postcode..... Tel No.....
 E-mail address.....
 I enclose a cheque (payable to KAFS) for.....
 Please send me a KAFS membership form

Return this form to:-

The Kent Archaeological Field School,
 School Farm Oast, Graveney Road, Faversham,
 Kent ME13 8UP. Tel: 01795 532548
 Website: www.kafs.co.uk E-mail: info@kafs.co.uk
 Please note that courses are bookable in advance only and are non-refundable or transferable. Member's 10% discount does not apply to special fees and field trips. Children over 14 and under 16 years old are welcome on courses, but must be accompanied by an adult; under-16s are not allowed on excavations.