



# Maidstone Area Archaeological Group



Established 1969

On Twitter as *MAAGinfo* and on Facebook

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## Newsletter, September 2011

### Dear Fellow Members

Welcome back after our summer break. It is with great sadness that I have to inform you of the death of Mrs. Joan Stally, one of our staunchest supporters and regular attendee at meetings. She will be greatly missed, and our condolences go to Tony and all her family. Some of you might remember a former member, Joan Homewood, who also died this summer.

On a happier note, our congratulations to our member Mr. Fred Booth was awarded an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list for his contributions to wildlife; very well deserved. See <http://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/about-kent-wildlife-trust/news/royal-accolade-to-trusts-first-chief-executive/>

Please find enclosed with this newsletter a copy of our Programme Card for the forthcoming year.

Linda

### Albert's Archaeological Roundup

#### Brenchley Gardens : Royal Engineers' Statue Foundations

Three members of the group excavated a trial pit for the foundation of the 36th Royal Engineers Regiment Memorial Statue in Brenchley Gardens on Tuesday, 23rd August. The pit, 1.2 m square by 900mm deep, was dug through soil layers deposited when the Gardens were landscaped in Victorian Times.

### East Farleigh

#### Open Day and Excavation Update

This was held on Sunday, 31st July. Approximately 400 visitors attended, breaking all previous records, and once again it was a great success. Our grateful thanks to all our stalwart volunteers who assisted on the day in every capacity; your help was much appreciated. Again we received some very generous donations, totalling £670, and attracted several new members - welcome to you all.

Visitors were treated to guided tours of the site and displays of artefacts that had been found. Members of the Group were on hand to explain the various finds and answer any questions that members of the public may have had. Poster board displays of previous work carried out by the Group in the last twenty years were shown to illustrate the different archaeological work carried out in that period.

The buildings displayed this year were the kitchen range (Building 5), displayed last year, together with a section of the Iron Age ditch which passed under its north wall and the central section of the two buildings (Buildings 2 and 3) located to the east. These buildings are now known to be barns, with 3.6m and 3.3m wide doors located mid way on the south wall.

Building 2 was demolished to construct the larger Building 3. A long flue corn dryer was built into the floor of Building 3. The fill of the corn dryer contained a late fourth century bone pin. Two coins dating to around 240 AD were found under the floor, which indicates a mid third century construction date.

Buildings 2 and 3 do not have the same floor level. Building 2 appears to have a floor 300mm lower than Building 3. The western half of Building 3 has a floor composed of 50 to 150mm of burnt mortar. A trial pit outside the west end of Building 3 has located a quantity of moulded mortar painted red. We also had red painted mortar in a pit under Building 1 which we excavated 5 years ago. The buildings will be backfilled later this year in order to prevent deterioration of the walls and floors.

## Summer Visit

### Folkestone Roman Villa

On Saturday, 13th August several members attended the visit to the excavation of the Roman Villa on the Leas Cliff, Folkestone. We had two very informative talks about the excavation and saw some of the finds being processed. Our thanks to those members of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust who gave their time to tell us about the work being undertaken. The excavation will remain open every day for visitors and volunteers until the end of September.

## Other News

**'All Change...? Maidstone's Past and Present in Photographs'** : The refurbished temporary exhibition gallery at Maidstone Museum will be re-opening in mid November with a photographic exhibition of images of Maidstone taken as far back as 1860 and how the same view appears today. This project has been undertaken in association with the Maidstone Camera Club.

**Archives** : There will be a number of short term closures at the Centre for Kentish Studies and East Kent Archives Centre to prepare the collections for the move to the new Archives building at the Kent History and Library Centre. For more information please call 01622 694363. The closure dates are: **24th to 29th October 2011** and **30th January to 4th February 2012**.

The **KAS Historic Buildings Conference** will be held on Saturday, **15th October 2011** at Harrietsham Community Centre, Church Road (off A20), Harrietsham at 9.30am for 10am start, 4pm finish. The theme of the Conference is *Accommodation in Medieval and Early Modern Buildings*. Main talks by Andrew Linklater (CAT): *The House Divided - the use of internal space of buildings as revealed through archaeology*; Sarah Pearson (author of The Medieval Houses of Kent): *The Provision of Services in Medieval Rural and Urban Kentish Houses*; and Catherine Richardson (University of Kent): *Towards a Material History of Early Modern Accommodation - houses, objects and daily routine*. Followed by short accounts of research projects by local groups. Contact David Carder (email: david\_carder@talk21.com) to book a place.

**CKA Conference on 'New Ideas on some Major Roman Villas'** : This will be held on Saturday, **22nd October 2011** from 2pm-5.30pm at The Old Sessions Lecture Theatre, Canterbury Christchurch University, North Holmes Campus, Canterbury. Talks on Chedworth, Lullingstone and Great Witcombe - speakers: Dr. Martin Henig, Bryan Walters and Graham Soffe. Tickets £5 from CKA, 7 Sandy Ridge, Borough Green, Kent, TN15 8HP - SAE please (no phone number given).

**Kent History Federation** : The One Day Conference next year will be on **12th May 2012** at Headcorn with three speakers in the morning followed by walks and trips in the afternoon after lunch. The meal will cost £7.50 and will include coffee and tea. They hope to arrange for a vintage bus to take people out to the trips in the afternoon.

**Kent History Network** : If you have access to the internet, the new development plan for the archive and local history service is now available at [www.kent.gov.uk/archives](http://www.kent.gov.uk/archives) giving information on the strategy for the service until 2015.

## Contacts

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## Open Day Photos



## Forthcoming Talks

### Maidstone Historical Society :

**'Underground Kent'** : An illustrated talk by Rod le Gear at 7.30pm on Wednesday, 21st September 2011, held at the Methodist Church Community Centre, Brewer Street, Maidstone. Free to Members; visitors welcome (£3).

**'Elizabethan Maidstone'** : A talk by Paul Oldham at 7.30pm on Tuesday, 4th October 2011, in The Great Hall, The Archbishops' Palace, Maidstone. Admission free - Advance booking on 01622-751900.

## Folkestone Roman Villa Visit



