



society

# NEWS

*The Bulletin of the ENFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY*

---

September 2002 No 166

## CONTENTS

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

#### EAS MEETINGS

20 September 2002: E. Augustus Bowles of Myddelton House  
18 October 2002: The Role of Surveying and GIS in Professional Archaeology  
15 November 2002: The Port of Roman London

#### OTHER SOCIETIES

#### MEETING REPORTS

The Prehistory of Greater London

### THE OLD NEW RIVER COURSE AT MYDDELTON HOUSE

### CAPEL MANOR EXCAVATION

### PASTFINDERS NEWS

Society News is published quarterly in March, June, September and December  
The Editor is Jon Tanner, 24 Padstow Road, Enfield, Middlesex EN2 8BU,  
tel: 020 8367 8000 (day); 020 8350 0493 (home); email: [jontanner\\_enfield@hotmail.com](mailto:jontanner_enfield@hotmail.com)



# FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Meetings of the Enfield Archaeological Society are held at Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield (near Chase Side) at 8.00pm on (usually) the third Friday of the month. Tea and coffee are served and the sales and information table is open from 7.30pm. Visitors, who are asked to pay a small entrance fee of £1.00, are very welcome.

## **Friday 20 September 2002**

*E. Augustus Bowles of Myddelton House*  
Bryan Hewitt

For the past 16 years Bryan Hewitt has worked at Myddelton House, Bulls Cross, in the famous garden created by E A Bowles. For most of that time Mr Hewitt has been collecting photographs, records and anecdotes about the remarkable man who is fondly remembered as Gussie (or Mr Gussie) by many local residents.

Bryan spent many hours talking to people who had known Gussie Bowles. He has used their reminiscences as the basis for an affectionate and well illustrated talk.

His book "*The Crocus King: E A Bowles of Myddelton House*" evokes a rural, almost feudal, Forty Hill and Bulls Cross, dominated by Sir Henry Bowles at Forty Hall and his brother Gussie at Myddelton House. Gussie Bowles was a lay reader at Jesus Church, Forty Hill, from 1894 until his death in 1954. In 1888 he founded a "night school" in Turkey Street for local lads, and became a generous benefactor to the poor who used to arrive at Myddelton House to beg for help. He gave years of service to the Royal Horticultural Society and was one of the famous band of plant hunters who travelled all over Europe digging up specimens to send back to England for propagation. A remarkable man indeed! The book has a foreword by his great-great nephew Brigadier Andrew Parker Bowles. Copies of the book will be on sale price £6.95.

*Bryan Hewitt*

## **Friday 18 October 2002**

*The Role of Surveying and GIS in Professional Archaeology*  
Duncan Lees

Geomatic Principles and Archaeology: The application of geomatic principles to the recording, analysis and display of archaeological data with reference to two recent projects undertaken by the Geomatics team of the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS)

The Geomatics team at MoLAS has recently undertaken two archaeological projects at Sarmizegetusa in Transylvania, Romania and at Amheida in the Dakhlah Oasis, Egypt. These projects presented a number of geomatic problems in the recording of the archaeological data and this talk attempts to outline these difficulties and explain the techniques used by MoLAS to solve them.

The presentation will begin with an introduction to the principles of the discipline of geomatics followed by a detailed description of the two projects and the different techniques utilised. Whilst the fundamental geomatic and archaeological concepts that underpin the work of MoLAS apply to both projects, each presented a number of differing and taxing problems that had to be resolved by the use of different techniques. The presentation aims to describe these differing techniques but also emphasise the similarities in the research aims and archaeological end products.

The techniques covered by the presentation include digital survey, utilising the Global Positioning System (GPS) and more traditional electronic instruments, and the use of computer software to analyse and present the survey data, with particular reference to Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

*Duncan Lees*  
*Principal Geomatics Officer, MoLAS*

## **Friday 15 November 2002**

*The Port of Roman London*  
Bruce Watson

The Romans established London in c.AD50 for two reasons. Firstly, the Thames could easily be crossed by bridge or ferry at this point making it a nodal point in the road network. Secondly, it was a convenient spot for a port as the tidal Thames is an excellent navigable route-way, extending from the North Sea far into central England. Here goods could be transferred from ocean going vessels to shallow draught river craft or vice-versa. Today the remains of the Roman port lie deeply buried under streets and modern buildings far behind the modern concrete river wall.

Along the south bank of the Thames, the many natural creeks and inlets were apparently used as moorings and sometimes lined with wooden revetments to prevent further erosion of the shoreline. The muddy estuarine slopes of the north bank offered no natural moorings, so wharves or quays were constructed on land that was reclaimed from the river, to provide deep-water moorings. This process of reclamation began in a small way in AD52 (according to tree ring dating), when a short length of revetment consisting of a line of driven piles, retaining horizontal planking was constructed. The first major port facility was constructed during AD 63-64, possibly as an Imperial project carried out by the army to reconstruct the embryonic town's infrastructure after its destruction during the Boudican revolt of AD60. This facility consisted of a massive quay built of stacks of horizontal squared oak baulks, all beautifully preserved by waterlogging. Along the quayside were blocks of rectangular buildings used for commodity storage and light industry, including the workshop of a glassmaker, who manufactured beads, bottles and stirring rods. Three 'British' lead ingots bearing the stamp of Vespasian (AD69-79) were found hidden inside one of the quay side buildings.

Wrecks of the type of craft, which sailed along the Thames have been uncovered locally in 1910, 1958 and 1962, the latest discovery was a 2<sup>nd</sup> century coastal sailing barge found buried in sediments at the mouth of the River Fleet. It was carrying a cargo of Ragstone, quarried down stream in Kent.

The success of the port is best illustrated by the successive piecemeal reclamation of the foreshore during the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. In c.AD 200-25 an attempt was made to restore a unified river frontage by building a new quay and associated buildings. By AD250-70 the port was in serious decline as the new quay was partly dismantled. Soon after this process was complete a defensive riverside wall was constructed, which severed London from its river and prevented any revival of the port. One reason for the decline of the port was the falling river level or tidal regression during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, which would have hindered the movement of larger vessels

*Bruce Watson.*

## MEETINGS OF OTHER SOCIETIES

### HENDON AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

All meetings are held at 8.00pm at Avenue House, East End Road Finchley

#### **Tuesday 08 October 2002**

*St Paul's Cathedral – our marble tribute:*  
Dr Ann Saunders

#### **Tuesday 12 November 2002**

*The Ups and Downs of Life in the British Palaeolithic:* Simon Parfitt

### **EDMONTON HUNDRED HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

7.45 for 8.00 p.m. in Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield unless otherwise stated. Visitors £1.00

#### **Wednesday 18 September 2002**

*The Three Barnets:* Dr Gillian Gear

#### **Wednesday 09 October 2002**

*The Gunpowder Plot and the Enfield Connection:* Robert Musgrove

#### **Saturday 26 October 2002** Day Conference

#### **Tuesday 19 November 2002** (2.15 for 2.30pm)

*The Three Barnets:* Dr Gillian Gear

Enquiries to the Local History Section, Town Hall, Green Lanes, Palmers Green London N13  
Tel: 020 8379 2724

### **HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION – NORTH LONDON BRANCH**

All meetings are held at 8.00 p.m. in Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield.

#### **Tuesday 10 September 2002**

*Iraq: the Land between Two Rivers:* Paul Hodge

#### **Tuesday 08 October 2002**

*Archaeology of the real King Arthur:* David Morgan Evans

#### **Tuesday 12 November 2002**

*The Victorians and Empire:* Prof. A J Stockwell

For details, contact Robin Blades, 020 8368 5328

### **WEST ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP**

All meetings are held at 7.45pm in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Unit, Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green

#### **Monday 09 September 2002**

*Prehistoric and Roman Epping Forest:*

Tony O'Connor

**Monday 14 October 2002**

*The Maya of Central America:*

Elizabeth Baquedano

**Monday 11 November 2002**

*Ice Age Art:* Jill Cook

# MEETING REPORTS

## The Prehistory of Greater London

Friday 17 May 2002: Hedley Swain

Hedley Swain is Head of the Early Department at the Museum of London and is project Manager for the new gallery opening at the Museum on 18 October. This was therefore a particularly opportune occasion for Mr Swain to speak to the Society, and he began by recalling some of the common public misconceptions of “prehistory” – the usual being of a world where humans in leather bikinis fought dinosaurs. The early 19<sup>th</sup> century attempts to depict prehistory were almost as fanciful, leaning either to the “noble savage” or the “ape man” models.

The story of human occupation of the area now covered by Greater London begins around 450 000BP, and this is the starting point for the new museum gallery. The River Thames is the key to the region, and it was around this time during the Anglian glaciation that the river moved to its present course. Previously, the river flowed through the Vale of St Albans and around Ipswich to join the proto-Rhine and flow into the North Sea. Flint tools – Acheulian handaxes (or bifaces) which were evidently used for butchery by a small population of hunter-gatherers - are the only evidence of human occupation in this period, and many examples are kept at the Museum of London. A large number were found at the gravel quarry at Swanscombe, with 3 pieces of the cranium of a young woman. It is important to note that these people, although human, were not *Homo sapiens*: the Swanscombe woman for example was of the species *Homo neanderthalensis*.

There is however plenty of environmental and faunal evidence, showing how animal populations vary with varying climatic conditions. The varying climate and sea levels led to the formation of the gravel river terraces, and the remains of cold-adapted animals are found in the first terrace close to the river, while those suited to warmer habitats are found on the upper terraces further away - for example, around 100 000BC Trafalgar Square would have been populated by large mammals – elephants, lions, mammoths and so on –this

being a warm spell between colder periods.

Evidence, in the form of new types of flint tools, of modern humans begins to appear in the archaeological record around 30 000 BP. The well-known site at Three Ways Wharf on the banks of the Colne in Uxbridge appears to be a butchery site, dating to around 10 000BP. Scatters of animal bone were recovered, interspersed with flint flakes, many of which could be reconstructed. The characteristic tool of the period is the long blade.

Climatic changes led to warmer conditions and the formation of mixed deciduous woodland in the area. Inevitably the animal population changed with the climate, and human behaviour adapted to the conditions and to hunting the smaller, quicker creatures. Mr Swain showed illustrations of the characteristic flint blades and points (microliths) of the period from Erith.

The period from around 4000BC, saw the beginning of agriculture, although it is unclear whether the practice was introduced or a native innovation. Clearings in the woodland were enlarged or created, possibly initially to attract animals, and it was suggested that animal husbandry could have developed from this practice. At Phoenix Wharf, ard marks were recorded on the Neolithic land surface. Ceramics also begin at this time, and the earliest pottery at present known from London comes from sites at Erith and Clapham. The form of the round-bottomed pots may have been based on leather bags.

Another characteristic artefact of the period is the polished stone axe. Used for clearing the forest, these are objects of intrinsic beauty and clearly items of importance. The construction of ceremonial monuments such as the Stanwell cursus and the Staines causewayed enclosure dates to the Neolithic.

Changing social practices from 2500-2000BC are shown by the construction of round barrows, the use of grave goods and the use of the beaker type pottery, although these are relatively under-represented in London: one such barrow described was that at Fennings Wharf, North Southwark.

Further developments in ritual practices from the second millennium BC are suggested by a pit containing the deposited remains of an aurochs in West London. Placed deposits including animal parts, flints etc. have also

been identified at St Mary's, Carshalton, a ringed enclosure dating to c. 1500BC. It is noticeable that settlements are becoming the dominant landscape feature, of which a number are dotted around London including a typical example at Stockley Park, West London, where the ubiquitous roundhouse and four-poster structures were identified. The site at Caesar's Camp, Heathrow not only included roundhouses but a rectangular structure interpreted as a shrine, or religious building of some sort, as did the site at Maryon Park, Charlton.

Larger sites such as those at Caesar's Camp, Wimbledon, and Uphall Camp, Ilford have conventionally been described as hillforts, and date to around 100 BC. Their precise function or functions is the subject of debate, although it should not necessarily be assumed that all hillforts in all regions had the same purpose. Mr Swain suggested that one possible use was as trading centres, and that people were coming together in large groups.

In prehistory the Thames was much wider and wilder, with marshy marginal areas crossed by trackways of which many examples such as that at Beckton exist. At Vauxhall, parallel rows of oak piles extending into the channel have been found. These could be part of a bridge, crossing to one of the small islands in the then braided river, or a small pier or platform from which votive deposits could be despatched to the water. It is clear that the River Thames has

always been the most important element in the region, not only for functional reasons – transport, a barrier, and as a resource – but also for symbolic and ritual reasons. There is a very strong impression that the river was regarded as sacred, and a huge number of artefacts have been recovered from the river, mainly during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These include the famous Battersea Shield, the Waterloo Helmet and the Brentford Horn Cap.

Mr Swain then described the new "London Before London" gallery at the Museum of London. The gallery will be chronological but will avoid the use of the "three age" system, as did Mr Swain in his talk. It will be interesting to compare this with the thematic approach adopted by the National Museum of Scotland. The importance of the river will be emphasised by the use of a central "river wall", while the outside walls will form "landscape walls". It is intended that four "take-home" messages will be imparted to visitors, headed Climate, River, People, and Legacy.

This talk encompassed the vast majority of human existence, in chronological terms, in the region, and yet was highly entertaining, informative and fascinating throughout. With Hedley Swain as Project Manager, the new prehistoric gallery at the Museum of London will surely be a huge success.

*Jon Tanner*



# The Old New River Course at Myddelton House

For several years members of the Enfield Archaeological Society have been investigating the portion of the former Whitewebbs loop of the New River's old course which flowed through the grounds of Myddelton House, Enfield – the former home of the Bowles family.

Construction of the New River commenced in April 1609 at Chadwell Spring near Ware, with up to six hundred labourers engaged at half-a-crown a day. The route followed the one hundred foot contour along the west side of the Lee valley.

A loop 5.6km (3½ miles) long had to be dug in Whitewebbs Park commencing near Turkey Street, running up nearly to Crews Hill

pumping station and returning across Whitewebbs golf course to the bottom of Clay Hill before continuing on to Islington. This was because the New River was initially unable to cross the valley of Maiden's Brook. In 1859 the Docwra aqueduct across Maiden's Brook was opened, bypassing the Whitewebbs Loop and making it redundant.

39 years later, in 1898, the Crews Hill pumping station was opened to supply the New River with additional water. The output from its two beam pumping engines discharged via a flow measuring weir to gravity feed a 610mm (24 inch) diameter metal pipeline. The route ran diagonally across the field adjacent to the pumping station, across Cuffley Brook, through the woods, into Carrion Pit Bottom field, under the New River Loop, on through Black Bush Bottom field, finally running close alongside the Loop when it became visible at a depth of about 2.1m in a brick lined pit containing a large Stone Patent stopcock at the edge of Archery Wood.

Adjacent to this large manhole was a line of blue industrial bricks, 1½ bricks thick (Fig. 1). This delineated the "basin" now forming the far end of the original initial section of the old New River Loop. After standing idle for 39 years, the output from the pumping station flowed into the basin producing a flow through the Myddelton House grounds in the opposite direction to that occurring when the full Loop was in use.

The basin also contained a substantial vertical iron sluice gate operated by a rack and pinion with a ratchet. The sluice fed into a vertical brick shaft feeding a brick tunnel and brick-lined culvert and on to field ditches draining into Maiden's Brook. There was a sluice gate at the New River end of the loop. With it closed, the sluice in the basin could be used to drain down this portion of the Loop. With it open, a flow of water from the New River could be drained into Maiden's Brook via the basin sluice, thus back-flushing the Loop to remove accumulated weeds. The slope of the Loop was downhill from the New River with a drop of 50-75mm (2"-3") per mile and if the Water Board bankman forgot to open the basin sluice, flooding occurred in the grounds of Myddelton House.

A map of 1867 shows a bridge carrying a farm track over the Loop near to the position of the basin sluice, but it does not show this sluice, which appears in a map of 1896. Thus the Loop was back-flushed up to the basin to provide a flow of fresh water prior to the building in 1898 of the pumping station and pipeline.

A weir set the level of water in the basin, its overflow going via a metal pipe into the sluice outlet. Nearby was a cast iron NRC (New River Company) marker. An auxiliary stopcock enabled the main 610mm pipeline to be drained down via a pipe to Maiden's Brook. The pipeline emerged some 2m down from beneath a large concrete block in front of the line of blue bricks and whose upper surface was about 500mm below water level.

This was ascertained by Enfield Archaeological Society members with the help of a tracked excavator and its skilled driver hired from Enfield Council.

The function of the block was to protect the banks of the basin from the twice per week flow of the pumping station from its 61m (200') deep well into the chalk. The pumping station closed in about 1950 due to lack of water from its well and the Loop from the New River to the basin was filled in with debris from the Victoria Line tube and the demolished Southgate Police Station. The spoil removed by the excavator contained many bricks and pieces of rubble.

The Loop in front of Myddelton House (completed in 1818 by Henry Bowles) held water for 239 years. Henry Bowles was a Governor of the New River Company and most likely used his influence with the Company to ensure a flow of fresh water through the gardens in front of his house. His son, E A (Gussie) Bowles, developed the gardens, building an Alpine Meadow with an extensive rockery of Kentish ragstone watered by a leak in the Loop's embankment. Loop water was also pumped up by the cowman by hand to tanks in the roof to supply Myddelton House.

Thus ends the fascinating story of the involvement of the Bowles family with the Whitewebbs Loop of the New River and the Myddelton House gardens.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the assistance of the gardens and sports staff at

Myddelton House, Enfield Council for providing the excavator, John Cunningham – former Thames Water civil engineer, for valuable advice and my EAS colleague Mike Dewbrey for the use of dowsing rods which led the EAS to employ the excavator to confirm the location of the end of pipeline – which is as described by Sir Alexander Houston, Chief Engineer, in his 20<sup>th</sup> Annual report to the Metropolitan Water Board of 1926.

*Dennis Hill*

Figure 1 follows on page 7

**FIGURE 1: PLAN OF THE BASIN**

## Capel Manor Excavation

The Society was contacted via our Chairman Dennis Hill earlier in the year by one of the head gardeners at Capel Manor College regarding a fragment of arched brickwork which had been uncovered at the base of the Theobalds Park boundary wall which runs through the north end of the estate. A small team from the Pastfinders excavated the feature to try to understand how the brick arch related to the wall and what exactly it was there for. Clearing back the accumulated soil and overgrowth of ivy the theory that this was a tree-relieving arch was quickly dispelled when the archway was revealed to have a span of 3.05m! There was some speculation that the feature may have been associated with the old course of the New River which when dug was also exactly 3.05m (10'0") wide.

Study of the 1803 enclosure maps of the area shows a ditch or culvert in roughly the same position as the brick arch running north to south but with no evidence of the gully on the south side of the boundary wall. It is possible that many of the field and property boundaries shown on the enclosure map consisted of drainage ditches, which eventually silted up or were filled in and lost outside of living memory.

The excavation revealed the foundations of the Theobalds Park boundary wall. Within the lower courses some of the original 1620's brickwork still survives below ground level. Much of the wall has been rebuilt over the years above ground using 19<sup>th</sup> century stock bricks. The 17<sup>th</sup> century brickwork is easily identifiable as the bricks are thinner and red in colour with a much softer texture as they fired at lower temperatures than later bricks.

In section the profile of the culvert tapered quite sharply confirming that we were indeed uncovering a drainage culvert, which ran

underneath the wall taking water down to a stream, which ran further to the north before the M25 was constructed. The culvert had been filled in with a mortarly loam mixed with broken brickwork from the wall above. In the bottom of the culvert a gravel layer cleaned down to natural clay and brickearth. The sides of the gully seem to be puddle with clay to assist with water retention. The bottom of the culvert was bricked up at some time in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as several mortared-in brick courses were uncovered at the bottom of the section. This would suggest that the culvert became disused in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century at about the same time as the Theobalds Park boundary wall was being rebuilt by the owners of the estate as it had fallen into disrepair.

A few small sherds of brown glazed pottery were recovered from the fill together with some fragments of 19<sup>th</sup> century clay pipe stem.

The culvert runs parallel with the projected line of Roman Ermin Street but no evidence of Roman occupation was found.

Capel Manor College have plans to landscape the culvert and create a garden feature using the brick arch as a centre point. The damp conditions will no doubt make an ideal environment for ferns and mosses along the shady woodland walk.

The arch has been photographed and recorded by Les Whitmore and a report of our findings has been sent to the Director of Estates and Buildings at Capel Manor. We are forging a good working relationship with Capel Manor and feel sure that this will continue with other interesting projects in the future.

*Mike Dewbrey*

Location Plan follows on page 9



## CAPEL MANOR EXCAVATION: LOCATION PLAN

# PASTFINDERS REPORT

## PASTFINDERS NEWS

The Executive Committee has agreed that in future the Pastfinders newsletter will be included in the quarterly bulletin. The main advantage of this besides reducing postal costs is that all EAS members will now be able to read about what we have been up to and also be aware of any activities planned for the future such as field trips or excavations.

## LEIGHTON ROAD BUSH HILL PARK

The excavation of the Romano-British site in Bush Hill Park has now been completed. The legacy of a year's work recording every detail of each trench is that large quantities of pottery need to be washed, sorted and marked. If you enjoy doing jigsaw puzzles and would like to help out call Mike on 07973 431346. Nick Bateson of WEAG has kindly agreed to analyse the samples of animal bone from the site and Dr Martin Dearne, our Roman small finds specialist is studying the many fragments of Samian ware and metallic finds recovered. Our thanks once again go out to Mr and Mrs Costello for their cordial hospitality.

## TURKEY STREET

Everyone is mourning the loss of The Plough, a much-loved landmark which was unceremoniously demolished by local builders recently. An alehouse had stood on this site for three hundred years, which was about the same time that a detached cottage was built overlooking a small stream on a south-facing slope nearby. We were invited by the owners of the cottage to dig a small test pit in the rear garden to try to establish whether the house originally may have had a lower ground floor or cellar. The cottage retains a timber framework, which suggests a 17<sup>th</sup> century construction date. Beneath 1.5m of topsoil containing 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century domestic debris we have located mortared 19<sup>th</sup> century brickwork. As work is still continuing at the site and the test pit is evolving into a sizable trench a full report on our findings will appear in a subsequent bulletin.

## CAPEL MANOR

A small team of Pastfinders investigated the arched feature discovered by the gardeners underneath the Theobalds Park boundary wall within the grounds of Capel Manor. A detailed report on this excavation is included elsewhere in the bulletin. Hopefully in the near future, weather permitting, we shall be taking the opportunity to dig a section across a small field owned by Capel manor which may reveal evidence of Roman Ermin Street. Due to other commitments which have a habit of cropping up at short notice this project, which was to be a training dig for some of our less experienced volunteers, has been delayed but we hope to be able begin work there in the autumn as the site becomes waterlogged in the winter months.

## FIELD TRIPS

Some of the field trips we had planned may have to be postponed until next year. We are however organising the following trips so make sure you write these dates in your diary:

### **Waltham Abbey and the Monastic Precincts**

Meet in the Rose Gardens Car Park, Abbey View at 2p.m. on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2002

### **Tour of the 1471 Battlefield at Barnet**

Meet in the sliproad outside Old Fold Manor Golf Club at 2p.m. on Sunday 27 October 2002.

### **A visit to the site of James I's Palace of Theobalds at Waltham Cross**

Meet in the car park in Cedars Park off Theobalds Lane at 2p.m. on Sunday 22 September 2002

It is a good idea to bring a waterproof and strong footwear in case of wet weather. Each visit should take no more than two hours so do not forget your camera. EAS members just turn up on the day; no need to book tickets but arranging transport to and from the sites will be each individual's responsibility.

*Mike Dewbrey*