



Charity XT29402

# SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

Founded in 1969

PATRON: Prof. Malcolm Airs  
PRESIDENT: Hazel Williams

## Annual Report & Accounts for 2012

### SOAG 44th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Goring Heath Parish Hall, Whitchurch Hill 2:00pm on Sunday 21st April 2013



*SOAGs listening attentively to Paul Booth at our outing to the Dorchester excavations*

*Gatehampton Open Day*



*Blewbury – test pitting at its prettiest!*



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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

*(Compiled by the Chairman from reports by members of the Committee)*

2012 was another successful year for SOAG.

In this time of financial difficulty our membership numbers have held up; we had hoped that our new charity status would enable us to actually increase income by Gift Aid repayments from the Inland Revenue in respect of tax paying members. Inland Revenue has just informed us that our submissions have been rejected due to the benefits gained by free admission to our lectures. We will therefore propose to make guest admission "by voluntary donation" in the future. Nevertheless, we have been able to maintain the cost of membership at the same level even though some of our basic costs have risen. Our finances have for a considerable time been under the control of John Gibbs as our Treasurer. However, due to significant health problems John feels he must resign from this role and we shall miss him. This does mean we need a replacement and we are lucky that a SOAG member with Charity Treasurer experience agreed to be co-opted into the role. This is Kaz Greenham and she, if approved at the AGM, will take over with effect from then.

### Publications

Printing our annual *SOAG Bulletin* publication, now under John Hefferan's excellent editorship, represents one of our most expensive items closely followed by the cost of its distribution especially after the recent huge hike in postal charges. While, with its quality, this still represents good value for money, John and the committee are looking into ways of reducing this cost. One possibility could be to have distribution partly by electronic means, as it is mainly with Messenger, but with paper copies still available for members who prefer this. The committee will welcome considerations and comment on this matter and will keep the membership up to date with any proposals.

Our very informative monthly newsletter, *SOAG Messenger*, continues to be mainly written, as well as 100% edited, by a very hard working Mike Green; in a year the total pages he produces easily exceeds the average size of an issue of *SOAG Bulletin*. If these were distributed in paper form by mail the cost would equal the annual membership fee. Mike does get article contributions from many members and we are particularly grateful for all of these, especially the ones covering lectures during the winter programme.

### Events

The lecture programme is brilliantly organised by Nancy Nichols and we have had a series of outstanding talks which have been very well attended. The pre-Christmas one was followed by a copious spread of wine and snacks organised by Becky Morrison which was much appreciated by

the attendees. The lectures have covered a wide range of archaeological subjects at a high level and any of these could easily have been included in a professional archaeological conference. Nancy also coordinates any summer visits and organised the July visit to Dorchester on Thames.

This visit, by 32 SOAGs, came in two parts with the morning spent looking at the dig of the Roman remains within the allotment area and, after a pub lunch, a guided tour of the Abbey. Both of these are interesting areas as Roman Dorchester followed on from the adjacent Iron Age Oppida as a small Roman town, and in late Roman times had Saxon mercenary troops (*foederatii*) in residence. After the cessation of Roman power, the Saxon influence remained and expanded in Dorchester which eventually became the seat of a Bishop whose diocese extended to the Wash. Dorchester Abbey church is a rare survivor of a monastic church and some of the associated buildings.

### **Fieldwork programme**

The active digging programme saw significant changes this year. Ian Clarke has retired from active direction and is busy writing up the fantastic results from his **BBCHAP work**. This meant that there was no dig at Brightwell Baldwin in 2012, but plans are being made for further work. Mike Vincent, in addition to his roles as Secretary and Membership Secretary, is seeking permission from the new landowner for an excavation in the summer of 2013 which, although time is pressing, we still hope will be able take place at the end of July/ beginning of August.

More test pits were dug at **Ewelme** for Stephen Milesen's 'South Oxfordshire (Pilot) Project', run jointly by the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire and the University of Oxford, with Roelie Reed acting as the SOAG team leader. Policy and funding difficulties put a sudden brake on this work but it is hoped to restart fieldwork later in 2013 or after as a purely University of Oxford initiative.

In 2012 the village of **Blewbury**, which has long had an active History Society, initiated a community-based archaeology programme, under the leadership of Dave Carless. The main activity in the first season was a test pitting programme, mainly in private gardens, which was designed primarily to test support and enthusiasm in the village for field archaeology. Several neighbouring societies offered technical and material support, which in SOAG's case included the loan of much field equipment. Progress on the project was advertised regularly in *SOAG Messenger*, and several SOAG members took part directly in the field work. By the end of the season 16 test pits had been completed, and in the close season finds were washed and processed. This first year was deemed a success, both in participation rates, and in the nature of the finds, the most interesting of which provide direct evidence of the Saxon origins of the village. A wider range of activities is being planned for 2013 and SOAG will continue to be a close partner.

**Gatehampton**, under the direction of our President Hazel Williams, is SOAG's longest running project, continues to attract high numbers of SOAG members and those new to the group or to archaeology. During 2012 excavation was concentrated in three areas; a large room on the east side of the trench that, like the central room investigated the previous year, may in one phase have been a working area as it has a small furnace. The south side of the trench was extended for a wider look at the surface of the enclosure outside the building and as expected large quantities of pottery were found associated with what are likely to be domestic hearth areas. More work was also done in the area between the current trench and the earlier Trench 3 to establish the layout of the building and bring together the evidence found in that trench with that from our current work.

The highlight of this year at Gatehampton was the very successful Open Day in September that attracted nearly 100 visitors, mainly from local archaeological societies. It was an opportunity to

exchange views and discuss the site with fellow archaeologists. An exhibition, finds display and also tea and cake, were enjoyed by everyone. With excavation in progress, younger visitors in particular were encouraged to join in. Congratulations to the Gatehampton team for organising an event that has no doubt raised SOAGs profile and enhanced the group's reputation as an active and welcoming organisation. We are particularly grateful to the site owners for their valuable support for both the project and the Open Day

Under my direction we had a standalone project at **Highlands Farm** near Henley where SOAG, helped by members of HAHG, dug an unusually large test pit over four days in March (and enjoyed some of the best digging weather of the year). Highlands Farm is the most prolific site in the country for Acheulean period tools, but is under threat of development. The object of the test pit was to investigate if geological conditions were similar to the Scheduled Ancient Monument some 80 metres away and, if this was the case, were 450,000 year old tools present. We proved the geology was indeed similar being convoluted gravels laid down by a braided river, but for safety reasons we could not get down to the layers close to the top of the chalk that, from the work done in the 1960s, contain most tools. The best find was a large core from which tools had been struck. The other finds are still being professionally examined and it is possible some of the flints from the finds tray may prove to be worked. Much thanks to all those who took part especially those who worked in the confined space at the bottom of the pit reached by ladder.

Work at **Greys Mound** has changed course this year. Over the previous five years, under the leadership of David Nicholls, we have learned as much as we can from Barrowfield short of conducting an excavation of the barrow itself, a project that would require considerable resources and which is unlikely to take place in the immediate future, although a test pit soon is a possibility. Committee member Janet Eastment is now undertaking a PhD centred on the lithics of the wider area. Accordingly 2012 saw a number of joint activities. SOAG embarked on a comprehensive geophysical survey of an adjacent field, Greys 3, which has suggests interesting features in aerial surveys – field work that is enabled by a very supportive landowner. This geographical survey is incomplete and has so far been inconclusive, but it is hoped to continue in the new season.

Janet meanwhile has led several fieldwalking surveys the major one being the completion of the survey of Rowcroft field, (also adjacent to Barrowfield) that was begun in 2009. This survey was of the whole field, which was walked using a 25m square grid; analysis of the collected flints is ongoing. She has also led fieldwalking for her own research in three other locations on the Chilterns slope that runs from Rotherfield Greys down to the Thames.

### **Possible future new sites**

We are looking at doing some resistivity surveying at **Ascott Park** to expand the area already examined as part of the hunt for the house built there in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but burned down before it was occupied. We have also been asked, by the common management committee, to help record the archaeology on **Kingswood Common** close to Sonning Common, this is mainly a WWII US army camp.

We have acquired more equipment and while the dedicated site store is at Gatehampton cannot take any extra items we are thankful that we have been given some space in Pat Preece's garage. The new items include two heavy duty gazebos one of which we hope can be used at any events we attend, while the other will provide shelter at digs and a portable toilet also for use at digs.

***Dave Oliver (Chairman)*** 31 March 2013

## LECTURES AND VISITS IN 2012

### Lecture Series:

- 26 Jan      **Dr Gill Hey**, Oxford Archaeology  
Being Neolithic in the Upper Thames Valley: recent work and new perspectives
- 23 Feb      **Prof Helena Hamerow**, Oxford University, School of Archaeology  
An Anglo-Saxon royal vill at Sutton Courtenay/Drayton
- 23 Mar      **Tim Allen**, Oxford Archaeology  
A road through the Past: prehistoric, Roman & medieval discoveries on the A2 in North West Kent
- 22 April     **AGM and Review of SOAG Archaeology**
- 27 Sep      **Professor Martin Bell**, University of Reading)  
Footsteps in the past: prehistoric intertidal archaeology in the Severn Estuary
- 25 Oct      **Helen Winton**, English Heritage  
A bird's eye view: archaeological aerial survey
- 22 Nov      **Dr Katie Meheux**, University College London  
Saxon Reading: new discoveries and interpretations  
and  
The SOAG Christmas Seasonal Party

### Events and Visits:

- 13 July      Dorchester excavations and guided tour of Dorchester Abbey and Museum  
Tour guides      Paul Booth and Wendy Morrison (Oxford Archaeology) and  
Sue Dixon (Dorchester Abbey Education Officer)  
Organiser Nancy Nichols
- 09 June      Oxfordshire Past (Henley): SOAG took a stand, arranged & hosted by Dave Oliver
- 15 Sep      Afternoon Tea at the Villa -  
Open House at SOAG Gatehampton Archeological Excavation  
Organiser: Hazel Williams
- 29 Sep      Half-Day Workshop on Medieval Pottery  
Led by              Lorraine Mephram (Wessex Archaeology)  
Organiser        Janet Firth, held in co-operation with Berkshire Archaeological  
Research Group

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Last year, in addition to the Annual Accounts sheet which contains the amounts actually banked or cashed during the year, we produced a draft Budget Centre Forecasts and Actuals sheet containing summaries that reflected the actual income/expenditure for the year. This budget model is still a “work in progress”, has been of much use for the committee in identifying core administrative and project based resources, and when in a final format will be included with the Annual Accounts in future years.

As always, we need to continue the process of improving our forecasting and control, and to monitor costs closely and explore all opportunities both to reduce costs and increase income. One innovation in increasing the Group's income, which we were hoping would prove an immediate success in 2012, was the introduction of Gift Aid. As the Chairman has noted, our submission was rejected on the basis of the benefits accruing from “free” lectures, but when our treatment of guests is revised this year, we anticipate significant additions, over £300, to our future annual income. Over 80% of non junior/student members have been able to declare eligibility and thanks are due to our members for participating so willingly.

The budget model will also facilitate appreciation of year-on-year differences, where the Annual Accounts, prepared on a receipts and payment basis and thence including some items attributing to 2011 and 2013, do not reflect strictly annualised income and expenditure.

### **Notes to the 2012 Accounts**

#### **1. General**

These accounts were prepared in accordance with guidance from the Charities Commission ‘Statement of Recommended Practice’ (SORP 2005).

#### **2. Payments**

Dig expenses - As in previous years, the general principle was that all projects should aim to be self-funding.

#### **3. Receipts**

Subscriptions - Membership seems to have stabilised at about the 145 mark, and receipts were slightly up.

#### **4. Monetary Assets**

Restricted Fund – This consists of the Trio Fund donated by Pat Preece to support our activities in the field of Landscape Archaeology.

#### **5. Assets**

Are where appropriate included at cost.

John M. Gibbs  
3<sup>rd</sup> April 2013

**SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2012**

**Receipts and Payments Account  
for Year Ended 31 December 2012**

<b><u>UNRESTRICTED GENERAL FUND</u></b>	
<b>RECEIPTS</b>	
<u>31/12/2011</u>	<u>31/12/2012</u>
<b>£3,470.67</b>	<b>£13,096.61</b> <sup>1</sup>
Balance brought forward	
1,654.00	1,738.50
Subscriptions	
0.00	1.00
Sale of Bulletins	
10,036.50	15.00
Donations	<sup>2</sup>
1.23	5.40
Bank Interest	
15.65	38.90
Party/Teas income	
239.25	320.61
Visitors'/Diggers' Fees	
0.00	0.00
Equipment Sale	
<b>£11,946.63</b>	<b>£2,119.41</b>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	
<b>PAYMENTS</b>	
169.99	0.00
Venue Hall Hire	
572.64	488.54
Insurance	<sup>3</sup>
1,026.85	416.00
Bulletin	<sup>4</sup>
190.00	200.00
Speaker Expenses	<sup>5</sup>
49.95	7.00
SOAG Party	
20.50	20.50
Standing Orders	
0.00	149.98
Equipment Purchase	
0.00	36.00
Publishing SMA	
102.00	0.00
Dig Expenses	
50.16	172.39
Office Expenses	<sup>6</sup>
61.60	143.15
Messenger	<sup>7</sup>
50.00	68.00
Committee room	
27.00	17.00
Website	
<b>£2,320.69</b>	<b>£1,718.56</b>
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	
£9,625.94	£400.85
Surplus for year	
<b>£13,096.61</b>	<b>£13,497.46</b>
Balance carried forward	

**Statement of Assets & Liabilities  
as at 31 December 2012**

<b>MONETARY ASSETS</b>	
<u>31/12/2011</u>	<u>31/12/2012</u>
2,194.47	2,660.01
Main Account	
10,832.05	10,837.45
Reserve Account	
70.09	0.00
BBCHAP Account	
<b>£13,096.61</b>	<b>£13,497.46</b>
<b>TOTAL MONETARY ASSETS</b>	
<b>REPRESENTED BY FUNDS</b>	
12,096.61	12,497.46
Unrestricted General Fund	
1,000.00	1,000.00
Restricted Funds	
(P. Preece Trio fund)	
<b>£13,096.61</b>	<b>£13,497.46</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	

<b>MAJOR FIXED ASSETS AT COST</b>	
Geoscan RM15-D Resistivity Meter	6288.36
HP NC6320 Laptop PC	734.36
Toshiba X2000 LCD Projector	505.24
Dumpy Level	349.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>£7,876.96</b> <sup>8</sup>

Accounts prepared by:  
**John M. Gibbs**

**Notes**

- See general comments in Treasurer's Report concerning Year-On-Year differences.
- 2011 figure includes £10,000 from Cyn Graham-Kerr estate.
- Insurance costs for 2011 included £84.10 from 2010.
- 2011 figure includes 2010 printing costs of £374, plus 2011 costs of printing £567 and distribution £85.85).
- Includes £40 from 2011
- All 2011 costs, 2012 costs yet to be booked.
- Costs for 2011, costs for 2012 still to be booked.
- Note represents undepreciated cost of assets, not current value.

This account was examined by Trudi Kidd from documentation provided and provides a true and accurate presentation of the transactions of the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group during 2012.

Signed by: **Trudi Kidd** \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: **3rd April 2013**

*(signed original on file)*

## **SOAG OFFICERS AND ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

*As they stand at the end of year 2012-2013 & including reference to any special roles*

Hon President :	Mrs Hazel Williams (also Director of the Roman Villa dig)
Vice President	Mr Ian Clarke
Chairman	Mr David Oliver
Vice Chairman	Dr Nancy Nichols (SOAG Events Secretary)
Hon Secretary	Mr Michael Vincent
Hon Treasurer	Mr John Gibbs (resigning at the AGM)
Ordinary Members	Mr John Hefferan (Editor, <i>SOAG Bulletin</i> )
	Mr Michael Green (Editor, <i>SOAG Messenger</i> , and SOAG webmaster)
	Mrs Janet Eastment
	Mr David Carless (co-Director, Blewbury “Big Dig”)
	Mr David Jobling
	Mrs Kaz Greenham (co-opted 13/03/13 as Treasurer designate)