



Charity XT29402

# SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

Founded in 1969

PATRON: Prof. Malcolm Airs  
PRESIDENT: Hazel Williams

## Annual Report & Accounts for 2013

**SOAG 45th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Goring Heath Parish Hall, Whitchurch Hill**  
**2:00pm on Sunday 27th April 2014**



*Dave Oliver at Oxfordshire Past*

**SOAG on display!**



*Gatehampton Open Day*



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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

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

### **Introduction**

Once again, I am happy that I can say SOAG had a good year! The committee has as ever worked very hard and SOAG has much to thank them for.

It is very good to have our new Treasurer and auditor on board; thanks are due to the February lecture attendees who made up the SGM that ratified these appointments. Our new Treasurer has fitted in seamlessly for which I am grateful.

You will find Kaz Greenham's new and informative accounts appended to this report.

It is of some concern that membership again fell in 2013; we "lost" 36 and gained only 19 new members. The membership receipts were held stable due to a life membership payment while our Gift Aid submission has finally been approved by HMRC; further mention of this is made in the Treasurer's report. Many thanks are due to all the membership who have been able to participate in this scheme and who have taken the time to fill in the forms that the Secretary has been assailing them with in order to set it up!

I unfortunately have to resign as SOAG Chairman as I am moving to north Bedfordshire for family reasons and 90 plus miles is a bit far to come for meetings etc. The rest of the committee will, I hope, be carrying on with their roles so I know the Group will be in good hands.

### **Summary of fieldwork programme**

On the archaeological front, while we did not dig at as many locations, we still carried out minor excavation at one new site and geophysics at two others in addition to the regular Gatehampton and Blewbury digs.

The efforts of SOAG's diggers have extended the known area of the Roman Villa at Gatehampton; it is truly a large building although it may be that we have now shown where the eastern end is.

The test pit programme at Blewbury has carried on and is gradually increasing what is known about early settlement there.

(More details of our Gatehampton and Blewbury work are given in a later section of this report, and will be presented at the SOAG AGM.)

Work at Brightwell Baldwin has been halted until we gain permission from the new owner to carry on with the excavation.

No work was conducted this year at Greys Mound but it is still hoped that in future we may be able to undertake a limited excavation with the intention of dating the structure.

More extensive geophysics has been done at Ascott Park (led by Ian Clarke and Gerard Latham) and this we believe has confirmed the location of the lost house to be in the "hole" at that site.

A geophysical survey, carried out jointly with Marlow Archaeology Society, was also carried out over an interesting cropmark near Binfield Heath found on Google Earth. However, due to extremely dry site conditions little was seen. This site is near that of an unidentified Roman building in High Wood, which is being studied for its potential as a long-term project.

Two test pits were dug at Greyhorne Wood (led by myself) in the hope of finding some evidence as to the age of the enclosures there discovered by a SOAG member. No evidence was found although a wooden revetment where a track cuts one of the mounds proved to be probably Victorian. That, however, does not date the mounds to all being Victorian.

The variety of interesting crop marks in what remains of open space in Emmer Green is suggestive of significant prehistoric activity in this area. To record what can still be seen before it is put at risk by potential development a geophysical survey was undertaken of the recreation ground using the combined resources of SOAG and BARG. Reading University also assisted with the loan of their more specialised magnetometer and GPR equipment. The results are still being analysed and when complete will be logged with Reading Borough Council.

I must thank all who have carried out this fieldwork, particularly the site directors and team leaders who shoulder so much responsibility.

### **Blewbury**

Following the successful 2012 “Blewbury Big Dig” test pit season (a community-based archaeology programme, mainly in private gardens, led by Dave Carless), it was decided to extend the campaign for two more years. With continued strong support from SOAG in the form of technical advice and the loan of field equipment, as well as active participation by many SOAG members, further progress had been made by the end of 2013. A total of 25 test pits has now been completed, and in the close season all finds have been washed and processed. In addition to test pitting, a programme of geophysical surveys of the open spaces within the village has been started. Both the test pits and the geophysical surveys are now primarily focussed on two main research areas: the Saxon origins of the village and the history of the small Nottingham Fee Manor in the heart of the village. In 2014, this work will continue as a close partnership between the Blewbury groups and SOAG.

### **Gatehampton**

In 2013, a record number of volunteers participated in the Gatehampton roman villa excavation, nearly 80 in all. It is particularly pleasing that this included twenty young children under 14 years as the site attracted more family groups. An important part of SOAG’s aims for archaeology in South Oxfordshire is to engage and enthuse the next generation of young archaeologists.

The Gatehampton Open day in September attracted a similar number. This was organised in collaboration with a walking group from Pangbourne and another from the Whitchurch that included a ‘walk through history’, ending at the villa site. A dry sunny day made all the difference, with the whole site open and the villa layout marked out for visitors to see. As usual, guided tours, displays of finds and information and refreshments were provided. The day was a great success.

The excavation has reached an interesting phase with a large trench in the site field and a new trench opened in the car park area to the east. Two large rooms and part of a corridor were excavated in the ten by twelve metre trench in the site field. In the car park trench, substantial walls suggest that we may be close to finding the extent of the building and establishing that the eastern end of the villa may be the earliest phase.

### **Lectures and events**

The SOAG lecture programme, which runs from September to March each year, continues to entertain and stimulate SOAG members during the winter months. This year our speakers were mainly local,

including three from Reading University, one from Oxford, two from Oxford Archaeology, and Judy Dewey from TWHAS, our neighbouring society in Wallingford who helped us out one month at very short notice when a speaker was unable to attend. The lecture topics however have been more widespread, covering digs in the Middle East, Kent, and Wallingford; the science of pollen analysis; the effects of the Black Death; and finally the mystery of why people figure so little in pre-historic British pottery decoration. We are particularly grateful to our lecture organiser, Nancy Nichols, who nevertheless emphasises that she is dependent on suggestions for lectures and lecture topics by SOAG members.

In 2012, we mooted changing our venue from the village hall in Whitchurch Hill to a location in one of our neighbouring urban centres, but we decided to stay and are happy that attendance has held up, notwithstanding the recent closure of the bridge at Pangbourne adding to the journey times for some attendees.

The lectures also facilitate continuing social contact between members during the non-digging season, and two events were particularly successful on this count – the SOAG Christmas party after the last lecture of the year, and the buffet after our April review of the year’s field events. We therefore mustn’t forget to thank also Becky Morrisson and David Cox for their regular assistance on the catering front.

The summer visit this year, also organised by Nancy Nichols, was to Oxfordshire’s Museums Resource Centre at Standlake, where a presentation on the role and responsibilities of the Centre was followed by a tour of the main collections, which includes most of the finds from the county’s archaeological digs. After an excellent and sociable lunch at the Talbot Inn near Eynsham we progressed to the Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock. It is here that many of the most interesting artefacts from Standlake are on public display and for this event we were given privileged access to some new galleries. Tea and cakes in the museum garden ended a very enjoyable and rewarding day for 24 SOAG members and friends.

Other events that SOAG took part in included a stand at Oxfordshire Past 2014, arranged and hosted by myself, and a pottery workshop, jointly with BARG, tutored by Lorraine Mephram of Wessex Archaeology.

## **Publications**

Under the editorship of Mike Green, in 2013 there were ten issues of our newsletter, *SOAG Messenger*, which is our main method of communicating with members. Messenger advertises and then reports all our activities as well as publishing interesting Tailings submitted by members. Recently we have increasingly advertised public events organised by our neighbouring societies, mirroring an increasing trend for collaborative working and reflecting the fact that many SOAG members are also members of other local societies. The frequency of publication is only possible through the many contributions from our activity leaders and other SOAG members.

Mike also maintains our SOAG website, one of whose particular values in recent years has been attracting newcomers to SOAG. They read about us on the web, and typically arrange to visit our Sunday dig at the Villa. Many then join our society.

The latest *SOAG Bulletin*, once again produced by the editorial team of John Hefferan and Janet Eastment, covered the 2012 fieldwork and this year included the early 2013 fieldwork. This brings its scope into line with the lecture “year”, makes it possible for us to include the more recent information and (frankly!) makes it easier for the contributors.

***Dave Oliver (Chairman)***

31 March 2014

## LECTURES AND VISITS IN 2013

### Lecture Programme:

- 24 Jan      **Professor Roger and Dr Wendy Matthews,** University of Reading  
Excavating the First Farmers in the Zagros Mountains of Iran and Iraq
- 28 Feb      **Judy Dewey,** Curator, Wallingford Museum  
Wallingford: from Burh to Borough
- 28 Mar      **John Poulter**  
The Planning of Roman roads in Britain
- 21 April     **AGM and Review of SOAG Archaeology**
- 26 Sep      **Professor Gregory Stores,** University of Oxford  
The Black Death: its Nature and Effects on Society
- 24 Oct      **Dr Michael Keith-Lucas,** University of Reading  
The use of pollen analysis in archaeology
- 28 Nov      **Dr Lisa Brown,** Oxford Archaeology  
Finding the People in the Pottery  
and  
The SOAG Christmas Seasonal Party

### Events and Visits:

- 1 June      Oxfordshire Past 2014 (Kidlington):  
SOAG took a stand, arranged & hosted by Dave Oliver
- 19 Aug      Oxfordshire's Museums Resource Centre at Standlake (a.m.)  
The Oxfordshire Museum at Woodstock (p.m.)  
*Organiser:* Nancy Nichols
- 6 Oct      Open House at SOAG Gatehampton Archaeological Excavation  
*Organiser:* Hazel Williams
- 7 Dec      Half-Day Workshop on Pottery Coarseware (joint with BARG)  
*Tutor:* Lorraine Mephram (Wessex Archaeology)  
*Organiser:* Dave Carless

## TREASURERS REPORT 2013

It is the intention of the Committee that core activities (such as the running the lecture series, circulation of information and publications, and administration of the Group) are funded by Subscription and associated income and that all projects are self-funding.

With this in mind, the layout of the year-end accounts has been altered to show core income and expenses as identifiable items, and a core activities budget for 2014. You will be pleased to note that our core activities have been funded by our subscription income over the last 2 years, and our forecast for 2014 also shows a small surplus.

Thank you to all Members who have completed and returned Gift Aid Declarations. Although we have no Gift Aid Receipts in the 2013 Accounts, we have a robust system in place to ensure that Gift Aid claims will be paid in future years.

A further change has been made to the way that our cash assets are displayed: in addition to the Restricted Fund (the donation by Pat Preece to pursue activities in landscape archaeology) the accounts now show Designated Funds for, for example, the Gatehampton project

### *Note*

*Restricted Funds: Funding for specific projects as declared by the donor at the time of donation. They cannot be used to cover other expenditure*

*Designated Funds: Funds for specific projects, as agreed by the Committee*

We are delighted to report that we accepted a lifetime membership subscription this year. This has been treated wholly as income, as we do not expect to receive many such memberships.

Looking forward to 2014

We anticipate subscription income to be slightly reduced, due to natural turnover. However, Gift Aid income will be available to us, which will keep our overall income about the same level. Since the year end, £247 gift aid was received in March 2014 in respect of 2013; this will show in the 2014 accounts.

Tight control will be kept on core activity expenses

Kaz Greenham  
Honorary Treasurer  
March 2014

## South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group (SOAG) Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2013

### Receipts and Payments

2012		2013	2014 Core Activities Budget
13,097	<b>Balance as at 1st January</b>	13,497	
	<b>Receipts</b>		
	<b>Core Activities</b>	1	
1,739	Subscriptions	1,565	1,495
	Life Subs	210	
	Gift Aid	0 <sup>2</sup>	284
39	Refreshments income	11 <sup>3</sup>	
	Lecture Visitor Donations	37 <sup>4</sup>	
1,777	<b>Subtotal, Core Activities</b>	1,822	1,779
15	Grants/Donations	1,000 <sup>5</sup>	
321	Diggers Fees	882	
0	T-shirt Sales	240 <sup>6</sup>	
5	Bank Interest	5	
1	Other		
342	<b>Subtotal, Non-core Activities</b>	2,127	
<b>2,119</b>	<b>Total receipts in year</b>	<b>3,949</b>	
	<b>Payments</b>		
	<b>Core Activities</b>		
143	Messenger	93	106
416	Bulletin	463 <sup>7</sup>	500
53	Publicity, incl Website	9	40
68	Room Hire	81	90
489	Insurance	514	550
172	Office/Admin Costs	121 <sup>8</sup>	25
	Hall hire	290 <sup>9</sup>	145
200	Speaker Expenses	220	240
7	Refreshments	35	45
21	Affiliate fees	21	21
1,569	<b>Subtotal, Core Activities</b>	1,846	1,762
150	Equipment	1,183 <sup>10</sup>	
	T shirts	611 <sup>6</sup>	
	Trust exp	156 <sup>5</sup>	
	Dig expenses	311	
	Equipment Repairs	251 <sup>11</sup>	
150	<b>Subtotal, Non-core Activities</b>	2,512	
<b>1,719</b>	<b>Total payments in year</b>	<b>4,359</b>	
209	Surplus/loss for year on Core Activities	-25 <sup>12</sup>	
192	Surplus/loss for year None-Core Activities	-385	18
401	Total Surplus/loss for year	-410	
<b>13,497</b>	<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>13,088</b>	

These accounts were prepared, on a receipts and payments basis,  
in accordance with guidance from the Charities Commission  
'Statement of Recommended Practice' (SORP 2005)  
by Kaz Greenham, Honorary Treasurer  
March 2014

### Assets

2012	Monetary Assets	2013
2,660	Main Account	2,245
10,837	Reserve Account	10,843
0	BBCHAP Account	0
<b>13,497</b>	<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>13,088</b>
	<b>Represented by</b>	
13,497	Unrestricted Fund	10,651
	<i>Restricted Funds</i>	
1,000	P Preece Trio	1,000
	<i>Designated Funds</i>	
	Gatehampton Project	593
	Robert Kiln Trust	844
<b>13,497</b>		<b>13,088</b>
	<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
	<i>Major Fixed Assets at Cost</i>	
	Geoscan RM15-D Resistivity Meter	6,288
	HP NC6320 Laptop	734
	Toshiba X2000 LCD Projector	505
	Dumpy Level	349
		<b>7,877</b>

### Notes to the Accounts

- 1 Core Activities : please see Treasurers Report
- 2 Gift Aid income of £274 has been received in March 2014. It will show in the 2014 accounts
- 3 Income from teas at lecture series
- 4 Donations from visitors to lecture series
- 5 A £1000 grant has been received from the Robert Kiln Trust re Greys Mound Project
- 6 SOAG t-shirts are available to members at £15 each
- 7 Bulletin costs include production and postage costs
- 8 These are reducing due to the increased use of e-mail for correspondence and information circulation
- 9 Hall hire includes £145 previous year expenses
- 10 Equipment purchased using £500 matching-expenditure grant from the Chilterns Conservation Board
- 11 Repairs to the Geoscan Resistivity Meter
- 12 This figure includes £211 of previous year core expenses. The adjusted figures show a deficit of £2 for 2012, and a surplus of £186 for 2013

These accounts have been examined by Sue Fogden against documentation provided.  
In her opinion these are a true and accurate presentation of the transactions made by the  
South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group in 2013

A signed copy of these accounts is on file

## SOAG OFFICERS AND ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*As they stand at the end of year 2013-2014 & 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 (retiring with effect from the AGM)
Vice Chairman	Dr Nancy Nichols (also SOAG Events Secretary)
Hon Secretary	Mr Michael Vincent
Hon Treasurer	Mrs Kaz Greenham
Ordinary Members	Mr John Hefferan (also Editor, <i>SOAG Bulletin</i> )
	Mr Mike Green also Editor, <i>SOAG Messenger</i> , and SOAG webmaster)
	Mrs Janet Eastment
	Mr David Carless (also Director, Blewbury “Big Dig”)
	Mr Dave Jobling
	<i>Vacancy</i>