

# KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER



No. 22

Summer 1992

## NO WAY TO TREAT AN ANCIENT MONUMENT

The condition of the dilapidated medieval church at Ruxley, in North-West Kent, on the outskirts of Sidcup, is a sad example of how legislation designed to protect such buildings can fail in its purpose. Built in the late thirteenth century, it was officially relegated to secular use in the reign of Mary Tudor and was for four centuries used as a barn. Now it stands disused, with much of its roof gone and parts of its rubble walls disintegrating. It is almost unbelievable in these circumstances that it enjoys the status of a Scheduled Ancient Monument – a fact well known to English Heritage, as well as the owners and the Local Authority. Despite representations by the K.A.S., the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society and other similar bodies, it has been allowed to deteriorate to a state where the cost of repair is almost prohibitive. The longer this continues, the less likelihood there will be of ever repairing the structure and adapting it for some modern purpose. There has been the proposal to convert it into a restaurant for visitors to the well known and much patronised Garden Centre in the grounds of which it stands, but the owner has declared that the cost is beyond his resources.

One step inside through a gap in the walls is to be presented with a scene of desolation shocking to anyone of sensitivity. Disintegration and decay present themselves on all sides, although the medieval sedilia and piscina remain and signs of traceried windows can be detected. Pigeons fly in and out through holes in the tiled roof, depositing droppings over the earth floor, and there is a sickening atmosphere of desecration.

A plan of the church and a sketch of the sedilia and piscina accompanied by an article by F. C. Elliston-Erwood in *Arch. Cant. LX* (1947) and the results of an excavation carried out in the 1960's were described by Mr. G. Davies and Mr. M. Leonard in *The Kent Archaeological Review*, No's. 17 & 20 (1969 & 1970) These investigations revealed traces of an earlier church on the same site, with numerous burials, some of which were even earlier than the older church and were most likely of Anglo-Saxon age.

Ruxley gave its name to an illustrious family, one of whom, Gregory de Rokesley, was Mayor of London eight times, as recorded on a stoneware plaque on the front of a building in Lombard Street in the City of

London on the site of his former residence. He died in 1291, and he may have been the patron who built the church whose pathetic remains still stand adjoining the Garden centre at Ruxley.

If this can be the fate of a Scheduled Ancient Monument, what hope is there in the present financial climate for threatened buildings of lesser status, though of outstanding historical and architectural interest?

Peter J. Tester

### George Matthew Arnold & Dode Church

Many will know that George Matthew Arnold was an original member of the K.A.S. Towards the end of a long and active life Mr. Arnold acquired the small Norman church at Dode near to Luddesdown. At the time of his acquisition (1901) the church was in a ruinous state and during the early years of this century Mr. Arnold restored and re-roofed it at his own expense. His programme of restoration had very great regard to the original character of the building, and the church as a whole has stood the test of the last 85 years well, a tribute to both the original builders and Mr. Arnold's work.

Almost 90 years to the day of Mr. Arnold's purchase I acquired the church and a portion of its former land. The main fabric of the building is in remarkably good condition although obviously owing to its relatively remote situation acts of vandalism are a continued problem. Arnold's door has been burnt off its hinges, the altar stone thrown down and damaged, and graffiti covers the internal walls. These items are currently being rectified and it is hoped that limited public access to the interior will be restored in the not too distant future.

The church and immediate vicinity seem to offer scope for some excavation and research, particularly bearing in mind the circumstances of the de-population of the Village of Dode as a result of the Black Death in 1348, since which time there have presumably been no interments or real interference with the site.

It is hoped that during the forthcoming years more will be learnt of this charming church and members will be informed of progress in this connection. Most of what I imagine is known has been published in *Archaeologia Cantiana* and in Arnold's book 'Dode in Kent' but if any Member has information which may assist in my research with regard to either church or Mr. Arnold's involvement, I would be pleased to hear from them.

D. Chapman



## Uncovering Henry VIII's Manor House at Dartford

1991 marked the 500th. anniversary of the birth of Henry VIII. To link up with this important event Dartford District Archaeological Group approached Allied London Properties to obtain permission to carry out an exploratory excavation on a large site owned by them in Dartford. The site, which up until recently formed part of APV Baker Ltd. (originally J. E. Hall Ltd.) lies close to the remaining portion of Dartford's visible link with this popular monarch, namely the Manor Gatehouse. This building, now owned by Dartford Borough Council, originally served as the west gate to a large manor house built between 1551-1554 for King Henry VIII.

This manor house site is probably one of the most important archaeological sites in Dartford, so therefore whenever areas of land become available for exploratory excavations, the Group have readily asked for access to them. Various areas have been worked on by the Group since 1976, each of which has revealed more evidence of the 'lost' manor house.

Allied London Properties very kindly gave permission for the Group to carry out our researches on the site, which began in November 1991. Our work was concentrated to the west of the site close to the boundary with APV Baker Ltd. This area was chosen as in the past other parts of the site had been disturbed by building works to such a depth that the archaeological deposits would have long been destroyed.

To speed up our work a mechanical excavator was hired to dig five trenches in the chosen area. At a depth of 4ft. - 5ft. a layer of demolition rubble was found. This appears to have been spread over the site to level it, and in one particular place it formed a pathway. This was measured and planned and then Group members started to remove it. In doing so it was found to contain shaped stone and brick as well as printed and stamped floor tiles about 4 ins. square, decorated with different designs including geometric, floral and heraldic patterns. These tiles were medieval in date and probably came from the Dartford Priory which was demolished in 1541 to make way for Henry's new manor house. Tiles of this type were mainly used for flooring in religious buildings of this period.

The Group's excavation seemed to have co-incided with the substantial grounds of the residence as no walls were found or any other structures. However, on the last day of digging a section of the eastern boundary wall was uncovered, recorded and photographed before being buried again. The objects found on this excavation are currently being cleaned and catalogued at our Research Centre in Dartford.

Chris Baker,

Dartford District Archaeological Group. c/o Dartford Museum

## The Crossness Engines Trust. A Report

K.A.S. members may recall the problems that the Crossness Engines Trust had with Thames Water Utilities plc. some 2 years ago when the Trust was locked out of the Beam Engine House. We are pleased to report that discussions with TWU proved fruitful and the Trust now has a 2 year agreement under which it is required to complete an agreed programme of work. On satisfactory completion of that work within the 2 year time scale, TWU are committed to grant the Trust a 60 year lease.

Access to the Beam Engine House was obtained in November last year and much of the time since has been spent in clearing up to enable the work to start and in making arrangements to meet the safety standards demanded by TWU. Inevitably restoration progress has been slow so far but is now beginning to accelerate and we are confident that we can complete the programme of work within the 2 year period. As we identify and schedule jobs to be done we shall be looking for volunteers to join the growing work teams.

Much of the success of the discussions with TWU was due to the pressure put on them by K.A.S. members writing in to protest against TWU actions. Crossness Engines Trust would like to take this opportunity to thank your members for the

support they gave and to express the hope that, in the not-too-distant future, we shall be able to welcome them on a visit to the Engine House. Details of Open Days will be circulated in due course.

John Ridley, Chairman,  
The Crossness Engines Trust

## K.A.S Buffet at Somerhill

In a county famed for its architecturally and historically interesting buildings, Somerhill ranks high. Turner's superb 1811 painting shows it standing on the wonderful hilltop setting much as John Thorpe had planned it.

This house, built between 1611 and 1613 (rainwater heads) for the Earl of Clanricarde whose wife had been widowed by two eminent men, Sir Philip Sidney and the Earl of Essex. Our third K.A.S. Christmas gathering, attended by 112 members, was held here on 5th December, in the warm and welcoming library (previously three rooms). It was pleasant to meet old friends and make some new ones in such a setting.

During pre-luncheon drinks we were entertained to music by two musicians from the Tarleton Jig, an early music group. These talented young men, in costume, took time to answer the many questions we had whilst they were playing.

After a satisfying buffet lunch, the duo gave us an all too short recital of mainly 17th. to 18th. century songs and music for various early instruments, most of which were fine modern copies. Before each item one of the players gave a witty introduction with a brief history of each instrument. The cittern was flat and oval shaped with a soft mellow tone played extensively from the 16th. century until the introduction of the guitar in the late 17th. century. This, accompanied by the recorder, makes a lively background for singing. Of particular interest was the hurdy gurdy, known in England as the cymbal in the 17th. century. A four stringed instrument with a resin wheel and a small keyboard, which being portable was used mainly for folk dancing at fairs. Played as early as the 12th. century it survived until mid-Victorian times. The various bagpipes proved no less interesting and their appeal is worldwide, being played from Northern India to Ireland. The musicians played the Border pipes, which have a more mellow tone than the Scots war pipes. Unusual were the 18th. century Gaelic uilleann or Union pipes with air being pumped in, using both elbows. An altogether rewarding finale to the fine Christmas gathering and highly successful organisation by Mrs. Margaret Lawrence, was a visit to two particularly interesting local churches at Tudeley and Capel, escorted by Mr. Don Coast.

R. Rolinson

## Letters

I seek information on a timber framed barn which was situated alongside the main road that runs through Eccles (Grid. Ref. TQ 728 606). It was demolished in the early 1980's for a housing development. If any reader has information, I would be pleased to hear from them. **David Bacchus.**

I write to support the sentiments expressed by Peter Dawson in his leading article 'The Role of the Amateur in Archaeology' which appeared in the Spring 1992 issue of the Newsletter.

If indeed there are actual or emerging difficulties in this context, then perhaps these should be identified, collated and sent to the Society.

A copy of this letter goes to Mr. Dawson. **Victor T. C. Smith.**

### MASS DIALS

I should appreciate any data re. Mass Dials known on churches in North Kent, particularly in the Cray and Darent Valleys, except St. Mary's, Bexley and St. Michaels, Wilmington. It would be useful to know the site (e.g. on North wall) height from ground, number of Dials and approximate date of that part of the building they are on. **K. M. Roome.**



## Events, Lectures, Outings

K.A.S. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. **Saturday, 23rd, May 1992** at Tonbridge.

K.A.S. EXCURSION TO THE LOIRE VALLEY. **25th to 30th, May 1992**. All places on this excursion are now filled.

K.A.S. WALK ALONG THE DARENT to LULLINGSTONE CASTLE. **Saturday, 6th, June 1992**. To be conducted by Mrs. Joy Saynor. Details from Mrs. Saynor. S.A.E. please.

K.A.S. EXCURSION to EAST KENT. **Saturday, 4th, July 1992**. Half day visit to MINSTER, ISLE OF THANET. 1. Tour Minster church or Ozengell Barn if available. Former has Saxon foundations and Norman work. 2. By permission of Sister Concordia, visit the Saxon ruins of the Abbey of St. Mildred. The remains include part of the pre Canute walls of the Saxon church and Abbey House with a pre-conquest wing. 3. Strawberry & Cream tea etc. at Dane Court. Meet at 2 pm at Minster church (own transport) cost £4. Names by May 25th. to Excursions Sec. Numbers restricted to 24 people. S.A.E. please.

K.A.S. EXCURSION to BEDGEBURY AREA. **Saturday, 5th, September 1992**. Full afternoon visit. Meet at Kilndown church at 2 pm for ½ hour talk on this famous 19th. century church; see the famous marquetry panels. Tour of Bedgebury Park School to see the Library, Badminton Room etc. See gardens and grounds. Light refreshments in the house. Illustrated talk on the Beresford Hope family, especially A. J. Beresford Hope the founder member of the K.A.S., first lay president of the

R.I.B.A. Ecclesiologist, M.P. and patron of the Arts. Finish approx. 5 pm. Members wishing to spend the whole day in the area may lunch at the 'Globe and Rainbow' in Kilndown Village or at the 'Happy Eater' on the A21. Bedgebury Park is 2½ miles S. of Goudhurst. Cost £3 Number limited to 50 people. Names to Excursion Sec. (address as above) before 1st July. S.A.E. please.

K.A.S. FIELDWORK COMMITTEE ONE DAY COURSE. **Saturday, 5th, September 1992**. The K.A.S. Fieldwork committee is continuing its very successful series of specialist one day courses on archaeological techniques with a day course on SURVEYING UNDERGROUND SITES. The course, to be held at Dartford, will be conducted by Rod LeGear the Hon. Secretary, one of the principal surveyors of the Kent Underground Research Group. It will be designed for those who have little or no previous knowledge or experience of the subject. Basic surface surveying, as well as simple underground survey techniques will be covered and there will be opportunities to use various surveying instruments during the day. For those who wish to put the theory into practise for real, it is planned to have an optional visit to an underground site the following Saturday. To cover costs there will be a registration fee of £2. For further details and a registration form, please send S.A.E. to R. F. Le Gear.

K.A.S. FIELDWORK ONE DAY CONFERENCE ON THE PALAEOLITHIC PERIOD (Date probably 24th or 31st October 1992). Further details in next Newsletter or from Dr. A. P. Detsicas. S.A.E. please.

CONFERENCE OF BUILDING RECORDERS This will take place at 2.15 pm on **Saturday, 17th, October 1992** at The Barn, Charing, Kent. Further details in next Newsletter.

KENT DEFENCES RESEARCH GROUP (A Subject branch of the K.A.S.) have arranged a Field visit which any interested K.A.S. members are welcome to attend. This will take place at 10.30 am on **Saturday, 20nd, June 1992** at the New Tavern Fort, Milton Place, Gravesend. Meet at magazine entrance within the fort. Those attending the field visit will be shown areas not normally seen by the public and will have the opportunity to handle weapons and equipment forming part of the collection.

After the visit there will be a walk to the Henrician Milton Blockhouse and the remains of the Gravesend Blockhouse. There are refreshment facilities, toilets and parking nearby. Entrance to the Fort will be free but donations to restoration funds are welcome.

COOLING CASTLE SON et LUMIERE. Details of this were in Newsletter No. 21. Please note: The date is now **20th, June 1992, NOT 7th July**.

LOWER MEDWAY ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP. K.A.S. members are welcome to attend lectures of L.M.A.R.G. as visitors. Meetings are held at Deanery Gate Lodge, (by side of Rochester Cathedral) at 8 pm. **Monday, 18th, May 1992** *Erotic Roman Art* by Catherine Johns of the British Museum. **Monday, 27th, July 1992**. *Slides from my travels in the Greek and Roman World*. by Michael Freeman.

OPEN AFTERNOONS AT SCADBURY MOATED MANOR EXCAVATIONS, CHISLEHURST. On **Saturday, 12th, and Sunday, 13th, Sept.** the archaeological excavations at the medieval moated manor site at Scadbury will be open to the public. Members of the Orpington & District Archaeological Society will give guided tours, showing the work that is currently being done on the site as well as the remains of the foundations of the buildings associated with the Walsingham family and unlike many similar moated sites the island is completely surrounded by water. Guided tours will be given at 15 minute intervals throughout both afternoons, the first at 2 pm and the last at 4.30 pm. There will also be a slide show, refreshments, and bookstall. Admission is free and limited car parking is available close to the site by ticket only, for which application should be made (enclosing a S.A.E. and stating for which day required) to: Mr. M. Meekums.

KENT HISTORY FEDERATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE will be held on **Saturday, 9th, May 1992**. at Headcorn, 9.30 to 5.00 pm. Theme of Conference, Kentish Railway history. Lectures in morning, lecture and guided tour of Headcorn in afternoon. Details from D. Coast. S.A.E. please.

COUNCIL FOR KENTISH ARCHAEOLOGY CONFERENCE: BURIALS OF THE PAST. To be held at Christ Church College, North Holmes Road, Canterbury, on **Saturday, 14th, November 1992**. 2.15 pm to 5.30 pm. Half day of lectures illustrated by colour slides. Speakers include Dr. Paul Ashbee on *The Long Barrows and the Medway Megaliths*. Dr. Ian Stead on *The Snettisham Treasure*, and Dr. Tom Blagg on *Roman Tombs and Cemeteries*. Tickets: Price £2 (payable to C.K.A.). S.A.E. please.

ROMNEY MARSH WEEKEND CONFERENCE AT CANTERBURY. This will take place on **25th-27th, September 1992** at the University of Kent at Canterbury. The conference will explore the physical changes which the marshes have undergone in pre-historic and historic times, and human reactions and adaptations. Speakers will include Dr. Michael Tooley, *Romney Marsh, the Debatable Ground*. Mark Gardiner on *Medieval Farming and Flooding*. Andrew Butcher, Dr. Anthony Gross, Dr. Joan Thirsk. Tickets £98 residential, £55 non-residential. From Mrs. Sue Carrel.

DEDICATION OF THE GEOFF PORTEUS MEMORIAL WINDOW. This will take place on **Saturday, 20th, June 1992**. at Holy Trinity Church, Dartford, at 11 am. conducted by the Bishop of Rochester the Rt. Rev. Michael Turnbull. The Appeal Committee wishes to thank K.A.S. members for their generous donations to the Fund.

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES (I.S.I.S.) invite members of the public to two free lectures *A Test of Time: The New Chronology of Egypt and its Implications for Biblical Archaeology and History*, at the Institute of Archaeology on **Saturday, 2nd, May 1992**. starting at 1.30 pm. The lecturer will be Mr. David Rohl. Part 1 will investigate the series of archaeological anomalies which appear to suggest that Egyptian chronology should be radically shortened in the First Millennium BC. Part 2 will be a presentation of some of the remarkable discoveries which have been made as a result of the superimposition of this New Egyptian Chronology onto the archaeology and traditional history of the Old Testament and the Ancient World. These lectures are being presented for the first time in public for all who are interested in this subject. There will be a break for tea during the afternoon.



## Books

EAST KENT PARISHES. A Guide for Genealogists, Local Historians and Other Researchers. by David Wright, M.A.

This aptly titled book of 106 pages is a mine of information and represents many years of research by the author. The first section of the text deals with sources of information such as Census returns, Workhouse records, Probate records etc. etc. Thereafter, Parishes are listed in alphabetical order and a useful guide is given as to where documentary and other information is available to the researcher. At £6.50 per copy (includes p. and p.) this book is a bargain and no K.A.S. member should be without one on the bookshelf. Copies may be obtained from: Mr. David Wright.

THE REPAIR OF TIMBER FRAMES AND ROOFS. Technical pamphlet (No. 12) published by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings at £2. May be obtained from SPAB.

FARMING HISTORIC LANDSCAPES AND PEOPLE is a fully illustrated booklet jointly produced by English Heritage and the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service (ADAS). Available free from Room 309 English Heritage, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRITISH BELL FITTINGS by Trevor S. Jennings, Curator of the Bell Foundry Museum, Loughborough. Obtainable from the author. Price £28 (includes p. and p.) Limited edition of 1000 copies.

**HELPING THE STONES TO SPEAK.** Welcoming Visitors to your Church. — A Practical Handbook by Moya Freehally. Published by Tortoiseshell Publications. A guide to the presentation of places of worship to visitors. Price £2.95 per copy. (includes p. and p.). from M.E.G. Myerscough (to whom cheques should be made payable).

## Kent Historic Buildings Index

Those interested in Historic Buildings in their home district do not easily have access to the Department of the Environment List. One copy is normally lodged with the Local Authority and other appropriate Bodies such as the Kent Historic Buildings Committee, the Society of Antiquaries, etc., are also considered fit and suitable custodians. The average conservation minded citizen seemingly is not. I have remarked before that our County has more Listed Buildings than the whole of Czechoslovakia.

It is up to each of us, especially those with a designated responsibility for our home districts, such as local K.A.S. Secretaries, to exercise vigilance in regard to our local historic buildings. Not all the suitable candidates are on the statutory list. I expect that most of us know of buildings that are of interest which seem to have escaped the net. Sometimes, such buildings are altered *without* Council approval. Sometimes, interesting ancient buildings are subject to damaging alterations carried out *with* Local Authority approval but without a proper voice being heard from our Society or other appropriate conservationist opinion.

The network of representatives from the Kent Historic Buildings Committee is habitually consulted by Local Authorities where the Authorities themselves consider it appropriate. There are many other occasions when we should have been consulted but are not. It is proposed to publish an Index listing with brief descriptions all the Historic Buildings in Kent, including the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley. Gravesham has already been published and is available for sale at £3. *Please contact me if you would like a copy.* Ashford, Bexley, Dartford, Sevenoaks and Swale are progressing well. Some work has been done on all the Districts in Kent.

I hope I have the support of the membership in the efforts

which we are making in this direction. We are a very small team. The indexing is being carried out by Paul Glover, a ~~University of Illinois~~ <sup>University of Illinois</sup> project ~~leader~~ <sup>leader</sup> who ~~has been~~ <sup>has been</sup> ~~working~~ <sup>working</sup> ~~with~~ <sup>with</sup> ~~us~~ <sup>us</sup> ~~preparing~~ <sup>preparing</sup> ~~this~~ <sup>this</sup> ~~web site~~ <sup>web site</sup> ~~checking~~ <sup>checking</sup> ~~from~~ <sup>from</sup> ~~references~~ <sup>references</sup> ~~all~~ <sup>all</sup> ~~entries~~ <sup>entries</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>as</sup> ~~well~~ <sup>well</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>as</sup> ~~preparing~~ <sup>preparing</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~role~~ <sup>role</sup> ~~between~~ <sup>between</sup> ~~three~~ <sup>three</sup> ~~others~~ <sup>others</sup>. Please indicate your support by buying your personal copy of the Gravesham Index.

Michael H. Peters, FRICS

## News from the Library and Muniments Committee

Council has recently decided to cease to meet in the Library in order to enable the shelf and working spaces to be increased, in particular so that the local and family history sections can be

enlarged. Hitherto, largely for want of room emphasis has been placed on Journals of learned Societies covering the British Isles and the year 1857 of the Society's initiative in the fields of archival and topographical material have been largely taken over by local government. Now, the core collection of reference and study guides will be augmented as availability permits. As an example, a set of the 1972 reprint of Hasted's History of the twelve volumes is now on open access

More lighting has been installed. Michael Peters has kindly donated a niche reader and the nearby Public Library has very generously made space available for the storage of other journal volumes. The rebinding and conservation programme continues at a level of 100-200 volumes a year. Once these and other transfers are complete the committee plans to experiment by having a member on duty regularly. In the meantime the Catalogue etc. are available for members upon production of their membership card and signing in at the Museum Keeper's desk by the Museum entrance. Recent acquisitions include material on Roman Pottery, Medieval Ceramics, Archaeological finds in Thanet, A Roman House in Dover, Forts, Wealden Buildings, Churches, etc. etc. Donations and suggestions are welcome. We thank all our many helpers and recent donors.

Mr. A. C. HARRISON, BA FSA. Hon. General Secretary, K.A.S. After many years of faithful service as Hon. General Secretary to the K.A.S. Mr. Harrison has expressed a wish to retire from the post. He will, however, continue as Assistant Secretary to Mr. Andrew Moffat who will be taking over from him. Members wishing to express their appreciation for Mr. Harrison's loyal dedication to the Society are invited to complete the enclosed form.

## For Sale

Members are reminded that they can obtain K.A.S. 'Tote bags', £6; Tea Cloths, £3. Ties, (navy blue, green or grey), £3.50. Please state colour required - from Mrs. Saynor. Price includes p. & p. Also available from Mrs. Saynor or from Mr. D. Coast are K.A.S. greeting cards. Pack of four with envelopes featuring lesser known Kentish churches £1 (includes p. & p.) Available soon! Key fobs and Book Markers.

## Fieldwork Grants

Are you planning an excavation or fieldwork within the county of Kent during 1993? Grants are available from the K.A.S.

Applications on appropriate form (obtainable from the Hon. General Secretary, Mr. A. C. Harrison by 1st October 1992).

The Hon. Editor welcomes all letters, articles and communications and would particularly like to receive more from members and others, especially requests for research information, finds, books and related topics. Illustrations, if relevant, are helpful and can assist readers in identifying objects, understanding points and following arguments. The Editor, wishes to draw the readers' attention to the fact that neither the Council of the K.A.S., nor the Editor is answerable for the opinions which contributors may express in the course of their signed articles. Each author is alone responsible for the contents and substance of their letters, items or papers. Material for the next Newsletter should be sent by 1st July to Hon. Editor. Nesta Caiger.

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