



<http://kentarchaeology.org.uk/research/archaeologia-cantiana/>

Kent Archaeological Society is a registered charity number 223382

© 2017 Kent Archaeological Society

ANNUAL REPORT

KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Council presents its one hundred and thirty-third Report and Statement of Accounts for 1991.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at Ramsgate on Saturday, 18th May, when Council's Annual Report and Accounts for 1990 were accepted. Messrs. Reeves and Neylan of Canterbury were re-appointed as Auditors of the Society.

OFFICERS

The following were elected as Officers of the Society:

The President	Mr K.W.E. Gravett, M.Sc.(Eng.), F.S.A.
Vice Presidents	Mr L.D. Lyle, M.A. Mr Nigel Nicolson, M.B.E., B.A., F.S.A.
The Hon. Editor	Mr P.J. Tester, F.S.A. Dr A.P. Detsicas, M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot.
The Hon. Treasurer	Mr B.T. Cousins
The Hon. Gen. Secretary	Mr A.C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A.
The Hon. Membership Secretary	Mrs M. Lawrence
The Hon. Excursions Secretary	Mr M.A. Crane, B.A.
The Hon. Curator	Mr D.B. Kelly, B.A., F.S.A., A.M.A.
The Hon. Librarian	Dr P.H.G. Draper, B.Sc., Ph.D.

COUNCIL

After a ballot, the following were elected Members of Council:

ANNUAL REPORT

Mr D. Bacchus, Mrs S. Broomfield, Mrs N. Caiger*, Mr R. LeGear*, Mr A. Miles* and Mrs P. Winzar*. In addition, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr P.J. Tester, Mr A. Daniels* was elected for a period of 2 years.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Volume CVIII of *Archaeologia Cantiana* was issued in 1991. The volume, under the editorship of Dr A.P. Detsicas, B.A., M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot., maintains its high standard and its contents cover a wide field of Archaeology and History.

It is hoped to publish in the near future an extra volume of *Archaeologia Cantiana* dedicated to the memory of Allen Grove and containing papers of Kentish interest in the fields of his special study. Members are invited to write to the Hon. Editor, if they wish to contribute to this volume.

Parts 3 and 4 of Volume 1 (1991) of the new series of *Kent Records* have now been issued to subscribers, containing *Henry Haule's Notebook, 1590-95* (concluded), *The Oglander Letters from Kent* and part of *Dr Warner's Visitations of the Diocese of Rochester, 1663 and 1670*, which will be followed by *Stuart Yeomen of the Darent Valley* and an edition of the *Kent Feet of Fines (Henry VIII)*. Several other texts are under active preparation. The Committee is indebted to the Society's President for undertaking the type-setting of this series. The annual subscription to members of the Society is £6.00, on application to the Hon. Editor.

There has been no progress with *Excavations at Highstead* or the volume dealing with the early history of Rochester Cathedral. However, it is hoped that both these volumes may be published later in the year.

MEMBERSHIP AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

The membership of the Society has continued to show the upward trend of recent years. On December 31st, 1991, the membership stood at 1632 this being an increase of 42 over last year's total of 1590.

The gain was accounted for by the election of 101 new members. That gain was offset by the removal of 59 members made necessary by the decease of 16 members, the removal of 23 names on account of non-payment for two years, and the resignation of a further 20

* Retiring Member of Council eligible for re-election.

ANNUAL REPORT

members, some of which were caused by the reorganisation of departments within the Kent County Council.

The Membership and Publicity Committee met on three occasions during 1991 each time with a full agenda.

Three social events were organised during the year; a spring evening tour of the Museum of Kent Rural Life at Maidstone followed by a barbecue supper in the barn attended by 50 members; a Garden Party with strawberry tea at Cooling Castle where 200 members enjoyed a display of hop-pickers dances and readings from *Great Expectations* with a guided tour of the church, and a Christmas Buffet Lunch at Somerhill, Tonbridge where 200 members were entertained with early English music. Many members were later guided to see the Chagall windows at Tudeley church and the wall paintings at Capel.

The Committee has been very encouraged by the interest shown in these social events which are differentiated from excursions organised by the Excursions Secretary by the fact that numbers are not limited.

In spite of much discussion and enquiry efforts to represent the Society at the Kent Show has been unsuccessful.

The Newsletter Editor, Mrs Nesta Caiger, has been well supplied with material and in two of the 1991 editions has needed to use an extra page. Her reliability in providing a regular source of information for members, recorded in previous reports, is again appreciated.

Publicity material, ties, bags and greetings cards have been available at all Society functions and Mrs Joy Saynor reports that sales have been steady. The distribution of membership leaflets to key points in the county has continued.

CHURCHES COMMITTEE

Following the successful Day School held at the Barn, Charing, in 1989, a second School was held there on 27th April, 1991 on 'Furnishing and Decoration of Kent Churches'. Papers were read by Mr Leslie Smith on brasses, Dr John Physick on monuments, Mrs Sarah Brown on glass and Dr Charles Tracy on woodwork to an audience of some 70 people.

In the last Report, concern was expressed about the future of two churches in Maidstone by local architect, John Wichcord. Sadly, St. Stephen, Tovil, has now been demolished and the fate of Holy Trinity is still uncertain.

It is disappointing that the Friends Meeting House, Maidstone, which was saved from demolition by being listed, still has no tenant to cherish it, but good that proposals which would have damaged the

ANNUAL REPORT

façade of the United Reformed Church in Week Street were rejected by the Maidstone Borough Planning Committee.

The fate of Christ Church, Tunbridge Wells, and of St. Bartholomew, Goodnestone, on both of which the Committee has exerted much effort, is still undetermined.

It is pleasing that following a report from our member, Nigel Yates, it was possible to find the finance, including a grant from the Society, to enable Wolfgang Gärtner to restore the Victorian triptych at Worth. This consists of 13 separate paintings and has been attributed to Nathaniel Westlake.

The Committee organised and financed the restoration by Mr Anthony Hicks of the remaining part of the medieval bell sub-frame from High Halstow and has now installed it in the tower of the redundant Cooling Church.

There is a number of ruined churches on Romney Marsh, some of which have been ruined since the Reformation. Eastbridge, Hope and Midley have shown rapid deterioration over recent years and the Committee is delighted that Eastbridge, which now belongs to Michael Nightingale of Cromarty, Chairman of the Committee, has now been stitched and repointed. If money can be found, it is hoped that work can soon be carried out on the other ruined churches.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Council has appointed a Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr A.P. Detsicas, to concern itself with archaeology in schools. This will be in close association with the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, which has already been active in this sphere and it is hoped, with other bodies, including the County Council.

FIELDWORK COMMITTEE

The Committee has organised two events again this year: a day meeting on field walking in the Stowting area, led by Dr J.H. Williams and Mr J. Bradshaw, and a one-day conference at Canterbury on *Kent before the Romans*. Thanks are due to the organisers and speakers on both these events.

Consideration was given to the feasibility of a training excavation, based on the cemetery at Sarre; however, this has had to be abandoned as the site is now in the process of being scheduled. Though it is now too late to consider another site, it is to be hoped that a training excavation may be organised at another site for 1993.

ANNUAL REPORT

EXCURSIONS

1991 was another full and exciting year for those who ventured forth on a full summer excursion programme. No visits had to be abandoned through lack of support.

Although no Continental visit was available 'foreign fields' were explored in the late Spring, along the borders of Northumbria when a coach full of members breached The Wall. Our thanks to Mrs Saynor for organising this.

On the 8th June, another party spent a day seeking out the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

One of the highlights of the year for the limited number of twenty who visited the Kensing area on the 29th June was the tour of St. Clere; a bonus was the invitation to see the manor of Yaldham. Dr Draper was kind enough to act as our guide at St. Clere.

To round off the season east Kent was the venue for Northbourne Court, Gardens and Church with the usual strawberry tea at Dane Court.

In 1992 the châteaux of the Loire form the background to our Continental excursion.

KENT DEFENCE RESEARCH GROUP

The subscribing membership of the Kent Defence Research Group is now approaching fifty, thanks largely to the considerable efforts of David Burrige, editor of 'Ravelin', the Group's newsletter and to John Guy, secretary of the Group. They have done much to further project the Group and its reputation outside Kent. Both are involved in important work concerned with the identification, categorisation and listing of twentieth-century defensive sites across other parts of the country as well as Kent. Helpful cooperation with English Heritage in this kind of work has taken place.

In the Thames area the work at New Tavern Fort has gone from strength to strength. The fort now possesses the best and most proficient restoration team it has had since restoration began there, with much more specialised presentational activity being carried out. More exhibits were added for outside display in 1991 than in any previous year. The foundation lines of the nearby Henrician Milton Blockhouse (excavated by the Group) have recently been laid out on the surface in brick and road studs, together with a commemorative plaque.

There appears to be some evidence of further explosive demolition of parts of Shornemead Fort and this will be taken up with the Ministry of Defence.

Gravesend will be the venue of the conference of the International

Fortress Study Group to be held from 4th–6th September, 1992. Conservation will be the theme, to be reflected both in the field visits and the lectures to be given. Attendance by non-Fortress Study Group members should be possible and details will be made available to the K.A.S. in due course.

The Group hopes to examine, record and report upon Fort Borstal at Rochester, a scheduled monument which was privately purchased in 1990. Such a record will be a vital preliminary to any possible development of the building.

The construction of the M20 extension at Dover entails the destruction of the entrance bridge of Archcliffe Fort, South Lines Battery, Lydden Spout Range and the remains of Hougham Battery and other features. This is to be regretted. The coastal area of Kent has suffered a great deal of destruction of its defensive heritage over the last 20 years. Recent excavations at Archcliffe Fort have revealed an old wall which may be connected with the fort. Works for a new sewer are expected to reveal the foundations of the town's medieval Snargate and possibly other medieval remains.

The Group is keen to attract more participating members, especially from the K.A.S. It is hoped to hold a lecture meeting in 1992 both to raise the profile of Kent's defences and the Group and to attract further members.

It is sad to report that Doug Bennett, the Group's archivist, died during the year. He was one of the original members of the Group and made many contributions, including a major part of the work of preparation of the 'Handbook of Kent's Defences'. He was well liked and respected and will be greatly missed.

KENT UNDERGROUND RESEARCH GROUP

Work has continued at Mote Park, Maidstone where the Group has completed the survey of the underground quarry. Sadly, vandalism of the strong entrance grill installed by the Group to control access, has led to costly and time-consuming repairs. The condition of the mined galleries dictates that excavations in the floor of the roadways would be unwise. Although much information can be gathered on the methods of working the stone, etc., it will, therefore, be documentary research that will provide us with positive dating evidence.

The spring of 1991 saw the publication of *Kent and East Sussex Underground* (ISBN 0948193 581). This A5 size book of some 124 pages was written by eight of our most experienced members and was published for the Group by Meresborough Books (price £5.95). It is aimed at the general public and covers all types of underground sites in the County. Since publication the Group has had several letters

ANNUAL REPORT

from readers wishing to either join the Group or obtain more information on specific sites.

The Group's surveyors are often asked to investigate sites outside the County and in April 1991 a small chalk mine was surveyed at Ware in Hertfordshire for a local mining historian. Such visits are most useful to compare mining methods in other areas.

It is hoped in the near future to hold a one or two day course on 'Recording Underground Sites' as an introduction to basic surveying techniques. Details will be published in the K.A.S. newsletter as K.A.S. members will be welcome to attend.

CONFERENCE OF BUILDING RECORDERS

The twenty-eighth Conference of Building Recorders was held at the Barn at Charing on Saturday, 19th October, 1991, with an audience of some 70 people. It took the usual form of a series of short talks reporting recent investigations.

Tim Tatton-Brown commenced with a report of his recent work at Rochester Cathedral, including the Chapter House Doorways, to the restoration of which the K.A.S. had contributed, and demonstrated the variety of imported stone which had been used. He continued with a description of the Norman west front, the restoration of which had only recently been completed, with its important west door.

He was followed by Miss Sarah Pearson, who discussed a group of early timber-framed halls, which she had investigated for the R.C.H.M. Many of these were aisled and all were earlier than the more familiar end-jetty and Wealden houses.

Next, Mrs Jill Williams described an early nineteenth-century cricket ball factory at Chiddingstone Causeway, that had been taken over by her firm. Investigation of the structure, prior to moving in, had convinced her that the building was of two periods and she was able to confirm this from Victorian maps.

Finally, Michael Peters reported on the progress of the Kent Historic Buildings Index and introduced the first section, recently published, for Gravesham District.

The chairman, Kenneth Gravett then thanked the Charing P.C.C., for the use of the hall; Miss M. Ruglys, for the excellent tea; and Miss Pearson, for providing the projector and screen.

The next Conference of Building Recorders will be held on Saturday, October 17th, 1992.

1st January, 1992

By Order of the Council
A.C. Harrison
Hon. General Secretary