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ANNUAL REPORT

KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

Council presents its one hundred and thirty-fourth Report and Statement of Accounts for 1992.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at Tonbridge on Saturday, 23rd May 1992, when Council's Annual Report and Accounts for 1991 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	Dr C.W. Chalklin, M.A., B.Litt., Litt.D. Mr C.R. Cuncer, F.S.A. Mr A.C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A. Miss E. Melling, B.A. Dr J. Whyman, B.Sc.(Econ), Ph.D., A.I.P.M.
The Hon. Editor	Dr A.P. Detsicas, B.A., M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot.
The Hon. Treasurer	Mr B.T. Cousins, I.P.F.A., F.C.I.S.
The Hon. Librarian	Dr P.H.G. Draper, B.Sc., Ph.D., D.I.C., F.R.S.C.
The Hon. General Secretary	Mr A.I. Moffat
The Hon. Membership Secretary	Mrs M. Lawrence
The Hon. Excursions Secretary	Mr M.A. Crane, B.A.
The Hon. Curator	Mr H.S. Middleton, B.Sc., A.M.A., M.B.I.M.

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COUNCIL

The following were declared elected members of Council:

Mr P.B. Bennett, M.A., M.I.F.A.* , Mr R.H. Hiscock, LL.B., F.S.A.* , Mr M.H. Peters, F.R.I.C.S.* , Mrs J.M. Saynor, M.A.* , Miss M. Waite, B.A.* , Mr D.A.H. Cleggett, B.A., and Mr V.T.C. Smith, B.A.

* Retiring member of Council eligible for re-election.

CHURCHES COMMITTEE

The Committee is still concerned about the future of a number of churches in Maidstone. The Friends Meeting House awaits an occupier, plans to convert Holy Trinity into flats drag on, whilst the future for the important medieval church of St. Peter is uncertain.

It is hoped that work will start soon on repointing Hope and Midley, two ruined churches on Romney Marsh. English Heritage has offered generous grants towards this purpose, whilst the Society has offered a grant to help eradicate ivy, which has gained a stronghold on the abandoned church of W. Hythe.

At long last suitable arrangements have been made to provide new stone matrices to take the restored brasses at Brabourne. This work, towards which the Committee has offered a small grant, should be completed shortly.

The Committee is grateful to the Pilgrim Trust for a grant of £500 towards the restoration of further bindings from the Doddington Parochial Library now housed in the Fleur de Lys Heritage Centre in Faversham.

The Committee has been concerned for some time about the vandalistic attacks on Murston Old Church, which is in the care of the Society and for the future of Goodnestone St. Bartholomew, which has been redundant for many years but without a new purpose. Now plans are afoot to use both churches as interpretation centres for a Swale Heritage Trail.

The churches would be linked by the Saxon Shore Way and between these two points are wildlife sites of international importance and many buildings and sites of antiquarian interest.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Committee has met on several occasions and discussed the Society's active participation in the work of the Canterbury Archaeo-

logical Trust's education service. A booklet on *Roman Canterbury* has been compiled in co-operation with members of the Committee; it is intended for use in schools and its publication supported by the Society and the Kent County Council.

FIELDWORK COMMITTEE

The Committee has organised two events this year: a one-day conference at Maidstone on *The Palaeolithic in Kent* and a day-school on surveying underground.

The Committee has also considered applications for research grants and made its recommendations to Council.

No progress has been made with the organisation of a training excavation at a suitable site, but the matter remains under active consideration for the future.

KENT HISTORIC BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

This is a joint Committee with the Kent Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England and in addition to the members listed in *Archaeologia Cantiana* there are an equal number nominated by C.P.R.E.(K). Additionally there are several local people, consulted by the Committee and chosen to give representation throughout the County. The Committee acts within Kent on behalf of the Council for British Archaeology, one of the bodies statutorily consulted on planning applications involving the demolition of listed buildings.

It is a sign of the recent reduction in economic activity that in 1992 the number of cases to be investigated fell to 153. Each of these was carefully examined and objections were raised where necessary. It is a tribute to the improvement in the climate of preservation that the number of buildings where action has to be taken is now a minority.

Some cases, however, have raised general points of concern. The first of these was Longport House, a hall-house at Newington-next-Hythe. This was within the curtilage of the Channel Tunnel Terminal, but when the other houses were demolished assurances were given that it would be safe as it was needed as a centre for security operations. Application was made for large additions to the house and these were refused by Shepway District Council, as quite inappropriate in type and scale, whereupon Eurotunnel decided to demolish the building, quoting their Act of Parliament as giving priority over planning legislation. They have presented the building to the Open-air Museum at Singleton for re-erection. The Committee felt that this, while better than nothing, was unfortunate as it would have been better preserved *in situ* and that it would have been

possible to have designed a suitable extension. This reinforces the importance of careful scrutiny of Acts of Parliament for their Historic Building implications.

Another topic was that it is often felt that work carried out by the highway authorities is often ugly and less than sympathetic to the environment. This is a difficult area since highway engineers are primarily concerned with safety and have to use internationally standard signs, which conflict aesthetically with traditional materials. This is especially so with ancient bridges, of which Kent is particularly fortunate in the number which remain. All bridges are being examined in the light of new loading requirements. This has resulted in almost intractable problems with the heavily used and very fine stone bridge at Wye. Also the eighteenth century bridge at Fordwich has been rebuilt.

An increasing difficulty is the shortage of time to reply to planning applications, especially with those we receive after a double postal journey *via* York. As an answer to this the Committee decided to produce the Kent Historic Building Index, so that representatives could possess a copy and use it to check their local planning lists, and perhaps gain a few days extra time. The opportunity was taken to add those Ancient Monuments above ground and those buildings formerly on the Local List. It was realised that these would also be of interest to local historians and others, and it was decided to publish them. They are being issued in sections covering the area of each District Council. Booklets for Dartford, Gillingham & Gravesham were issued before the end of 1992.

MEMBERSHIP AND PUBLICITY

At December 31st, 1992, the membership of the Society was 1,684 showing an increase of 52 over last year's total of 1,632.

The gain was accounted for by the election of 103 new members. The gain was offset by the decease of 11 members, the resignation of 20 members mainly on account of health or removal from the County, and the removal of 20 names on account of non-payment for two years.

Membership leaflets have continued to be distributed to libraries, archives and other educational outlets both within and beyond the County.

There has been a good response to the appeal for members to covenant their subscriptions but there remains much unrealized potential with only 268 covenants from such a large membership.

The Membership and Publicity Committee has met three times during the year. Two new appointments were made; that of Mr R.

Bloomfield as Publicity Officer who subsequently gave much support during the year, and that of Mr D. Coast as Lecture Secretary who consequently organised the lecture programme so much enjoyed by members. Equipment for the use of lecturers was purchased in the form of a lighted reading desk, a projector stand and a screen. The expense of a suitable projector was avoided by a gift from a member.

Two social events were organised during the year; a Barbecue in the medieval undercroft at Nettlestead Place by courtesy of the owner, Mr Tucker, attended by 125 members, preceded by a visit to the adjoining church of St. Mary, and a Christmas Buffet Lunch at West Malling where 80 members were entertained by The Plaxtol Group who modelled costumes as worn by people living in Plaxtol from the ninth to the twentieth century.

This was followed by a much enjoyed guided tour of West Malling by Mr T. Lovegrove of the Malling Society.

A new venture, that of an historical walk, was organised by Mrs J. Saynor when a group walked from Farningham to Lullingstone viewing historical sites on route. It is thought that this type of activity might develop.

It is envisaged that the Society should build up a publicity exhibition of its work and a beginning was presented by Mr M. Roberts and Mr M. Freeman at the Christmas Buffet.

The *Newsletter* has appeared regularly due to the unfailing dedication of the Editor, Mrs N. Caiger. Publicity materials have continued to sell well and Mrs J. Saynor has been able to add new items to the range.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Volume CIX of *Archaeologia Cantiana* was issued in 1992. 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.

The special volume in memory of Allen Grove is still under preparation. It is hoped that this volume will be issued to members in the near future.

There has been no progress with volumes in the Monograph Series as the two texts promised are still awaited.

Parts 5 and 6 of Volume 1 (1991) of the new series of *Kent Records* have now been issued to subscribers, containing *Stuart Yeomen of the Darent Valley*, and several other texts are either submitted or under active preparation. The committee is indebted to the Society's President for the type-setting of this series.

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EXCURSIONS

The excursions began in July with our usual visit to places of interest in East Kent. A glorious afternoon for twenty members who toured the Abbey at Minster, Thanet, where our charming non-stop talking guide, the Sister Superior, delighted us with the brogue-enlivened account of the Abbey. We then toured the Parish Church at our leisure before viewing the St. Augustine's Cross, originally built to commemorate the spot where it is reputed St. Augustine met King Ethelbert in 597 A.D. The afternoon finished with a strawberry tea at Dane Court where our hostess was thanked by our appreciative President.

In September a large group visited Bedgebury and Kilndown. We first viewed the early 19th century Church with its famous wooden panels made from trees on the estate. After refreshments and a tour of the school we were entertained by Mr Batchelor who gave an illustrated talk on A.J. Beresford Hope who was responsible for founding the Church.

The Continental excursion in 1992 was made to the Loire Valley to see the famous chateaux of that area. We stayed at one hotel in Amboise, a fine centre for touring two or even three chateaux in a day! We saw the house of Balzac, and the home of Leonardo da Vinci. The tombs of the medieval English kings at Fointevraud and the famous gardens of Villandry and on the final night a *son et lumière* in the grounds of a chateaux before retiring to Amboise after midnight. This year a full coach will embark for Brittany.

KENT DEFENCE RESEARCH GROUP

Mr D. BurrIDGE reports: Membership of the Kent Defence Research Group is now up to 69, including 4 overseas members. The Group's journal *Ravelin* has appeared quarterly for some years and has now reached No. 32 with, for the last few years, an annual *Ravelin* "Special" on a subject deemed too important to be split over several issues. The 1992 "Special", *A Guide to the Western Heights Defences, Dover* is also being supplied to Dover Museum where it is selling steadily.

Victor Smith and other members associated with New Tavern Fort have been kept busy during 1992. A second 6 in. breech-loading gun has been mounted at the fort, which now has the most complete 6 in. battery site in Kent. It is, in fact, the only fully-armed battery of its type in Kent and one of only a few in the World.

The most important new arrival to the fort in 1992 was a 3.7 in. anti-aircraft gun, originally the forward gun of Tongue Sand Fort,

one of a number of A.A. forts built at Gravesend during the Second World War and floated out to sites in the Thames Estuary where they were sunk into position on the seabed. John Guy, the Group Chairman, had been negotiating for some years for one of these guns, with the assistance of Major Denis Rollo (also a K.D.R.G. member) and Mr R. Hughes. The gun was removed from the fort by an R.A.F. *Chinook* helicopter and air-lifted to Manston, and Victor Smith then had to arrange road transport to New Tavern Fort at short notice. Our gun is the one which sank one, and damaged another, E-Boat during an attack in 1944, and has a dent that may be damage from that action. The fort's other gun, together with the two from Knock John Fort, have gone to a museum in the Orkneys as Orcadians manned these forts for part of the War.

1993 is being devoted to strengthening education and interpretation efforts at New Tavern Fort, together with two new important display areas in the magazines.

A surprise documentary find during 1992 was evidence that New Tavern Fort had a previously unknown predecessor known as Trinity Fort, which appears to have been on the same site. It lasted for only a few months, having been built as a temporary measure during the Dutch raids on the Thames and Medway in 1667.

The Group has expressed concern to the owners of the Clarendon Royal Hotel and the hotel's riverside lawn site of the Henrician Gravesend Blockhouse about the deteriorating condition of the Blockhouse. The site was stabilised some years ago in works funded by the Kent County Council, Gravesham Borough Council, English Heritage and Berni Inns (the then owners). In recent years, however, the site has received little maintenance and the condition of the remains has been brought to the attention of the owners.

The deteriorating remains of the 17th century Cockham Wood Fort at Hoo St. Werburgh have been exhaustively researched by the Group and a measured survey of the site is well under way. A full report is to be prepared for submission for publication in *Archaeologia Cantiana*.

The Fortress Study Group's annual conference was held at the National Sea Training College at Denton, near Gravesend in 1992, and field trips were made to restored forts in the Thames and Medway areas. The conference, organised by Victor Smith, had as its theme conservation, restoration and interpretation of artillery forts, and drew delegates from Germany, Holland and the United States.

The Group has been assisting the County Archaeologist with information for a Defence Heritage Trail leaflet intended to cover Dover, the Kent coast and hinterland as well as Calais and the

associated area of France. It is hoped that this welcome tourist initiative will do much to raise awareness of the importance of defence heritage sites, not only in this County but in others and, indeed, those on the French side of the Channel.

Three members of the Group acted as guides when the Friends of Dover Museum opened Dover's Drop Redoubt for three weekends during the Summer of 1992; and several visitors to the town have been given guided tours of the rest of the important Western Heights defences by Group members.

In 1992 several members visited Cliffe Fort, where some more progress has been made in trying to understand the complexities of the Brennan torpedo stations there and elsewhere. It is hoped in due course to arrange a visit to Garrison Point Fort at Sheerness to study the Brennan torpedo training station there.

The Group is assisting the Palmerston Forts Society, based at Fort Nelson at Fareham, in the preparation of *Fortlog*, a series of loose-leaf information sheets on Victorian forts and batteries. It is hoped that this will eventually cover all such works in England.

Several members of the Group have also been active outside Kent. Victor Smith continues to assist the restored Brimstone Hill Fortress on St. Kitts in the West Indies and his book on the history of that site, *Fire and Brimstone*, was published in 1992. A further publication is due to appear in 1993.

Nearer to home, several Group members, including John Guy and David Burrige, the Group Secretary, are heavily involved with the Fortress Study Group Database of 20th century defences, which now holds details of approximately five thousand U.K. sites. In April, 1992, at the behest of the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England, six members of the F.S.G. Database sub-group, five of them K.D.R.G. members, undertook a survey of surviving 20th century defences in the Humberside area of Holderness. A pre-survey study suggested one hundred and thirteen likely sites: in one intensive weekend, one hundred and forty-nine sites were found and recorded and many more have since been identified from aerial photographs. The survey team's report was very well received by R.C.H.M.E. in July 1992. John Guy has also been carrying out a survey of 20th century defensive sites in Scotland for Historic Scotland, the Scottish counterpart to English Heritage.

The Group has also been asked to provide assistance for various Scheduled Monument consent applications to be put forward in respect of the restoration of Caolhouse Fort at East Tilbury.

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KENT UNDERGROUND RESEARCH GROUP

Mr R.F. Le Gear reports: Throughout the year members have been investigating the remains of a large chalk mine situated in a small wood at Pratts Bottom near Orpington. The only accessible portion of the mine, consisting of two connected galleries entered via a roof fall that has reached the surface, have been recorded and some limited excavation in the floor has taken place.

A surface survey has shown that a series of depressions link the site with a rubbish filled quarry in the corner of the small wood. It is probable that the original entrance adits were from the quarry working face and that the depressions indicate severe roof failure in galleries that are now blocked.

In September 1992 the group organised, on behalf of the Fieldwork Committee, a one day course on *Underground Surveying* at Dartford. The Tutor was K.U.R.G. Secretary, Mr R. Le Gear, an experienced surveyor and fieldworker. Most of those who attended also chose to come on an optional second day of practical work using K.U.R.G. instruments to survey part of the chalk workings known as Chislehurst Caves. The Group gained a number of new members from these two days.

Over the last year members have been asked to visit and advise on several sites in the County including chalkwell subsidences a Dover and Dartford, a cistern at Hunton near Yalding and two denehole subsidences at Southfleet. A small chalk mine was also surveyed at Ramsgate.

Copies of the Group's Newsletters and Annual Research Reports which contain reports of all our investigations and research are deposited in the K.A.S. library for the use of all K.A.S. members

MEDWAY AND GILLINGHAM BRANCH

Mr A. Ward reports: The Medway and Gillingham Branch of the Kent Archaeological Society under the chairmanship of Michael Moad the Curator of Rochester Museum has four lectures a year within the meeting room of the Guildhall Museum, Rochester.

The branch lectures have been taking place for many years, numbers of people in the past have varied tremendously, but over the last year 25-30 has been the norm. The archaeological and historical themes covered vary considerably in subject matter; local, regional, national and occasionally international subjects may be covered. Between October 1991 and October 1992 we have had lectures on:

1. Human Bones in Archaeology with about 80 people ("standing room only") attending.

2. Victorian and Edwardian Architecture of the Medway Towns.
3. Honnor's Seed Shop.
4. Curious Finds and Curious Tales – a members' meeting with several amusing and interesting anecdotes being told.
5. Excavations in Bahrain by Martin Hicks. For the last two winters (three by the time this is published) Martin and his wife, Alison, have been excavating on a Bronze Age site of c. 1500 B.C. on the island of Bahrain in the Persian Gulf. Those attending this lecture saw what archaeology can be (but usually is not) about. The removal of twelve inches of topsoil saw stone structures appearing. The interiors were emptied of rubble, walls were exposed still standing eight or nine feet high. Complete pottery storage vessels were found buried in the floors.

Mr Hicks also showed slides of modern houses, kilns and craftsmen at work, thus giving emphasis to his important points that archaeologists recover only a small portion of the total evidence and, of that portion, a considerable amount has more than one interpretation.

Many of us become so enmeshed with our own specialities or areas that there is a tendency towards parochialism. Mr Hicks' presentation hopefully broadened the minds of all of us present.

It is the policy of the branch not to undertake active practical projects in the area. These are best left to the local historical and archaeological societies and individuals, or the K.A.S. itself. We all know what Kentish archaeology is like from a "political" viewpoint; it is one of the aims of our branch to bring diverse opinions and personalities together for a relaxing evening.

At the time of writing (January 1993) we have lectures on 'Excavations on Mill Hill, Deal' and 'Post Medieval Ceramics' to look forward to. In June our members' evening will be 'True or False' where certain archaeological myths will hopefully be dispelled. The broadening of knowledge as well as entertainment are the aims of our lectures and all K.A.S. members with their guests are invited to attend. (See *Newsletter* for details).

CONFERENCE OF BUILDING RECORDERS

The twenty-ninth Conference of Building Recorders took place at the Barn at Charing on Saturday, 19th October 1992, with an attendance of 62 members and friends.

The first speaker, Mrs Jayne Semple, described Ford Place, Wrotham, where a stone medieval hall had been reduced to ruins in the Civil War. There remains one long timber-framed wing, with brickwork of high quality with shaped gables.

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Mr Neil Aldridge then described his investigations at Moatenden, Headcorn, a house with Tudor brickwork and fine stone doorways.

The rapid loss of farm buildings in the last few years has given rise to much concern. A recording scheme had been launched under the auspices of Museum of Rural Life, with the support of the County and some District Councils. The director of the project, Mrs Jane Wade, gave an overview and she was followed by Mr John Thorp, one of the investigators, who showed pictures of some of the buildings and discussed the problems that he had encountered.

Finally, Mr Kenneth Gravett, the Chairman, thanked Charing P.C.C. for the use of the hall, Miss Sarah Pearson for the use of her projector and Miss M. Ruglys for the excellent tea she provided.

The next Conference of Building Records will be held on Saturday, 16th October 1993.

1st January, 1993.

By Order of the Council
A.I. MOFFAT
Hon. General Secretary