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ANNUAL REPORT

KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

The Council presents its one hundred and thirty-seventh Report and Statement of Accounts for 1995.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at Dover on Saturday the 20th May, 1995, when the Council's Annual Report and Accounts for 1994 were accepted. Messrs. Reeves and Neylan of Canterbury were re-appointed Auditors to the Society.

OFFICERS

The following were elected as officers of the Society:

President:	Mr K.W.E. Gravett, M.Sc.(Eng.), F.S.A.
Hon. Editor:	Dr A.P. Detsicas, B.A., M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot.
Hon. Treasurer:	Mr B.T. Cousins, I.P.F.A., F.C.I.S.
Hon. General Secretary:	Mr A.I. Moffat
Hon. Librarian:	Dr P.H.G. Draper, B.Sc., Ph.D., D.I.C., F.R.S.C.
Hon. Membership Secretary:	Mrs. M. Lawrence
Hon. Excursions Secretary:	Mrs. J.M. Saynor, M.A.
Hon. Curator:	Mr A.C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A.

COUNCIL

The following were elected members of the Council:

Mr D. Bacchus*, Mrs S. Broomfield*, Mrs N.V. Caiger*, Mr R.F. Le Gear*, Mr A. Miles*, Mr R.N. Rolinson and Mrs P. Winzar*.

* Retiring member of Council

ANNUAL REPORT

MEMBERSHIP

At 31st December, 1995, the membership of the Society was 1,767, an increase of 49 over last year's total of 1,718. This increase is accounted for by the election of 108 new members off-set by the decease of 10 members, the resignation of 17 members (4 of whom reduced from joint subscriptions) and the removal of 32 names from the membership list owing to non-payment.

Long-standing members among the deceased were Dr J.D. Ogilvie, M.A., F.S.A., of Ash, a member for 38 years, Mr T.F. Page, of Sittingbourne, a member for 31 years and Mr R.C. Stone, B.A., of Sutton Valence a member for 63 years. Mr P.M. de Paris, of Sturminster Newton, Dorset, is congratulated on completing 50 years of membership.

The Hon. Membership Secretary thanks the Society's members for their co-operation in putting the new subscription rates into operation. Covenants made by 327 members raised £1,483 extra income for the Society.

CHURCHES COMMITTEE

The Committee continued its fight to retain the Romanesque façade of Christ Church, Tunbridge Wells, in a proposed new development. The scheme for demolition and redevelopment was referred to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, but sadly their lordships refused leave to appeal.

Concern was expressed about proposals to build a parish hall onto the Saxo-Norman church at West Kingsdown. This hall was considered to be of poor architectural quality and out of scale with the church.

Murston Old Church, which had been transferred by the Society to the Cromarty Trust in 1994, was retiled, reglazed and repairs carried out to the stonework. It is to form an interpretation centre for the Swale Heritage Trail, which was launched from the church on 13th June, 1995. The Committee is still hopeful that Goodnestone Church can be brought in for a similar purpose at the eastern end of the trail.

In 1944, the church at Little Chart was destroyed by a German bomb. The important series of memorials commemorating the Darell family was badly damaged but many fragments were rescued by a member of the family and stored in a garage at Egham. Some have already been restored and replaced in the new church. The Committee is hoping to procure the restoration of three of the memorials and to fix them at the base of the tower of the bombed church, together with material to demonstrate the history of the Darell family.

Four further volumes of the Doddington Parochial Library were

ANNUAL REPORT

repaired with a grant from the Council for the Care of Churches. A grant was offered by the Society towards the conservation of the funerary helm at Monks Horton, St. Peter.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

A grant was recommended for the consideration and display of a collection of archaeological material at Halling C.P. School.

Roman Canterbury was reprinted and consideration is being given to the production of another resource book for children on Medieval Canterbury.

A number of lectures were given to schools and days of teacher training organised by the Education Officer of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust.

EXCURSIONS

39 members participated in the 1995 Continental excursion to Burgundy from May 29th to June 4th. En route they stayed over night at Provins, close to Sens, where Becket spent his year of exile, then travelled on to their base, an excellent hotel just outside the hill-top town of Semur. From there they visited sites with Kentish connections at Fontenay, Auxerre, Vezelay, Beaune and Chablis, while there was an opportunity to examine Rheims Cathedral on the return journey.

The day visits during the summer were, in July, to Rye which included an excellent guided tour (led by Mrs Fraser-Hay) of Camber Castle, one of the Henrician fortifications; in August to Coggeshall – to Paycocke's House, the Abbey Barn and (by kind permission of Mrs Brew) the monastic ruins at Abbey Farm; and in September to Deal – in the morning to the Royal Marines School of Music, guided by Band-Serjeant Andrews, while in the afternoon the President led members to the Time Ball Museum and through the oldest part of the town.

Mr Gravett also arranged an additional visit for members at the end of September to view the wall paintings of Bishopsbourne Church, close to Joseph Conrad's old house.

FIELDWORK COMMITTEE

The Committee met on several occasions and recommended grants for fieldwork to the Council.

A one day conference on the theme of *Linear Archaeology in Kent (The Archaeology of Rail, Road and Pipeline)* was held in Wye College in October 1995 and chaired by the President of the Society. The Committee records its thanks to all the speakers.

ANNUAL REPORT

KENT HISTORIC BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

The Committee is sponsored jointly by the Society and the C.P.R.E. All proposals which affect listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas which involve outright demolition or any element of demolition must be referred to the Committee for observations before decisions are made. The Committee acts as agent to the Council for British Archaeology throughout Kent and may raise objections or comments on its behalf.

It is usual that recommendations include advice which would make the proposals more acceptable and allow the work to proceed whilst protecting the listed building. The number of applications referred to the Committee increased from 265 in 1994 to 275 in 1995.

Much of the Committee's time, and in particular that of the Chairman, was spent with Union Railway's proposals as they affect listed buildings and in trying to reach agreement as to what would happen to those buildings where demolition cannot be avoided.

The index of listed buildings divided into areas has progressed well and has already proved to be a useful tool to members who are better able to be aware of threatened buildings in their locality.

MEMBERSHIP AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

The Committee met on three occasions during the year. A new updated membership leaflet was launched in January and distributed to libraries and museums in the County.

The four lectures concluding the 1994/95 series of monthly lectures were well attended and the work of Mr Don Coast in organising them much appreciated. The photographic displays from the Society's archives continued to be in demand during the year.

The year was marked by the Society's presence at the Kent County Show where a high standard of presentation was achieved with photographic displays, a video recording of the Society's work, pottery displays, short lectures and demonstrations of flint knapping.

There were two social meetings during the year. Fifty members enjoyed a country evening and barbecue at Woodchurch, preceded by a visit to the Rare Breeds Centre and the restored windmill. Mr Fred Hams spoke on the evolution of the Kentish poultry industry. A Christmas buffet lunch at Aylesford was attended by some ninety members and was followed by a tour of the Friary.

Mrs Saynor's sales stall was present at Society events and the thrice yearly *Newsletter* was edited and produced promptly by Mrs N. Caiger.

ANNUAL REPORT

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Volume CXIV of *Archaeologia Cantiana* was issued in July 1995. 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 local history. Volume CXIII, a General Index volume, covering the years 1975 to 1992, was also issued free to members of the Society in July 1995.

Work continued preparing for publication several new volumes. Publication of *The Kent Feet of Fines in the Reign of Henry VIII*, edited by Dr M.L. Zell, has been started as volume II of the New Series of *Kent Records*. *Kent Heresy Proceedings 1511-12*, edited by Dr N. Tanner and a companion volume to *Visitations of Archbishop Warham and his Deputies 1511-12* (*Kent Records*, XXIV [1984]) will, it is hoped, be available in 1996, as volume XXVI of *Kent Records*. *Kent: Church and Chapel 1851: The Religious Census*, edited by Miss M. Roake, has also been submitted for probable publication in 1997 as volume XXVII of *Kent Records*. Several other texts are under active preparation.

It is hoped to issue, in 1996, *The Bishops and Monks of Rochester 1076-1214*, by Colin Flight as volume VI of the Monograph Series.

The Committee is indebted to the Society's President for undertaking the onerous task of type-setting the new series of *Kent Records*.

CONFERENCE OF BUILDING RECORDERS

The thirty-second Conference of Building Recorders was held at The Barn, Charing, on Saturday 14th October, 1995, and attracted an attendance of some 60 members and friends.

The Norman House behind the east side of West Malling High Street was not accessible, until a recent change of owner allowed Roger Walsh to make measured drawings. His colleague, Ralph Lovegrove, described the building which is of stone, of two storeys, with an upper chamber with fireplace and two windows with segmented heads and zig-zag mouldings. The roof was rebuilt about 1500. The buildings on the street frontage are later and timber-framed and these were described by Sarah Pearson, who had recorded them for the R.C.H.M. In the ensuing discussion, Margaret Lawrence was able to refer to some relevant documents in the Centre for Kentish Studies.

The second speaker was Paul Bennett, who read a report of work done by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust on the large, medieval barn at Littlebourne. They had made a number of detailed discoveries, including that the crown-posts were a later insertion.

The third speaker, Dr Richard Scarth was invited to describe the experimental sound mirrors, devised in the 1920s and 1930s to track

enemy aircraft. There is a group of these of various types, at Hythe and Dungeness. Increasing aircraft speeds caused them to be replaced by radar just before the second world war. They are well described in his booklet, published by the Hythe Civic Society with a grant from the Allen Grove Local History Fund.

Finally, Mr Gravett announced the publication of the Kent Historic Buildings Index parts for Swale and Bexley. He also thanked the ladies of Charing Parish Church for providing tea and the Charing P.C.C. for the use of the hall.

KENT DEFENCE RESEARCH GROUP

Membership of the Group is up slightly to ninety-two, just over half of whom live outside Kent, including five members resident abroad. Many members could perhaps best be described as 'armchair archaeologists' but many more are active in the fields of conservation and research. The Group's journal *Ravelin* appeared regularly and issue no. 44 was published in January 1996.

The New Tavern Fort Project, with which Victor Smith has been actively engaged for years, received (in 1995) the Council for Kentish Archaeology's award for Best Preservation Scheme in 1994. It is also important to mention work for Kent County Council by Victor Smith and Ron Crowdy on the recording of twentieth-century defences along the East Thames Corridor.

Member Keith Parfitt's epic work on the excavation of burials in the Mill Hill area of Deal was published in 1995. His full report on the Buckland Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Dover (an interim report appeared in *Archaeologia Cantiana* Vol. CXIV) is eagerly awaited.

Outside Kent, the Group continued its involvement with the Council for British Archaeology's *Defence of Britain Project*, which seeks to record as many as possible of the country's twentieth-century defences. With the appointment of another Area Co-ordinator, six out of seven are Group members. The Group's Chairman, John Guy, is not only acting as Area Co-ordinator for Scotland, but is also doing much work himself on the recording of twentieth-century defences in Scotland for Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.

The *Defence of Britain Project's* handbook, *Twentieth-Century Defences in Britain*, to which all but one of the contributors are Group members, was published in 1995 and is selling well.

KENT UNDERGROUND RESEARCH GROUP

Despite the classic conditions of a long dry summer followed by periods of heavy rainfall, very few denehole or chalkwell subsidences

ANNUAL REPORT

were recorded during the year. Members have, however, continued to record sites in the County and many research projects are in hand.

A denehole shaft at Darenth was cleared of deposited rubbish and a steel grill installed to allow hibernating bats the freedom of the underground chalk chambers but deny access to unauthorised human visitors during the hibernation period. This is an example of the Group's continuing conservation programme in co-operation with such bodies as the Kent Bat Group and Kent Trust for Nature Conservation.

In Surrey the Group is working with the Weald Cave and Mine Society at Brockham, where an excavation to re-enter a hearthstone mine is being undertaken. So far a backfilled shaft has been cleared of backfill and an area of shattered passage and roof falls has been reached. Our members' expertise in mining engineering and long experience in working in such loose and unstable material is most useful to the project. It is hoped that the main area of workings will be intact and should be reached soon.

Other heathstone and firestone mines in Surrey have been accessible intermittently over the years and have thus been subject to frequent visits by the general public with the associated vandalism, etc. The Brockham mine was sealed soon after mining ceased and therefore has great historical value and archaeological potential.

1st January, 1996

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