

Liss Archaeology AGM

Wednesday 20 April 2022

Attendees: 27 members online

1. Introduction to the meeting by Keith Baker who welcomed everyone online and thanked Eric Hartzenberg for hosting the AGM in the absence of Carl Hollands.
2. Apologies for absence:
Andy Vogel, Chris Talbot, Jessica Butt and Andrew Coombes.
3. Approval of Minutes of 2021 AGM.
The draft Minutes have been on the website since February 2022. No comments or corrections received. So Minutes approved.
4. Matters Arising.
The constitution was amended as agreed – changing the chairing of the Fieldwork Committee.
EMLID survey equipment purchased.
No comments were made in relation to Matters Arising.
5. Chairman's Report.
Alton - Big Dig took place in 2021. Alton Council was very pleased that the Dig went ahead. The southwest end of the park was investigated – but no evidence of Romans found. Interesting finds included a Victorian rubbish dump probably belonging to Westbrook House Asylum. Blue and white pottery jug and bowl found along with decorative clay pipes which may have been a discarded collection. Possible remains of a greenhouse, bakery and laundry were also found.
Back gardens at Lentern Street and Tanhouse Lane also had test pits which provided evidence of a small building, a lettered tile and pencil – the house had previously been used as a school.
Geophysics was undertaken at the Butts but nothing significance found.

EMLID – training sessions have taken place. The equipment can be pre-loaded with data to easily find corners of trenches which saves time. It also records levels which helps with site interpretation. It has been used at Liss, Alton and Ludshott.

Stroud – a scaled back dig was held in August and September 2021. Trench A, from 2019, was extended and found to be a kiln for making buildings material. This could have been used for making building material for the Villa in the adjacent field or been used for material linked to the constructed Villa. Trench B was opened along the hedge line, but nothing found.
This year it is hoped that a new site at Top of Copse – which has a square feature approximately 20 x 20 metres – will be dug. The farmer has agreed that we would have access after harvesting – hopefully in July, weather permitting.

Colemore – ditches were found containing pottery. The weather was dreadful with bailing out of the trenches being a regular feature. School visits were hosted during the dig. Chris Wilkins is standing down from organising the visits but will still be involved. Anne Brooks has been invited to join the Committee in an educational role. School visits and education is a good way to pass on knowledge to youngsters and get them involved with history and archaeology.

Ludshott – lots of work involving lots of volunteers has been undertaken with almost 1,000 features identified and recorded including gun emplacements and tank tracks relating to the 1st and 2nd World Wars. Forestry work undertaken in 2019 destroyed a lot of archaeology due to the use of huge machines. Liaison with the National Trust will ensure the areas surveyed will be cleared by hand felling and not machine. There is a master spreadsheet and map of all the records which has been maintained by Andrea Hay, Carl Hollands, Carol and Eric Hertenberg. Juliet has co-ordinated the survey and written reports of each feature throughout which has taken up much of her time. Liaison is ongoing with the National Trust archaeologist James Brown who has managed to obtain some funding to assist the on-going project.

2022 Digs – Colemore – 30 April – 22 May – bookings open.
Stroud – July – 33-4 weeks - Top of Copse.
Ludshott – winter – subject to nesting birds.

Also Geophysics sessions and a First Aid Course during one of the digs.

Fundraising – we needed to raise £12,000 to purchase a new magnetometer. £7,500 has been donated with EHDC promising £1,750. £2,000 has been released from the reserves which brings us to £11,250. We need another £1,000 to reach our target.

Many thanks go to Elaine Evans who donated £4,000 after having seen us on Meridian TV – which was filming the impact of Covid on local volunteer groups. She lives in Hove and has endowed an archaeological gallery at Brighton Museum. Thanks also to Joanne Utting who has helped us draft request grants from EHDC. We have received funds from: Robert Mocarra – ward member for Meon Valley - £1,000, Keith Budden – ward member for Liss - £500 and Anthony Williams – ward member for Headley - £250. Thanks to all for the donations.

6. Treasurer's Report.

Activity is back up to pre Covid levels.

The Crowdfunding Account stood at £7,385 and a further £2,000 has been added from reserves to total £9,385 towards the purchase of the magnetometer.

The SDNP grant is to be used as a reserve fund for Ludshott costs.

Insurance costs will be lower next year – different provider.

No questions or queries were received.

Keith Baker proposed the acceptance of the Accounts. Carol Hertenberg seconded. Accounts approved unanimously.

7. Election of Officers.

Those standing down: David Butcher, Claire Cousins and David Quick. Grateful thanks were given for all their hard work. Sue Upton will also step down from the Committee, but cakes will still be forthcoming!

New Committee Members proposed – Jane Walker as secretary and Ann Brookes in educational and schools role.

Proposal to approve all Committee changes – no objections – approved unanimously.

8. Jane Godden proposal for Constitution amendment.

To change the wording of Clause 20 – from suitably 'qualified' person to suitably 'experienced' person. The reason is to enable our current auditor to continue as he is now retired and not kept up his membership of the institute. He is therefore experienced but no longer qualified.

Proposed by Jane Godden, seconded by Peter Price. Amendment unanimously approved.

9. AOB – none. David Quick thanked Keith and the other Committee members for their time and hard work.