

Liss Archaeology AGM held at The Triangle Centre, Mill Road, Liss, GU33 7DX.

Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 7:30pm

Attendees: 24 members

1. **Introduction** to the meeting by Keith Baker - Chairman.
2. **Apologies for absence:** Colin Brash, Ann Brooks, Teresa Debski, Paul Kennedy, Sally Pritchard, Jane Walker, Simon White, Chris Wilkins, Barry Wood, Jean Sanderson, Andy Sanderson.
3. **Approval of Minutes of 2024 AGM.**
The draft Minutes have been on the website. No comments or corrections received. Minutes approved. Proposed by David Quick and seconded by Juliet Smith
4. **Matters Arising.**
No comments were made in relation to Matters Arising.
5. **Chairman's Report.**

Butser Hill - Geophysics Survey

We started our year early with a geophysics survey of areas surrounding Butser Hill Car Park. The car park was due to be remade, and Hampshire County Council needed an archaeological survey in areas that they proposed to put flower beds. We continued this exercise during the year with three separate visits.

Colemore - May

We started a dig on our Colemore site investigating new locations relating to previous year's trench locations. In one corner of the first trench we found an area of paving which, as we progressed, covered the whole of the trench. It dipped down and formed a sloping channel going deeper. The flint paving was similar to other areas we had found in previous trenches. The shape and profile of the paving indicated that it may have been used for water direction.

The next trench was an enlargement of a 2023 potential ditch location. It proved to be a typical Iron Age ditch, lined with flints on each face. It contained a reasonable amount of mainly Romano-British pottery.

The third trench did not initially produce any significant areas of interest along its length. It had a regular distribution of flints at its higher layer. At one end of the trench there was evidence of a ditch, which we excavated

In the fourth trench, which we had sited adjacent to the trench dug in the previous dig, we found chalk-based foundation lines - probably an extension to the building foundations found in past digs. Part of the plan of the foundation seemed to indicate a curved structure.

Petersfield Big Dig - July

We continued our Petersfield Big Dig for a second year, including more excavations on the playing field and further back garden digs, generally near to The Spain, Sheep Street and St Peter's Church.

The week before the opening of the Big Dig, Ann Brooks gave a talk at the Petersfield Museum. She brought along finds from the previous Big Dig, mainly pottery we had discovered in a number of back gardens. The sherds had been dated and ranged from 1000 to 1500 AD, throughout the mediaeval period. We found the remains of a Romano British pot that appeared to have been used for cooking. Ann and Chris partially assembled it to show its size. We rarely find enough sherds of a pottery or ceramic vessel to attempt to re-assemble it.

Petersfield's Mayor, J C Chrissey came to open the Big Dig, assisting in a trench opening in the Playing Fields. He was wearing his very expensive gold chain of office.

Our finds in the various back garden test pits included items from mid to late mediaeval periods and Victorian and Edwardian eras. Some of the items seem mundane, e.g. a broken end of an early toothbrush, but they are all part of our history. Some items are difficult to date but others can be identified by their markings and the use of the internet. For example an insignificant button can have its history revealed.

Our initial test pit was in the back garden of a house near the church. We dug in the flower beds and found a collection of mainly more recent china and pottery with the exception of the leg from a three legged pipkin pot dating from the 13 to 14th century. A following dig, near to the Spain, was on the site of a builders yard so the finds were generally related to construction.

In further gardens we located a selection of finds including the classic decorated clay pipe bowl – with a set of cricket stumps, bat and ball, probably Victorian and a skeleton of a dog, buried fairly deeply so could be an older burial. A final pit,

which we took down as far as we could, found concrete or mortar in a line. It may relate to drainage but was fairly deeply buried in a clay layer

Farm Near Petersfield – September

We started a new dig at a Farm near Petersfield. This was a site that the landowner was interested in investigating. A number of years earlier, whilst metal detecting, a number of cooking-related items had been found that dated back to Romano-British times. We were greatly assisted by the owner, who financed an excavator for our use.

The initial area of land we decided to investigate had been kept free of crops as the owner thought it potentially had buildings beneath it. After excavating a number of trenches across the area we found no evidence of built structures but at a depth of about 1-2m we discovered a prehistoric seabed. It was captured in a mud rock strata and had an interesting collection of fossils. It dated back to the Cretaceous period (60 million years ago).

Having drawn a blank on the area of the field that had not been cropped we looked at the area in the vicinity of where we had previously dug the test pit. The initial trench showed an apparent area of paving which had a definitive end. We extended the trench but found no areas of interest.

In the next trench we discovered, at a fairly shallow depth, evidence of a small oven. On further excavation we found it contained a built-up enclosure. At one end of the “oven structure” there was a semi-circular layer of white pebbles and adjacent blackened soil, indicating burning. We found an amount of pottery sherds contained within the soil and also a knife which was inserted end-on into the soil.

Chairman’s Report

Plans for 2025:

- A Colemore dig from 24th April – 27th May, for which bookings are already open.
- A third Petersfield Big Dig from 18th July – 3rd August.
- Ongoing work with the National Trust at Ludshott Common, subject to the usual restrictions because of ground-nesting birds.
- A dig at a farm near Medstead from 4th – 30th September.
- Several ongoing geophysics projects – including Petersfield and a farm in the Medstead area.

Fundraising:

- With donations we have raised enough funds to purchase a portable defibrillator.
- We have purchased some new Coleman shelters to replace damaged items.
- We are on the lookout for a reasonably-priced used ground-penetrating radar.

Membership

Membership for last year - ending March 2025 - 151 members.

New members this year - 37.

6. Treasurers report

Jane Godden, the Treasurer presented the accounts to end December 2024

There was a question regarding the accounts re how much rental we paid for the storage at Liss, as we are looking for other storage for finds and LA hard copy paperwork. Jane said it was £120 per quarter.

The accounts have been audited and meet examination requirements.

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Stuart Rippon and seconded by David Quick.

7. Election of the committee officers

Our current committee officers are:

Chairman - Keith Baker

Vice Chairman - Peter Price

Archaeology Director - Juliet Smith

Treasurer - Jane Godden

Membership Secretary - Carol Hartzenberg

Secretary - Jane Walker

Schools and Education officer - Ann Brooks

Two of our Committee members are standing down from their current positions - Keith Baker and Peter Price.

We have received nominations for their replacements as follows:

Chairman - Helen Mullenger

Vice Chairman - Carl Raven

We have received no other nominations.

Proposed Committee Membership:

Chairman - Helen Mullenger
Vice-Chairman - Carl Raven
Archaeology Director - Juliet Smith
Treasurer - Jane Godden
Membership Secretary - Carol Hartzenberg
Secretary - Jane Walker
Schools and Education Officer - Ann Brooks
Newsletter Editor - Peter Price

The appointment of the new Committee members, and extending the terms in office of Peter, Carol and Ann beyond two years, as currently required by our Constitution were proposed by David Quick and seconded by Stuart Rippon.

8. Membership Policy

We are preparing a change to the Constitution relating to the membership. A draft of this change will be placed on the website in the Members section for your information. We will hold an Extraordinary General Meeting to approve this change, and you will be notified of the date of this meeting in due course.

9. Any other business

There was no other business.

David Quick then presented a photographic talk about Alton - Past and Present.