

# MID-SUSSEX FIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEAM

## NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 44

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### Editorial

We apologise for this extremely short newsletter, but as I am sure that you are aware, we are currently spending all our time working on the Barcombe Villa excavation, of which details follow below. Our next newsletter will be back to normal. Please also see overleaf if you want to take part in the excavations or finds processing.

### Barcombe Roman Villa

The excavation of the villa commenced as planned in mid May, and is currently progressing well under the joint directorship of David Rudling and myself. The initial machine stripping of the site exposed wall foundation trenches, and in places remains of the flint wall footings themselves. The outlines of the walls match almost exactly the image seen in the geophysics survey results (see photograph 1).

Currently the Field Unit training courses are running during the week, and there are student volunteers working on the site during the week, supervised by the Field Unit. At weekends MSFAT and other volunteers are working, assisted by one of the Field Unit supervisors.

After the initial trowelling to clean up the trench, we have begun to excavate each of the villa rooms. The methodology is to quadrant each room, and then excavate alternate quadrants, so that a section remains to be recorded through the room. At present in each room interesting features have been found, ranging from pits to post holes and ditches, some of which must predate the villa, or at least the west wing as they appear to run under the walls.

Finds include large quantities of pottery and tile, oyster shell, bone and glass, with numerous iron nails. Amongst the small finds are bone hair-pins, glass beads and gaming pieces, and the occasional item of copper-alloy. Fragments of painted wall plaster have been found showing that the walls of at least one room were decorated. A number of tesserae from mosaics have been found, together with many cubes cut from tiles and used as flooring. These finds show that our villa was once richly decorated with mosaics and painted walls.

A full report will be included in our next newsletter

Chris Butler

### Subscriptions

If you have received a reminder with this newsletter, then your subscription is outstanding for 2001/2, and if it remains unpaid, this will be your last newsletter.

### Volunteers needed

Although the number of places at Barcombe has been limited to about 20 at weekends, we have as yet rarely reached that maximum, and on many days there are places left for volunteers (especially on Sundays). Many of you have completed application forms to dig at Barcombe, but have not yet come

forward as volunteers. Time is running out, there are only some six weeks left before the excavation comes to its planned end this year, and we do need your help. The excavation will probably close around the 12<sup>th</sup> August.

If you want to volunteer for either excavation work or finds processing, then please contact me between 7pm and 9pm on 01273 890081 during week days to book your place.

Chris Butler

### **T-shirts**

If you want to purchase a Barcombe Villa T-shirt (black or white), these can be purchased at the site at weekends, price £6 each.

### **Wickham Barn Roman pottery kiln site**

The final report on the excavations at Wickham Barn have now been published in a British Archaeological Report. We have a small number of copies available at a reduced price of £18 plus £1 p&p. Copies can be obtained from Chris Butler.



1. Roman Villa, Barcombe - Photograph taken 26<sup>th</sup> June 2001.

## **Forthcoming CCE Courses**

### *Summer School: Ancient crafts & Technology*

A week long course exploring ancient crafts and technologies including pottery, metal working, wood working, textiles building technologies and coracle building. Based at the Iron Age Activity Centre at Michelham Priory. Monday 30<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2001 Fee £140 (£60 concession) SAS Members £135/£55. Contact CCE 01273 678527 for further details.

### *Study Tour: Southern Cyprus*

Based at Paphos, the tour includes visits to important sites dating from the Neolithic, Bronze Age, Roman, Byzantine and Crusader periods. Dates: 12h – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2001. Tour price based on B&B accommodation in shared room £747 (£737 for SAS Members) Half board supplement £39. Single room supplement £69. For further information & a booking form contact David Rudling 01273 845497 or email: [fau@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk).

### *Certificate programmes in Archaeology*

This autumn see the introduction of a new two-year, part-time certificate programme alongside the well established and popular 'Certificate in Practical Archaeology'. The new programme a 'Certificate in Archaeology' will introduce students to a broad range of approaches, methods and theory in archaeology; it aims to explain the history of how people have attempted to reconstruct/interpret the past from archaeological data.

Further details of these two courses, together with the Diploma in Archaeology, please contact Yvonne Barnes, CCE, University of Sussex, Brighton, BN1 9RE. Tel. 01273 678537. email [y.d.barnes@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:y.d.barnes@sussex.ac.uk)

### *Boxgrove Man to 1066*

This popular introduction to the archaeology of Sussex, will be running again for two terms (20 weeks) from September 25<sup>th</sup> 2001. Covering a shorter period than in previous years will allow more time to be spent looking at the prehistory and Roman period in Sussex. Based at Oakmeads Community College, Burgess Hill on Tuesday evenings, Tutor: Chris Butler. Further details from the Burgess Hill Adult Education Centre, at Oakmeads Community College, Burgess Hill. Tel: 01444 236355.

## **CBA South East**

CBA South East are organising a conference on prehistory, concentrating on recent discoveries in the south east. The venue will be Guildford College of Further & Higher Education, Guildford, on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2001. Further details from Shiela Broomfield on 01732 838698.



2. Laurie admiring his ditch section