

# **ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD NOTEBOOK 2015**

**A RECORD OF THE PROJECTS OF THE BRIGHTON AND  
HOVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY FIELD UNIT**

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## Introduction

The new season of activities for the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were focused this year on the excavations at Hog croft field, Ovingdean. The excavations are now being directed by the new BHAS Archaeological Secretary John Skelton. Once again the excavations were supported by a good number of people. The team were joined this year by a number of new faces including a student from Finland.

The excavations at Ovingdean are beginning to expand with permission for 4 new large size trenches. It is becoming obvious that the past trial trenching has produced more questions than answers, and that larger sized trenches may provide more detailed information about what lies beneath Hog Croft field. The Saxon pottery found in 2014 was evidence that this field may have possessed earlier occupation, and the large pit found in 2014 indicates a good possibility of finding earlier material and features

Geophysics has been much a part of the BHAS research programme this year with resistivity surveys at Gallops Farm, near Barcombe, Hempstead Farm near Uckfield and Preston Park, Brighton.

The Society conducted one watching brief along the route of the Jugg's Road that runs from Brighton to Lewes. The watching brief also included the excavation of a small section of the footpath before it was covered with a modern layer of protective materials.

Training in archaeological techniques was once again a feature of the excavations, with several of the team enhancing and using the expertise gained at training courses. Pete Tolhurst has now been appointed Training Manager and will be responsible for the training of new recruits. He will also keep a log of the members activities and a record of their achievements. Part of this years programme has been on site training with Jane Russell teaching planning and section drawing and Lisa Fisher teaching about archaeological photography. Both of the courses were well supported.

Post excavation activities have included finds washing, marking and cataloguing and these events have been supported by a number of archaeological day schools. All of these post excavation processes have proved popular with the BHAS field unit. This season up to 26 people attended each finds processing sessions held at the ASE workshops in Portslade and at the Patcham Community Centre, with all of the appropriate finds being both washed and marked.

Once again Archaeology South East (ASE), the local professional Unit, opened their doors and allowed BHAS members to use their finds washing facilities and complete the washing of all of the pottery from this seasons excavations.

The BHAS bones team, led by Carol White, continue with the processing of all of the bone material from the excavations, and this is conducted at Carol's home at Newhaven.

This field notebook also includes some archive material about fieldwalking that Society conducted at Sompting in 1995

Hard copies of this report are now passed to Ms L. Johnson at Brighton and Hove Planning Department, Casper Johnson, the County Archaeologist, Brighton Museum, Barbican House, the East Sussex Records Office and the National Monuments Records Office at Swindon. CD-Rom copies are produced by the Society's web master Mr Martin Devereux and are made available to the field unit members and others who desire a copy.

John Funnell 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016



# Archaeological Interim Report

## Hog Croft, Ovingdean, 2015



© BHAS/John Skelton

<b>Director</b>	John Skelton
<b>Site Code</b>	500209
<b>Organisation</b>	Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society
<b>Prepared</b>	April 2016

## Introduction

Following successful excavations in 2014 a Written Scheme of Investigation for excavations to continue in Hog Croft, Ovingdean was submitted by BHAS to Brighton and Hove City Council in 2015 and it was approved for excavation to start in April that year. This report gives preliminary observations from the excavation. Further excavations have already started in Hog Croft to further develop our understanding of the site based on these observations

Hog Croft is a field situated to the North of St. Wulfran's Church, Ovingdean (Fig. 1) and it is believed to contain the remains of a medieval manorial complex dating from at least 1200 AD. This site has been a frequent subject of geophysical investigation and excavations by the Society between 1986 and 2014. The 2015 excavation was designed to build on the previous findings. The objectives of the 2015 excavation included:-

- a) Further investigate the structure of the northern bank with particular reference to the nature and extent of the cobbled surfaces.
- b) Extend the area of excavation at the eastern end of the bank out into the surrounding field to see if archaeological features extend beyond the known medieval complex and if they do to establish their relative phasing.
- c) Better understand the extent and significance of the archaeology to inform future management and protection of this site.
- d) Provide facilities for public engagement in archaeology by providing training, accommodating site visits and presenting talks to local interested parties.

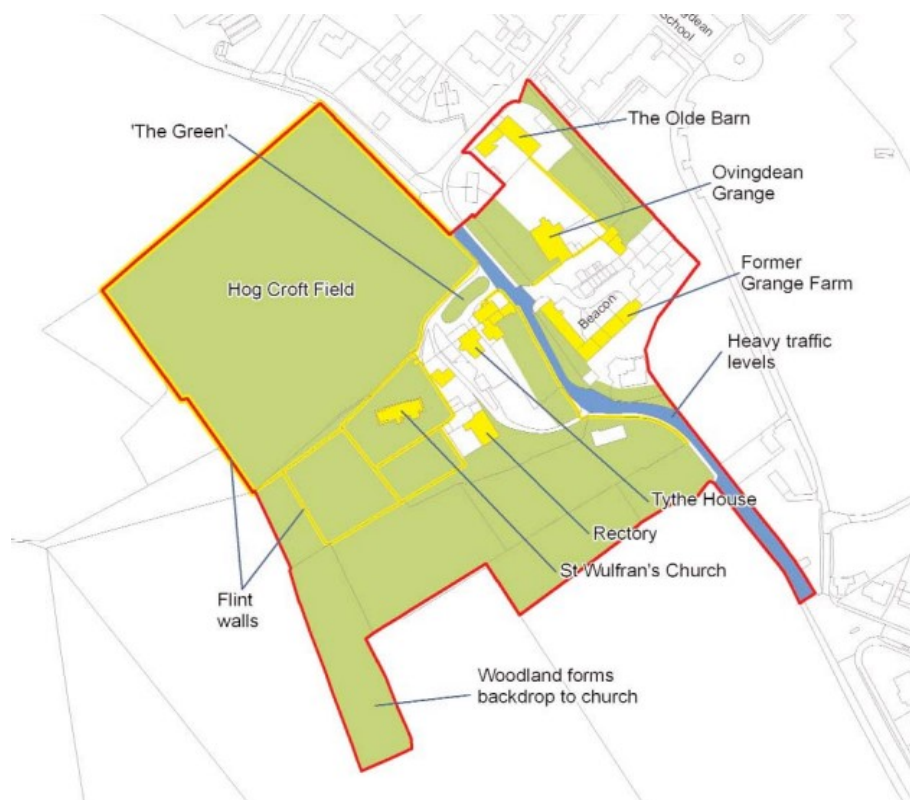
It was initially intended to open four 6x6 m trenches (P1 - P4) over the Eastern terminus of the East-West bank forming the Northern boundary of the manorial complex but excavation was slower than anticipated and only two of the trenches (P1 and P2) were opened (Fig. 2). This meant that objective b was not achieved.

## Location Map

Fig. 1 Site of excavations in Hog Croft, Woodingdean



a. Aerial view ©GoogleEarth



b. Plan view

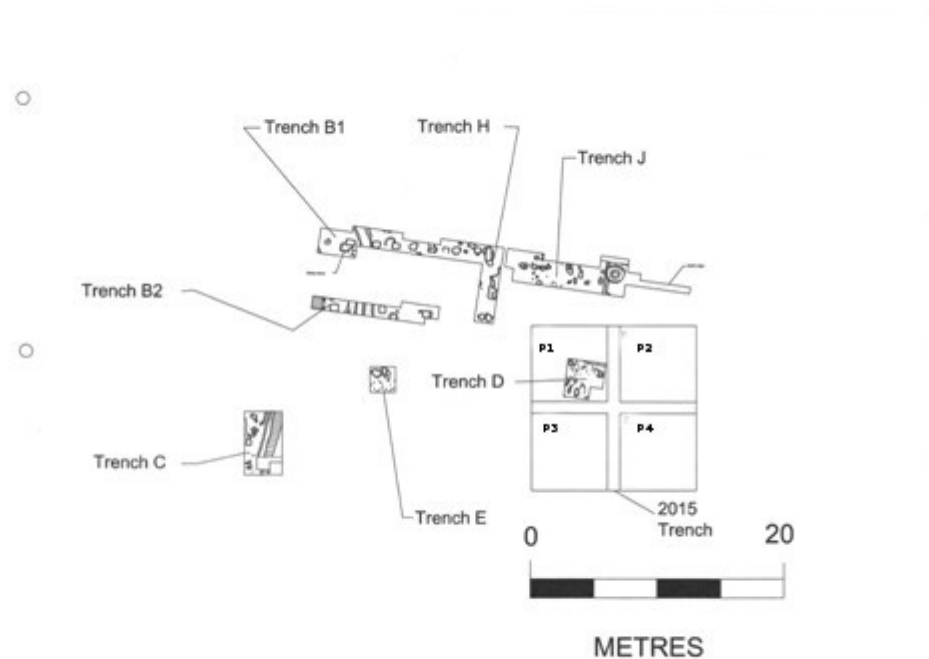
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## Archaeological Work Undertaken

Excavation of two 6x6 m trenches leaving much of the medieval archaeology intact. All work was undertaken by members of BHAS and short term community volunteers and students under the supervision of John Skelton (Site Director) and John Funnell (Deputy Site Director).

## Site Plan

Fig.2 Plan of proposed trenches P1 - P4 in relation to 2014 trenches. (SW to top).



## Preliminary Results

A large number of features were recorded during excavation mostly consisting of cuts into the chalk bedrock, cuts into the surrounding earthworks and flint structures.

The overlying strata was typically composed of a silty clay loam topsoil (Context A) with very few inclusions, under which was a layer of gravel (Context B) of varying thickness but typically only a few centimetres thick. The gravel was composed of a poorly sorted mixture of well rounded flint pebbles and angular flint stones up to 5 cm in size. Unless archaeology was present below context B the next stratum was a variable thickness of silty/sandy clay loam with abundant, poorly sorted inclusions of flint (up to about 20 cm in size) and chalk (up to about 10 cm in size) (Context C). A similar context constituted the fill of most of the cuts into the chalk. There were some exceptions and variations and these will be described and discussed in the final report.

Artefacts recovered from context A were typically “modern” and ranged from a glazed pottery, nails and pieces of roofing tile.

Context B produced mixed finds but included green glazed pottery sherds, beads, copper alloy objects, iron arrow heads, marine shell and small bones. Many of these finds were spot dated as “medieval”.

Context C produced a similar array of finds to the gravel layer except that large pieces of bone were often found, mainly of pig, sheep and cow.

Very few datable artefacts were recovered from within postholes and other features other than the buried soil beneath the earthworks.

### **Trench P1**

The location of trench P1 is on the presumed outside of the terminus of the earthwork bank bounding the North West of the complex and trench P2 is on the presumed inside.

Removal of contexts A and B revealed flint structures and flint scatters as illustrated in Fig 3. Unfortunately a trench opened in 2002 cuts diagonally through this area and disrupts the stratigraphy just at the point where the chalk bank terminates. Records from this previous project have still to be analysed. However, The chalk bank can clearly be seen in the South corner of the trench and the remains of a mortared flint wall lie to the North East. Running North East to South West is a linear scatter of flints with a clear area running between the flints and the chalk bank and flint wall. In the North corner of the trench is a protrusion of chalk apparently coming from beneath the flint scatter. Spot dating of pottery finds from this area suggest a late medieval origin for these structures.

The interpretation at this stage is that the clear area to the South East of the flint scatter represents a fence line running up the outside of the chalk bank and joining the flint wall at a right angle. The chalk protrusion may be some sort of reinforcing buttress. The flint wall does not appear to have been built for strength as the use of mortar is sporadic throughout the remains and the foundation is not onto natural chalk. It may be a revetment for the chalk bank or an ornamental "garden wall". This interpretation may suggest that there is a gateway into the compound North East of these structures. This suggestion is supported by the discovery of a large post hole (not yet fully excavated) between the flint wall and the chalk protrusion.

The original plan was to leave much of this presumed medieval archaeology intact but following a visit by the Assistant County Archaeologist a decision was made to completely excavate this trench in 2016.

A sondage along the South West edge of the trench has confirmed the nature of the chalk bank as revealed in 2014 as an unstructured mound of chalk blocks and rubble on top of a buried soil containing early medieval (Saxon) pottery.



A sondage in the North corner of the trench has uncovered a large ditch estimated at 1.8 metres wide and one metre deep running South West to North East. Unfortunately the Western edge of this ditch is truncated by a modern water mains ditch. It is proposed to explore this ditch further in 2016 with excavation of trench P3.

Fig. 3 Photogrammetric plan of trench P1 (South to the top left)





## Trench P2

The flint wall evident in trench P1 extends South-eastwards for about 3 m before turning 90 degrees to the South-west and continuing for a further 3 m. To the South-east of the wall terminus is another mortared flint structure of about 1 sq m separated from the wall by a narrow gully or gap in the stonework (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4 The flint wall has been partially removed at top centre right of the picture and remaining flints can be seen in the baulk. Top left is the isolated mortared flint structure separated from the wall by a gully.

In 2014 it was established that the flint wall was built on a foundation of three layers of large flint nodules separated by layers of soil. The horizontal depth of the foundation layer is greater than the depth of the wall providing a broad base.

There was a good deal of demolition 'tumble' around the wall and this was carefully removed during excavation. The gap between the two mortared areas was exploited by excavating down to bedrock chalk within the gap in order to expose the flint wall features in section.

The contention that the flint walls are revetments or 'garden walls' is supported by the finding that the wall was built up to the terminus of the chalk bank as it was in trench P1. The buried soil under the chalk bank as revealed by excavation of the gully was rich in charcoal. Again, the original intention was to leave the wall intact at this stage

Three-quarters of the area of trench P2 was excavated down to bedrock chalk and a number of post holes and stake holes were revealed (Fig. 5). Also a shallow gully about 40 cm wide and 10 cm deep was revealed running South-east to North-west and partially running under the flint wall. At this stage the gully is interpreted as a 'beam in trench' wall foundation with a gap about 1.5 m wide which may represent a doorway. We did not locate the termini of this gully so were unable to identify which way it turns (if indeed it does turn) and therefore cannot state whether any building would lie to the South-west or North-east of this feature.

The post holes and stakes holes were of various sizes and were scattered across the trench so that no pattern could be clearly discerned although there was some suggestion of linear arrays. Some of the post holes were large and sub-rectangular whilst others were smaller and round. The stake holes occurred in groups that appeared to respect the gap in the gully that may be a doorway (Fig. 6).

There were next to no datable finds from any of these features cut into the bedrock chalk. The distribution of these features was skewed across trenches P1 and P2 with most laying to the South-east of the earthwork bank supporting the contention that this area lies within an occupied enclosure bounded by the chalk bank.

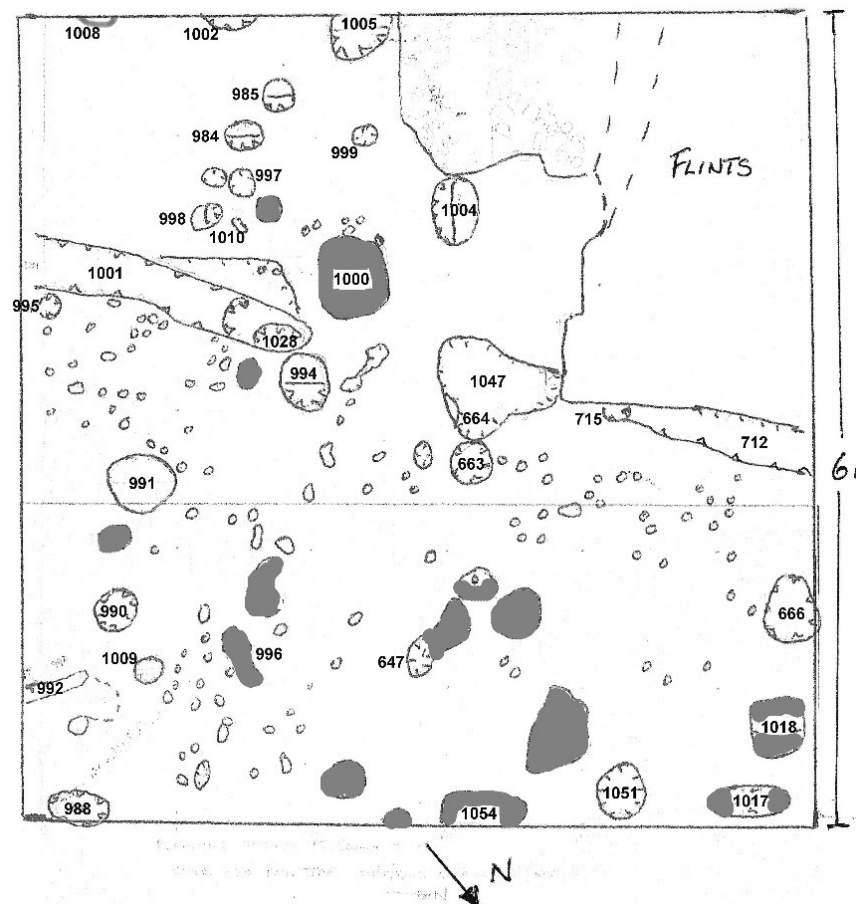


Fig. 5 Plan of post holes, stake holes, gully and shallow features (grey).





Fig. 6 Stake holes under the area occupied by part of the flint wall. The gap in the gully is between the two post holes top centre left of the picture.

## Registered Finds

Registered finds ranged from ferrous arrowheads and buckles (horse furniture?) to copper alloy, engraved, but broken, spur (c. C16) and a separate spur rowel wheel (Fig. 7). All the above finds were from the upper medieval layers. A particular interesting find was a buckler spine from thornback ray, *Raja clavata*, found in the buried soil under the chalk bank (Saxon?) indicating the consumption of cartilaginous fish at some time.



Clockwise from bottom left,  
Rowel  
Spur  
Buckle  
Buckler spine

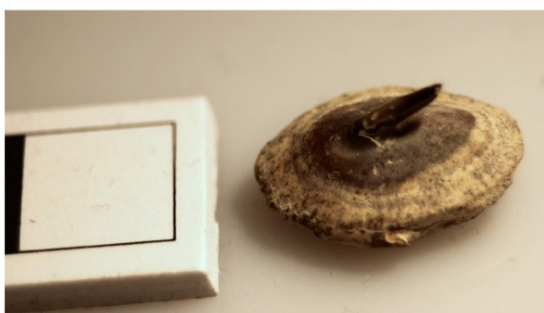


Fig. 7 Sample of registered finds

## **Post Hole Details**

The south trench contained numerous post holes and a gully running south to north across the trench. The post holes were each sectioned and drawn and then the remaining fill removed. Most had a loam fill with no post holes having any flint packing. The section drawings are appended to this report. (Figs 8, 9, 10 and 11)

<b>Context</b>	<b>Dia (cm)</b>	<b>Depth (cm)</b>
663	30	20
666	46	17
984	23	16
985	22	9
988	50	20
990	30	20
991	50	18
993	22	8
994	20	24
997	20	9
1002	42	27
1004	42	13
1005	43	24
1008	22	12
1009	20	19
1018	40	15

## **Preliminary Conclusions**

Progress has been slower than anticipated so conclusions based on the year's excavations are limited. We have continued to reveal some features such as postholes and wall foundation gullies that are not inconsistent with an early medieval (Saxon?) origin. More specifically the features are largely confined within the earthwork boundary supporting the contention that the enclosed area is a manorial complex. So far the structural details of the flint walls (foundation layers of flints and soil) have no parallels in the literature but the search continues. The evidence for consumption of cartilaginous fish has not been found previously.

## **Further Work Required for Preparation of Final Report**

Excavations will continue in all four trenches in 2016 exposing more features and examining the flint walls in more detail. More of the buried soil under the chalk bank will be excavated and samples taken for flotation and sieving analysis.

## **Acknowledgements**

With thanks to all members of the field unit who have shown considerable patience and perseverance with my supervision and continued to work hard.

Particular thanks are due to John Funnell and Mark Gillingham for their expert guidance and encouragement.

All plans are by John Funnell.

All mistakes are by me.

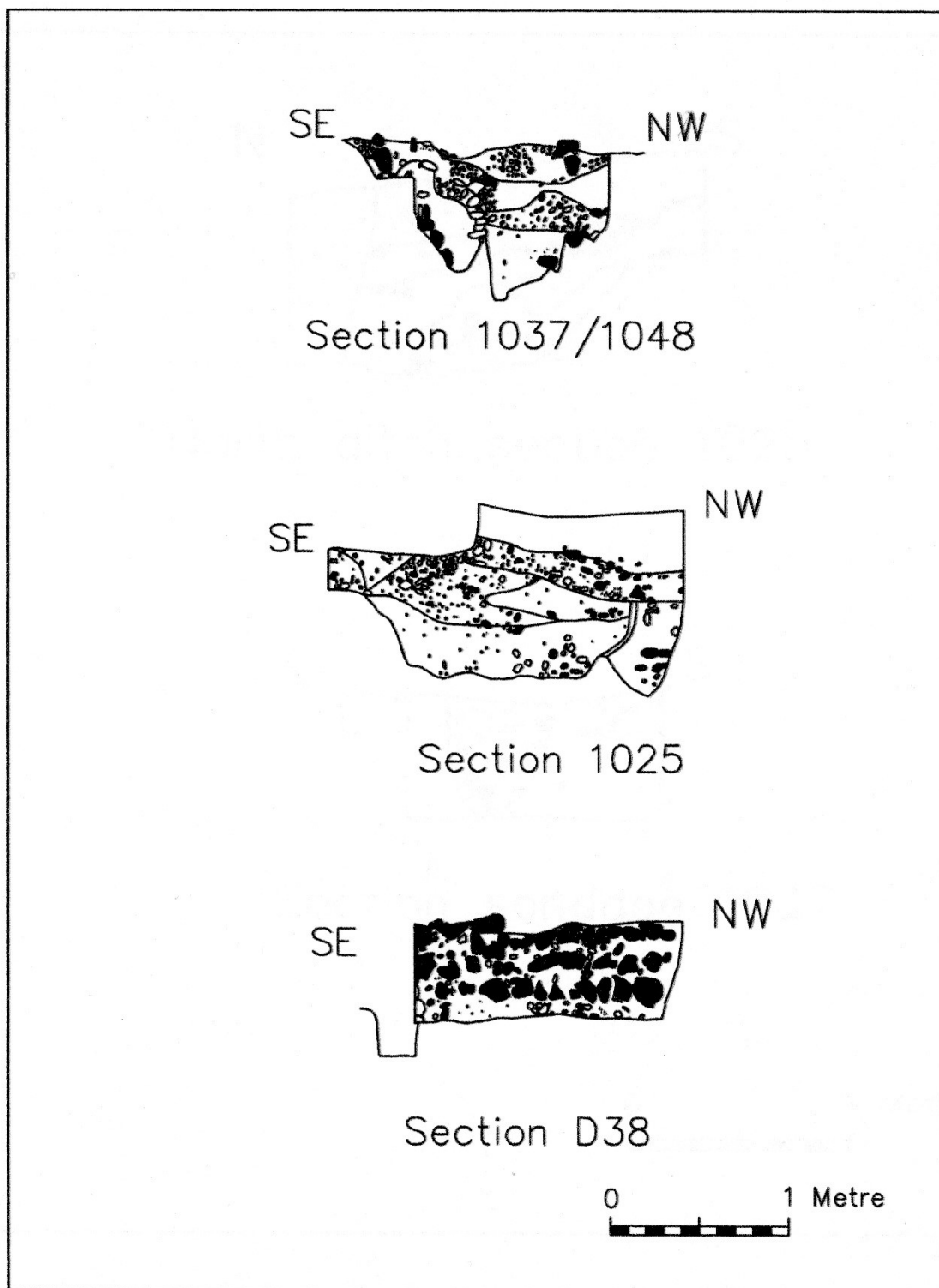


Fig 8. Ovingdean sections

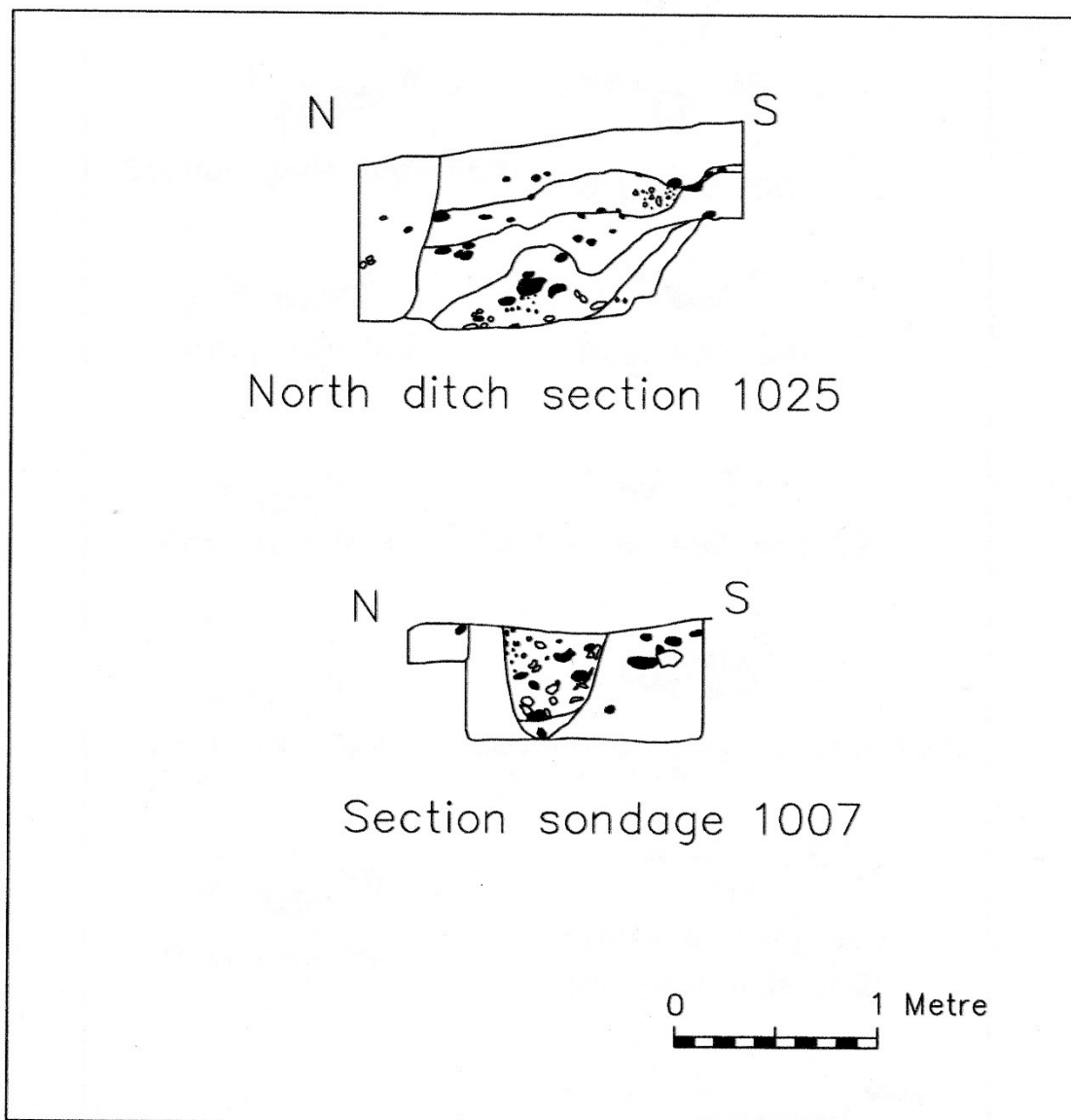


Fig 9. Ovingdean sections



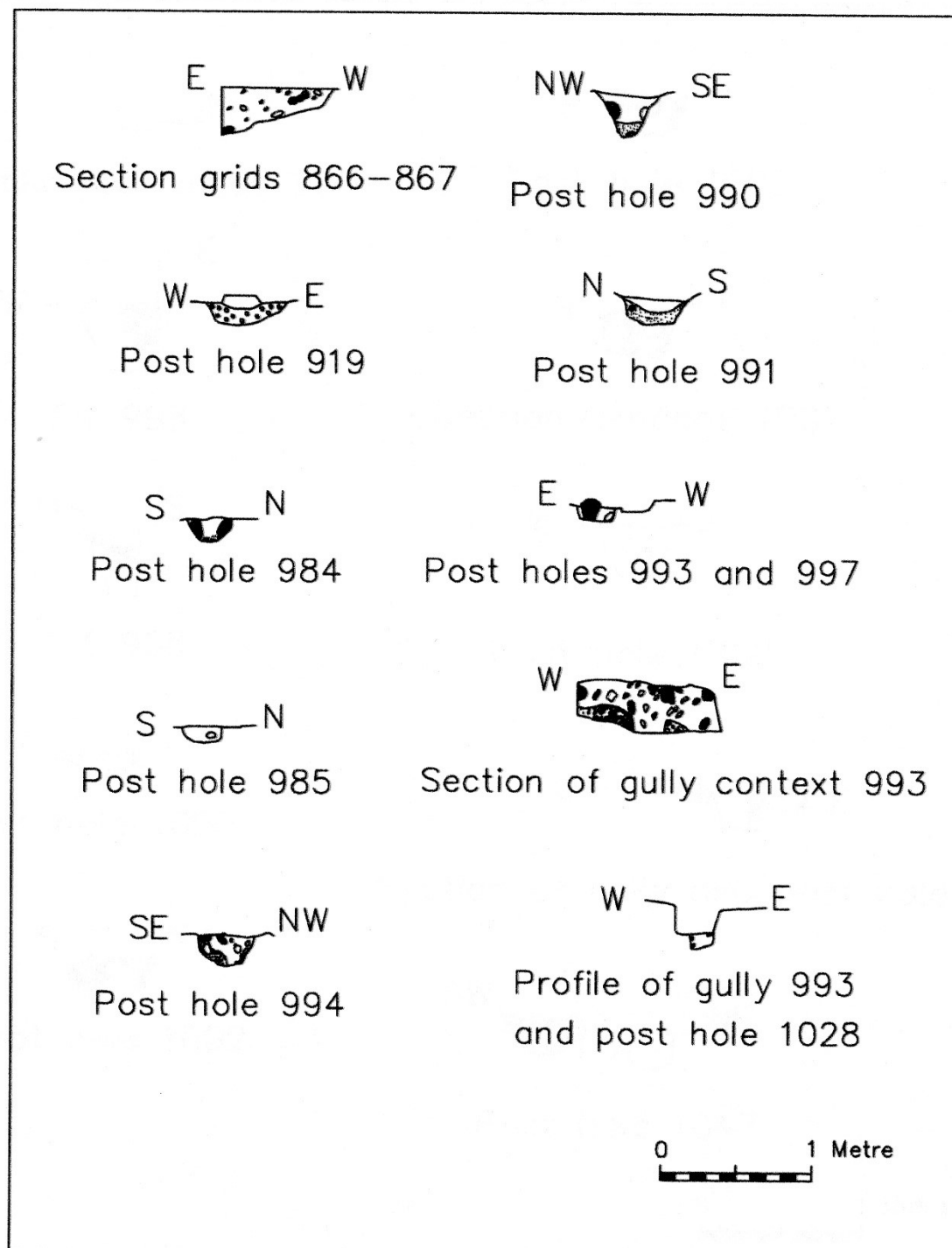


Fig 10. Post holes and gully

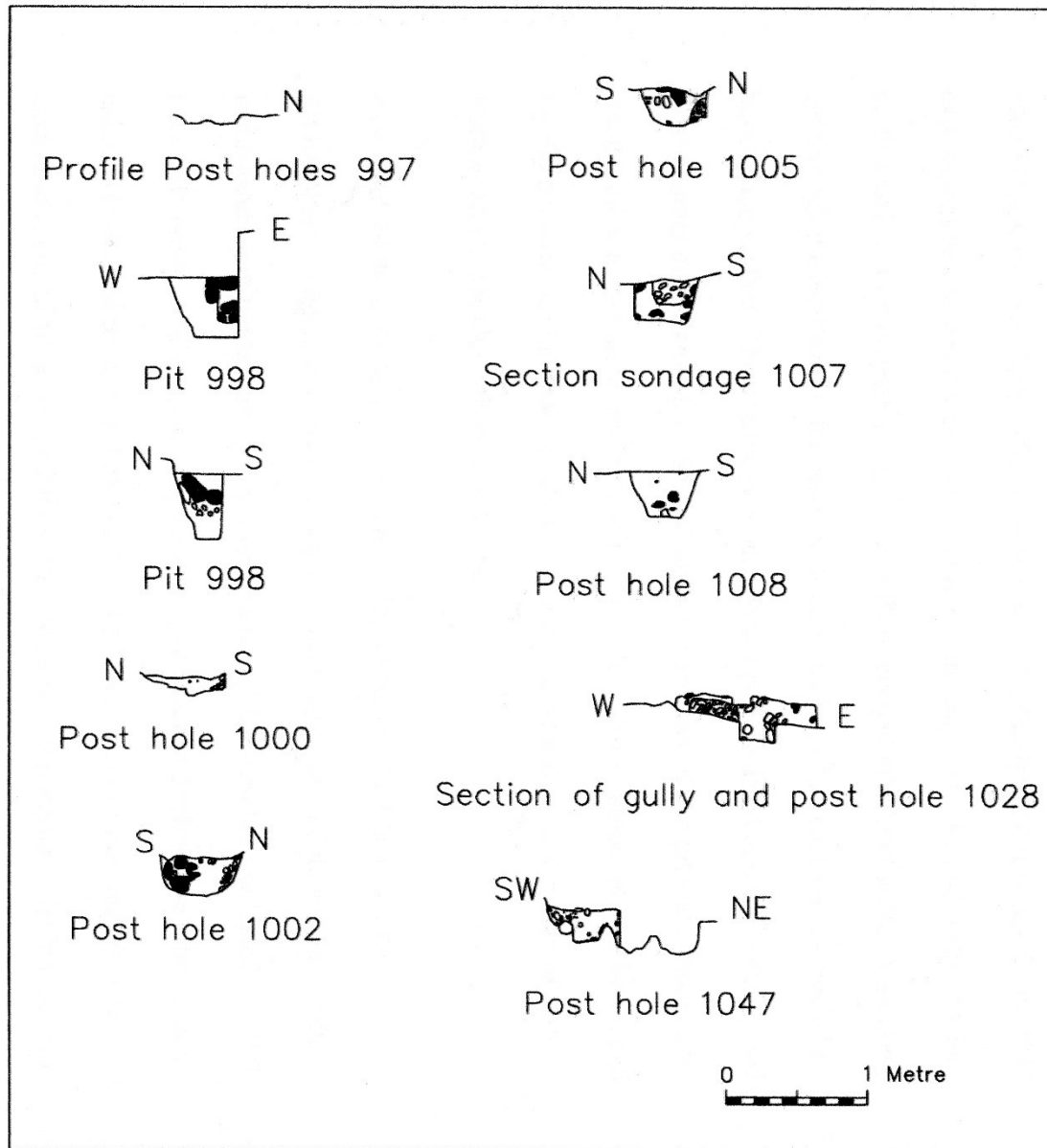


Fig 11. Post holes and gully



# **Excavations at Ovingdean 2015**

**(Notes from personal diaries, thoughts and reflections)**

**By John Funnell**

## **Introduction**

A new series of excavations began at Ovingdean in April (Fig 1.). The previous season a number of trial trenches had confirmed that post holes revealed that the field called Hog Croft was the location of a number of timber framed structures. The 2014 excavations had revealed a number of large rectangular postholes and further to the north a series of round post holes, some of these being double post holes. A section cut through the earthworks, forming the north boundary of an enclosure, revealed a buried land surface. This feature produced Saxon pottery dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century and a bone gaming disc. Below this 'Saxon' surface there was a large pit that contained a smaller pit with animal bones in the fill. There were also a number of post holes, and a gully cut into the chalk mound above the buried land surface that indicated later features and a safe chronological sequence.

As a result of the complexity of features being found the Assistant County Archaeologist suggested a series of larger excavations to try and determine a better understanding of the features being found. In two of the trenches excavated in 2014 trench B1 produced a long line of post holes and a pair of ditches. The other trench called B2 revealed fewer post holes but found evidence of three ditches. The excavations are raising more questions than answers. It is uncertain whether the post holes in these pair of trenches indicate an open ended cart shed or two buildings. It was decided that a larger excavation would be more beneficial. An area measuring 13 metres square was to be set out. It would consist of 4 squares each measuring 6 metres leaving a central baulk of 1 metre in both directions. These new areas were called P1, P2, P3 and P4.

During the season a number of new people joined the BHAS field Unit and the new training officer Pete Tolhurst produced a training document for those interested in learning more archaeological skills. In August a training session was held with Jane Russell teaching planning and section drawing, and Lisa Fisher came along to teach about archaeological photography. Both sessions were well supported by members of the field unit. Other training opportunities included the use of the RM15 resistivity machine. Basic training in archaeological techniques and find identification is given to every new member, along with health and safety details.

The Young Archaeologist Club (YAC's) visited the excavations in June and September and enjoyed digging with the field unit. A visit to the site was planned for September by the CBA South East but this was cancelled due to lack of interest. There was a request for BHAS to open the site for a number of students from Brighton University which was agreed, but in the event only one student turned up for any digging.

It was interesting to be informed that a new publication ' A Place-Name History of Rottingdean and Ovingdean' had included a copy of the drawing of the medieval complex at Ovingdean drawn by Deon Whittaker in 2003. What we now know is that the building considered to be the location of a possible detached kitchen is in fact incorrect, and the structure is actually aligned an angle of 90 to the one shown in the drawing, and may in fact be two buildings (Coates).

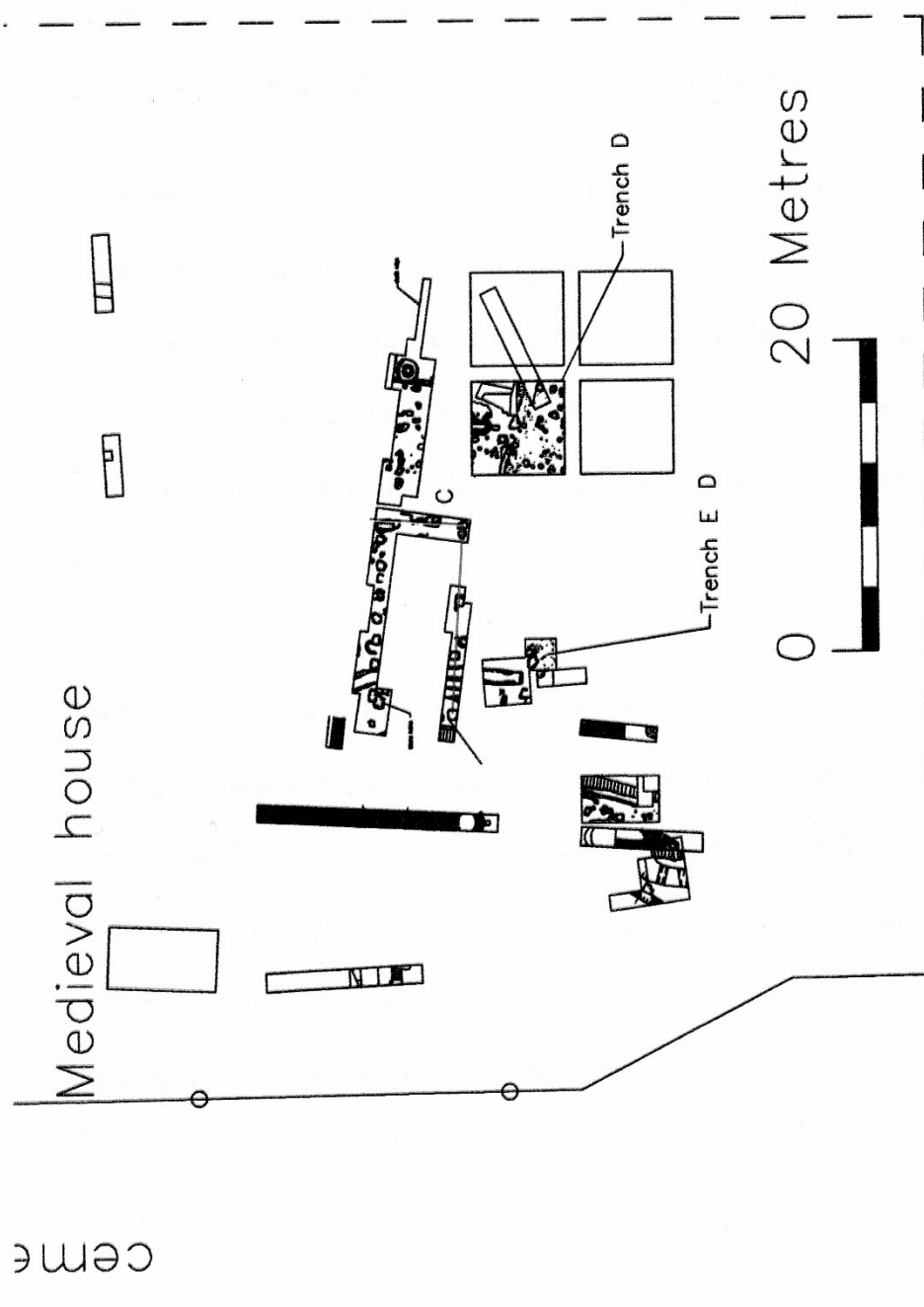


Fig 1. Plan of Ovingdean Excavations up to the end of 2015

956	943	930	917	904	891
957	944	931	918	905	892
958	945	932	919	906	893
959	946	933	920	907	894
960	947	934	921	908	895
961	948	935	922	909	896

865	852	839	826	813	800	
866	853	840	827	814	801	
867	854	841	828	815	802	
868	855	842	829	816	803	
869	856	843	830	817	804	
870	857	844	831	818	805	1025

937	924	911	898
938	925	912	899

1. *What is the main purpose of the study?*

2. *What are the research objectives?*

3. *What is the research methodology?*

4. *What are the results of the study?*

5. *What are the conclusions of the study?*

6. *What are the limitations of the study?*

7. *What are the implications of the study?*

8. *What are the future research directions?*

9. *What are the contributions of the study?*

10. *What are the key findings of the study?*

Fig 2. Top Soil Contexts

## **The Excavations**

The season commenced with the de-turfing of two trenches called P1 and P2. The north trench was called P1. A second trench to the south of P1 had been partially opened in 2014 and was called trench P2. Each trench measure 6 metres square and they had a 1 metre baulk left between them. The south trench P2 incorporated the trench that was excavated in 2014 and this was located in the north east corner. It had been back filled at the end of 2014 but was gradually the back fill was removed as more features appeared in 2015.

Each trench was divided into squares each measuring 1 metre by 1 metre and given a context number. In the north trench the grids square were numbered 800 – 805, 813-818, 826 – 831, 839 – 844, 852-857 and 865-870. An additional grid was added in the north east corner of this trench to chase the width of a large ditch and was given context 1025.

The south trench contexts were 891-896, 904-909, 917-922, 930-935, 943-948 and 956-962.

An area in a south east trench was partially opened and used for excavation by the YAC's. This was only 4 metres in length and 2 metres in width and the context numbers for this area were 898, 899, 911, 912, 924, 925, 937 and 938 (Fig 2.)

## **The Features in the South Trench P2 (Fig 3.)**

After de-turfing the whole area was found to consist of a light grey light loamy soil, covered with numerous flints. As the excavation progressed so a number of distinct features and finds were noted. After the top soil had been removed the next layer consisted of a gritty mixture comprising small pieces of stone, some mortar and a light loamy matrix. It was from this layer that most of the finds were collected. There was a rich mixture of finds including pottery, both medieval and Victorian, bone, oysters and whelk shells as well as numerous fragments of fire cracked flint and the occasional flint flake with a patination. There were also a few finds of glass and clay pipe stems and very rarely a metal find. No coins were found despite the sieving of every bucket of soil.

As the excavation progressed the proliferation of flints became very focused in the north west section of the trench. In 2014 a 'wall' of flint had been found in the north west section of trench 'D', which was located in the north east section of this trench. This flint collection had been recorded and removed. The new area of flint was found to consist of a number of layers, and as the excavation became deeper the east facing section, which was the old trench found in 2014, was cleared to reveal the new stratigraphy. It became obvious that these layers of flints continued westwards. An edge did appear on the south side of the concentration of flints, after which excavating southwards revealed only scattered, loose and random flint nodules.

The compact layer of flints appeared to form a floor or wall while the surrounding area consisted of a light loamy grey soil that was very quickly removed. Once the deposit of light grey loamy soil and random flints had been removed a number of

features were observed. These included numerous post holes, and a gully running across the site in a north/south direction, context 1001. A number of stake holes were also found cut into the chalk bedrock context.

The flint area started to produce traces of daub in discrete locations and some charcoal was noted on the south side of the flint concentration. Through the south section of flints a distinct cut was observed which proved to be a small gully. This vertical sided aperture cut through the flint 'floor' running north/west to south/east and was about 600mm wide. It was cut down to the chalk natural bed rock. Among the many flints areas of mortar were found and a considerable number of flints were found to be bonded by mortar. As the flints were removed they were counted, and notes made of those with or without mortar attached.

The area produced a number of stake holes. The collection of features including the post holes, gully and stake holes were planned and recorded.

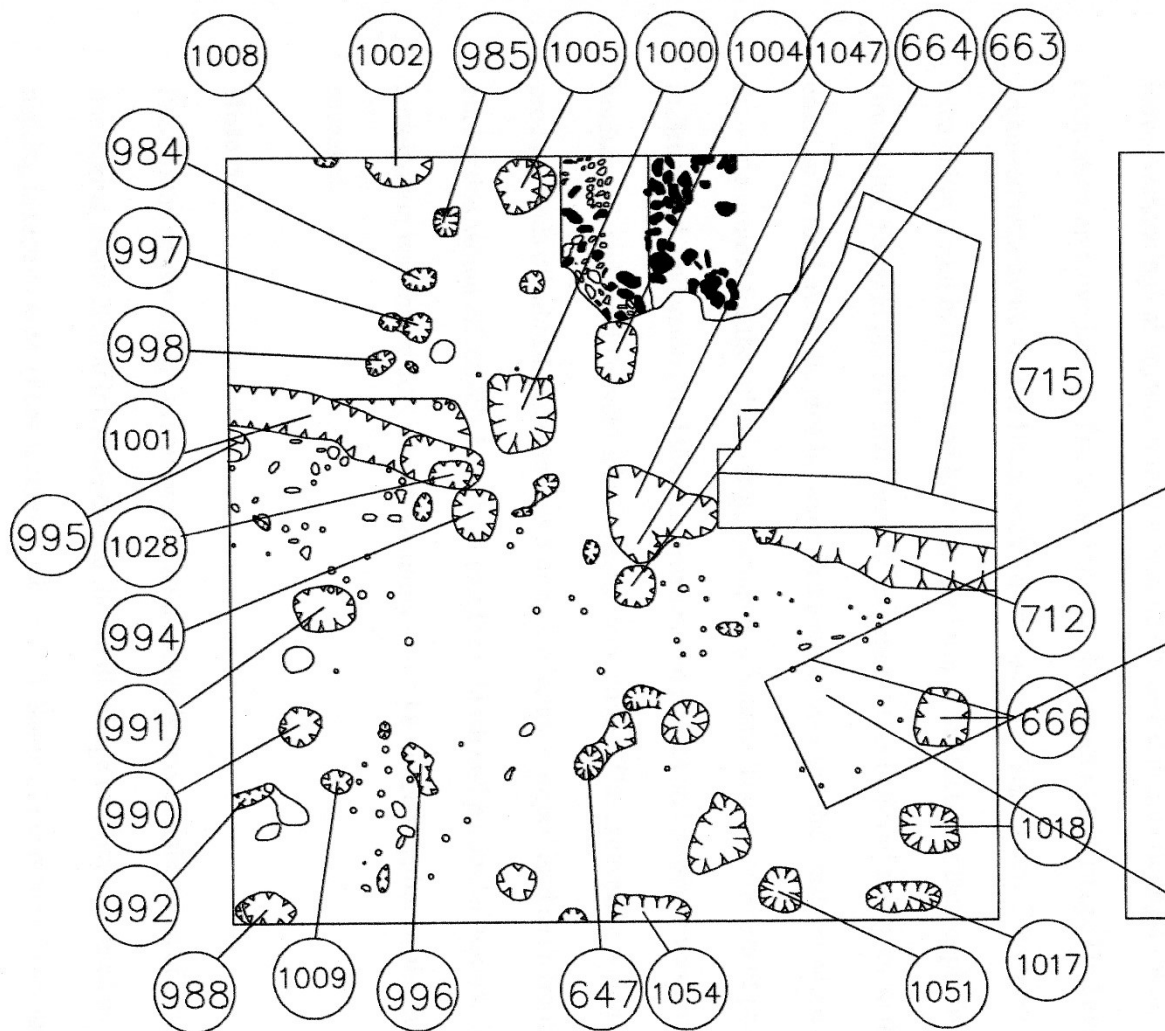


Fig 3. South Trench Features 2015

## **The Features in the North Trench P1**

The north trench produced the same upper fill found in the south trench, a light grey loam. However, there was one very distinct feature visible and that was the profile of the test trench cut in 2002. It was known that a flint wall lay beneath this surface at quite a shallow depth. As the excavation continued and after the upper loamy surface was removed the 2002 test trench was very quickly revealed.

It was decided to remove the back fill from the 2002 trial trench, and this was quickly carried out. The new excavation revealed a thin peninsular of chalk fanning out into the section, a feature previously recorded in 2002. Old photographs of the 2002 excavation showed a number of varying cuts to different depths. These cuts were gradually traced and the back fill removed. The flint wall appeared to be the only feature and was surrounded by a series of light grey loamy soils. The fills appeared different to those in the south trench in having fewer random flint nodules lying about, and the soil had a more gritty texture.

The north trench proved to have quite a variation of fills and subtle soil deposits in every section exposed, with very little evidence for distinct cuts or features. The only exception to this was on the west side where as the loam was removed a lower layer of heavy chalk nodules was revealed. This was anticipated as the section through the earthworks in 2014 had revealed a large deposit of large chalk blocks. These chalk blocks formed the basis for the earthwork construction. The bank is believed to be the north boundary of the medieval enclosure.

It was decided to cut a number of sondages in the north trench starting on the west side with a section being cut through the large chalk blocks down to the possible 'Saxon' layer. This sondage commenced on the north side and progressed gradually southwards. A section was undertaken removing some of the large chalk blocks that formed part of the north earthwork construction. As these block were removed it revealed a medium brown soft loamy soil below, similar to the 'Saxon' layer found in 2014. This produced a number of finds including a nice rib bone. As this layer was carefully being excavated it revealed a lower layer of daub and charcoal. The sondage did not quite reach the south baulk and was later covered up for the winter.

A second sondage was started on the east side of the trench, east of the flint wall running north/south. The fill in this area consisted mainly of a light brown loamy soil, but as this sondage deepened a complexity of fills started to appear. Very cautious and careful excavation around this area revealed the location of a large pit. It was buried beneath the loamy layers of soil. The south end of the same sondage came down onto natural chalk.

The pit consisted of a thin section of chalk in a circular configuration. The excavation also revealed an inner circle of large flints, and inside this collection of flints another mixture of a dark, silty loam.

The removal of the sondage on the west side of the north trench commenced with the removal of fills to the north of the chalk mound. In this area there were a few concentrations of flint nodules. They appeared to be just a scattered rubble and did not form any wall or floor. Between this spasmodic collection of flints was another



section devoid of any flints, possibly indicating a later cut running west to east across the site east to west. The fill was gradually removed southwards up to the edge of the chalk mound. Another possible area of soft silty loam further south may have been the location of yet another ditch running east west or as was suggested a possible beam slot for a Saxon type building. As the large chalk blocks were removed an area of charcoal and daub was found below, and was considered to be the location of a possible hearth.

A section was cut in the north east corner of this trench and a ditch, not noted in the geophysical survey, was revealed. The ditch was quite substantial and was excavated down to the bottom. The excavation of this ditch produced very few finds. The fill was a light chalky loam. It was noted that this ditch had been truncated on the north side by a cut for a Southern Water pipe ditch. Southern Water had run a water pipe across the field from Rottingdean to Brighton some years previously. This feature was not chased northwards for obvious reasons. The new possible north boundary ditch is 'v' shaped and has a wide flat bottom.

As the 2002 trench was excavated into previously untouched layers a deeper chalk 'wall' feature was noted running south/north parallel to the flint wall and, to the west of it. It proved to be a shallow feature and later disappeared. At the south end of this trench it eventually came down onto a ditch terminus. The ditch is going in a westerly direction. A post hole was also found in the same trench located further to the north.

#### **The South East Trench P4**

In August a section of the south east trench was de-turfed ready for a YAC visit. This new area was opened only for the YAC visit but produced copious amounts of red tile, and also an interesting number of medieval pottery sherds.

The Ovingdean excavation finished at the beginning of November. The post holes and gully were backfilled to prevent collapse due to frost damage, and both the south and north trenches were covered with tarpaulins. A check had been made to ensure that all section and planning drawings had been completed. The fencing and battery was checked to be working and then the site was closed for the season.

## Thoughts and Reflections

The 2015 season at Ovingdean was planned to answer some of the questions raised from the previous test trenching conducted from 2002 to 2009. It soon became quite obvious that even the larger trenches, designed to make an understanding of the site easier, produced a far more complex set of features and layers than previously envisaged.

In the south trench the concentration of flints on the north west side appears to be a wall or floor or a mixture of both. It is linked to the wall of flints going northwards in the north trench, but we know from the 2014 excavations that it does not move much further westwards and disappears within a metre in that direction.

The areas to the south and east in the south trench have produced numerous post holes and pits and a gully running south to north. The gully has a break in the centre with associated post holes. This could possibly be the entrance to an earlier palisade type enclosure, but with post holes on either side it could either be a division between two structures or something completely different. At present there are several possibilities. It is also observed that other features are located beneath the concentration of flints, and so these must be part of an earlier phase, possibly Saxon in date, but obviously earlier than the predominantly 13<sup>th</sup> century features and floors found above.

The north trench is even more complex. It has become obvious this season that the earthworks forming the north boundary terminate in this area going eastwards, coming down onto the flint wall running north/south. A number of linear areas devoid of flint nodules tend to suggest a number of later cuts, possibly ditches, running east/west across the site. As yet no sense of purpose can be determined for these features. It is possible that one of the ditches, that consisted of a light clay loam, could link to the beam slot gully running north/south through the south trench and be part of an earlier enclosure?

The north section of the north trench is a varied mixture of dumps of chalk, clay and flint. The scatter of flints may be associated with tumble from a structure of an ephemeral nature, but there is very little to distinguish such a feature, and at present can only be interpreted as random deposits.

The lack of any substantial flint deposits on the north side is interesting and makes the flint 'wall' running south/north very open ended. If it is part of a building then to have an open sided structure facing northwards would be extremely unusual, being open to any extreme winter elements.

One of the most significant finds was of the large north boundary ditch. There was nothing noted in any of the geophysical surveys, and it was a complete surprise. It is quite a wide and deep feature, but the small section cut through produced very few finds, and they were only of flint and bone.

The north trench is noticeable different to the south trench with there being only a few post holes showing at presents. Other post holes may lay beneath the remaining deposits we will know more in 2016. The new ditch found at the south end of the

sondages cut in 2002 and this season indicate yet another possible feature running east/west, and intriguingly the fill of daub and charcoal in the terminus may suggest a hearth or burning.

The most interesting find was of a copper alloy 'spur' found in a shallow deposit close to the north side of the flint wall in the north trench. John Skelton's investigations tend to suggest it is of a later Medieval or Tudor date.

Ovingdean is proving to be a real detective story with many phases being uncovered. It is hoped that excavations in 2016 will provide some answers to the many questions still awaiting answers, but knowing Ovingdean it is likely to be the complete reverse.

John Funnell December 2015

### **References:-**

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English Place Name Society, Nottingham

**Funnell J.** '2002, 2003, 2008 and 2009' 'Hog Croft Field Excavations'  
BHAS Field Notebooks

**Skelton J.** 2014 'Ovingdean, Hog Croft Excavations' BHAS Field Notebook 2014

# **Excavations at Hove Lawns 2009**

## **Introduction**

In July 2009 Mr Nick Tyson of the Brighton Regency House asked the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society if they would be interested in conducting a small excavation on Hove Lawns. The excavation would be part of a Heritage Trail event being organised nationwide by the Brunswick Town House for September. The object of the excavation would be to seek evidence, in the form of artefacts, for the people living in Brunswick Town in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is believed that prior to the creation of the Lawns the area between Brunswick town and the seashore was used as a dumping ground for the rubbish from Brunswick Square. The new owners of properties in Brunswick understood that the land between the houses and seashore was going to be landscaped, and would cover their domestic depositions. The excavation would hopefully produce finds of rubbish, and perhaps among the items, stamped lead seals from wine bottles that would effectively be able to link the rubbish and particular houses. The anticipation was that history and archaeology could be linked together by the evidence revealed.

## **History**

Prior to the construction of Brunswick Town the lands between the town of Brighton, numbering about 20,000 inhabitants, and the small village of Hove was used as a brick making industrial area. (Pers. Comm. Nick Tyson). Some of the material was in fact used in the building of Stanmer House in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is possible that domestic refuse was already being dumped in the same area at that time.

Brunswick Town was constructed between 1824 and 1840 by Charles Busby and the magnificent houses are a very important part of Brighton and Hove's heritage. The Hove Lawns were created after the town had been completed and overlay and covered the early industrial complex.

In 2007 Southern Water cut a trench across Hove Lawns at their western end and uncovered a large deposit of glassware, ceramics and other items which clearly indicated the location of a Georgian or Victorian rubbish pit. A number of finds from this excavation are now held at the Brighton Regency House.

## **The Heritage Trail Excavation**

In July of 2009 the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society applied for, and received, permission from Brighton and Hove City Council to conduct a geophysical survey of Hove Lawns, with further permission to undertake a small excavation of anomalies found during the geophysical survey. The excavation would be restricted to a single day, and the excavated area would have to be back filled at the end of that day.

## The Geophysical Survey (Fig 1.)

The geophysical survey was conducted by David Staveley and other members of the BHAS Field Unit on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September. The machine used was a magnetometer. Readings were taken at 1 metre intervals and along lines spaced 1 metre apart. A total of 7 grid squares measuring 20 metres by 20 metres were completed on the day, out of a potential of 10 grids. The survey started at the eastern end of the Lawns and progressed steadily westwards. The images produced are from 'Snuffler' software.

The results of the magnetometer survey (Fig 1.) show extremely clearly that Hove Lawns has a considerable number of anomalies lying below it's surface, and the low resistance tends to indicate that these feature are pits, varying from quite small features to large areas of over 3 metres or more in width.

After studying the images David Staveley suggested an excavation in the centre of a large pit located immediately south of the western end of Brunswick Square, marked by a yellow pin in the image supplied (TQ29680420).

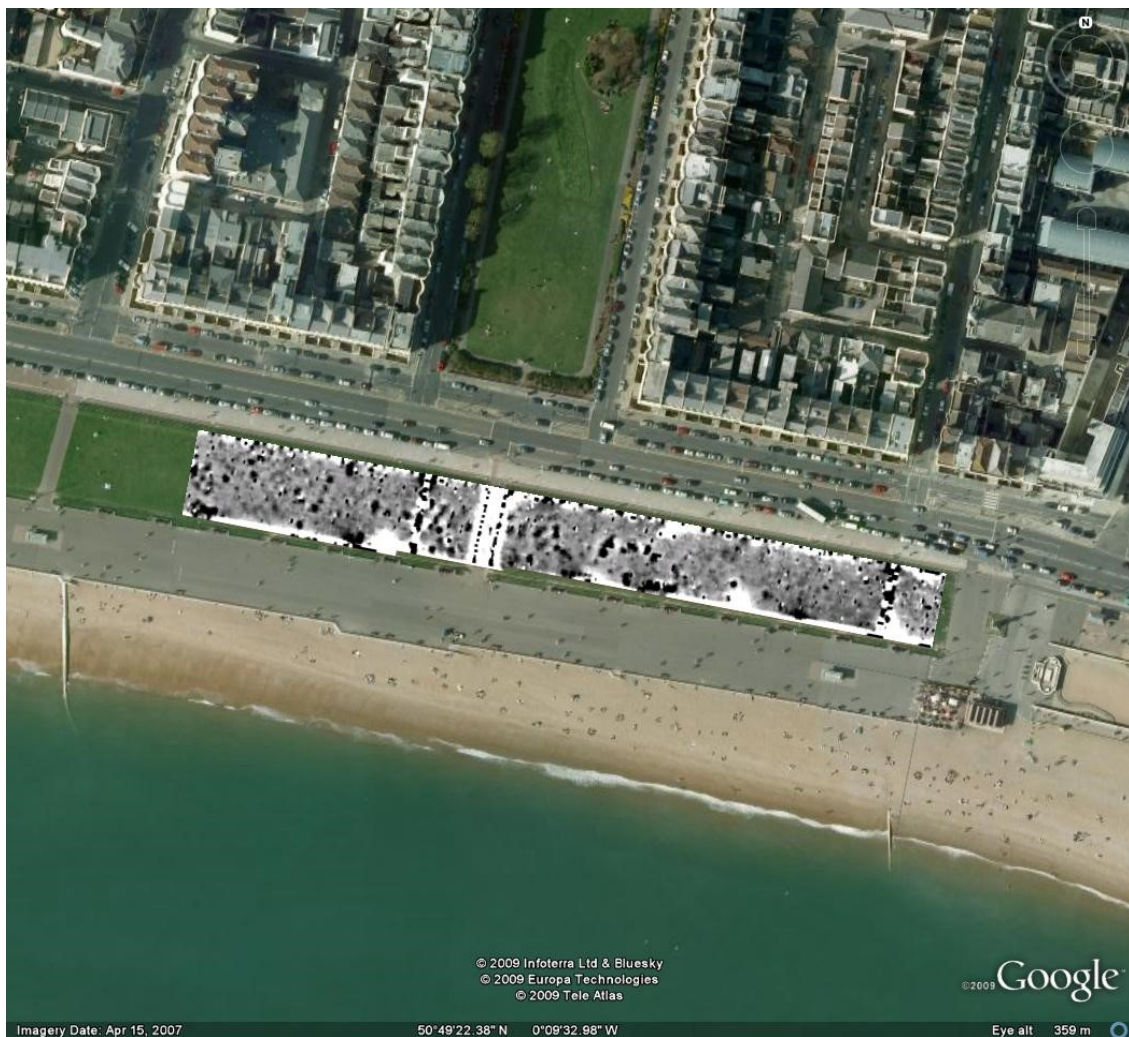


Fig 1. The Resisitivity Survey at Hove Lawns

## **The Excavation**

Using tapes and pins the centre of the trench to be excavated was pin pointed using the co-ordinates supplied. The centre was 17.4 metres south of the cycle track that runs east/west along the north side of the Lawns and 39.5 metres from the western edge of a cross path running north/south from the cycle path to the sea front located south of the west side of Brunswick Square. A safety perimeter was set up using canes and warning tapes. A display board was also constructed showing photographs of past endeavours of the BHAS Field Unit. It was a very windy and blustery day, but sunny and warm.

A trench measuring 1 metre square was stringed out and the turf carefully removed. The excavation was conducted by 3 members of the BHAS Field Unit. The spoil heap was deposited on top of a layer of plastic sheeting to protect the grass.

The excavation continued throughout the day until 4-00pm in the afternoon. Context sheets were kept and recorded and section drawings created of the stratigraphy. During the latter part of the afternoon time restrictions allowed only a ½ metre square sondage to be cut to deeper levels.

## **The Stratigraphy (Fig 2.)**

Layer (1) – The layer immediately below the turf consisted of a soft, silty, dark brown layer of chalky loam, measuring 3-5cms in depth.

Layer (2) – This layer was also of a dark brown chalky loam, but it also contained other elements including small flakes of flint and small pebbles. This fill was much firmer and difficult to trowel. This layer measured 11cms in depth. It was in this layer that the majority of finds were recovered.

Layer (3) – The fourth layer was a very hard mixture of clay, interspersed with small areas of soft yellow sand. This layer proved to be quite shallow measuring a depth of only 5cms.

Layer (4) – The third layer consisted of solid chalk nodules, a mixture of small and medium sized pieces. The chalk produced no finds and was quite compact. The depth of this layer was 37cms

Layer (5) – The final layer excavated consisted of a very dark/blackish layer of soot, burning, broken brick and dark blue pieces of roofing slate. The bottom of this layer was not reached due to time restrictions but was excavated to a depth of 15cms.

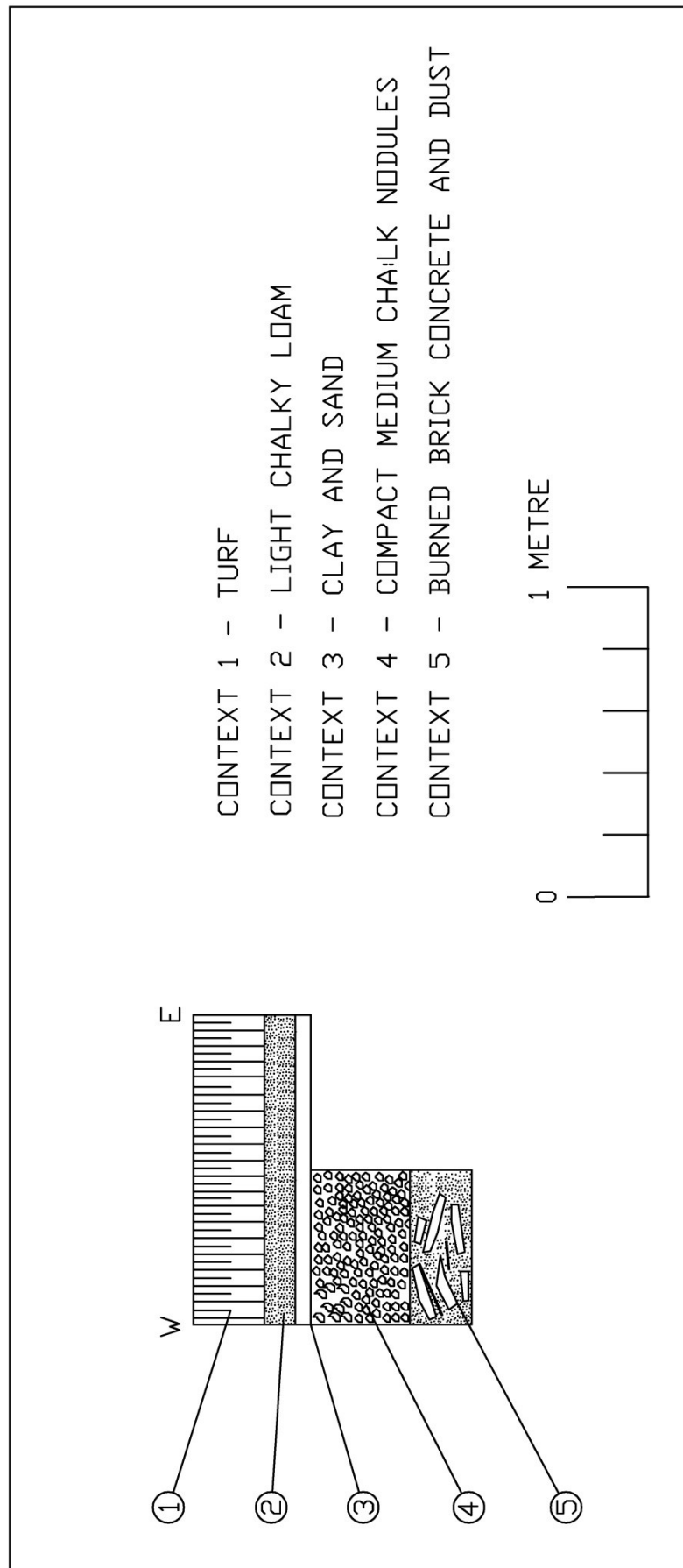


Fig 2. SECTION AT HOVE LAWNS 2009

## **The Finds**

**Pottery** – A single sherd of East Sussex Ware Roman pottery

**Ceramics** – A total of 12 pieces of glazed ceramics were recovered including 5 pieces of white vessels that varied in thickness from 3mm thickness to 7.5mm so are unlikely to be from the same vessel. Among the white pieces were two pieces that are either rims or bases. Other pieces included a single sherd of light brown stoneware type and a single piece of dark brown stoneware style. The excavated produced two pieces of blue Willow Pattern, possibly from the same vessel.

**Marine Molluscs** – A total of 9 fragments of oyster shell were recovered.

**Nails** – A total of 4 nails were recovered varying in length from 30mm in length to 55mm in length. The nails had small heads, and are probably contemporary items.

**Clay pipe** - 3 pieces of clay pipe stem were found measuring 33, 30 and 23mm in length. The stems all measured 7mm diameter and may be from one single broken pipe. Clay pipe bowls and stems were both decorated, and their manufacturing location, which could be Brighton (Atkinson) deduced from that decoration. The stems from the Hove Lawns were all without adornment.

**Glass** – Glass came in a variety of clear and opaque finishes. 8 fragments were clear with one piece obviously part of a bottle or jar. There were two pieces of brown glass.

**Slate** – A total of 7 pieces of blue slate were recovered from context (2) while two larger pieces of similar slate were recovered from the deeper layer context (5)

**Roofing Tile** – Roofing tile is represented by two pieces of light orange tile measuring 13mm in thickness.

**Brick** – The majority of finds came from the upper layer context (2). A total of 24 pieces of red/orange brick consisting of very crushed and abraded pieces were recovered. The deeper sooty and burned layer contained large quantities of concrete and debris and two large bags of materials were collected and are currently being processed.

**Stylus** – A single, solid carbon writing stylus was recovered from context (2)

## **Animal Bone Report by Carol White**

### **Context 2**

Five bones were recovered from this context; three of which were small sherds, with no identifiable features and were thus assigned *small indeterminate mammal*.

The remaining two bones were identified as detailed below:



## **Cattle**

Phalange 1, right hand side and measuring:

GLpe	7.00cm
Bp	3.28cm
SD	3.10cm
BD	3.45cm

Evidence of butchery in the form of a chop mark was noted to the proximal end of the bone.

## **Hare/Rabbit**

Phalange 1, left hand side and measuring:

Bp                      0.27cm

This latter bone was incomplete and no further measurements were possible.

## **Bibliography**

Schmid, E. (1972) *Atlas of Animal Bones for Prehistorians, Archaeologists and Quaternary Geologists*. Amsterdam. Elsevier Science Publishers.

Von Den Dreisch, A. (1976) *A Guide to the Measurement of Animal Bones from Archaeological Sites*. Massachusetts, Peabody Museum, Harvard University.

## **Conclusions**

The small excavation at Hove Lawns had ambitiously high expectations of what it hoped to achieve, and this proved the case. Archaeology is always full of uncertainty but it is equally high in positive thought and expectation. To find artefacts from a rubbish pit and within that rubbish items related to distinct people or house was going to be extremely unlikely. The excavation, though shallow in depth, did provide an interesting collection of stratigraphical layers containing sealed contexts.

The most important of these layers was the compact layer of chalk, this effectively sealed the layer below containing the materials indicating the industrial activity probably associated with the early 19<sup>th</sup> century brick making. Building materials in the form of broken bricks, roofing slate, concrete pieces and soot and dust continued to a greater depth than that excavated. The chalk contained no artefacts and was probably used as a sealing layer for the unsightly remains of industry that would have been viewed from the elegant windows of the new Brunswick Square. The chalk was probably brought in from an unidentified location on the South Downs, although a large pit is known close to the junction of Dyke Road and Western Road in Brighton, which is not too far away. (Pers. Comm G.Mead)

The majority of finds from the excavation came from the upper layer, just below the turf, and include ceramics and glass which could be dated to the period of interest or later. What is not known is how the upper layer was deposited. It is possible that the small collection is from houses in Brunswick that was later covered with turf or grass. Equally it is also possible that the finds are among domestic rubbish brought in from other parts of Brighton. We will unfortunately never know.

The most intriguing find was of a single sherd of Roman East Sussex Ware pottery. The nearest known Roman site to the Hove Lawns is the Roman villa at Springfield Road, which is some considerable distance away, although the Bronze Age Hove barrow is quite close. The piece of Roman pottery may be an indicator of archaeological remains now lost when Brunswick town was built.

The excavation was extremely useful in revealing a small vestige of early 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial activity in Brighton, but frustrating in the knowledge that a large domestic rubbish pit was found close by. The geophysical study of Hove Lawns shows a myriad of readings having the potential for being either industrial features or rubbish pits, or indeed both. The author believes that a new survey at the western end of the Lawns, around the area where Southern Water cut their trench, would be extremely beneficial. The large Georgian/Victoria rubbish pits may produce a variation in image that could reliably allow the differences between the domestic and industrial activities to be noted. Another Victorian rubbish pit was photographed and reported on at Hollingdean in 2007 by BHAS and was of considerable size. (Funnell) If this difference in identification between domestic and industrial deposits is possible then a new excavation may provide the detailed results so deeply anticipated in this past endeavour.

**Acknowledgements** :- The author would like to thank Mr Nick Tyson for inviting the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society to be part of the Heritage Trail event, to Brighton and Hove City Council for granting permission for the surveying and excavation to take place, and to David Staveley, Bill Santer, Stephanie Freiling, Beth Clements and Catherine D'Mello who conducted the geophysics and did the digging, and to Carol White for the bones report.

## **References:-**

**Atkinson D.R.** (Undated) 'Sussex Clay Tobacco Pipes and the Pipemakers'  
Crain Services,  
Eastbourne

**Funnell J.D.** 2007 'Field Notebook of the Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society'

Author:- John Funnell 27<sup>th</sup> October 2009

# **Watching Brief at the Juggs Road, Woodingdean**

## **Introduction**

The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were asked by the Assistant County Archaeologist to conduct a watching brief along a section of the Juggs Road. The road is an ancient thoroughfare that runs from Brighton to Lewes. This section of the road runs along the back of houses and bungalows parallel to the Warren Road (TQ 3465 0590). An article by antiquarian Adrian H. Allcroft had suggested that the Juggs road may be a Roman road. The section of road running parallel to Warren Road is being refurbished as part of a new cycle lane and foot path.

In 1987 a Roman road was sectioned by Chris Butler along the route of the new A23 at the time of the Muddleswood excavations (Butler). Although not part of the excavation report the A23 drainage ditches were cut and the road appeared as a section. The road runs towards Hurstpierpoint and is noted on the O/S. This road was constructed of several layers of flints and had a well defined camber and flanking ditches. A smaller Roman road with a good camber is still visible south of the Duddleswell tea rooms (TQ468279), and part of this road was the study of a resistivity survey by BHAS in 2002 (Funnell)

## **The excavations**

The BHAS were contacted in May by Abbey Hone of Brighton and Hove City Council saying that the contractors were ready for the archaeological investigation. After several missed opportunities due to weather, and other circumstances, the watching brief finally took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015. The location was at the west end of the track close to a location called 'The Bones Yard'.

Roman roads normally have certain characteristics which include a camber and drainage ditches on either side of the road. This particular track has no camber and lynchets created by the fence lines either side of the track did not allow for investigating into the adjacent fields. The lynchets were higher than the surrounding fields, but no camber was noted in the surrounding landscape.

BHAS were informed that the track is a public right of way and could not be closed. It was decided then to only excavate one half of the track width, as it would be anticipated that the other half would be of the same construction. The contractors, using their machine, excavated a hole measuring 80cm wide and 1 metre long. They dug down until it was obvious that they were removing natural chalk.

## **The Section (facing eastwards)**

The section excavated was straightened and cleaned back until the various layers could be identified. The trackway proved to be quite a shallow feature. The single layer consisted mainly of a mixture of large and small flints, but the flints were set among a mixed debris of Victorian brick and other rubbish.

## The Finds

A search was made of the mixture removed from the excavation and the only finds consisted of Victorian glazed wares, plain and decorated, and a number of nails. No finds of antiquity were recovered.

## Conclusions

The watching brief conducted on a small section of the Juggs Road, in this part of Woodingdean, confirms that it is not of a Roman Road type of construction. Most of the material used in the construction, and the finds collected, appear to suggest a Victorian date for the track.

However, it is more than likely that the Juggs Road is an ancient thoroughfare and that the debris found in this small section shows some form of maintenance during the Victorian or later periods. The local farmer was expected to maintain the track as part of his tenancy agreement, and it appears that this was condition was adhered to, but with the minimum amount of effort.



Fig 1. Cleaning back the section and checking the spoil heap





Fig 2. The completed section – A mixture of flint nodules and brick

## References

- Butler C.** 1994 'The Excavation of a medieval site at Muddleswood, near Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex' *Sussex Arch. Colls.* 132, 101-14
- Funnell J.** 2002 'Geophysical Survey at Duddleswell, East Sussex' *BHAS Field Notebook 2002*'.

Author John Funnell 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015

# **Geophysics at Gallops Farm, near Barcombe**

## **Introduction**

Lisa Fisher, archaeologist, is planning some test pit excavations on a site just north of Barcombe Cross village on Gallops Farm land (TQ438176). The site is believed to have been a medieval hall house. The site later developed with barns and out houses all focused around 3 small lakes. The excavations will investigate the possibility that the house was an aisled structure, hopefully leaving vertical post padstones in place. The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were asked to conduct a resistivity survey prior to excavation to seek out anomalies that may be useful for further investigation.

## **The survey**

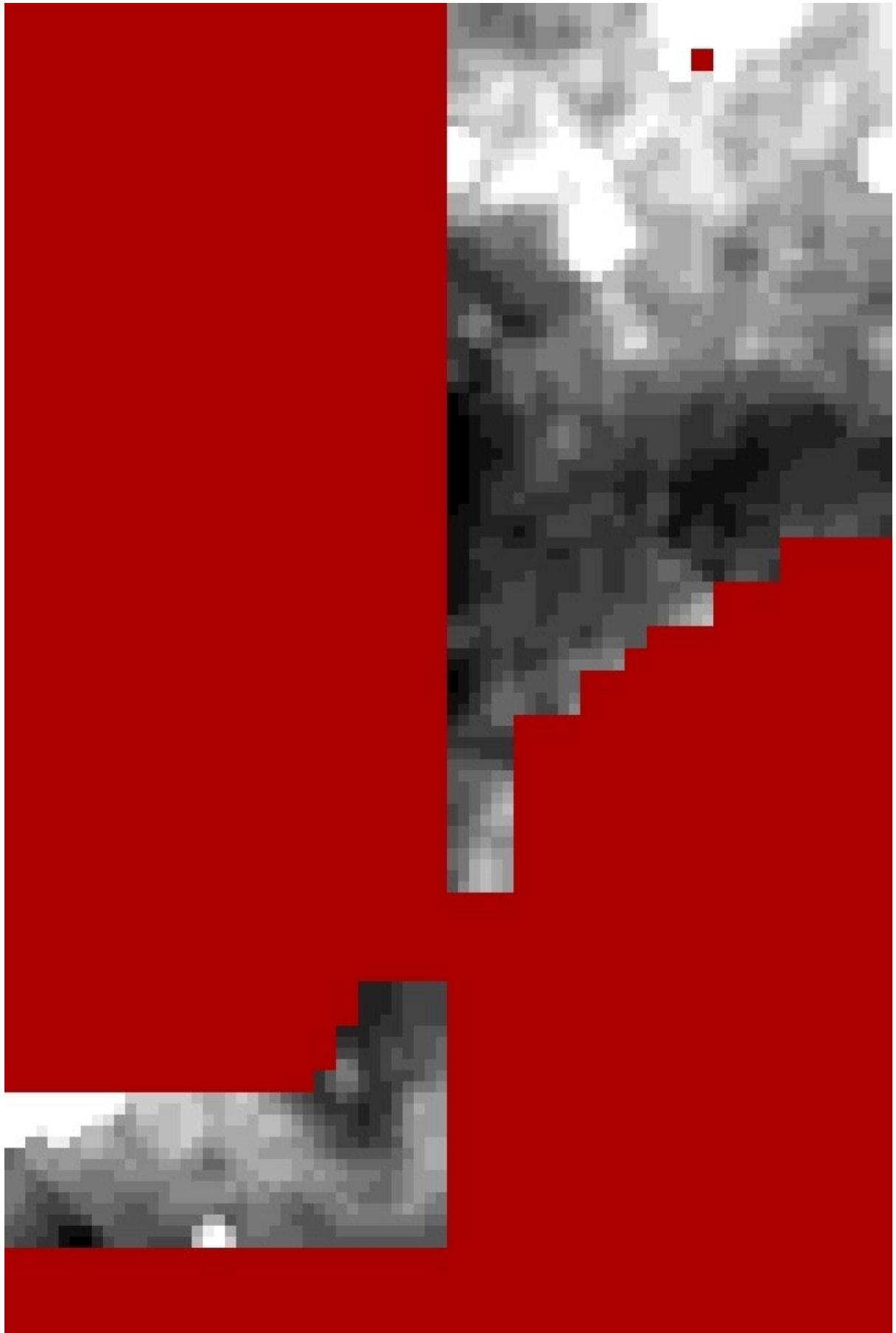
The contour and shape of the lakes restricted the survey to only a single complete 20 metre square. The complete grid surveyed was located on land to the east and north of the west lake. Two other partial grids were surveyed, one to the south of the full grid and another even further south of the second partial grid. The final grid was located on the other side of a deep ditch. The ditch drains rainwater into another small lake to the east of the most westerly lake.

The machine used was a Geoscan RM15 resistivity machine. The measurements were taken at 1 metre intervals and were measured in Ohms.

## **The Results (Attached)**

The results show a number of anomalies and the site director Lisa Fisher will examine the results and plan her trenches accordingly. The excavations are planned for August 2015.

John Funnell 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015





# **Geophysics at Hempstead Farm, Uckfield**

## **Introduction**

In early 2015 the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were invited to conduct a geophysical survey around the premises of Hempstead Farm, Uckfield (TQ 486 218). The house is believed to be dated to the medieval period, but hints of other walls have been found in the gardens around the house which may indicate possible earlier foundations and structures.

Members of the BHAS geophysics team visited Hempstead Farm on 17<sup>th</sup> July and were informed that a possible medieval mill had been found in the River Uck along the side of an adjacent field (TQ 484219). The BHAS team visited the site and observed a large morticed timber which had been dragged up from the river, and a large rectangular structure within the river itself. BHAS were informed that local archaeologist Chris Butler was already aware, and had visited the site and would be carrying out further investigations.

The BHAS team returned to Hempstead Farm on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July to carry out the surveying. An area east of the river and close to the possible mill was investigated and a total of 4 grids measuring 20 metre square was surveyed (Fig 1.) Further investigations included the complete interior of the walled garden (Fig 2.), which is located east of the main house, and a small inner section of grass close to the east side of the house, but detached by a fence from the walled garden (Fig 3.)

During the surveying dendrochronological investigations were taking place on the timbers removed from the possible mill and within the house itself on some of the exposed interior timbers.

## **The Resistivity Survey**

The survey was conducted using a Geoscan RM 15 machine and the data downloaded using snuffler software. The readings were taken in lines measuring 1 metre apart and taken at 1 metre intervals. The measurements were in Ohms.

## **Conclusions**

The survey around the mill area produced very few anomalies and the field consisting of river silts may have obscured any buildings or structures. Ground penetrating radar (GPR) is being planned for use in further investigations.

The walled garden area produced an interesting collection of high resistance readings which could be interpreted as structures, walls or buildings, some on alignment with the existing standing building. However, only excavation can confirm whether the anomalies are walls or something else.

A report was forwarded by Hempstead Farm to BHAS which confirmed that the timbers of the house were cut in about 1501, or a year or two later.

BHAS have been invited back to Hempstead Farm for further investigations in the not too distant future.

**Acknowledgements** - The team leader Pete Tolhurst would like to thank all of those BHAS members that came along to help out with the survey.

Author:- John Funnell 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015

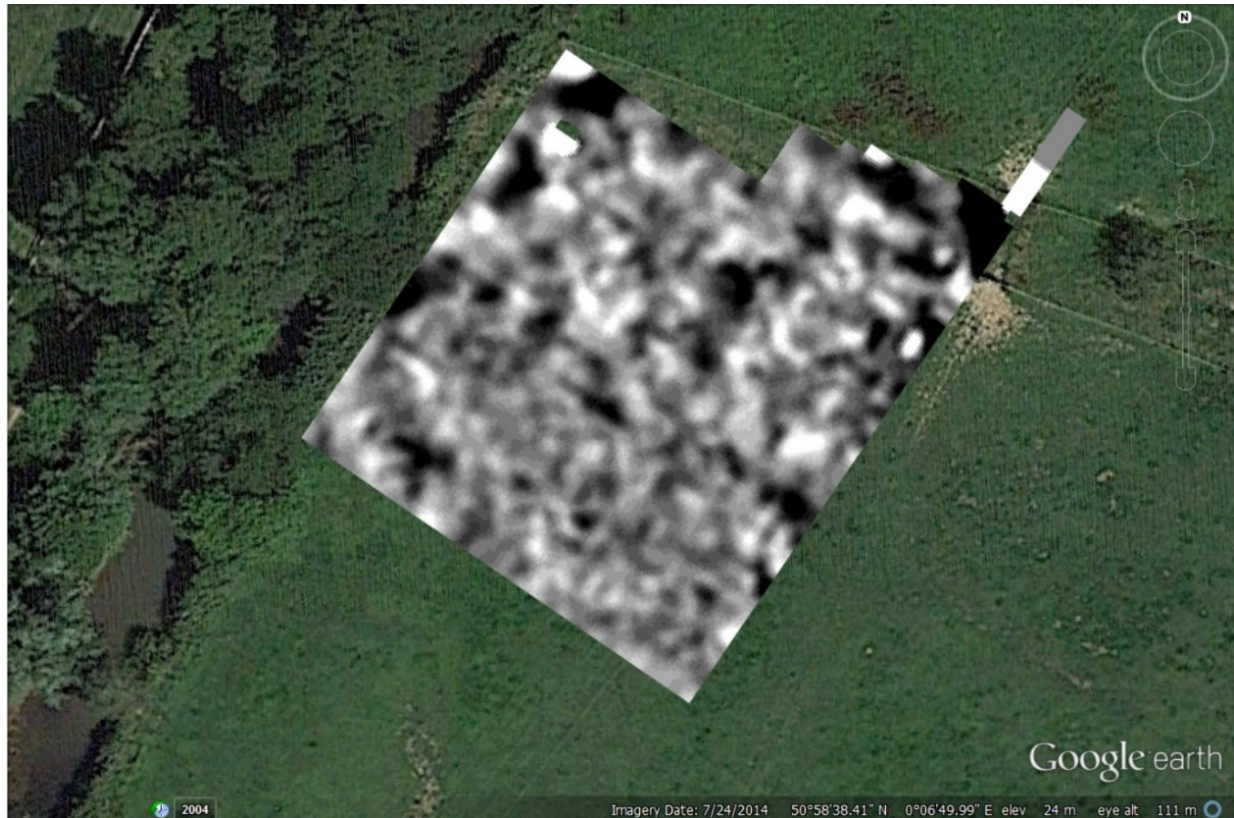


Fig 1. The Survey results of the possible mill location (Google Earth)





Fig 2. The survey results of the walled garden and annexe (Google Earth)



Fig 3. Surveying the annexe close to the house

# **Geophysics at Preston Park, Brighton**

## **Introduction**

Brighton University are involved in a major project to investigate many of the parks of Brighton and Hove by surveying. They are using magnetometry wherever possible. Where there are locations with too many metal distractions that affect the equipment the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society have been asked to conduct a resistivity survey. The project is designed to look for any ancient buried features that may still survive. The close location of a Roman villa could possibly reveal out buildings, work shops, store rooms or even a bath house associated with the settlement. The ground is believed to have been untouched over a long period of time. However, there are no visible traces of any lynchets or field boundaries in the park.

Preston Park is on the main London Road into Brighton. The park does have large areas of open space, but there is one section, focused around the Rotunda café that was once bowling greens. This location is heavily fenced and there are a number of fenced tennis courts close by.

## **The Geology**

The British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale geological mapping (BGS 2015) shows the Site lies over Upper to Middle Chalk with Quaternary head deposits in the valley bottom. The west side of Preston Park drops down to the Wellesbourne Stream, a feature that is now running below ground level.

## **Topography and History**

Preston Park lies on the northern outskirts of Brighton and has had a mixed and varied history. To the south of the park is the location of the Brighton Roman villa. This was mainly excavated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and produced mosaics and a female burial. A later excavation in 2003 produced finds of a wall, a chalk lined well, another burial and several large pits filled with rubbish and pottery from the Roman period. A small excavation at the junction with Stanford Avenue in 2002 produced only geological features and a buried but modern children's sand pit, along with toys. The lands along the London Road have produced a number of Roman coins in the past including some from the Rockery when it was being constructed.

The north section of Preston Park contains Preston Manor. The current building was constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, but it is believed that there was an earlier medieval structure. There is some historical evidence to support this early building.

On the west side there is a dramatic rise in the landscape and it was on the top of this hill, close to the site of the Booth museum, that several Saxon burials were unearthed in 1996. The Wellesbourne stream runs through the park on the west side, but is now located well below the road surface. It may have been navigable during the Roman period as it runs close by. The east side of the park is a gentle rising slope.

The Brighton Raystede Manor is meant to be located close by and one of the council gardeners remembered when a diary had been located somewhere in the park in fairly recent times.

### **The Resistivity Survey and Methodology**

The survey, conducted on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2015, focused on the location of the old bowling greens which have been filled with a deposit of light loam soil and cinders, along with other debris. The greens would have been about 50-60 cm below the current depth. The new area had been sown with wild flowers during the spring and summer. The weather before the survey had been predominantly wet for a number of days, and had been damp on numerous occasions spread over several weeks. It was anticipated that the extremely wet conditions would raise the background 'noise' and make any resistance between features very difficult to distinguish.

The base line of the survey ran parallel to the London Road on a north/south orientation. The north grids were located along the north border of the new flower beds and old bowling greens. A total of 8 grids were surveyed measuring 40 metres in width and 80 metres in length. The machine used was a RM 15 resistivity machine. The readings were taken in lines spaced 1 metre apart, at one metre intervals and measured in Ohms.

The results were produced using 'Snuffler' software. The images are Fig 1. and Fig 2.

### **Conclusions**

The only areas noted in the resulting images were of various paths crossing this part of the park. There was no evidence revealed for any archaeological features or activity.

### **Acknowledgements**

The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society would like to thank Andy Maxted of Brighton Museum for inviting us to conduct the survey, the Brighton and Hove City Council parks division for allowing access to the park, and to Pete Tolhurst, Brenda Collins, Sue Batey and Andy Maxted for conducting the survey. This report will be added to the BHAS 2015 Field notebook.

Author John Funnell 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015



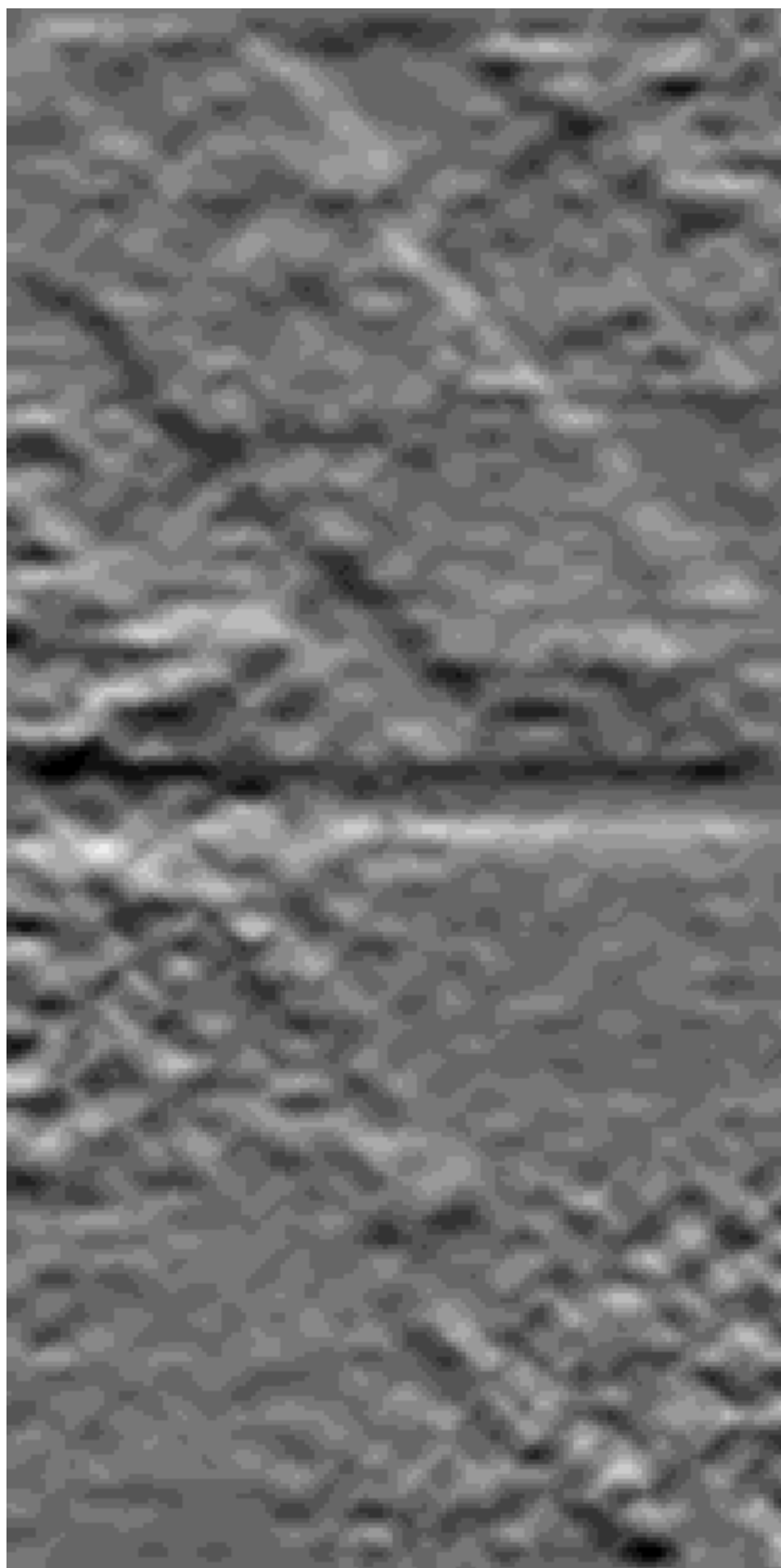


Fig 1. Resistivity Image at Preston Park

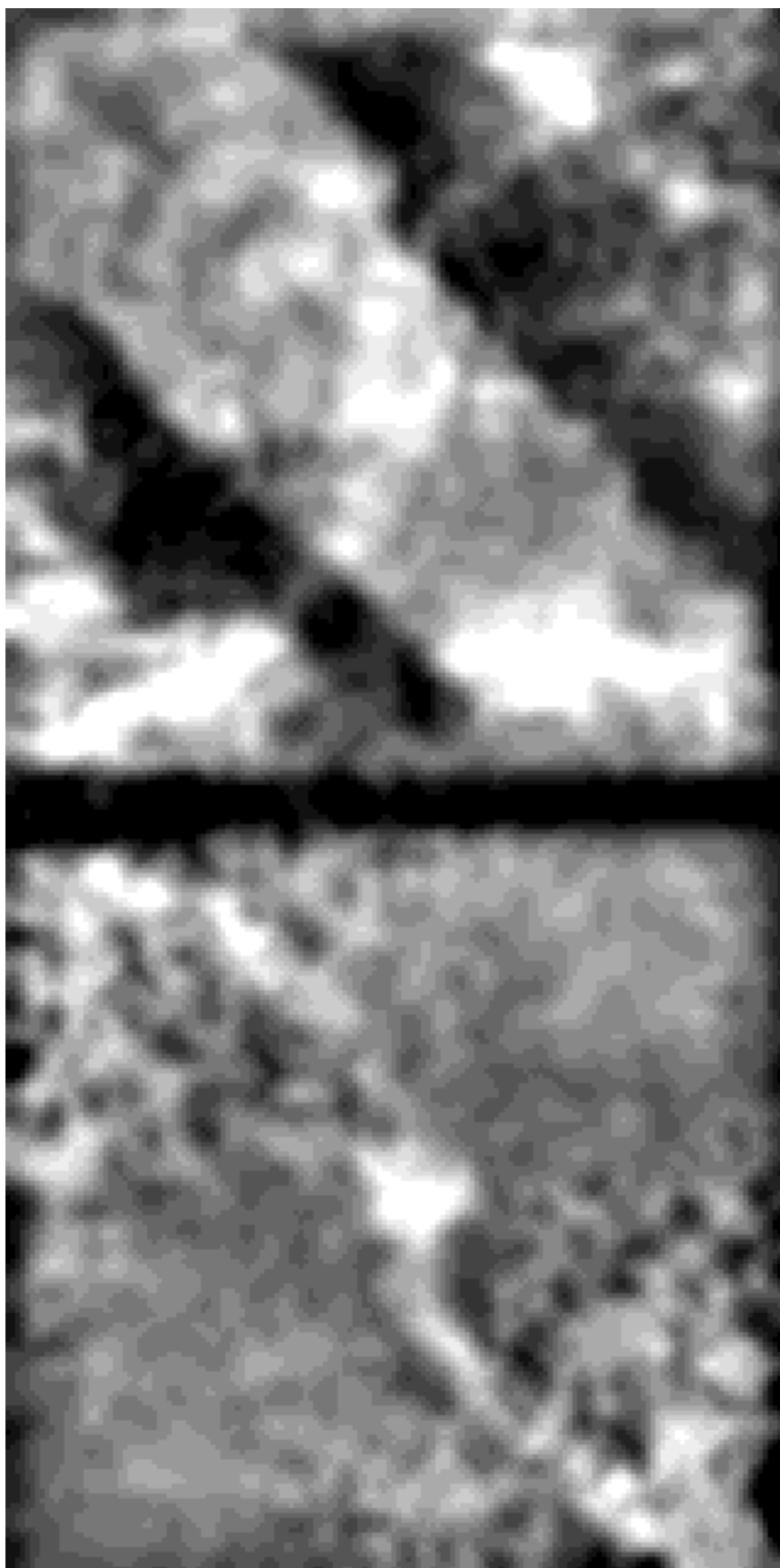


Fig 2. Resistivity Image at Preston Park



# **St Nicolas Vicarage, Portslade – Geophysics and Other Finds**

## **Introduction**

In June 2015 the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were asked to visit St Nicolas vicarage, Portslade as some large stones had been uncovered during gardening works (TQ 2555 0630). The garden had largely remained untouched during the previous vicar's occupation of the house. A local parishioner and volunteer offered to clean up and tidy the garden and it was during this activity that a large number of dressed stones were dug up.

A visit to the vicarage was made on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015 where the stones were examined and found to be a collection of plain and dressed stone, some with decoration and others with mason marks. The garden volunteer and the vicar spoke about the garden and how a house had occupied part of it until the middle part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when it was then demolished and replaced with a new building.

The garden is south of the 12<sup>th</sup> century church of St Nicolas and it is known that during the 14<sup>th</sup> century the church was extended and a tower added. At that time an interior wall had been demolished. Were these stones part of this medieval renovation?

Also to the north of the garden is the location of the medieval house built by the Pierrepont family after the Norman conquest with walls still standing up to two floors in height (Packham). Were these stones part of that building construction or another still undiscovered?

It was decided that a geophysical survey on the garden might produce evidence for a building or vestiges of the one demolished which could account for the stones, and which might warrant further investigation.

The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society visited the house on August 10<sup>th</sup> 2015 and conducted a geophysical survey of the garden, and photographed a large number of the stones.

## **The Resistivity Survey**

An almost complete survey was made of the garden using a Geoscan RM15 machine. The grids measured 10 metres square with one complete grid surveyed on the west side of the house and a further 2 partial grids west and north of the first. As the area was quite small a second survey was made using ½ metre widths and intervals with a view to creating a clearer image if possible. Both surveys using 1 metre wide lines and intervals and ½ metre lines and intervals were completed. The readings were in Ohms and the images were downloaded using snuffler software (Fig 1 and Fig 2.)

## **Conclusions**

The resistivity survey proved quite interesting with a number of anomalies, but no real definition. There are a number of square and rectangular areas of high resistance and a linear low resistance area which could be a robbed out wall. Only excavation will confirm what remains below the surface (Fig 3.)

## **Future Investigations**

Some of the stones can be connected to the old vicarage building. These stones are curved in shape and can be observed in an old photograph. Some of the stones have a tongue and leaf shape configuration and are deemed too elaborate to have been manufactured for a vicarage. Some research by the gardener shows that similar designs in stone were noted at Chartres cathedral in France as were similar mason marks.

BHAS have sought assistance from the Sussex Archaeological Society and Fiona Marsden has recommended looking at the stone finds from both Lewes Friary and Priory of which drawings are lodged at Barbican House. This suggestion will be followed up in the not too distant future.

## **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank John Skelton, Pete Tolhurst and Linda Wright for conducting the survey and to the Vicar Father Andrew Perry for inviting BHAS along and the gardener David Shapes for his notes on his research into the church and the vicarage.

## **References:-**

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Author John Funnell 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015



Fig 1. The geophysical results for the Vicarage Garden at Portslade (Google Earth)



Fig 2. The geophysical results for the Vicarage Garden at Portslade (Google Earth)





Fig 3. Conducting the survey at St Nicolas Vicarage



Fig 4. Some of the decorated stones found in the garden

# Field Walking at Sompting 1995

## Introduction

Sompting is well known in Sussex for its church with its Rhenish Helm roof, but very little else is known about the immediate surrounding area (Fig 1.). There have been a few isolated finds around Sompting including a Bronze Age palstave found in the upper section of the field being walked, but very little else. There is a small quarry half way up Lambley's Lane but very little evidence for why it was created. The hill to the north of Sompting, Steep Down, has produced an interesting collection of Neolithic flintwork, mainly accrued by local resident Mrs Dot McBrien, who frequently walks alone the newly ploughed fields.

An almost complete Bronze Age quern was found in 1963 at Lychpole Hill a little to the north tending to suggest settlement not too far away (Barton 1965). This location is south of the well documented Bronze Age to Roman site of Park Brow (Wolseley et al). Steep Down is also the location of a number of Bronze Age barrows further indicating settlement close by (Frere).

In A field to the south of the A27 Roman pottery has been found including Samian wares (Evans), and Roman pottery has also been found in Crabtree Lane to the east of Sompting (Kelly). A Roman coin of Maximianus II was found at Stump Bottom, Sompting in 1960 (Lewis).

It was a local resident of Sompting, Mrs Dot McBrien, who knew the farmer and managed to gain permission to field walk this particular field. The close location of the field to Sompting Church raised some expectation of finding medieval and hopefully even Saxon pottery. Medieval pottery sherds have previously been found at Myrtle's Cottage in 1962 (Barton 1964)

The nearest Saxon site is a cemetery to the east near Hoecourt Farm, some distance away (Frere).

The field is west of the church at TQ 157060 (Explorer Map 121). The field walking commenced at the bottom west end section of the field, but a visit by the farmer and request not to use the bottom section of the field as seed had been sown, moved the main field walking further up the field (Fig 1).

## Methodology

The field was set out using a base line running west to east. Lines were set out spaced at 20 metres apart. The lines were divided into 20 metre transects and the finds collected in separate bags. The finds were recorded onto dot density sheets and transferred to CAD and printed for publication purposes (Fig 2.)

## **The Finds**

### **The Flintwork**

The field produced an interesting collection of flint work including a number of tools. The majority of the flint work had a white patination tending to suggest a Neolithic date for its use. The field also produced a significant amount of fire-cracked flint, more focused and larger in quantity at the north, upper end of the field.

### **The Pottery**

A small collection of medieval pottery was recovered and this was evenly spread over the whole field with no real area of concentration. One interesting area to the north of the field produced a number of sherds believed to be prehistoric, as it had a flint tempered fabric. However, an examination of the pottery by local specialist Mark Gardiner confirmed that it was not prehistoric but Saxo-Norma wares. It is similar to pottery found at Bramber Castle and part of the Adur valley medieval pottery production, whose kilns and manufacturing site are yet to be found. (Pers. Comm M.Gardiner).

### **Conclusions**

The field at Sompting produced an interesting collection of finds from both the Neolithic and Medieval periods. It is highly likely that any settlement associated with the church is located elsewhere. The Neolithic flintwork is a common feature of the South Downs and it is likely that ploughing has removed any prehistoric other evidence. The curious omission of Roman finds is interesting as so many other finds have been recovered in other fields close to this field walking.

### **References:-**

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Author John Funnell 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016



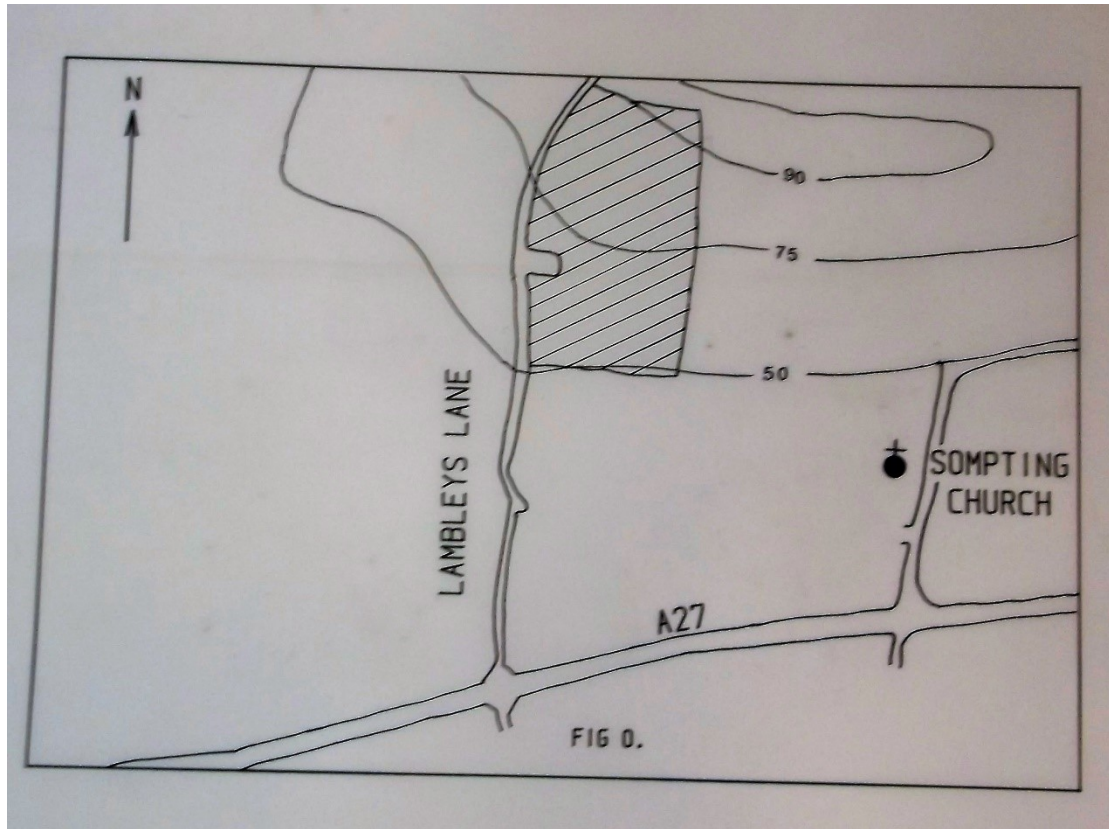


Fig 1. Location of Field Walking at Sompting

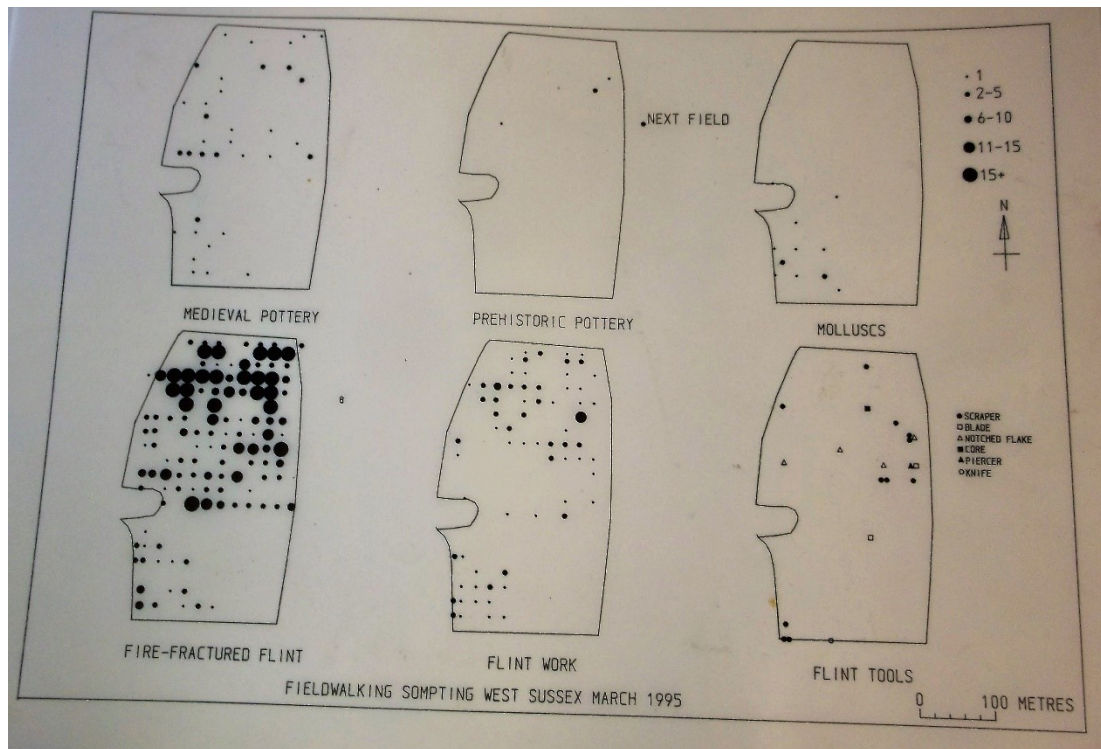


Fig 2. Distribution of the Finds from Field Walking



# Juggs Road Test Trench

**ADDRESS:-** Juggs Road (Drove Road), Woodingdean

**DATES OF EXCAVATION:-** 4 May 2015

**BHAS OFFICERS CONDUCTING EXCAVATION:-** John Skelton, John Funnell, Paula Cohen, David Cuthbertson.

## RESULTS OF EXAMINATION

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### Site Location – (Approx TQ 34614 05808)

**Historical Background** – The Drove Road, Woodingdean is part of Juggs Road, a pre 1770 route from Brighton to Lewes which was used predominantly to transport fisherman's catch. The route may have its origins in prehistoric times as a ridge way and the discovery of a small horde of Roman coins nearby at Newmarket Hill (Shields, 2005) has led to the suggestion that it may have been a Roman Road.

**Geology** – The geology of the area is predominantly a bedrock of upper chalk, partially overlain by clay-with-flints.

**The Test Trench** – A small test trench, 0.95m x 1.6m, was dug down to chalk bedrock along the track 0.4m from the North edge. At this point the track is 2.8m wide. It was not possible cut through the edge of the track as the edging boards had already been laid by the contractors. Also, due to access issues, only one side of the track could be closed for excavation. The trench was dug by machine under archaeological supervision and then finished by hand trowelling ready for recording (Photo 1). The machined spoil was searched for artefacts.

The depth of soil at this point was about 30 cm and had frequent inclusions of large flint and chalk nodules, moderate large brick fragments and occasional small slate fragments. The inclusions were well mixed through the entire depth except that there was some suggestion of a more dense layer of brick about 20cm above the chalk surface (Photo 2 and 3).

**The Finds** – There was no evidence that any of the finds were anything but "modern".

There were six nails, one possible knife blade, four fragments of tile, six pottery sherds, three glass fragments, one shell fragment, one slate fragment and one "souvenir" spoon (Photo 4).

### Conclusions.

There was no evidence of a pre-modern constructed surface over the chalk bedrock and no artefacts of pre-modern age found at the chosen location.

**Photo 1 Test trench**



**Photo 2 East facing section**





**Photo 3 Detail East facing section**



**Photo 4 The finds**



## References

Shields, Glen. "The Roman roads of the Portslade/ Aldrington area in relation to a possible Roman port at Copperas Gap" (PDF). *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 143 (2005), 135 – 49.

**Note** A low resolution 3D model of the trench can be viewed at <https://sketchfab.com/models/2bf4d41b10474dab94e6440e5ca13c25>

## Attendance Record

Dated 31/12/2015

John Skelton (Site Director)	53 Days	Hove
John Funnell (Assist. Director)	52 Days	Brighton
Hestor Adams	2 Days	Brighton (Cardiff)
Sue Batey	4 Days	Brighton
Clive Bean	37 Days	Portslade
Tiina Bergman	1 Day	Finland
Judith Billingham (G)	14 Days	Brighton
Sue Birks	1 Day	Horsham
Fran Briscoe	21 Days	Brighton
Margaret Carey	22 Days	Brighton
Martina Carsella	1 Day	London
Maureen Cahalin	4 Days	Saltdean
Kay Chaffer	1 Day	Shoreham
Beth Clements	8 Days	Brighton
Paula Cohen	2 Days	Lewes
Brenda Collins	3 Days	Sompting
Penny Cooper	3 Days	Brighton
Kirsty Craig	1 Day	Brighton
David Cuthbertson	4 Days	Brighton
Chris Davidson	1 Day	Brighton
Brian Drury	1 Day	Worthing
Elaine Evans	2 Days	Hove
Lisa Fisher	1 Day	Chailey
Hayley Forsythe	2 Days	Eastbourne
Stefanie Freiling	6 Days	Hove
Kiera Funnell	1 Day	Plymouth
Mary Funnell	4 Days	Brighton
Maria Gardiner(E)(SP)(G)(W)	10 Days	Hove
Andrea Gardner	1 Day	Brighton
Lauren Gardner	1 Day	Brighton
Mark Gillingham (Director)(W)	46 Days	Hove
Paul Greenslade	2 Days	Bevendean
Lesley Haines	14 Days	Burgess Hill
John Hynnter	9 Days	Brighton
Glynis Jones (MacCloud)	17 Days	Lancing
Victoria Kam	2 Days	Saltdean
Harry Locke	1 Day	Brighton
David Ludwig	22 Days	Rustington
Dot McBrien (S)(SP)(G)(W)	3 Days	Sompting
Joan MacGregor (G)	26 Days	Brighton
Jasper Marshall	3 Days	Ardingly
Nicky Matthews	8 Days	Newhaven
Andy Maxted	1 Day	Saltdean
H.Mohan	1 Day	Brighton

Nadia Khalili-Nayer	3 Days	Shoreham
Jo Miller	3 Days	Ringmer
Sylvia Newman	2 Days	Brighton
Owen O'Donnell	1 Day	Brighton
Alison Partridge	12 Days	Newhaven
Franz Plachy	6 Days	Hove
Donald Richardson	3 Days	Lewes
Neil Richardson	15 Days	Brighton
Linda Robinson	15 Days	Brighton
David Rudling	3 Days	Ditchling
Derek Russell	4 Days	Brighton
Jane Russell	7 Days	Brighton
Alison Sanders	1 Day	Rotherham
Steffano Santini	1 Day	Brighton
Kate Skelton	28 Days	Hove
John Spiller	21 Days	Portslade
Ed Start	1 Day	Brighton
David Staveley(Director)(P)(S)(L)(G)	1 Day	Eastbourne
Pete Tolhurst	44 Days	Crowborough
Jeremy 'Jim' Webster	1 Days	Hove
Carol White (SP)(Director)	12 Days	Newhaven
Emily Willmoth	1 Day	Eastbourne
Stephen Willmoth	1 Day	Eastbourne
Janis Winkworth	12 Days	Brighton
Linda Wright	14 Days	Southwick

## Total Attendance

Total Days 627 (Male Days 323 53%) (Female Days 286 47%)

Total Number of Participants 67 People, not including the Young Archaeologists Club (YAC)

Dated 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015

**Codes** (P) Planning (S) Section drawing (G) Geophysics (L) Surveying & levelling(E) Educational Officers (Q) Quarter master (F) Finds processing (Although finds processing carried out by much of the team, those with (F) process considerable amounts of site material) © Conservator (SP) Specialist Field(MD) Metal Detectorist).

## **Acknowledgments**

The Archaeological Co-ordinator of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Field Unit would like to express appreciation to those who assisted with the Society's field projects during 2015.

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Ms S. Roberts, Brighton and Hove City Council

Mr David and Martin Carr, Tenant Farmers, Ovingdean Farms

Mr Casper Johnson, County Archaeologist

Mr Greg Chuter, Assistant East Sussex County Council

Mr David Rudling University of Sussex

Mr J.Skelton – BHAS Director of the Ovingdean excavations

Mr M.Gillingham – BHAS Assistant Director of the BHAS Field Unit

Ms C.White (Leader of the BHAS Bones Team)

Mr David Larkin, Acting Manager City Parks, Brighton and Hove City Council

Mr Jim and Mrs Betty Driver

And all members of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Field Unit

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Note that the dates shown (1993-2015) are an indicator of when the work was carried out, and not the date of publication.

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Varley Halls-Excavations – Interim Report by Lisa Fisher-2008

## **W**

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Woodingdean Excavations across the Jugg's Road – 2015  
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Hard copies of the above reports and Field Notebooks were deposited at Barbican House Library, East Sussex County Council, Brighton and Hove City Council Planning Department and Brighton Museum. A number of copies were deposited at Brighton Library, the National Monuments Records Office, Swindon and at the East Sussex Records Office.

John Funnell 11<sup>th</sup> October 2016