

Introduction

Hello everyone and welcome to the May 2026 CDAS Newsletter. It looks like summer has finally arrived. I look forward to our members evening of talks on Wednesday which leads us into a 'summer recess' as far as talks are concerned. We then reconvene in September.

I was returning from a visit to Leicester the other week and took the opportunity to stop off at Silchester Roman Town. I know this is well known to some of you but I've only visited a few times before on various walks in the area and every time it had been raining. Fortunately, this time the weather was fair and I managed to grab some images as we walked the walls.



Talks and Lectures Schedule

The New Park, Chichester 2025

2026

May 27th – Members evening – The Schedule for the Members' evening has now been finalised and will be; Trevor Davies - on Warblington Castle; Mark Roberts - on Seeley Copse and Mark Seaman - on Roman roads.

June/July/August – Summer recess, no lectures.



September 23rd – Francis Wenban-Smith - Giant hand-axes and other recent Palaeolithic discoveries.

October 28th - Martyn Allen, Oxford Archaeology – Post-excavation of the discoveries at the Westhampnett Rolls Royce excavations.

November 25th – Helena Griffiths and Andy Bliss - Prehistoric hunters of the High Weald.

December 9th - AGM at the hall in Bosham

All talks are at New Park Cinema, Chichester, from 7:00 pm, talks start at **7.30 pm** . The bar will normally be open after the lecture for drinks (hot, soft or alcoholic). The bar is a cash free bar, so, payment by card only.

Activities

We now have a provisional date (8th July) for a CDAS 'pub quiz', more details on that when the plans become firm

20th June - Old Idsworth Guided Walk

Start time: 10:30

Meeting point: The entrance to the footpath up to St Huberts Church. There's limited parking along the side of the road or opposite. Post code: PO8 0BE

Cost: Members £1.00, non-members £6.00 (if places are available) payable in cash on the day. Please book your place in advance by emailing myself, chairman@cdas.info

Recent archaeological work by CDAS has revealed that the church of St Hubert's Idsworth (The Little Church in the Field) is built on top of much older buildings and has potentially been used as a sacred site for thousands of years. In the Bronze Age there were numerous round barrows in the area. A complex series of boundary ditches have been found in the field by CDAS. These date to the Iron Age and indicate that there is a pagan temple under the church. When the Romans arrived, they built their own temple on the Iron Age site. Then, with the arrival of Christianity, a wooden church was built on the site. This was followed by the current stone-built church, the western wall of which has a foundation of Roman pilae. A considerable amount of Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval pottery has been found by CDAS in the field.

It is known that Roman religious cults and then the early church "appropriated" significant locations from previous religions to convert or suppress them, and Idsworth would appear to support this theory.

The walk will include Old Idsworth Gardens where permission has been obtained to see its dovecot, icehouse and walled garden. We will also see the unusual and intriguing medieval wall paintings in the church and discuss the interpretation of these.

The walk will be illustrated with Geophysics images, other documents and samples of pottery. There will also be a display of the finds by Bart Smith, a metal detectorist. He has found some intriguing items which we can discuss.



The total length is less than a mile. The going is easy with one style (though this can be avoided) and should take about an hour and a half. There are no facilities. Dogs are welcome – St Huberts is dedicated to hunters and hunting dogs!

Afterwards, if you would like some refreshment, we can meet in The George, Finchdean, and have a closer look at some of the finds.

24th July – Festival of Archaeology – Fishbourne Palace

CDAS will be represented at the 'Meet the Experts' event at Fishbourne Roman Palace as part of the CBA's Festival of Archaeology 2026. More details of the wider event will be published in due course.

24th August Cissbury Walk – Led by Dicke Spurgin

5th September Visit to Boxgrove Priory – led by David Bone. David is running this visit or the West Sussex Geological Society but has kindly opened it to CDAS members. Details as follows

Exploring the stones of Boxgrove Priory

Leader: David Bone assisted by Tim Pullan

Saturday 5th September 2026

Located just north of the A27 east of Chichester, Boxgrove Priory was founded in 1120. Following the Dissolution of 1536, the existing church now occupies the chancel of the former monastic church, whilst the original nave, chapter house and guest house form picturesque ruins, in part managed by English Heritage. In this visit, we explore the great variety of building stones that reflect this long history from its foundation to the present day.

Meet at 2.00pm at the south door of the church. Do not park in Church Lane. Follow the gravel track, slightly to the north, to the church car park. If full, use the large public car park back across the main road.

No attendance fee but donations to the West Sussex Geological Society welcomed. Please confirm your attendance to david@dajbone.plus.com and whether you would like to join us for afternoon tea at around 3.30pm at £3 per head (supporting the cost of new church heating).

David Bone has studied the local geology and, in particular, its historic building stones for many years. He has published several academic papers and local guides and often undertakes consultancy for archaeologists. For visits to Boxgrove Priory, he is assisted by Tim Pullan who is an expert on the history of the church.

If you have any suggestions for activities or want to get involved arranging an activity, please email activities@cdas.info For full details see the CDAS website [here](#)

Fieldwork

Thorney Condition Assessment

The annual Condition Assessment of the WW2 sites on Thorney Island took place on Wednesday 13th May . For those of you unfamiliar with this project it was initiated in 2006 by the Chichester Harbour Conservancy (CHC) as part of their Heritage Lottery



funded project, Rhythms of the Tide. The project aims are to monitor the condition of archaeological sites identified within the Harbour Conservancy's Archaeological Condition Assessment Report and to report findings and make recommendations for their management to the CHC. Monitoring is undertaken annually by CDAS using a tried and tested methodology.

Documentation (site descriptions, visit notes and photographs) has been compiled for each site and is held by CDAS and shared with CHC and MoD. A programme of work recommended is written annually.

Stansted Geophysical Survey

The final part of the Stansted survey on the Orange Grove will now take place from approx. 13th July – 21st July (Details and request for volunteers to follow). Mark Seaman has presented the findings so far to the Friends of Stansted Park who were most impressed with our work.

Seeley Copse

The excavation at Seeley Copse will now take place from 25th August to 7th September as this coincides with the Summer gathering of the Goodwood Art Foundation (a principal sponsor). Details to be confirmed.

Old Idsworth Training Dig

We now have permission for a training dig at "Huckswood Field" at Old Idsworth to the north of Old Idsworth. This will be across one of the features have previously identified. We will be looking for members to undertake this training activity in August.

CDAS 100 Club

Don't forget the CDAS 100 Club is a great way for you to support us.

Join the 100 Club by giving £2 a month (or £24 annually) to CDAS. This buys you one membership number which is included in the monthly draw. All participants must be over 16 and a member of CDAS. We'll be holding the 'catch up' draws on our return to New Park.

To join please email 100club@cdas.info

The draw will take place each month at a CDAS meeting. Winnings will be paid to you by bank transfer.

The prize money will be 35% of the membership fee taken that month. The remaining 65% goes to CDAS to help fund equipment, resources and opportunities for members.

Membership Update /Member Mojo

No update this month, we are thankfully through our renewal period.

Competition Time

Thanks to everyone who submitted ideas for a new CDAS Logo , we will be announcing the winner at New Park on Wednesday .

Have you Seen?



If you have found a particularly interesting or useful website that you think Members might not have seen, then please feel free to forward to me and I'll include here. A lot of links are already included on our main website;

<https://www.cdas.info/Links.html>

We recently received this communication from Matthew Jones of the West Sussex Records Office ;

On Sussex Day (16 June), we're publishing the first edition of our quarterly e-newsletter and wonder if you could share the following with your members, or anyone who might be interested.

Subscribe to the West Sussex Record Office Newsletter!

Keep up with all the news at West Sussex Record Office by signing up to our brand new quarterly e-newsletter.

We'll share news on forthcoming talks and workshops, publications, online historical resources, research guides, blog articles, collections recently catalogued or digitised, and service announcements. Click on the link below to sign up. You can unsubscribe at any time.

[*Sign up to WSRO Newsletter*](#)

The Novium are hosting this talk by Trevor Creighton (who has previously delivered a talk to CDAS). Booking details for this talk on Fri 29 May at 6:00 pm can be found here;

<https://shop.thenovium.org/collections/roman-week/products/decline-and-fall-of-roman-britain-an-evening-talk-by-trevor-creighton>

Thanks for taking the time to read this Newsletter, please feel free to get in touch with suggestions and / or content of your own.

Dickie

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