



Charity XT29402

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

Founded in 1969

PATRON: Prof. Malcolm Airs
PRESIDENT: Hazel Williams

Annual Report & Accounts for 2019

SOAG 51st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

By video conference*, 7:30pm Thursday 23rd April 2020

Chairman's Report

At the time of writing this report (early April 2020) we are in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic. My first thoughts are therefore for the health of our members. I wish you all the very best during this period of trying circumstances and an unpredictable future. Like all similar organisations we have of course taken measures to protect ourselves. All SOAG events, fieldwork and other group activities are currently and indefinitely suspended. Desk-work however continues and as well as our own private research one SOAG project, Goring Heath (see below), in which we can collectively contribute will soon be commencing. We know we will get through this period. The committee continues to function, and indeed to meet, by the use of email and video conferencing, and we are planning future activities albeit with uncertain timescales. Because of the need to avoid physical contact and backed by government regulations our AGM, for which this report is prepared, will be held by video conference this year and I hope many members will be able to join us.

In November last year we celebrated our 50th anniversary with a party for members and friends of SOAG. It included a number of short presentations on the past, present and future of the group, which demonstrated our continuing strength by highlighting key people, activities and projects. More of these later. As we all know, the staple diet of archaeologists is cake and so we crowned our celebrations with a magnificent, and tasty, representation of our Gatehampton dig. I would like to thank Mike Green and Hazel Williams for masterminding and organising this momentous event.

Whilst it is clear that we have continuity and confidence going forward in terms of our aims and our work, it seems to me that we are also in a period of significant change. For many years our flagship project has been the Roman villa at Gatehampton. The fieldwork there has now been completed but I am delighted that a number of new projects are now in development. And there have been significant personnel changes too. In particular Kaz Greenham has stepped down as Treasurer and Mike Vincent, our former Secretary has moved away from Oxfordshire. I thank them both for the great work they have done for the Group. I am pleased to say that John Hesketh (Treasurer), Nigel Peters (Secretary) and Linda Annan (Membership Secretary) are now very ably filling those roles.

A notable aspect of many of our projects is collaboration with other organisations. For example, Ascott Park is undertaken with Oxfordshire Buildings Trust and Blewbury in partnership with the Blewbury Local History Group. I believe this collaboration is of great benefit to SOAG not only in identifying and establishing new projects but also in broadening the scope and improving the quality of the work. I am pleased to say that there are a significant number of new collaborative projects in the pipeline as outlined below.

Our Vice Chair, Nancy Nichols, has again organised a well-attended and very interesting programme of lectures and visits. These, as well as being a key part of SOAG activity in their own right, also help to provide a broader context for our project work.

Membership and Finance

The Group's membership remained steady at 143. This healthy figure was a little ahead of our budget assumptions and, supplemented by Gift Aid, continues to fund our core activities including lectures, Bulletin production, insurance, equipment storage and the web site. We welcome all new members and hope for many more.

Our projects continue to be responsible for their own funding although some shared resources (mainly equipment) are provided from core funding or, for more significant purchases, from generous bequests which we have received.

Publications and Communications

Mike Green continues to be the focus of our routine communications with all of the group's members and beyond by and management of the web site, and by ad hoc email updates. In 2019, Nigel Peters edited the first 3 editions of *SOAG Messenger* before taking over the Secretary's role, Mike then edited a further 5 editions during the year. John Hefferan is editor of our flagship report, *SOAG Bulletin*. No edition was published in 2019 but one has been produced early in 2020. We are very grateful for the hard work of John, Mike Green, and Janet Eastment (who did the typesetting and layout).

In addition, we publish results of our research projects to a wider audience through the CBA South Midlands Archaeology annual report. We also give presentations to other archaeological organisations, thereby raising the profile of SOAG and our research work. Work also continues, under the leadership of Mike Green, on digitising and making available our written archive of past projects.

Fieldwork and Research

2019 marked the final year of excavation at the **Gatehampton** Roman villa site. After 27 years on the site, SOAG's longest running excavation project has drawn to a close. The scope of the project included both the excavation of most of the villa building and extensive survey of the surrounding landscape and we are now planning the post excavation phase. During 2018 and 2019 work focussed on the eastern end of the villa building; good progress was made in the excavation of the second bath house and in the investigation of several large pits and early walls in the villa enclosure area outside the building.

Many hundreds of people have been involved in the project over the years, as SOAG's major project for a long time it fulfilled the group's aim to encourage participation in archaeology by all, whether expert or beginners. It is pleasing to see that with many new projects planned and in progress, SOAG's very active approach to archaeology will continue.

I would like to take this opportunity to give my sincere thanks to our President, Hazel Williams, who has led this project since 2010 (and worked on it since 1997). Hazel's work in planning, technical leadership, painstaking excavation and analysis, recruiting new members to SOAG and training the team has been immense. The project was initiated by our founder, Cynthia Graham Kerr in 1992 and Hazel's leadership has provided continuity – the backbone of SOAG – for many years.

Led by Alan Hall, our operations at **High Wood** in 2019 may be considered our most successful season in the sense that we completed excavation of the northern range of buildings and revealed answers to some of the most significant questions. In particular: the likely source of the artefacts contained by the nearby "mound"; the overall size of the complex; the characterisation of the remains and the sequence of their destruction.

Our team of 26 core workers were joined by a good number of visiting members from neighbouring societies and the operations were conducted in a friendly and congenial atmosphere which culminated in a barbecue over the last weekend. A team of a dozen processed finds over the autumn, meeting weekly at the Dunsden Green Estate Office and draft reports on all classes of finds are now up to date. It was hoped that work in 2020 would provide an understanding of the nature of the later building and information as to any further constructions which might abut the outer walls of the enclosure but work is now suspended..

The second year of excavations on the presumed site of the 17th century manor house at **Ascott Park** took place over ten days between 23 August and 3 September 2019. The number of 'volunteer days' was 15% up on 2018, with thirty volunteers (and two dogs) taking part, led by Project Director Ian Clarke and Excavation Director Roelie Reed. Special thanks to Mike Vincent for his administration of volunteer recruitment and preparations for the dig, and to all the volunteers for their hard work and enthusiasm.

The main objective in 2019 was to complete the work on recovery of the ground plan of the house which was largely achieved. We now have a much clearer understanding of the site but there are questions outstanding and some of the research aims have yet to be addressed. We are planning further work for 2020, dependent on the pandemic situation, but realistically, it is unlikely that we will complete everything on the present three-year research plan in 2020. Our associates on the project, Oxfordshire Buildings Trust, are very keen for work to continue beyond 2020, and this has been agreed in principle by the SOAG Committee.

The test pit programme and geophysical surveys within the village at **Blewbury** are now complete and no work was undertaken in 2019. However further investigations are under consideration for future years.

At our 50th Anniversary meeting we announced a potential new SOAG venture – a study project in collaboration with the Beacons of the Past Project. An area in South Oxfordshire (near **Goring Heath**) has been identified which the Project's LiDAR survey indicates is potentially rich in archaeological features dating from pre-Roman to WWII. A project plan is under development. Nigel Peters is acting Project Leader with continued strong support from Bill Annan for our role in this work. It is hoped that the study will provide a range of activities to our members, with desk-based LiDAR analysis and documentary research leading on to field excursions and field walking – and perhaps even opening up the possibility of more substantial fieldwork in the future.

We have been invited to collaborate with Cotswold Archaeology and the Society of Antiquaries in a three-year community archaeology project at **Kelmscott Manor**, the country home of William Morris, which has been awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant. of £4.3 million. SOAG's involvement in this work is now being developed by Nigel Peters and Alan Hall.

SOAG has also been introduced by the Oxford Blues Metal Detecting Club to the owners of **Smokedown Farm** near Faringdon. The detectorists have found a number of Iron Age and Romano British coins. From initial field walking and an analysis of aerial photographs, we believe this may be a Roman Villa site. A geophysical survey led by John Scarborough and possible excavations are now being planned.

Finally, we have agreed to provide geophysical survey support to The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society in a new project led by Lindsey Bedford at **Coldharbour Farm**, Crowmarsh Gifford, looking for evidence of Roman settlement.

Dave Carless (Chairman)

April 2020

Lecture Programme

Jan 24 **Dr Martin Bridge (UCL Institute of Archaeology)**

An Introduction to Dendrochronology (Tree-Ring Dating)

Feb 28 **David Sanchez (Thames Valley Archaeological Services)**

Roman Villa Site in Tackley, Oxon

Mar 22 **Dr Edward Peveler (Chilterns Conservation Board)**

'Beacons of the Past': Hillforts in the Chilterns Landscape

April 28 **Review of SOAG Archaeology and AGM, followed by SOAG Social**

Sept 26 **Rob Wadley (Oxford Blues Metal Detecting Club)**

What Archaeology can you find with a Metal Detector?

Oct 24 **Ben Ford (Oxford Archaeology)**

Hampton Court Palace: Initial Results from Selected Excavations

Nov 14 **Dr Jane Harrison (Oxford University)**

Anglo-Saxon Hall Complexes: Excavation & Reconstruction at Long Wittenham

Nov 28 **SOAG's 50th Anniversary**

The Past: Hazel Williams (SOAG President); The Present: Richard Oram (Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist); The Future: Dr Edward Peveler (Chilterns Conservation Board) followed by the Christmas Seasonal Party

Events and Visits

July 11 **Visit to Silchester Roman Town**

Organiser: Nancy Nichols

Nov 24 **Visit to the Reconstructed Saxon Hall at Long Wittenham & Tour of Castle Hill**

Organiser: Dave Carless

Treasurer's Report 2019

Core Activities:

The year-end accounts show a healthy surplus of £687 on Receipts and Expenditure for our Core Activities. This is primarily due to Bulletin, the biggest core expense, not being published this year and despite the non receipt of annual Gift Aid payment due to an issue with the application - we hadn't notified HMRC of recent committee change in writing. We are confident that Gift Aid will be paid retrospectively once we have provided appropriate paperwork.

Non-Core Activities:

These show a significant deficit of £935 on Receipts and Expenditure for our Non-Core Activities. The High Wood project ended the year with a budget surplus although project balance reduced due to absence of funding. Ascott Park had a budget shortfall, due to larger than expected machine hire and labour costs for digging, but the balance is still positive thanks to a grant of £1000 from Oxford Building Trust. The Gatehampton project ended its final the year with a positive balance with some transactions still pending.

Assets:

No new assets were purchased in 2019.

Looking forward to 2020:

For the Core Activities, we anticipate subscription income to be similar to 2019 and have budgeted a small surplus for the coming financial year. For Non-Core activities, additional funding will be required for Highwood and Ascott Park if we want to support a similar level of expenditure to 2019. Funding will also be needed for the new Smokedown project. Gatehampton project is expected to be completed with a small balance once outstanding items are processed.

John Hesketh
Honorary Treasurer
March 2020

Notes:

Core Activities: The day-to-day running of the Group, such as insurance, room hire, and lecture series. It is always the intention to fund these activities from Subscription and associated income.

Non-Core Activities: The various Projects currently being undertaken. All projects are expected to be self-financing, and funds for these are identified as Designated Funds.

Restricted Funds: Funding for specific projects as declared by the donor at the time of donation. They cannot be used to cover other expenditure.

Designated Funds: Funds for specific projects, as agreed by the Committee

South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group (SOAG)
Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2019

| Receipts and Payments | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2018 | | 2019 | 2020 Core Activities Budget |
| 14,493 | Balance as at 1st January | 10,807 | |
| Receipts | | | |
| <i>Core Activities</i> | | | |
| 1,844 | Subscriptions | 1,877 | 1,817 |
| 330 | Gift Aid | 0 ¹ | 660 |
| 17 | Refreshments income | 22 | |
| 3 | Lecture Visitor Donations | | |
| <u>2,194</u> | Subtotal, Core Activities | <u>1,899</u> | <u>2,477</u> |
| 500 | Grants/Donations | 1,009 ² | |
| 45 | Diggers Fees | 580 ³ | |
| | T-shirt Sales | | |
| | Training fees | | |
| 29 | Bank Interest | 39 | 36 |
| | Other | 125 ⁴ | 21 |
| <u>574</u> | Subtotal, Non-core Activities | <u>1,752</u> | <u>57</u> |
| <u>2,768</u> | Total receipts in year | | |
| Payments | | | |
| <i>Core Activities</i> | | | |
| 52 | Messenger | 46 | 35 |
| 820 | Bulletin | 95 ⁵ | 700 |
| 0 | Publicity | 30 | 30 |
| 83 | Website | 90 | 90 |
| 55 | Room Hire | 60 | 60 |
| 350 | Insurance | 290 | 320 |
| 19 | Office/Admin Costs | 5 | 27 |
| 185 | Hall hire | 220 ⁶ | 193 |
| 260 | Speaker Expenses | 170 ⁷ | 240 |
| 0 | Refreshments/Events expenses | 0 ⁸ | 130 |
| 288 | Storage Costs | 144 ⁹ | 144 |
| 63 | Affiliate fees | 63 ¹⁰ | 63 |
| <u>2,175</u> | Subtotal, Core Activities | <u>1,212</u> | <u>2,032</u> |
| 258 | Equipment | 253 ¹¹ | |
| 25 | Training Costs | 0 | |
| 2,329 | High Wood Expenses | 1,606 | |
| 0 | Gatehampton Expenses | 54 ¹² | |
| 145 | Ascott Park | 760 ¹³ | |
| 1,500 | Storage Container | 0 | |
| 22 | Pat Preece Landscape Fund | 0 | |
| 0 | Equipment Repairs | 0 | |
| 0 | Other | 15 | |
| <u>4,279</u> | Subtotal, Non-core Activities | <u>2,687</u> | |
| <u>6,454</u> | Total payments in year | <u>3,900</u> | |
| 19 | Surplus/loss for year on Core Activities | 687 ¹⁴ | 445 |
| -3,705 | Surplus/loss for year None-Core Activities | -935 | |
| <u>-3,686</u> | Total Surplus/loss for year | <u>-248</u> | |
| <u>10,807</u> | Balance carried forward | <u>10,558</u> | |

| Monetary Assets | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| 2018 | | 2019 |
| 295 | Main Account | 288 |
| <u>10,511</u> | Reserve Account | <u>10,270</u> |
| <u>10,807</u> | Total Cash | <u>10,558</u> |
| Represented by | | |
| 1,736 | Unrestricted Fund | 2,327 |
| <i>Restricted Funds</i> | | |
| 978 | P Preece Trio | 978 |
| 2,137 | Highwood Project | 961 |
| | Ascott park | 320 |
| <i>Designated Funds</i> | | |
| 379 | Gatehampton Project | 395 |
| 864 | Digitisation Project | 864 |
| 2,000 | Gatehampton Post excavation | 2,000 |
| 412 | Storage Management | 412 |
| <u>2,302</u> | Cyn Bequest | <u>2,302</u> |
| <u>10,807</u> | | <u>10,558</u> |
| Fixed Assets ¹⁵ | | |
| <i>Cost</i> | | <i>NBV</i> |
| 2,000 | Storage Containers | 1,280 |
| 0 | FM18 Gradiometer | 640 |
| 2,678 | TR Resistivity meter | 1,727 |
| 0 | 5700 GPS Receiver | 2,048 |
| 0 | Geodimeter CU and 600 CU | 2,048 |
| 6,288 | Geoscan RM15-D Resistivity Meter | 432 |
| 734 | HP NC6320 Laptop | 50 |
| 505 | Toshiba X2000 LCD Projector | 35 |
| <u>350</u> | Dumpy Level | <u>24</u> |
| <u>12,555</u> | | <u>8,284</u> |

- Notes to the Accounts**
- 1 Gift Aid for 2019 will appear in 2020 accounts
 - 2 Includes £1000 grant for Ascott Park from Oxford Building Trust
 - 3 Large increase due to fees being collected at all 3 sites. Highwood made biggest contribution.
 - 4 Compensation from Barclays Bank as an apology for poor service
 - 5 Distribution costs for 2018 edition. A Bulletin was not published in 2019. There will be only one in 2020.
 - 6 Larger than expected due to additional lecture on the reconstruction of a saxon hall prior to a tour of site
 - 7 Some speakers declined payment in 2019
 - 8 Event costs for SOAG 50th paid in 2020
 - 9 Annual site rental for storage container
 - 10 Membership of two local plus one national archaeological groups
 - 11 Includes brush cutter and spare projector bulb
 - 12 Cost of infill (JCB hire and services) will appear in 2020 accounts
 - 13 The majority of costs were machine hire and labour costs for digging and infill
 - 14 Large surplus in core activities primarily due to delayed publication of Bulletin (note 5). Surplus also expected in 2020 due to receipt of 2019 Gift Aid in 2020 (note 1).
 - 15 No new assets purchased in 2019

These accounts were prepared, on a receipts and payments basis, in accordance with guidance from the Charities Commission 'Statement of Recommended Practice' (SORP 2005) by John Hesketh, Honorary Treasurer, February 2020

These accounts have been examined by Sue Fogden against documentation provided. In her opinion these are a true and accurate presentation of the transactions made by the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group in 2019

Signature: Date:

A signed copy of these accounts is on file

SOAG OFFICERS AND ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As they stand at the end of year 2019-2020 & including reference to any special roles

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Hon President | Hazel Williams (Director of the Gatehampton Roman Villa dig) |
| Hon Vice President | Ian Clarke (Director of the Ascott Park dig) |
| Chairman | Dave Carless |
| Vice Chairman | Nancy Nichols (SOAG Events Secretary) |
| Hon Secretary | Nigel Peters |
| Hon Treasurer | John Hesketh |
| Ordinary Members | John Hefferan (Editor, <i>SOAG Bulletin</i>) |
| | Michael Green (Editor, <i>SOAG Messenger</i> , SOAG webmaster and SOAG archive digitisation project manager) |
| | Linda Annan (Membership Secretary) |
| | Lindsey Bedford |
| | Bill Annan (Future Projects) |
| | John Scarborough (co-opted) (Geophysics) |

* Due to the exceptional measures taken by the Government to combat coronavirus, we are forbidden to hold the AGM meeting in person. The SOAG committee have agreed therefore to hold the meeting by video-link. If you wish to attend the AGM please email: secretary@soagarch.org.uk who will send you the meeting invitation and details of the video site being used. You will need an internet connection via a computer/tablet/smart phone. All requests to attend the meeting need to be received by the secretary by 12 noon on the day of the AGM, Thursday 23 April.