



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2021

Letter from the Editor

Hello, how are you? Staying warm and dry I hope 😊.

We're all tucked up at home with the weather being so dreary, but a few signs of Spring are finally poking their heads up through the sodden ground. It's a time to look forward to better weather (and times).

For the time being we are continuing with keeping our activities online, we will keep future activities under regular review. The lectures are working well on Zoom, any feedback is helpful to improve your experience further. We are able to offer a telephone dial in for members who would like to listen to the lecture or who do not have access to the internet.

Annual General Meeting 2021

The AGM will be held on Monday 8th March at 7:30pm, using Zoom. We will circulate the agenda, and minutes of the previous AGM in March 2020, in the week before the meeting.

Meanwhile, anyone who wishes to make a nomination for the Committee, or for any of the Officer posts (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) should send that nomination immediately to Colin Mann, please, at colin_r_mann@msn.com. Likewise, if you wish to put forward a motion at the AGM, please send it to Colin immediately. Nominations and motions require a proposer and a seconder from amongst the WEAG membership, so please make sure that the membership subscriptions of both proposer and seconder are up to date (they were due on 1st January). The formal deadline for submissions of nominations and motions is 8th February, but we can accommodate anything received by Colin up to 15th February.

Any nominations and motions received will be circulated to members before the end of February. There will be a final opportunity to make nominations (but not to propose motions) at the meeting itself.

The current Committee proposes that voting at the AGM should be by "show of hands" as usual, and this will require participants to clearly raise their hand in front of the camera they are using for Zoom. The Committee are investigating whether there is a way to vote using the facilities of Zoom itself, and if there is, that will be explained at the AGM.

January 2021 Subs

A reminder about the increase in membership - 19 standing orders came in at the pre 2021 amount (mine included), would you please top up to the new amounts of £15 for single membership and £20 for family, it would be helpful if you let us know you have done this on weagmembership@outlook.com.

THE Essay on Radio 3

Something I thought might be of interest to you is a series called The Essay on Radio 3 exploring the joys of Essex, to listen to the first one click on the link <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000h6pr> or search the BBC for Radio 3, The Essay, Odes to Essex, first broadcast from 25th to 30th Jan - the first one is written and read by songwriter and activist Billy Bragg, there are five in total, so far I've listened to the first 3 and can thoroughly recommend them, as we all know there is much more to Essex than it is given credit for, my Dad always calls Essex 'Gods Own County' in reply to anyone putting it/us down and I'm inclined to agree with him.

Articles

We have below Allestree Fisher's notes from his talk to us in December about the Phoenicians and Carthaginians, an interesting insight into a civilisation I knew very little about and also Lee's 2020 archaeology report for the Copped Hall Trust first published in the Trust's newsletter. I must say I really enjoyed Claire and Lee's article last month on the Indian Princesses.

See you all on the 8th!



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WEAG Member Profile

Would you like to be 'our profile on a member'? If so email me on and I'll forward you the questions.

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Anything you'd like to contribute to the WEAG Newsletter or if you have any comments on the new format, please email lexie.lyons@icloud.com

WEAG AT COPPED HALL 2020

submitted by Lee Joyce

As what would have been WEAG's excavation season comes to an end without having had the opportunity to dig, the question arises what has been achieved this year and how will it help our work in the future.

First of all, early in the year while we were still able to meet, the work on the brick and tiles (Ceramic Building Material (CBM)) continued at a pace and has generated masses of data that should keep me busy over winter. While the vast majority of the material is just your standard Tudor brick, there are a number of examples that allow us a glimpse at the detailing of door and window frames, fireplaces, staircases, chimney stacks and the roofline, which in a house of high status like Copt Hall, would have been made, at least in part, of ornately shaped brick and tile.



During the early days of lock-down I took home the Clay Tobacco Pipes we have excavated over the years and recorded them on a pro-former. Although we do not have any pipes of the very early period (C1580-1620) we do have a very wide range of dates represented in the assemblage. The vast majority date from 1640-1770. Pipes in this area (Greater London) are catalogued using the 1969 Atkinson & Oswald typology, thus giving the exciting name of AO 25 to our most common type and AO16 to the most interesting. This has a gauntlet mark in relief on the base. These marks can be as early as 1600 and are a trademark of makers from Amesbury, Wiltshire. These were a very high-quality pipe and purchased by the likes of Marquis of Hertford, it is for this reason that they were copied by pipe makers in the London region. Ours are almost certainly examples of the very-nearly as well-made London type and date from 1640 -60 based on dates provided by excavations at our near neighbour Hill Hall. Amongst our assemblage the usual repertoire with heels, spurs and makers marks are well represented as are later Victorian pipes. The assemblage as a whole offer good scope for further research and compares well with the material excavated at Nonesuch Palace.

The earliest material I have been working through is the pottery from the fill of the medieval moat belonging to the first Copt Hall. This material dates from 1050-1200 and is the everyday cooking and dining ware of the Fitz-Aucher house first mentioned in C 1150. The material consists mostly of two fabrics (pottery types) a shelly type (Fabric 12A) ware and a sandy type (Early Medieval ware or Fabric 13 as they are properly known). These are the ubiquitous pottery type of the period and this coupled with the fact that no Medieval grey wares or Orange sandy ware (Fabrics 20 and 21) are present seals the date of the filling up or silting of the bottom of the moat at no later than 1200 and proves conclusively that the site was moated by this period.

Although we have not been able to get in the trenches this year many members have continued to work behind the scenes. This helps us to play an important role in fulfilling Copped Hall's aims of delivering cultural and educational opportunities to the community. All this puts us in a strong position when we return to site.

PHOENICIANS AND CARTHAGINIANS

SUMMARISING A NEGLECTED CIVILIZATION

submitted by Allestree Fisher

This brief overview of the achievements and legacy of this people from the eastern Mediterranean began with situating them geographically and pointing out what was in all likelihood their greatest contribution to occidental culture: their alphabet, borrowed and modified by the Greeks. Tyrian purple (from the Murex snail) was their most prestigious product, but as well as producers of many fine products such as glass, gold jewelry, and pottery, they also acted as middlemen for a Mediterranean-wide traffic and beyond, bringing new aspects of agriculture and crops to the western Mediterranean. Their ability to do this depended on their supremacy as sailors, boat builders and navigators. This initially gave them the edge over their immediate competitors the Greeks, who used aspects of Phoenician maritime skill to navigate.

Their successors, the Carthaginians, eventually built up a western Mediterranean empire based not from Tyre and Sidon, but from Carthage in modern day Tunisia, where many Phoenicians had fled as a result of subsequent invasions particularly from the Persians and Alexander. They were considered by the Romans as the ultimate traders. The Greeks invited the Romans to defend Greek interests in Sicily which led to the 1st Punic war. After the destruction of Carthage in 146BCE, influence in the Mediterranean passed to the Romans who had conquered Greece in the same year. Their language and some civic institutions survived at least until the time of St Augustine, although even before the 1st century AD, Carthage was once more flourishing as a centre of commerce, trade, industry and later also of Christianity. Henceforth the newly created province of Africa Proconsularis, with Utica as its capital, was to provide a large percentage of the corn sold and distributed in Rome.

In my view, we owe this gifted and industrious people more credit for our own development than has usually granted them.

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WEAG CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Lecture Program

Talks will be accessible via the internet and NOT in person at the usual venue, further details to follow. We'd like your help in summarising each of the remote talks/lectures to be included in the following newsletter for those members who do not have internet access.

Lectures are in the committee room at Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green, IG8 9LA at 7:15pm unless otherwise stated.

Non-members are welcome to attend Lectures. A voluntary contribution of £2 would be appreciated from guests.

Monday 8 February 2021 @ 19:15

'Medieval Building Myths'. *Speaker: James Wright.* James is an award-winning buildings archaeologist. He has two decades professional experience of ferreting around in people's cellars, hunting through their attics and digging up their gardens. He hopes to find meaningful truths about how ordinary and extraordinary folk lived their lives in the mediaeval period.

Monday 8 March 2021 @ 19:15

AGM and 'Highgate Wood Potteries' – A continuation, with a focus on the role of the Roman Procurator, managing coppicing for the fuel for the kilns. *Speaker: Harvey Sheldon, Birkbeck College, WEAG President.*

Monday 12 April 2021 @ 19:15

'Historic Cultural Landscapes in South West Essex'. *Speaker: Tricia Moxey.*

Monday 10 May 2021 @ 19:15

The Rudge Lecture – 'to be announced'. *Speaker: Mike "Mr Stonehenge" Parker Pearson.*