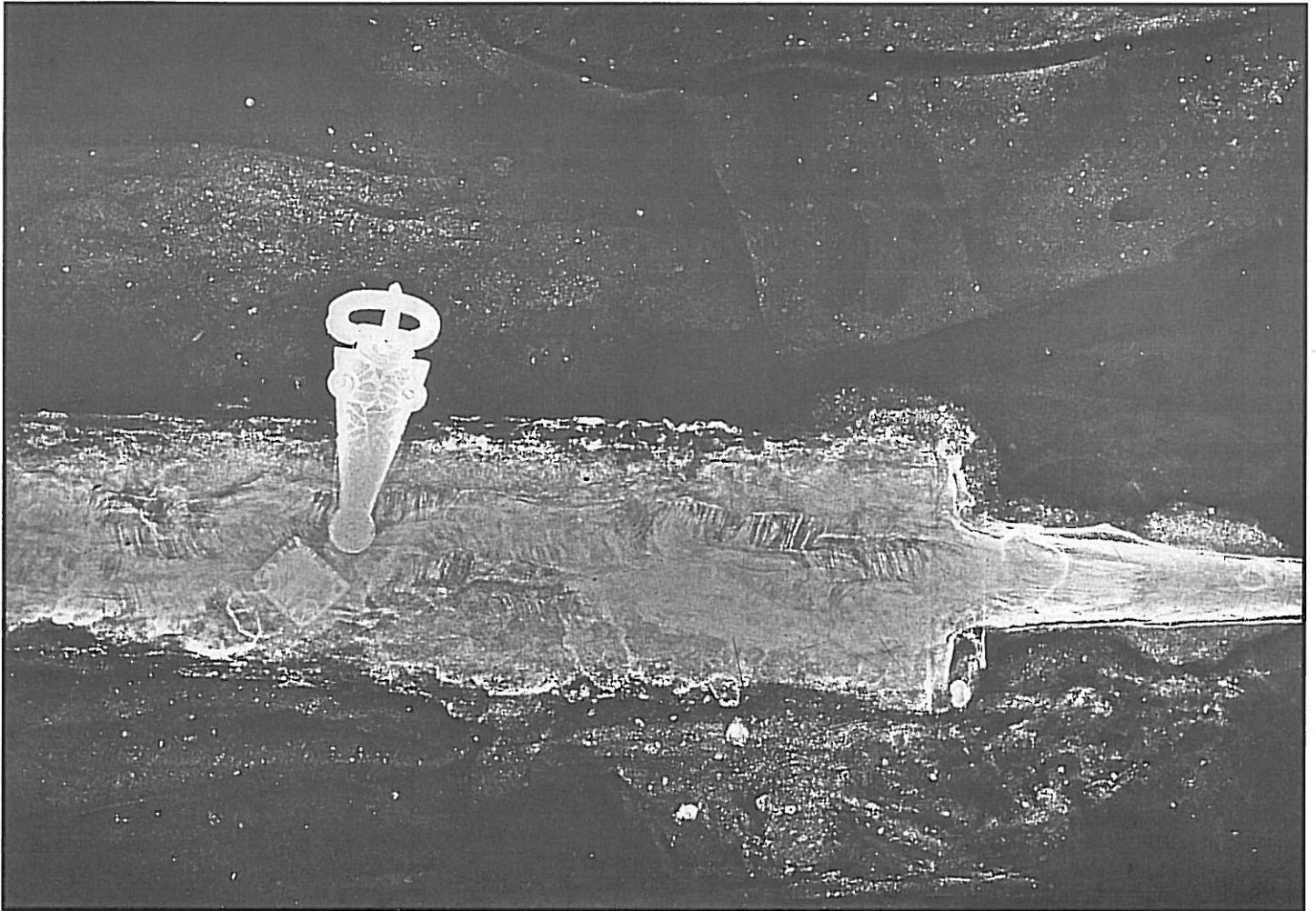




The Newsletter of the Sutton Hoo Society

SAXON

No. 17 / 1992



The photograph from an X-ray of the 'princeling' burial showing small silver buckle associated with the sword. Photograph: British Museum.

AN EXCAVATION INDOORS

by Angela Evans

It is a standing archaeological joke that major finds are always revealed either beneath the only baulk left on a site or on the last day of an excavation. It is perhaps an irony that this scenario should have been played out at Sutton Hoo after eight years of a research project that fascinated people almost *because* of its lack of Anglo-Saxon finds. Archaeologists and visitors alike were excusably locked into the concept of a royal cemetery well and truly gutted by English grave-robbers during previous centuries. Mound 17 however was different: two rectangular features were uncovered beneath a mound ploughed almost to extinction. The graves, one of a very young man, the other of

his pony, were excavated and recorded during September and October last year and the assemblage was block lifted by a small team from the department of Conservation in the British Museum (*Saxon* 15). Two major complexes from the young man's grave have been investigated in the museum over the winter as a joint project between the department of Medieval and Later Antiquities (MLA) and the departments of Scientific Research and Conservation. The complexes consisted of a mass of iron and gilt bronze fittings from the west end of the grave outside the oak coffin in which the princeling was placed, and the full sword that lay alongside him.

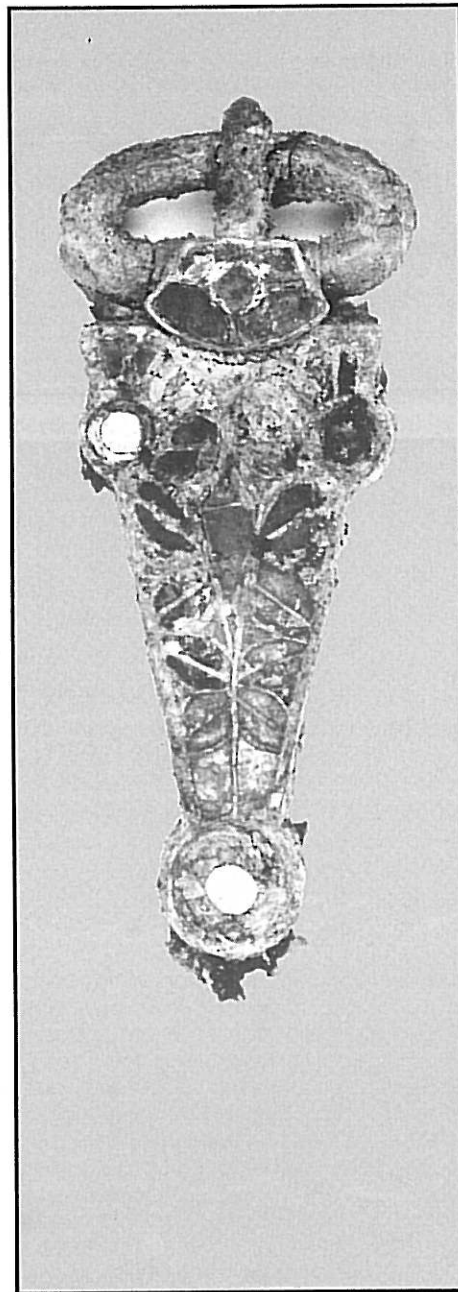
The complex at the head of the grave was tentatively identified in the field as the pony's tack. The first step towards establishing this was to subject the sand-filled plaster, chicken-wire and expanded polystyrene block containing the fittings to 'real-time' radiography in the department of Scientific Research. This enabled us to look into the block, which could be turned at different angles to the X-ray beam, and to isolate individual elements which lay hidden within the sand, without disturbing the integrity of the complex as a whole. 'Real time', although troubled by the density of the sand, revealed an exciting and confusing jumble of corroded iron, circular and axe-shaped bronze fittings of two

distinct sizes decorated with swirling interlace, as well as smaller and more delicate fittings. Radiography was followed by controlled excavation. This involved translating the complex recording system used at Sutton Hoo to the Anglo-Saxon reserve collection in the basement of the British Museum, as it was essential for the integrity of the archaeological record that the recording system matched exactly that used on site. A theodolite was set up — with difficulty — on the slippery linoleum! A temporary bench-mark was established, and using a Psion organiser, the visible finds were recorded in the usual three dimensions. To our surprise, after a few false starts, this micro-recording worked extraordinarily well! Jim Thorn (MLA's archaeological illustrator) was drafted in to reproduce the detailed recording used for all graves excavated during the project, while the block was being 'excavated' and the finds 'lifted' by Fleur Shearman who masterminded the removal of the blocks from the grave in November.

The first problem encountered after initial cleaning and recording was the mass of iron that straddled the gilt bronze fittings, obscuring their relationship. This corroded iron was impossible to identify *in situ* so it was lifted and subjected to 'real-time'. With the obscuring sand removed, the X-rays penetrated the corrosion effortlessly and to our delight revealed the clear shape of a snaffle-bit, the cheek-pieces and axe-shaped copper-alloy fittings, all completely hidden within the corrosion products.

Gradual excavation of the block revealed a suite of gilt-bronze circular and axe-shaped fittings, with delicate leather straps surviving only in contact with the metal. Faint shadows in the sand, invaded by fine bracken roots, were recorded in the hope that they will eventually provide a clue to the relationship between the various fittings and the straps of the tack which must consist of a bridle and possibly a breast strap. Associated with the copper alloy mounts are a group of smaller fittings which must have decorated the bridle: one set is axe-shaped and consists of a fine undecorated silver sheet overlying a bronze base-plate with two tiny gilded birds heads. The second group, of gilded bronze, resembles the "dragon" heads on the rim of the shield from the mound 1 ship-burial, but decorated with finely modelled human masks. The untangling of the relationship of all these mounts remains a task for the immediate future.

The other major complex, the sword, presented a daunting prospect in the ground: iron corrosion obscured the hilt and the scabbard presented a flaking, fragile face to the archaeologists who surveyed it. Large pieces of wood lay across it. Safely lifted, the first objective on reaching the British Museum, was to look at it on 'real-time'. Before this, all the wood lying against the blade was removed for dating and identification. This revealed a small group of scabbard fittings: a tiny silver buckle apparently associated with a base silver bar which originally lay horizontally across the scabbard. The bar was in very poor condition. It has, we think, a loop at one end and its surface is inlaid with small square and round garnets. Embedded in the wood was a 'pyramid' made of silver and inlaid with garnets, but missing the large central settings in each face. Scrutiny of the empty cells showed traces of the original settings and under the microscope it was realised with some surprise that these were originally of ivory. High status finds indeed!



Left: Silver buckle inlaid with garnets and blue glass, before conservation. Photograph by Trevor Springett. © Dept of Conservation, British Museum. Scale @ 2 to 1.



Right: Gilt-bronze fitting from the pony bridle. Photograph by Trevor Springett. © Dept of Conservation, British Museum. Scale @ 3 to 1.

The next step was to radiograph the sword to see what fittings still lay hidden in the sand and corrosion. This revealed not only a fine pattern-welded blade, but a second 'pyramid' and a triangular buckle, small but extraordinarily exciting as its surface seemed to be covered with cell-work of petal-like delicacy. None of us had ever seen anything quite like it: the charm of Sutton Hoo, with its unflinching ability to produce unique finds, still held good! The hidden surface of the sword was then gently cleaned of loose sand and corrosion debris to reveal the buckle and 'pyramid'. When the buckle was lightly brushed we could see that it too was made of silver and its surface was entirely covered with cloisonné garnets. Even the small, shield-shaped tongue plate was inlaid with garnets surrounding a single setting of bright blue glass. Cabochon garnets concealed three rivets on the buckle-plate and under the microscope it could just be seen

that these small garnets were originally set in ivory collars. The buckle was clearly made *en suite* with the 'pyramids' and the whole assemblage, while not as sumptuous as the gold and garnet sword fittings in Mound 1, nonetheless confirmed the status of the dead young man as aristocratic, perhaps a son of the ruling dynasty — a fitting discovery to celebrate the end of a taxing yet always fascinating excavation of the best known archaeological site in England.

Angela Evans is a member of the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities at the British Museum, editor of Volume 3 of 'The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial', and author of the book, 'The Sutton Ship Burial' which replaced the original British Museum Handbook on Sutton Hoo.

THE SUTTON HOO SITE — MANAGEMENT PLAN 1992

Martin Carver has circulated a proposal for the long-term management of the Sutton Hoo site, and is seeking support from the landowners, English Heritage, Suffolk County Council and the Sutton Hoo Society. We include here the major part of the Management Plan, with the hope that members will read it, and feel free to comment on it. There will be an opportunity to put your views at the AGM in January (see Pinboard for details), or write direct to Martin Carver at York University (address on the back page).

A management plan for the Sutton Hoo site is essential for its survival as an asset of the British people, Europe and the world. The cultural value of Sutton Hoo, England's first royal cemetery, stretches beyond local interests and includes schoolchildren, who study it in the National Curriculum, and visitors from all over the world. Our plan must achieve a balance between the rights of landowners and farmers and the wider public interest. It must satisfy the site's international clientele, while remaining an unassuming feature of the landscape of south-east Suffolk.

The site is all privately owned and is split between three landowners. Although Sutton Hoo is not in national guardianship, English Heritage, as the custodians of the nation's heritage, has an interest in the site, part of which is under their legal protection as a *scheduled monument*.

Other bodies, who have an unofficial or indirect interest, have also been consulted regarding the Management Plan: these include the Sutton Hoo Society, who are willing in principle to continue their voluntary work as guides, under contract with the Sutton Hoo Research Trust; and Suffolk County Council, whose good offices have been made available through a *consultative committee*, convened by them, a pool which can be fished for academic and technical expertise on management matters.

Execution of the Management Plan is a responsibility assumed by the Sutton Hoo Research Trust, under its Director Martin Carver, acting on behalf of the other landowners. The Trust has appointed Mr Peter Berry as Site Caretaker. It is hoped and expected that this Plan will conserve the site for the nation, and present the findings of research to the public, while respecting the amenity and economic activity of the owners and local residents.

The Management Plan divides in three interlocking components:

The Research Plan

The Conservation Plan *and The Presentation Plan*

The Research Plan

The Sutton Hoo Research Trust completed its campaign of field work in the spring of 1992, and no further work is contemplated by them. The next task, publication, will be undertaken over the next few years at the University of York. In the long term any further fieldwork at Sutton Hoo will depend on its contribution to

the Anglo-Saxon project in Suffolk as a whole, under the control of Suffolk's Archaeological Unit. The rights of excavation, currently restricted to the Sutton Hoo Research Trust or its heirs in title, will be reviewed after the publication of the research campaign.

The Conservation Plan

To counter disturbance of the archaeological strata (including burial mounds and graves) by treasure hunters, rabbits, and the roots of bushes and bracken and to prolong the life of the site, the following measures will be taken:

- a non-resident *warden* will be appointed to keep the site under continual surveillance throughout the year.
- a *fence* will be erected around the monument which is proof against rabbits.
- the site will be *mown* regularly.

Financial support for these measures has been offered by English Heritage and the contracts will be executed by the Sutton Hoo Research Trust.

Presentation Plan

It is a fundamental principle of the conservation strategy that the site is accessible to the public for controlled visits.

Controlled visits are necessary:

- to promote the value of the site as a public asset and so deter vandals and looters. This will assist its protection as a scheduled monument.
- to prevent members of the public attracted to the well-known monument from unwittingly causing trespass or annoyance to landowners and residents.
- to satisfy the public demand to see a site, which is not only world famous but on the National Curriculum for schoolchildren, and give them a satisfying visit.

To this end, a visit has been devised which is intended to be both educational and entertaining. It will be developed in two phases as follows:—

PHASE 1

Site Display:—

- 1) All mounds will be displayed in their 1984 form, under mown grass, except Mound 2.
- 2) Mound 2 will be displayed in its original dimensions as determined by the research campaign. It will be allowed to weather and be monitored by the Sutton Hoo Research Trust.
- 3) The site of other Anglo-Saxon graves will be marked by pebble surfaces, lower than the level of the grass.
- 4) The replica sand-men will be located beside Mound 5.
- 5) Mound 1 will have the dimensions of the ship and burial chamber marked out on its surface.
- 6) Each mound which has been examined in the research campaign, and Mound 1, will be provided with a weather-proof plaque showing the burial rite employed by the Anglo-Saxons.
- 7) Exhibition: The current Display Centre will continue to operate. It will be refurbished and updated at low cost. The exhibition (item 7) is to be improved with the assistance of a grant from the Sutton

Hoo Society's revenue from visitors.

Resources: Items 1–5 have already been executed by the Sutton Hoo Research Trust. Item 6 will be undertaken with the support of the English Heritage, and with advice from the County Council's Consultative Committee, following designs put forward by the Sutton Hoo Research Trust.

Guides: The Sutton Hoo Society are to continue to provide guided tours on weekend afternoons, May to September.

Access: The Site will be accessible to the public on weekend afternoons and Bank Holidays, May to September; there is no public access at other times. The public are only permitted access on foot, along the allocated routes, with the following exceptions:

- Site Caretaker, Mr Berry
- Named members of the Sutton Hoo Society, when acting as guides or officers, on weekend afternoons or for booked tours only
- Booked tours, by schools or societies
- Disabled persons, by arrangement with the Sutton Hoo Society guides.

Vehicles should enter by the allocated route and park near the Display Centre.

PHASE 2

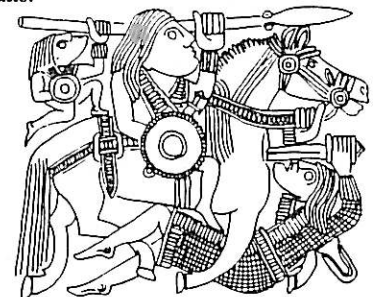
In Phase 2, the site visit might be improved in two ways:

- 1) The on-site display will be enhanced by the reconstruction of the ship and the unexcavated burial chamber at Mound 1. The design will be that agreed in due course with the landowners, English Heritage and the Consultative Committee.
- 2) The exhibition will be redesigned to include new photographic display panels and a tabletop model, based on the findings and publication of the research campaign.

Resources: The developments will be financed through a special fundraising initiative, which will follow the completion of the research programme. Arrangements for access and guided tours will remain as for Phase 1.

Timetable

The enactment of Phase 1 has begun. Visitors in 1993 will see the replicated Mound 2, the sandmen replicas and the sites of the sacrificial graves. The plaques will probably be ready by 1994. Fundraising for Phase 2 will begin in 1993, and the plans for Mound 1 and the new display will be put to consultation in 1995. By the turn of the century, visitors should be able to appreciate the story of the cemetery, its claims for kingship, its Scandinavian links, its human sacrifices, cremations and ship burials, and so experience the unique variety of the Sutton Hoo historic monument in both atmosphere and details.



SUTTON HOO— EAST ANGLIAN OR EAST SAXON KING

by John Newman

Sutton who? Suffolk king or Essex Man?

A NEW study of the Sutton Hoo ship burial, the most spectacular ancient tomb discovered in Britain, suggests historians have got the identity of the dead man completely wrong.

Far from being a seventh-century East Anglian ruler, latest research suggests he was king of the wealthier and flashier East Saxons to the south — in fact not so much a dour Suffolk warlord as the first Essex Man.

The research — similar, in effect, to raising doubts over Tutankamun's tomb in Egypt — has split the archaeological community, with senior figures expressing either

extravagant praise or lofty dismissal. "The most interesting single paper on Sutton Hoo for 50 years," said Martin Biddle, Professor of Medieval Archaeology at Oxford. It had broken the mould of thinking on the subject.

Not so, said Martin Carver, Professor of Archaeology at York, who has recently completed an eight-year excavation at Sutton Hoo backed by the British Museum. He said the study was "contrived" and its reasoning weak.

Dr Rupert Bruce-Mitford, a former Keeper at the British Museum, and author of the definitive, four-volume

by Simon Denison

publication of the original excavations, was equally dismissive. "[The study] made absolutely no impact on my thinking. One calls Sutton Hoo East Anglian because that's where the damn stuff was found," he said.

In the orthodox view, the early seventh-century tomb, discovered at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk in 1939, belonged to the East Anglian king, Raedwald. He must have been a local king, the argument ran, and the site was known to have been part of East Anglia in the second half of the cen-

tury. Raedwald seemed to fit the bill because he embraced Christian and pagan beliefs. The grave, an extravagantly pagan burial inside a long-boat packed with gold and silver treasure and regalia, included a number of items with Christian insignia.

But the new study, written by Dr Mike Parker Pearson of Sheffield University, argues that it was Saebert, a king of the East Saxons who died in about AD 617.

Based on new evidence that the Sutton Hoo region had a different administrative system from the rest of Suffolk in the early seventh century, Dr Parker Pearson says that

it then formed part of the Saxon kingdom in Essex.

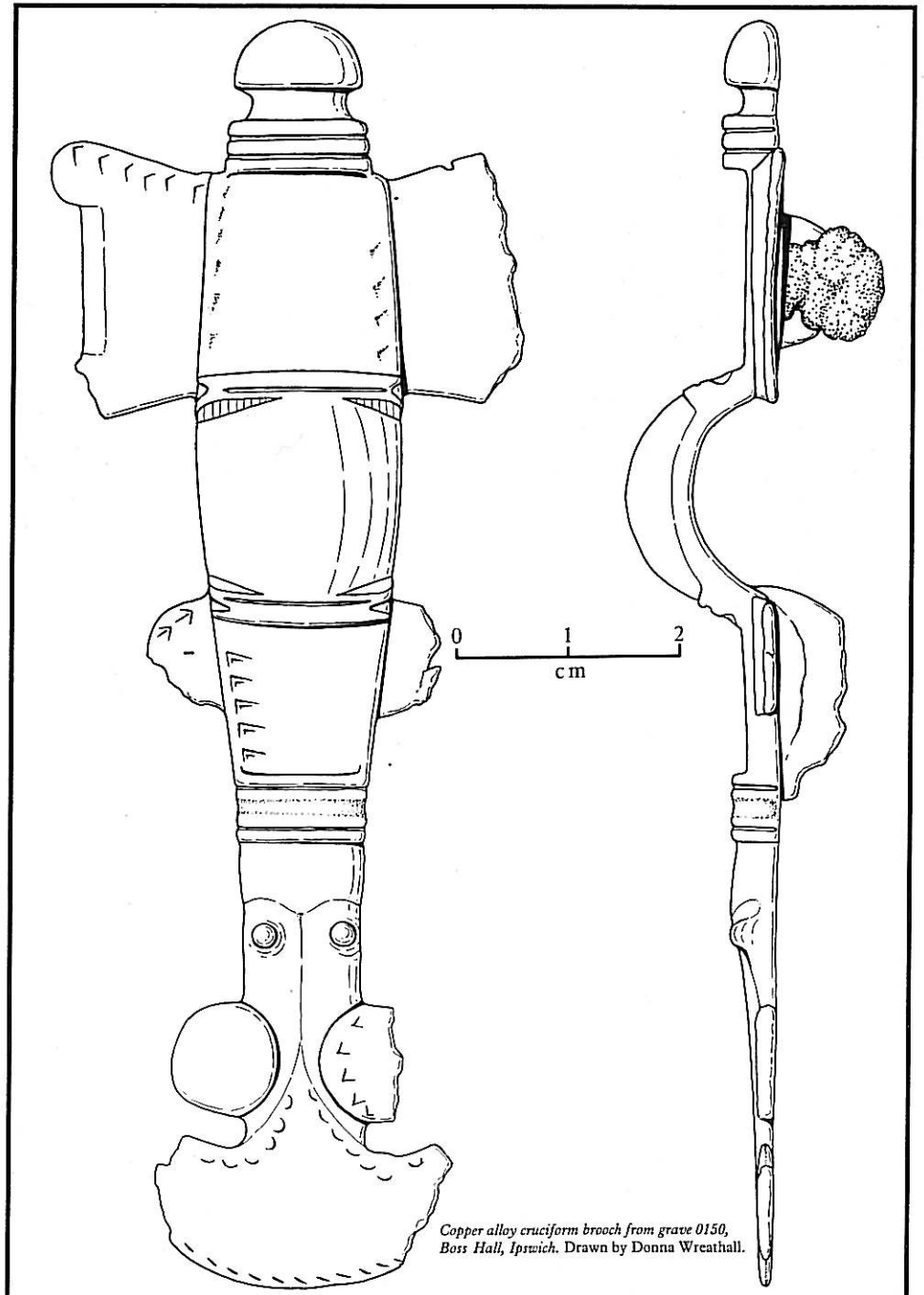
"It only became East Anglian later, some time in the mid-century, perhaps given away by the East Saxon king as a dowry," he said.

King Saebert was a Christian who had three pagan sons. That would explain, Dr Parker Pearson says, the three sets of spears and other grave goods found in the ship — funeral gifts from each son — and the dual pagan-Christian burial.

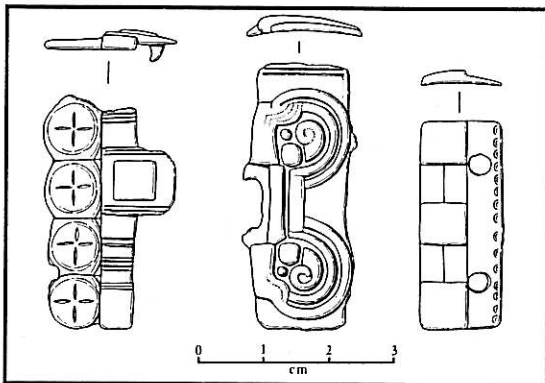
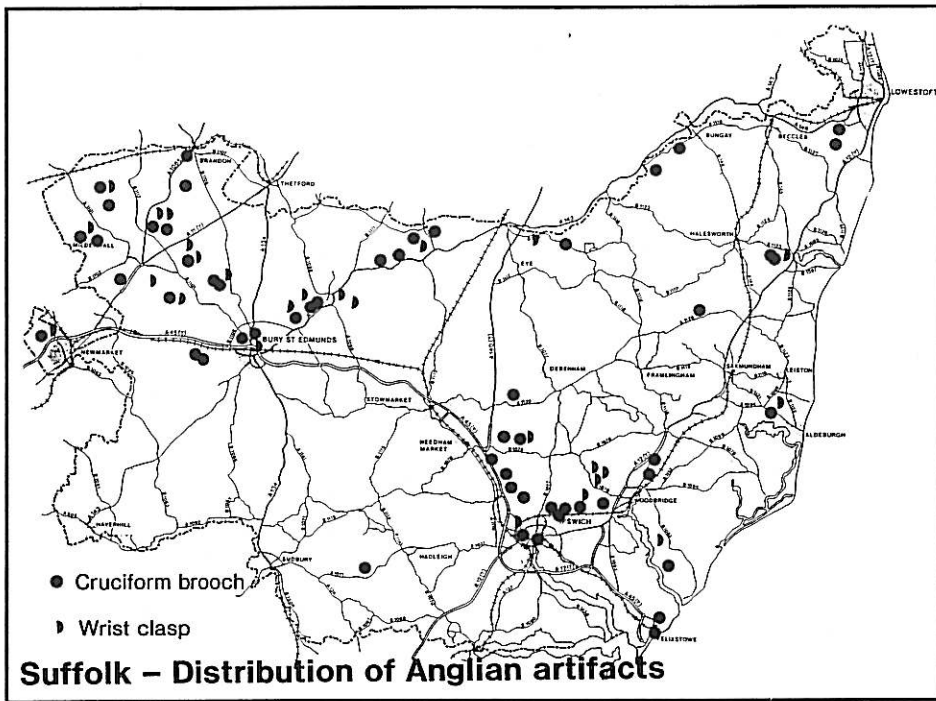
Some of the mundane finds — types of clay bottles, shoe buckles and spears — were rare in East Anglia but common in the Saxon south-east.

Members of the Society will probably have read with interest the article on the front page of the Sunday Telegraph of 4th October which drew on recent research by Dr Michael Parker-Pearson of Sheffield University, that brings into question the identity and ethnic affiliations of the individual whose passing was so lavishly marked by the contents of Mound 1 at Sutton Hoo. While the conventional view has always been that Sutton Hoo is the burial ground of members of East Anglia's ruling class in the early to mid seventh century, the new theory suggests that it is in fact East Saxon royalty who are commemorated here. Hence the newspaper headline "Sutton who? Suffolk King or Essex man!"

While the research paper on which this theory is based has not, as yet, been published it has been widely circulated for comment. Following the Sunday Telegraph article, therefore, some public comment appears appropriate in answer to the new theory recently put forward in the media about Sutton Hoo. Taken down to its essential framework the new view appears to challenge the site's East Anglian affinity on two basic grounds. One of these is the questioning of the traditional view which sees Sutton Hoo as being inside the area which can be seen as "Anglian" through the distribution of known findspots of Anglian artefacts, in particular jewellery. Items of jewellery such as cruciform brooches and wrist clasps being two classes of artefact which are recognised by academics as being definitely Anglian in character. In Suffolk these Anglian type objects are found in relatively large numbers as far south as the River Gipping, therefore placing Sutton Hoo well within an area that is markedly Anglian in character in the late fifth to early seventh century period. There is no convincing archaeological argument which can push the southern limit of the Anglian area in Suffolk further north and it certainly cannot be drawn from Aldeburgh to Sudbury in order to place Sutton Hoo in a "border zone". Artefacts which can be seen as Saxon in character and which therefore might show the limits of the Kingdom of the East Saxons are not found in any numbers until one looks well to the south of the River Stour. This river being the traditional boundary between East Anglia and Essex.



Copper alloy cruciform brooch from grave 0150, Boss Hall, Ipswich. Drawn by Donna Wreathall.

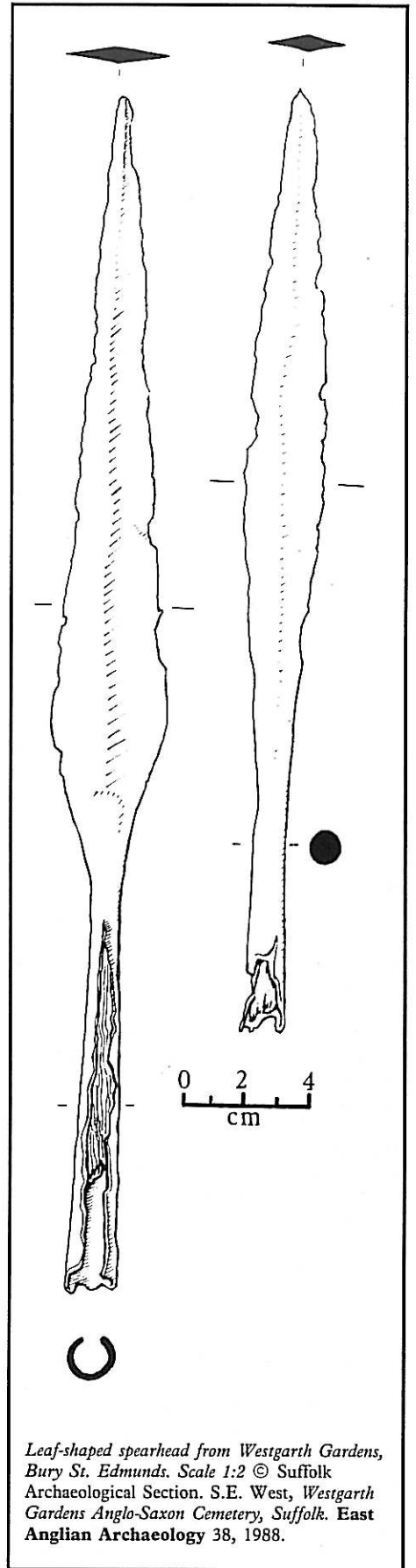


Three copper alloy wrist clasps from Coddenham, Suffolk. Drawn by Donna Wreathall.

The second pillar upon which the new view of Sutton Hoo appears to rest concerns certain aspects of the cemetery itself. In particular three characteristics of Sutton Hoo and the magnificent assemblage from Mound 1 are highlighted as being more Saxon than Anglian in form. These characteristics are the presence of small barrows or mounds in cemeteries of fifth to seventh century date, the presence of "Saxon" type leaf-shaped spearheads in Mound 1, (the finding of three spearheads of a certain type in Mound 1 possibly indicating their deposition by three sons), and the presence of exotic luxury items as well as unmounted gold Merovingian coins in Mound 1. Taking these "Saxon" characteristics in turn it can be seen that recently published archaeological reports in particular contradict the view that they can be seen as Saxon rather than general Anglo-Saxon traits. Small barrows are known from a high proportion of East Anglian cemeteries excavated under controlled methods in recent years. Apart from Spong Hill, they are known from Morning Thorpe in Norfolk and from Snape, The Buttermarket (Ipswich) and Boss Hall in Suffolk. Snape in particular having numerous small barrows as well as the famous ship burial discovered in the nineteenth century and flat cremation and inhumation graves, many of these being of marked Anglian type. Leaf shaped spearheads are, admittedly, less common in East Anglia than other types. However they are known from Morning Thorpe, Spong Hill, Swaffham, Westgarth Gardens and Bergh Apton. It is also worth noting at this point that

one male grave at Boss Hall, Ipswich, contained three spearheads. Perhaps this individual, again in a strongly Anglian cemetery, also had three sons or nephews who deposited one each? Lastly, luxury items, such as glass vessels and bronze coptic vessels are known from various sites in East Anglia, and unmounted gold Merovingian coins are known from Barham, Coddenham and Great Oakley in Suffolk as well as near Caister by Norwich in Norfolk.

Therefore while Mound 1 at Sutton Hoo may show some traits in common with the wealthy Saxon graves of south east England these traits may also be seen across the kingdom of East Anglia on other sites. Sutton Hoo can also be seen to lie within an area that is strongly Anglian in character. The latter view having been strongly reinforced by numerous, recently published finds. The primary funerary rite in Mounds 1 and 2 at Sutton Hoo that can be archaeologically observed, that is ship burial, is only paralleled at Snape, another East Anglian cemetery. While it is always useful to challenge the accepted orthodoxy in order to bring about new insight and question our preconceptions about the past, in this case the traditional view can hold its ground on the basis of published archaeological information. Perhaps the final word should go to Dr Rupert Bruce-Mitford, author of the definitive British Museum publication on the 1939 excavation, who is quoted in the same newspaper article on 4th October as saying, "One calls Sutton Hoo East Anglian because that's where the damn stuff was found."



Leaf-shaped spearhead from Westgarth Gardens, Bury St. Edmunds. Scale 1:2 © Suffolk Archaeological Section. S.E. West, *Westgarth Gardens Anglo-Saxon Cemetery, Suffolk. East Anglian Archaeology* 38, 1988.

John Newman is the County Archaeological Section's Rural Field Officer, and has been working in Suffolk for eleven years. He was responsible for the South East Suffolk Survey, field walking large areas of land around the Deben valley as part of the Sutton Hoo Research Project. He is also a Committee member of the Sutton Hoo Society.

'VOLUNTEERED'

by Faith Jerromes

Jenny, who has great powers of persuasion, suggested I should write a piece for *Saxon*, and listening to her it did not seem such a difficult task. How wrong one can be. Here goes...

In 1978 my husband, Roy, became a volunteer on a site at Coleshill in Warwickshire just two miles from where we live. In charge of this Roman Temple excavation was Martin Carver of Birmingham University, also on site were Jenny (the persuader), Madeleine, Annette and Liz. Later I would meet them all again at Sutton Hoo. Though this was Roy's first introduction to field archaeology, he was very quickly 'hooked' and spent most evenings and weekends on site. I had always been interested in history and enjoyed wandering around old churches and castles, but had no real knowledge of archaeology. One day Roy informed me (as I had the next weekend free), that he would take me to visit the site, adding 'you don't mind doing a bit of pot washing, do you? It's quite easy if you do exactly as you're shown'. Obviously, I had been 'volunteered'.

Arriving on site, Roy, eager to get to his digging, steered me to the Finds caravan. The pieces of pottery and brooches I found fascinating, here were things I could relate to. The fastenings on the brooches were similar to that on a brooch I had inherited from my grandmother. The pottery too, reminded me of some unglazed victorian ware. Many people find pot washing boring, but to me, each piece raised so many questions. What was it used for? Who used it? What sort of food had been cooked in it? That week I searched the local library for books on Roman pottery and food.

After Martin and the students left the site at Coleshill, Roy went to dig on a Romano-British site at Wall near Lichfield. There I tried my hand at digging, and maybe if I had been shown by someone other than Roy, I might, in time, have become quite proficient. It is often considered a drastic measure for husbands to teach wives to drive, and the same applied to us where digging was concerned. It was getting very near to a duel to the death (or divorce) with trowels at twenty paces, when the site directors Frank and Nancy Ball must have guessed that all was not well between us, and tactfully suggested that when I next visited Wall, I could wash pot instead. I was pleased when in later years Roy admitted that he had met diggers worse than me, but he spoilt it by adding 'so you can tell how bad they were!'

Frank and Nancy Ball also worked for Dr Graham Webster on the Macellum site at Wroxeter, and in 1980 Roy was offered the chance to go and dig there. When he rang me after his first day, I was well aware that the next year, we would be going to Wroxeter for our holiday. We went there for the next five years, and I learnt to identify — and reconstruct — the pottery I washed. It's strange, I've always hated jig-saws yet I love sticking pot together. As the site was coming to a close, I helped catalogue the many site photographs, and these, along with Graham Webster's patient explanations helped me understand what it may have looked like in Roman times.

We went to Sutton Hoo in 1987, after meeting up with Martin again. I was rather worried

about working at this Anglo-Saxon cemetery as the only thing I knew about was Roman pottery. One thing I had learnt about sites is that they carry no passengers, everyone must work. But though I started off in Finds, it soon became apparent that help was needed elsewhere. The canteen at that time was a large converted static caravan, and as it was used by a lot of people, it constantly needed cleaning. Under the sink was a breeding ground for mosquitoes, but Pete (the amazing) Berry soon fixed that.

The next year we moved to our luxurious new canteen. I assure you it was sheer luxury after the caravan. I assisted Jenny by supervising the lunches and helping to cook the evening meals, also by nagging the poor students on kitchen duty. A lot of them found life in the kitchen as hectic and hard as on site, but the majority rolled up their sleeves and got on with it. Some quite enjoyed it, and would offer to help as soon as they came off site.

I learnt about the site itself and had the best of teachers. Martin, Madeleine, Jenny, Nigel, Angela and Andy would explain to me what was happening on site. Cathy showed me how to understand section drawings. Linda made sure I saw any interesting finds. When walking distances became difficult for me, Annette and Justin drove me round on a site tour. Another experience was watching the BBC team at work, and being able to ask that most likeable man, the producer Ray Sutcliffe, the whys and wherefores of it all. I never missed out on anything by working in the kitchen.

Some of the same people came back to dig each year at Sutton Hoo, as we did, so it was very much like going home. Knowing them all so well made it easy to ask questions about anything to do with the site, and about other things too (nosy old woman, that's me). There were times when I had to be quite bossy, like

trying to make Maddy stand still long enough to drink her coffee, or Jenny, when she had to be almost nailed to her chair to eat lunch. Making sure that Martin, Nigel and others got something to eat when they were late coming off site was another important duty. Hard work didn't stop when the sun went down. Many, especially supervisors, went on working until quite late. When they were not working however, they knew how to enjoy life to the full.

There were opportunities to learn from our foreign friends. Cooking a real Italian meal proved at times to be an intoxicating experience, and we learnt a little about life behind the Iron Curtain from our Czech students, as they showed us how to make potato dumplings. Inviting two Americans to try a real old-fashioned (terribly fattening) English breakfast, two surprising things happened. Firstly, one very likeable and normally dependable young man (a confirmed vegetarian) was tempted and did fall. Shock! Horror! He ate two sausages. Secondly, we discovered that one among our number (not an American) eats marmalade on fried bread! Needless to say, love and loyalty forbid me to name these people.

Yes, I learnt much from Sutton Hoo. Being connected with a site which had been a burial place so long ago was naturally very interesting and exciting. But from a purely personal point of view, I am grateful for being allowed to work and play with some very special people there.

Roy and Faith Jerromes have contributed much voluntary labour to archaeology over the years; but even more than their work, it is their company which is invaluable. Any site team with them in it will be in good spirits, and they are held in great affection by many people.



Faith is second on the left, bottom row and Roy is third in on the right, back row with a beard and spectacles.

Photo taken during the Easter season 1991 by Nigel MacBeth.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 1992

by Robert Simper

All things considered the Sutton Hoo Society has had a good and successful year. This was the first summer that there was no excavation taking place on the site for visitors to see. Another influencing factor has been the recession which has hit tourism in Suffolk. In spite of this visitors have still come to Sutton Hoo for guided tours in almost the same numbers. In fact after eight years people expect to go on to the site for tours.

The Society's activities have previously centred on the excavations. Now these have stopped, at least for the time being, the Society has looked for alternative attractions for members. In February twenty-three members went to the British Museum, in March John Newman lectured to us on Anglo-Saxon Suffolk

and the Boss Hall cemetery, and in June we visited the excavations at Snape.

In September the Society was off again on another coach outing, this time around sites in Essex, including the site of the Battle of Maldon and St. Peter's Chapel out on the lonely marshes overlooking the River Blackwater. Next year we plan to visit sites elsewhere, possibly in Norfolk. Although these visits do not attract so many members as the site Open Days, it was noticeable that different members came to each outing, so we were providing something for everybody.

The Society's main interest must remain Sutton Hoo and the world it belonged to. The remaking of Mound 2 has fascinated visitors and shown a properly displayed site could be of great interest to the public. The site and the access to it remains in private ownership, and the

Society naturally wishes to work closely with the landowners to protect their interests, but at the same time tell the visitors this fascinating story of this unique place. To continue to achieve this in the future will of course need very close co-operation between all parties so that there will be no misunderstandings.

In the past many members have contributed towards raising funds for the site and the excavations, usually by giving up their spare time to give guided tours and helping with many other background activities. The plans for the future of the site are very much at a fermenting stage and constantly change. In order to safeguard the Society's efforts we must endeavour to work with all the many interests at Sutton Hoo to make certain that the good work is continued.

SOCIETY EVENTS

FIELD EXCURSION TO ESSEX

On Sunday 13 September just over twenty Society members set out for Essex, to visit four historical sites, the first of which was the small Norman church at Copford. We looked first at the exterior features, and then moved inside to see the twelfth-century paintings which decorate the interior walls of the church. The paintings were in the process of restoration, and so we were able to see them without the layers of Victorian renovation. Although much later than Sutton Hoo, their relevance lies in the artistic style, closely paralleling the illustrations of saints and the decorative borders found in the early Anglo-Saxon manuscripts from Northumbria. After Copford, the weather deteriorated, but a few hardy souls visited the splendid motte and bailey castle at Pleshey, and fortified by lunch we pressed on to Maldon, where a muddy walk

along the river wall brought us to the site of the confrontation in 991AD between the men of Essex and the Northmen. Armed with copies of the poem 'The Battle of Maldon' we were able to envisage the event in which the East Saxons were eventually defeated. From Maldon we drove through the ancient landscape of the Dengie peninsula, with the coach driver especially feeling the full effect of the (?)Iron-Age field-system! Eventually we reached the extreme edge of the peninsula, where, when the rain stopped, we walked to the small church of St. Peter-on-the-Wall. The building, which post-dates Sutton Hoo by only a matter of 30 years, exactly echoed the form and dimensions of that at Copford. However its isolated position on the site of the former Saxon-Shore fort on the very edge of the marshes, was a stark contrast.

Despite the appalling weather the trip was most successful, and especial thanks go to

Rosemary Hoppitt and Jenny Glazebrook for planning and researching the trip, and to Andrew Lovejoy for organising transport.

VISIT TO SNAPE

In June members were shown round the excavation at Snape which, as at Sutton Hoo, was in its final season. Part of the plan for the season was to locate what had been the largest tumulus of the group, now ploughed away completely, despite having been a scheduled monument. The remains of a possible robber pit were found, which may have marked its location, but no firm evidence was uncovered. The ring-ditches of four smaller ploughed-out mounds were found, and of the six inhumation graves found during the season, one contained a shield boss and spear, and in another there were pieces of a coarse textile. Analysis is still awaited, but this may have been a rug or a cloak.



Sutton Hoo Society members gathering as the tide recedes at the probable site of the causeway linking the mainland with Northey Island (in the distance), the site of the confrontation which led to the Battle of Maldon in 991AD. Photograph: Rosemary Hoppitt.

SALES

★ SPECIAL OFFER ★ SPECIAL OFFER ★

The Boydell Press are offering Society members the chance to save £££s off two new publications:

The Age of Sutton Hoo by Martin Carver (special price to members £35, usual retail price £49.50)

The Origins of Beowulf and the pre-Viking Kingdom of East Anglia by Sam Newton (special price to members £20, usual retail price £29.50)

See enclosed leaflet for details, or contact the Boydell Press direct if your leaflet is missing: Boydell and Brewer, PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF.

HURRY... Offer closes 31 December 1992

BULLETIN No 8/9 DELAYED BY EXTENDED FINAL SEASON — DUE OUT SPRING 1993... (honestly!). Interim reports on the 1990 and 1991 excavation seasons included. You can obtain your copy by contacting Madeleine Hummler at the Department of

Archaeology, University of York (address below).

SNAPE ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY

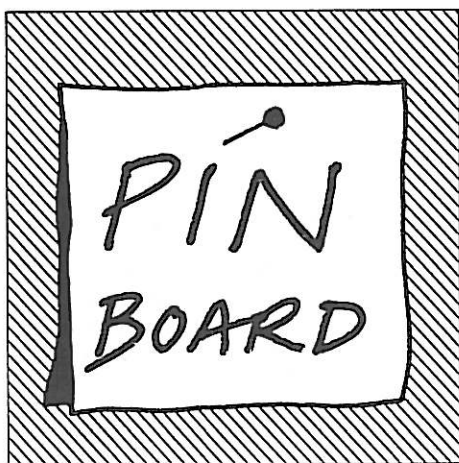
For information and souvenirs contact the Director of the recent excavations: William Filmer-Sankey, 71 Southfield Road, Oxford OX4 1NY.

SUTTON HOO SLIDE PACKS

Slides of the treasures and current excavations are available in packs of 24. These popular packs are selling fast—order yours now! Details and order forms available from Nigel MacBeth, 30 St Mary's Road, Creeting St Mary, Ipswich IP6 8LZ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sutton Hoo Research Project is now based at the Department of Archaeology, University of York (full address below), and all communications should be sent to that address.



DIARY

SUTTON HOO SOCIETY AGM

The next **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **Friday 8 January 1993 at 7.30pm**, in the **Sixth Form Centre at Woodbridge School** (see location map). Martin Carver will speak about the early kingdoms of Dark Age Europe, and there will be an opportunity to review proposals for the future management of the Sutton Hoo site.

COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

Nominations for new Committee members should be sent to the Chairman of the Sutton Hoo Society (address below). Nominees should be members, willing to stand for election, and able to attend three or four meetings a year. Please contact any committee member if you are interested in standing.

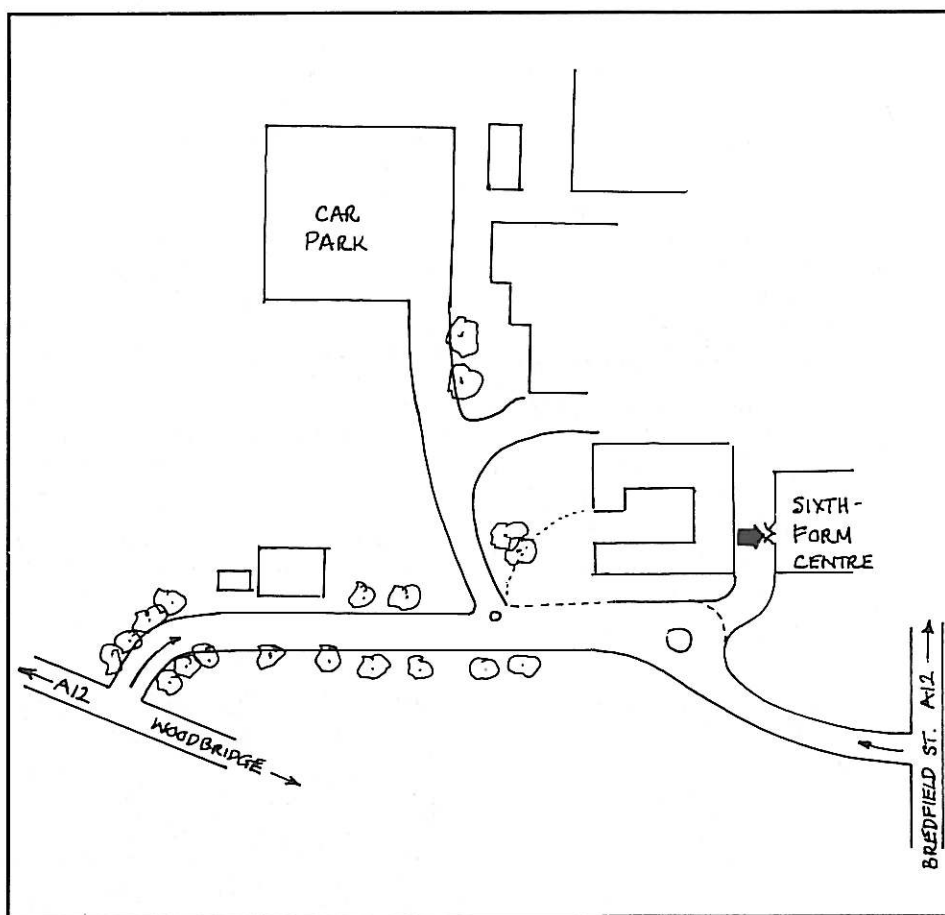
SPRING LECTURE

A lecture is being planned for Society Members and friends (speaker and date to be confirmed early in the new year). The lecture will take place on a Wednesday evening in March, at St John's Hall, Woodbridge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Three cheers for the Society's guides and helpers, who continued to provide guided tours for visitors to Sutton Hoo during last summer. There is still considerable public interest in the site, and it is good to know that representatives of the Society provide a welcome for people who visit.

General surveillance and maintenance of the site have been put into the capable hands of Peter Berry, who has been hard at work throughout the summer. He has the best interests of the monument at heart, and his loyalty and hard work deserve our warmest thanks.



Contact Addresses:

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The Sutton Hoo Society, c/o NatWest Bank plc, Cumberland Street, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 1JD

Who's Who — Sutton Hoo Society Committee Members

Chairman: Robert Simper Hon. Secretary: Larry Gatter Hon. Treasurer: Colin Moore
Membership and Site Guides Secretary: Andrew Lovejoy Research Director: Martin Carver Publicity: John Le Mare Publications: Rosemary Hoppitt
Sue Banyard Jenny Glazebrook Lord Lewin Malcolm Miles John Newman Sam Newton Pearl Simper Mike Weaver

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