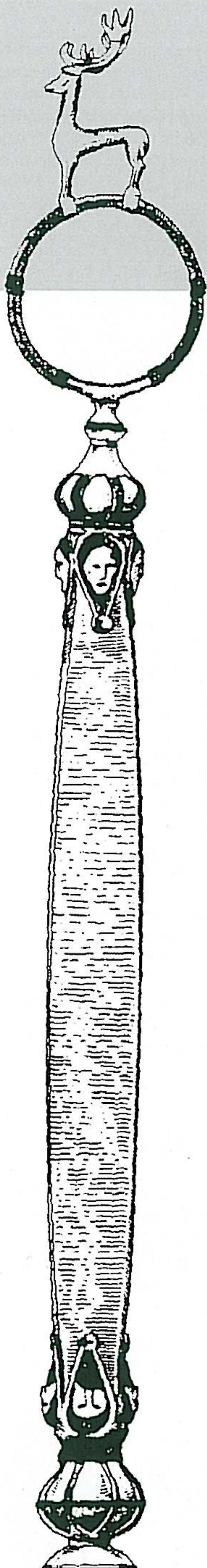
Saxon

Newsletter of the Sutton Hoo Society No. 49 / July 2009



Nighthawks and Nighthawking, *the new national report into illegal metal detecting (© Oxford Archaeology)*

Nighthawks at Rendlesham

Illegal night time raids by thieves with metal detectors have been robbing fields at Rendlesham, near the probable site of Redwald's hall. Urgent surveys organised by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and funded by the Sutton Hoo Society have recently turned up Saxon finds and features. One of the Archaeological Officers, JUDE PLOUVIEZ, summarises and updates the research she described to the Society's AGM in February.

Landowners do not naturally welcome intrusions on their land, fearing for their crops, stock, game, fences or buildings. But when their security has already been breached by illicit treasure-hunters, an organised investigation that collects the finds and protects the features is the best defence.

This was the suggestion from the County Council Archaeological Service when they were consulted by Sir Michael Bunbury, the owner of the Naunton Hall estate at Rendlesham last year. As they put together a proposal for a survey project, they learned that at least one field beyond the original project area was also being seriously damaged by illegal metal detecting.

Rendlesham has always been a focus of attention because Bede referred to 'the king's country-seat of Rendlesham, that is, Rendil's House' (*Ecclesiastical History* III.22). A complete Anglo-Saxon urn turned up on glebe land at How (or Haw) Hill in 1837. Fieldwalking survey and excavation on the footprint of a new barn in 1982, by Tom Loader and Keith Wade for the county unit, found sherds of Ipswich Ware, a copper alloy binding

above: Copper-alloy harness mount, 39mm long, 6th century
right: Coin weight, 8mm wide, with an 'H' symbol on the face, which represents an equivalent to 8 silver siliquae or one-third of a gold solidus in the Byzantine monetary system
far right: Top part of a copper-alloy girdle hanger, 6th century

strip from a wooden bucket and middle and late Saxon and medieval ditches.

Sir Michael agreed to a new survey, though seasonal crops were going to make access difficult. As soon as the Sutton Hoo Society had pledged funding, the fieldwork went ahead early last autumn, with the raided field included.

Designed to integrate the 1982 results, the survey involves plotting aerial photographs, a topographical survey, magnetometry, and metal detecting. The cropmark evidence provided by Rog Palmer of Air Photo Services of Cambridge last August was useful but not dramatic. His report helps plot the visible features including two ring ditches accurately, but it does not add greatly to what was already known.

The on-site geophysics survey, carried out by LP Archaeology between 29 September and 3 October 2008, was more promising. Two fields were in a suitable condition for magnetometry survey: the large field north-west of the church and a pasture north of Naunton Hall. Although magnetometry is not always successful on sandy soils, both fields revealed a series of linear features, some of which may be relatively recent field boundaries. However, the topography dictates some of the layout of the area, so both ancient and modern boundaries may be on similar alignments, and this is confirmed by the orientation of the middle Saxon ditches excavated in 1982 at Naunton Hall.

On the large field, one of the ring ditches visible as cropmarks shows clearly in the magnetometry plot. It intersects with a ditch enclosing a roughly D-shaped area. Within this enclosure the second ring ditch is less distinct, but is adjacent to a small oval enclosure. This group is similar to features elsewhere of prehistoric date, but an interesting comparison to the D-shaped enclosure is the one excavated at Whitehouse in north Ipswich in 1995. (For a summary and plan see the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* 38, part 4 [1996] 476–8.) The 1982 survey had recorded hand-made and middle and late Saxon pottery scattered across the field, though few finds came from within the enclosure.

Archaeologists hoped to survey the field that had been raided illegally, and which lay beyond the survey area originally intended, as a quick walk on it while under a crop of onions produced several handmade Anglo-Saxon pottery sherds; but access proved impossible for magnetometry

as it had just been ploughed. It was surveyed by metal detector but *in the two days between cultivation and survey, the field was looted again by the nighthawks.* After this, the Suffolk unit's detectorists were so keen to thwart the thieves that they worked on for a couple of days unpaid on the field north of the church, which was outside the budget for this year.

Nighthawking is defined as 'the illegal search for and removal of antiquities from the ground using metal detectors, without the permission of the landowners, or on prohibited land such as Scheduled Monuments. Nighthawking is therefore theft.' This is a long-standing problem, and the current scale of it was revealed in January this year in a survey by Oxford Archaeology for English Heritage. Between 1995 and 2008, 240 sites were reported as affected, 88 of them Scheduled Monuments, though this is probably only a fraction of the actual total. Suffolk was identified as one of the counties most seriously affected.

What has been lost from the field at Rendlesham is suggested by the finds that were recovered by the survey, such as a number of 6th-century copper-alloy items which Helen Geake has helped identify. They include an ornate harness mount, part of a girdle hanger and a cruciform brooch. There was also a copper-alloy coin weight of Byzantine type, probably for testing gold coins (tremisses). Although many of the finds were Anglo-Saxon, it was not clear whether they were from burials or settlement activity. A later brooch — an 'ansate' (handle-shaped) type, which is found on 8th- or 9th-century settlements — was found on the field near the church.

Roman coins include a silver denarius of Trajan (AD 97–117) and several 4th-century bronze nummi. Much less common was a Merovingian tremissis of the first half of the 7th century. Only about twelve have been found in Suffolk — not counting the thirty-seven in the purse from mound 1 at Sutton Hoo. There were also two 8th-century silver sceats (below).

March was due to see the end of the surveys, and April–May the writing of the final report. Following the AGM, further detecting was done as planned on the area of the magnetometry survey — *again the field was looted overnight*, but more Anglo-Saxon coins and objects were found over a wide area, corresponding to the scatter of pottery found in 1982. A few weeks later, following conversations between Sir Michael Bunbury and the local police about the importance of the site and the extent of the problems, a group of five men were arrested after being spotted at night nearby with metal detectors.

The survey results confirm that there is an exceptional Anglo-Saxon settlement here, and that it was flourishing at the time of Redwald. The objects in the ploughsoil show that there has been considerable plough damage to the archaeology and that the surviving artefacts are being stolen — a good reason to continue the metal detecting survey, to forestall 'the theft by a few of the heritage of the many'. The magnetometry has identified surviving archaeological features — though not as yet the postholes of any large timber halls that might be 'Rendil's House' — and could usefully be extended onto the other fields producing Anglo-Saxon finds, to get a fuller correlation between the results. Ultimately only excavation can date the features, but the survey is beginning to show where limited excavation might be targeted effectively.

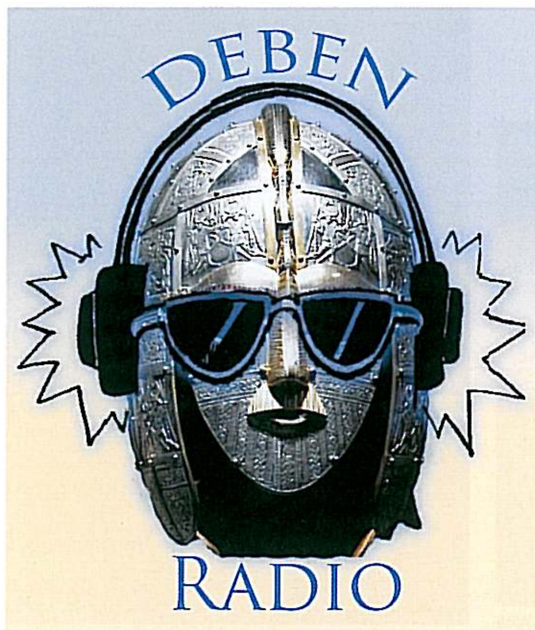
all photos on this page (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service)

The Nighthawking Survey and the full report, *Nighthawks and Nighthawking*, can be downloaded from the Historic Environment Local Management (HELM) website www.helm.org.uk/nighthawking

Gold Merovingian tremissis, obverse BELLOMO, reverse +AIDO[ ]O, from Beaumont, diameter 13.6mm, c. first half of 7th century

Silver sceat Series L type 12, obverse shows a diademed bust to right, CNONN, reverse a standing figure, diameter 12.4mm. c.AD 730

Silver sceat Series C2, obverse Taepa, reverse TOTII in a beaded standard, diameter 12mm, c. AD 700–710



Deben Radio interviews Chris Hudson and Tom Plunkett

Raedwald with shades and headphones is the logo of Deben Radio, a new volunteer-run internet radio station for the Woodbridge area.

Cliff Hoppitt tells us that Rosemary Hoppitt (some relation, and our sometime chairman) has been interviewing Chris Hudson (right), the designer of both the main display in the Sutton Hoo visitor centre and also the summer exhibition, *Welcome to the Feast!* You can listen to Chris talking about his design work at Sutton Hoo and further afield in this fascinating thirty-minute interview by going to www.DebenRadio.co.uk and looking in the 'Listen Again, all — Local History' section.

There you will also find a sixty-nine minute interview by Robin Pooley with Dr Steven (Tom) Plunkett, creator in the 1990s of the Anglo-Saxon gallery in Ipswich Museum, writer of the Sutton Hoo visitor centre exhibition texts, and author of *Suffolk in Anglo-Saxon Times* (Tempus, 2005) www.oxbowbooks.com/bookinfo.cfm/ID/45546

Chris Hudson (Rosemary Hoppitt)

Romans and Saxons on the River Alde

The Aldeburgh and District Local History Society is planning to discover more about Saxon and Roman settlement in the valley of the Rivers Alde and Ore, using field-walking, metal detecting, excavation, and research from books and maps. ADLHS chairman, RICHARD NEWMAN, outlined his thinking in the Sutton Hoo Society's Spring Lecture on 25 March.

The rivers of East Suffolk — the Orwell, the Deben and the Alde — flow through light, easily workable, sandy soils and provide transport routes, freshwater from tributaries and springs, salt and a year-round supply of fish, shellfish and wildfowl.

Each of them attracted a Roman or Saxon settlement. On the Orwell, Ipswich was a major Saxon town and trading centre; the Deben had the probable hall and burial site of Saxon king Raedwald at Rendlesham and Sutton Hoo respectively; on the Alde, Snape had another Saxon ship burial on a site with five hundred interments; and on the Blyth, Wenhaston probably had a substantial Roman settlement.

Yet apart from these sites, we know little about what was really going on here in Roman and Saxon times, though we do have a few indications. At the time of the Roman invasion in AD 43, the Alde could possibly have formed the tribal boundary between the Iceni and their southern neighbours, the Trinovantes, though you have to remember that the Alde today is a very different river to the one the Romans and Saxons knew. The tidal part of the river is now virtually a canal, held in place by man-made banks that are medieval or post-medieval. Before they were built, the area covered by the river would have been considerable.

It is impossible to know exactly what area was covered 2,000 years ago, due to different sea levels and sedimentation of some of the tributaries, but a recent map, produced by Posford Duvivier, to show potential areas of modern flooding if the river walls were lost, is very revealing. It probably gives a reasonable impression of the area covered by water or marsh in Roman and Saxon times and gives some indication as to where we might expect to find evidence of habitation and activity, and just as importantly where evidence is unlikely to be found.

Although there are three tributaries of the Alde, the main river rises near Rendham and meanders through the Suffolk countryside until it crosses the A12 at Sratford St Andrew. The name Stratford suggests Roman origins and just to the east of it, on the high ground by Farnham parish church, lay a Roman villa. Further down the river at Blaxhall, the OS map shows the site of a Roman bath structure.

At Snape the Alde becomes tidal, as it certainly was in Roman and Saxon times. Just below Snape is Iken, which is known to have had a similar name in Saxon times, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for the year 654 mentions that 'Botulf begins his minster to build at Iken Hoo'.

Whether the original church was built on its present site, or half a mile away on Yarn Hill is not known, but during his excavations in 1977, Dr Stanley West found within the fabric of the present church the lower part of a carved cross, dating from the 9th or early 10th century. Local myth has it that during the 19th century a gamekeeper found a similar piece, perhaps the top half of the same cross, whilst digging for his dog in a rabbit burrow on Yarn Hill.

In the Iken area, seven Red Hills have been recorded: four on the southern bank and three on the northern bank. Red Hills are in effect the slag heaps from the production of salt from sea water, and they generally date from the Iron Age to mid-Roman period, although there is evidence that the practice continued until at least the middle ages.

Right opposite Iken Church, on the north bank of the river, one of these Red Hills was surveyed last year by Suffolk County archaeologists. It was undoubtedly Roman, judging by the associated pottery. It is particularly interesting that the river level must then have been lower than today, otherwise the Roman fire — the charcoal from which still remains *in situ* — would have been swamped.

The next Roman feature is at Barbers Point. It is a promontory in the river that stands some four to five feet higher than the surrounding land. It has been known as a Roman site since 1907, when the Aldeburgh Literary Society conducted a dig at the site, finding Roman pottery together with a seal box and a silver bodkin that may be Saxon.

A geophysics survey conducted in 2003 showed that there was a walled or ditched enclosure encompassing about a tenth of an acre, over half of which has been lost to the river through erosion.

The site was further excavated in 2004, under the guidance of Suffolk County, by the Aldeburgh Local History Society, who also carried out topographical and environmental surveys. These showed that in the 1st and 2nd centuries the site was an island. Estimated sea level fluctuations suggested that the site probably became uninhabitable after the 3rd century, becoming accessible during the early Saxon period.

The finds included more than 2,500 sherds of mostly Roman pottery, but there was also a considerable amount of pottery from the middle and late Saxon period. Also found were over a thousand pieces of *briquetage* from salt workings, though why there was so much is not clear. We can hope to learn more from these sites in the next few years.

Recreating the Whetstone

A society-funded project to create a reconstruction of the Sutton Hoo whetstone has turned into a fascinating piece of experimental archaeology. Stone carver BRIAN ANSELL has been working closely with National Trust Archaeologist ANGUS WAINWRIGHT to learn the lessons embodied in an exceptionally hard piece of stone.

When the burial chamber display was created in the visitor centre at Sutton Hoo in 2002, budget dictated that many of the items would be approximate models rather than accurate facsimiles. Ever since, the National Trust has wanted to improve them.

The education programme has also grown and needs a proper handling collection to offer visitors. Any items in such a collection have to be as faithful as possible to the original and last autumn the Sutton Hoo Society agreed to fund the first one. The choice depended on trying to derive an object for future use from the subject of each year's special exhibition, beginning last year. Appropriately for the society, since we increasingly use the whetstone as our logo, this so-called 'sceptre' will be the first new reconstruction.

Like so much from mound 1, the whetstone is unique. Only two other large Anglo-Saxon 'hone stones' survive: one a chance find and the other from an Anglo-Saxon grave; one undecorated, the other with crude figures. Neither compares to the regal, ceremonial character of the Sutton Hoo whetstone.

It is emphatically a hone and not a sharpening stone: it is for whetting a very fine edge, not for getting it sharp in the first place. To sharpen a sword you would use a small stone, much coarser and more abrasive, such as is found more often on Anglo-Saxon sites. Using the Sutton Hoo whetstone would be completely impractical: it is too big.

After a geologist's report on the original, sourcing the stone for the replica took some time, even though the necessary greywacke is found in north-west Cumbria and south Scotland. (The name derives from *Grauwacke*, German for 'grey stone'.) As one visitor to Sutton Hoo described it, it is 'fossilised mud': a fine-grained carboniferous sedimentary rock with traces of minerals. A very close match was found in a quarry near Settle, and a block of it was donated by Tarmac. The first step was to split the piece into bars, because more than one reconstruction is needed. The first will be a trial piece, left unfinished to show the phases of the process. Then there will be a replica for the burial chamber as well as a spare.

The work itself is not challenging for a traditionally-trained stone sculptor, but it has turned into a fascinating piece of experimental archaeology. Brian Ansell is a stone carver with forty years experience who has worked on York Minster as well as at West Stow. He is skilled in Roman and medieval ways of carving and has been working on the project since early this year, sometimes in the visitor centre at Sutton Hoo.

Brian believes that the original maker was probably trained in the classical tradition, using particular skills and specific tools, such as compass, square and straight-edge. The gentle arc that defines the sides is part of a 16½ foot diameter circle, adding strength and creating a more attractive form by making it thicker in the middle. 'The arc is everything', says Brian, 'and it's all set out from the centre line. It's pure geometry.' In the raw bar state, the piece weighs ten pounds; the stone so dense that when iron strikes it, it rings out as though hitting an anvil. 'I was amazed. It is right at the limit of what my tools can cut. If I'd been given a piece of this stone forty years ago, I don't think I'd have bothered going on!' says Brian. A 5½ foot diameter diamond blade took hours to cut off the rough quarry face, but with practice you can split it in seconds, though it takes a Derbyshire Gritstone block to smooth it to a workable surface. 'There is no other way of doing this than the correct way — it's a very gentle art. It cannot be rushed. The material will not allow me to work any faster, it must be done thoughtfully and methodically.'

Brian Ansell at work (© National Trust)

detail of work in progress (Mike Argent)

Stone carving was not a familiar craft for 7th-century Anglo-Saxons. In East Anglia there was no stone and no stone carving for another hundred years, so the piece might be earlier, or made elsewhere, or by an itinerant stone carver. 'The commissioning process probably would not have changed much throughout history. The stone worker would have known in advance to source the stone, and he would certainly have needed a working drawing: every mason in history would have needed one in order to set out the work.'

In Brian's view, it is unlikely that anyone would bother working anything with such density unless it was meant to last for ever. On the other hand, since it was buried with Raedwald, it must be particular to him — perhaps as *braetwalda*, or high king — and not a general symbol of the office of king. The delicately-carved faces on it are individual, with different hair and beard styles, and might even be male and female. They could be idealised portraits of royal ancestors, or gods. 'We're out in the unknown because there are no other examples and perhaps there never were,' says Angus Wainwright, the National Trust Archaeologist for East Anglia, 'as even a fragment of a head would have been quickly spotted by an archaeologist.'

The metalwork, which is being recreated separately by David Roper, could possibly be a later addition. After all, there is no absolute proof that the ring and the stag (as used on Sutton Hoo Society documents) actually belong on the whetstone. 'But if not there, where?' asks Angus. 'Certainly not on the iron standard, as was originally thought.' If the whetstone was commissioned by Raedwald, it could possibly have been copied from the fine Saxon wood carving tradition, but of course its precursors would not have survived and a wood carver would probably not have had the skills or tools to carve such a hard stone.

All the work is being recorded by experimental archaeologists, so we can look forward to a full report as well as our reconstructions, which will be unveiled at the 'Sutton Hoo Through the Ages' weekend on 8–9 August.

Welcome to the Feast! — a heartwarming cry today, but a significant one in Anglo-Saxon times. The next four pages describe the rituals of the feast, their displays of wealth and power, the alliances and allegiances they forged and the buildings that witnessed them.

On this page LESLIE WEBSTER, President of the Society for Medieval Archaeology and late of the Department of Prehistory and Europe at the British Museum, introduces the exhibition she has curated at Sutton Hoo this summer. The eighth partnership between the National Trust and the British Museum, its theme is Food, Ceremony and Entertainment *in the Anglo-Saxon hall.*

The next three pages feature extracts from papers given at the SHS Conference in Woodbridge last October, Arts and Crafts in the Meadhall — the Roots of English Culture. *They describe the halls at Uppåkra, Gamla Uppsala and Eketorp in Sweden and Lejre in Denmark, as well as the role of music and verse, and the decline of the meadhall tradition.*

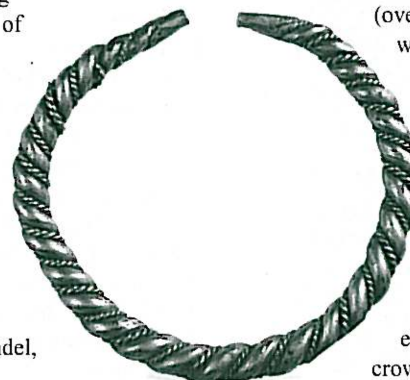
Welcome to the Feast!

above: Computer reconstruction of the hall at Lejre, Denmark, at dusk (Niels Valentin Dahl, Roskilde Museum)
below left: Selection of Sutton Hoo silver bowls and spoons (© Trustees of the British Museum)
below right: Viking gold arm-ring, Wendover, Bucks (© Trustees of the British Museum)

The theme of this year's exhibition leads us into a world of ceremonies and rituals which have significance far beyond mere drinking and eating; the Feast is a recurring image in Anglo-Saxon literature, which lies at the very heart of Anglo-Saxon ideas about loyalties, allegiances, wealth and power. It is also a theme that speaks directly to our own experience today. We're all familiar with celebrations involving eating and drinking, the rituals and ceremonies that accompany these, the special places they may be set in, and the feelings of fellowship and communality that such hospitality can engender. From wedding breakfasts and bar-mitzvahs, to regimental dinners and state banquets for visiting dignitaries, the Feast is part of our own lives as much as it was for Anglo-Saxons.

An atmospheric image of an Anglo-Saxon hall greets the visitor to the exhibition and leads us on into its role as the theatre in which the Feast was enacted. The great timber hall, described in *Beowulf*, and by Bede and other Anglo-Saxon authors, is now increasingly known from excavations in England and Europe (above, top). Up to eighty metres long, decorated with carvings and hung with bright textiles, a glowing fire in the central hearth, the hall is the ultimate icon of power and rule; here in his powerbase, the lord fed, sheltered and rewarded his warriors, who in return gave him unwavering loyalty. It was also the arena in which alliances were struck with rivals, through marriages and the exchange of treasure, and where ancient feuds could be resolved. As the stage for generous hospitality, gift-giving and other displays of wealth, of pledges of allegiance and the celebration of ancient heroic deeds, the hall also symbolized warmth, joy and safety in a cold, dark and dangerous world. This is the warm and welcoming hall that Bede evokes in a famous passage, where the pagan life is compared to the brief flight of a sparrow through the firelit hall where the king sits at his feast, from the bleak wintry gloom outside and back once more into the dark (*Ecclesiastical History*, II.13).

Treasure and gifting played a large part in this culture; Anglo-Saxon poetry tells us that a brave warrior or a faithful bard might be rewarded with gold rings, usually taken to mean collars and armlets, hence the frequent epithet given to famous rulers, 'ring-giver'(right); but such gifts of rings may also include the enigmatic rings attached to certain swords, symbols of the bond between a ruler and his warriors, or perhaps signs of special favour. Even grander rewards were said to have been presented at the Feast — to celebrate Beowulf's slaying of the monster Grendel, King Hrothgar gave him a gold neck-ring, a sword, a golden banner, an ornamented battle-standard, a helmet and mailcoat, along with eight horses with gold-sheeted bridles and fine saddles, which were led clattering into the hall.



Display, as this implies, was all-important; a king needed to impress with treasure. The great array of drinking and serving vessels, Byzantine silver tableware and other exotic imports associated with feasting in the Sutton Hoo mound 1 burial asserts the wealth and supreme status of the king buried there, as do the similar, though less magnificent, assemblages from the burials at Taplow and Prittlewell (left). The numbers of such costly vessels on show at the Feast (of which only a selection was placed symbolically in these graves) also reflect the size of the retinue a lord maintained, and the resources he needed to house, equip and feed them, as well as giving messages about his wide-ranging contacts and alliances, through exotic prestige items such as the imported silverware and the hanging bowls. To his dependents, his warriors and his allies, this was a reassuring message of strength and security; to his enemies, an unequivocal statement of wealth, resources, and power.

The emphasis on huge and magnificent drinking vessels is especially significant. *Beowulf* and other sources tell us that the queen and her daughters, themselves potent reminders of peace and power gained through marriage alliances, carried round the great drinking horns from warrior to warrior, inviting them to drink (over). This was a symbolic as well as a social act. Bonds were forged through this sharing of drink, and perhaps more formal pledges and alliances were also sealed by drinking, witnessed by the assembled company. The mighty size of the drinking horns, and their elaborate symbolic ornament, crowded with human and animal

motifs, emphasize the important ceremonial role they played at the Feast. These horns were used for ale, but other, smaller drinking vessels suggest different drinks, known from the literature — wine, mead, and strong fermented fruit drinks such as cider. The small burr-wood and glass cups were probably used for stronger drinks such as these, while other vessels, such as the unstable glass palm-cups and cone-beakers, could not be put down till emptied, suggesting other kinds of drinking etiquette; the baroquely bulging claw-beakers would have required considerable skill to drink from without the contents spurting out into the drinker's face, or spilling down his front (right). Food, interestingly, is rarely mentioned in poetic descriptions of feasting, reinforcing the impression given by the quantities of drinking vessels in rich burials that drinking played a greater part in the rituals and entertainments of the Feast.

As implied above, there was a lighter side to feasting; as well as the physical comedy implied by tricky drinking vessels, entertainments would certainly have included verbal jokes and riddles, while clues to the board games played and the tales recited are given by the gaming pieces and decorated lyres which all three of these Anglo-Saxon princely burials contain (see overleaf). The literature of the period abounds with references to the importance of the bard's role in singing the king's praises, and reciting the heroic past deeds of his ancestors; such performances were a very important part of the Feast, reinforcing messages of dynastic power and hospitality, past and present.

And although this literature most often focuses on the deeds of men at the Feast — warriors, heroes, bards, and kings — as noted above, the role played by aristocratic women is a central one, which lies at the very heart of the notions of hospitality and power. In *Beowulf*, King Hrothgar's queen, symbol of an alliance forged through marriage, embodied the ties of kin that underpinned peace and power, both past and — through her children — future. At the Feast, she dispensed hospitality and maintained harmony through offering the drinking horn to guests and warriors, and through giving gifts herself. Anglo-Saxon documentary sources reveal that such women (Redwald's notorious queen amongst them) could exercise considerable power through their personalities, as well as through the alliances they secured.

(above right) Glass Anglo-Saxon claw beaker, Castle Eden, Co. Durham
(below) Pair of Anglo-Saxon drinking horns, Taplow, Bucks (© Trustees of the British Museum)

Many aspects of 7th-century feasting rituals may seem distant to us now; but in the celebratory and hospitable spirit of the Anglo-Saxon Feast, its creating of bonds and its (mostly) good fellowship, we can recognise a universal human experience that is shared by all of us today who continue to enjoy our own kinds of Feast. This is certainly one of the reasons why this has been such a fascinating and enjoyable exhibition to create.

Day school

Leslie Webster is leading a day school at Sutton Hoo on Saturday 25 July called *Heroic Feasting: Sutton Hoo, Prittlewell and Taplow in context*. It is organised by Wuffing Education and booking is essential
www.wuffingeducation.co.uk

Ritual Halls in Scandinavia

NEIL PRICE, Professor of Archaeology at the University of Aberdeen, spoke to last year's SHS Conference about The Ritual Hall in Early Medieval Scandinavia. His complete text will appear on our website, but these extracts take us to the Swedish and the Danish equivalents of Sutton Hoo. They end with the suggestion by Uppsala archaeologist Frands Herschend that the Swedish ship burials might themselves be symbolic halls.

To seek the origins of these buildings we need to go back three centuries to the middle of the Roman period. Most hall buildings of this time were similar to those of the Viking Age but usually much larger. Divided up into interior rooms, including a space for livestock, they had two storeys and highly sophisticated timber constructions. They seem to have been purely domestic structures, but beside them there are sensational archaeological indications of the beginnings of distinctive, separate ritual halls.

Uppåkra

At Uppåkra in southern Sweden, excavations by Lund University have revealed something quite unique: a very substantial post-built structure, much shorter and narrower than the halls which surround it, that had no clear domestic function and was architecturally highly unusual. Constructed around 200AD and continuing in use for almost 600 years, the building had three entrances and was raised around four massive posts that were effectively entire trees (the post-holes are 2m deep), suggesting a high roof and an elevated profile for the structure — interestingly similar to a stave church. Inside were found over a hundred gold figure foils that may have been fixed to the interior posts (we can only imagine the glittering effect in the firelight), along with what appear to be an oath ring and a goblet and bowl of astonishing quality that may also have had cultic overtones. Outside the structure were offering places with dozens of spears and lances, deliberately broken and laid down in the earth.

Over the succeeding centuries, longhouse architecture evolved into the forms familiar from the Viking Age, and at other sites such as Tissø in Denmark we find the same pattern as at Uppåkra — a central place, but delineated from the surrounding landscape by clear boundaries. Alongside a range of longhouse structures there was a single central hall building, the residence of the local magnate, with a separate, enclosed

building adjacent that, like Uppåkra, was not domestic but filled with amulets and other ritual objects. The whole complex was situated next to a sacred lake, with a number of offering deposits comparable to the Uppåkra spears.

Gamla Uppsala, the Swedish Sutton Hoo

This combination of the halls, the cult building and the offerings brings us to what has become the archetype for this kind of central place, Gamla Uppsala, the Swedish Sutton Hoo, where we have Adam of Bremen's famous description of a great temple building, inside which the idols of the gods were worshipped. For centuries the veracity or otherwise of this image has been debated: what would such a place have looked like? Were there really temples, or just halls? How do the two concepts go together in a place like Gamla Uppsala? The possible location of Adam's 'temple' has always been assumed to be under or near the medieval church, on its artificial terraces which we know to have supported hall buildings in the early medieval period. Recent radar surveys by myself and Magnus Alkarp have suggested that there are indeed massive buildings under the church, at a different alignment which suggests non-ecclesiastical functions. But is this a temple? The clue may come, after all, from Adam's text.

Writing in Latin, when he mentions the room where the idols are housed, he calls it a *triclinium*, 'a dining room', and it's been suggested that what he is actually describing is the hall itself — the idea being that these 'temples' are actually the feasting halls themselves, with their ritual function being one among many. This would fit well with the new interpretations of Old Norse 'religion' as being something rather nebulous, a system of belief that was simply an extended part of life, rather than a separate sphere of behaviour that can be packaged up and labelled. The hall and the cult building thus become one and the same. Exactly when this happens is uncertain, and Uppåkra amongst others shows that some of the cult structures were in use even into the Viking Age, but the ritual halls were present at least by the 7th century and the age of Sutton Hoo.

Lejre in Denmark

The key to this is a kind of hierarchy of cult sites, first proposed by Olaf Olsen in the mid-60s, based on written descriptions and terms but illuminated by archaeology. Most of these places were holy groves and fields, natural sites in the open air, but one of them, the *hov*, was a permanent building, representing the idea of a temple-hall that combined the residence of a lord with his functions as a cultic leader. We start to pick them up all over Scandinavia in the Viking Age, but there are some particularly spectacular examples, of which the greatest is from Lejre in Denmark. It is no accident that, like Gamla Uppsala, this is also the national equivalent to Sutton Hoo. This is the seat of the Danish kings, the location of the action in *Beowulf*, and excavations here have revealed a series of massive halls strung out along the crest of a ridge. At the centre is the largest building of this kind known, some 48m long, and the Lejre hall has been rightly seen as the ultimate in Viking Age royal power

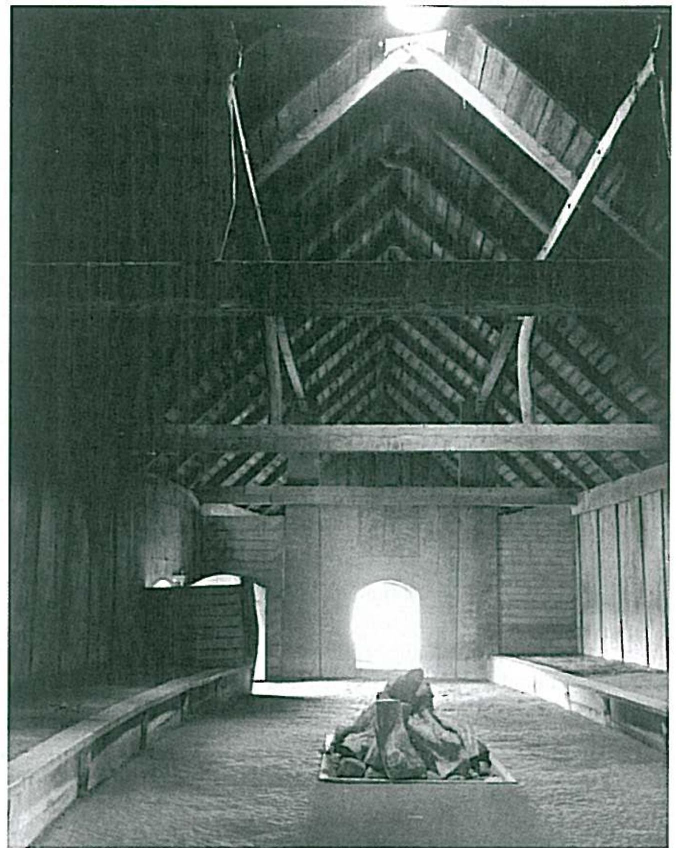
Reconstructed, we see how large these temple-halls really were — new spaces fit for new monarchies. Thus we can imagine the rituals of the gods performed in great timber buildings like this, the benches cleared and offerings made around the fire, before the high seat of the hall's lord. This suggestion has been supported by finds from sites such as the great hall at Hofstaðir in Iceland, hung about with the skulls of cattle. They are found all over the North, from island sites such Frösö in southern Lapland where a *hov* was associated with a sacrificial tree, to an arctic example at Borg in Lofoten, at 80m the absolute largest structure we have from Viking Age Scandinavia. Here too, finds of gold foils, like at Uppåkra, indicate these same ritual functions.

Then there are the other dimensions of the buildings, more overly symbolic. The Uppsala archaeologist Frands Herschend has studied the layout of objects in the Swedish ship burials contemporary with those at Sutton Hoo, and concluded that the disposition of the grave goods matches the functional distribution of spaces in the hall — the high seat off-centre, eating area in the middle, a place for display and high-status pursuits such as gaming, cooking spaces at the ends, and so on. In other words, it seems possible that the burials are themselves symbolic halls, the homes, and royal seats, of the dead. In some of the great Viking Age ship burials, such as Oseberg in Norway, the chambers were actually left open, for months, halls for real that could be entered — for who knows what kinds of encounters with their dead occupants — and it may be that this is reflected in England too at graves such as Sutton Hoo mound 2.

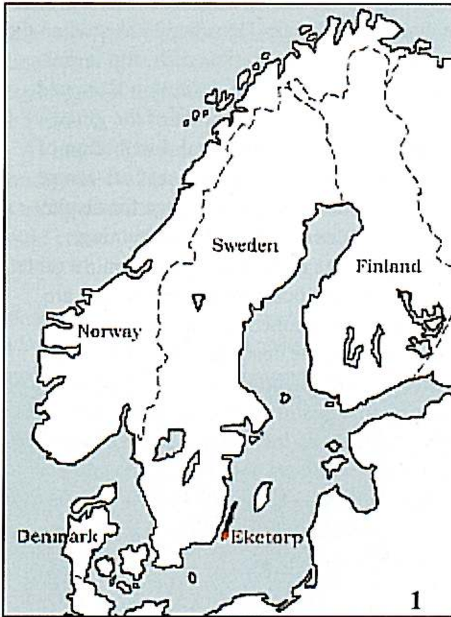
Reconstruction of the great hall at Borg, Lofoten, northern Norway, c.7th–10th century. Eighty metres long, the building had a central hall, living quarters and a cattle byre (DM Wilson)

The Spaces in the Hall

JENNY WALKER is completing her doctorate at the University of York. At last year's SHS Conference she explained how, by studying architectural spaces, archaeologists can describe how a building may have been used, and how it maintained social hierarchy. This extract concentrates on the example of the hall in the second phase of the Eketorp ring fort settlement in southern Sweden. The further example of Hall B at Doon Hill in Midlothian will appear on our website in the full text of her paper, The Anglo-Saxon Hall: Space and Ideology.



Reconstructed Viking hall at Trelleborg, Denmark, showing the central hearth with raised platforms for the warriors on either side (Ralph Swearer)



The Anglo-Saxon hall is one of the central themes in early medieval literature. Such sources have often been used to study the way of Anglo-Saxon life, but, due to changes in archaeological thinking, it has now become possible to use the architecture of the hall itself to shed further light on the way that hall society was created and maintained.

In essence, ethnographic studies have revealed that the ability to use a building develops out of what is termed 'lived experience'. For example, via the use of visual cues such as doorways, decorations, and lines of sight, an individual learns which spaces in a building are off limits. These cues remind us of our social position, relative to that building's owner, and help us to act within the confines of societal convention.

However, such architectural cues also ensure that these conventions and social distinctions remain in place. For example, there might be several boundaries that need to be negotiated before the office of a senior executive can be reached, and the furnishings of that office might be grander than those provided for the rest of the employees. The presence of features like these — controllable boundaries, an executive chair — deliberately emphasise the importance of the senior manager, and ensure that hierarchy in the workplace is maintained.

Ideology in the hall

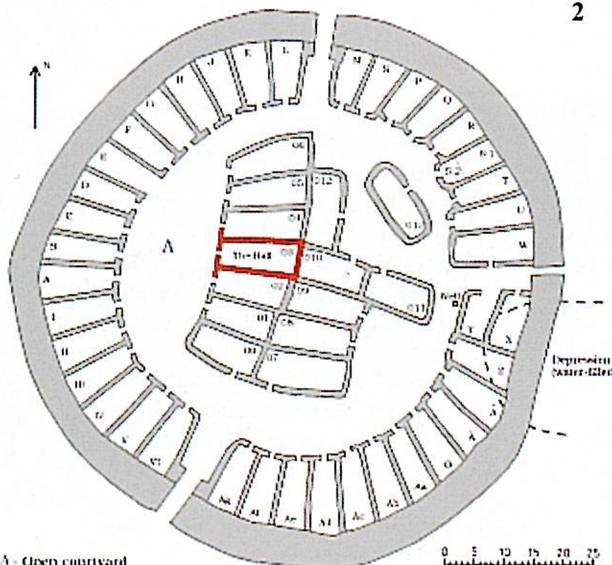
So, how does this relate to the Anglo-Saxon hall? The example of the hall that was built during the second phase of the Eketorp ring-fort settlement (AD 400 to 700) can be used to illustrate (1, left).

The hall at Eketorp, Building 03, was built into a row of terraced buildings overlooking an open courtyard on the western side of the fort (2, below). It was identified by three main features. Firstly, by it being the only building in the settlement with a canopied entrance over its external door. Secondly, by the provision of three separate rooms, and, finally, by the presence of items of weaponry scattered on the floor of the central room.

The architecture of the Eketorp hall suggests that the building was deliberately designed to impress the power and elevated status of the hall owner onto the 'lived experience' of the community. It was not possible to enter the inner sanctum of the hall room without first passing through two boundaries — that of the external doorway, and the doorway between the entrance room and the hall room. This meant that the hall owner could control access to the ceremonies and meetings that might have taken place in the hall room, as well as the timing of that access. He or she could also have controlled access to the living room by placing the high seat directly in front of the door. Thus, it could be made clear that certain areas were off-limit to certain people, consequently underlining the elevated status of the hall owner's family. This would also mean that the high seat was the first thing that an individual would have seen on entering the hall room. All of these features would have emphasised the status of the hall owner, *relative* to that of the rest of the hall's users, and would have helped to safeguard his or her rising position of dominance by making it part of the 'lived experience' of the Eketorp community.

Interestingly, there are contradictions in the evidence collected at Eketorp. The position of the hall building in a row of structures seemingly identical suggests that Eketorp society was egalitarian. Indeed, most of the differences that mark out Building 03 are internal, and could not have been known in advance of entry, thereby reducing their impact on the community. However, the location of the hall building was deliberate, as other positions in the settlement would have been possible. This must mean that the builders of the Eketorp hall wanted the structure to appear to be just one of many. However, the addition of the canopy ensured that it would be noted as different. It almost appears as if the hall owner wanted to quietly introduce the idea of his or her elevated status without producing too much dissent. One might argue that position of the building was designed to 'soften the blow' of increasing social hierarchy.

2



Music and Verse at the Feast

Dr SAM NEWTON is known to us all for his popular lectures and books and his appearances on Channel 4's Time Team. At the climax of his talk to last year's conference, he recited from Beowulf (in the original) while plucking a reconstruction of the Sutton Hoo lyre. Here he conjures up the image of the warrior-poet.

The Old English equivalent of Camelot is the great Hall of the Hart in *Beowulf*, located at Gammel Lejre in Denmark. The picture of this exemplary feasting-hall — 'its light shone over many lands' (*Beowulf* l.311) — is richly woven into the epic, and in places we are provided with wonderful detail of life within the golden meadhall.

As well as the drinking, music and verse are clearly central activities — even the venerable Hrothgar, lord of Hart Hall and Scylding king of the Danes, plays his *hearpe* (or lyre) and sings at the feast:

There was song and mirth; [the] old Scylding,
steeped in learning, recalled [tales] from long ago.
At times [the] battle-leader [his] lyre in bliss,
sweet-wood, handled. At times song recited,
true and tragic. At times tales of wonder
[he] recalled rightly, [that] roomy-hearted king.
At times again began, by age bound,
[the] old warrior, [his] youth to evoke,
[his] battle-strength; [his] heart within welled,
when he, wise in winters, so well remembered.
(*Beowulf* ll.2105–2114 — my own translation)

The image of the warrior-king with his *hearpe* in the feasting-hall provides an idealised model of Old English kingship — one in which a king should be skilled in the wisdom of verse. This ideal can also be seen in the 8th-century Canterbury miniature of the Old Testament

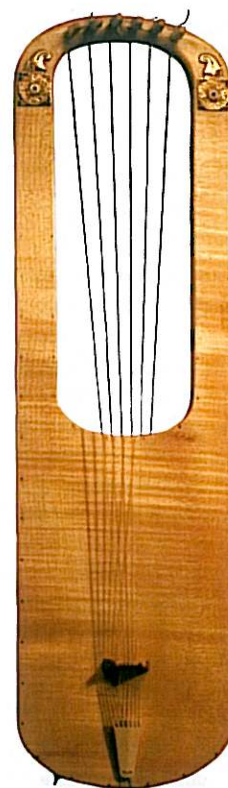
Old English king as warrior-poet — Canterbury Vespasian Psalter (British Library, Cotton Vespasian A.I)

warrior-king David (above), singing psalms to the accompaniment of his Old English *hearpe*.

The presence of a fine maplewood lyre among the grave-goods found aboard the Sutton Hoo ship-burial implies that the king who lay in such glorious state there amidships lived up to this ideal. Lyres have also been identified from the rich barrow-burials at Taplow and Prittlewell.

Dr Graeme Lawson's work on the broader archaeological and literary evidence for the *hearpe* reveals that it was an instrument in use widely throughout Europe, and not just among the nobility, as Bede's miracle-story of Caedmon the cowman-poet shows (*Ecclesiastical History* IV, 24). We now understand much more about how it was made, tuned, and played, though the relation of the music to the verse texts remains a matter of ongoing research and experiment.

Graeme has also identified a significant pattern of warrior-poet burials in the folk



A replica of the lyre from Sutton Hoo mound 1 (© Trustees of the British Museum)

cemeteries in East Anglia, of which the Grave 32 at Snape is a clear example. The grave of the Snape warrior-poet provides clear archaeological evidence for the existence of the kind of professional bards who would have maintained and transmitted the heroic poetry woven into *Beowulf* and related verse texts.

Dr Sam Newton's Wuffings website is at www.wuffings.co.uk
His book *The Origins of Beowulf and the pre-Viking Kingdom of East Anglia* was published by Boydell and Brewer in 1993

The End of the Meadhall

STEPHEN POLLINGTON is a writer and lecturer, long involved in promoting Old English studies. At last year's conference, he reminded us that a hundred or so Old English poems survive, all but a handful dealing with life in the meadhall. In this extract, he adds a coda on the eventual decline of a great pagan tradition.

If the evidence of the verse is any guide, meadhalls were the backdrop for just about every important event, including fights to the death (e.g. Beowulf and Grendel) and the cementing of friendships (e.g. Beowulf and Hygelac). Whether weighty matters really were settled within four walls over a cup of ale in fact is not important — for an Anglo-Saxon audience, it would have been inappropriate to situate mighty moments in any other setting.

It is easy to overplay the testosterone. The hall in the imagination of the audience appears as a male-dominated structure in a patriarchal society, and the heroes of old who swagger through the halls of this tradition are men larger than life, bound by terrible oaths, haunted by implacable nightmarish spirits, forsaken by loved ones and kin.

The primacy of hall-based leaders was not threatened by early Christianity. The lord still ruled his folk and lands from his high-seat, just as the bishop kept watch over his flocks from his *cathedra*. The two traditions became indissoluble.

The image of the hall is very much the image of 'the good life' in Anglo-Saxon thinking. No less important than the individual *seledreamas* — 'joys of the hall' — was the fact of their availability only through the hall. For the loner and outcast, there could be no hall-joys because there were no hall-fellows with whom to share them. The fellowship of hall-meetings was the whole point.

The end of the meadhall feast tradition was a process, not an event. Christianity's rise in importance outside the specialist religious communities entailed the building of preaching crosses in every settlement, usurping the religious function of the hall. The Alfredian system of fortified towns assumed more economic, judicial and legal powers, undermining the local hall as the seat of authority. Small communities were extending, joining into larger units, and governance through the headman's hall was no longer workable. The small-scale world of the meadhall — where Beowulf fought and Widsið sang — had not measured up to the threat of the Danish invasions. The meadhall was emptied, having lost its role as the centre for religion, justice, ritual and trade. All that remained were the community halls — guildhalls for craftsmen and church-halls for worshippers. The inclusive, all-embracing meadhall had outlived its usefulness.

Stephen Pollington's *The Mead-Hall: Feasting in Anglo-Saxon England* was published by Anglo-Saxon Books in 2003. Last year, they published his most recent book, *Anglo-Saxon Burial Mounds: Princely Burials in the 6th and 7th Centuries* www.asbooks.co.uk

Coddenham Bed Burial on Display

Finds from the Coddenham bed burial have gone on display for the first time. They are in an exhibition in Ipswich called Anglo-Saxon Art in the Round, which also features finds from Basil Brown's excavation of mound 2 at Sutton Hoo. Your editor visited on the opening day.

The centrepiece of *Anglo-Saxon Art in the Round* is a selection of gold and silver coins from the De Wit Collection, recently bought by the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. Four narrow cases are laid out in the shape of a cross in the centre of an upstairs room at Ipswich Town Hall Galleries. Above them is a square sail, and on either side a representation of the prow and stern of a Saxon ship. Sutton Hoo dominates this exhibition as it dominates Saxon archaeology in Suffolk and in Britain.

It is hard to see any unity in this exhibition, but all five wall cases surrounding the coins make essential viewing for Sutton Hoo Society members. Much of the material is drawn from the collections of the now combined Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service, with other items from museums in Norwich, Braintree, Cambridge and Ipswich. The exhibition is curated by Caroline MacDonald, Curator of Archaeology for Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service, with the support of Mark Blackburn, Keeper of Coins and Medals at the Fitzwilliam, and other lenders.

The De Wit coins offer a number of themes. There are Roman and post-Roman coins, including Merovingian and Germanic ones. Another case examines stylistic motifs (crosses, bosses and interlacing) and the other two look at the coming of Christianity and at animals in art. On display here for the first time is the Boss Hall brooch from Sproughton, as well as the Kennard brooch, both 7th-century, both large roundels of gold and garnets.

Clockwise from the left on entering, the first of five wall cases celebrates the first Honorary Curator of Christchurch Mansion, Nina Frances Layard (1853–1935) who donated her collections to that museum in 1920. On display here are items from her Hadleigh Road dig. Ms Layard spent the whole of 1906 excavating 200 wealthy Anglo-Saxon graves, both inhumations and cremations, dating between 550 and 640. Here we see a glass drinking cup, made in Kent about 600 but traded into Ipswich, and also a square-headed brooch. Altogether, eight of these were found at Hadleigh Road, but no others in the whole of Ipswich. Almost certainly from Hadleigh Road as well, is a small hanging bowl of *c*.600–640 in the next case.

Society members will head for the third case, which commemorates the 1938 excavation of mound 2 by Basil Brown (1888–1977). Here is his notebook, open at the page where he records that Guy Maynard, Curator of Ipswich Museum, had asked him to investigate some mounds which were 'apparently near Woodbridge'. The small finds shown include a couple of ship's rivets; fragments of a glass cup; two decorative mounts, one portraying a dragon-like beast; a gold-covered bronze disc; a bronze ring with a tag, probably from a bowl; a tiny gold stud and a buckle. There is also a round metal openwork brooch of about 600, found in Sutton in 1835 by a ploughman who apparently threw away its stones.

All of these riches are apart from what ought to be the main focus of the exhibition — the first public display of artefacts from the Coddenham bed burial. In 1999, fifty-five burials were excavated from a communal cemetery of about seven hundred. The centrepiece is an iron shield boss, originally with silver and garnet decoration, and studs around the rim. Beside it is a short iron sword. The bed burial itself, of a wealthy person laid out on a sleeping mat, was surrounded by 200 small finds. We are shown small beads, strands of silverware, tiny bronze brooches, and a pendant with a coin of the Frankish king Daghobert (629–639). The most striking object is a bone comb.If this exhibition is something of a miscellany, it was well worth putting together, and members have until the first week of September to visit.

The exhibition in Ipswich Old Town Hall (Nigel Maslin)

Anglo-Saxon Art in the Round is in Gallery 3, upstairs in the Old Town Hall Galleries in the centre of Ipswich until Saturday 5 September. Open Tuesdays to Saturdays, 10.00–17.00, admission free
www.ipswich.gov.uk/Services/Museums+and+Mansion/Gallery+Three

Boss Hall brooch (Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service)

Spoil Tips

The items on this page have been excavated from various sites — on the web — so check the accuracy for yourself. They bring you archaeological news that you may have missed recently. Follow the links to discover more.

Germanic hall found

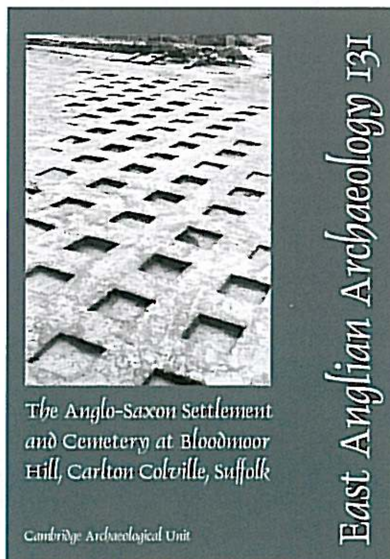
Thirty archaeologists from Swale and Thames Archaeological Survey Company were studying debris on a regeneration site in Rushenden on the Isle of Sheppey, when they identified the remains of a large boat-shaped hall, as well as evidence of boat-building. Dr Paul Wilkinson, who headed the dig, is quoted as saying, 'It's significant because it's a Germanic establishment — the boat shape gives the game away. The only boat-shaped buildings are from what's now Germany and outside the Roman Empire.' The find dates to the 5th century and was reported in December.

Read more at
http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/england/kent/7777867.stm

Bloodmoor Hill

The Anglo-Saxon Settlement and Cemetery at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville, Suffolk is about to published in *East Anglian Archaeology*. Excavations by Cambridge Archaeological Unit in the later 1990s revealed an almost complete settlement of the 6th to early 8th centuries, including a 7th-century cemetery of twenty-eight graves, but few surviving bones. There were thirty-eight *grubenhäuser*, or sunken-featured buildings (SFBs) and nine buildings defined by posts. Most remarkable was 160kg of slag from metalworking, as well as hearths, crucibles, moulds and scrap metal. There were also high quality personal items, glass, textile fragments and imported silver. The report concludes that the site may have been an early form of estate centre, with industry and high status burial, accommodating an average of twenty-five to thirty people at any one time, over five generations.

EAA is an academically refereed series of reports on archaeological work in the eastern counties. Beginning in 1975 there are now 150 titles, which, since 1 April this year, are being distributed by Oxbow Books of Oxford (links on our website). The monograph on the Coddenham Anglo-Saxon Cemetery (see opposite) is in press, and *Saxon* will keep an eye on this and future reports.



The Anglo-Saxon Settlement and Cemetery at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville, Suffolk
by Sam Lucy, Jess Tipper and Alison Dickens (East Anglian Archaeology 131, 2009, forthcoming)
www.oxbowbooks.com/bookinfo.cfm/ID/87001/Location/Oxbow

'The Archaeological Excavations at Bloodmoor Hill', summary of a talk by Alison Dickens to Lowestoft Archaeological and Local History Society, 22 March 2007 *Lowestoft Archaeological and Local History Society Newsletter*, vol.35, no.7, April 2007)
http://lowestoftlocalhistory.co.uk/archive/apr07.htm

Well, you ASKED!

The Leverhulme Trust — that bountiful patron of research in the arts and sciences — is awaiting delivery of a pioneering study of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in southern England from 400–750. *Beyond the Tribal Hidage* is a three-year project running from September 2006 which promises the first systematic regional study of the archaeology of the kingdoms of the Kentish Jutes, the South Saxons and the West Saxons.

The Tribal Hidage itself is an 11th-century document which apparently records the peoples of the 7th century who owed tribute, perhaps to Northumbria or possibly to Mercia. It has long fascinated medievalists, and prompts unanswered questions about state formation: why were some kingdoms more successful than others, and what caused the changes in society over such a wide area?

The study is timely because 2010 marks the sixteen-hundredth anniversary of the notional end of Roman control over Britain, and one of the authors' central questions is whether the formation of kingdoms was centralised, military and top-down, or a bottom-up process powered by interaction between the prototype states.

While the written evidence for the period 400–750 is limited, the archaeological record 'represents the richest phase of furnished burial recorded in British archaeology', say the project's authors. The élite burials of Sutton Hoo, Broomfield, Taplow and Prittlewell; other furnished burials; high status building at Yeavering and Cowdery's Down; farming communities at Mucking and West Stow, all contribute to a picture of a multi-layered society at that time.

The project takes a comparative approach to assessing these three kingdoms, systematically recording the archaeological evidence from the entire region. It has been plotting cemeteries and settlements and also individual finds, especially those recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). It has also looked topographically at settlement patterns, food production and land ownership, to set state formation in a landscape context.

The project has built on a database developed by Dr Stuart Brookes and Dr Sue Harrington at the Institute of Archaeology in University College, London (UCL), which they used to research the distribution and wealth of cemeteries in Kent. Their Anglo-Saxon Kent Electronic Database (ASKED) records 137 cemeteries, with 3,500 burials and 11,000 grave goods, detailing age, size, gender, and the type and provenance of the finds.

The new database will cite 450 excavated Anglo-Saxon burial sites with 10,000 burials, 80 excavated settlements and 1,200 find spots of artefacts. The chief investigator is Dr Martin Welch, a senior lecturer at the Institute of Archaeology, working with Dr Sue Harrington as research assistant.

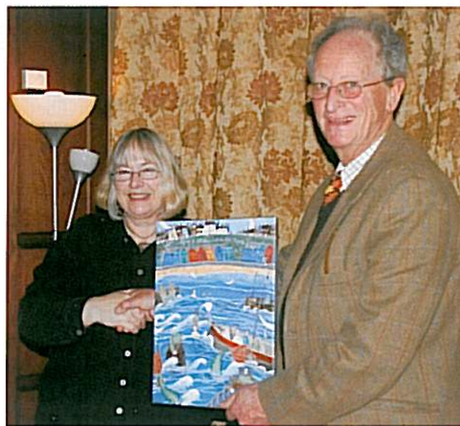
Beyond the Tribal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in southern England AD 400–750
www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/project/tribal-hidage/index.htm
Beyond the Tribal Hidage: Using Portable Antiquities to Explore Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms in Southern England –
Martin Welch and Sue Harrington
UCL institute of Archaeology
www.finds.org.uk/documents/conf07/welch.pdf
Anglo-Saxon Kent Electronic Database (ASKED)
Sue Harrington and Stuart Brookes (2008)
http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/archive/asked_ahrc_2008/index.cfm?CFID=573996&CFTOKEN=39545028

Lindsay Lee Steps Down as Chairman

In her final report to the AGM, Lindsay said, 'During the last six years as your chairman, I can honestly say I have had some of the best and most memorable times of my life. I am grateful beyond words for the support and dedication of committee members who bring their individual expertise and skills to the table and toil unselfishly to ensure the society thrives. This is not an easy task, with a membership drawn from a relatively small section of the public with a special interest...

'I don't need to tell you how important I value our burial site guides — the lifeblood of the society, and without whom our involvement at Sutton Hoo would be a very different one. I strongly believe in the importance of our guides training programme and the advisory role we can offer.

'I have every confidence that the Society will go from strength to strength and will be in safe hands under the chairmanship of Mike Argent.'



SHS President Lord Cranbrook presents retiring chairman Lindsay Lee with a painting by local artist Stephanie Lambourne at the society AGM on 21 February (Nigel Macbeth)

As her personal highlights, Lindsay named the creation of the first Anglo-Saxon Festival at Sutton Hoo, the establishment of the society's biennial conference in the national conference timetable, and supporting research archaeologists through our funding policy.

Anglo-Saxon Sailing Ships

The Society has published a new edition of the very popular *Anglo-Saxon Sailing Ships* by Edwin and Joyce Gifford, builders and sailors of *Sae Wylfing*, the half-scale replica of the Sutton Hoo ship. With improved digital photographs and textual updates, members' discount price is £2 inc. p&p (yes, just two pounds). It is available from the publications officer: Mrs Pauline Moore, 69 Barton Road, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 1JH (01394 382617). Please make cheques payable to the Sutton Hoo Society.

Edwin Gifford aboard Sae Wylfing (V. Bennett)

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www.suttonhoo.org

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Printed by Henry Ling Limited, The Dorset Press

Events Diary

Now on
Anglo-Saxon Art in the Round
Gallery 3, Ipswich Town Hall Galleries
Closes 5 September

Welcome to the Feast!
NT Sutton Hoo summer exhibition
Closes 1 November

Sat 18 July – Sun 2 August
Festival of British Archaeology
(formerly National Archaeology Week)
Various events around the country, co-ordinated by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA)
http://festival.britarch.ac.uk

Thurs 9 July
The Kingdom of the East Saxons: the poor relations?
Lecture by Philip Wise (Heritage Manager, Colchester and Ipswich Museums)
Ipswich Town Hall Council Chamber, 12.15–13.15

Sat 25 July
SHS Summer Outing
Anglo-Saxon Essex: Maldon, St Peter's Chapel at Bradwell, Great Warley and Greensted (sold out)

Heroic Feasting: Sutton Hoo, Prittlewell and Taplow in context
Leslie Webster (formerly of the Dept. of Prehistory and Europe, British Museum) leads a day school at Sutton Hoo (booking essential)
www.wuffingeducation.co.uk
cliff@wuffingeducation.co.uk

Sat 8 – Sun 9 August
Sutton Hoo Through the Ages
NT's weekend of events for the family at Sutton Hoo

Mon 17 August
Portable Antiquities: the public contribution to Anglo-Saxon Archaeology
Lecture by Laura McLean (Finds Liaison Officer, Essex)
Ipswich Town Hall Council Chamber, 12.15–13.15

Wed 16 – Thurs 24 September
SHS Trip to Scandinavia
Copenhagen and Roskilde Danish Ship Museum, Stockholm and Gamla Uppsala (sold out)

Sat 31 October
SHS Autumn Lecture
We hope to announce a lecture by Dr Stanley West, formerly of West Stow, followed by lunch in Woodbridge. Details later

1 November
Copy deadline for the new year edition of *Saxon*

Sutton Hoo Opening Times
Click on 'National Trust (Sutton Hoo)' in the Links section of our website, or go to:
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-vh/w-visits/w-findaplace/w-suttonhoo.htm