



*The Lakenheath Warrior, with sword, shield boss and horse, lies in its new display in Mildenhall Museum. (Photo Gerry Yeend / Mildenhall Museum)*

## Society to visit The Ashmolean and West Stow

Two exciting field trips are being planned for this summer, one to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford for a privileged look behind the scenes, and the other to Mildenhall Museum and West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village near Bury St Edmunds, which the Society as a whole has not visited since 1990, and Society guides alone in August 2003.

The trip to Oxford is scheduled for Wednesday 19 August, a twelve-hour round trip leaving Sutton Hoo at 7.45 am. We will be taking a private tour, 'Highlights of the Ashmolean', which features the Alfred Jewel, treasures of the Italian Renaissance, Pre-Raphaelite paintings, Chinese jade and ceramics, Samurai armour and the finest collection of pre-dynastic Egyptian artefacts outside Cairo.

We will also be having a special handling session, 'Treasures of the Ashmolean's Medieval Collection', with **Dr Eleanor Standley**, Assistant Keeper in Medieval Archaeology, whose particular interest is in medieval dress accessories and the significance of everyday objects. She told **Saxon**, 'In this Study Room session there will be the opportunity to see in detail some of the wonderful early medieval objects in the Ashmolean's collections – from garnet set brooches to glass palm cups. Not only will this session allow a closer look at some of the finest early medieval material, but also a chance to discuss how these objects enter our collections and their importance in the history of medieval archaeology. Material from some of the

earliest collections recovered by Reverend James Douglas to one of the most recent acquisitions will be included.'

Our visit to the Ashmolean includes a 10% discount voucher for the Museum Shop and Café.

There will be time for people to go exploring or shopping in Oxford on their own and lunch will be in the magnificent surroundings of Balliol College Dining Hall.

Earlier, in June, we shall have a similarly long but enthralling day visiting Mildenhall Museum and West Stow. West Stow is a unique Anglo-Saxon village site in the Lark Valley, with many buildings (halls and 'sunken-featured' ones, or Grubenhäuser) which have been reconstructed in situ. It was fully excavated by Dr Stanley West, later County Archaeologist for Suffolk, who gave the Society's first Basil Brown lecture in October 2009. His 1985 excavation report, long out of print, was recently republished.

Our guide there will be **Joanna Caruth**, a Senior Project Officer with Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service. For the past 17 years she has specialised in the excavation, analysis and future publication

of the Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at RAF Lakenheath. These include the 'Lakenheath Warrior' (above), buried with his horse and weaponry and discovered in 1997, now displayed in the recently refurbished Mildenhall Museum, which we shall also be visiting.

Further details of the excursions, prices and how to apply for tickets will be announced on our website and by email, and for the Ashmolean trip will also appear in the July issue of **Saxon**.

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Ben Cowell, Regional Director of the National Trust, addresses the party on Friday night. (All photos, Nigel Maslin)



Among those listening to Ben Cowell were Jude Plowiez (far left), Rosemary Hoppitt (centre) and Catherine Hills, next to Angus Wainwright (far right).



The jazz ensemble Sax Affair.



Therese Coffey tries it on.



That's the way to do it: a 1930s picnic



A fine line-up of classic cars delighted visitors on Sunday.



Tranmer House, formerly Mrs Pretty's home, was the centre of many of the weekend's activities.

# Mrs Pretty's

In July 1939, Mrs Pretty held a garden party at Sutton burial ship in Mound 1. 75 years later, National Trust in association with the Sutton Hoo Society. As in 1939, Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

The weekend began with a reception on Friday night 25 July for special-interest guests from archaeology and government. National Trust Regional Director Ben Cowell (a UEA graduate in landscape archaeology) spoke about the role of the Trust, and their Regional Archaeologist (Society committee member Angus Wainwright) spelt out the significance of the site. Then the party moved from the marquee into Tranmer House, where wine and canapés circulated

to the sounds of the jazz saxophone ensemble *Sax Affair*.

For the public events on Saturday and Sunday, Sutton Hoo was packed with family visitors guiding themselves round the special events. In Mrs Pretty's drawing room, pianist Judy Smith played tunes from the 1930s and Inquisiquest Puppet Theatre entertained children in the dining room. Outside the front door on Sunday, a shining line-up of vintage cars attracted a constant flow of admirers.



*Affair takes over Mrs Pretty's drawing room.*



*MP for Suffolk Coastal, Dr Therese Coffey, examines the replica shoulder clasp with Bryony Abbott (SHS committee) and National Trust Manager, Martin Atkinson.*

# Garden Party

Hoo to celebrate the discovery and excavation of the celebrated the anniversary with another garden party, a Spitfire flew over the site on Saturday, courtesy of the

Actors Rosemary Macvie as Mrs Pretty and Brian Hewlett as Basil Brown, reprised the monologues written by Peppy Barlow, recorded on CD as *Gold Under the Bed*. Mary Skelcher and Chris Durrant signed copies of their book, *Edith Pretty: from Socialite to Sutton Hoo*, and Jan Farmery read from her poetry. Elsewhere, there was a swing dance workshop, a 1930s record request show and a costume team were displaying their

skills. Children went on a trail as news reporters, and dug up small finds behind 'Basil Brown's workshop'.

Craft stalls demonstrated Anglo-Saxon skills, while the Society provided four burial ground tours each day, and short talks about all aspects of Sutton Hoo history, from the Anglo-Saxon jewellery to Mrs Pretty's spiritualism. Much more than a Garden Party, it was a great way to celebrate the 1939 anniversary, and, indeed, the Society's 30th birthday.



*Rosemary McVie reprises her role as Mrs Pretty in extracts from Gold Under the Bed.*



*Just what you need for reaching the cobwebs: Mrs Pretty's extra tall maid.*



*Two of the performers stay in character for a tea break.*



*"If only this was ours!"*



*Training a future generation of Basil Browns.*

# Defining Kingdoms

Society President Lord Cranbrook welcomed a capacity audience to our 30th anniversary Day Conference on Saturday 20 September. Held in the Waterfront Building at University Campus Suffolk, in Ipswich, it was called *Defining Kingdoms: 6th to 10th centuries*.



Chairman Mike Argent introduces Dr Sarah Semple to a packed conference audience.



Ah, lunch! (All photos Nigel Maslin)



Paul Mortimer chatting before his session on the Sutton Hoo stone.

Introducing the conference, David Gill, Professor of Archaeological Heritage at University Campus Suffolk, reminded us how the first announcements of the Sutton Hoo ship burial in July 1939 spoke of the burial of an 'Anglo-Saxon chief', changed within the year to 'a king's grave', and eventually to 'Raedwald'. Kingdoms, he quoted, were 'made by chaps, not maps': in other words by alliance and conquest rather than topography.

Dr Stuart Brookes of University College London, described 'a period of intense fragmentation', with a wide range of political units, or 'polities', as revealed by plotting the 11th century levies, based on the 8th century land divisions of the 'Tribal Hideage' (see opposite), which in turn fragmentarily reflect the realities of 6th century political geography.

Archaeological theory likes intellectual 'models'. A classic of the literature is Colin Renfrew's 'early state model', involving a paramount chief or king, with sub-kings who submit to the higher power only in time of war. Such patterns of intensive and extensive lordship help distinguish the strong heartlands from the less well resourced peripheries, providing a basis for examining the emergence of state structures and the nature and extent of government ('governmentality').

The concept of *bretwalda*, or 'high-king' has been disparaged in the literature (eg, Fanning 1991, 26, endorsed by Mortimer and Pollington 2013, 76): as Martin Carver has it, it is 'more imaginary than real' (1998, 170). But Dr Brookes defended the validity of the term as an understanding of rank and status among the aristocracy, rather than a fixed territorial reality or permanent office.

After coffee, Dr Sarah Semple of the University of Durham discussed 'the emergence of supra-regional power and identity'. She noted how selectively reusing prehistoric and Roman monuments helped

new leaders define their territorial power, though not in any uniform pattern.

In the wooded landscape of the Wolds of East Yorkshire, the round barrow at Uncleby was repeatedly used and extended by burials in the 6th century, while burials at Painsthorpe Wold relate to ancient tracks across the landscape. Of the early medieval burials in the North Wiltshire landscapes around Avebury, Overton Barrows, West Kennet Long Barrow and Silbury Hill, 80% relate to these famous prehistoric features, not Roman ones, whereas burials on the gravel platform of Yeavinger, Northumberland, relate to both.

The phenomenon can be traced into later medieval times with church sites appropriating powerful barrows. Battles were sometimes fought in the shadow of earthworks, which became sites of assembly for royal councils (the *witan*), for military forces like the *fyrd*, and for judicial execution. When linear earthworks came to be used as administrative boundaries, the process can be seen as having provided the beginnings of the political framework in England.

Dr Sam Newton had a different starting point for his lecture, asking where the superb craftsmanship of the 'spellbinding' cloisonné jewellery of the Sutton Hoo treasure originated. His answer began with the Apahida Treasure of c.475, from a village in Cluj county, Romania. The three graves discovered there in 1889, 1968 and 1979 were presumed to be of Gepid kings, rivals of the Huns. These Sam compared with a Visigothic burial from Tierro de Barros in Spain, and with jewellery from an Ostrogothic female burial of the 6th century from Domagnano in San Marino, Italy: all Aryan, Christian peoples.

They stand beside other ethnic groups who invaded the Roman territories between 100 and 500, like the Huns and Vandals, as well as the Franks, Angles, Saxons, Jutes

and Frisians. Sam pointed to Theodoric the Great (d. 526), an Ostrogothic regent of the Visigoths, who, like Raedwald, practised religious tolerance, and who made peace with the Byzantine Emperor Anastasius, the source of the great silver dish in Mound 1. We finally lost sight of Sam diving into a Powerpoint full of the Gothic, Ostrogothic and Visigothic cousins of mainland Europe.

The idea of the ancestors bridged lunchtime with the first afternoon session, when Paul Mortimer and Stephen Pollington considered the significance of the Sutton Hoo stone, ringed by its two sets of four male faces. They challenged some of Rupert Bruce-Mitford's early interpretations (1978, 346-7, 370, 373) which saw the stone as something 'thoroughly barbaric', 'held in the king's hand', or even as a symbol of the *bretwalda*, rather than East Anglian kingship per se (1978, 347). Pollington listed more than a dozen different interpretations and parallels, before settling for 'holy stone'.

For the final session of the conference, Dr Noël Adams, Deputy Curator of the Fursiyya Art Foundation, took us back to the European heartlands to ask what the depositions at Tournai and Malaja Pereščepina can tell us, beside Sutton Hoo. Those three assemblages are the only early medieval burials that can be associated with historical figures. The Merovingian king Childeric was buried at Tournai in Belgium in 480/481, but its burial mound with radial horse burials was ruined during excavation, and many of its finds were robbed and thrown into the Seine in the 18th century, leaving only engravings as a record. Two *solidi* of Zeno (425-91) nevertheless provide the basis of 5th-7th century European chronology.

The cremated remains of Kuvrat, khan of the Turkic-speaking Bulgars from the north of the Black Sea region, were buried at Malaja Pereščepina on the Dnieper near

Poltava, in the Ukraine, sometime after 641-8. A Christian and a godson of the Emperor Heraclius, his five sons were responsible for founding Bulgaria in the west of his kingdom in 679 and Volgar Bulgaria in the north of it. Although by this point in the 7th century garnets had disappeared, his burial contained a staggering twenty-five kilos of gold and fifty kilos of silver, represented by Byzantine silver bowls, Sassanian vessels of 3rd to 7th century, silver and gold Turkic vessels of the mid 7th century, 69 coins of Constans II (641-668), cloisonné work, as well as a set of weapons and horse harness.

With a diameter of 61 cms, the



Professor David Gill talking to Dr Angela Evans.

Paternus dish alone weighed 6.2 kilos, and can be compared to the silver dish of Anastasius I (491-518) from Sutton Hoo Mound 1, the third largest silver dish to survive from the period: contra Rupert Bruce-Mitford, Noël asserted, “It’s thoroughly imperial!”

All three burials have comparable grave goods, and Noël concentrated on the cloisonné ornaments, weapons and vessels in precious metals. They show what was thought appropriate to a ruler’s grave, what was available, and particularly the nature of the relationship to the Eastern Roman Empire, whose silverware bore the control stamps of its emperors.

Closing the day’s proceedings, Sutton



Sam Newton with Jude Plouwiez.

Hoo Society past-chairman Lindsay Lee said that the idea of holding a society conference was first mooted in 1998. “At that time it represented a new venture and a new challenge for the society, one which could provide a platform for experts in their field to explore and present new ideas. I am pleased to say the concept has proved a sound one – this being the eighth successful conference.” She warmly thanked the day’s speakers for “taking us all on fantastic and inspiring journeys of ideas and exploration.”

## REFERENCES

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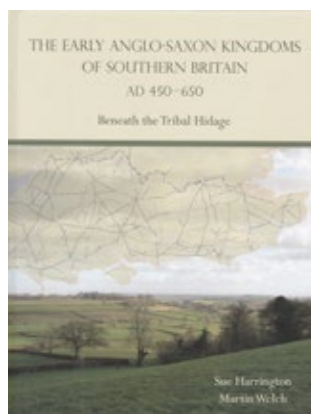
# Beneath the Tribal Hidage

*The Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms of Southern Britain AD 450-650: beneath the Tribal Hidage*, by Sue Harrington and Martin Welch. Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow Books. 234 pp., 10 colour plates, 62 b&w figures, 49 tables, £60 ISBN 9781782976127.

As reported more than five years ago in **Saxon 49**, the pilot project of the Anglo-Saxon Kent Electronic Database (ASKED) was deposited with the Leverhulme Trust in 2009 as part of their wider project, *Beyond the Tribal Hidage*. Begun in 2006, it ambitiously aimed to bring together all the evidence for Germanic presence in southern Britain, from about 400-750.

Martin Welch, senior lecturer at University College, London, had long been developing a card index as a forerunner of a gazetteer, and two of his students, Sue Harrington and Stuart Brookes, developed the ASKED database. Sadly, Martin Welch became ill and died in 2011 before all the resulting research questions had been finalised. The present volume contains only the maps and secondly their associated text, instead of the complete work that had been planned. The third element, The Early Anglo-Saxon Census of Southern Britain, is also being made available to researchers with the rest of the data, through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).

Sue Harrington’s completion of this compromise volume acknowledges differences with Martin Welch’s views over the role of gender in emerging socio-political hierarchies, over the survival of British communities in the west, and over the timing of the first Anglo-Saxon arrivals: Welch saw a discontinuity with



Roman Britain until the final quarter of the 5th century, while Harrington sees a continuity in structures and production areas throughout.

The Tribal Hidage itself was a 7th century (or later) listing of population groups and the tax payable on their lands, only known from 11th century and subsequent copies. Understanding how far these manuscript sources ever correlated with political reality is a task

for archaeology: 12,000 burials and 28,000 artefacts have been analysed and plotted against topographical features, both natural and built.

The first tentative conclusions suggest that the earliest migrants spread rapidly across the south east using the road network, which also helped them access resources and control local trade in agricultural produce, textiles and metals. Iron-working seems to have been localised, but higher status objects were made not by itinerants, but by settled smiths and jewellers.

Disused Romano-British sites were not reoccupied, though they were plundered for building materials; ancient barrows, cemeteries, trackways and waterways were used as signposts to new settlements. The migrants came not as a marauding force, but as successors to the Roman administrators; civil strife only arose later as aristocratic dynasts clashed. ‘In conclusion,’ writes Harrington, ‘the creation of kingdoms in southern Britain by the seventh century remains a matter of the greatest conjecture.’ – N.M.

Stuart Brookes, Sue Harrington and Andrew Reynolds co-edited a festschrift for Martin Welch on his retirement from UCL in 2010, published as *Studies in Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology: Papers in Honour of Martin G. Welch*, Oxford: British Archaeological Reports (BAR 527, 2011) xi+174 pp. £38 ISBN 9781407307510.

# The site that keeps on giving

*“...one of the richest records of elite settlement in 6th century England and a striking testimony to the fact that places of Anglo-Saxon royal residence could have very deep roots indeed.” – Gabor Thomas, [www.lymingearchaeology.org](http://www.lymingearchaeology.org)*

The Society's 2014 excursion struck metaphorical gold on Thursday 21 August with a visit to a site we have followed in **Saxon** for the last four years (see nos. 52 p.11, 53 pp.8-10, 56 p.10, 59 p.10). We were shown round the excavations at Tayne Field, Lyminge, near Folkestone in Kent, by the dig director, Dr Gabor Thomas, Associate Professor of Archaeology at the University of Reading. If you missed that, you must not miss his Basil Brown Lecture in Woodbridge on Saturday 23 May (see back page).

The five-year excavation has revealed a 7th century 'feasting hall', followed

by more high status halls in 2013, and last season by 6th century features that show that Lyminge, like Yeaveering in Northumberland, was planted in the heart of an ancestral community.

Gabor walked us round last summer's excavation of a Bronze Age barrow ring ditch, with a series of timber halls partly overlaying it, which were dated to the 6th century by metal work found in their postholes. Then came his prize exhibit: a 12 x 14 metre 'sub-circular geophysical anomaly', technically known as 'the blob'. It is significant because it was formed by

a midden of charcoal, animal bone and a seemingly inexhaustable series of Anglo-Saxon small finds, more than three metres deep: 1.4 metres had to be left unexcavated at the end of the dig. There were more than 200 sherds of glass, diagnostically significant detritus from iron and copper working, smashed Anglo-Saxon pots and butchered beef. A nearby transect was excavated down to a laid flint platform, identified as late Roman, but of unknown function. The significance lies in the clear archaeological association of Roman with early Anglo-Saxon occupation.



After leaving Sutton Hoo at 8am and over two hours on the motorway, first stop was Maidstone Museum. (All photos Nigel Maslin)



In the Anglo-Saxon section of Maidstone Museum, to see a temporary display of the recent small finds from Lyminge.



The 7th century Faversham claw beaker in the collection at Maidstone Museum.



Gabor Thomas indicates the layout of the site on Tayne Field



*Walking the 20 metre-diameter Bronze Age ring ditch, which was partly overlaid by a series of 6th century timber halls and adjacent to 'the blob' (background).*



*Full coach, full attention: members of the Society listen to the dig director.*



*Pointing out the post holes and trenches of the hall discovered in 2012 in another square.*



*Chairman Mike Argent has a front seat view of recent finds passed round by the finds team.*



*Inside 'the blob': Gabor indicates the site of the recently excavated midden of 220 glass sherds and metal.*



*Helen Geake examines a rather puzzling find.*

# Nydam Two sails on

The new replica of the 4th century Nydam ship, *Nydam Tveir* or *Nydam Two*, was launched on 18 August 2013 at Allsund in Denmark, as reported on our front page a year ago (**Saxon 58**). OLE BRIXEN SØNDERGAARD brings us up to date with news of its maiden voyage, an exciting appearance on the Kiel Canal, and laying it up for the winter.



*Nydam Tveir* on its maiden voyage.



*Nydam Tveir* on its way down the Kiel Canal to reconquer East Anglia.

On the evening of Tuesday 17 June 2014, we left our safe haven, and eight tons of boat and crew rowed out to sea - *Nydam Tveir*'s maiden voyage. The boat handled well, with the crew trying hard to keep stroke - practise makes perfect. After stability tests, two tons of stone ballast had been put into the bottom of the ship, so it moved steadily through the water, responding well to the rudder. Next, we have to learn how to sail it, and test its performance.

But the real story is that in September we were invited to be the mascot of the E.ON Hanse Canal cup, an annual three-day event for international rowing-eights held in Rensborg (Rendsburg) in Schleswig-Holstein [www.eonhansecup.de](http://www.eonhansecup.de)

On Friday and Saturday, *Nydam Tveir* was on show on the wharf, and on Sunday we lifted it into the water and went rowing along the canal, the banks crammed with spectators, very exciting.

The canal authority got a little upset about an Iron Age boat rowing up their canal! We got permission to row across the canal to be at the finishing line at 3.15pm. 'Ordnung muss sein', but the Danes are not that authoritarian. We told the authorities we had been on course for England down the River Eider since the Iron Age: they calmed down. Our Rensborg trip was made possible by the cup sponsors: sometime, we would love to row up the River Deben and visit Sutton Hoo.

We have had to protect the keel with a steel rail to avoid launch damage: the weight of the hull was ruining the keel when rolling down the ramp. The lime rope used to fasten the rowlocks also needs to be stronger: a matter of twisting better quality lime rope - a job for the winter. We will have to find the right type of willow bough to use as an oar-grommet, and for the time being we have replaced it with modern rope. In addition, we need to make small alterations to the oars, including a rather lighter oar for the women rowers. *Nydam Tveir* is now laid up in its ship shed (the Naust), while we plan more scientific rowing trials for next season.

## How heavy was the Sutton Hoo Ship?

In our last issue, JOE STARTIN invited Society members to estimate the weight of the Sutton Hoo Ship. Here, KEN ALLEN weighs in.

I don't think that the volume or the displacement of the ship have a lot of effect on the hull weight; the interior is after all mostly air and effectively weightless. The length is relevant, but the thickness of the planking, for example, does not double with a doubling of the length. I agree however that the *Sea Stallion* is probably a good analogue for the Sutton Hoo Ship. The original ship (Skuldelev 2) was about 400 years younger than our ship and *Sea Stallion* was probably constructed with more of an eye on modern safety and less on an historical need to 'portage' the finished vessel.

*Sea Stallion* is 96 feet long (maybe a bit longer than the Sutton Hoo Ship), with a

beam of 12 feet (maybe a little narrower than at Sutton Hoo) although width has less effect on weight than length. *Sea Stallion*'s hull weight, as Joe says, is 8 tons. This may include the mast. The hull, rigging and oars together bring the weight up to 10.4 tons. To this we must add 4.4 tons of ballast, equipment is another 5.4 tons and the (weighed) crew 4.8 tons, giving a total weight (displacement) of 25 tons. All of these weights have been taken from the Viking Ship Museum website.

Why do I say that ships were lightly built to assist portage? People have always needed to live near a drinkable source of water and travel by water is a lot easier than by foot. If you wish to see how sophisticated a Bronze Age sea-going boat could be, look at the Dover Boat: it was beautiful, about 11 metres long and built perhaps c. 2,000 BC. Trading across continents involved taking shallow-drafted

boats across watersheds and over hills. They must be rolled, dragged or carried, so need to be light.

We have historical records of warships being transported overland by 'railway', albeit a stone paved track: the Diolkos was built about 600 BC, though the route was probably used primarily for commercial traffic. It had grooves about 5 feet apart to accommodate wheeled trolleys, carrying ships and cargoes 4 or 5 miles across the Isthmus of Corinth.

It should also be noted that Viking ships traded over a huge area of the world and had major trade routes that crossed land, from the Baltic to the Caspian and Black seas using the Volga, for example.

Back to the Sutton Hoo Ship. If we say that the Sutton Hoo Ship was slightly smaller than the 8 ton *Sea Stallion*, maybe of lighter build and was stripped of its mast, mast step, central tholes and



# Sae Wylfing at Maritime Woodbridge

*Sae Wylfing*, the 45ft scale replica of the Sutton Hoo ship, arrived at Whisstocks former shipyard in August, on loan to the Woodbridge Riverside Trust, who hope to build a full size replica on the site (see **Saxon 58**, front page). Crewed by Saxons from the *Ealdfaeder* group, it was on display in September at the Maritime Woodbridge weekend, to gather supporters for the project, as PETER BRADBEER describes.



"When I nod my head, bit it." Striking coins at Maritime Woodbridge. (Peter Bradbeer)



A thousand questions around *Sae Wylfing* in Whisstocks former shipyard. (Peter Bradbeer)

Surrounded by other craft elegantly dressed in polished varnish, gleaming spars and crisp, cream canvas, *Sae Wylfing* was surely Cinderella, with her black planks smelling of linseed oil, but the visitors loved her sweeping lines and wanted to hear her story. The sheer scale of the full size ship was something that most people struggled to visualise, at twice the length of *Sae Wylfing* and eight times the volume.

We passed out hundreds of Woodbridge Riverside Trust leaflets to residents who were interested to hear of the project's progress. In the middle of the stand we set up a hammered coin anvil where we turned out replicas of one of the coins found in

the grave. When we ran out of metal blanks we resorted to foil-covered chocolate coins - a case of having your coin and eating it! The children hopped from one foot to another as they wanted to make their own Merovingian coin: most had never seen or heard of hammered coins, now they were minting their own.

Clambering aboard *Sae Wylfing*, the children waved plastic replica swords and donned helmets so they could be photographed with the Saxons in the boat. One little girl insisted on coming back to show the Saxons a picture she had drawn. Youngsters helped to man our stand and

asked a thousand questions, about the buoyancy properties of salt water versus fresh water, the position of the 'steorbord', whether the original ship sailed and, if not, how had it received damage severe enough to require patching?

The potential of the longboat to attract and engage children of all ages is enormous. You too can join in this adventure. Hewers of wood (literally) and drawers of water, of metal, of leather and of many other talents will be needed. You can see more by looking at the 'Using *Sae Wylfing*' page on [www.woodbridgewaterfront.co.uk](http://www.woodbridgewaterfront.co.uk) and [www.ealdfaeder.org](http://www.ealdfaeder.org)

anything else that was not needed, 7 tons seems to be a sensible upper estimate for the bare hull weight. This is 1,120 stone. If we can get 50 warriors along each side of the boat (my estimate) each warrior needs to lift just over 11 stone, or about 150lbs, to pick up and carry the boat. To put that into context, until recently recruits to the Fire Service had to be able to shoulder-carry a 12 stone person for 100 yards to pass their physical test.

To add an anecdote, my father once had his 2.5 ton motor boat washed up by a flood on an island in the Thames. Having failed to move it with levers and greased planks, he asked an inebriated rugby team to help. They thought this was great fun and, ignoring his improvised slipway, simply picked up the boat and threw it into the water. I suggest that Anglo-Saxon warriors were at least as strong as rugby players and possibly as drunk!

My (unproven) theory about how the Sutton Hoo ship was put in its trench is that the Anglo-Saxons rolled the stripped hull over onto its keel ends (elaborate stem and stern pieces are not part of the keel and could be removed) to lift the gunwales clear of the ground. Then 50 warriors got under each side, lifted and trotted up the hill to roll the hull into its trench. After which they all sat down and enjoyed a few pints. But that is just my own personal vision of the event.

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Dover bronze age Boat [www.dovermuseum.co.uk/Bronze-Age-Boat/Bronze-Age-Boat.aspx](http://www.dovermuseum.co.uk/Bronze-Age-Boat/Bronze-Age-Boat.aspx)

## OLE BRIXEN SØNDERGAARD adds:

On reflection, the support of the rudder at the stern points to a rather lighter hull in the Sutton Hoo ship. Two additional ribs, nos. 24-25 in front of the last rib, no. 26, distribute the weight of the rudder to the hull. This is not case in the Nydam ship. Looking at the drawing of the Sutton Hoo hull, it looks as if the planks are a bit narrower than the Nydam planking, which could imply 5 Nydam planks equals 9 Sutton Hoo planks.

In our case the technical calculations, estimates and support was done by Gøthche Morten <http://www.vikingskibsmuseet.dk/en> and Ronald Bockius, Hauptkonservator und Leiter Des Forschungsbereichs Antike Schifffahrt. [http://web.rgzm.de/no\\_cache/ueber-uns/team/m/ronald\\_bockius.html](http://web.rgzm.de/no_cache/ueber-uns/team/m/ronald_bockius.html)

As it has turned out they were very close to the outcome - the copy of an Iron age boat.

# The Tale of Hengest

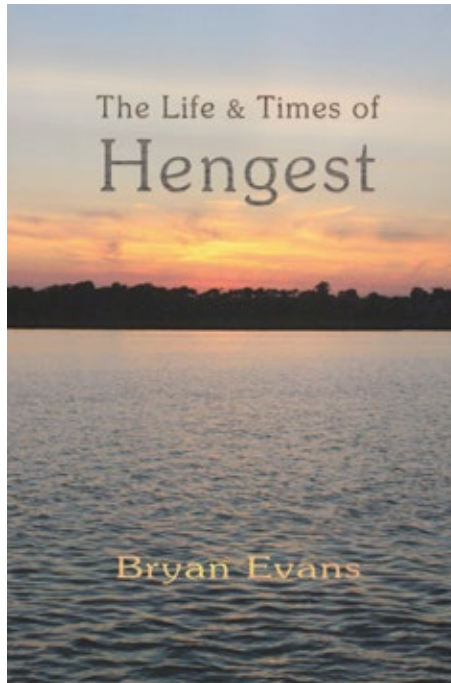
STEPHEN POLLINGTON reviews *The Life and Times of Hengest*, Bryan Evans. Anglo-Saxon Books, 2014. ISBN 9-781898-281740. Card covers, 272 pages, 7 maps, 10 drawings, £14.95

This new title from Anglo-Saxon Books offers a new look at the evidence for the character Hengest, who plays a key as the traditional founder of the kingdom of Kent in the early annals of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Less well known is his appearance in Old English poetic literature in the fragmentary Fight at Finnesburg.

The book is divided into three sections. The first offers an overview of the Roman Empire in the 4th and 5th centuries, its many threats and opportunities and their effects on the situation in Britain. Written sources for the period are few, summarised in a short section but discussed at some length: a critical evaluation of the intellectual climate at the times the sources were compiled is essential in any assessment of their reliability. Section two offers an overview of Anglo-Saxon society based on literary and archaeological evidence. The third section provides a discussion of the manuscripts in which the tale of Hengest is referenced, and the author's own attempts to write modern verse in the Anglo-Saxon style and metre. The relevant prose texts are given in translation at the end of the book.

The project is ambitious. The part played by Hengest and his kinsman Horsa in the settlement of Britain is the subject of legend, and this fact obscures the very real possibility that Hengest was a genuine historical character. His story, as far as we can reconnect the fragments we possess, concerns the aftermath of a deadly rivalry among the peoples of the North Sea coasts in the 5th century in which some famous names were embroiled – Hroþgar and Hygelac in Beowulf among them. This subject was famously tackled by Tolkien in a series of lectures and notes, which were edited by Alan Bliss for posthumous publication in the 1980s. Bliss brought Tolkien's readings to public attention and followed his reconstruction of the tale; Bliss's own unique contribution was to argue that Hengest was actually an Angle rather than a Jute.

Evans offers no comparable new insights. The value of his book is to summarise some quite tricky arguments in a readable manner, without recourse to the close textual analysis which Bliss and Tolkien brought to the subject. Evans takes a fairly pedestrian approach, following the main thrust of 20th century research: he cites the small size of Anglo-Saxon armies, for example, although this



view is questionable; he assumes that the alliterating names in the king-lists were given at birth rather than taken as regnal names; he assumes that Anglo-Saxon settlers making use of abandoned Roman structures were trying to emulate Roman culture, rather than adapting it to their own needs. A discussion of the numbers of Anglo-Saxon migrants leads to a survey of the studies of DNA evidence, without showing any appreciation that the sources of such evidence (i.e. DNA extracted from ancient bone) are severely limited and the results of the research are based on mathematical models founded on the researchers' own assumptions.

The book is written in a plain, non-technical style which is helpful – or would be, were the author not occasionally tempted to use some rather strange vocabulary. He refers to 'kinlore', and then has to gloss this as 'genealogy', 'unbelief' rather than 'scepticism', and so on. This may be his poetic instinct at work, using an unusual and therefore arresting term to catch the reader's eye, but it reads rather strangely in a book which evidently aims to bring the story of Hengest to a wider modern audience.

Does the book further our knowledge of Hengest and his career? In truth, it does not – but it does offer a great deal of material necessary to understanding the man and his times between two covers, at an affordable price.

## Mrs Pretty in DNB

An article with fully credited sources on Mrs Edith Pretty, 'the lady of Sutton Hoo', has appeared in the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* 2014. It was written by our membership secretary, Pauline Moore, who tells us, "Mrs Pretty is one of the first three people mentioned in ODNB's 'highlights', as she was (and still is) responsible for 'the most generous donation made in the lifetime of the donor', as the British Museum acknowledge."

Pauline adds, "It can be accessed online if you use your local Library card and enter the number on it. Not sure it will accept Australian/USA cards, however! No idea how much it costs to buy! It was great to be asked to do this. Thank you, Mike [Argent] for passing it to me."

### SUTTON HOO SOCIETY EMAIL ACCOUNT

**The recent email book auction organised by Jonathan Abson was a prime example of the way in which the Society uses its email account to reach members. If you did not receive either the notification it would take place, the daily update on bids or the final result, it is because either we do not have an email address for you or the one we have is incorrect.**

**As this is one of the ways by which we may well increasingly contact members, please could you let us have the relevant address if you wish to be included in the system. No details of members' addresses are shared with any outside organisation.**

**Do please update us. Currently about 30 addresses we have are returned as incorrect or unrecognised, and we should like to remedy this. Please send an email with 'New email address' in the title to: [thesuttonhoosociety@gmail.com](mailto:thesuttonhoosociety@gmail.com)**

Thank you!

**Nan Waterfall,  
email administrator**

# Conservation awards for our President

Two Sutton Hoo Society Presidents met in Buckingham Palace on November 12, when Prince Philip – who was our president for six years from 1985 – presented our current president, Gathorne Gathorne-Hardy, 5th Earl of Cranbrook, with The Duke of Edinburgh Conservation Medal, sponsored by WWF International.

Lord Cranbrook was described by the WWF as ‘a global leader in the fields of mammalogy, ornithology and zooarchaeology’ who has long supported conservation efforts in Malaysia and Brunei, as well as at home.

His PhD on the biology of cave swiftlets - southeast Asian birds known for building edible nests - was followed in the later 1950s by professional posts in Sarawak, in Indonesia and at the University of Malaya, concentrating on the taxonomy and ecology of the region’s birds and mammals, as well as the vertebrate remains from excavations. Returning to Britain in 1970, he later served on many leading environmental policy-making bodies, such as the Natural Environment Research Council and the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution. Succeeding to the family title in 1978 he regularly spoke in the House of Lords on environmental issues and indeed chaired the environment subcommittee three times, before the House was reconstituted in 1999. From 2001-8 he chaired the International Trust for



Prince Philip presents Lord Cranbrook with the WWF's 2014 Duke of Edinburgh Conservation Award in a private ceremony at Buckingham Palace in November. (Photo © Fergus Burnett/WWF-Canon)

Zoological Nomenclature. Since the 1960s he has written and contributed to many definitive books, such as *Mammals of Borneo* (1965), *Wild Mammals of Malaya (Peninsular Malaysia) and Singapore* (1968) and *Birds of the Malay Peninsula* (with D.R. Wells, 1976).

The Chief Executive of WWF-UK, David Nussbaum, said, “In everything he has contributed to conservation, Gathorne’s passion for field work, and his enthusiasm to share, teach and encourage, has shone through. His appreciation of the wonder and value of nature, coupled with unwavering scientific rigour when communicating with politicians, peers and students alike, has provided us with a conservationist truly worthy of this award.”

Remarkably, this was not the only conservation award Lord Cranbrook has received recently. Just before Christmas, he was presented with the Merdeka Award for Outstanding Contribution to the People of Malaysia, which cited his contribution to pioneering research and conservation of Malaysia’s forest biodiversity, including its birds and animals. The Merdeka Award Trust was founded in 2007 by the oil companies Petronas, ExxonMobil and Shell and makes six awards annually in specific fields such as scholarship, education, health and the environment. Lord Cranbrook’s award was first announced in September by the Trust’s royal patron, H.R.H. Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah.

## Horses of Men and Gods

Are all war horses stallions? You might expect so, but how do you tell? *Horses of Men and Gods: the horse and its role in funerary ritual in 1st millennium AD Britain* is a doctoral research project of PAMELA J. CROSS. It is based at the University of Bradford and supported by the Sutton Hoo Society, National Trust, Museum of London and author Bernard Cornwell. Pam’s thesis is due for completion in May this year.

The interpretations of archaeology are inferences which depend on extensive sets of reliable data, but Pam Cross has been discovering the shortcomings of existing data sets about horse remains. Reference collections are meant to provide a view of normal anatomy, but for horses there are only a few comparatively small collections. Therefore, for the past year, ‘a year of bones’, Pam has been researching modern horse skeletons to help evaluate size, age, sex and

pathology in archaeological horses. The result is new data and new research methods.

Sexing is basic to bioarchaeology and sex ratios tell you about animal husbandry and cultural use. An indicator for male horses is the presence of long, pointed canine teeth, rarely found in females according to the archaeological literature. According to the veterinary literature, however, 30% of female horses will have canine teeth, albeit smaller, and 30% of male horses will not.

Pam has begun a study of living horses in association with University of Aberystwyth researchers, which already confirms that mares have canines. Re-evaluating the horses of Broxmouth Hill Fort revealed females and juveniles - a different gender ratio that indicates different horse use and husbandry and potentially, therefore, a different interpretation of the societies of Iron Age hill forts.

In 2013 Pam went to a meeting of The International Council of Archaeozoology’s Animal Pathology Working Group, held

in Sweden at the University of Stockholm, and concerned with ‘bone changes’. Pam insists that spinal changes in horses cannot be attributed to their being ridden, since such injuries also occur in foxes, dogs and humans. Pam developed her theme last year when she addressed the conferences of the Palaeopathology Association and also the Society of American Archaeologists, arguing that fused spines can be related to knocks or falls rather than riding. She related her findings to the 2nd century skeleton of a possible chariot-race horse from Roman London – archaeological CSI!

Pam’s research is now at an end, along with her funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, so she is currently ‘chained to the desk’, writing up a thesis that will confirm cultural influences and other strong links between Anglo-Saxon England and continental Europe.

To download Pam’s papers, visit <https://bradford.academia.edu/PamCross>

# Events Diary

**Saturday 14 February, 14.30-16.00**  
*Prof. Michael Fulford, Roman Rural Settlement of Eastern England*  
Suffolk Institute of Archaeology & History  
Blackbourne Hall, Elmswell

**Wednesday 18 February, 19.30**  
*Dr Rory Naismith, Anglo-Saxon Coins*  
Ipswich Numismatic Society, The Golden Hind,  
470 Nacton Road, Ipswich IP3 9NF

**Thursday 12 March**  
*Preview of NTSH summer exhibition*  
(site re-opens for the new season on Saturday  
14 March)

**Saturday 14 March, 14.30-16.00**  
*Prof. Chris Scull, Recent Discoveries at Rendlesham*  
Suffolk Institute of Archaeology & History  
Blackbourne Hall, Blackbourne Road, Elmswell

**Sunday 15 March, 11.30-13.15**  
*SHS Guides' pre-season meeting*  
The Court, Sutton Hoo, followed by lunch at  
The Coach & Horses, Melton

**Friday 27 March, 19.30**  
*SHS Spring Lecture, preceded by short AGM* (see separate panel)  
Faye Minter, Finds Liaison Officer, Suffolk  
County Council Archaeology Service, including  
finds from Rendlesham  
National Trust Sutton Hoo (NTSH)

**Tuesday 14 April, 18.00 start**  
*Prof. Chris Scull, Rendlesham Rediscovered: an East Anglian Royal Settlement of the time of Sutton Hoo*  
Spring Lecture, Centre for East Anglian Studies  
(CEAS) jointly with The Society of Antiquaries  
of London  
Lecture Theatre 1, University of East Anglia,  
Norwich

**Saturday 23 May, 11.00-12.30**  
*Dr Gabor Thomas, The Archaeology of Lyminge, Kent*  
SHS Annual Basil Brown Lecture  
Riverside Theatre, Woodbridge

**Saturday 20 - Sunday 21 June**  
*Ealdfaeder re-enactors at Sutton Hoo: Storytelling with Sae Wylfing ship*  
(other dates, see [www.ealdfaeder.org](http://www.ealdfaeder.org))

**June, date TBC\***  
*Mildenhall Museum and West Anglo-Saxon Village with Jo Caruth*  
Sutton Hoo Society day trip

**Saturday July 4, 11.00-16.00**  
*Laxfield Museum Anglo-Saxon Day*  
The Guildhall, Laxfield, IP13 8DU

**Wednesday 19 August\***  
*Behind the Scenes at the Ashmolean Museum with Dr Eleanor Standley*  
Sutton Hoo Society day trip to Oxford

\*Final details including how to apply for tickets will be announced by email and website.

**Saturday 19 - Sunday 20 September**  
*NTSH Festival of History*  
National Trust Sutton Hoo



**Wuffing Education Study Days**  
The Court, NT Sutton Hoo,  
£36

Anglo-Saxon topics include:  
28 Feb *King Raedwald and the Temple of the Two Altars* - Dr Sam Newton  
7 Mar *Wealth and Status in Post-Roman Europe* - Dr Angela Evans, Dr Noël Adams  
14 Mar *Anglo-Saxons, Romans and Carolingian Frankia* - Prof. Rosamund McKitterick  
21 Mar *Monasteries in the Landscape* - Dr Richard Hoggett

Prior booking essential: see website for full details [www.wuffingeducation.co.uk](http://www.wuffingeducation.co.uk) or contact Cliff on 01394 386498 or email [cliff@wuffingeducation.co.uk](mailto:cliff@wuffingeducation.co.uk)

## SUTTON HOO SOCIETY NOTIFICATION OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Sutton Hoo Society will be held on Friday 27 March at 7.30pm in the King's River Restaurant at Sutton Hoo.

### AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of last AGM
3. Reports and Accounts
4. Election of Auditors
5. Election of Committee

Following this short business meeting, Faye Minter, Finds Liaison Officer, Suffolk County Council, will make use of finds from the recent Rendlesham excavations to talk about her role.

**Michael Argent  
Chairman**

**The  
Sutton  
Hoo  
Society**



[www.suttonhoo.org](http://www.suttonhoo.org)

**President**  
*The Earl of Cranbrook*

**Research Director**  
*Professor Martin Carver*

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*Mike Argent*

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