



Charity XT29402

# SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

Founded in 1969

PATRON: Prof. Malcolm Airs  
PRESIDENT: Hazel Williams

## Annual Report & Accounts for 2011



Gatehampton Roman Villa

*SOAG at work and play*



SOAG visit to Marcham-Frillford

**SOAG 43<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Goring Heath Parish Hall, Whitchurch Hill**  
**2:00pm on Sunday 22nd April 2012**

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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

*(Compiled by the Chairman from reports by members of the Committee)*

2011 was a very good year for SOAG. Financially we have been made secure in the short term due to a generous bequest in the will of Cynthia Graham-Kerr. Please refer to John Gibbs financial statement for full details. To receive this we had to achieve charity status and that required minor changes to SOAG's constitution to comply with HMRC rules. These were approved at a Special General Meeting held at Brightwell Baldwin in August, which did enable the attending members to visit the excavation in Brightwell Park making a bonus third SOAG visit of the summer.

### **Events**

The first visit was to Wallingford Castle in June when around a dozen SOAGs plus guests were given a guided tour by Judith Dewey from Wallingford Museum. Tales of royal comings and goings as well as accounts of military action were well received by the attendees. This visit was organised by SOAG David Cox. The second visit, organised by Nancy Nichols, was in July and set a record for attendance with a total of 37 SOAGs and guests. After lunch at a nearby hotel, the group made their way to the Oxford University training dig at Marcham Frilford to see what had been uncovered of the Roman religious centre before the dig finally ended. Over the last ten years quite a few SOAGs have dug in different parts of this extensive complex, which is still subject to final interpretation, exposing unusual Roman structures as well as Iron Age features. Our party was guided around the exposed remains by Megan Price.

Extensive work and interpretation is required to present archaeology well and we often receive the benefit of this in our winter lecture programme. As reported last year, the committee has been concerned by falling attendance figures at lectures, with a low point when our Patron gave a fascinating talk about the demise of the English country house but only 19 people came. Concerned that our isolated venue might be partly responsible, serious consideration has been given to relocating to a town, notably Henley-on-Thames, if the isolated lecture venue was partly responsible for this. But I am pleased to report that currently attendance is much higher (the first of the new winter season having just under 50 attendees and the others all having over 30) and hence we have decided to maintain the Whitchurch Hill hall as the lecture location for next year's programme. Attendance may well have been helped by the publicity gained by the work of Keith Lowndes who has produced and manned displays at a number of events as well as widely distributed details of the programme. Additionally this winter's programme is superb and for this

we must thank Nancy Nichols who organised the lecturers and also Becky Morrison and David Cox for their tea and coffee making which rounds off every lecture.

I must thank all those members who have helped to turn this situation around. Support for the lectures is important as not only are they informative, but talking to a small audience is disappointing to the speaker. Additionally they do take a significant proportion of SOAG's core income which is only exceeded by the cost of producing *SOAG Bulletin*.

## **Publications**

The 2011 edition of *SOAG Bulletin* was a bumper issue and was the last one to be edited by Sue Sandford who has held this demanding role for the last five years. Sue deserves our gratitude for all she has done. Her role will be carried on by John Hefferan who will look forward to receiving articles as well the reports of SOAG's fieldwork.

*SOAG Messenger*, although apparently shorter until you sum all the pages of the issues in a year, requires tremendous effort every month by Mike Green as editor. We are truly grateful for the time Mike spends gathering data, writing the editorial, many of the articles and compiling and distributing the completed newsletter. This publication keeps all our members as up to date as possible with SOAG news and is also circulated to various external bodies. Most members now receive *SOAG Messenger* by e-mail which is not only quicker, but is cost and handling free. I would urge any member who can switch from paper copies to electronic versions to please do this; but we will maintain the availability of the paper version for those members who are unable to change.

While more comprehensive reports will appear in the 2012 edition of *SOAG Bulletin* and elsewhere, I can summarise the excellent work carried out by SOAG members on the various field projects with which we are involved.

## **Brightwell Park**

Members who attended the SGM at Brightwell and visited the BBCHAP dig in Brightwell Park, saw the numerous test trenches that had been opened. The locations of these were based upon an interpretation of the extensive resistivity survey carried out earlier under the direction of Ian Clarke. The large rectilinear feature that dominated the survey was thought to represent the house, but in fact much of it turned out to be an ornamental terrace in front of the house, overlooking what are believed to be more formal gardens. Digging through and beyond this gave some excellent results. Substantial walls were found whose alignments could be followed across a number of trenches, including Trench 1 excavated in 2009-10. But perhaps the most significant feature was the discovery of a medieval hearth with later masonry infilling. This was interpreted as evidence of an early manor and the rebuild that resulted in the manor house that was burned down in 1788. Proving that there was a substantial medieval dwelling here was a primary aim of the excavation, so we should be well satisfied with what was achieved. However, while much remains to be done at this site, there has been a change of land ownership and we do not yet know if there can be any further work in Brightwell Park in the future. We will also sadly be losing the services of Ian Clarke, who is retiring from active archaeology and has moved out of the area, although I am glad to say he will still be working with SOAG and will continue as Vice President. Ian was admirably supported by numerous SOAG diggers and in particular Janet Eastment and Peter Shackleton who acted as supervisors providing direction for our less experienced excavators. Thanks to everyone who took part.

## **Grey's Mound**

Major work at "The Mound" near Rotherfield Greys has been restricted due to David Nicholls limited availability. The good news is he has arranged with the landowner that the mound area has been taken out of cultivation and is now permanent fallow land; the most significant part of this site is thus currently protected. Janet Eastment led a four day field walking exercise in unseasonably warm weather at the end of September. Much flint was found and this was washed and examined in a polytunnel at Gatehampton in November by the original finders who after a fine pub lunch and a presentation were encouraged to sort their finds into artefacts and natural flints. Work by Reading University and SOAG over the last three years has given us a tremendous amount of geophysical data which has allowed David to formulate outline plans for future work. More surveying of nearby fields is planned to gather more evidence of prehistoric activity in the wider area. This will also have the benefit of providing more SOAGs with opportunities to learn the techniques of resistivity and magnetometry surveying. It is also hoped that we can at some stage open a couple of trenches to study the perimeter of the Mound itself.

## **Ewelme (South Oxfordshire Landscape Project)**

We are partners in the Victoria County History project at Ewelme with at times over half of the volunteers being SOAGs. Directed by Stephen Miles of Oxford University, this is an innovative project designed to see how the inhabitants saw and interacted with their environment and landscape for over a one thousand year period ending around 1650. The work this year has involved field walking, geophysics and the digging of ten test pits in various locations around the village. The test pits were supervised by professionals from Oxford Archaeology as well as Richard Oram (County archaeologist covering South Oxfordshire) who were a pleasure to work with and the finds gave an insight into the wide range of occupation that has occurred within in this small area. These extend from worked flints from prehistory and other artefacts from the Iron Age and Roman periods all the way up to modern times. The star find in test pit 10 (within the primary school garden between the school and the Alms Houses) was a medieval wall of what was possibly an unknown manor house. Stephen has many plans for the forthcoming year, but these will be subject to funding limitations. There will certainly be more geophysics and test pits and members will be informed when dates are known, there is also the tantalising possibility of excavation at Ewelme manor.

## **Gatehampton Roman Villa**

Gatehampton continues to be our primary teaching excavation. Run by project director Hazel Williams and deputy director Steve Gibson, it continues to be popular with SOAG volunteers and newcomers, nearly 50 people participated during 2011. As usual, the diggers included some families and younger children as well as students. We are able to provide opportunities for all volunteers to develop their onsite excavation skills, whatever their level of experience. SOAG has an increasing number of skilled and experienced diggers and this is of great benefit at Gatehampton, on other SOAG projects, and on shared projects with other organisations. We greatly value their expertise and enthusiasm that enables us to maintain good standards of excavation whilst still welcoming new volunteers to archaeology. Relationships with the Gatehampton landowners remain good and we are grateful for all the help and support that they provide and for their continued enthusiasm for the project. With their co-operation, the first part of an extensive geophysical survey of both the site field and the adjacent car park has begun and this provided an opportunity for an onsite training session in geophysical survey. The survey so far shows a

substantial area of walls and features extending eastwards and as the site owners have plans for the area, completion of the survey and investigation of the car park area is likely to be a priority in 2012. Further excavation of the central room and adjacent areas in 2011 focussed on what lies beneath the floors exposed in 2010. This has given us a better understanding of the phasing and dating of this part of the building; thanks to Dave Jobling and Tom Walker for their extensive work on this. Tom is also engaged in a further study of the rodent bone assemblage. A 5m by 5m area between Trench 7 and the old Trench 3 was opened at the beginning of the year. Most of the diggers worked on this area at some time during the season, much of it heavy work removing demolition rubble, but with good results; surfaces and walls linking the two trenches and a feature that appeared on the resistivity survey, a new north to south wall. Our thanks also to John Hefferan for his meticulous recording of the CBM and to David Cox for his work as Finds Officer on site; this leaves us well prepared for the winter finds processing sessions.

At the last AGM we unanimously voted for two of our long serving members to become Honorary Members. Pat Preece is a past Chairman and an acknowledged expert on local landscape archaeology and Margaret Westwood, who was one of the group whose work at Gatehampton led to the discovery of the Roman Villa, was SOAG's secretary for 12 years. Both deserve this recognition.

We lost one committee member during the year and I am pleased to say Janet Eastment has stepped into the vacant position and although it is really a 2012 event Keith Lowndes has, to his and our great regret, had to resign from the committee for personal reasons.

*Dave Oliver (Chairman)* April 4<sup>th</sup> 2012

## LECTURES AND VISITS IN 2011

### Lecture Series:

- Jan 27: **Gwilym Williams**, John Moore Heritage Services  
'Medieval excavations at Newington: drawing together the results of work by SOAG & JMHS'
- Feb 24: **Prof Malcom Airs**, Kellogg College, Oxford  
'The Survival of the Country House in the Twentieth Century'.
- Mar 24: **Dr Nicholas Saunders**, University of Bristol  
'20th-century conflict: Archaeological and Anthropological perspectives'
- Apr 18: **AGM and Review of Archaeology for**
- Sept 22: **Dr Mary Lewis**, University of Reading  
Death of a traitor? The case of a hanged, drawn and quartered skeleton from Hulton Abbey, Staffordshire.
- Oct 27: **Dr Hella Eckardt**, University of Reading  
"Foreigners in Roman Cities"
- Nov 24: **Gary Marshall**, National Trust  
'Buildings, Gardens and Landscapes: Archaeology & Restoration in the National Trust'

### Events and Visits:

- June 25: Guided Tour of Wallingford Castle and visit to the Wallingford Museum  
Tour guide: **Judy Dewey**, The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society  
Organiser: SOAG David Cox (joint with Association of Open University Graduates and Berkshire Archaeological Research Group (BARG))
- July 15: Guided Tour of Marcham-Frilford Romano-British Excavation  
Tour guide: **Megan Price**, University of Oxford School of Archaeology
- Aug 02: Guided tour of the SOAG excavations at Brightwell Park  
Tour Guide: **Ian Clarke**
- Nov 12: One-Day Workshop on Human Remains from Archaeological Sites  
Led by: **Louise Loe and Helen Webb**, Oxford Archaeology  
Organiser: Janet Firth, held in co-operation with Berkshire Archaeological Research Group (BARG)

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Last year, in addition to the *Annual Accounts* sheet which contains the amounts actually banked or cashed during the year, we produced a *Budget Centre Forecasts and Actuals* sheet containing summaries that reflected the actual income/expenditure for the year. This was intended to address two points. Firstly to help explain apparent discrepancies caused by factors such as subscriptions for 2011 collected and banked in late 2010 or expenditure for 2011 not paid or cashed until 2012. Secondly, we felt that the greater detail afforded by the budget summaries would enable our members to understand more precisely how the committee manages expenditure on behalf of SOAG members.

It is the policy of the committee to keep expenditure on core SOAG activities within our projected subscription income and for individual projects to be self-financing. In order to do so, we agree budgets for core expenditure items that are designed to meet our policy and review progress with budget holders at regular committee meetings. Looking at the figures in *Budget Centre Forecasts and Actuals*, we can see that the actual running costs of the Group in 2011 exceeded the income from subscriptions by £355.71.

This overspend was driven by three main factors: a conscious decision to spend £172 more on the bulletin than we had forecast; an underestimation of the admin costs of the membership process; and failure to budget for contingency items. We will need to continue the process of improving our forecasting and control in coming years, and to monitor costs closely and explore all opportunities both to reduce costs and increase income. One innovation in increasing the Group's income, which we are hoping will prove a success in 2012, is the introduction of Gift Aid. This will add significantly to our income, but only if tax paying members return their Gift Aid declarations.

### **Notes to the 2011 Accounts**

#### **1. General**

These accounts were prepared in accordance with guidance from the Charities Commission 'Statement of Recommended Practice' (SORP 2005).

#### **2. Payments**

i) Dig expenses - As mentioned above, the general principle was that all projects should aim to be self-funding. During 2011 this has worked well.

ii) Insurance - The cost of insurance rose slightly due to year-on-year cost rises. Note that any increases in the Group's activities may require corresponding increases in insurance cover.

iii) Messenger - An opportunity for cost saving is members opting for electronic copies of Messenger, rather than paper based copies with their printing and distribution costs. I would urge all members who are able to switch to receiving electronic copies, to do so at the earliest opportunity.

### **3. Receipts**

i) Subscriptions - Membership continues to show a year on year decline, something else we will need to continue to monitor closely.

ii) Donations - The most significant financial event of the year was the extremely generous sum of £10,000 which has come from the estate of our former President Cynthia Graham-Kerr, for which we owe immense gratitude to her son Alistair.

### **4. Monetary Assets**

i) Restricted Fund - These consist of the Trio Fund donated by Pat Preece to support our activities in the field of Landscape Archaeology, and funds raised from the Robert Kiln Trust by David Nicholls. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage our membership to take advantage of the Trio fund in 2012.

John M. Gibbs

1<sup>st</sup>February 2012

**SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2011**

**Receipts and Payments Account  
for Year Ended 31 December 2011**

<b><u>UNRESTRICTED GENERAL FUND</u></b>	
<b>RECEIPTS</b>	
<u>31/12/2010</u>	<u>31/12/2011</u>
<b><u>£2,251.30</u></b>	<b><u>£3,470.67</u></b> 1
Balance brought forward	
1126.50 Subscriptions	1654.00
0.00 Sale of Bulletins	0.00
2229.29 Donations	10036.50 2
0.30 Bank Interest	1.23
0.00 Party/Teas income	15.65
465.00 Visitors'/Diggers' Fees	239.25
0.00 Equipment Sale	0.00
<b><u>£3,821.09</u></b>	<b><u>£11,946.63</u></b>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	
<b>PAYMENTS</b>	
220.00 Venue Hall Hire	169.99
387.38 Insurance	572.64 3
159.93 Bulletin	1026.85 4
320.00 Speaker Expenses	190.00 5
34.87 SOAG Party	49.95
22.10 Standing Orders	20.50
11.49 Equipment Purchase	0.00
1058.72 Dig Expenses	102.00
97.35 Office Expenses	50.16 6
186.88 Messenger	61.60 7
86.00 Committee room	50.00
17.00 Website	27.00
<b><u>£2,601.72</u></b>	<b><u>£2,320.69</u></b>
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	
<u>£1,219.37</u>	<u>£9,625.94</u>
Surplus for year	
<b><u>£3,470.67</u></b>	<b><u>£13,096.61</u></b>
Balance carried forward	

**Notes**

- See general comments in Treasurer's Report concerning Year-On-Year differences.
- Includes £10,000 from Cyn Graham-Kerr estate and various other donations.
- Insurance actual cost for 2011 was £488.54, includes £84,10 from 2010.
- Includes 2010 printing costs of £374, plus 2011 costs of printing £567 and distribution £85.85).
- Actual speakers costs for 2011 were £230.
- Actual costs £162.12, remainder to be booked in 2012
- £71.58 of 2011 costs not booked until 2012.
- Note represents undepreciated cost of assets, not current value.

**Statement of Assets & Liabilities  
as at 31 December 2011**

<b>MONETARY ASSETS</b>	
<u>31/12/2010</u>	<u>31/12/2011</u>
2,569.76 Main Account	2,194.47
830.82 Reserve Account	10832.05
70.09 BBCHAP Account	70.09
<b><u>£3,470.67</u></b>	<b><u>£13,096.61</u></b>
<b>TOTAL MONETARY ASSETS</b>	
<b>REPRESENTED BY FUNDS</b>	
1,470.67 Unrestricted General Fund	12,096.61
2000.00 Restricted Funds (P. Preece Trio fund)	1000.00
<b><u>£3,470.67</u></b>	<b><u>£13,096.61</u></b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	

**MAJOR FIXED ASSETS**

Geoscan RM15-D Resistivity Meter	6288.36
HP NC6320 Laptop PC	734.36
Toshiba X2000 LCD Projector	505.24
Dumpy Level	349.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>£7,876.96</u></b> 8

Accounts prepared by:

**John M. Gibbs**

This account was examined by Trudi Kidd from documentation provided and provides a true and accurate presentation of the transactions of the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group during 2011.

Signed by: **Trudi Kidd** (Examiner)

Dated: **1st February 2012**

*(signed original on file)*

## BUDGETS CENTRE FORECASTS AND ACTUALS FOR 2011

<i>Item</i>	<i>Budget Holder</i>	<i>Projected Income</i>	<i>Actual Income</i>		
<i>Membership fees</i>	Mike Vincent	<b>£1,625.00</b>	<b>£1,654.00</b>	<b>£29.00</b>	
<i>Expenses</i>		<i>Budget</i>	<i>Actual</i>		
<b><u>Core activities</u></b>		<i>Forecast</i>	<i>Costs</i>	<i>Variance</i>	
Events	Nancy Nichols	£425.00	£418.29	£6.71	
Insurance	John Gibbs	£489.00	£488.54	£0.46	
Bulletin	John Hefferan	£480.00	£652.85	-£172.85	
Messenger	Mike Green	£135.00	£143.15	-£8.15	
Committee room	Mike Vincent	£120.00	£72.00	£48.00	
Secretary/Admin	Mike Vincent	£85.00	£162.12	-£77.12	
Website	Mike Green	£20.00	£27.00	-£7.00	
Publicity	Keith Lowndes	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Misc/Contingency	(n/a)	£0.00	£45.76	-£45.76	
		<b>£1,754.00</b>	<b>£2,009.71</b>	<b>-£255.71</b>	
<i>Actual income versus actual expenditure (excluding projects)</i>				<b>-£355.71</b>	
<b><u>Projects</u></b>		<i>Opening Balance</i>	<i>Actual Income</i>	<i>Actual Costs</i>	<i>Suplus/ Deficit</i>
Project: BBCHAP	Ian Clarke	£0.00	£186.00	£102.00	£84.00
Project: Villa	Hazel Williams	£215.75	£273.26	£155.36	£333.65
Project: Greys	David Nicholls	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Project: Bix	David Nicholls	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
		<b>£459.26</b>		<b>£257.36</b>	<b>£417.65</b>
<i>Total</i>		<b>£2,113.26</b>		<b>£2,267.07</b>	<b>£4,380.33</b>

## SOAG OFFICERS AND ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*As they stand at the end of year 2011-2012 & including reference to any special roles*

Hon President :	Mrs Hazel Williams (also Director of the Roman Villa dig)
Vice President	Mr Ian Clarke (also Project Leader of the BBCHAP project)
Chairman	Mr David Oliver
Vice Chairman	Dr Nancy Nichols (SOAG Events Secretary)
Hon Secretary	Mr Michael Vincent
Hon Treasurer	Mr John Gibbs
Ordinary Members	Mr John Hefferan (Editor, <i>SOAG Bulletin</i> )
	Mr Michael Green (Editor, <i>SOAG Messenger</i> , and SOAG webmaster)
	Mr Peter Stapleton, expelled September 2011
	Mr Keith Lowndes, resigned February 2012 (SOAG Publicity)
	Mrs Janet Eastment, co-opted January 2012