



NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021

Letter from the Editor

Hello!

Spring is on its way – the sun is shining, snowdrops are giving way to crocus in the garden, a table of iris reticulata outside the kitchen window brightens my day as does the birds visiting the feeders.

Have you watched 'The Dig' on Netflix? It highlights Basil Brown's role in excavating Sutton Hoo, I really enjoyed it, though how factually accurate is it? Answers on a postcard (well email please). 😊

An Institute of Detectorists is being created with the support and £50K funding from Historic England with the Nation Farmers Union joining the advisory board. A good news story from the detecting community. Below is lifted from British Archaeology News Resource.

"A £50,000 grant from Historic England is a step forward towards the setting up of a new organisation to support and train metal detectorists in the UK.

Working with archaeologists and others in the heritage sector, the 'Institute of Detectorists' aims to provide training opportunities to promote responsible metal detecting and examine how metal detecting has been beneficial in the investigation of archaeological sites and landscapes.

The project will explore how best to develop such an institute and help to establish an agenda for best practice as well as determining how this can be taught as part of a national training programme. It will also support voluntary self-regulation and provide a platform for detectorists to demonstrate their competence and skills to others.

Keith Westcott, the metal detectorist who is behind the project, has 25 years' experience of metal detecting and is passionate about ensuring that the archaeological value of metal detecting is fully realised. In 2019, Keith won the **Archaeological Training Forum Award** for creating the first ever course focused on skills development for metal detectorists.

Keith pointed out that;

"The aim of this project is to establish a not-for-profit research and educational body for detectorists. This body would promote responsible metal detecting as a technique that contributes to the understanding, conservation and protection of the historic environment".

Barney Sloane, the National Specialist Services Director Historic England stated;

"This project provides an opportunity to build on an increasingly positive relationship between the responsible metal detecting community, archaeologists and other heritage organisations. The proposed institute could prove to be of great benefit for portable antiquities, archaeology and the wider public. This new body aims to train people in best practice in metal detecting and we applaud that."

A Project Advisory Board and Focus group will be set up to help steer the development of the Institute and the feasibility study also has the support of national bodies such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Council for British Archaeology and Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

See you all on the 8th!



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

WEAG CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Lecture Program

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

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

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

Monday 8 March 2021 @ 19:15

AGM and 'The Roman pottery manufacturing site in Highgate Wood and the Imperial Procurator in Londinium. Can we find a connection?'. *Speaker: Harvey Sheldon, Birkbeck College, WEAG President.*

Monday 12 April 2021 @ 19:15

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

Monday 10 May 2021 @ 19:15

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

Monday 8 June 2021 @ 19:15

'To be confirmed'. *Speaker: Noral Carlin.*