



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2020

Letter from the Editor

IT'S CHRISTMAS well nearly, so much to do and so little time, give yourself a break, pull up a chair, put the kettle on and settle down to December's edition. We have another article from Lee Joyce, always a good read.

There is still time to see Melinda's lecture on [Non-Invasive Archaeology](#) from 9th Nov, click the title to watch. Melinda has also sent us a link to some lectures on [Scottish Archaeology](#).

We've had a reply to Guy's email about the Archers from Jeremy Grove.

"Well done to Guy for the Archers story line. Being the WEST ESSEX Archaeological Group, I wonder if we should now set our sites on getting something into Eastenders? Albert Square can't be that far outside our baileywick, or maybe they could stumble across something on one of their occasional trips out to Epping Forest? Maybe Albert Square itself could lie on the boundary between the Trinovantes and that other lot? Hmm, I'm not even convincing myself..."

A couple of reminders firstly subs are due in January, please remember to change your standing order to £20 and secondly donate to WEAG for free using Amazon, you can generate money for WEAG by putting smile.amazon.co.uk into your browser, choosing West Essex Archaeological Group as your chosen charity and then continuing your purchase as normal, if you remember to do this every time you spend with Amazon you'll be giving for free.



Guy also sent this in – *University of Hertfordshire Press is delighted to launch the fourth in its series of Essex local history books under the imprint Essex Publications. This volume provides the first comprehensive account of the life, work and philanthropy of Dr Thomas Plume. Educated at Chelmsford Grammar School and Christ's College, Cambridge, Plume was vicar of Greenwich from 1658 and archdeacon of Rochester from 1679, holding both posts until his death in 1704. [Dr Thomas Plume, 1630-1704](#) can be ordered directly from our website with a special introductory discount of 20% with no postage to pay.*

New Collections Officer for Epping Forest District Museum

I am pleased to announce that Ian Channell is our new Collections Officer for Epping Forest District Museum. Please see Ian's bio attached at the end of the newsletter.

Annual General Meeting

Due to the continuing Covid situation and to meet legal requirements we are planning for the AGM in March to be via Zoom, with the current committee remaining in place, all reports will be made available or sent out via email. If there are any objections to either the online 'AGM' or the committee you can send your objections in the strictest of confidence to our Chair Tony O'Conner at AConnor@eppingforestdc.gov.uk or by post to Mr A O'Connor, Epping Forest District Museum, 39-41 Sun Street, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1EL. Should you wish to be nominated or to nominate someone for the committee, please notify us in advance, more details nearer the time.

Post Lockdown / Tiers.... Change of Venue?

Would you like us to meet elsewhere and if so where? The venue ideally should have Wi-Fi and access to a kitchen or a bar, if you know of a suitable venue please email into membership with the venues contact details and we'll look into it.

Christmas Gift Ideas

Short of Christmas present ideas? Why not treat the person you love (or yourself) to a WEAG T-shirt or sweatshirt.



December Lecture

The December meeting is via Zoom, though we won't be meeting in person we are still having a social and the upside is I can have a glass of wine. Included in the evening is a presentation from Allestree Fisher, a quiz of general knowledge and archaeology questions and a show and tell or show and ask - if you have anything you'd like to show us or if you have an item that you are unsure of or would like some more information on, have it handy during the meeting. Also, would you like to contribute to the social, do you have a presentation? Please contact me in the next few days.

That's all folks, wishing you a peaceful and healthy Christmas.

WEAG Member Profile

Would you like to be 'our profile on a member'? If so email me on and I'll forward you the questions.

Stay In Touch

weag.org.uk
Facebook.com/westsexarchaeological
Twitter.com/WEAGarchaeology
Instagram.com/weag_archaeology
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 7 December 2020 @ 19:15

A Zoom meeting – Social and roundup of member activities.

Monday 11 January 2021 @ 19:15 via Zoom

'Humphrey Repton at Highams'. *Speaker: Georgina Green.*

Monday 8 February 2021 @ 19:15

'Bricks in Essex'. *Speaker: Anne Padfield.* Anne is a local historian and English Heritage guide at Hill Hall.

Monday 8 March 2021 @ 19:15

AGM and 'Progress in the last 12 months at Bankside Rose'. *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.*

WEAG'S WORK ON THE ROUTE OF THE M11 PART 5: The Mill Street Kilns Transitional pottery production in Harlow

Amongst the most important sites found along the line of the M11 must be the pottery kilns at Mill Street. During fieldwalking in early 1972 late medieval/transitional pottery sherds were found in a paddock at the junction of Harlow Common and Mill Street (TL 482 086), the area had been flagged up after initial field survey by Wally Davey in 1971 (*Davey 1972*). In the summer of 1972 trial trenches were dug by W.E.A.G. under the direction of Mr F.R. Clark and further excavation carried out in 1973 under the direction of Mr T.A. Betts. Two late 16th C kilns were found. The smaller kiln, Kiln A was found in a fragmentary condition but the



remains of a brick pedestal were present. The larger kiln, Kiln B, lay 6m South-East of Kiln A and was far better preserved and was a flattened oval shape (*Betts 1972, 1974. Robertson 1976. Walker and Davey 2009*). A Musty Type 2d (*Musty 1974*) twin flue kiln with opposing fireboxes and a split pedestal, it is almost identical to an example from Hole Farm Sible Hedingham (*Walker 2012*). Only the brick base of the kiln survived. The kiln evidently had problems with flooding as the floor level had been raised at least twice. It had three phases of use, the lowest level had a drain which ran off into a ditch. The drain was constructed using interlocking wheel thrown ceramic drainpipes most probably made on site. Harlow was an important location for pottery manufacture from the 13th to the 18th century. Roman pottery kilns were also found at Holbrooks (*Conlon 1973*) and a Roman tile kiln at Potter Street (*Mounce 2010*), the area that would later become the

centre of the medieval and later industry. The Harlow industry reached its height in the 17th century when its products were widely traded most notably its slip trailed products 'Metropolitan Slipware' so named because of its abundance in London. The earlier medieval Harlow pottery industry had been a small scale regional centre but still with a fair reach, it accounts for 46% of the medieval pottery found in the market place excavations in Old Harlow (Walker 1991), it is the most abundant pottery fabric recovered in medieval layers at Copped Hall (Joyce 2007) and has been found in other medieval excavations such as those at Stansted Airport where its presence is variable to say the least accounting for only a single sherd at the RWS site, only 0.5% from the DFS site, but on other sites such as the LBS site it forms 49% of the assemblage and TWS site it accounts for 77%, although the assemblages are smaller in size (Walker 2004). Medieval Harlow ware does have a presence in London and recent excavations at Barking have shown its importance on some sites (Jarrett 2018. in this report he also discusses the wares use in London in some detail). At the time of our kilns the main market for their products would have been the annual Bush Fair, a medieval livestock market that lasted until the end of the 19th century. It also served as a centre for regional trade and was renowned for its entertainments (and its criminality!). There are also records of a Harlow potter, William Catterolle Snr, renting a stall at Harlow Market for 5d in 1611 (Bartlett 2009).

No actual pottery was recovered from Kiln A. Medieval/ transitional redwares, small amounts of black glazed wares and kiln furniture were recovered from Kiln B, these are likely to have been dumped in the kiln after it had ceased to function. The presence of the black glazed wares is evidence that the dump within the kiln would date to the late 16th century.



A total of 178kg of transitional pottery was excavated from Mill Street although some poorly stratified so only material from four contexts were used to construct the sites typology (Davey and Walker 2009). The sherds were also divided by fabric using petrological analysis (thin Section) (Vince 2009). Judging from

Recording Kiln B.

Note early stages of the motorway behind

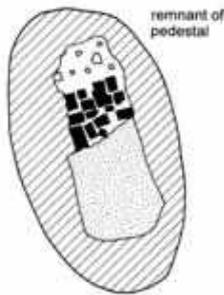
the waste materials the pottery produced on site would include transitional plain red ware dishes, dishes with painted slip decoration and dishes with an unusual impressed decoration, some of the other

forms made were dripping dishes, double handled jars, pipkins, bunghole jars, jugs, cups/drinking jugs, costrels, chafing dishes, candlesticks, lids and pierced vessels (Davey and

Walker 2009). However probably the most interesting of all is the earlier mentioned slip

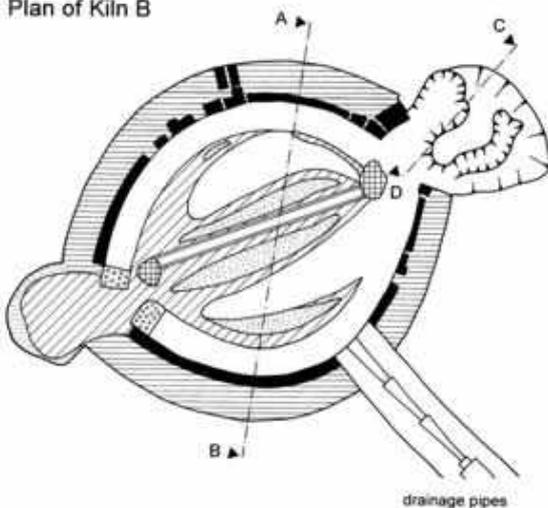
decorated and stamped decorated dishes. There is little decoration on the majority of the transitional ware sherds but some from Kiln B have a trailed slip of either straight or curved lines (a common feature of Essex medieval pottery industries, for example Mill Green (Pearce 1982)) although no sherds are bigger

Plan of Kiln A

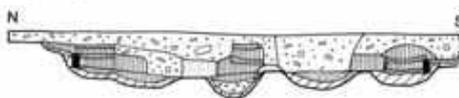


- Footing of kiln wall
- Grey fired clay on plan
- Grey fired clay in section
- Brickwork or fired lining
- Red fired clay
- Yellow clay
- Brick rubble build-up
- Rubbish & waster fill
- Wood ash
- Charcoal
- Fragments of red brick

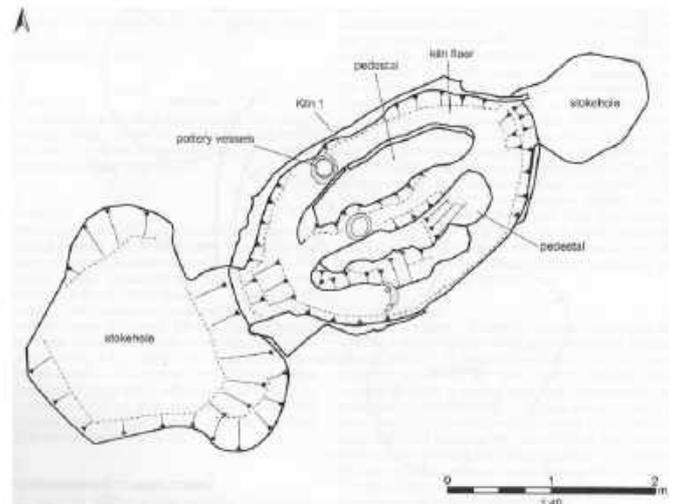
Plan of Kiln B



Section A-B



Section C-D



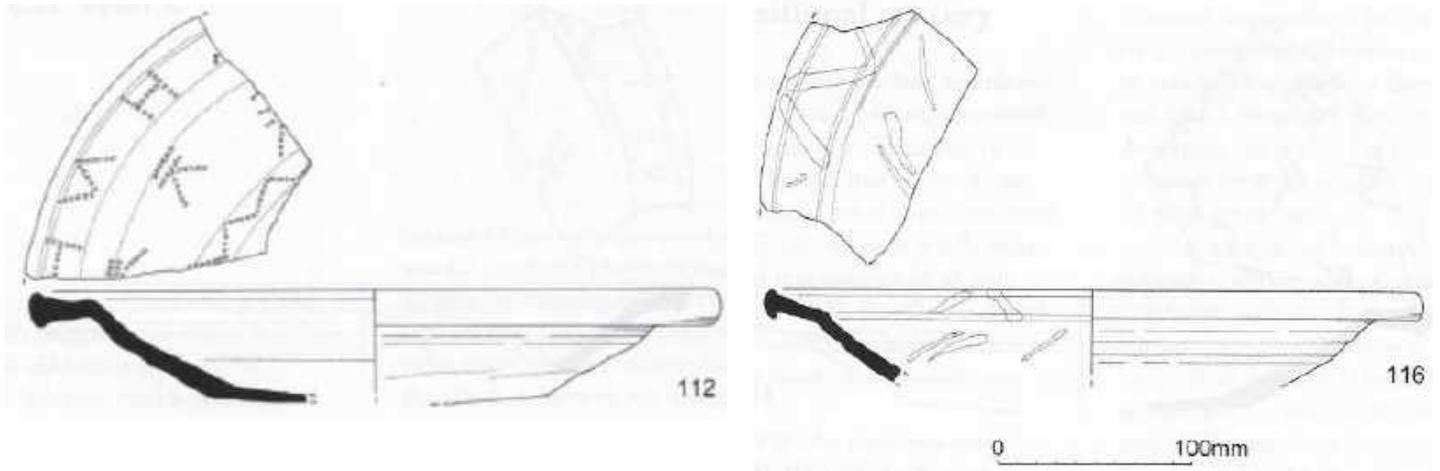
Hedingham ware Holes Farm kiln 1,

Two kilns shown side by side for comparison. Not the same scale, the Harlow kiln is 3.0x2.7M & the Hedingham Kiln 2.2x1.5M.

16th C split pedestal kiln at Mill Street, Harlow

enough to reconstruct the whole pattern. These would have been applied with either a brush or a fingertip. The slip when examined was always white rather than the pink used in the later Metropolitan slipwares (Davey and Walker 2009). Another features of the site not yet discussed was the discovery of a 17th c cottage rebuilt on the foundations of a medieval predecessor. Part of this rebuilding, included an overshot whose foundations was partially constructed of kiln wasters. Two of these were typical 17th C post-medieval fabric (so not the product of our kilns which date to the mid-16th C (Betts 1972)) with otherwise unique zig zag brush slip around the rim. The rims were formed using a profile gauge typical of the later Harlow industry and the slip which was examined using XRF (Hughes 2009) and was pink as was the slip later used on Metropolitan ware, so these two sherds are possibly the earliest evidence we have for the beginnings of this tradition (Davey and Walker 2009). Also found in these deposits were 3 dishes with impressed decoration including lettering on the rims and various motifs on the inner walls, these appear to have been made using a six pronged comb (Davey and Walker 2009). The Mill Street kiln provide by far the greatest

evidence of the intermediary stages of evolution of a regional medieval industry into one of national (*Jarrett 2018. Davey and Walker 2009. Pearce 2014*) and international importance, with the products of the later industry, although on a minor part of assemblages, invaluable to those studying early English presence in America (*Noel-Hume 1969. Hurry 2012*).



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West Essex Archaeological Group (WEAG) Newsletter – Biography, Role Responsibilities and Rationalisation Project

Hello, and thanks very much for allowing me the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Ian Channell and I have recently been appointed the Collections Officer of Epping Forest District Museum.

I have previously held positions within the Collections Care Department of the Fitzwilliam Museum and within a digital and physical archiving department of a commercial archaeology unit based in Herefordshire and Buckinghamshire. Within the later role I oversaw the preparation of archives and liaised regularly with museums, the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) and Historic England to ensure the timely deposition of archaeological documents and data.

One of the most significant projects I was fortunate enough to assist with was Project Pilgrim, an HLF- funded project which involved excavations at Gloucester Cathedral prior to ground redevelopment. The team found multiple skeletons and grave goods, allowing us to elaborate upon the lives of past individuals, including one skeleton interred with a rare iron alloy band which specialists believe supported a prosthetic wooden leg- [Medieval 'false leg' strap found at Gloucester Cathedral - BBC News](#).

I have experience working and volunteering in museums in Scotland and Wales and have worked as a field archaeologist in Orkney, Shetland and Romania and continue to be passionate about archaeology within the museum environment.

The Collections Officer role at Epping Forest District Museum is multifaceted and diverse and is broadly responsible for:

1. Collections development, focusing primarily on updating and editing the collections database, generating and refreshing procedures and overseeing the review and rationalisation project;
2. Supervising, providing training and recruiting collections volunteers;
3. Assisting and co-curating object interpretation and exhibitions; and
4. Ensuring accessible and well-managed storage areas, including regular environmental monitoring

One of our current larger projects is the Review, Rationalise and Recycle Project.

The collection is currently housed in 4 storage locations. Like so many museums, the collections have begun to exceed the space available for storage and display, presenting limitations to their care, management and access.

Many of these objects fall outside the Museum's Collection Development Policy- reflecting objects originating from outside the district, duplicated items, or hazardous material.

In a series of phases, the Museum's Review, Rationalise and Recycle Project will document, photograph and condition assess pertinent objects, followed by researching object provenance, rarity, historical importance, and social value.

When an object is to be potentially deaccessioned from the collection, the stringent ethical guidelines developed by the Museum Association and SHARE Museums East will be abided by.

I very much look forward to working with members of the West Essex Archaeological Group, ensuring your extensive knowledge is utilised to strengthen our decision making during the Review, Rationalise and Recycle Project and a continued partnership within future projects.

Please do feel free to contact me at ichannell@eppingforestdc.gov.uk and I look forward to meeting you all in person at one point in the future.