



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2020

Letter from the Editor

Hello! How are you all? The weather has been great which helps – what a digging season it would have been!

Have you found anything in your garden? I found part of a jug handle on my allotment. Please see Lee's assessment below....



"It is post medieval red earthenware, thumbed handle from a chamber pot, Essex black glazed ware. The glaze is a black iron reduced glaze. This example, given where you live, was almost certainly made at the Loughton kilns rather than the Harlow or Stock kilns. Probable date of 1580 - 1630 although could be as late as the early 18th century." Lee

I also found a lovely blade whilst walking my dogs on Roding Valley playing fields in Loughton, definitely a re-deposit.



Last Month Competition

Well done to Melinda for correctly identifying last month's mystery object as a shot. It's possibly 13th century, found in a pyramid of about 30 at a farm on Tawney Common.

WEAG Message Board – see next page

We've had a kind invitation from Ralph for volunteers to dig in his garden. This would be a private arrangement between yourself and Ralph and not be under the WEAG umbrella – so if interested, please contact him directly. He has also offered to survey members' gardens. There is also a message from Judy regarding back issues of Current Archaeology.

Festival of Archaeology 2020 – July & October

As a reminder the CBA Festival of Archaeology is starting with a series of digital events in July and on the ground events in October. See info attached.

Friends of the Copped Hall Trust – Exclusive Private Opening of the Gardens

As lockdown eases the Copped Hall Trust wants to trial opening up the gardens again. This Sunday 5 July 'Friends of the Copped Hall Trust' are being offered the special opportunity of attending a private "Friends-only" garden afternoon. Please see WEAG Key Events (page 4) for details.

Articles

This month we are pleased to include two articles from Lee, one on the 'M11' and another on 'Finds from a walk'. Do you have anything to contribute to the newsletter? However big or small we would welcome your input – please do get in touch via lexie.lyons@icloud.com.

WEAG Message Board

"I'm doing a bit of back garden archaeology that I couldn't get too before. Thought I'd waggle my metal detector at it first. Lots of signals but as expected mostly ferrous, with not much enthusiasm as the ground was as hard as concrete. Then just 6 inches down I had a glimpse of corrugated iron. Looked like an Anderson shelter. The specter of 35 St Mary's Avenue flashed through my mind. I've surveyed much of the garden with the GPR and it's no surprise there's a lot of junk. If there are WEAG members with nowhere to dig, something could be done so long as the social distancing rules are observed. I'm also open to requests from WEAG members who want a survey of their own garden." Ralph Potter

If interested message Ralph directly via ralph.potter1@ntlworld.com

"Hi everyone I'm hoping this reaches someone who is interested or knows someone who would be interested in a small pile of back copies of Current Archaeology. I can deliver to an interested party within a reasonable distance of Chingford." Judy Weatherley

If interested message Judy directly via judy.weatherley@yahoo.co.uk

WEAG Mem. 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](https://www.facebook.com/westsexarchaeological)

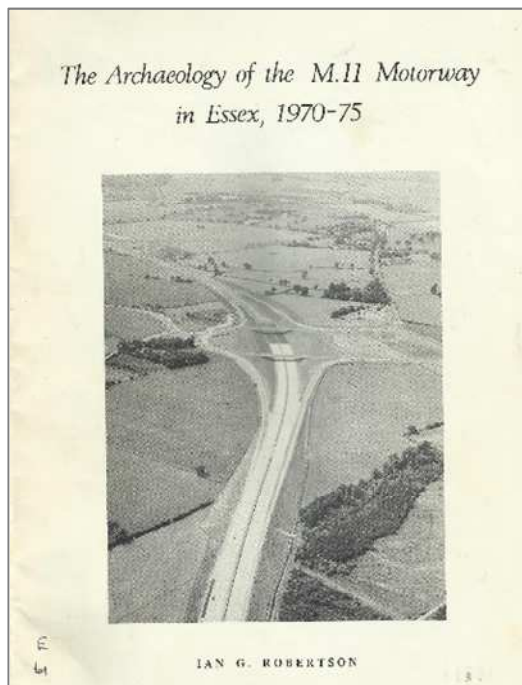
[Twitter.com/WEAGarchaeology](https://twitter.com/WEAGarchaeology)

[Instagram.com/weag_archaeology](https://www.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'S WORK ON THE ROUTE OF THE M11

submitted by Lee Joyce



As this week was supposed to be spring dig I thought we all need a little archaeology fix. WEAG have excavated many notable sites over the years: Copped Hall; Wanstead Park (twice); Little London; Harlow Temple to name a few and I am sure you all know them well so I thought I would write about a lesser known episode in WEAG's history - The monitoring of 18 km of the proposed site of the M11 (making it WEAG's biggest site ever!). Many local groups and museums along the line of the motorway were involved and the area split into four areas. WEAG worked in area 3.

Area 3 was the first in which Archaeological surveys / field walking began, this started on 1st November 1972. The area covered was between South Harlow and Birchanger and covered eleven miles. The other groups involved in this area were The Bishops Stortford Local History Society and The Stort Valley Area Study Group (an offshoot of WEAG). Eighteen sites in total were investigated in area 3. The report breaks down the sites in to the following categories: Bronze Age 1; Iron Age 6; Iron Age and Roman 2; Roman 1: Medieval 4 and Post Medieval 2. We shall take a look at some of these over the next few days.

WEAG's biggest site ever!

THE MOST HUMBLE OF FINDS

submitted by Lee Joyce

Once again in the week I received an email from Vicky (Hoskin) with some finds she had discovered, this time not from her garden but on a walk she had just taken. The assemblage consisted of a few sherds of flower pot and land rain, both are ubiquitous finds on any field walk and at first may not sound all that interesting but even the humblest of finds has a story to tell.

Flower pots have been around on and off since the Roman era. From the mid 17thC onwards they became a staple of the post-Medieval Red Earthenware tradition. In the 19thC the modern flowerpot as we know them came into being. Made in porous unglazed red earthenware and mass produced in very large numbers by companies like Sankeys of Nottingham whose stamped jars account for 100% of the name stamps found at Copped Hall. Local manufacture was also common in many areas until the Second World War with the potteries at Upshire, only a few miles away from Copped Hall, making both thrown and slip-caste pots in this case well beyond the end of the War.



A film of the Upshire Works can be found on the East Anglian film archive website. See bibliography for details.



*Right – Slip-casting Flowerpots.
Far right – Potter throwing
Flowerpots, both at Upshire.
(1954 EAFA Still)*

Land rains will be familiar to all those who have dug at Copped Hall. During the 19thC new mechanical ways of producing bricks were developed. However the combined problems of flawed design and excise duties (in place between 1784 & 1850) restricted their adoption, as designs were crude and unreliable, but the tax had to be paid on all bricks even those damaged and unusable. This led to a reluctance to invest in new machinery. Without the opportunity to test the new machinery in mass brickmaking situations, manufacturers were unable to refine the machines and demonstrate their efficiency.



During the 1840s a new machine was required to manufacture large quantities of drainage pipe for the new emerging market, this provided the needed impetus to drive development of clay working machinery. An opportunity to display their effectiveness was provided by meetings of the Royal Agricultural society and this allowed continuing technical development. It was the relationship between the machine manufacture and the agricultural industry that eventually decided the direction of technologies in both brick and drain development. Although several alternative technologies were tried it was the extrusion or wire cut method that proved to be the most successful and became widely adopted. Well I never thought I would say it but I kind of miss those drains!

Bibliography

Cotter, John P Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85—(Colchester archaeological report 7). "Flower Pots" 1954, East Anglian Film Archive www.eafa.org.uk > catalogue. Accessed 21.05.2020
Watt, K (2002) Making drain tiles a "home manufacture" Agricultural consumers and the social construction of clay working technology in the 1840's. *Rural History*, 13(1) 39-60.

WEAG CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Key Events

Sunday 5 July 2020 – 2pm–4pm

Copped Hall, Crown Hill, Epping, CM16 5HS

‘Exclusive Private Opening of the Gardens’

"Friends of the Copped Hall Trust" are being offered the special opportunity of attending a private "Friends-only" Garden Afternoon. This Garden Afternoon will be strictly limited to existing single or joint members of the "Friends of the Copped Hall Trust" and their children, under 16, but will not extend to other visitors whom you may have ordinarily wished to bring along. Precautions will be in place to respect social distancing.

For more information visit www.coppedhalltrust.org.uk

Lecture Program

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 14 September 2020 @ 19:15

The Rudge Lecture

‘Highams in Walthamstow’. *Speaker: Georgina Green.*

Monday 12 October 2020 @ 19:15

‘Medieval Church Wall Paintings in Essex’. *Speakers: Lee Joyce & Claire Hooper.*

Monday 11 November 2020 @ 19:15

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

Monday 7 December 2020 @ 19:15

Social (book sales and refreshments) and roundup of member activities.

Monday 11 January 2021 @ 19:15

‘Non-Invasive Archaeology’. *Speaker: Melinda Barham.*

Monday 8 February 2021 @ 19:15

Details to be confirmed

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.

THE UK'S BIGGEST CELEBRATION OF ARCHAEOLOGY

NEW DATES

11-19 JULY
DIGITAL EVENTS

24 OCTOBER-1 NOVEMBER
ON THE GROUND EVENTS

THEME:
CLIMATE AND
ENVIRONMENT

CBA
FESTIVAL OF
ARCHAEOLOGY
2020



festival.archaeologyuk.org



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