



Archaeological Service

Annual Report 2001-2002

Archaeology has never been so popular. Television programmes, like Time Team, have huge viewing figures, reflecting a widespread interest in our past, but it is far more important than mere entertainment. Surprisingly (to some), the protection of our historic environment is a significant indicator of sustainable economic development. (*“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.*) All development uses not only the earth’s natural resources but also its historic environment resources. A hedgerow removed or an archaeological site destroyed permanently, reduces the heritage resource. The effective protection of the historic environment is crucial to maintain the character of Suffolk and quality of life of its people.

However, the heritage shouldn’t be seen as just a negative constraint on development. Wisely used, it can be a powerful agent for economic development.

Tourism contributes £700 million to Suffolk’s economy every year and a major reason visitors come here is its heritage. There is still enormous scope for heritage-based tourism as shown by the massive influx of visitors to the new Sutton Hoo Visitor Centre.

Finally, archaeology is important for lifelong learning. For most of Suffolk’s history there are no written records and archaeological research is the only way the history of these periods can be written.

The County Archaeological Service is the only agency solely dedicated to the protection of Suffolk’s historic environment and the work summarised in this report illustrates the broad range of its contribution.

Keith Wade
Archaeological Service Manager



▲ Early Bronze Age collared urn from Carlton Colville

‘My visit to Landguard Fort’
▼ by Rebecca Thomas, Bealings School



Conservation Teamp2

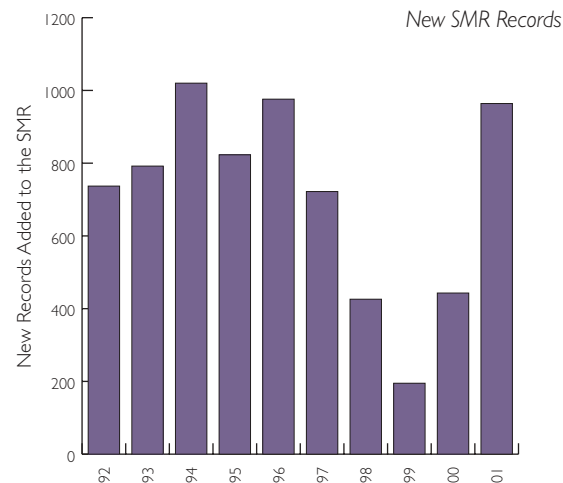
Field Projects Teamp4

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Conservation Team

Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)

During 2001/2002, 964 new records were added to the computerised SMR, 521 more than in 2000/2001. A total of 20,000 records was reached in February 2002, representing over 13,100 mapped archaeological sites. This upsurge in entries reflects the additional staff time which has been allocated to the task of clearing the backlog of records which await entry to the electronic database. In addition 1,201 existing records were amended.



Some outstanding finds and sites were recorded during 2001 (also see 'Finds Recording Scheme' and 'Field Projects Team') dating from the Palaeolithic to the 'Cold War' (see Scheduled Ancient Monuments). Aerial photography (see also 'Coastal Survey') resulted in the recording of two additional (to one that was previously recorded) 'cursus' monuments at Fornham All Saints. These are a particularly rare and mysterious Neolithic monument type consisting of parallel ditches, that can be up to six miles long, which usually lead to funerary complexes. Their precise function is unknown. Additional to these were cropmarks of possible Neolithic long barrows at Reydon and Kessingland; 'ring-ditches' (usually plough-levelled burial mounds) at Ashfield cum Thorpe, Lackford, Flixton, Hawkedon, Helmingham and Hoxne (and an oval example at Frostenden); enclosures (usually for settlements) at Ashfield cum Thorpe, Benacre, Monk Soham, Easton Bavents, Debenham (2), Framlingham, Flixton (2), Fressingfield, Gazeley, Helmingham and Weston; trackways and field systems at Bramford, Framlingham (2) and South Elmham St Cross; moats at Cratfield, Framlingham, Helmingham, Fressingfield, Laxfield, Layham and Marlesford and parish boundaries at Dennington/Brundish.

Surviving earthworks (also see 'Forest Survey') include two possible pillow mounds (for medieval rabbit breeding) at Mildenhall; a possible windmill mound at Copdock, a possible sheepcote at Cavenham Heath; possible house platforms at Hemley; strip field systems at Grundisburgh and 1st world war training trenches at Mildenhall

Documentary evidence provided information on numerous, mainly post medieval, mills, kilns and brickworks sites and a variety of medieval sites, including mills at Framlingham, Hopton, Lavenham and Orford; deer parks at Drinkstone, Elmsett, Framlingham and Westhorpe; moats at Lawshall and

Worlingworth; dovecotes at Chedburgh, Edwardstone and Felsham, a chapel at Haverhill and a manorial hall and chapel site at Weston.

Finds Recording Scheme

Funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Heritage Lottery Fund, the third year of the pilot scheme for the voluntary recording of portable antiquities in Suffolk was completed at the end of January 2002. The Finds Recording Officer, Dr Helen Geake, continued to be supported by a substantial contribution of Conservation Team staff time.

Visits continued to be made to the three principal metal-detector clubs which serve the county: the Mildenhall and District Metal Detector Club, the Ipswich and District Detector Club, and the East Coast Searchers.

During the period covered by this Annual Report, 4890 objects were recorded on the Portable Antiquities Database, which represents an increase of just under 15% on last year's total. A priority for the last year was to increase the quantity of digital images, and the number added to the database has in fact more than doubled to 1,539 images this year. The images consist of digital photographs and flatbed scans, both of the objects themselves and of the line drawings that are an essential part of recording information about objects. Black-and-white record photographs and colour slides also continue to be taken.

The breakdown of finds by period for this year shows some significant differences to last year. While nearly half (44%) of all finds continued to be of Roman date, there was an increase in the proportion of finds from the medieval period (post-Norman Conquest) to 28% of all finds, probably as the result of an increased understanding by metal-detectorists that apparently commonplace medieval objects are worthy of recording. There was also an increase in the numbers of prehistoric finds reported, to 11% of all finds. This represents an increase in the numbers of flints brought in for recording by detectorists who are now also picking up objects traditionally found by fieldwalkers.



Anglo-Saxon plaque from Bromeswell

During 2001-2, data continued to be passed to other databases, mainly the SMRs of neighbouring counties. Information on 15 early-medieval coins was sent to the Early Medieval Corpus of Coin Finds at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, and details of 29 Iron Age coins were sent to the Celtic Coin Index at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

The Roman assemblage was again overwhelmingly dominated by coins. Exactly 1,200 of the 2,153 Roman finds were coins, but again only one new coin hoard came to light during this year. This was a dispersed group of clipped siliquae from Worlington which, it is hoped, will be acquired by Mildenhall Museum.

Notable among the early Anglo-Saxon finds from this year were those from newly discovered inhumation cemeteries; two in the west of the county, and one near Ipswich. Graves from these cemeteries, originally deeply buried, are now being eroded by agricultural activity and their metal objects found by detectorists.



Anglo-Saxon strap-end from Wyverstone

Finds reported under the Treasure Act 1996

1998/1999	16
1999/2000	21
2000/2001	22
2001/2002	27

The number of Treasure Act cases reported has shown a slightly higher increase this year than the number of non-Treasure finds reported under the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

All except one of this year's numismatic cases were all Roman, the exception being a gold quarter-stater from a previously reported Iron Age hoard. The Roman coins included two hoards of late Roman siliquae, one group from a previously reported hoard, and a small group of Roman Republican coins.

Single finds were again dominated by fairly commonplace items. The most common category was finger-rings; there were five silver examples of Roman date, three medieval silver finger-rings, and two post-medieval gold finger-rings, one set with a diamond. Three medieval silver annular brooches were found, one set with amethysts. It seems likely that about one-third of this year's Treasure finds will be claimed by museums, and the rest returned to their finders.

The few more significant objects reported under the Treasure Act this year included a penannular gold ring dating to the Bronze Age, known as 'ring-money' but of uncertain function; a silver belt-buckle, distorted by heat, from the site of an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery and showing that cremation was practised on the site; and a gilded silver medieval pilgrim's badge showing St Nicholas.



Bronze Age gold ring



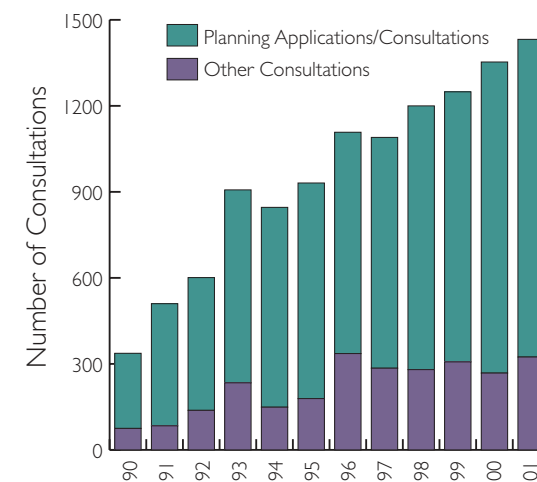
Gilded silver medieval pilgrim's badge

Historic Field Systems In East Anglia

Dr Max Satchell continued his two year project funded by English Heritage, concentrating on the analysis of the data collected for the twelve case studies across the region. The results of this important project will be prepared for publication during 2002/03.

Consultations

The increase in consultations since 1990 continues but has slowed down. There were 1,425 consultations in 2001/2002 compared with 1,349 in 2000/2001. Around 71% of these came from the Local Planning Authorities, while the rest were mainly from the Department of Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and Forestry Authority. There was only one consultation as a result of the Hedgerow Regulations (1997).



Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Thirty two sites were designated by English Heritage as Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Suffolk in 2001, as part of the ongoing Monuments Protection Programme (MPP). These comprise of moats at Barnardiston, Great Bradley, Brockley (2), Cowlinge (4), Denham (St Edmundsbury), Depden, Elmsett, Eye (5), Hintlesham, Hitcham, Hundon, Lawshall, Milden, Nedging, Rushbrook, Shelley, Great Thurlow (2), Whepstead, Great and Little Wratting (2); a churchyard cross at Brockley and remains of the early Shelley Hall.

In addition to this, as part of the MPP, was the launch of the national assessment of Cold War monuments. Of the first four sites shortlisted for scheduling are two in Suffolk, Barnham Camp, a former chemical and nuclear store, and Orford Ness, the experimental research station used principally, since the first world war, for testing bombs, radar and some of the environmental effects of atomic weapons.

Monument Management

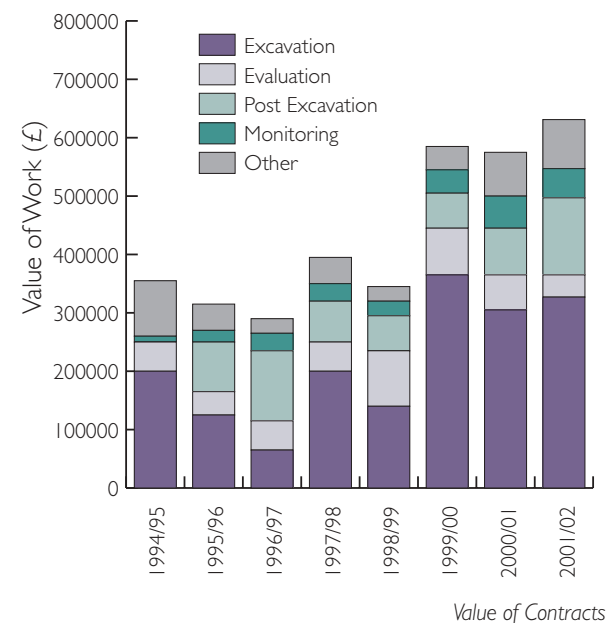
Very little proactive work was undertaken during 2001/2002. However, the Service was consulted on 86 applications for Countryside Stewardship and 35 Environmentally Sensitive Area Agreements.

Advice continued to Forest Enterprise over the management of archaeological sites on their extensive holdings in the county.

Field Projects Team

290 Field Projects were undertaken in 2001/2002 and external income amounted to nearly £600,000, recovering the costs of projects, for the third year running. Excavations continue to provide half of this income, with the remainder made up of evaluations, post-excavation, monitoring, church recording, survey, assessment and specialist consultancy.

The following is a selection of some of the more interesting and important projects. Summaries of all discoveries reported in 2001 can be found in 'Archaeology in Suffolk 2001', in Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, XL, part 2, 2001.



Excavations

Higher Baxter Street, Bury St Edmunds. The construction of housing on the former car-park of the Suffolk Hotel resulted in an excavation along this medieval street. The earliest remains were an isolated Early Anglo-Saxon burial, for which a radiocarbon date of 7th or 8th century has been obtained. The first urban occupation dated from the 11th-14th centuries, with evidence of posthole buildings along the street front with clay walls and pits filled with rubbish in the backyard areas. A well-made late medieval flint-and-mortar drain with a tiled base was associated with a range of buildings that were constructed using dwarf flint-and-mortar walls. These buildings were all lost in the great fire of 1608, which destroyed the street and only just stopped short of Abbeygate Street. Excavation of the debris revealed the impressions left by floor tiles, which were recovered after the fire, and burnt malt suggesting part of the site was occupied by a malting. The site was then levelled before new buildings were constructed, one of which contained a substantial vaulted cellar. Much of the site was occupied by a warehouse built in the 19th century, which was recently demolished.

Carlton Colville. Excavations started on the line of the second phase of the bypass focussing on three sites identified by trial trenching earlier in the year.



Baxter Street: Floor of house burnt down in 1608

At CAC 026, site 1, excavation revealed at least five four-post structures, interpreted as Iron Age granaries, a series of rectangular enclosure ditches of probable Iron Age to Roman date and a single Anglo-Saxon post-hole building. A series of hearths, cremations, pits and other features were also revealed but as yet no dating evidence is available for these.

At site 2, to the west of Uplands Road, a ditch of Roman date defined the western edge of one of the enclosures recognised from site 1. A series of post-holes along the northern edge of the site indicates possible rectangular structures of Roman date.

Also at site 2, the Roman ditch cut through a circular structure of c.12m diameter. This consisted of a circular ditch containing burnt posts with an entrance to the east. Within the south of the ring was a smaller crescent facing south. This slot was c.60cm deep, steep-sided and probably designed to take upright posts or planks. Excavation of these features revealed flintwork and pottery of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date. Within the entrance to the larger ring a burial was placed with a complete collared urn and several flint tools. An urned cremation was also placed within the crescent.

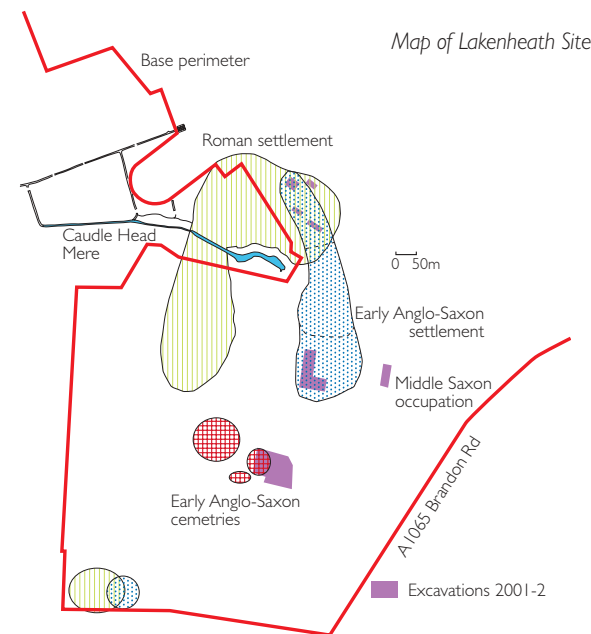
Excavation to the west of Hollow Lane (Site CAC 001) revealed part of an outer enclosure ditch for the Iron Age or Roman occupation to the east.

Excavation to the east of the bypass (Site CAC 027), revealed medieval activity associated with the edge of a previous village green. A series of the green edge ditches and several phases of enclosure were recognised. The enclosure was associated with a well, possibly for stock watering, and a possible small structure.



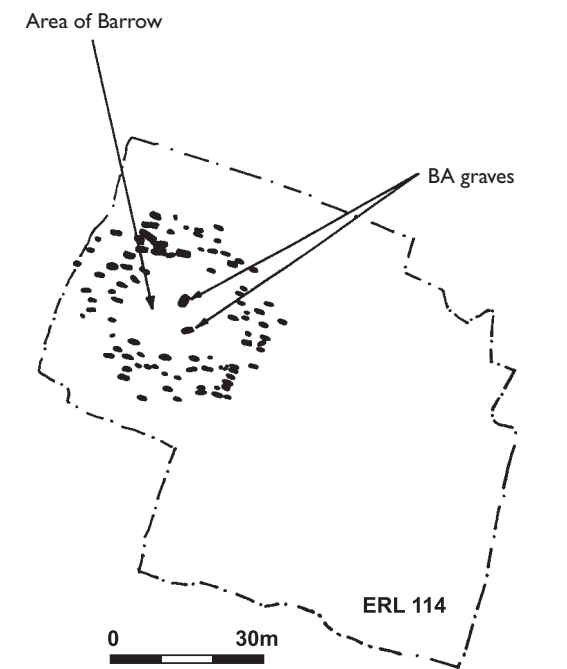
Carlton Colville: Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age burial complex

RAF Lakenheath, Eriswell. This was a busy year at RAF Lakenheath with continuing excavations within the Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and the Roman settlement and the first major excavation within the Early Anglo-Saxon settlement. Possibly the most exciting of all was the discovery of the first evidence for significant occupation of the base in the Middle Saxon period. All this work has greatly increased our understanding of the development of this area between the 1st and 8th centuries AD and has enabled us to tentatively apply some boundaries to the settlement limits.



Previous work at RAF Lakenheath has established the approximate limits of the Late Iron Age/Roman settlement centred around Caudle Head mere. This is a natural spring flowing westwards into the fens and fed from the east by a now peat-filled water course, which pollen analysis has shown was gradually filling from the 3rd to 13th centuries AD. The settlement is characterised by a series of rectangular enclosures and probable trackways, and the ditches making up the enclosures can be seen to respect roughly the same alignments over an extensive area of more than 20 hectares. The ditches fall into two basic categories: broad, often replaced ditches marking major long-standing boundaries, and steep, palisade types, indicating smaller internal property boundaries and fence lines. Major discoveries this year include the identification of the northern limits of the settlement, defined by east-west aligned ditches, and the south-west corner of a substantial enclosure within which were smaller divisions and seven burials, - one notable one with the head removed and placed between the legs - a recognised late Roman burial tradition.

Perhaps most exciting of all was the discovery of six Early Anglo-Saxon 'sunken featured buildings' (SFB) overlying the Roman settlement. The first two SFBs were discovered in December 1997, c.500m to the south-east of the Roman settlement and a large excavation was carried out near this area in the summer 2001. This uncovered another three SFBs and Roman and Saxon field ditches. The pit of one of the SFBs was filled with charcoal which may be the remains of a building destroyed by fire.



Plan Of Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery

Further work in the area of the Anglo-Saxon cemeteries was carried out on the site first excavated in 1959. This covered a more extensive area and established the limits of the cemetery whilst uncovering another c.70 graves. More importantly, the discovery of two Bronze Age burials under what would have been a substantial mound in the centre of the cemetery explains the focus of the Saxon burials in this area. A total of 420 inhumations and 17 cremations have now been recovered from these cemeteries.



Lakenheath: Bronze Age burial

Finally, the longevity of the Lakenheath settlements has been extended by the discovery of considerable quantities of Middle Saxon Ipswich ware pottery (650-850AD) close to the A1065 Brandon Road. A complicated network of north-south ditches appears to mark the shifting eastern boundary of a larger settlement and, although no buildings were found the relatively large amounts of pottery, animal bone and burnt daub in the tops of ditches are clear evidence of habitation.

After c.850AD there appears to have been depopulation of the area and documentary evidence indicates that by 1250AD much of the area of the air-base was enclosed and used for rabbit farming.

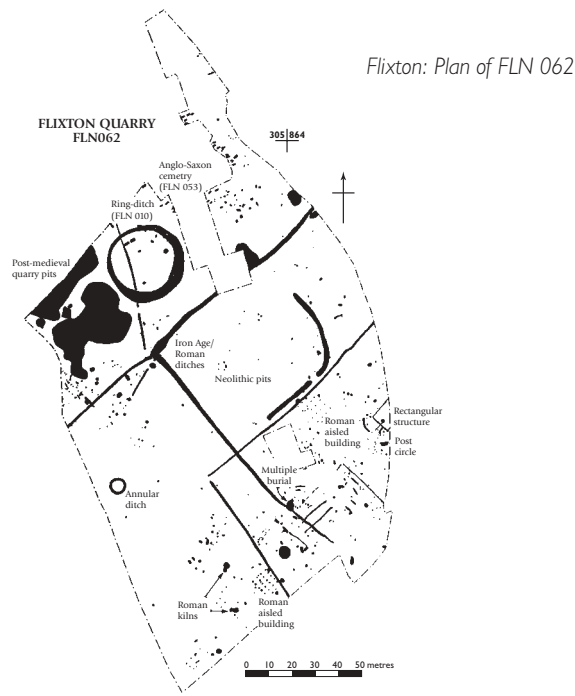
Landguard Fort, Felixstowe. A research excavation, sponsored by English Heritage, revealed evidence for the earlier 17th-century fort built to guard approaches to the port of Harwich. An L-shaped trench was designed to encounter the east-to-west running curtain wall and the north-western corner bastion of the fort. Both these elements were revealed and an associated deep ditch was excavated. The earliest phase of the fort, probably dating to 1628, consisted of a stack of clay slabs holding up a bank of beach shingle. Later the sides of the ditch and the bottom of the bank were stabilised with a brick revetment. This wall and the platform behind it (the *fausse-braye*) was certainly in place when the Dutch attacked the fort in 1667 and was decisive in fending off the enemy assault. Several other phases of construction were also recognised during excavation and probably belong to a major remodelling of the fort that may have happened during the Civil War. The fort was demolished in the 18th century to make way for the later brick forts, culminating in the present fort of 1750. Outer earthworks associated with this fort buried the earlier fort under 3m of beach sand and shingle.



Landguard Fort: ditch excavation

Flixton Park Quarry. During the summer the stripping of topsoil and subsoil over approximately 8ha was monitored and about half of this was then excavated.

The most productive area excavated (FLN 062), lay immediately to the east of the phase excavated in 2000. Within it was a known ring-ditch and the presumed continuation of the Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery that was discovered in 1998. The earliest activity consisted of Neolithic pits, often well stratified, containing Grooved Ware pottery and flint tools. An irregularly-shaped pit, which contained pottery and a polished flint axe fragment, was found to be central to a circle of post-holes with a projected diameter of c. 10m. One other feature, a curving ditch, comprising two sections with opposed terminals, was tentatively dated as Neolithic, because it contained worked flint, including a transverse-derivative arrowhead.



The full circle of the known ring-ditch, 35m in diameter, was revealed towards the northern edge of the site. No contemporary burials were identified within the ditched area, but eleven Early Anglo-Saxon burials were recorded either internal to or cutting the ring-ditch. These burials appeared to form a discrete group, isolated from the main cemetery to the east. A further annular ditch, with an external diameter of only 8m, was probably of prehistoric date.

A rectilinear series of ditches of Iron Age and Roman date represents a continuation of a field system previously identified to the east. Also recorded in this area was a relatively concentrated area of Roman archaeology dating from 1st to 4th centuries. Significant structures/features included two aisled buildings, a four-posted structure (previously interpreted as granaries) and two pottery kilns.

One other significant feature was a multiple burial cut into a Roman pit. The four bodies (three adults and a sub-adult) are probably Roman in date and had been stacked within a relatively small grave. Preliminary examination suggests that at least two of the individuals were related, and at least one exhibited evidence indicating that they may have met a violent death, with knife marks visible in the throat area.

The remaining 4ha, at the northern end of the quarry, was stripped of topsoil and archaeological features were planned only (excavation is expected next year). Prehistoric activity was represented by two ring-ditches. One of these had a diameter of 30m, with a ditch that was approximately 4m wide and 1.5m deep, with a V-shaped profile. A single grave was recorded to the NW of the centre of the ring. The grave was large, measuring 3m x 1.5m, with a depth of 1.8m. A hint of organic staining was recorded on the base of the feature along with a decorated pottery beaker which confirms the Early Bronze Age date of the burial. Marked variations in the colour of the natural sands and gravels in the area of the ring-ditch suggest that the ring-ditch originally had an internal mound, separated from the ditch by a berm and with an external bank, making it what is termed a bell-disc barrow.

A further concentration of archaeological features was identified in the narrow strip against the northern edge of the quarry. The majority of the features have yet to be excavated. However, it was clear that at least three sunken-featured buildings (SFBs) and at least three post-holed buildings were represented along with pits, ditches and more isolated post-holes. These are likely to be of Early Anglo-Saxon date and represent a significant area of occupation.

Ballingdon Bridge, Sudbury. The new Ballingdon Bridge, currently under construction, has provided the opportunity to record the remains of earlier bridges.

The site is likely to have been a crossing point of the river from at least Roman times and the earliest documented bridge was built in the 13th century by the Countess of Clare.

Evidence of earlier bridges was already well known and lines of timber posts could be seen when the river was low. An initial survey by a team of divers located and tagged 88 posts and established that a mass of consolidated brick and mortar projected through the silt across the river bed.

Working within a cofferdam, extending from the northern bank, the positions of 30 oak timber piles have been plotted and these are currently being extracted. Samples from the timbers are being taken and will be dated by dendrochronology.

Buried within the river silts is a vast amount of brick rubble and limestone blocks, which pre-dates the timber piles and appears to be an almost complete bridge collapsed onto the river bed. The bricks have been dated to the late 15th/early 16th century and could be part of the bridge which history records as being swept away in 1520. Amongst the stonework there is also evidence of an earlier, medieval bridge, but nothing of the structure of this survives.

Work on the Ballingdon side is yet to start and will begin once the Sudbury bank is completed.



Ballingdon Bridge: Timber piles of an earlier bridge

Survey

Court Knoll, Nayland-with Wissington. This Scheduled Ancient Monument consists of a D-shaped enclosure surrounded by a wide ditch and has an internal area of some 2ha. Limited excavation by Major Dick in 1924 revealed building foundations believed at the time to be Norman and constructed of flint and tile. The survey which was a joint project with Nayland Parish Council and the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Countryside Project, was funded by the Local Heritage Initiative. It consisted of a geophysical survey, a documentary search and systematic fieldwalking of the site's internal area by a team of local volunteers. The geophysical survey revealed a number of anomalies including what appear to be the remains of building foundations and what is possibly the line of the original 1924 exploratory trench.

Documentary evidence confirmed the site's manorial status and suggested that a range of buildings occupied Court Knoll, certainly by the late 13th century, when there are records of repairs to several buildings including a solar and chapel. By the 18th century the ruins of the chapel were the only structural remains visible on the site.

Fieldwalking recovered a large quantity of Roman tile suggesting that at least one of the buildings of the manor used these tiles in its construction and roof tile of late medieval and early post-medieval date.

Pottery from the site suggests concentrations of activity during the high medieval period (12th-13th centuries) and the late medieval phase (late 14th-16th centuries), with a lack of 14th century evidence, which ties in with the documentary evidence for a decline of the manorial site from 1336.

Coastal Survey

The mapping from aerial photographs of archaeological features on the Suffolk coast continued during 2001-2002, as part of English Heritage's National Mapping Programme. Half of the project area has now been completed and 685 new records have been added to the county's Sites and Monuments Record. The coastal strip from Lowestoft to Sizewell and from Hollesley to Felixstowe, as well as the Deben Estuary and Shotley Gate, have all been completed this year. The project continues to highlight the intensity of anti-invasion defences in place along the county's coast during World War II and has enabled the mapping of these features from contemporary war-time photography. Many of the Prehistoric and Roman landscapes on either side of the River Deben, which are visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs, have been plotted accurately and fully described on the Sites and Monuments Record for the first time. A Roman villa site, which was previously unrecorded on the Sites and Monuments Record, was also identified and is a valuable addition to the record. The study of aerial photographs taken at low tide in a number of years has given us the opportunity to record a variety of archaeological features in the inter-tidal zone, such as fish weirs, jetties and wrecks. This information will be used during the field survey in 2002/03.

Forest Survey

The rapid identification survey begun last year (see Annual Report 2000-2001) was completed following the delay caused by Foot and Mouth precautions. An area of over 400 hectares in south-east Norfolk and north-west Suffolk, proposed for felling and destumping over the next four years, was surveyed with the aim of identifying and preserving significant surviving earthworks. Over half of the Forestry compartments visited contained earthworks, consisting mainly of banks, pits, ditches and mounds. Whilst the majority are post medieval, some of the banks may be medieval in origin and most of the 16 mounds recorded are possible barrows of Bronze Age date. Other significant sites identified include partially surviving walls from the Brandon medieval warrener's lodge.

Heritage Promotion

Heritage promotion is delivered largely through public lectures, exhibitions, guided tours/walks, media interviews and publications by both teams of the Service. Fifteen guided walks were provided, including seven school visits to excavations. 79 lectures were given by staff during the year to a wide variety of audiences, including local and national groups, adult education courses, conferences and universities.

Staff contributed to sixteen publications including the annual review of archaeological finds and fieldwork in the county entitled 'Archaeology in Suffolk 2001', compiled by Helen Geake, Edward Martin, Colin Pendleton and Judith Plouviez. (*Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*, XL, part 2, 2001).

Staff were regularly interviewed on Radio Suffolk, Look East and the local press. National coverage included an appearance by Helen Geake on Time Team Live.

The service assisted at three Open Days at Ipswich Museum and the Stowmarket History Fair. There was an on-site exhibition, a viewing platform and an information board on the Landguard excavations and an Open Day with guided talks attracted over 400 people.



Landguard Fort: Viewing platform and exhibition hut

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