Thursday the 21st of April
‘Woodland Archaeology - ‘Secrets of the Wild-wood’,
A talk by Stuart King, leader of the Coleman’s Wood Project located above the Misbourne Valley.
Local wood-worker and historian, Stuart King, has been investigating this Romano-British and Medieval site for some years (see photograph).
Last year AIM members, Martin Fowkes and John Laker, visited the wood with Stuart as the moated Medieval part of the site has some similarities to Warren Wood. Stuart will inform us about the many interesting discoveries made at this unusual site.
8pm the Garden Room of Liston Hall - Members of AIM £3, visitors £4

Saturday the 21st May
‘Visit to Wallingford’
At 10.30am we will be gathering outside Wallingford Town Hall to meet up with Judy Dewey (Wallingford Museum Curator), who will give a guided tour around the walls of this Anglo Saxon ‘Burh’ Town. The tour will finish about noon and allow those, who want to, to visit Wallingford Museum at the reduced group rate of £4/person. Again those who wish to can visit a local eatery for lunch. After lunch there will be an opportunity to visit Wallingford Castle before setting off home.
Should anyone wish to join the ten people already booked in, please contact Tony Birkett, or John Laker (see last page of this newsletter for details) to reserve your place.
The charge for the tour for members and non-members will be £5 (payable on the day).
We will try to arrange car sharing in advance, depending on where people are coming from.
Aim’s Events at a Glance

Thursday 23rd June: ‘AIM AGM’ followed by ‘The Watlington Hoard’
A talk by AIM member James Mather on his amazing metal detector discovery. See page 8 for more details.
8pm in the Main Hall of Liston Hall - Members of AIM £3, visitors £4

Thursday 22nd September: ‘The History of Local Maps’
A talk by John Leighfield.
8pm in the Garden Room, Members of AIM £3, visitors £4

Thursday 13th October: ‘Prehistoric Trackways’
A talk by Martin Bell (joint talk with MAS)
8pm in the Garden Room, Members of AIM/MAS £3, visitors £4

Thursday 24th November: ‘Richard III: Part II’
More discoveries from Matthew Morris (joint talk with MAS)
8pm in the Main Hall, Members of AIM/MAS £3, visitors £4.

Thursday 8th December: AIM’s annual Christmas Quiz
8pm in the Garden Room, Members of AIM £1, visitors £1

We would like to wish a warm welcome to Stella Sudekum and Kathy Allso, the latest members to join Aim.

*Liston Hall’s full address is:
Chapel Street, Marlow, SL7 1DD.

Free parking is available in the adjacent car park after 7 pm.

Hunt’s of Marlow
For First Class DIY, Hardware and Garden Supplies
35 Station Road, Marlow
Tel 01628 488228
This AIM/MAS presentation was given on 25\textsuperscript{th} February by Paul Garwood, a senior lecturer in archaeology from the University of Birmingham. This talk followed the Part 1 talk in January by Paul’s colleague Eamonn Baldwin (see the February newsletter).

Although Stonehenge is such an iconic feature, there are many other significant types of monuments in the surrounding area. There are circular enclosures such as Durrington Walls, and linear enclosures with the Cursus being the most well-known. There are many funerary monuments such as barrows, plus field systems and many other earthworks, not to mention a hillfort and Roman sites.

Even in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century it was realised that Stonehenge sits within this wider landscape and the work of Paul and his colleagues builds on the work of many others before them, including well-known archaeologists such as Atkinson, Piggott and Wainwright. The most recent major project was the Stonehenge Riverside project, just a few years ago. As a result, Stonehenge is probably the most intensively investigated prehistoric landscape in the world.

The current project is primarily based on geophysics, which were described in the January talk. Many of the techniques used were unique and developed specifically for this project. About 20 square kilometres were covered producing a huge volume of data. This will take many years to fully analyse, but thousands of new features have already been identified.

‘Early Neolithic’
Several new monuments have been found, but the surveys have also shown new features on monuments which were already known. One long barrow shows the addition of rectangular timber structures, while another barrow had a later circular henge-like structure added to one end.

‘Mid Neolithic’
Although the Great Cursus has been studied even as recently as the 2000s, new features have been identified. A major gap is visible in the enclosing earthwork, with lots of smaller gaps around the edges – possibly used as entrances or passages to the interior. Some large pits appear to be aligned with the mid-summer sunrise and sunset from the Stonehenge Heel Stone. The Lesser Cursus has a segmented ditch feature within it which could date from the Beaker period.

‘Late Neolithic’
A new discovery is a circular segmented pit feature with a possible wooden circle within it, resembling a henge. We watched an animated digital reconstruction that has been produced using gaming software. This showed how it might have looked –
although it was from a dog’s-eye view!
The most dramatic discoveries have come from Durrington Walls, which is the largest monument of this period. By combining several geophysical methods, lots of small dots within the surrounding bank have been found to be elongated holes, which may have contained stones or timbers. This could have been a massive henge, dubbed “Stonehenge 2 or “Superhenge” in recent media coverage. There is already speculation on future excavation of this site.

A number of segmented ditch features have been found that may be Beaker period funerary monuments. The later ones occur more centrally within the area and some are aligned in a linear fashion. Perhaps they relate to struggles over land ownership or represent pathways.

‘Later periods’
The value of using different geophysical methods was illustrated by the discovery of a number of small Early Bronze Age barrows that do not have the usual associated ditches. Electrical Resistance techniques used, helped show that these were probably built of turf.

Some small Iron Age enclosures might be shrines or burials and would be the first evidence for ceremonial use in the area from that period. Roman settlement details have been revealed along with Medieval sites.

Even later, some of the pipes and other utilities for RAF Stonehenge (1917-1921) are clearly visible. And bringing us almost up to the present day, a series of very small dots represented the positions of metal debris and burnt material left behind from the Stonehenge festivals of the 1960s.

Paul emphasised that there is a huge amount of data still to process so more discoveries are certain to be made. This project will now be the basis for all future investigations within this landscape and it shows what can be achieved on a large-scale landscape project. Not surprisingly, this comes at a cost – roughly 2M euros.

This was a fascinating and very enjoyable talk, very well presented by Paul. Perhaps we will have to invite him back in a few years’ time when he has made more exciting discoveries.

Martin Fowkes
Ros has been the Bucks Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme for the past 13 years. This was her final talk, as she retires very soon. She reminded us of the origins and purpose of this recording system which has grown each year following its 1997 set up. We were also told of the 1996 Treasure Act and how this affects what and how items (and hoards) over 300 years old, whether found by chance or organised investigation and metal detection, should be reported.

Since 1997 there have been 31,810 entries for Bucks. Currently more than 1,000 qualify as treasure each year. Nationally there have been more than 1,150,000 reported finds, massively adding to our historical information.

Ros detailed two major finds that she had been involved with recently. On 6th October 2014 she was called out to an “interesting find” by the organisers of England Detecting Tours. They were working an area at Creslow previously metal detected in 2003 and 2005 and identified as a medieval farm site.

Positive readings uncovered copper alloy and iron items and minimal digging found samian ware and other pottery that was thought to be a burial. By the time specialists from Oxford Archaeology arrived the next morning a significant ceramic pot had been stolen. The experts were still able to excavate artefacts including a copper alloy flagon, samian shards, roman iron objects, glass and bronze items and cremated bone of an adult female.

They found 115 hobnails (from shoes) and a jasper intaglio of the gods Minerva and Mercury. Several pieces of samian ware were stamped, each indicating manufacture in Lezoux in central France. Many of these items await further cleaning and research but have been on display in the County Museum.

On the 21st of December 2014 a metal detecting club held its Xmas rally at Lenborough (just south of Buckingham). Within a short while a strong signal was investigated and 3 silver coins and some lead fragments were uncovered a few inches down. Ros was called in, the hole enlarged, local medieval glazed pottery was uncovered (a deserted village was known nearby). A little deeper and a huge hoard of silver coins was found, apparently “wrapped” in a sheet of lead.
As darkness approached it was decided to lift the coins and the lead fragments to prevent theft.

More than 5,000 silver coins were collected and delivered to the British Museum where their conservator, Pippa Pearce, washed them clean. They represented a massive Anglo-Saxon hoard. They were in unusually good condition although many were slightly bent or bowed.

The BM examined a total of 5,248 coins. Of these 985 represented King Aethelred II (78 – 1016) and 4,263 were from the reign of King Knut (1016 – 1035). They were all hammered silver pennies, a single one of which had been cut into two halfpennies. How and why they had been accumulated and hidden will never be known. Their condition was so good that the museum coin specialists were able to identify more than 60 moneyers/mints from the coins of Aethelred and more than 70 for Cnut. Some of these makers were local, but other specimens originated from the West Country, Kent and up to Yorkshire. There were even 4 coins of Aethelred that have been attributed to the moneyer, Faraman, from Dublin and a single mule with a small cross reverse, from the moneyer Aethelwine from the Stamford Mint. This was an amazing find that has increased knowledge of the coinage of this period.

Thanks Ros for a great talk. We wish you a very happy retirement

Gerry Platten

In mid-February Eddie Mitchell passed away; he was nearly 80 years of age. Eddie was cremated at Amersham Crematorium and the affectionate service reminded us of his long and active life. Many Marlow people will have known Eddie for his metal detecting and his work for Marlow Football Club. Eddie unearthed many interesting artefacts with his metal detector, from ancient coins to missing engagement rings. Eddie was a member of AIM for some years and came to Warren Wood on a number of occasions to help us locate metal objects. Eddie was always glad to see you. He was a kind and generous gentleman and will be sadly missed.

AIM Members may remember that the MRWWI Association organised a day long event at the site of the First World War Training Trenches in Pullingshill Wood on the 12th of July last year. Bucks TV have made two video recordings of the activities that took place on the day. Should you wish to view these interesting records, log on to:

http://www.buckstv.co.uk/category/community/marlow/
If you look at Marlow Rugby Club (off Riverwoods Drive) using the Google Maps satellite image view, you will see lots of circles over the main pitch and other areas. Some are about 20m in diameter while another group are about half that size (see map below).

AIM were asked if we knew what these circles might represent, as they looked as though they could be archaeological features, such as Iron Age round houses. We thought we ought to consider other possibilities before we started digging up the rugby pitch, so we started thinking about what else the circles might be, and we came up with a number of ideas.

They looked a bit similar to a sewage works and there had been one in this area before the new one was built near Little Marlow. But looking at old maps showed the sewage works was on the other side of the railway line, on the site of the Crowne Plaza hotel. Another possibility was bomb craters, but there is no record of any bombs being dropped in this area. Perhaps the circles represent an industrial process such as a tannery or something else that required tanks?

Before starting a more serious search of the archives at Aylesbury, I decided to ask the club if they knew of any activity of theirs that may have caused the circles. They did. The circles represent the position of their sprinkler system – which is why the large ones fit their main pitch so accurately.

So, it shows that not all interesting “crop marks” are archaeological in origin and that it pays to check all other possibilities before assuming that they are. It also shows that the explanation can be something that none of us would have thought of. And even though we didn’t discover a new Iron Age settlement, we enjoyed the speculation and the challenge of trying to solve the puzzle.
As many of you know, I discovered this hoard in October last year whilst metal detecting near Watlington. It was formally excavated and then block lifted by archaeologists from The Portable Antiquities Scheme to be taken to The British Museum.

Subsequently, it was expertly disassembled and announced on the 10th December to coincide with the launch of the 2014 PAS Annual Report attended by the Minister of Culture, Ed Vaizey. Given its rarity and historical significance the media reaction has been exceptional.

On the 23rd February I attended the Coroner’s Inquest and, as expected, the hoard was declared Treasure. Based on the Coroner’s report the final tally comprises 200 Anglo Saxon silver coins (primarily Alfred the Great and Ceolwulf II) some of which are fragmentary, 15 assorted silver ingots, 3 arm-rings, 2 neck ring sections, hack silver and unusually, a small piece of hack gold.

The coins are of great importance, as they shed new light on history at a pivotal time in England’s development (870-880 AD), charting Alfred’s rise to fame, as well as his relationship with, and the status of, Ceolwulf II, King of Mercia.

Currently, a modest selection of these items is on display in the Citi Money Gallery at the British Museum, and it is anticipated that the Ashmolean Museum, in conjunction with Oxford Museums Service, will eventually purchase the hoard for public display.

It will be my pleasure to give a talk to you all on this subject in the Main Hall in Liston Road on 23rd June at 8pm and update you on any further news.

I look forward to seeing you all then.
At 10 a.m. on Sunday morning on the 21st of February, a dozen keen AIM members assembled at Marlow Common.

We had two objectives that day; firstly we wanted to take a look at the ‘ancient road’ spotted by John Morris on the Chilterns Conservation Board in Marlow Common, north, and secondly we had been asked by Bucks, Berks and Oxon Wildlife Trust to field walk Rassler and Hog Woods, which they had recently leased from Bucks County Council, for signs of human activity.

The ‘road’ is in a small clearing, 200 metres up the northerly track, and appears to have an ‘agger’ (a raised and cambered centre) with shallow ditches on both sides. There is about 30 metres of ‘road’ which disappears into undergrowth at each end. However, our determined volunteers waded through the difficult terrain and discovered that the ‘road’ continues at least 75 metres in each direction. If this is a road, and it looks likely, it appears to run to the house on the minor cross-roads to the south and probably emerges near to the ‘studio’ in the north. It would seem that this road predates the existing track by at least 100 years and would been a more direct route. The age is estimated from the mature trees currently growing in the centre of the road.
Our second investigation took us to the southerly part of Marlow Common. We entered Rassler and Hog Woods on the footpath running due south. After a one kilometre walk, we stopped where the footpath meets the Henley Road (see photo’). Our plan was to field walk Rassler Wood in 50 metre strips, running east to west. This operation was less easy than we first thought. Branches, large and small, covered the area and progress was slow and difficult. However, we covered four strips and GPS readings were taken at the locations where the landscape seems to have been shaped by human activities.

Martin Fowkes and John Laker visited the northern part of Rassler Wood on Thursday the 10th of March to survey the first six narrow strips. A few suspected saw pits were observed, but the main feature was a pond (possibly a dew pond used to supply water to livestock). Following this visit, members assembled on Sunday the 13th of March to continue the survey. Again, despite difficult conditions underfoot, we field walked four strips, this time locating a large pit; as the tree within was probably 150 years old, we assume the pit was dug at an earlier date.

An initial graphic showing the strips and the location of the features (so far) in Rassler Wood is reproduced below.
We have now established a time table for our visits to Warren Wood for the first part of 2016, as follows:

April 10th  April 24th  May 8th  May 22nd
June 5th     June 19th  July 3rd  July 24th

So, on Sunday morning the 10th of April at 10 o’clock (weather permitting – see below), we will be meeting up for our first investigatory visit of 2016. We will be continuing our work in the Inner Enclosure in Test Pits 10 and 11 and 12. We will also be planning to record the remaining profiles around the Inner Enclosure bank. We intend to use our video camera to make another short film of our investigations at the site.

Please visit our website www.archaeologyinmarlow.org.uk and select ‘blog’ for comprehensive updates of our progress.

As usual, all AIM members are very welcome to attend any of our investigations at Warren Wood. No experience is necessary for those members wishing to participate, as we conduct training in all the archaeological procedures we employ. All relevant archaeological equipment is supplied by AIM.

We will meet up at the gateway, just before Woodlands House, on Winchbottom Lane, Little Marlow, SL7 3RN (if you copy 51.594095,-0.750098 into Google Maps it will take you there). Woodlands house is on the right about one mile up Winchbottom Lane from the Bourne End/ Marlow road (A4155).

As before, we are conducting our investigations on private land and we have to advise the owners when we visit and the likely numbers attending. So, should you wish to participate, please contact:

Martin Fowkes 01628 530832 - mfowkes@tiscali.co.uk

To book in on any of the days we are due to visit the site, as numbers may be limited and visits may be cancelled, if the weather is dire.

We look forward to seeing more members at Warren Wood and to making even more exciting discoveries.

Stop Press! On the 8th of May, in the scenic Chiltern woodlands, on land that includes Warren Wood, the owners have arranged Charity walks (a choice of three distances) plus a Buffet Lunch, in aid of the Medical Detection Dogs charity. This event commences at 10am; lunch from noon, with a raffle being drawn at 3pm. Directions are as detailed above. AIM members will be showing walkers around the Warren Wood site and informing them about our investigations there. The entry fee is £20, with free entry to children under 12, and refreshments can be purchased on the day. Entries are limited and the closing date is the 29th of April. To support this important charity, please request an entry form, by contacting John Laker.
April 2016’s Quiz Question

As far as we know, there is only one memorial in Marlow that is dedicated to a horse. The quiz questions are:

1. What was the name of the animal?
2. What was the last major event it took part in?

Prize for the AIM member with the first correct answer - Two tickets to any AIM talk. Email or phone your answer to Ann Pitwell (see back page for contact details).

February 2016’s Quiz Answer

In what year was Marlow’s Victorian “Police Court” built and opened?

The answer is 1869 (see photograph). The building exists in Trinity Road, off Dean Street, Marlow.

Congratulations to Barbara Wallis and Brian Vallis who tied for the prize who have received two tickets each for any AIM talk.

Interesting website
http://digventures.com/archaeologynews/
Other Events of interest
This is the information available to us at the time of publication, but we advise you to check as this may have changed since then.

Tuesday 5th April 2016 7.45 pm
Henley-on-Thames Archaeological and Historical Group
Archaeology of the Jubilee River’ by Stuart Foreman
Kings Arms Pub Barn, Henley on Thames
Visitors £3

Thursday 14th April 2016 7:30 pm
Hurley Village Hall
The Hurley Historical Society has a talk by local resident Phil Williams, who has written a book telling the story of Hurley’s involvement in clandestine activities during the Second World War. It describes how a top secret US communication station known by its codename ‘Station VICTOR’ was constructed and operated within the parish by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) the forerunner to the CIA.

Saturday 16th April 2016 2pm for 2.30pm
Berkshire Archaeological Society (BAS)
Bone chemistry and Isotope analysis with case histories by Gundula Mueldener
RISC, 35-39 London Street, Reading, RG1 4PS.
Visitors welcome
www.berksarch.co.uk

Marlow Museum
Peacock Room, front of Court Garden entrance Higginson Park, Pound Lane, Marlow SL7 2AE

Latest quarterly display on WW1 and exhibition about General Sir George Higginson who would have been 190 this year. Open Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays 1-5pm and Wednesdays 2 – 5 pm
Bridge Evening - Friday 22nd April 7pm
476610
www.marlowmuseum.wordpress.com

29th April – 1st May 2016
Medieval Settlement Research Group
Spring Conference
University of Lincoln
Full details at
http://medieval-settlement.com/spring-2016-conference/

Monday 18th May 2016 7.30 pm
Marlow Society, Local History Group.
Development of Marlow.
This is a real Workshop. The intention is to work on dating the growth of Marlow. (Some houses along Glade Road actually have a date on them.) Led by Peter Bailey, aided by David Greenwood
Garden Room, Liston Hall, Chapel Street, Marlow, SL7 1DD. £1.50 members, £3 non-members - 01628 476610

Wycombe Museum has re-opened
Monday to Saturday: 10am to 4:30pm, Sunday: 2pm to 5pm,
Priory Avenue, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP13 6PX 01494 957 210
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RATES

- £10.00 Individual (over 18)
- £12.00 Household Membership (one adult and any children under 18 at the same address)
- £15.00 Household Membership (two adults and any children under 18 living at the same address)
- £6.00 Student (over 16 in full time education, or pre-university gap year)

Corporate Membership is available on application

AiM Committee Meetings

Future AiM Committee Meetings

7.30 pm on Wednesday 27th April at 3 Penington Road, Beaconsfield, HP9 1ET
7.30 pm on Wednesday 1st June at 9 Spinfield Lane, Marlow, SL7 2JT

All members are welcome to attend all AiM meetings.
Please telephone a committee member in advance to confirm date and venue.

AiM Committee Members

Chairman
9 Spinfield Lane, Marlow, SL7 2JT
01628 481792 - johnlaker@thamesinternet.com

Vice-Chairman
88 Blind Lane, Bourne End, SL8 5LD
01628 530832 - mfowkes@tiscali.co.uk

Treasurer
9 Spinfield Lane, Marlow, SL7 2JT
01628 481792 - annpitwell@thamesinternet.com

Secretary
Vacant

Membership Secretary
c/o 9 Spinfield Lane, Marlow, SL7 2JT

Newsletter Compiler
js722@kent.ac.uk

Joint Field Work Co-ordinators
01628 481141 - andyford.marlow@btinternet.com
01628 530832 - mfowkes@tiscali.co.uk

Publicity Officer
01494 675195 - jabirkett@btinternet.com

Committee Members
01628 472126

Gerry Platten