



NEWSLETTER 50 AUTUMN 2009

EDITOR: JEREMY HODGKINSON

3, Saxon Road, Worth, Crawley, Sussex, RH10 7SA; Tel: 01293 886278; Email: jshodgkinson@hodgers.com

CONTENTS

Chairman's Letter	page 1
Annual General Meeting	1
WIRG Photo Archive	2
New Members	3
Foray to Benenden	3
Foray to Ashburnham	3
Foray to Mark Cross	4
Foray to Brightling	5
Foray to Flimwell	6
Locked in!	6
Recent Publications	7
Bulletin 30	7
Research Suggestion	8
East Sussex HER	8
Website News	9
Winter Meeting 2010	9
Straker's Notebook	9
Fernhurst Furnace Open Days	10
Tebbutt Research Fund	10
WIRG Contacts	10
Editor's note	10
WIRG publications	10

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear All

It was so good to see so many of you at the Annual General Meeting in the Danehill Memorial Hall where we had an interesting illustrated talk by Phil Lucas on the area especially relating to his local connections.

After the talk the business meeting took place and I am pleased to welcome David Willcocks onto the committee. The accounts and annual reports were presented and agreed. A copy of these is to be sent with the newsletter. As usual I must express my thanks to my fellow trustees for their help, friendship and commitment and especially to David Brown for his efficient arrangements and the enormous efforts he makes throughout the year. Being secretary is the lynchpin of any organisation as he/she does far more administration than anyone else.

After the usual splendid lunch the afternoon visit was to the beautiful site of the Sheffield Furnace and Mill. In spite of a not very good summer we did not suffer too much from the rain on this occasion. The AGM is an important day, not just for the business side of things, but the opportunity to meet up with like minded people and have some very interesting discussions.

I am very disappointed that no one has come forward to look after the financial side of the Group. It is not

an onerous job but the present situation of myself doing both the jobs as treasurer and chairman is far from satisfactory. Please please someone come forward!! It is not that I mind the extra work but I do not think it is in the interests of the Group for these posts to be done by one person. You will find my contact details in the newsletter and I would appreciate someone coming forward. We can easily co-opt!

We are still looking for people to do research and have a vehicle for the results in the annual Bulletin. Jeremy Hodgkinson is very willing to help in the writing up of projects. The newsletter is for more ephemeral topics but is also a very useful source of interest.

Arrangements are in hand for the Winter meeting which will be in the usual venue at the Nutley Memorial Hall at the end of January. It is hoped that Lyn Palmer will be speaking on the Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Project. This is a new project which covers all aspects of the landscape and includes iron. It is hoped that more sites will be discovered during the surveys.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year

Shiela Broomfield

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 18TH JULY 2009

As WIRG's AGM afternoon visit would be to Sheffield Furnace Mill in Danehill, it was only reasonable to ask the Vice President of Danehill Historical Society, Phil Lucas, to give an introductory talk about the area. Many of his ancestors have lived around Danehill, and may account for the society being one of the most active in Sussex. The lecture picked out various aspects of Danehill based on booklets about the area written by the members of the society.

Danehill has been a separate parish since 1898, before which it was part of Fletching, Horsted Keynes and Maresfield parishes but, although a modern parish, it is ancient place with a known history. Danehill was in the Manor of Sheffield, with Sheffield Forest and Ashdown Forest, to the north, supplying water for Sheffield Furnace and later mill as well as some of the ponds in the garden of Sheffield Park, a National Trust property.

The Fletching parish registers (the closest church to Danehill) record French workers coming into the area and, between 1551 and 1572, there were 2 marriages, 4 baptisms and 6 burials recorded, whilst, over a longer period, 18 baptisms. But these names disappear and it is assumed that they went back to France or found work elsewhere. However, the wealth accumulated by some workers would have

allowed them to build their own houses. One French family moved to the Wadhurst area where, until recently, they traded as blacksmiths. All the work carried out at the furnace caused a great deal of extra traffic in this once-rural village, but was offset by the extra income by selling food and services and the hiring of wagons for haulage.

Various important people have held the Manor of Sheffield: Simon de Montfort, the Dallingridges, Sackvilles and Nevills, the Dukes of Norfolk and Earl De La Warr, to name a few, and this suggests that it was a manor of value.

In the second half of the eighteenth century John Baker Holroyd, later first Earl of Sheffield, purchased the Sheffield House estate and employed the leading architect, James Wyatt, to re-style the original Tudor mansion to Gothic. The Earl wanted to impress his friends when they came to visit his estate and so he built many lodges in the Gothic style for his workers. Some 130 years ago, so a tale goes, the Earl & Countess of Sheffield often travelled the estate in a pony & trap, drawing pictures and picnicking, whilst a boy from 'the Big House' rode with them to open and close gates and look after the horses. He was given some of their food during picnics, somewhat different from his normal fare, so causing much amusement to the picnickers. He might have hoped to take some morsels back home for his siblings but was watched very carefully and was unable to put any in his pockets. Drawings by the Countess of Sheffield still exist. At this time, the tenant farmers' wives always kept a pinafore to hand so that if it were known that the Earl and Countess would be passing their house, a clean pinafore could be worn when she curt-sied to them.

The local name of Furners Green, in the vicinity of the furnace, might be thought of as a corruption of Furnace Green, but it is more likely to have been derived from the Furner family living locally at Portmanford Farm. There is also a Furners Green near Henfield.

Brian Herbert

At the AGM the following were elected as Officers and members of the Committee for the following year:

Chairman & Hon. Treasurer: Shiela Broomfield
Vice Chairman: Jeremy Hodgkinson
Hon. Secretary: David Brown
Hon. Editor: David Crossley

Other members:

John Baillie
Ann Callow
Brian Herbert
Tony Singleton
Tim Smith
Simon Stevens

Co-opted since the AGM:

David Willcocks



Sheffield Mill House

In the afternoon, members were able to enjoy a visit to Sheffield Furnace Mill, with the kind permission of Mrs Cornelia Dyball. Little remains of the site of the furnace, which was active from as early as 1545 but which had been replaced by a corn mill by 1598. The attractive timber-framed house dates from about the same time. The mill, which operated with a single pair of stones, continued in use until 1921. Its milling mechanism is still in place although no longer coupled to the water wheel, which is still in working order.



Members exploring Sheffield Mill

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR THE WIRG ARCHIVE

David Brown is seeking any photographs you may have taken on forays or at meetings. If the photo includes members, so much the better.

Did you have your camera on our visit to Danehill in the summer?

And there were definitely people with cameras when we visited Fernhurst.

David will let you have the print or slide back once it has been scanned.

Digital photos are also welcome.

*Do you have photographs from the early days of WIRG?
Did you go on the trip to Belgium and take a camera?*

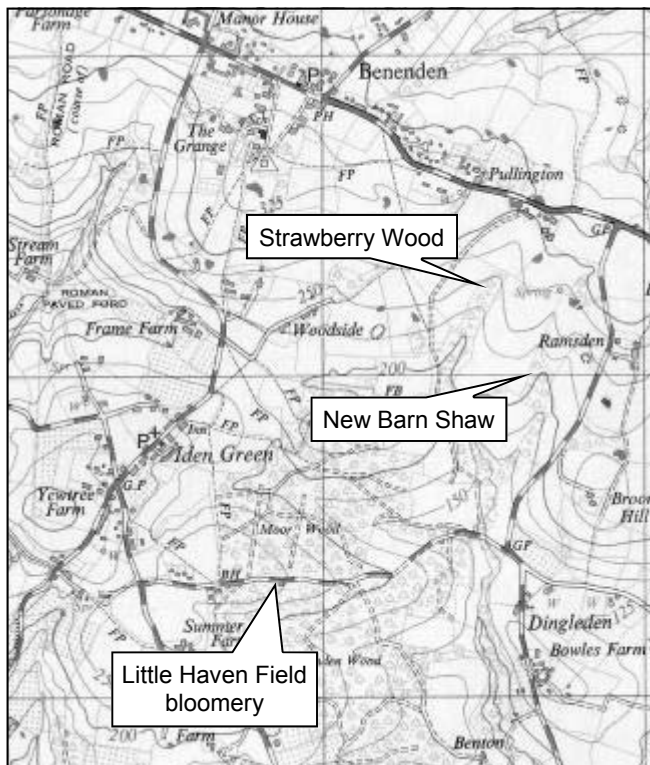
We welcome the following new members:

Kate Naylor, Brighton
 Mr T. J. Steele, Heathfield
 Dr David Stephens, Mayfield
 Mr A. M. Hunt, West Hoathly
 Dr F. H. Panton, Sittingbourne
 Peter J. Ponsford, Tunbridge Wells

FORAY REPORTS**Strawberry Wood and New Barn Shaw,
Benenden, Kent, March 2009**

WIRG was asked to look for any ironworking which may have taken place in the vicinity of an old trackway running through Strawberry Wood where the Kent High Weald Partnership were undertaking the repair of a sandstone culvert. A local historian, Dr Ernie Pollard, had found a Furnace Field about 1km south of Strawberry Wood, and Brian Herbert and Reg Houghton had visited this field some years previously but had found nothing iron-related.

Hawkhurst Furnace, which is first referred to in 1644 and may still have been in operation in 1717, is about 4km west of the wood. Little Haven Field bloomery lies to the south. The Hastings to Rochester Roman road runs through Benenden about 1 km from the wood. The area of the woods lies on the junction between the Ashdown Beds and Wadhurst Clay. The two streams cut into the Wadhurst Clay from the



The area south of Benenden
 (based on OS 1:25,000 map 1959)

north exposing the Ashdown Beds over the southern half of the woods.

Two members of WIRG were present. Two pieces of slag had previously been found in the stream running through Strawberry Wood. The northern extremity of the wood was examined and no slag could be located. It was therefore assumed that the slag found may have washed out of the collapsed culvert where it may have been used as footings for the trackway. An archaeological examination of the trackway was due to take place in the months following the foray. It will be interesting to see if slag is found. A small wooded area with two water-filled pits in the field east of Strawberry Wood was examined, and it was concluded that clay and/or ore extraction could have taken place there.

New Barn Shaw was examined from the north (going downstream). It contained a quarry in the Wadhurst Clay and considerable quantities of iron ore were found in the stream below it. The first bloomery site was at the top of a steep bank east of the stream and continued for about 15m along the field margin. The slag found at this site was bloomery furnace slag. A second bloomery site occurred on a platform about 2m above the level of the stream on the east side. Here some tap slag was found among the furnace slag and pieces of reddened material which could have been roasted ore. The slag heap covered an area of about 150 sq. metres.

David Brown

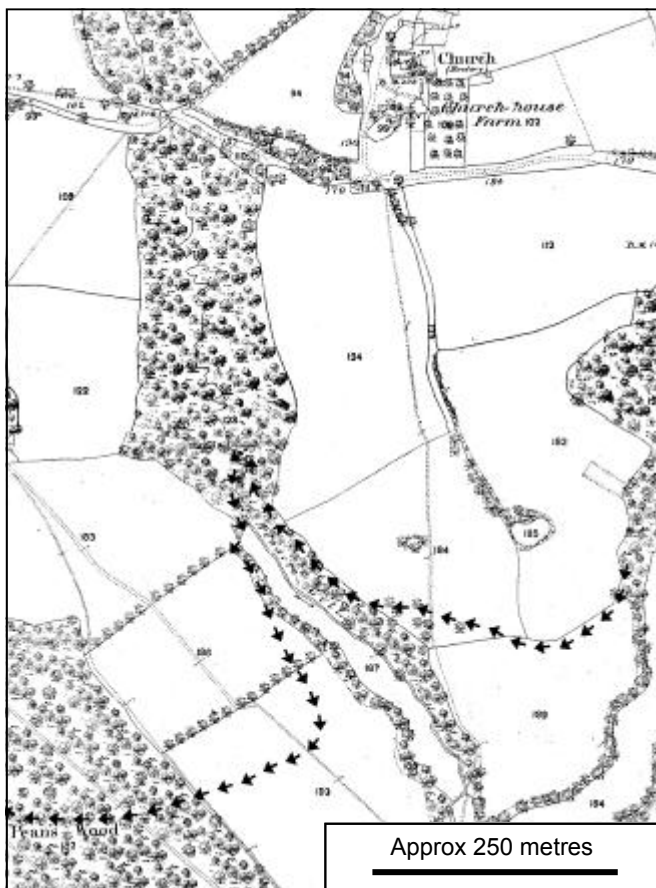
**THE PENHURST - ASHBURNHAM LEAT
The Middle Third
April 2009**

For the final foray of the season, we again visited the Penhurst to Ashburnham leat; this time to visually survey the middle third. Investigations of the previous two-thirds of the leat were reported in the Autumn 2007 and Spring 2008 Newsletters.

The leat entered Ten Acre Gill (the next gill west of Hazelbridge Gill) by passing across the corner of the adjacent field and not by passing around its periphery, as this would take the leat too low. This route is suggested by the 1878 map that shows trees in the SW corner of the field, an area that would have been cut off by a leat. From here the leat is easily followed as it passes up the east side of the Ten Acre Gill on a wide track made by levelling into the hillside, although some erosion is visible. Eventually, the leat becomes very overgrown prior to where it crossed the stream, but on stepping over the stream the leat is again seen, this time passing down the west side of



Henry Bowyer (d.1589),
 ironmaster
 (from his memorial in
 Cuckfield church)



**The Penhurst-Ashburnham leat:
from Hazelbridge Gill to Peans Wood**
(based on OS 1:2500 map 1878)

the valley. However, by following the leat back up the valley a very low bay may just be seen. It is at this point that the leat passed across the stream; somehow! The solution considered for Hazelbridge Gill, in the Spring 2008 Newsletter, was that a bay was built across which the leat passed, although a wooden aqueduct is another possibility.

After passing over the gill the leat flows south, again along a wide track made by levelling into the hillside, the leat eventually flows, via a dog-leg where the land falls away to the valley below, to flow just outside the next field boundary, indicated by a shallow gully. After about 30m, it passed into the field where all trace of the leat was lost, as it has in all the fields it has passed through. According to the field levels, the leat must have continued into the next field south before swinging to the right, all the time just lower than the 30m contour, before entering Peans Wood, where it immediately becomes visible again.

In fact, the leat is exceptionally visible for the next 300m through Peans Wood and is the best preserved section of its whole length. On leaving the wood, it passes over a field that has been made-up with soil from new fish ponds in the valley.

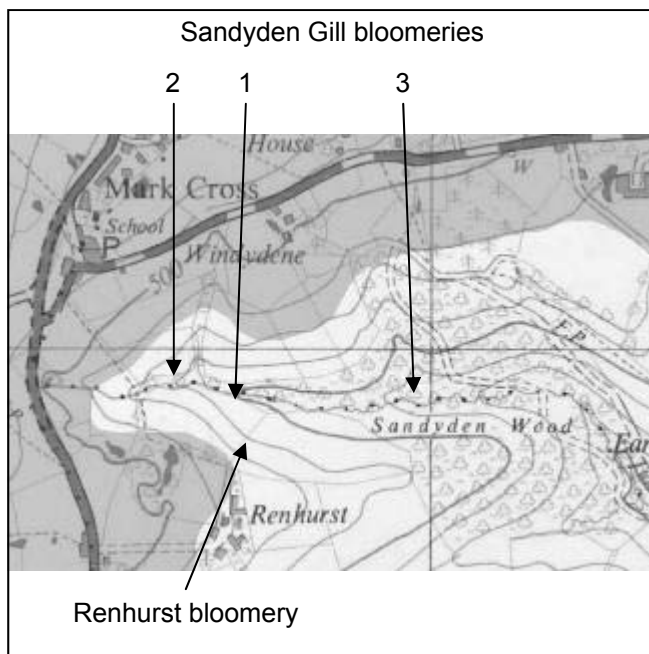
As already noted in Autumn 2007 Newsletter, after the leat crossed the Penhurst Road towards Ashburnham Forge, it flowed along the east bank of the stream, passing an outcrop of sandstone, on its way to the field with made-up soil, noted above. When the Penhurst road was built, after the iron in-

dustry had finished, it destroyed evidence of the leat and a level survey is necessary to prove that the levels are consistent with this being the expected course of the leat.

Brian Herbert

**SANDYDEN WOOD, ROTHERFIELD/
WADHURST**
September 2009

The first foray of the 2009-10 season took the team to Mark Cross, Sussex, as part of the bloomery search area. This was initiated over 10 years ago, starting at Heathfield, Sussex and finishing at Mark Cross, to supplement a larger area surveyed in the 1970s. However, there are still many more streams to follow, as we have not been very meticulous over planning the forays. Even with the outlook warm and sunny, only 6 people turned up; however, it turned out to be very humid and thus tiring.



**Fig. 1 Sandyden Gill,
showing Wadhurst Clay (dark shading)**
(based on OS 1:25,000 map 1959)

Fig.1 shows the iron-working sites in association to the geology. There are many places in the district where there is only a thin layer of Wadhurst Clay overlying the Ashdown Sand, e.g. Stilehouse Farm, enabling the ore to be found over a large area. As the site of the Renhurst Farm bloomery was en route, this was searched for, but without success. There was a variety of rubbish in the nearby gateways but although the hedgerows were searched, nothing was found, the ground being too hard for effective probing.

In woodland to the west of the bloomery, the OS 1:25,000 map shows a long, water-filled mine/marl pit, although the pond now curves towards the west at its south end. Near the pond a dozen or so small, dry, mine pits were noted. The field, adjacent

to the north side of the wood was marshy, suggesting that this was the last few feet of Wadhurst Clay overlying the Ashdown Sand, this being the geology for the remainder of the foray. A further, smaller pond to the west is to be seen on the map but it was not investigated.

Even at the start of the Sandyden Wood stream, bloomery slag was found in the stream; however, its source on the bank could not be found. Eventually, Sandyden Gill 2 bloomery site was found on the north bank, covering an area of 25m along the stream by 10m width. Tap slag was noted. At this stage the stream become a very deep, narrow gill, unlike any seen during 40 years of foraying; at one point we looked down on a 2m drop within the gill. There was no water in the rocky-based stream, and very little was seen for most of the foray; this was probably due to the recent dry weather, or perhaps the underlying, porous Ashdown Sand. Fortunately, a small side stream from the north enabled the team to easily negotiate back down to stream level.

Sandyden Gill 1 bloomery site was noted due to the slag and charcoal dust falling down the high, steep, south bank. It turned out to be quite a small site, covering an area of 20m along the stream by 5m width. Tap slag was again noted. This site had been C14 dated in the 1970s to 340-100BC. A curious, spillway-like feature was noted half way across a low bay, some 100m downstream from the site, with a level area where a small pond would have formed. The spillway was formed by two parallel rows, about 1m apart, of flattish stones down the bay, although there was negligible depth for the water to flow in. It seems unlikely that this was a relic from when the site operated.

A small distance further on another, much larger bloomery site was discovered, Sandyden Gill 3, previously unrecorded. The site was some 60m diameter and on the north bank; this may be accounted for by the nearest ore source now being to the north. There did not seem to be any mounds of slag, despite its large size. The slag was first detected on a small, isolated, 2m-high mound close to the stream. This is somewhat strange as it represents an insignificant area compared to the whole site and the author suggests that slag may have been removed from the site at some point in time. Another reason is that floodwater may have washed through the site.

The final find of the foray, in a meander where the stream was flowing south, was a long piece of slag that seemed to be solidified, molten slag-run that had been



Fig. 2 Slag mass found in Sandyden Gill

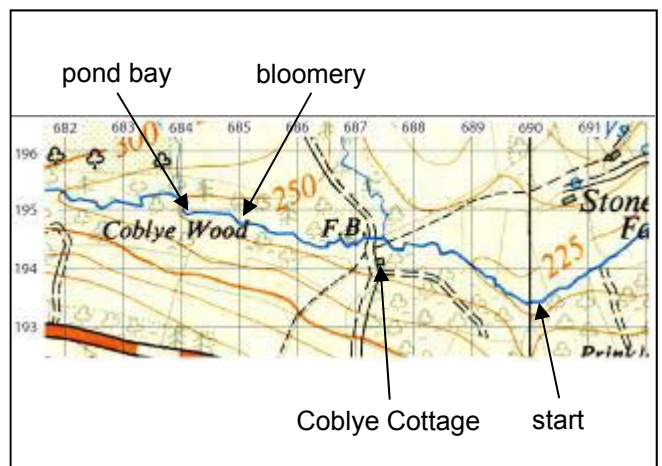
tapped from a bloomery furnace. After cleaning it became clearer that it was composed of tap slag with a partial covering of pink material, most likely roasted iron ore. It is suggested that ...perhaps... while the slag was being tapped, the furnace collapsed and deposited its burden on the tap slag. The 'false colour' B & W photograph, Fig 2., shows the pink area lightened, where otherwise it would look the same shade. Unfortunately, there was no sign of a furnace in the vicinity, but the slag's shape and weight would not have allowed floodwater to move it very far.

Brian Herbert

COBLYE WOOD, BRIGHTLING, SUSSEX October 2009

John Stafford (Forestry Commission) and Greg Chuter (archaeologist, ESCC) had previously visited the site and found what appeared to be a substantial pond bay and some slag. They asked if WIRG could have a look. David Brown visited the site with John Stafford on in September 2009 and found bloomery slag, but the pond bay did not seem to have any connection with the iron industry. It was decided a foray would assist in determining the location of the bloomery.

The area lies entirely on the Ashdown Beds. The stream being investigated originated on a small outlier of Wadhurst Clay and drains into Darwell reservoir. The wood had been part of Brightling Park until it was given up in lieu of death duties in the 1960s. It was then overplanted by the Forestry Commission. Darwell furnace was located downstream, now submerged under Darwell reservoir.



Foray to Coblye Wood
(based on OS 1:25,000 map 1959)

Eight WIRG members started looking in the main stream and continued westwards. A side stream running north from the ford at Coblye Cottage was searched for a distance of about 150m. The search was then resumed on the main stream from the ford and was terminated at the pond bay.

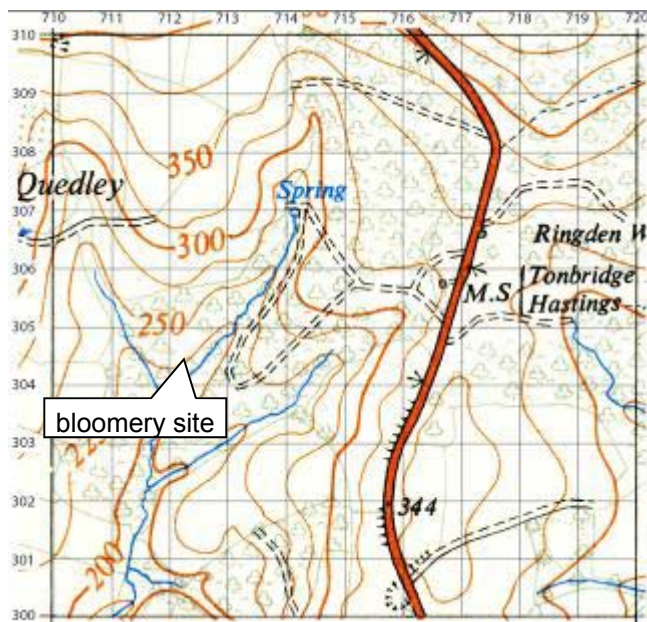
The first piece of slag found in the stream was close to the ford. In the side stream running north no

slag was found but some pieces of iron ore were found in the stream bed. Continuing west up the main stream more bloomery slag was found, after about 200m, in the stream adjacent to a concentration of slag in a mound on the north bank. The area covered by the slag was 20m (E-W) by 8m (N-S). A piece of possible furnace lining was found and some tap slag.

Some discussion took place about whether the pond bay was, in fact, a causeway across the stream. It was felt that the ground was probably too porous to support a pond bay effectively. The bay had what appeared to be a flat working area on the bank of the stream at the breached (southern) end, with masonry and brick shoring up part of the bay. A ramp also led up to the top of the bay just north of the flattened 'working area'.

The area west of Coblye Cottage appeared to have been extensively quarried. The pond bay would seem to have post-dated the quarrying activities. There was a small amount of spoil (which probably led to the scattering of the bloomery slag) in comparison with the size of the quarry, and judging from hard sandstone blocks in the stream it seems likely that building stone was being extracted.

**OLDWOMAN'S WOOD, TICEHURST
October 2009**



Area south of Flimwell crossroads
(based on OS 1:25,000 map 1959)

In 2003 Dr Nicola Bannister had undertaken a brief archaeological walkover survey of Oldwoman's Wood and Yellowcoat Wood and had located slag in the stream. The woods both sides of the stream lie on Tunbridge Wells Sand. However, there is a substantial layer of clay lying within the sand immediately to the east. The site of Pashley Furnace lies 0.75km downstream. As the approximate position of the site was known, the stream or banks were not searched

except in the immediate vicinity of the slag found in the stream. A concentration of slag was found in the stream, including wood-marked slag. This was adjacent to a mound which lay between a drainage ditch and a small sunken trackway. The area of slag measured 30m (parallel with the stream N-S) by 15m (away from the stream E-W).. On the opposite side of the stream to the slag heap was a charcoal burners' platform. The two woods contain a number of archaeological features, including charcoal burners platforms, sawpits, trackways, quarries, woodbanks, a pond bay and some platforms. Time precluded their investigation; many are recorded on the survey by Nicola Bannister.

David Brown

LOCKED IN!

An unexpected hazard confronted members of the Field Group on a recent foray when they discovered that their exit from where they had parked their cars had been locked. Returning from a successful visit to locate the newly discovered bloomery site at Ticehurst (see left), the eight individuals were due to leave the site of the Woodland Enterprise Centre, near Flimwell, when they discovered their path blocked by a massive steel barrier. The site is owned by East Sussex County Council, but is shared by a fencing company whose yard, unbeknownst to the foray leader, closed at three o'clock in the afternoon - not long after the Field Group had arrived. The latter's cars being out of site of the



Hooray for Heating Engineers!

fencing company's premises, their key holder was unaware of the Group's presence, so locked the gate when he left.

On discovering their predicament a fair amount of telephoning occurred, to the police among others, before a local heating engineer who happened to have a key because he was engaged in some work at the centre, came to the Field Group's rescue and set them free.



The Gresham Gun

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Auer, J. and Firth, A., 2007, 'The "Gresham Ship": an interim report on a 16th century wreck from Princes Channel, Thames Estuary,' *Post Medieval Archaeology*, **41**, 2, 222-241.

The 'Gresham Ship' was found in Princes Channel by the Port of London Authority in 2003. Investigations culminated in the recovery in 2004 of the remains of a small to medium-sized armed merchant ship built soon after 1574, probably in East Anglia or Essex. The wreck provides archaeological evidence of the documented practice of 'furring' (rebuilding a ship to increase its breadth). The cargo included folded iron bars, lead ingots and tin ingots, and amongst the four recovered guns is a rare English early cast-iron saker, marked with the grasshopper motif and initials of Sir Thomas Gresham (c1519-79).

Much of this paper deals with the details of the construction of the ship. However, of particular interest to members of WIRG will be the cast-iron saker and other guns, and the folded wrought-iron bars. As this is just an interim report, prior to the post-excavation analysis of most of the artefacts recovered, there is little discussion of the nature of the other guns recovered, of the possible origin of its cargo or of the likely direction in which the ship was travelling (the remains were found lying in an approximately north-south orientation). For answers to these questions, we will have to await the final report.

JSH

Gillian Draper with contributions by David Martin, Barbara Martin and Alan Tyler, *Rye: a History of a Sussex Cinque Port to 1660* (Phillimore, 2009) price £22.50 (online), £25 at the Martello bookshop in Rye.

This new illustrated history traces Rye's origins from the Norman Conquest until beyond its period of great prosperity under the Tudor monarchs. Many inhabitants were fishermen or small-scale merchants and owned vessels which they supplied for the king's ship-service, transporting members of the royal family across the Channel or, in wartime, carrying horses and provisions for soldiers. In times of truce Rye's mariners turned to piracy and wrecking, disrupting the cross-Channel trade on which the town's economy also depended.

During the Hundred Years War the townsfolk reinforced the defences and, in response to the huge mortality of the Black Death, they endowed an Augustinian Friary so that the brothers would pray for their health and souls. But then Rye entered a period of economic stagnation which saw the disappearance of many trades and crafts that had supported the residents and supplied mariners calling at the port.



Rye Creek

Rye's revival came towards the end of the 15th century after the harbours of nearby ports such as New Romney and Winchelsea had been damaged by storms and silting. Rye became a prosperous, if crowded, town and its Protestant sympathies and close links to the Continent ensured the arrival of many Huguenot refugees. For over a century Rye continued as the major port in south-east England but as its own harbour silted it was finally eclipsed by Dover in the 17th century. Rye was an Ancient Town which formed part of the important Cinque Ports confederation in the Middle Ages, yet has remained a small town 'almost suspended in time'. This fascinating account explains why modern Rye has its unique appearance and will enlighten those wanting to know more about its past.

WIRG BULLETIN 30 (2010)

Articles for inclusion in next year's Bulletin should be submitted to the Editor, David Crossley, by 31 March (see back page for contact details)

ANDREAS SCHALCH

Readers might be interested in a new biography, 'Andreas Schalch, First Master Founder of the Royal Brass Foundry, Woolwich.' The book does not dwell on the technical processes of gunfounding but rather on his personal and family history. The authors are Pat and Tony Fawcett of the Woolwich and District Antiquarian Society, and copies are obtainable from them. Price: £8.50 inc p and p. Please make cheques payable to: Mr and Mrs A L Fawcett, 86 St Mary Street, London SE18 5AJ.

RESEARCH SUGGESTION

Shirley Dixon, the archivist at Godalming Museum, writes:

We have deeds in the Percy Woods Collection here relating to the ironworks between Witley and Thursley Heaths. The reference is PWD/7/2, and the bundle is described as 'Deeds relating to an ironworks and its ponds, and rights of warren, on Thursley Heath, alias Witley Heath', dated 1579-1671. The really wonderful item is an inventory of equipment and tools included in the lease of the iron works about 1640. Also in the Museum is a deed (No 2277), a settlement of the estate of Anthony Smith of Rake, 1662, which included the ironworks and the 'cony warren'. Montague Giuseppe wrote about the Thursley ironworks in Surrey Archaeological Collections Volume 18, 'Rake in Witley, with some notices of its former owners and of the Ironworks...'

The Thursley and Witley ironworks are a complex group. Unravelling their histories would be an interesting project for someone - Ed.



**Iron Fireback
made for Anthony Smith of Rake
(the numbers and letters really are reversed)**

EAST SUSSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD New volunteering and training opportunities

Here in the ESCC Archaeology Section we are looking for some volunteers with a good knowledge of their local area to help add archaeological reports to the computerised Historic Environment Record (the HER, formerly known as the Sites and Monuments Record or SMR).

We are working through reports from archaeological work such as watching briefs and excavations carried out through the planning system, summarising them and linking them to our electronic map or Geographical Information System (GIS). We'd provide training which would give you a very good introduction to modern archaeological software and how HER records are kept. You'd also get access to the most up-to-date archaeological information about your area and make a great contribution to the important work of making this more available.

You wouldn't need previous experience of using the HER or GIS, but you'd need general computer skills like using a mouse, Word and Excel and locating files on a network. If you've used Google Earth or processed your digital photographs you'll probably find it relatively straightforward to pick up.

Other qualities we're looking for – and we know there are plenty of people with them out there in our local societies – are:

- local knowledge of the history/archaeology of an area of East Sussex and/or Brighton and Hove
- writing skills; ability to summarise complex information in comprehensible English
- archaeological knowledge; familiarity with archaeological terms and interpreting archaeological reports
- familiarity with large-scale OS mapping (interpreting contours, field boundaries etc accurately) and a good understanding of grid references.

Because we need access to the HER system the work would have to be during the day Monday-Friday at County Hall, Lewes – but within this days and hours can be arranged to suit the volunteers.

For a discussion please contact me, Greg Chuter, on 01273 336177 or 07500 123 634 or email gregory.chuter@eastsussexcc.gov.uk

If you're interested, but not available just yet, please do still get in touch as this project is likely to run for a year or two.

Many thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Greg Chuter
Assistant County Archaeologist
East Sussex County Council

WIRG WEBSITE NEWS

www.wealdeniron.org.uk

The Group's website continues to attract a good number of 'hits', and regular efforts are made to update it and add fresh material from time to time.

Strange vessel

Recently an appeal was posted for suggestions as to the identity of a heavy, quasi-hemispherical vessel found at Northfrith Farm, Hadlow, Kent. Made of cast iron and weighing about 100kg, it is 48cm long by 26.5cm high and its width ranges between 42cm and 33cm. The metal is 5.5cm - 6cm thick. Its size, shape and material suggest that it might have been used as a vessel for holding hot metal. However, close examination has not been possible so far, so study of any surviving residues has not been undertaken. Where it was found is not a known industrial site, and there is no evidence to suggest that it might have been.



The Northfrith Farm vessel (scale 10cm)
www.wealdeniron.org.uk/What.htm

Do you know what it is? Have you seen something like it before? **Contact the Editor with your ideas.**

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

WIRG WINTER MEETING
 Saturday 30th January 2010

Speaker : Lyn Palmer, Historic Environment Project Officer for the Weald Forest Ridge

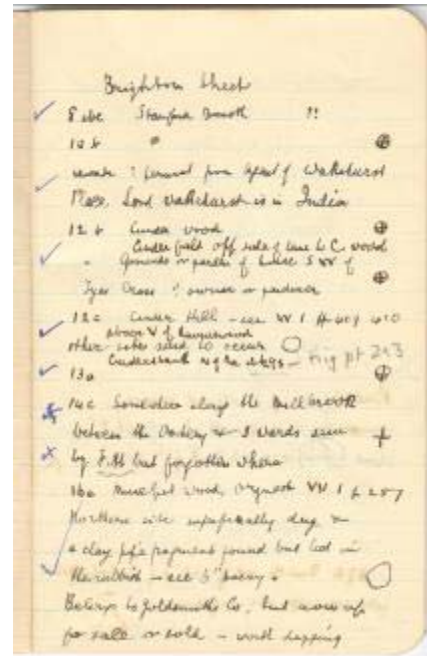
Theses and Dissertations

Theses and dissertations written for university degrees often contain useful material that does not always find its way into print. Making them available on the internet is an inexpensive way of making such research accessible for reference.

The following dissertation is now available on the WIRG Website:

The Iron Industry in the Weald in the Period of the Seven Years' War, 1750-1770 **Jeremy Hodgkinson** University of Brighton MA 1993

Have you written a thesis or dissertation on an aspect of the Wealden iron industry, that has not been published? Could it be put on the WIRG Website for others to refer to? If so, contact the Editor.



Straker's 1937-8 Notebook

WIRG possesses few historical relics, save for a quantity of slag and some pieces of ironwork recovered during forays. Of particular interest, therefore, is a small, red Memo Book with lined pages, and calendars for 1937 and 1938 on the back cover. The book belonged to Ernest Straker and came into the Group's possession via the late James Money, whom Straker had encouraged to continue his work, and which he did when he excavated the bloomeries in Minepit Wood, Rotherfield. The book is accompanied by a map of Brighton and District published by Bartholomew's, to which the references on the page above refer, although other pages refer to the companion map of Maidstone. The book records sites which Straker felt worth investigating, marking them according to how he had heard of them, and which James Money seems to have followed up. Only a few pages are filled - most are blank.

JSH

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY**FERNHURST FURNACE OPEN DAYS 2010**

Saturday 11th September

Sunday 12th September

www.fernhurstsociety.org.uk/furnace.html**TEBBUTT RESEARCH FUND**

Grants are available towards research into any aspect of the Wealden Iron Industry or subjects pertaining to it. Applicants may be individuals or groups, and the application can include any associated expenses, such as travelling and photocopying. Grants do not usually exceed £100 each year. The applicant should write a letter giving details of themselves together with relevant information concerning the research envisaged.

Applications to the Hon. Secretary

WIRG CONTACTS

Chairman & Hon. Treasurer: Shiela Broomfield, 8, Woodview Crescent, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 9HD
s.broomfield@dial.pipex.com

Vice Chairman & Newsletter Editor: Jeremy Hodgkinson, 3, Saxon Road, Worth, Crawley, Sussex, RH10 7SA
jshodgkinson@hodgers.com

Hon. Secretary & Field Group Secretary: David Brown, 2, West Street Farm Cottages, Maynards Green, Heathfield, Sussex, TN21 0DG
wirghonsec@hotmail.com

Publications: Brian Herbert, 1, Stirling Way, East Grinstead, Sussex, RH19 3HG
brianherbert@btinternet.com

Bulletin Editor: David Crossley, 5, Canterbury Crescent, Sheffield, S10 5RW
d.crossley@sheffield.ac.uk

EDITOR'S NOTE

Thank you for your contributions and please keep them coming. Newsletters are published in March and November each year. Items for publication, normally not exceeding 500 words, should be received by February 14 and October 14, respectively, for inclusion in the forthcoming issue. Please send by email preferably, by CD or hard copy; I can work with most PC formats. Monochrome line drawings and photographs are welcome. Please send them separately, not embedded in the text. Digital images need to be at least as big as their expected published size, ideally at 300 dpi or more.

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

	PRICE	
	BY POST (UK)	AT MEETINGS
<i>The Wealden Iron Industry</i> , Jeremy Hodgkinson (2008)	17.20*	15.99*
(discount price- 1 copy per member)	12.00*	12.00*
<i>The Iron Industry in West Hoathly</i> , ed. K. Coutin	6.50	5.50
<i>Excavations of a Late 16th./Early 17th. C. Gun Casting Furnace at Maynard's Gate, Crowborough, Sussex, 1975-1976</i> , O. Bedwin.	1.90	1.50
<i>A Middle-Saxon Iron Smelting Furnace Site at Millbrook, Ashdown Forest, Sussex</i> , C.F. Tebbutt.	1.60	1.20
<i>The Fieldwalker's Guide and an Introduction to the Iron Industries of the Weald</i> , B.K. Herbert.	4.00	3.50
<i>Guns Carried on East Indiamen, 1600 – 1800</i> , Ruth Rhynas Brown.	1.50	1.00
<i>Identifying 18th. Century Trunnion Marks on British Iron Guns; a discussion</i> , Ruth Rhynas Brown,	2.00	1.50
<i>Parson Levett and English Cannon Founding</i> , Brian G. Awty.	2.50	2.00
<i>Metallurgical Analysis of Ferrous Alloy Produced in a Primitive Furnace</i> . R. C. D. Sampson & B. K. Herbert.	5.00	4.00
<i>The Penhurst to Ashburnham leat: a first foray + map</i> (2007)	2.00	1.50
<i>The Penhurst to Ashburnham leat: a second foray + maps</i> (2007)	2.00	1.50
<i>The Penhurst to Ashburnham leat: the flow rate + graphs + map</i> (2007)	3.00	2.50
<i>Fernhurst Furnace</i> . Chichester District Archaeology No. 2, J. Magilton (ed.).	13.70	12.00
CD of Series 1 <i>Wealden Iron Bulletins</i> , Vols. 1 to 17, with searchable index.	6.00	5.00
<i>Second series Bulletins:</i> -		
Volumes 1 to 10 & 12 to 17 (1981 to 1997)	1.50	1.00
Volumes 18 to 28 (1997 to 2008)	2.00	1.50
<i>Note:</i> Vols. 5, 10, 15 & 20 have 5-volume cumulative indexes. Vols 21 onwards are separately indexed		
<i>Index for Wealden Iron</i> , Bulletin of the Wealden Iron Research Group 1st ser. Vols 1-17 and 2nd ser. 1-20	2.50	2.00
Publications are available from the Publications Officer, Brian Herbert (see Contact List above)		
Cheques payable to WIRG (except where marked* - payable to J. S. Hodgkinson)		