



ANNUAL REPORT

2022

Registered Charity No. 281485

www.wealdeniron.org.uk

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(Webmaster)

G. Crawshaw, *BSc*

S. Hall, *BSc, MB, BS*

J. Cranfield, *BA, MA, PGCE*

The aims of the Group shall be:

‘To promote investigation and collate information concerning the Wealden iron industry and related activities for the benefit of the public. In furtherance of this objective,

- a) to publish such information both in regular bulletins and by any other means which the Executive Committee shall think fit;***
- b) to co-operate with and affiliate to other organisations with allied aims as may seem desirable.’***

WIRG is affiliated to the Council for British Archaeology (CBA).

Chairman's Report 2022

The past year was a period of gradual recovery from covid related restrictions. We held the 2021 AGM and summer meeting at Nutley. Jack Cranfield gave a talk on his ongoing work on Tudeley and Roffey. The winter meeting in January 2022 was held by zoom. Kay Smith gave a talk on the manufacture of cannon revealing that it was a complex process with many stages involving much skilled work. Technical problems caused the talk to be divided into two parts and some participants were unable to log-on to the second of these. Kay willingly repeated her talk in April, this time without glitches.

An innovation this year was talks by zoom by Judie English, Tim Smith and Jeremy Hodgkinson on aspects of the iron and steel industry. Each attracted over 20 participants.

There was no spring visit in 2022. In its place WIRG participated in the Historical Metallurgy Society's experimental archaeology event at Cranborne in June.

The experimental bloomery continued in use with smelts each month from April to October, except in June when a wren nesting nearby caused a cancellation. An open day was held in August with six visitors.

Excavations continued in Great Park Wood on the Brede/Udimore border. A magnetometry survey conducted by the Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group indicated areas of possible industrial activity close to the area already under excavation.

Forays were conducted to Tudeley and Petley Wood, near Battle. The Tudeley foray visited the probable site of the only medieval bloomery whose accounts have survived. The foray to Petley Wood identified a previously unrecorded bloomery site close to a series of ore pits found by the Battle and District Historical Society in 1952.

We responded to a consultation by Hastings Museum about their expansion plans and commented on their display of iron firebacks and more generally on their treatment of the iron industry, an important element in the history of Hastings and its environs. We wrote to Wealden District Council in support of the submission of the County Archaeologist concerning a planning application relating to the site of Chiddingly furnace and forge.

Committee meetings in September 2021 and March and May 2022 were held in Nutley Hall. The December 2021 meeting was by zoom. My thanks to all members of the committee for their work in the past year and during the Covid pandemic, which I hope is now behind us.

R. Turgoose

WEALDEN IRON RESEARCH GROUP

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MAY 2022

GENERAL FUND

<u>2021</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2022</u>
1,458.00	Membership Subs	1,571.00	654.41	Printing etc/ postage	432.52
148.00	Legacies/Donations	150.00	418.18	Internet/website	790.81
10.22	CAF Dep (interest)	3.05	143.88	Hall Hire/speakers	111.00
262.75	Gift Aid	298.75	0	Refreshments	115.50
0	Refreshments	46.00	5,000.00	Studentship	0
				Exeter Univ Old & New student	
0	Field Trip	0	288.82	Insurance	288.82
15.90	Sundries	55.00	160.50	Excavations/Forays	96.99
1,294.61	<i>Projects/Adventure in Iron</i>	336.03	367.88	Experimental	414.78
0	HMS Conference	0	0	Bloomery Projects	0
<u>3,189.48</u>		<u>2,459.83</u>	0	Subscriptions	67.00
			128.55	Committee expenses	3.30
			620.75	<i>Projects/Adventure in Iron</i>	129.83
			0	Sundries/HMS conference	577.25
			0	Promotion	0
			<u>7,782.97</u>		<u>3,027.80</u>

6 copies of *Adventure in Iron* sold between 1st June 2021 and 31st May 2022. 202 in stock – 148 sold so far.

BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MAY 2022

<u>General Fund</u>		<u>Bank Balances as at 31 May 2022</u>	
Balance as at 1 st June 2021	£19,003.37	Current Account	£866.10
Cash in hand	10.00	CAF Deposit	£17,579.30
2021/2022 Surplus(loss)	(£567.97)		<u>£18,445.40</u>
Balance as at 31st May 2022	<u>£18,445.40</u>		

Independently examined 17th June 2022 by *Sarah Cope*
Shiela Broomfield 17th June 2022 Treasurer

Wealden Iron Research Group - Financial Report for AGM 2nd July 2022

The accounts have now been independently examined by Mrs Sarah Cope who kindly agreed to do this as Mr Richard Botten was unable to do so. My thanks to Richard for doing this previously and to Sarah for stepping in and letting me know that she is willing to do this in future. The signed accounts are available in the hall.

The accounts are self-explanatory and show the finances to be in a healthy position regardless of the difficult times we have all been through. This is mainly due to the continuing loyalty of the membership. We have lost some of the longstanding members but have been pleased to be able to welcome newcomers. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the accounts and I shall endeavour to answer these.

As usual I should like to thank the other officers and committee for their support.

Shiela Broomfield, Hon. Treasurer and membership.