

**Message from Tom Jones:**

Hello to all members and friends of the Olney Archaeological Society.

If you are on your own, I hope you are not missing social contact too much. If you are with someone, I hope you are surviving togetherness. Mrs Jones says I am thoroughly enjoying my quality time with her!

We are sending this out to as many members of the society as we can reach by email. If you know the email address of others in the society, please forward it on.

To cheer everybody up the Museum is planning a little pop up exhibition which may be entitled: *Pandemics, pills and plagues: Georgian medicine in Olney*.

It's interesting to speculate on the long term effects of diseases. In the north Bucks area has several Deserted Medieval Villages (DMVs) such as Olney Hyde, Hardmead and Petsoe. These were assumed to be deserted immediately following the arrival of the Black Death in 1348, but current thinking is that their abandonment was for economic reasons and only indirectly associated with the plague, occurring decades or even centuries later.

Anyway, Mrs Jones, quite rightly, says I'm wittering and should be cutting the lawn, so I will stop and let you read the attached list of interesting links that I would like to thank Ann for providing below.

Keep safe.

Tom 01234 713412

**Message from Ann Burrows:**

Welcome to all members to our first newsletter.

We looked forward to our speakers in the Spring but unfortunately the present pandemic put a sudden end to our meetings. I am pleased to announce that Professors David Jacques, Jane Evans, Stephen Upex and Dr David Noy have all been re-booked for the autumn of 2021. Brian Pollard is no longer with the Salcey Forest team and they are not able to provide a replacement speaker. David Ingham is giving his talk at the AGM next year.

Stephen Upex is providing a video link of last year's excavations at Durobrivae near Castor. If you have not seen the Time Team video of excavation at the site of the Roman Praetorium at Castor, you can find it by typing in youtube.com "Under the Gravestones". Stephen appears on the programme as he is the local expert on the archaeology in the area.

Please look on our website for information regarding the Day Schools and the possible starting date for our next programme. Hopefully we shall know by the beginning of June if we are able to relax lock down enough to hold meetings, although as many of us come in the category of "over 70s" it does not look very promising.

I include a website issued by CBA (The Council of British Archaeology) that gives a very large selection of interesting videos of archaeological sites.

For those of us who had complimentary tickets to the "Young Rembrandt" exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum, it is possible to enjoy a tour of it from the comfort of your home on [www.ashmolean.org](http://www.ashmolean.org) Another good source has been suggested by Peggy Butler,

[connected.theartssociety.com](http://connected.theartssociety.com) which will provide excellent talks, some on history as well as art and architecture and which are often related to archaeology.

Bookings have just started for some video/Zoom courses from Cambridge with an amazing collection of Archaeology, Art, Architecture, History etc all throughout July. I have just booked 3 courses, £75 each for a week of lectures by excellent speakers, including some due to or already have, spoken at Olney.

<https://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/university-cambridge-virtual-summer-festival-learning/virtual-summer-festival-learning-courses>

Best wishes, keep safe, Ann

**From David Ingham:** “The CBA team in York has used the current lull in its work programme to put together an Archaeology Resources Hub - see <http://blog.archaeologyuk.org/2020/03/24/archaeology-resources-hub/> There's an eclectic mixture of stuff on there, so you may well find something to take your interest while stuck indoors over the next few weeks/months.”

### **Message from Stephen Upex:**

Durobrivae Excavations :- An update.

That plan was for members of OAS to come over to view the excavations at the Roman town of Durobrivae (North Cambs.) during the period of the excavations in June of this year. Ann Burrows and I had fixed a date when the excavation would have been well underway and there should have been plenty to see. The excavation plan was to open up a large area over the site of the Roman-Celtic temple that we just caught a glimpse of last year. This temple was cut in 2019 by a single trench but the results were fascinating, showing that the building had still been in use as late as the early part of the 5th century when its limestone tessellated floor was being heavily repaired with red roof tile cubes. It is possibly one of the last buildings to still be functioning within the Roman town.

So all was set for an exciting second season in the field with student groups from Cardiff, Cambridge and Birmingham universities along with local people from surrounding Societies. All set that is until the inevitable! The current situation has meant that I have had to postpone the work until (hopefully) next year when the plan will be to simply do what I had planned to do this year. But the invitation to come over to view the work will still stand so that OAS can visit the site and see what is being found.

In the meantime if you want to catch up on the detail of the 2019 seasons work then you can find this published on line. If you type into your web browser the following site details.....  
<https://www.nenevalleyarchaeology.co.uk>. this should bring up the Nene Valley Archaeological Trust's website where you can navigate first a summary of what was found at the site and then should you want more, you can find the full report of last year's work.

Hopefully we can all meet in 2021 on a sunny morning in June and I can guide you around the excavations.... so stay safe..... you can't afford to miss it!

Stephen Upex

May 2020