

THE 2014 DIG – TAYNE FIELD - FROM THE BRONZE AGE TO THE FIRST WORLD WAR, VIA THE ANGLO-SAXONS

Dr Gabor Thomas and his team from the University of Reading have undertaken archaeological excavations in the village of Lyminge, Kent, since 2007. In 2014 Dr Thomas excavated on Tayne Field in the heart of the village, the third year of excavations on the site funded by the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council). The Community project, allowing volunteers to get involved, included on-site archaeology, finds washing and sorting, research, photographing finds and other skills.

The dig confirmed that Lyminge is certainly highly significant to the history of Kent and the introduction of Christianity, a fact that the media has also recognised.



Summary of what has been found

Two trenches were opened in order to try to answer some of the remaining questions about the Saxon settlement before backfilling.

Trench 1 was positioned over a Bronze Age ring ditch containing several cremations which had several Saxon post holes cutting into it. There was also an interesting large dark patch with animal bone and pottery visible on the surface in the south-eastern corner of this trench. This promised many Saxon finds.

A copper alloy bird was discovered. It does not have any obvious fitting for attachment to anything, so it may have been a decorative pin head or similar article. Also found was a tanged chisel over Bronze Age barrow from Late Bronze Age (c. 1200-800BC).

Trench 2 was situated closer to Church Road and was opened over an area that included some of the previous season's trench. The 15 metre extension of main trench in 2013 was covered in black plastic and backfilled so it could be removed in 2014. This was the trench in which was found part of a very large timber hall and excavations in this area attempted to find more of it and any associated structures. Evidence found was two more halls, with shared walls, showing evidence of continuous occupation.



A possible Beaker burial, with a skeleton in crouched position containing grave goods was excavated. There was a bone toggle, which probably fastened a strap or belt. Beaker culture dated from c. 2500 BC in Britain, up to around 1700 BC. The name 'Beaker' came from the beaker shaped artefacts found as grave goods.

A radiate-headed brooch was excavated from one of the transects dug through the 'blob' in the summer, decorated with Style 1 animal art.

2014 was the final excavation carried out as part of a three-year project. However, part of the excavations had unearthed what was named "*The Blob*". This feature would be further excavated during 2015 when the team returned for a short dig to establish what the *Blob* was.



Further Information and Reading:

Anglo-Saxon Lyminge: Excavations in 2014 published by the Lyminge Historical Society in its publication, *Lyminge a history, Part 7*. Please contact the Society if you would like to buy a copy.

The Guardian, 22 November 2013, *Gambling of high-living Anglo-Saxons revealed by Archaeology find*

The Times, 22 November 2013, *Drink and draughts – how Saxons played*.