

Lossenham Project Newsletter

ISSUE 24

Introduction

On 3 November 1801, Karl Baedeker was born in Essen, into a book-selling and publishing family. After a period of education and learning the trade, he set up his own firm in Coblenz in 1827, and five years later came the start of his travel guide series. This lasted in its original form until WWII, with more than 1,000 editions published in German, French and English, ranging from his homeland to Madeira, Canada and even India. Baedeker guides contain many famous gems like the above, as well as giving a time-capsule view of places a century or more years ago. [My favourite is a description in a French-language guide, describing the Valle d'Aosta as having "3,200 habitants (beaucoup de crétins)". It doesn't quite mean what you first think!]

The Baedeker name is still in use for travel guides, now published by Mair Dumont in Ostfildern, near Stuttgart. This issue of the Lossenham Project newsletter picks up on the subject of spas and other tourist attractions and we hope will give you a sense of adventure and desire to explore the local area, much as the highly collectable little red books did for your great-grandparents.

"The traveller need have no scruple in limiting his donations to the smallest possible sums, as liberality frequently becomes a source of annoyance and embarrassment."

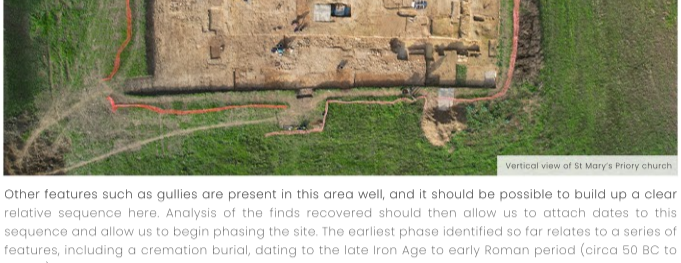
Karl Baedeker



Åke Nilson
Chairman of the Janus Foundation

Progress on the Priory

The archaeological team were back at Lossenham in October, continuing the ongoing excavation of the priory. The large trench (Area 1) has been extended to the west and now encompasses the entire footprint of the priory church of St Mary. It now appears that the primary entrance to the church was in the north wall, linking to the cloister. It is flanked by two substantial sets of stone foundations, which presumably supported an arched doorway. There does appear to be an entrance in the west wall, but at present this seems much less grand. The southern wall was supported by a series of projecting buttresses. To the south of these was a spread of rubble and roof tile, presumably a demolition deposit, which seals what may be a pathway.



Vertical view of St Mary's Priory church

Other features such as gullies are present in this area well, and it should be possible to build up a clear relative sequence here. Analysis of the finds recovered should then allow us to attach dates to this sequence and allow us to begin phasing the site. The earliest phase identified so far relates to a series of features, including a cremation burial, dating to the late Iron Age to early Roman period (circa 50 BC to AD 100). The priory itself of course dates from circa AD 1243 to 1538, with the post-dissolution demolition and partial occupation extending into the late eighteenth century.



St Mary's Priory looking south



St Mary's Priory looking east

Despite some downpours, the weather was relatively benign for October, and the softer ground conditions meant that a lot of areas could be cleaned up and trowelled relatively quickly, compared to the baked conditions of the Summer. When the surface in Area 1 was too wet to work, we took the opportunity to open three further test pits in other parts of the site. One to the north-west of the complex, and another in the centre of the cloister, were largely blank, but a third picked up the east wall of the eastern range, providing our first glimpse of that range. In all, the days on site in October were a success; everyone worked very hard, and the excavation will continue in November and into December, before the site is prepared for the Winter. Some amazing finds were made this month...but more on those next month!

Andrew Richardson
Isle Heritage CIC

Lossenham Project will go to Medway



On Saturday 15 October five of the exhibition banners from the Lossenham Priory Study Day featured among the exhibits at the Medway History Showcase, thereby taking the Lossenham Project to a new audience at the Royal Engineers Museum, Gillingham. This display was part of the Canterbury Christ Church University's Centre for Kent History and Heritage stand, which also illustrated the activities of the 'Medieval Animals Heritage' project led by Dr Diane Heath.

As well as the introductory banner to the project, Jason Mazzocchi and I selected four banners that illustrated to visitors how the volunteers in the wills group have been deploying wills to gain an understanding of life on the Rother Levels in the early modern period. The banners we took to Gillingham highlight the archives where these primary sources are held, matters relating to handwriting and the various abbreviations and other conventions used by clerks, as well as the potential of such sources to provide a window on past lives, including those who often do not appear in archival sources - women, and the roles and activities they undertook in 16th-century society. This display sparked considerable interest, so thanks to all those who created these banners. Jason talked to a steady stream of people in the gaps between the history talks which were another feature of the day, including my history of the medieval hospitals of the Medway valley.

The exhibition banners are currently stored at Nackington, ready for similar opportunities to showcase the project.

Dr Sheila Sweetinburgh
Centre for Kent History and Heritage

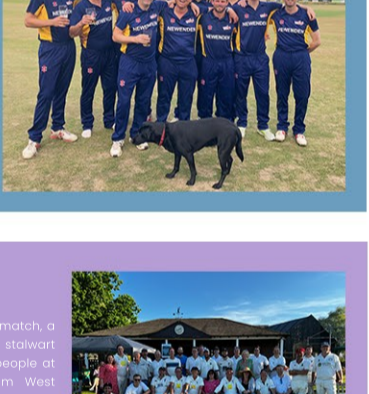
FOUR-MIDABLE

If Carlsberg made cricket seasons then this one would be right up there as the club enjoyed one of the most successful in our history. We entered four competitions and brought home four trophies - and we appeared on the front cover of a national newspaper.

Cup wins

We achieved our third consecutive league promotion. It has been a meteoric rise, having entered the league in Division 5 in 2019 we now move up to Division 1 after we took home the league title at a canter. There were several memorable performances, but the emphatic wins over Street End, Staplehurst and Bearsted will live long in the memory.

The team also won the Wealden Wallop, the local T20 competition, and both Sixes tournaments we entered.

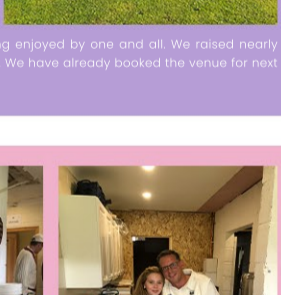


Events

We all enjoyed a wonderful day at Winston's match, a game played in the memory of former club stalwart Winston Cuthbert. It saw well over hundred people at the NCG, raising over £1,500 for the Sam West Foundation.

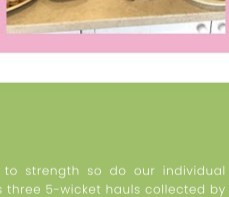
The Newenden Sixes was a great success, five teams taking to the field for a highly competitive tournament. Trev's Big Bash saw Biddenden winning a closely fought affair. We raised £640 for the local hospice too.

Our annual awards dinner in March was a great evening enjoyed by one and all. We raised nearly £5,000 from the evening - amazing for a club of our size. We have already booked the venue for next year, so put Saturday March 4th in your diaries.



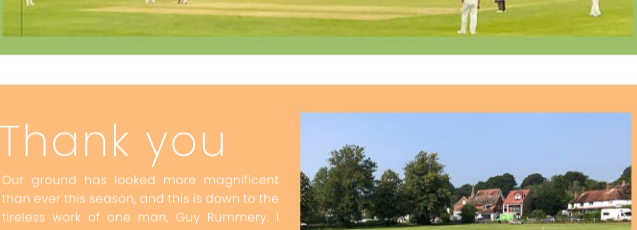
Teas

I cannot write a season overview without mention of the teas, which have been truly memorable this year.



On the field

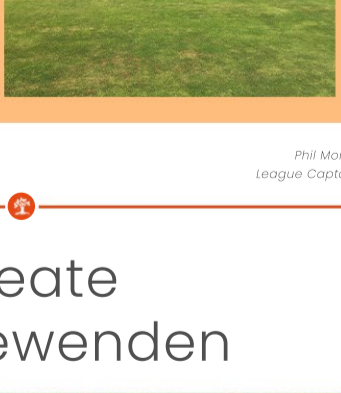
As the team's achievements continue to go from strength to strength so do our individual performances. Nine centuries were scored this year, as well as three 5-wicket hauls collected by Garry Smith (who got 37 wickets in total this season), Ian Jones and Finn Piper.



Thank you

Our ground has looked more magnificent than ever this season, and this is down to the tireless work of one man, Guy Rummery. I would also like to thank our umpires, Mick Browning and Giles Moffatt, who have both been exemplary this season, exuding an air of calm authority.

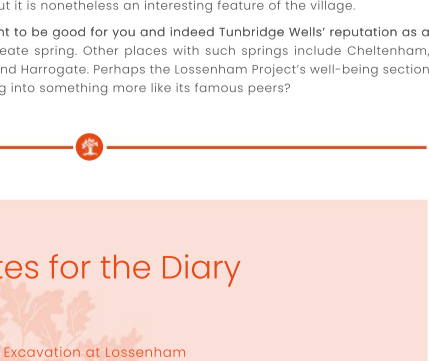
I would like to thank all of our sponsors for their continued support, and finally, I would like to thank all of players and members that continue to make Newenden CC one of the finest places to play cricket in the county.



Phil Morris
League Captain

The Chalybeate Spring in Newenden

Between Selmes Trust's land and Friars' Marsh, just where the public footpath goes down to the river and opposite Old Timbers, is an overgrown construction belonging to Southern Water. Most casual observers might not even notice it, or if they do, think that it might be some sort of pumping station. But it is no such thing - it is a chalybeate spring, built over to prevent the unwary from becoming overwhelmed by its fumes.



Chalybeate spring at Ramlösa, Sweden

This kind of spring (it's pronounced "ka-li-bi-eyt") is not unusual in the Weald. It is a natural spring whose waters contain iron salts, and indeed gives off carbon dioxide (which might cause suffocation in high concentrations). The great historian of Kent, Edward Hasted, said of our spring water: "with oaken leaves put into it, turned blackish; and with powder of galls [tannin], it sparkled and turned like Champaigne wine." I'll stay with the Bolly, thanks, but it is nonetheless an interesting feature of the village.

This kind of mineral water was thought to be good for you and indeed Tunbridge Wells' reputation as a spa town rests entirely on its chalybeate spring. Other places with such springs include Cheltenham, Gloucester, Hampstead (in London) and Harrogate. Perhaps the Lossenham Project's well-being section should consider developing the spring into something more like its famous peers?

Dates for the Diary

- November 2022**
Wednesday 9th to Friday 11th: Excavation at Lossenham
Wednesday 23rd and Thursday 24th: Field walking and metal detecting at Castle Toll
- December 2022**
Tuesday 6th to Friday 9th: Excavation at Lossenham

Note: these excavation dates are subject to weather conditions. (Please make sure to sign-up in good time so we can plan our activities effectively.)