

MARCH MEETING

First Speaker

Kent in 100 Objects

A talk by Martin Crowther

Reported by Alan Lee

Martin has worked for 20 years in Kent and is married to a Dorsetian. He gained inspiration for his talk from a radio 4 programme, 'A History of the World in 100 objects' from the British Museum.

Because of the concerns about Covid-19 a much depleted audience, of about 30 members, was treated to a most interesting and informative talk with the objects ranged from ancient documents, to treasure, to Wellington's boots on display at Walmer Castle.

The first object that Charles described was a fossil of a tree fern, some 300 million years old, excavated by miners at Snowdown and has links to the history of coal mining in Kent.

This was followed by numerous other objects which included the following.

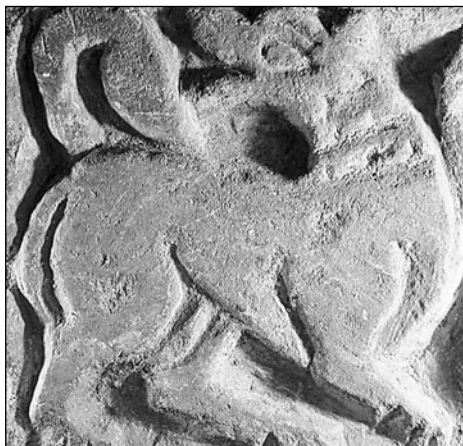
A fossil of an Arthropod, a six foot centipede from the Carnivoran period, and a fossil of an Iguanodon, a large herbivorous dinosaur were uncovered near Maidstone.

During the excavation of the Wellington Dock Navigation Channel, among other objects, a fossilised mammoth tooth dating back 14,000 years was unearthed.

In 1992 the world's oldest known seagoing boat, the Bronze Age Boat, was discovered and along with the Langdon Bay Hoard, found in 1974, can be seen in Dover Museum.



Iron Age gold



Dog chasing its tail

South East Kent is an area where hundreds of thousands of ancient objects have been uncovered. An extremely rare copper alloy Iron Age Celtic helmet was discovered near Canterbury and dated to around 50BC by a small bronze brooch found with it.

A Viking stirrup was unearthed, Viking raiders were the first people to bring horse riding stirrups to England he said.

In 2008, at Richborough, a Roman dice tower, or Pyrgus, was found. Only the third ever discovered, the other two were in Germany and Egypt. It was an everyday object in Roman times and was meant to stop cheating when rolling a dice. It is about 12 inches tall and the rosette decoration on this tower links it to the Roman game of Duodecim Scripta.

Included in the talk were some more unusual items. There is 'Snob' the dog, preserved by taxidermy and on display in the Royal Engineer Museum. The live dog was found beside the body of a Russian officer after the battle of Alma, 1854, during the Crimean War. Adopted by the 11th Company Royal Sappers and Miners and

brought back to England the dog was presented with a Crimean War medal. Originally called 'Alma' but re-christened 'Snob' as he preferred the Officers Mess at Chatham to the Guardroom. Snob died at Chatham, and a plaque in his honour shows his final resting place, just off the parade square in the middle of Brompton Barracks.

A picture on a potted shrimp lid entitled 'lady being carried ashore by a fisherman', found at Pegwell Bay.

A painting, from 1940, of hop picking by Dame Laura Knight.

Bagpuss created at Blean was meant to be a marmalade-coloured cat. It all went horribly wrong in a fabric dyeing shop in Folkestone and he came out bright pink. The creators decided that they preferred him that colour and the rest is history.

The audience also learnt that Subbuteo was invented and produced at Langton Green, near Tunbridge Wells.

Charles concluded his talk with the, now customary question and answer session.



Pot Lid



Hop picking Granny Knowles by Dame Laura Knight