

# News

## A HOARD OF LATE BRONZE AGE INGOTS

A remarkable group of ingot fragments contained within a pottery vessel was found in January by local computer company owner and metal detector user Nick Green, while detecting near Betchworth in Surrey. Nick recognised the significance of his find immediately. He left it undisturbed in the ground and checked the site using his hand-held GPS so that the findspot could be easily relocated. Nick then rang the Portable Antiquities Scheme's Finds Liaison officer for Surrey, David Williams, who arranged a small excavation a few days later. The group of eight 'bun' ingot fragments was contained within a pot that had a pair of lug handles. The pot is of a type which dates the find to about 800 BC. The upper part of the pot together with one of the handles is missing due to ploughing. The breaking of ingots and their placing in hoards in the landscape is especially common during the 'Ewart Park' metal phase of

PHOTOS: Portable Antiquities Scheme/Surrey County Council



the Late Bronze Age (c. 1000-800 BC).

Although there are a few English antiquarian records of ingots being found within a pottery container, this is the first to be recovered in modern times and certainly the first from Surrey. The pot and its contents were recovered intact and the contents were later investigated at the British Museum.

It is hoped that the find will be lodged at Guildford Museum. The findspot lies on a narrow belt of sand and a number of excavations in the Betchworth area have taken place in advance of sand quarrying. These excavations have shown

strong evidence for activity of a ritual or religious nature extending from at least from c.2000 BC to the Roman period. It is possible that this latest find relates to this activity rather than simply being a cache of metalworking ingots, hidden away and intended for later recovery.

### The Portable Antiquities Scheme

The Portable Antiquities Scheme is a voluntary scheme for the recording of finds of archaeological interest found by members of the public. Most of these are found through metal detecting. In

## EXCAVATIONS AT CAERLEON

A team of 50 archaeologists from Cardiff University and University College, London, has started to excavate a large building in the south-western corner of the Roman fortress at Caerleon, whose very existence was unknown until Cardiff staff and students undertook a geophysical survey in 2007.

The building is believed to be a

warehouse and the excavation aims to gather new information about the storage facilities, provisioning, and supply of a Legion in Britain.

Dr Peter Guest, of Cardiff's School of History and Archaeology, explained: 'Store-buildings are a largely unknown feature of legionary fortresses. We hope that our findings will not only improve our knowledge of the fortress and its

inhabitants, but also tell us more about the history of the fortress and Roman Britain.' Throughout the project, Dr Guest and the team will be keeping a dig-blog ([www.britarch.ac.uk/communityarchaeology/wikka.php?wakka=CaerleonLegionaryFortress](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/communityarchaeology/wikka.php?wakka=CaerleonLegionaryFortress)) and the site will be open for National Archaeology Week, which runs from 12 until 20 July.

**Right** A team at work at the Priory Field excavations, Caerleon.

PHOTOS: Courtesy of Cardiff University/UCL