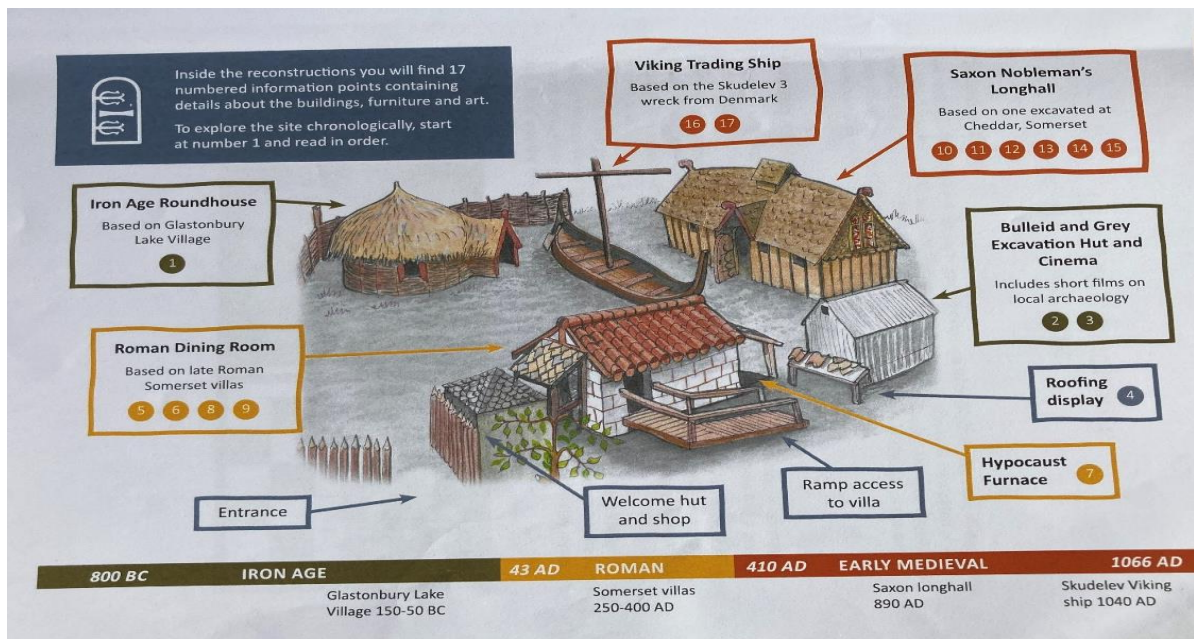


Glastonbury Antiquarian Society Field Trip 2023

We were to be 20, but in the event, a dozen GAS members went on this year's field trip, venturing a long way out onto Avalon Marshes – well just a few miles down the road to be precise – and first stop was the Avalon Archaeology Park. Here, Natalie Watson and Richard Brunning gave a lengthy tour of the reconstructions which included an Iron Age round house under construction, a Roman villa dining room, an Anglo-Saxon long hall, a Viking boat modelled on one retrieved from the waters off Roskilde in Denmark and finally, the original Bulleid & Gray excavation hut used in the Lake Village excavations.



Plan of Avalon Archaeology Park

This was a long tour and marked by the intricate artwork telling the story of King Alfred and various weird and wonderful wood carvings in the long hall and the wall frescoes and mosaic floor in the Roman building. The level of detail given by Natalie and Richard was impressive as was the work of the volunteers.



The Roman dining room showing the mosaic floor and frescoes



Two murals in the Anglo Saxon Long Hall with tales of Alfred and the Vikings

After a lunch, the party moved to Meare where we parked in front of the Manor Farmhouse. Robyn Look took us round the outside of the house and pointed out the various features in the long history of the building which dates from the C14 and C16 with C19 alterations. It was the summer residence of the abbots of Glastonbury and over the centuries has seen many changes of use, recycling of materials and is now a working farmhouse.



Looking round the outbuildings at the Manor Farmhouse with Robyn Look

We then crossed over the field and had a look in the Meare Fish House. English Heritage says it's the only one in England but Robyn said that he has tracked another one down near Kenilworth.



Meare Fish House



Meare Church

Meare Church was the last stop and it seemed that everyone wanted a good sit down to recover. The church itself is well-proportioned and has one or two interesting features. The walkway from the road was particularly inviting on a hot day with its closely grouped trees offering a passageway of shade.

The Antiquarians enjoyed the trip:

'Thank you so much for your work organising the trip. I very much enjoyed it and shall be returning (to the Archaeology Park) and thank you to GAS for our free entry ticket!'

'The highlight for me was visiting the Manor House.....having worked at the Abbey and heard so much about it.'

For such a variety of things to see so close to Glastonbury, it was a good trip with lots of history, artwork, personal stories enhanced by the tellers and an enthusiastic and informed audience.

M Claridge