

Portable Antiquities

21st June 2004 - Roy Underdown Pavilion

At our meeting in June, Jody McCrohan of Winchester Museum told us about their Portable Antiquities Scheme. Before the meeting, some of us had wondered whether this referred to old objects with handles, but we were soon enlightened. It is a system whereby historical 'finds' are identified and recorded. People using metal detectors, or just searching, make 150,000 finds each year. They include coins of all ages, brooches, buckles, Stone Age tools, pieces of horse harness, and Jodi showed us some pictures. We saw Iron Age coins of gold and bronze, Roman brooches of copper alloy, a variety of 1st to 4th Century coins, and pieces of pottery. Jodi explained the difference between ordinary finds and treasure, the latter being objects 'buried with the intention of recovery.' Then she showed us an example which she called 'The Hoard,' an impressive golden necklace with bracelets and brooches, and a picture of how they would have looked on their owner. This collection was valued at £350,000. After the meeting, I would not be surprised if the sale of metal detectors in Hamble rose somewhat!