



From the Editor

Welcome to the August Newsletter. In these unprecedented times the Council is working hard to keep things moving and restart events.

We are pleased to announce that restrictions have currently relaxed sufficiently to enable the Society to run a local field trip to Bidston Hill in September. On 8th October, Sue is inviting members to join her for an informal walk around Calderstones Park. Details are below.

We have also put plans in place for the Autumn season of lectures and our postponed AGM using Zoom technology. Further information can be found on page 2. These details will be firmed up at the end of September in the next Bulletin.

We recognise that members may have things they would like to see happen which we haven't considered and we would welcome suggestions for future activities.

Dave Roberts

Fieldtrip News

Although restrictions have gradually eased since full lockdown, there are still limits in place on group sizes, travelling etc and it's likely that many members of MAS will still be nervous about travelling and meeting others. However, I feel that it is possible to test the waters with a limited trip, so I will be leading a walk around the Bidston Hill Heritage Trail on Sunday 20 September. <http://www.bidstonhill.org.uk/heritage/>

I realise that this is significantly less ambitious than past fieldtrips, but believe that it's important to see if things can operate safely in the current circumstances; hopefully we'll be able to be more ambitious next year. In addition, despite having lived on Merseyside for 32 of the past 38 years, I'd not been up there until I dragged the kids round on a quick recce a couple of weeks ago (hopefully MAS members will complain less than they did!). Highlights for me included Bidston Windmill and a range of rock art of various dates.

In these interesting times we will have to operate differently, so please adhere to the following.

- 1) The trip may be cancelled at short notice if there is a change to Government advice, I will attempt to contact anyone who has booked, but please keep an eye on the news and act accordingly.
- 2) **Booking is essential** for this trip. Please contact Mark Adams by email to mhadams@rsk.co.uk or by phone to 07469144227.
- 3) At present I am working to guidelines issued by the Ramblers: <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer-zone/coronavirus.aspx> which limit groups to 30, though I will probably split us into two or more sub-groups if

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Merseyside Archaeological Society publishes three newsletters each year. Contributions are invited on all aspects of archaeology in Merseyside. If you wish to contribute information please contact the Newsletter Editor. Please note that contributions may have to be edited.

Disclaimer: Any views or opinions expressed by contributors to this Newsletter are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of Merseyside Archaeological Society.

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more than 5-6 attend. Again, please note that these guidelines may change at short notice.

- 4) **If you have any Covid-19 symptoms DO NOT ATTEND.**
- 5) Please bring your own alcohol based hand-sanitiser, face-covering and first-aid kit.
- 6) You will be asked to provide details of your address for Track & Trace
- 7) Plan in advance how you will get to the meeting point, avoiding public transport, shared cars etc where possible.
- 8) 2 m safe distancing will be adhered to throughout the trip.
- 9) Do not share food, drink or equipment such as walking poles.
- 10) Avoid, where possible, touching gates etc.
- 11) I will not be supplying hard copies of handouts relating to the trip. The link to Bidston Hill's website supplies details of the route, historical background etc and it is suggested that you either bring your own copies, or download them to a smart phone. Alternatively I found that the phone signal (O2) is good on the hill and it is possible to view webpages on site using a smartphone. However, that may be different for other services and you will need sufficient data and battery life available.
- 12) Please make sure that the walk is well within your physical abilities. The walk will be 1 ½ to 2 miles with short sections of up-hill and down-hill. Paths are generally good, though there are some uneven sections. Remember, some of us may not be as fit as we were pre-lockdown. I estimate that it will take about 2 hours.
- 13) If you develop symptoms after the walk, apply for a Covid-19 test and contact NHS Contact Tracing and Mark Adams as required.

Subject to all of that, we will be meeting at the car-park for Tam O'Shanter's Cottage, which is accessed from Boundary Road, at 1.30 PM Sunday 20 September.

Mark Adams

Autumn Meetings 2020

Covid-19 continues to impact our programme, the Quaker Meeting House remains closed at time of writing and it is difficult to foresee when we'll be able to meet in person. Current guidelines suggest that even if the Meeting House reopens we will be severely restricted in the numbers we will be allowed to admit. It is also likely that many members will be wary of attending meetings.

In consequence it has been decided to trial meetings held online via the Zoom app. We realise that this may not be accessible for some members, and apologise in advance for the inconvenience, but for the time being this seems to be the only way we can keep some sort of programme going. Things will hopefully have improved by the New Year, but at the moment it is not possible to give a date for the restart of indoor meetings.

For the present we've arranged dates up to December to allow everyone to see how this works and to allow us all to get used to it. Talks will be relatively restricted in length at 20-25 mins with 10 mins for questions.

Details are yet to be finalised, but it is proposed to supplement the shorter talks with a series of short field trips to locally accessible sites and museums as the weather improves in the spring. To trial this there will be a short visit to Bidston Hill in September which replaces September's talk (see above).

There are some technical points to put across to ensure everything runs as smoothly as possible.

1. Zoom sessions will last 40 mins; please make sure you log on promptly.
2. Please set your microphone to mute whilst the speaker is talking. This is to ensure that we get the best audio quality so that everyone can hear.
3. Just as we would in a physical meeting, please save any questions until the end of the session.
4. It's possible to post text comments during Zoom meetings, but we found this quite distracting during the trial run, so please keep this to a minimum.
5. It is possible to record Zoom meetings, so if for some reason you are unable to attend it may be possible to catch-up later,

details will be given in October's newsletter.

6. If you'd rather not appear by video that can be turned off and replaced with a photo.
7. A link to the Zoom meeting will be sent out by email to members in the week prior to the meeting, so please make sure that our membership sec, Vanessa Oakden, has your current email address.

There's a handy introduction to how to use Zoom in this video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOUwumKCW7M>

Hopefully this will work, though we are expecting the usual technical glitches on the first couple of sessions so please be patient with us. We're trialling it with talks by members whilst we find out how it works, but if it's successful we will be inviting our usual diverse range of speakers and (almost) normal service will resume.

Programme

Sunday 20 September 1.30 PM Mark Adams *Evening meeting to be replaced by the Bidston Hill fieldtrip.*

Thursday 15 October 7.30PM Maurice Handley *'Merseyside's Industrial Heritage - a short illustrated guide'.*

Maurice will give a short introduction to the industrial archaeology of Merseyside based upon the latest MIHS publication, "A Guide to the Industrial Heritage of Merseyside".

Thursday 19 November 7.30PM Mark Adams *'Capstans, Winches and Walls- Industrial Archaeology at Princes Dock'.*

Keeping up the industrial theme this talk will cover a (currently) ongoing watching brief at Princes Half-Tide Dock.

Thursday 17 December 7.30PM Maurice Handley *AGM & Christmas Quiz*

Those without access to the internet will be able to submit a postal vote. This will be followed by Maurice's now traditional Christmas Quiz, though you will unfortunately have to supply your own mince pies and refreshments.

Further details will appear in October's newsletter.

Mark Adams

MAS Social Walk to Calderstones Park, Thursday 8th October 11.30 – 13.00 hrs



The Calderstones: the remains of a megalithic tomb with carved rock art that is now on display close to its original location, next to the Mansion House in Calderstones Park.

There is a small, informative exhibition associated with the monument, and both can be visited.

MAS published a popular booklet on the Calderstones that is available:

<https://www.merseysidearchsoc.com/the-calderstones.html>

Would you like to use your COVID-permitted fresh air & exercise time in the company of a very small number of other people who are also interested in local archaeology and the historic environment? The aim of a social walk is to get some fresh air in an interesting place, with a few like-minded people (no more than 6 people in a group, meeting out of doors).

Sue Stallibrass (Sue.Stallibrass@liverpool.ac.uk) will be going for a walk in Calderstones Park on Thursday October 8th and if you would like to join her, please rendezvous on the steps of the Mansion House at 11.30am (there is a porch for shelter if necessary, but I am hoping for some lovely autumnal colours on the park's trees!). The park has lots of walks, it also has the Calderstones

themselves, and it has a café. There is free parking and bus numbers 75 and 86C pass by (Menlove Avenue bus-stop) For information about how to get there, facilities and history of the Reader and Calderstones Park see: <https://www.thereader.org.uk/visit-calderstones/>

This is not a 'led walk' but a mutual explore of the area. The timing (mid-week, late morning) is to avoid busy travel times whether by car or public transport.

At the rendezvous you will be asked to provide Sue with your name and phone contact details, to comply with government track and trace systems. Social distancing will be required, in accordance with whatever the current government advice is at the time of the walk. If more than six people turn up at the rendezvous, we can easily split into two smaller parties: it is quite a large park. If you know in advance that you would like to come along, and would like to have Sue's phone number in advance of the walk, please contact her via her email.

Archaeology is Everywhere

Archaeology is not quite everywhere. The impact of Covid-19 has hampered local societies like ours and many are unable to hold meetings or carry out activities such as archaeological excavations. Typically these societies have members in the older age group who might not be able to attend meetings and younger members who lead busy lives and also can't come to meetings. One solution to these problems is to have virtual meetings. MAS Council has already met using ZOOM and we are working on using video-conferencing for talks and the AGM in the next few months.

In the previous Bulletin we had a surfeit of recommended web sites to visit. I particularly enjoyed the virtual walks on the CITIZAN site. I learnt a lot from the online visit to the Liverpool's historic docks and can't wait to get on my bike and tour the area once I feel safe. The site describes the docks built by Jesse Hartley as having 'Cyclopean' masonry. The term refers to the randomly shaped stone blocks found in the walls of Mycenae and the belief that the Cyclopes possessed the strength to move them.

Liverpool has over three thousand listed buildings, many of them in the central commercial area and around the historic docks. One of my favourites is Oriel Chambers which was built in 1864. It is an early example of the use of cast



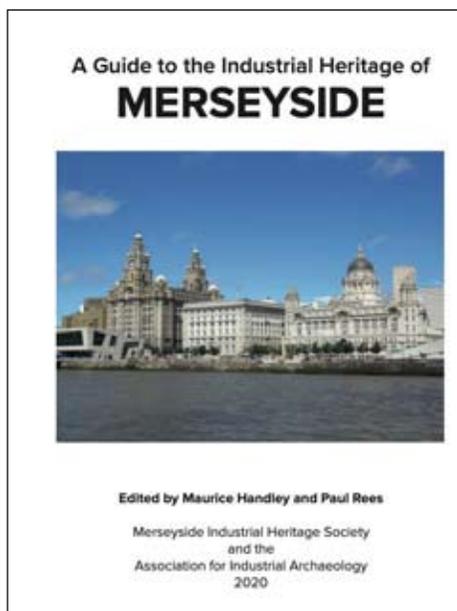
Oriel Chambers

iron framework construction. The architect Peter Ellis also built a similar structure on Cook Street. Most of the 19th century warehouses also have cast iron incorporated in their structure for fire resistance reasons. Just wandering round the city centre you realise the great variety of buildings and structures there are. Beneath these there will be evidence of earlier structures such as docks, warehouses, potteries, foundries, railways and civil war defences.

I've spent the last couple of years researching the industrial heritage of Liverpool and some of the other parts of Merseyside, for a guide that was intended for the Association of Industrial Archaeology's 2020 conference but that is now postponed until next year. The following advert (not written by me) gives further details.

A Guide to the Industrial Heritage of Merseyside

'Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society has published *A Guide to the Industrial Heritage of Merseyside* which is available to MAS members at a discounted price. The new Guide contains 132 pages and details more than 330 sites across the boroughs of Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral, each with map references and listing status. There are more than 140 illustrations, almost all of them new colour images never published before. A key feature is the inclusion of 12 specially commissioned maps, showing the location of the important sites. The guide contains comprehensive overviews of the industrial development of both the region and the



Guide Cover

individual boroughs. As an introductory offer the new guide is available at the discounted price of £7.00, plus £2.00 P&P. To secure a copy send a cheque to the MIHS Treasurer at 14, Ardern Lea, Alvanley, Frodsham, WA6 9EQ or contact her at renie11@yahoo.com for details of how to pay. ‘

Maurice Handley

Talks at The Atkinson

The Atkinson in Southport is running a weekly series of eight online local history talks by Dr Tom Preston called ‘Southport snapshots’. The first, taster, session on Monday 14th Sept is free, all subsequent sessions are £3 plus a booking fee of £1 per ticket (ie £4). They will be held via ZOOM at 10.30 - 11.15am every Monday from 14th Sept until Monday 2nd Nov.

Southport Snapshots, the series of popular local history sessions continues, this time, via online workshops using the free video communications platform Zoom. We will be looking at aspects of Southport’s history, including fishermen’s cottages, Little Ireland, Vulcan Cars, and Hesketh Park Aerodrome, amongst others.

To take part in the Zoom meeting you will need access to a computer, laptop or tablet, an email address and an internet connection. The first session on Monday 14 September is free but booking is essential for each session (including the free taster session- you need to book in order to receive the Zoom link).

Further information and booking details (you can book by phone or online) via

<https://www.theatkinson.co.uk/events/southport-snapshots-2020-09-21/>

Please note: Dr Tom Preston is delivering Southport Snapshots online, direct to participants on behalf of The Atkinson. Participant email address will be shared securely with Dr Tom Preston for him to facilitate the Zoom meeting.

Sue Stallibrass

New Discovery at Formby

To find out about a wonderful discovery by Dr Ardern Hulme-Beaman please please follow the link to learn about the discovery of an ancient hearth hidden in the sands of Formby Beach alongside millennia-old footprints. You will be able to explore the find directly through SketchFab models as well!

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/archaeology-classics-and-egyptology/blog/2020/formby-hearth/>

Sue Stallibrass

Self-guided walks

If you want to get some fresh air out and about in the local historic environment, either on your own or with members of your own household, here are some links to some self-guided walks in Merseyside.

Here are some coastal walks that you can try:

Parkgate Heritage Trail <http://www.parkgateheritagetrail.org/home/locations/>

CITiZAN Liverpool Bay Discovery Programme has two coastal walks at:

<https://citizan.org.uk/discovery-programmes/liverpool-bay/>

1) **New Brighton:** From smuggling haven to coastal resort

2) **Liverpool: Docks, Liverbirds and Beatles:** Albert Dock and waterfront sites. These all look at built heritage and structures, and all are in areas where you can find refreshments etc

For another coastal walk but in a more open environment, you can look for the remains of World War II defences in the dunes at Crosby, using Alison Burns’ booklet on **Forgotten Fort Crosby: Dune Heritage Revealed** which can be downloaded from her Academia website at https://www.academia.edu/17314554/Forgotten_Fort_Crosby_Dune_Heritage_Revealed

If you know of other self-guided walks that you think MAS members might enjoy, please send the links or short reviews of them to the MAS newsletter editor for inclusion in future issues.

Sue Stallibrass

More useful links

CITiZAN – 2020 blog posts

<https://citizan.org.uk/blog/2020/>

CITiZAN – videos of two coastal related activities

<https://citizan.org.uk/blog/2020/Aug/12/crafting-citizan-world-youth-day/>

Shared Research Repository – includes: MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology), Tate, National Museums Scotland, British Museum, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew & British Library

<https://iro.bl.uk/>

Queens University Belfast – Ciphers, codes and notes: crafting knowledge in the Medieval and modern worlds – online exhibition

<https://sway.office.com/WDT3WAaPQ0JjDdCf>

British Library – Medieval manuscripts blog – Digitisation of the Sherborne Missal

<https://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2020/08/digitisation-of-the-sherborne-missal.html>

Anglo-Saxon Laboratory – Pangur Press – open access publications

<http://www.aslab.co.uk/pangur-press/>

Open Data Institute – Data toolkit for business: help to manage, publish and use data

<https://theodi.org/service/tools-resources/data-toolkit-for-business/>

About Manchester – ‘Health holidays’: forgotten tales of poorly Manchester children who were sent to Switzerland revealed in new documentary

<https://aboutmanchester.co.uk/health-holidays-forgotten-tales-of-poorly-manchester-children-who-were-sent-to-switzerland-revealed-in-new-documentary/>

Dates for your diaries

The Victorian Society – The pub unwrapped and the golden age of Pub building – Wednesday 09 September 2020, 19:00

<https://www.crowdcast.io/e/lb653h92/register>

Heritage Open Days – Discovery Stage – online offerings for the festival – 11-20 September 2020

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/visiting/festival-stages/discovery-stage>

Sue Stallibrass