



### From the Editor

Welcome to the December News Bulletin, which is slightly earlier than usual. In this issue we report back on the votes that took place at the AGM and introduce you to the new Council. Now we have successfully trialled the Zoom technology we can announce our Winter 2021 lecture programme with guest speakers and there is further information on page 2. We also have another instalment of Maurice's 'Archaeology is Everywhere' series, the usual links and some ideas to make the Newsletter more inclusive.

You will notice aside that Roy Forshaw has succeeded Maurice as our Chairman. MAS Chairs normally serve for a period of 2 years. Due to the delayed AGM Maurice has been in post for an extra 8 months and has successfully guided the Society through a difficult year. Maurice will remain on the Council as Past-Chair.

Hopefully, this Bulletin will reach the majority of you before the 25th December and it remains for me to wish you an enjoyable Christmas. With some optimism, we can also look forward to a 2021 where we can resume face-to-face meetings and revive our fieldtrip programme in the Summer.

With Seasonal good wishes,

*Dave Roberts*

### MAS 2020 AGM and Christmas Quiz

The 2020 AGM was held via Zoom on 17th December and was attended by 22 members. The result of the vote submitted prior to the meeting was passed as follows. 6 postal votes and 15 votes via e-mail were received. 21 members voted to accept the 2019 Accounts and the nomination put forward to elect the 2020 Council. The 2020 MAS Council is:

#### Officers:

Hon. Chair: Roy Forshaw

Hon. Secretary: Liz Stewart

Hon. Treasurer and Newsletter Editor: Dave Roberts

#### Members of Council:

Mark Adams (Events Organiser), Ben Croxford, Maurice Handley (Past Chair), Vanessa Oakden (Membership Secretary), Rob Philpott, Samantha Rowe, David Scott, Sue Stallibrass, Chris Wood

In addition, Nancy Jenkins was elected as the Society's Auditor for 2020.

Thank you to Maurice for all the hard work during your role as Society Chair.

The AGM was followed by yet another excellent Quiz from Maurice. We hope that we will be able to include it in the January News Bulletin for members who were unable to be present at the AGM.

### Merseyside Archaeological Society

*Hon Chair:*

*Roy Forshaw*

*Hon Secretary:*

*Liz Stewart*

*Membership Secretary:*

*Vanessa Oakden*

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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.

### Contents

From the Editor.....	1
MAS 2020 AGM & Christmas Quiz.....	1
Winter Meetings 2020/21.....	2
Archaeology is Everywhere.....	2
Request for Newsletter articles.....	3
On-Line Resources.....	4

## Winter Meetings 2021

Meetings will be held ‘virtually’ via Zoom. A link to join the meeting will be issued via e-mail a few days beforehand.

### *Programme*

**Thursday 21 January 7.30 PM.** Chris Kolonko, CiTIZAN, ‘Decoys and Rubble - Taking another look at the wartime coast’.

**Thursday 18th February 7.30 P.M.** Heather Beeton, Museum of Liverpool, recent PAS finds.

**Thursday 18th March 7.30 P.M.** Claire Christie, Headland Archaeology: Triton Knoll.

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, so please keep this to a minimum.
5. If you’d rather not appear by video that can be turned off and replaced with a photo.
6. 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> .

## Archaeology is Everywhere



*One of the concrete bunkers photographed in February 2019 and in November 2020. The bunkers were originally camouflaged under grass covered mounds and some still retain their grass roofs.*

Over the last 3 years I’ve been photographing sites for the MIHS Guide to the Industrial Heritage of Merseyside. Inevitably now that it’s published, I’m finding that it will need some corrections and updates. One site in particular has captured my attention. The former Royal Ordnance Factory at Kirkby had a unique group of ten bomb-proof bunkers which appeared in the Guide. During the Autumn four of the ten bunkers were demolished.

The site lies within Knowsley Industrial Estate and is owned by Knowsley Council. Earlier in the year, the Council had applied to itself as the planning authority for permission to demolish the bunkers. They are not protected so this was a relatively straightforward procedure. However, the Council as applicants commissioned an archaeological report and a heritage statement. After approval was given, a second and more comprehensive archaeological survey was carried out by Oxford Archaeology North (OAN). The heritage statement can be viewed at : <https://doi.org/10.5284/1082630>

Near to the bunkers is the modern head office and huge warehouse of a major clothing retailer. Around the country many former wartime sites have become trading estates with similar distribution centres. During the Covid crisis these have played a significant role in changing the way we shop - an influence on our society that is an unexpected legacy of 20th century warfare.

Best wishes for the season and a happy and safe 2021.

*Maurice Handley*

### **Please contribute your own articles about local places of interest!**

The MAS membership is very knowledgeable about local sites and history, and many people have been (re)-discovering places of interest near to where they live- a beneficial side-effect of not being able to travel further afield during Covid restrictions. Why not share some information about places you have noticed that others may like to discover? Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor Dave Roberts e-mail: [drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk)

What have you noticed? It could be a landscape feature or a building, a structure (eg bridge, canal etc) or simply one small detail (such as an interesting doorway, or a cast iron manhole cover made by a local manufacturer).

This isn't a competition, but we would like the site to be:

- (1) local- preferably within Merseyside, but if you live elsewhere, somewhere that is local to you &
- (2) visible from a public place (even if not accessible), so that anyone can visit or look at it.

Please provide a location so that people can find it (eg street address, postcode, or National Grid Reference) and a few lines about why you find the site interesting. If you can, a photo would be good (but don't step backwards into a road to get a better view!). Here's an example:

### **The bear pit, Victorian Pleasure Gardens, Eastham Country Park, Ferry Road, Eastham, Wirral, CH62 0BH**

This was a completely unexpected discovery on a wet day in late November. A friend had suggested a walk in Eastham Country Park, which has woodland walks and views across the Mersey. We stepped through the monumental arch into the remains of the pleasure gardens, trying to track down the overgrown remains of landscaped walks, fountains etc, and almost found the bear pit by accident. It's very well preserved. It used to house two brown bears on display to Victorian visitors. I was glad it wasn't a bear-baiting pit, or used for performing bears (like the Chester amphitheatre or the Audlem Bear Stone) but it still seemed a very small container for two large animals who should have lived in the wild. My favourite part was walking into the pit down the narrow, shallow stairs. The bear keepers must have walked the bears into the pit down these steps, presumably on collars and leashes. The photo shows the doorway into the pit from the bottom of the steps.



NB This site happens to have a web presence, so I have included some links, but many do not <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events/parks/eastham-country-park>

<https://designanddragons.wordpress.com/2015/10/28/a-victorian-day-out-eastham-country-park/>

*Sue Stallibrass*

## On-Line Resources

The **Manchester Archaeology Festival** is usually held on the last Saturday of November, but due to COVID restrictions this year's event has been posted online, with new content uploaded on Sat/Sun 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> December. The homepage is at <https://diggreatermanchester.wordpress.com/gmaf-2020-online-events/>

There are lots of resources available including free downloads of the latest nine books in the **Greater Manchester's Past Revealed** series. These are extremely accessibly written and illustrated short books that present the results of recent projects, often within a wider regional context. You can access them all at <https://diggreatermanchester.wordpress.com/publications/>

Other resources are three videos on a new, dedicated YouTube channel  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfrO0kBmxUF3nszZ\\_Y1R7OA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfrO0kBmxUF3nszZ_Y1R7OA)

- 1- **Greater Manchester Archaeology update for 2020** by Norman Redhead
- 2 – Recent Archaeological Work on the **Bridgewater Canal in Worsley** by Mike Nevell
- 3 – The **Archaeology of the Smart Phone** by Prof Nigel Linge

The **History of Halton Mill**, in the Lune Valley, Lancashire (update): Free online resources are continuing to come on-stream on YouTube for this National Lottery Heritage Funded project. The most recent upload is an extended version of a film that a canoeist made for the Halton Mill community back in 2012: '45 Years at Halton Rapids site'. You can access all of the films (there were 11 on 12<sup>th</sup> Dec, including ones about a mechanical elephant!) at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcI3-q0f1SgR5VLUJ2A5FAA>

Another productive Lottery-funded project is the **Westmorland Dales landscape partnership**. You can access their homepage to find out about all of their projects and to download their newsletters here: <https://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/westmorland-dales-hidden-landscapes-partnership>

Projects that might be of most interest to MAS members are those in the Cultural Heritage group <https://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/Pages/Site/westmorland-dales-hidden-landscapes-partnership/Category/cultural-heritage-projects>

There is a well-illustrated article about **Roman roads** <https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/roman-soldiers-and-their-roads-in-westmorland/> and a welcome news item about the re-opening (on 11<sup>th</sup> Dec) of the **Smardale viaduct** <https://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/news/smardale-gill-viaduct-re-opens>

### *Other useful online links*

Maritime Archaeology Trust – **3D wreck tours**  
<https://maritimearchaeologytrust.org/3d-wreck-tours>

Festival of Archaeology – **3D image** training at the British Museum [blog post]  
<https://blog.archaeologyuk.org/2019/08/06/3d-modelling-at-the-british-museum-the-results/>

MOLA – These **boots were made for Romans**  
<https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/discover/these-boots-were-made-romans>

SAS – Discover collections – A-Z of **online collections**  
<https://historycollections.blogs.sas.ac.uk/discover-collections/>

Festival of Archaeology – **200 years of Egyptology**: the good, the bad and the ugly  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=WRzvVxz2mhg>

National Library of Scotland – **Wick Society Kinora Reels** collection  
<https://movingimage.nls.uk/film/4627>

Smithsonian Magazine – How profits from **slavery changed the landscape of the Scottish Highlands**  
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/new-research-investigates-how-enslavement-profits-changed-landscape-scottish-highlands-180976311/>

Miranda Kaufmann – Talking **Black Tudors** [blog post]

<http://www.mirandakaufmann.com/blog/talking-black-tudors-drake-and-elizabeth-i-with-alice-roberts-for-channel-4s-britains-most-historic-towns-elizabethan-plymouth-episode#>

Royal Historical Society – **RHS race, ethnicity and equality roadmap** for change II [blog post]

<https://blog.royalhistsoc.org/2020/11/25/rhs-race-ethnicity-and-equality-roadmap-for-change-ii/>

British Library – Coast: **sounds and stories of Britain's coastline**

<https://www.bl.uk/coast>

Transport for London – Corporate **archives World War II** showcase

<https://tfl.access.preservica.com/>

### *Historical Christmases on TV*

**Tudor Monastery Farm Christmas** Historian Ruth Goodman and archaeologists Tom Pinfold and Peter Ginn recreate how the farms of Tudor England celebrated the 12 days of Christmas with banquets and carol singing. Shown BBC2 & BBC4 10<sup>th</sup> Dec (NB has been shown in previous years) expires c 7<sup>th</sup> Jan <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03ndb8c>

**A Merry Tudor Christmas with Lucy Worsley**. Recreating festivities from Henry VIII's era, Lucy Worsley dresses, eats, drinks, sings and parties like it is 500 years ago - discovering long-lost traditions as well as familiar customs. Shown BBC2 12<sup>th</sup> Dec (NB first shown Dec 2019), expires c 10<sup>th</sup> Jan <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000cfd5>

and the BBC has a whole collection of historical Christmas programmes at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p08zr5r6>

Christmas at Hampton Court, broadcast Channel 5 Tues 15th Dec <https://www.channel5.com/show/christmas-at-hampton-court/>

*Sue Stallibrass*