



### From the Chair

This is my first submission as Chair so I would like to wish everyone who was not at our January Zoom lecture a very happy new year with life hopefully returning to a more normal fashion in the summer. MAS Council is reviewing its 2021 events program and adjustments are being made accordingly subject to restrictions in place at the time. Announcements will be made in future newsletters.

Chris Kolonko from CITiZAN gave us an excellent zoom lecture on the region's war time coastal WWII defences which stimulated a lot of discussion and interest. Chris has provided a write up for this newsletter and there have also been offers from others who have researched the topic. Elsewhere in the newsletter there will be appeals for you to offer newsletter contributions or short presentations in our members evening in April. Details on page 2.

Outside the Society there are some interesting proposals in the museum world. National Museums Liverpool have announced their 'waterfront transformation project' which aims to regenerate historic areas of the docks to create vibrant, welcoming and relevant public spaces for everyone to share, enjoy and explore Liverpool's rich heritage <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/waterfront-transformation-project>. A new Artificial Intelligence exhibition (AI) has been recently installed in World Museum which will open once COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.

To summarise, the Society will still aim to inform and entertain the membership throughout 2021, by one means or another.

*Roy Forshaw*

### 2021 Subscriptions

MAS Subscriptions fell due on 1st January. Renewal rates for 2021 are:

Ordinary £15, Concession £10 (retired, unwaged, student over 18), Junior £2, Family £18, Institutional £25. Please remember to add £3 if you want to receive the Newsletter by post.

If possible please pay direct to the bank. The Society bank account details are:

Account: Merseyside Archaeological Society  
Bank: HSBC, 99-101 Lord Street, Liverpool L2 6PG  
Sort Code: 40-29-08  
Account No: 11098705  
Reference: MAS Subs

Please send any forms and cheques to: Vanessa Oakden, Museum of Liverpool, Pier Head, Liverpool Waterfront, Liverpool, L3 1DG  
Email address: [Vanessa.Oakden@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Vanessa.Oakden@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

### Merseyside Archaeological Society

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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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## 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 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.

**Thursday 15th April 7.30 P.M. Members Evening.** *We have decided to postpone the 2021 AGM until Thursday 16th September as it is only a matter of months since we held the 2020 AGM in December. It has been suggested that we hold a Members evening which will give us the opportunity to try something a little less formal using Zoom. Members are invited to give a short (say 5- 10 minutes) presentation on a Site or Object of interest. A Photo or slides can be submitted in advance so contributors don't have to worry too much about operating the technology. Please let Roy know by 1st March if you wish to contribute: roy.forshaw@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk*

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

## Archaeology is Everywhere



On a sunny morning last Christmas Eve, we strolled along the promenade at West Bank in Widnes. The low tide had exposed the remains of rotting hulks that lay half-buried in the mud, with the inevitable detritus including old tyres, a mattress, a dustbin and a supermarket trolley. Here was archaeology in the making. In the background we could see the entrance to the dock at Spike Island, the cooling towers of Fiddlers Ferry Power Station and the new bridge crossing the Mersey - examples of 19th, 20th and 21st century technology which might also one day vanish beneath the mud and sediments or simply be demolished and crushed to provide hard core for another construction project. The power station is no longer fit for purpose and now closed down - I wondered is it worth keeping as an industrial museum, like those giant stationary steam engines that once powered the mills and coal mines of Lancashire?

West Bank can be reached by following the signs to the Catalyst Museum where there is a car park. From there you can explore Spike Island or follow the edge of the river downstream to the Silver Jubilee Bridge which has a pedestrian walkway across to Runcorn (access is from Irwell Street). In normal times the Catalyst Museum has a café and toilets.

Maurice Handley

## Quiz Answers

1c, 2d, 3b, 4b, 5c, 6c, 7d, 8a, 9d, 10d, 11d, 12b.

## 'Archaeology isn't always even rubbish'; or 'What Happened Before Bin-Men Were Invented?'

The 'null watching brief' or 'null evaluation' where nothing archaeological is found is often cited as the bane of many professional archaeologists' lives. Usually dismissed as 'boring' or 'pointless', I've never viewed them like that, preferring to at least see 'evidence of lack' rather than attempting to work from 'lack of evidence'. In fact 'evidence of lack' can potentially be almost informative as finding 'something', as I'll attempt to demonstrate below.

I've had my fair share of null projects, some which spring to mind are the Abbot of Chester's lodge at Ince Manor, where despite the presence of standing medieval buildings barely any finds evidence was found in c. 10 hand-dug evaluation trenches. I've run 2-3 watching briefs in the grounds at Speke Hall where there were very few finds or structural features, and more recently at Formby Hall where there was also nothing. Newton Hall at Newton-le-Willows (Adams in prep) had more finds evidence, but still not huge quantities of pottery, the total assemblage size is in the low hundreds. Before anybody questions my competence at spotting pottery, this seems to be part of a broader pattern on higher status medieval and post-medieval sites in the North-West. For example, at Abbey Farm, Risley, despite extensive excavation by Oxford Archaeology North of a moated site, only relatively small quantities of pottery (2681 sherds dating to the 16th to late 18th century) were recovered (Heawood 2004); though that may in part be due to the excavation methodology (Ward 2004). However, it is part of a wider pattern, for example, at Halton Castle (Cattell 2016) where a total of c. 270 sherds of medieval and post-medieval sherds were found (later post-medieval whitewares etc have been excluded from this count), though there are exceptions, such as Norton Priory, where assemblages are larger.

There's a different pattern on lower status farms and cottages where, contrary to expectation, the finds assemblages are often almost as big, sometimes larger, than those found on the higher status manorial and moated sites. For example, on farms such as Big Lea Green (Towle & Speakman, 2012) ceramics and other domestic debris seem to have been discarded into cut features such as ditches close to the dwelling, though at Lea Green that practice appears to relate at least in part to the disposal of wares no longer considered fashionable or of use when the site changed hands. A good example is Bleak House, the site of a cottage in Netherton, which despite its lowly status produced almost as much ceramic evidence as was found at Newton Hall (Adams in prep). The reasons for this are uncertain, but it is likely to relate at least in part to the nature of the disposal of domestic debris on the higher status sites, such as Ince Manor, Speke Hall and Formby Hall, which appears to be different to that observed on lower status sites in the region.

It seems likely that domestic debris from higher status sites was disposed of by it being distributed across the surrounding fields, probably during regular manuring activities. The spreading of 'muck' is referenced from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century at Speke Hall (Nicholson 1979, 9) and the diarist Nicholas Blundell of Crosby Hall makes several references to the spreading of 'muck' across his fields. For example, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May 1711 he records that '*I led Muck with three of my owne [sic] carts & with 3 Boones [i.e. loaned or borrowed carts]*' whilst entries for 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of April 1706 record the demolition of his '*Muck-Hous*' [sic] (Tyrer 1968). It's not clear what Blundell meant by 'muck', it may have consisted entirely of animal manure, but is perhaps more likely to have

consisted of manure mixed with household ash and other domestic debris. Muck Houses are not mentioned in either the Forum on Information Standards in Heritage <http://www.heritage-standards.org.uk/> consulted 3/12/20 or Historic England's 'National Farm Building Types', though Blundell's may have been similar in form and function to the Ash Houses found in South-West England (English Heritage 2013, 3). The photograph is of a 19<sup>th</sup> century Devon ash house at Middle Henstill and gives an idea of their form, though it is likely that Nicolas Blundell's was larger. See this article for more details: [https://www.legendarydartmoor.co.uk/ash\\_house.htm](https://www.legendarydartmoor.co.uk/ash_house.htm).



© Copyright [Lewis Clarke](#) and licensed for [reuse](#) under this [Creative Commons Licence](#). Sometimes finding 'nothing' can be as interesting and informative as finding 'something'.

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Mark Adams

**‘Decoys and Rubble - Taking another look at the wartime coast’. Summary of MAS lecture 21st January 2021**



As the key port for transatlantic shipping, Liverpool was a key strategic target for aerial bombing by the Luftwaffe. As a result, Liverpool was heavily defended with both passive (decoys, barrage balloons and Royal Observer Corps posts) and active defences (anti-aircraft batteries and airfields) to attack any incoming bombers.

The bombing decoy programme started in Autumn 1939, with both day and night decoy sites being established to draw bombers away from their intended targets. This system was complex, consisting of day and night dummy aerodromes (‘K’ & ‘Q’ sites), decoy fires (‘QF’ and ‘Starfish’ sites), simulated urban and factory lighting (‘QL’ sites), as well as complexes of dummy factories and buildings. Dobinson identified 792 decoys on 593 sites in England.

Team North of the Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network (CITiZAN) has recently been undertaking research to record and interpret two of the 24 decoys established to protect Liverpool from aerial bombardment. The team undertook a survey of the surviving QL decoy crew shelter at Formby in 2019 and early 2020 and have been carrying out further research on the site (photo above).

CITiZAN is keen for volunteers to get involved with its efforts to record vulnerable archaeological remains in the coastal and intertidal zone within the Liverpool Bay discovery programme area.

If you would like to find out more, please check out the website or contact CITiZAN Community Archaeologist Chris Kolonko at [ckolonko@mola.org.uk](mailto:ckolonko@mola.org.uk)

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

<https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/formby-ql-crew-shelter-0071cd57309b4897b2c3470aad3d5370>

<https://citizan.org.uk/blog/2020/Mar/02/blitz-defence-formby/>

Chris Kolonko, CiTIZAN

Editor’s note: Imperial War Museum footage regarding ‘deception’ and ‘concealment’ can be found here:

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060020970>



**Military Archaeology on the Sefton Shoreline**

The military services have been prime users of the dune system on the Sefton coast since 1862 when Altcar Rifle Range was established on the reclaimed sandy Bailing’s Wharf on Lord Sefton’s estate. Much of the estate was modified to produce butts, targets, service roads and ancillary buildings. Towards the end of the Crimean War, the giant Horsfall Gun was tested there. It was 13 feet long and weighed 21 tons and was manufactured at the Mersey Forge, Toxteth, Liverpool. The gun is said to have fired a cannon ball weighing 300lbs a distance of 5 miles. Today, the northern part of the state supports fixed dunes, dune-grassland, and small slacks, extensively used by regular, reserve and cadet units from all three Services for military and civilian activities and training.

Training also took place on the nearby Cabin Hill until 1979 and included digging fox holes and occasional use of heavy vehicles such as tanks.



Another large-scale military facility was the 18.3 acres Fort Crosby built on the dunes near Hightown in 1906. Together with Fort Perch Rock at New Brighton, these batteries of six-inch naval guns were installed to protect the Mersey coast in both World Wars but were never fired. After the first World War, Fort Crosby became a training centre with 40 gunners stationed there. The system of searchlights, barracks, anti-aircraft guns and gun emplacements facing out to sea observed shipping but never saw action in WW2. It also had underground ammunition dumps and military planning rooms, also its own railway crossing known as Sniggery Crossing – between Hightown and Hall Road stations.

After 1945, Fort Crosby was designated Camp 678 for German POWs controlled by British and Polish soldiers. It had accommodation, a church, a cinema, a hospital, and a football pitch. By 1950 the prison camp had closed and was used by the Territorial Army until 1954. The site was demolished in 1967 although some buildings remained such as block houses, concrete platforms and tall fence supports until 1983 when the area was restored.

Throughout World War 2 the King's Liverpool Regiment's main depot was the former Harrington Barracks (now a housing estate) in Formby. The regiment was previously based at Seaforth but moved to Formby for more accommodation and a bigger training area. Training took place in large gyms, on the large parade ground and in the surrounding fields.

During the Cold War, a ROC Nuclear Monitoring Post was built next to the previous observation platform at Ravenmeols. Erosion caused the structure to become vulnerable to potential bomb blast damage and subsidence, so it was closed around 1966-68 and replaced with a new building inside the Woodvale perimeter. A ruined block house built after the May 1941 blitz at the western end of Range Lane, Formby was one of fourteen 'Starfish' decoys for Liverpool, a lighting system to draw enemy bombers away from the Mersey docks. The relicts of coastal military presence are identifiable and recorded.

*Howard Harris*

### Cast Iron Sewer Ventilation in Southport



A



B



C



D

Those of you who went on the MAS guided walk down Lord Street, Southport a few years ago may recall stopping outside the Prince of Wales Hotel to inspect a rather battered lamppost on the corner of Portland Street (A). The cast iron column in question has two plaques on the base which record that it is a "J.E. Webb's Patent Sewer Gas Destructor" and that it was made by the "Webb Lamp Co. Limited 11 Poultry [E.O?]." It worked like a normal gas lamp but had a second inlet which connected with the sewers below. The idea was that the burning lamp would draw gasses up from the sewer and "safely" dispose of them. Joseph Edmund Webb, of 11 Poultry, City of London, filed a patent in 1901 but had earlier patents going back to 1894 (<https://www.xenophon.org.uk/historywebblampco.html>).

There is a second such lamp in the north west corner of St Paul's Square, off of Duke Street (B). It is identical to the one by the Prince of Wales Hotel but better preserved, with the frame for the glass lantern remaining.

Recent lockdown-rules-compliant exercise (walking round the streets) has meant I have located another one of these in Southport. It is at the south eastern end of Portland Street, opposite the junction with Walnut Street (C). This one is missing a ladder rest but has part of the cowl above the frame for the lantern. It is also slightly different from the other two in that one of its plaques reads "Sewer Gas Extractor & Destructor Webb's Patent".

The fourth piece of cast iron sewer ventilation apparatus is probably a little later in date and is not a lamp. To the south of the pier there is a large upright section of cast iron on Southport beach, opposite Pleasureland (D). It is an outfall ventilation pipe and is in an advanced state of corrosion. Until recently it had a domed grid over the top and support struts around it. It is first marked on the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 25" OS map of 1928. It is of interest because rather unusually it has text around the column and depth measurements below. It reads "Tidal Standards", "Fleetwood" and "Liverpool". The Roman numerals below each place name recording the tide height measurement scale, above Old Dock Sill for Liverpool, up to 20 feet, and up to 29 feet for Fleetwood.

If you know of any more interesting bits of cast iron, sewer related or not, let me know:

*Ben Croxford*

[Merseyside.her@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:Merseyside.her@sefton.gov.uk)

#### **Roman 'dolphin' brooch from Rushton, Cheshire West and Chester LVPL-016404**



A mostly complete cast lead or lead alloy Roman Colchester derivative Polden Hill (dolphin) brooch dating to c.AD 43-100.

The object comprises the bow, head, and wings. The remains of the brooch such as the catchplate and pin are missing. The bow head is hump-like, and slightly angular (comma shaped) in profile, with cylindrical wings projecting from either side at the top of the head. At the mid-point between the wings is a small rectangular socket presumably for the placement of the pin. The bow is undecorated and tapers to a rounded point that does not appear broken.

Dimensions:

Length 26.3mm; wing length 18.5mm; wing width 6.7mm; bow width 8.11mm; bow thickness 5.5mm; weight 13g.

Roman brooches composed of lead are uncommon discoveries, with the majority being cast in copper alloy. To date there are over 32,000 Roman brooches recorded on the PAS database, with only 28 of those noted as composed of lead or lead alloy, which attests to their rarity. Most of these lead brooches are Colchester derivative Polden Hill types, such as this example, a few are trumpet brooches and there is one crossbow brooch. This is the second lead brooch to be reported to the PAS from Cheshire, the first being a fragment of a trumpet brooch from Pickmere, Cheshire East (LVPL-A56A54).

The Rushton brooch is a metal detector find near Eaton Roman Villa. Excavations at the site from 1980-2 revealed four phases of construction, suggesting the villa proper to date from c.AD 170 onwards (Mason 1983: 72). Material culture recovered from the site is slim and largely comprises building materials and a few 4<sup>th</sup> century finds with the earlier phases of construction remaining poorly understood. Recent metal detecting activity in the area has revealed a further abundance of Roman material that is likely to be related to the villa, including a second copper alloy 'dolphin' brooch, a Wirral type brooch, and a probable fragment of roof tile with the brooches securely dating to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD.

The recovery of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century material through the metal detector finds from the area have the potential to shed further light on these earlier phases of occupation at the villa site. The lead brooch may be particularly insightful, as although its function is uncertain, Mackreth (2011: 5) argues that lead brooches likely functioned as patterns for making moulds due to the material's ease of working. It is therefore possible that the presence of lead or lead alloy brooches at a site may be evidence of brooch manufacturing. As a single find the Rushton brooch cannot be firm evidence of brooch manufacturing at or near to Eaton Villa, but as the site's surrounding area continues to be investigated through metal detecting activities, we will likely gain a greater understanding of the villa and of Roman activity near Eaton.

Mackreth, D F (2011) *Brooches in Late Iron Age and Roman Britain: Volume 1*, Oxbow Books, Oxford.

Mason, D J P (1983) 'Excavations at the Roman Villa', *Cheshire Archaeological Bulletin Vol.9* pp. 67-73.

*Heather Beeton*

*Finds Liaison Officer for Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside*

## Online resources

Please note- due to the lead-in time for the monthly newsletter, I don't include upcoming talks, but you can visit MAS's Facebook and Twitter pages for up to date info <https://www.merseysidearchsoc.com/>

Just in case this reaches you before the event: **Derbyshire Archaeology Day 2021** will be held online over Friday afternoon and Saturday morning **5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Feb**. It is free (but they ask for a donation to a fund to restore the tomb of Thomas Bateman). You need to register for each half day to obtain the access link. Great range of talks. Details and registration at: <https://chesterfieldtheatres.co.uk/shows/derbyshire-archaeology-day.aspx#.YAq6dXpiZO>

The **National Lottery Heritage Fund** has a huge mine of online heritage resources to enjoy from home that they keep adding to (so you can keep revisiting it for new ideas). They have activities, links to online exhibitions (including some **Manchester Museum from home**) and a huge range of podcasts etc <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/stories/how-enjoy-heritage-home>  
Manchester Museum: <https://www.mmfromhome.com/>

If you like maps, you can explore **Digital Maps of the Ancient World** <https://digitalmapsoftheancientworld.com/>

The **National Archives** have made lots of items available online during COVID closures of their Kew premises. Best approached through their Discovery page [http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/?utm\\_source=emailmarketing&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=new\\_year\\_31\\_december\\_2020&utm\\_content=2021-01-10](http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=new_year_31_december_2020&utm_content=2021-01-10)

Latest releases include a group of **papers from the Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet Office**, predominantly covering the final months of John Major's government in 1997.

Closer to home, **The British Newspaper Archive**, a partnership between the British Library and *Find My Past* to digitise the British Library's vast collection of newspapers, has digitised the **Birkenhead News** (up to 1920) – more information can be found on their website. But apparently you can only access it three times for free. After that, there is a charge.

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/birkenhead-news>

### **Birmingham Museums online collections**

<https://dams.birminghammuseums.org.uk/asset-bank/action/browseItems?categoryId=4&categoryTypeId=2>

**Salisbury Cathedral** – The cathedral that moved: animation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QyM5rVORzQ&feature=youtu.be>

JSTOR Daily – **Fake stone and the Georgian ladies who made it**

<https://daily.jstor.org/fake-stone-and-the-georgian-ladies-who-made-it/>

Stromness Museum – **Neolithic maceheads in Orkney**

<https://www.stromnessmuseum.org.uk/whatson/online/neolithic-maceheads-orkney>

**Prehistoric Society** YouTube channel

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwLOL2rkyfBqL8TjB-\\_ygUQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwLOL2rkyfBqL8TjB-_ygUQ)

MOLA – **Prittlewell: princely burial**

<https://prittlewellprincelyburial.org/>

MOLA – Significant **Anglo-Saxon cemetery** and settlement found in Overstone, Northamptonshire

<https://www.mola.org.uk/blog/significant-anglo-saxon-cemetery-and-settlement-found-overstone-northamptonshire>

**Town and Country Planning Association** – online journal archive

<https://archive.tcpa.org.uk/>

**Paul Mellon Centre** – Art & the country house

<http://www.artandthecountryhouse.com/>

**Public Statues and Sculptures Association** (new)

<https://pssauk.org/>

**Apollo magazine – Short history of door handles**

<https://www.apollo-magazine.com/history-door-handle-designs/>

Paul Mellon Centre – **Ceramics in Britain, 1750-now** – recordings of 5 x 30 min lectures

<https://www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/whats-on/plc-ceramics-in-britain>

**Natural Sciences Collections Association** – Top 10 blogs from 2020

<https://natsca.blog/2020/12/24/top-10-blogs-of-2020/>

Royal Horticultural Society – **Thomas Fairchild: the first city gardener?**

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/digital-collections/city-gardener>

MoLA – **Pleasure gardens**

<https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london/Pleasure-gardens-hub>

RHS Lindley Library online collections - Codlings, Costards and Biffins: our **apple growing heritage**

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/digital-collections/codlings-costards-biffins>

Internet Archaeology, V. 55 - **Digital Public Archaeology at Must Farm: A Critical Assessment of Social Media Use for Archaeological Engagement**, by Christopher Wakefield

<https://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue55/9/index.html>

**Bristol & Avon Archaeology journal** – online access to volumes 11 (1993) to 27 (2016/17)

<https://bristolandavonarchaeology.org.uk/journals/>

IHR – **Analysing historical settlement** (webinar recording)

<https://www.history.ac.uk/whats/ihr-events-archive/analysing-historic-settlement>

London Metropolitan Archive – **Women in construction** (film)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kU4u4Lb3iPw>

TED Talk – **The treadmills dark and twisted past**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/conor\\_heffernan\\_the\\_treadmill\\_s\\_dark\\_and\\_twisted\\_past](https://www.ted.com/talks/conor_heffernan_the_treadmill_s_dark_and_twisted_past)

**The Foundling Museum** – online talk archive

<https://foundlingmuseum.org.uk/whats-on/talks/>

**\*\*A challenge!\*\*** RAF Museum – Lancaster Challenge – **celebrating 80 years since the first Lancaster flight** – challenge closes 17 May 2021

<https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/virtual-events/the-lancaster-challenge-2021/the-lancaster-challenge-details.aspx>

The latest issue of Current Archaeology has links to these museums and exhibitions:

**Kyoto National Museum, Japan.** <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/kyoto-national-museum>

**La Brea Tar Pits**, Los Angeles, USA (these are the tar pits that have outstanding preservation of animal remains from the last Ice Age). <https://tarpits.org/virtual-field-trip>

**Virtual Underwater Museum**, Malta <https://underwatermalta.org> photography by divers of drowned wrecks

And boats on top of the water: Kajak!, Maine, USA: **the creation and use of kayaks** [www.bowdoin.edu/arctic-museum/exhibits/2020/kayak-exhibition.html](http://www.bowdoin.edu/arctic-museum/exhibits/2020/kayak-exhibition.html)

And keeping up the maritime theme, Vikingir, Oslo, Norway: **Viking period exhibits** from the University of Oslo's Historical Museum

<https://www.khm.uio.no/english/>

Down to terra firma in UK: **Jane Austen Museum**, Chawton: <https://janeaustens.house/jane-austens-house-from-home>

## Historical(ish) programmes on freeview TV

Starting on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January on BBC 4 from 7 – 8pm: **The Victorian Slum** (5 programmes). I think this is a repeat of a series originally shown on BBC2.

‘A group of 21st-century people move into a Victorian tenement that has been painstakingly brought back to life in the heart of London’s East End’. All five programmes available on BBC iplayer <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07zd454>

For enthusiasts of Industrial Heritage, BBC 4 are repeating a 12-part series from BBC2 on several weekdays 7.00 – 7.30pm **Fred Dibnah’s made in Britain** NB there are lots of additional Fred Dibnah series available online Just search for ‘BBC TV Fred Dibnah’! <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00fn977/episodes/guide>

**Lucy Worsley’s Royal Palace Secrets** seems to be a single BBC programme <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000qznd>

From Monday 04<sup>th</sup> Jan BBC4 from 8.00 – 9.00pm: **Secrets of the Museum ( V & A)** is a repeat of the 6-part series previously shown on BBC2 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000f1xp>

Not strictly historical, but the **Natural History Museum: World of Wonder** is a new four part series of one hour programmes Thursdays 7<sup>th</sup> , 14<sup>th</sup> , 21<sup>st</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Channel 5 from 8.00 -9.00pm <https://www.channel5.com/show/natural-history-museum-world-of-wonder/>

Immediately followed on Channel 5 starting Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> Jan by a new three part series of walks along Hadrian’s Wall with Robson Green from 8.00 – 9.00pm. First (14<sup>th</sup> Jan) was **Hadrian’s Wall with Robson Green**, 2<sup>nd</sup> (on 21<sup>st</sup> Jan) is **Robson Green: Walking coast to coast** (3<sup>rd</sup> not advertised yet) <https://www.channel5.com/show/hadrians-wall-with-robson-green/>

And if you like landscapes, you may like walking programmes such as BBC 4’s series of **Winter Walks** through historic landscapes of Yorkshire & Cumbria. These are Slow TV and very evocative <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000qd6w/episodes/guide>

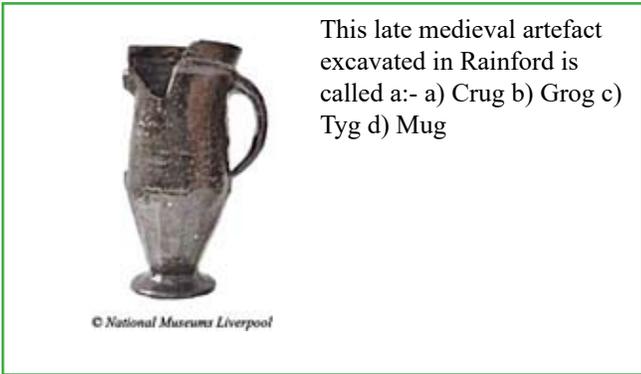
And an 8-part series of half-hour programmes that started on Weds 06<sup>th</sup> Jan ITV 8.30- 9.00pm **Cornwall and Devon walks with Julia Bradbury** (inland as well as famous coastline areas) <https://www.itv.com/presscentre/ep1week1/cornwall-and-devon-walks-julia-bradbury>

Railway journeys often feature landscapes and historic sites. Channel 5 has a new (third) six-part series **The World’s most Scenic Railways** on Friday evenings 9.00 – 10.00 pm that started on 08<sup>th</sup> Jan. All series available at: <https://www.channel5.com/show/worlds-most-scenic-railway-journeys/>

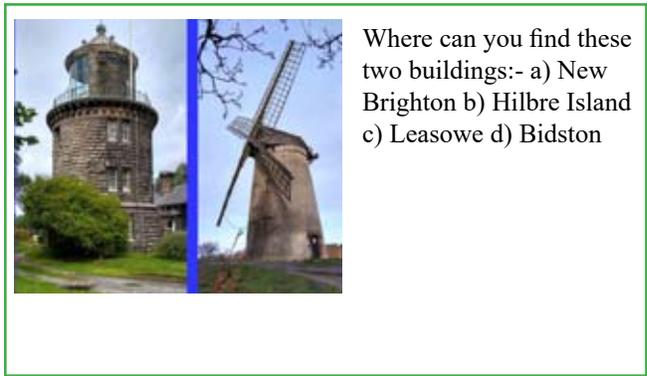
And Yesterday (Freeview 26) is full of nostalgic repeats of sitcoms & documentaries including Michael Portillo’s Great British Railway Journeys which included on Sat 16<sup>th</sup> Jan at 7.00 pm **Following in the footsteps of Victorian archaeologists at Hadrian’s Wall**

And a new series with Tim Dunn starting on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> Jan **The Architecture the Railways Built**

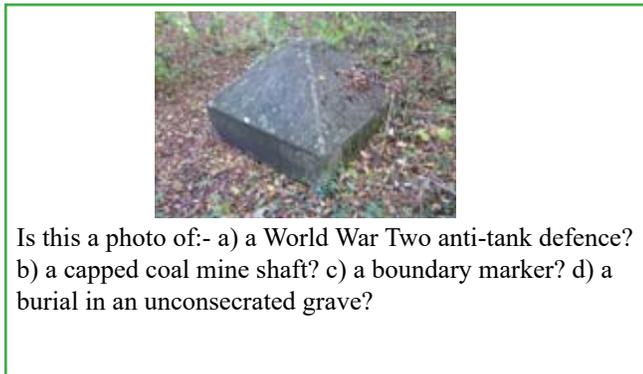
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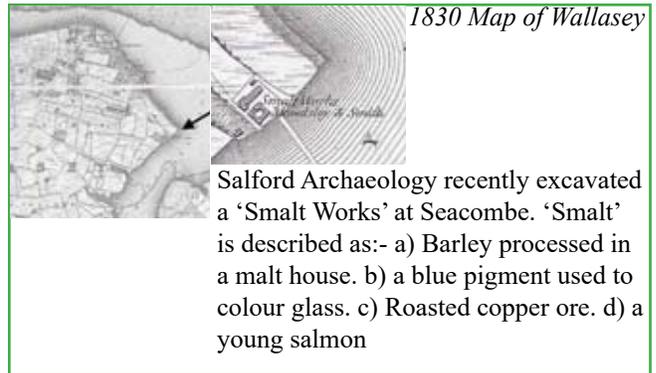
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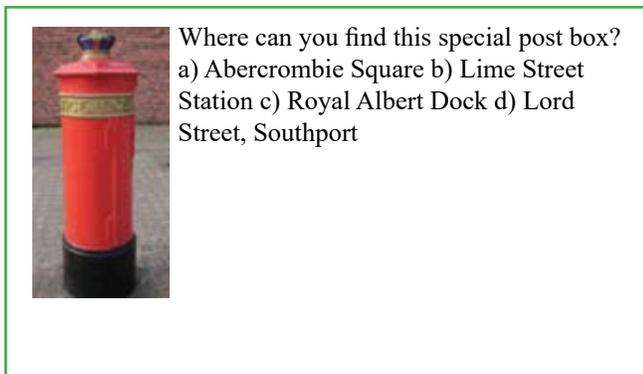
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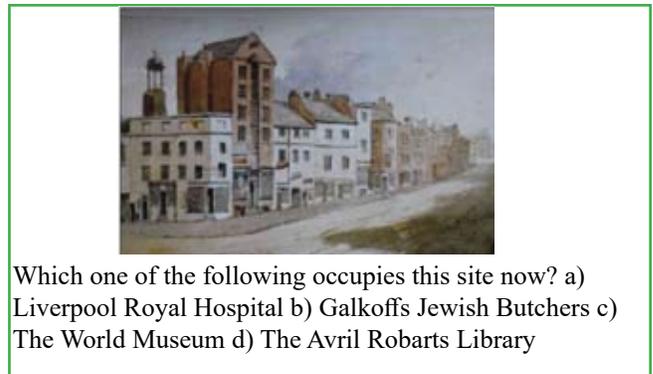
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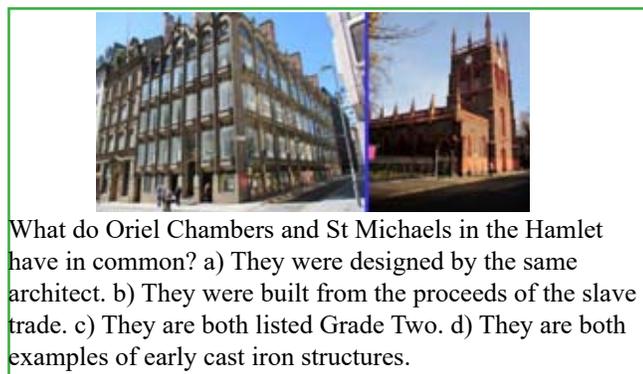
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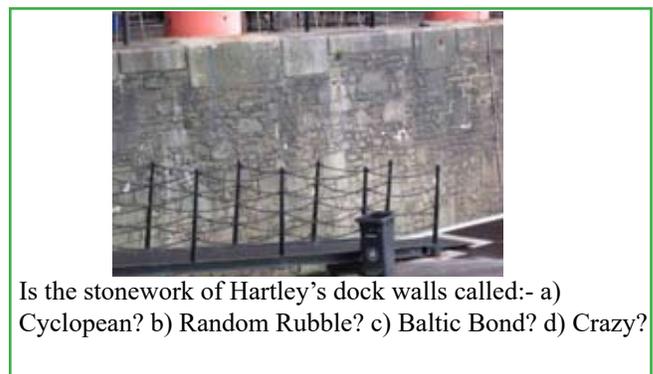
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*Foundations of 18th century copper works Excavation at Stanley Bank, St Helens in 2018*

Copper was used to make ‘Manillas’. Are they:- a) a type of envelope? b) a decorative item exported to the Philippines? c) a lockable collar worn by slaves? d) a jewellery item used as currency in West Africa?

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In which borough will you find this terrace of worker's houses? a) Knowsley b) Liverpool c) Sefton d) St Helens e) Wirral

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*During 2020 Mark Adams has been excavating at Princes Half Tide Dock. The depth of the entrance lock is 33 feet seen carved on this massive masonry block.*

Is the rock:- a) Sandstone from Weston Quarry, Runcorn? b) Granite from the Mountains of Mourne, Northern Ireland? c) Limestone from Portland in Dorset? d) Granite from Creetown, South West Scotland?

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Part of the area (arrowed) was excavated in 2005. Was it the site of:- a) the pumping station for the dock's hydraulic system? b) the boiler house and pump house for draining the railway tunnel? c) the steam powered generating station for the Overhead Railway? d) a canning factory?

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### And finally..... A Question about Kerbstones?

At the beginning of the last lecture I made a plea for short Newsletter articles on local discoveries made during lockdown. Here is my offering.

Cressington and Grassendale Residential Parks were laid out adjacent to the River Mersey in the mid 1840s in what was then the rural fringe of South Liverpool. If you walk through both Parks today and look at the kerbstones you will quickly discover a variety of engraved symbols and what appear to be ‘initials’. Below are a few examples:



Many more designs can be found by those interested. I believe such kerbstone markings are common elsewhere in ‘Victorian’ Liverpool. Last year I also spotted some in Argyl Street, Birkenhead. What do they represent (I have my own ideas but won't spoil it for you)? If you want to join the debate a good place to start is:

<https://www.geol Soc.org.uk/Geoscientist/Archive/June-2013/Kerbstone-conundrum>

Theories (not necessarily on a postcard - an e-mail will suffice) to the Editor.

*Dave Roberts*