



From the Chair

I am writing this over a warm bank holiday weekend and I hope everyone has managed to enjoy the good weather and if able had some time outside.

How 2021 will be for the Society

It has been a busy time for the MAS council organising the summer and autumn events. The responses we received from you about how to move forward with the 2021 programme were most helpful and we have prepared activities that will hopefully accommodate all views. There will be a series of summer local walks and these will be supplemented beforehand by Zoom talks giving background information presented on our traditional Thursday evening.

First visit of the year

The first walk is Crosby Battery, blitz beach and prehistoric forest which has already been covered by a lecture earlier in the year so needs no introduction. The walk will take place on Monday 21st June and details can be found in the separate handout accompanying this Newsletter.

Meetings

Meetings in the Autumn will alternate between zoom meetings and lectures at the Friends Meeting House subject to the Government guidelines at the time and FMH room availability. The first get together meeting will be the September AGM. Papers will be issued before the meeting but just so you can think ahead there will be at least two places available on the Council as Chris Wood and David Scott are retiring. We will also be looking for a new Secretary and a Newsletter editor. The Council is to continue meeting via Zoom so there will be no commitment to travel should you want to join us quarterly. A place on Council can be what you want to make it. You can help by contributing fresh ideas or get more involved if you want to help with the organisation of the Society.

Collaborations with other organisations

Discussions are also at early stages with two organisations who are looking at working with MAS. Big Heritage want to promote archaeology and contacted MAS to see how we could assist. We are talking with Dean Paton who is the Director of Big Heritage to look at options such as funding a prize or bursary for archaeological research. It is very early stages so will let you know as and when we reach an agreement and in what form the assistance will take.

The Groundwork Trust has also contacted us to look at ways MAS can help with the archaeology along the Sankey Canal corridor the Trust works on. We are at an early stage but there may be the possibility of some research or practical work excavating or recording. I was involved with the Sankey Canal Restoration Society for some years and we excavated a number of canal lock sites including cottages and culverts.

Roy Forshaw

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.

Contents

From the Chair.....	1
Summer Meetings 2021.....	2
Piermaster’s Green Excavation.....	3
New Calderstones Book.....	3
Childwall Churchyard Survey.....	3
How I Got Into Archaeology.....	5
On-line Resources.....	6

Summer Meetings 2021

Thursday 17th June from 7.15 p.m (the formal meeting will start at 7.30) Mark Adams from RSK. 'Early Salt-Making in Merseyside & South Lancashire'

Abstract: Building upon my speculative article in a recent newsletter, I'll be looking a little more deeply into the documentary and other evidence for medieval and earlier salt production in Merseyside and South Lancashire. Was it an industry? If it was, where was it taking place? What strategies should archaeologists adopt to look for any physical evidence, and what should we be looking for?

A Summary of the Summer programme is below. Further details will be announced in future Newsletters.

Date	Speaker/Leader	Title	Venue
17th June	Mark Adams	Early Salt-Making in Merseyside & South Lancashire?	ZOOM
21 June	Sue Stallibrass & Roy Forshaw	Guided Walk	Crosby. See handout
13 July	Vanessa Oakden & Liz Stewart	Site Visit	Piermaster's House dig. Details in separate article below.
15th July	Roy Forshaw	Archaeology of Hilbre island	ZOOM
??? August TBC	Roy Forshaw	Guided Walk	Hilbre Island
19 August	Rob Philpott	Archaeology of Norton Priory	ZOOM
16 September	Gina Muskett	'Athena Parthenos in Liverpool' and AGM	Quaker Meeting House TBC following consultation with QMH
25 September	Rob Philpott	Site Visit	Norton Priory Excavation

For those meetings held 'virtually' via Zoom. A link to join the meeting will be issued via e-mail a few days beforehand. There are some technical points to put across to ensure everything runs as smoothly as possible.

1. Talks will last 40 mins starting at 7.30. You will be able to log on from 7.15.
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> .

Piermaster's Green Community Excavation

Join the Museum of Liverpool and CITIZAN North on Tuesday the 13th of July for a guided Low Tide Trail around Liverpool's historic docks beginning at the Piermaster's Green community excavation. Find out how the dig has been progressing and take a look at some of the finds before taking a look at how the docks and Liverpool grew over time and investigate some of the hidden clues that survive in the landscape today which help tell the story of this development. The socially distanced walk will take an hour and a half to two hours to complete. Contact Vanessa Oakden, Vanessa.Oakden@liverpoolmusuems.org.uk or leave a message on 01514784260 to book your place. Due to social distancing places are limited to 8 people however the walk will be run twice in the day if demand is high.

New Calderstones Book

MAS has published a brand new book about the Calderstones: <https://www.merseysidearchsoc.com/the-calderstones.html>

Described as: *'the most complex decorated carved megalithic art assemblage in southern Britain'* by George Nash in 2007, the six stones of the Calderstones monument have fascinated people for centuries. Their story of monumental construction, use and reuse, movement and re-movement, is a fascinating record of people's connections to them. Using historical sources, such as mapping and historic printed illustrations to track their history and modern scientific techniques to explore their art, this book investigates the Calderstones from their neolithic roots 5,000 years ago to their modern conservation in 2018. Exploring their long history reveals how special these stones are!

Buy your copy by contacting the MAS publications secretary via the website: <https://www.merseysidearchsoc.com/contact-us.html>
Members of MAS are entitled to a 25% discount, which is £6, plus £2.50 P&P if postage is required.

You can also order online from Museum of Liverpool: <https://shop.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/collections/liverpool-books> or buy at The Reader bookshop at Calderstones Park.

Childwall All Saints Churchyard Survey - Phase 1

As part of its contribution to the 2020 Festival of Archaeology the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) ran a competition for organisations involved in the recording of churchyards. The top 3 entries would have their project published for 'free' on the prestigious Historic England funded 'Discovering England's Burial Sites' (DEBS) hosted by the University of York. MAS entered the long-running Childwall project and won one of the prizes. The project data has now been published and can be accessed via the web-site at: https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/debs_he_2018/.

This is the first part of a two part article which will briefly describe what the project has achieved to date. The second part will follow later in the Summer and will describe how we intend to use the data gathered to gain a better understanding of the churchyard's development since the 17th century and how the information can be used in other local churchyards to gain an insight into the evolution of different monument types.



A visit from the Young Archaeologists' Club in 2011

In April 2009, the Department of Continuing Education at Liverpool University, in conjunction with Merseyside Archaeological Society, ran a course on the techniques involved in surveying graveyards. The course was based at All Saints Church, Childwall and was attended by about a dozen people. The course and the venue proved so interesting that the Society started a project to record the whole of the churchyard. The project loosely followed Harold Mytum's process for recording graveyards (Mytum 2000). This involved plotting every grave onto a plan, photographing each monument and recording the detail of the gravestone or memorial. Data gathered included a description of each memorial (dimensions, monument type, monument condition, construction materials, design motifs etc.) and the detail of those remembered/commemorated (date of birth/death, age, family relationships, profession and place of abode where given). A precise transcription of the epitaph was also entered onto the recording sheet together with a sketch of the monument which included further information not requested on the form.

It soon became apparent that graveyard recording was not as straightforward as one might assume. It demands high levels of concentration and commitment at all stages. Childwall churchyard has monuments dating back to the 17th century. The oldest dateable monument



Some of the more common monuments in the older part of the churchyard. From left to right: chest tomb, ledger and headstone. The headstone illustrates an interesting method of commemorating the deceased.

is dated 1620. There may be more ancient ones there without a date, as the most ancient often only bore the initials of the deceased. In many cases the local red sandstone used for the majority of the older monuments has weathered quite badly. It was therefore not unusual for some monuments to take a day or more to record, particularly where the epitaph ran to dozens of lines commemorating several generations of a family. Many different techniques were devised by team members to help bring faint inscriptions to life.

Although the churchyard is beautifully kept the team also had to try and access monuments located under bushes and trees, some of which proved quite difficult to record. One Museum volunteer spent hours recording under rhododendron bushes only to emerge saying ‘there’s loads more under there I can’t get to’. The vagaries of the English weather did not help either. It is not long before biro goes through wet paper making recording difficult in bad weather. The work is also seasonal. It only takes a couple of hours for the fingers to refuse to write legibly in colder weather. It is to the great credit of the two students from John Moores University who joined the recording team between November and January 2016/17 for enduring the harshest of weather. Twice daily trips to the pub across the road (for coffee!) did not entirely keep the cold at bay.



The Case family vault

Phase 1 of the monument recording process ran for a total of 8 years (there was a 3 year gap in recording between 2013 and late 2016) and concluded in 2020 with the digital conversion of the data relating to 838 monuments and 3594 individuals that you will currently find on the DEBS site. This was all the data that had been digitised by the project at July 2020 and represents the majority of the memorials which date prior to 1860. The preparation process took longer than expected. One of the conditions of the prize was that the data must be converted for submission by September 2020. Thankfully, this deadline was flexible.

Although, from the outset, the project had loosely followed Harold Mytum’s process referred to above we had not included many of the data attributes required by the conversion exercise. This involved assigning codes to many of the data items gathered on a spread sheet followed by a cleansing and normalisation of the data. Additional tasks included dating each memorial by reference to information contained in the epitaph. At this stage we found that there were many inconsistencies between data entered on the forms and the digitised data, particularly around family relationships and in the transcription of the epitaph, which involved much cross-checking with the recording forms and in some cases further visits to the churchyard were required to validate information recorded. In addition, the photography of the memorials had fallen behind the recording process and approximately 400 of the 838 memorials did not have photographs. The digital planning of the churchyard had also lapsed and at July 2020 the plan consisted of 17 pieces of A4 paper. This was subsequently condensed to 3 sheets of A3 paper to produce an acceptable location plan of the 838 monuments in the churchyard. The data conversion exercise was eventually completed in January 2021 when the completed spread sheet was submitted to DEBS along with the location plan and a complete set of photographs. This marked the end of Phase 1.

However, that is not quite the end of the story and Phase 2 is now well underway. By July 2020 we had recorded a total of 2,249 memorials and the details of 7,656 individuals although much of the data had not been digitised. During the locked down months earlier this year most of the remaining data was added to the spread sheet. We have also now recorded the 20 or so ledgers,

previously hidden under the rhododendrons which have now been cut back. The monuments inside the church are still to be recorded. The majority of the 19th and early 20th century monuments have now been photographed and we have started categorising and dating the more common monuments from that period i.e. the crosses and headstones. The data gathered in this process will be important when we start looking at monuments in other churchyards, more of which over the coming months. The digital planning of the churchyard has also now resumed. The main focus of the team is to have the complete dataset ready for publication on DEBS by the end of 2021. At present, this is going well and provided we are not distracted too much by other research activities, the deadline is achievable.

Finally, I would like to thank All Saints, Childwall for its permission to carry out the survey and the many volunteers who have contributed their valuable time to help with the project. These include MAS members who have assisted with recording and NML staff and volunteers who initiated the digitisation process. I would particularly like to thank Diana Goodier, Joyce Hughes and the late David Kennils who have supported the project over many years. I would also like to pass on my gratitude to Toby Pillatt of the University of York for his guidance and assistance with the data conversion exercise.



David Kennils recording a ledger in 2010

Reference:

Mytum, H. 2000 *Recording and Analysing Graveyards - Practical Handbook in Archaeology 15*, CBA in association with English Heritage

A couple of hints on how to use the DEBS site:

- 1) From the link in the 1st paragraph above you can search on a variety of criteria. Try entering 'Wainwright' in the Person search. This will give you about 20 'hits' for Childwall as it is a common name. If you then click one of the entries under DEBS ID it will give you more detailed information including PDF links to a photo of the memorial and the location plan.
- 2) If you go down a level using the Site List you can access the Childwall data directly. From here you can download various datasets into Excel which you can then re-format.

Dave Roberts

How I got into Archaeology - Mark Adams

As told to Maurice Handley

In last month's talk about the Beaker Burial at Aldington, the speaker, Laurence Hayes, mentioned that he initially thought that the stone wrist bracer (an archer's wrist guard) was a whetstone. 'Whet' is an old word for a sharpening stone and this led to a fascinating flurry of emails between Mark Adams and myself. We began discussing how we got in to archaeology and the following is an edited version of Mark's story.(MH)

I got interested in the past at the age of four via the usual dinosaurs and a picture in a Ladybird book of King Alfred burning the cakes; for some reason that one really stuck with me and I can remember it like it was 10 mins ago . After that history was pretty much the only thing I was interested in at school. Age 10 or 11 I pestered my parents about visiting an excavation of a barrow at Grindale, East Yorkshire by Terry Manby (<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/library/browse/details.xhtml?recordId=3034816&recordType=Journal>) up the road from where we lived. I can't remember the exact details but it ended up with me being let loose with a trowel in one corner of the trench; I hope I didn't do too much damage. Main memory is the varied 'characters' in the site hut and picking up flints from the field, Terry helped me ID them. I volunteered on a few excavations after that, most notably West Heselton (http://www.landscaperesearchcentre.org/AA%20Tier%201%20Primary%20Headings/heselton_parish_project.htm) with Dominic Powlesland when I was 16-18. Dad was a stonemason and he used to buy his sand from the adjacent stone quarry, I was working

for him as a labourer, saw the dig so again I pestered to be let on. Dad's always been 'eccentric' and I can still remember the look on Dominic's face when Dad asked him if a pair of parallel Bronze Age ditches could be a UFO landing strip! Being the archetypal teenager I just turned red and wanted to merge into the quarry.

Aged 17 Careers Advice talked me out of pursuing archaeology on the grounds that there were hardly any paid jobs, the jobs that there were were poorly paid, and I needed Latin to do a degree (I went to a Comp so was never taught that). I learned later that the last bit was BS, the first 2 have changed for the better in the last 30 years or so but at the time were probably reasonable advice, maybe still are. I went to Cornwall, trained as a mining engineer, didn't fit that, so came to Liverpool to study geology, that didn't really fit either so I started digging again at Runnymede Bridge in summer 1984.

Mark is a keen climber and told of a whetstone quarry on the path up to the Idwal Slabs, a popular climb in Snowdonia. We discussed various ways of getting to North Wales including cycling and hitching lifts. (MH)

I used to hitch regularly in the early 80s and when I acquired a car started giving people lifts, but you rarely see it now. One lift played a small part in starting me off in archaeology. I couldn't get a paid summer job that year so was on my way down to Runnymede Bridge to volunteer on the excavation there over the summer, I got chatting to one guy who picked me up about where I was going and it turned out that he was the County Archaeologist for somewhere, I think it was for Derbyshire which would mean it was probably John Barnatt. Up to that point I didn't think paid jobs in archaeology were accessible to people like me (it was at a time when popular perception was still that it was for the 'posh' such as Mortimer Wheeler and Glyn Daniel; people with another income to fall back on), but the conversation that followed gave me the first inkling that it may actually be possible to make a career out of it. Anyway, when I came back up to Liverpool I switched from single honours geology to combined with archaeology and gave it a go.

It turned out the training in mining engineering wasn't wasted, I learned to survey, something not taught well if at all on a lot of archaeology degrees in the early 80s and that got me my first paid job in summer 1985. The rest as they say is history.

Maurice Handley

Online Resources

Upcoming online events

Monday 28th June 5.00 – 6.00 om **Talk**. Professor Sarah Rees Jones. **A Northern Way? The Archbishops of York and Urban Development in the Fourteenth Century** Free but please book
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/142231350799>

The lecture will explore the administrative records of the Archbishops of York as a source for the history of Beverley, Hexham, Hull, Ripon, Southwell, and York during the fourteenth century. This was a century of crisis: of famine, war, and plague. The talk will explore the reactions of the archbishops to these events through their interventions in some of the major urban communities of the northern province.

Sarah Rees Jones is Professor of Medieval History at the University of York. A former contributor to the Historic Towns Atlas for the City of York, she is currently the Principal Investigator on an AHRC-funded project that is seeking to make the vast administrative archive of the medieval Archbishops of York accessible to the public online. The project is called 'The Northern Way: The Archbishops of York and the North of England, 1304–1405', and you can find out more here: <https://www.york.ac.uk/history/research/northern-way/>

2nd & 3rd July 2021. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the **Study Group for Roman Pottery** (SGRP) and they are celebrating with a two-day **conference**. It will be the very first virtual SGRP conference via Zoom hosted by Newcastle University. The conference is FREE and open to both members and non-members. To see the full programme and book your place at the conference: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/study-group-for-roman-pottery-50th-anniversary-conference-tickets-144748850709>

20th July **Museum of Liverpool Twitter conference**: theme = Science & Archaeology (highlighting STEM aspects ie Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths). hashtag #ArchMoL21 on Twitter
<https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/festival-of-archaeology/archaeoscience-can-you-dig-it-yes-you-can>

17th July – 1st August The **Council for British Archaeology (CBA) Festival of Archaeology** takes place between the 17th July and the 1st August. The theme for 2021 is Exploring Local Places. Keep checking the website for live and recorded events
<https://festival.archaeologyuk.org/>

Past talks available online

Recording of Bioarchaeology Research Seminar, Durham University given by Prof. Peter Rowley-Conwy on **Hunting the Big Beasts: Aurochs and Elk in the Terminal Palaeolithic and Mesolithic**

An excellent 45 min talk and 30 minutes discussion: topics covered include animal behaviour, ethnographic and modern hunting techniques, hunting equipment and archaeological artefacts and potential management of vegetation to facilitate hunting.

<https://durhamuniversity.zoom.us/rec/share/x-5mOeyrkPwcoRIGiMmAmWmCf1O98KIWRlx5YwiHkamjoyv82joTXXtc5jD5DF7n.U-tz8tX26xfJByvC>

Passcode: 9Hm9Bx#p

Kent Archaeological Society talks. Wide variety of talks recorded and made available on YouTube. Includes 'Did Julius Caesar land at Pegwell Bay?' <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHBQA8tx6caQAdOU9Jb0yWw>

<https://www.facebook.com/theKentArchaeologicalSociety1857>

Recordings of past **Historic Towns talks** available at

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCs2td9p_72Y1JFox2wK3LEQ/featured

Matthew F. Stevens: The Place of Native Populations in Medieval Colonial Towns: Wales and Prussia Compared

Keith Lilley: Mapping Chester's Landscapes: Past, Present, Future

Vanessa Harding: Early Tudor London: On the Brink of Transformation?

Helen Fulton and Giles Darkes: Making Bristol Medieval (presented 24th May, may take a week or two to be uploaded)

For talks related to the **Historic Towns Atlas** project, visit

<http://www.historictownsatlas.org.uk/content/lectures>

Other online resources

An account of **experimental oven-making and bread-baking**

<https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/ancient-cultures/daily-life-and-practice/biblical-bread-baking-like-the-ancient-israelites/>

Liverpool Museum has a **map of medieval Liverpool** that you can explore online. There are 'information' points at specific locations that contain brief information plus an image (some ancient some modern)

<https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/7604c2e12af415f14ca9aa82682186bd/medieval-liverpool/index.html>

New discovery high status Roman remains Eastfield Scarborough. Possible villa and/or religious site info from excavations April 2021 drone fly through at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5iPlqgNv-c>

News items at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/14/roman-site-scarborough-first-kind-in-uk>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/in-your-area/yorkshire/roman-remains-discovery-scarborough/>

The **Field Museum Chicago** has several **online exhibitions** including Ancient Egypt

<https://www.fieldmuseum.org/exhibitions>

<https://www.fieldmuseum.org/exhibitions/inside-ancient-egypt>

Past TV programmes: two series have just been repeated

How the Celts Saved Britain (two episodes, presented by Dan Snow)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00kps7h>

Britain's Biggest Dig (three episodes, excavations along train route of HS2. Mostly post-medieval urban cemeteries but also the Curzon Street train station in Birmingham).

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000mmrf>

Sue Stallibrass