

## Forthcoming Merseyside Archaeology Society (MAS) Events:

Our winter evening talks take place on the third Thursday of each month until April 2024

The venue is the Quaker Meeting House (QMH) 22 School Lane, Liverpool L1 3BT. It is close to Lime Street and Liverpool Central train stations, and Queen Street and Liverpool One bus stations. See: <https://www.liverpoolquakers.org.uk/contact>

Doors open at 7.00pm for coffee/tea/biscuits and the meeting starts at 7.30pm, closing at 9.00pm  
The costs to attend a meeting are £1 for MAS members, with visitors welcome at £2

NB During the midwinter months (including January) our meetings are held on-line via Zoom, to avoid travel in inclement weather. Online "doors" open 7.15 for the 7.30pm meeting.

### MAS autumn/winter talks programme 2023-2024

DATE	VENUE	Speaker	Topic
Sept Thurs 21 <sup>st</sup>  COMPLETED	QMH	Dan Garner MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology)	The Chester Amphitheatre Environs Research Project in Grosvenor Park: Current results from the ongoing excavations by West Cheshire Museums in partnership with the University of Chester. <a href="https://www1.chester.ac.uk/news/archaeological-excavations-grosvenor-park">https://www1.chester.ac.uk/news/archaeological-excavations-grosvenor-park</a>
October Thurs 19 <sup>th</sup>  COMPLETED	QMH	Warren Kern MAS	An illustrated talk (including some demonstration items) about local historic objects
November Thurs 16 <sup>th</sup>  COMPLETED	ZOOM	Julie Franklin Headland Archaeology	<b>Life and death in a northern milltown: excavations at St Peter's Church, Blackburn</b> Archaeological excavations in 2015 on the site of the former St Peter's church rescued nearly 2000 human burials. The skeletons tell their stories of life in 19 <sup>th</sup> -century Blackburn, and the way they were buried reveals some unusual practices and beliefs.
<b>December * Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> *</b>	ZOOM	<b>Chair, members QuizMAster Mark Adams</b>	<b>Christmas social &amp; Quiz</b>  <b>*PLEASE NOTE DATE* 14<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>
January Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup>	ZOOM	Scott Lloyd & Jon Dollery RCAHMW	<b>Current Welsh mapping project using placenames.</b> (exact title tbc) Update with a case study from NE Wales
February Thurs 15 <sup>th</sup>	QMH	<b>3 student short talks</b>	<b>Work in Progress talks by research students at Liverpool universities</b>
March Thurs 21 <sup>st</sup>	QMH	Mark Adams Headland, MAS	<b>Recent investigations at J M Worrall's Ordsall Lane dyeworks</b>
April Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup>	QMH	<b>Chair &amp; members</b>	<b>AGM + short talks by members</b>

## Forthcoming online talks

### **Two per week throughout 2023: Lancaster Museum 100 items podcasts**

These twice-weekly podcasts celebrating the Lancaster Museum's centenary can be listened to as soon as they are uploaded. October's have featured (amongst other items) **Roman forceps, a highly decorative 9<sup>th</sup> century silver mount, and a print of Hornby Castle**, which apparently has links to Richard III, the Gunpowder Plot, 600 gallons of beer, and 40 large cheeses. Not to mention November's **17<sup>th</sup> century token from a Lancaster sugar merchant and a rare Anglo-Saxon woollen fabric from a hillside burial**. The whole series is available on the website, so you can go back and see what you may have missed. They cover 50,000 years of interesting items in the museum's collection.

<https://visitlancaster.org.uk/museums/100-years-100-objects-a-century-of-lancaster-city-museums-podcast/>

### **Society of Antiquaries:**

**Thursday 07<sup>th</sup> December 5.00 – 6.00pm** Ian Haynes & the Rome Transformed team: **Rome from the Principate to late antiquity: lessons from the Eastern Caelian** (ie an area of Rome that the team have been investigating). From the extravagant houses of elite families, through successive imperial palaces to the seat of papal governance the area's architecture embodied changing expressions of political power. From the early military stations, through the grandeur of the barracks of the emperor's horse guards, to the building and rebuilding of the Aurelian Walls, this area illuminates evolving ideas about security and imperial control. And from the shrines of the early empire to the world's first Cathedral, it attests successive religious regenerations. This paper introduces the Project's methods, its visualisations of the evolving area, and some of its major findings.

FREE but register in advance at:

<https://www.sal.org.uk/event/rome-from-the-principate-to-late-antiquity-lessons-from-the-eastern-caelian/>

**Gresham College** provide national lecture series by leading specialists

<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/whats-on?see-all>

all online talks are FREE but register in advance (or watch online later)

NB there are none scheduled for live broadcast in **December**, but you can watch **recordings of previous ones** if you missed the live event

**Magic, the Supernatural, and the Lost Gods of Europe**, Prof Ronald Hutton:  
Weds 20<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023 to 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024

<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/watch-now/series/magic-europe>

This website lets you view recordings of past talks and also lets you register to attend a live talk

Free, but you need to register for each talk that you wish to attend live

Dates in this series:

Weds 20<sup>th</sup> Oct 2023: Ancient goddesses of sex and war: see recording

Weds 08<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023: Were there pagan goddesses in Christian Europe?

**Weds 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024**: Dragons: a history

Weds 06<sup>th</sup> March 2024: Ritual nudity in history and religion

Weds 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024: The western magical tradition

Weds 05<sup>th</sup> Jun 2024: Witch-hunting in European and world history

**Evolution: The Big Questions**, Prof Robin May,

Weds 4<sup>th</sup> October to 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024

<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/watch-now/series/evolution-questions>

This website lets you view recordings of past talks and also lets you register to attend a live talk

Free, but you need to register for each talk that you wish to attend live

Dates in this series:

Weds 04<sup>th</sup> Oct 2023: A small history of big evolutionary ideas: see the recording

Wed, 15 Nov 2023: Random chance in evolution

**Weds 20<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024**: Why is there only one species of human?

Weds 07<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024: a 300,000-year history of human evolution

Weds 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024: Artificial selection: How humans have shaped evolution

Weds 08<sup>th</sup> May 2024: Evolution tomorrow and beyond

**The Political Imagination of Ancient Greek Ideas**, Prof Melissa Lane,

Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> Oct 2023 to 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024

<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/watch-now/series/political-ideas>

This website lets you view recordings of past talks and also lets you register to attend a live talk

Free, but you need to register for each talk that you wish to attend live

Dates in this series:

Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> Oct 2023: Plato and the ideas of political office: see the recording

**Thurs 11<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024**: Ancient Greek ideas of justice

Thurs 07<sup>th</sup> March 2024: Ancient Greek ideas of equality under the law

Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024: Democracy: ancient models, modern challenges

Thurs 30<sup>th</sup> May 2024: Experts in politics: lessons from Socrates and Aristotle

Thurs 13<sup>th</sup> Jun 2024: Plato's cave: thinking about climate change

## Past Online Talks

### The Council for British Archaeology (CBA)

There are several Festival Resources from the **2023 CBA Festival of Archaeology** still available on the Council for British Archaeology website, including 'meet the artist' or 'meet the author', activity packs, discovery videos, talks, walks, an item on Grosvenor Park in Chester, & lots more at:

<https://www.archaeologyuk.org/festival/festival-resources.html>

Podcasts and YouTube videos from the **2023 Chester Heritage Festival** are still available online. These include 5 episodes about the buildings of the **Chester Rows**, and tours of **The Rows**, the **City Walls**, and **Bishop Lloyd's Palace**. All at:

[https://www.chesterheritagefestival.co.uk/buildings-and-structures?utm\\_campaign=4b02c4a1-763f-459d-8ebd-c14a7564047d&utm\\_source=so&utm\\_medium=mail&cid=9e6b7dcb-cbf2-4493-b6e1-8c977b52855a](https://www.chesterheritagefestival.co.uk/buildings-and-structures?utm_campaign=4b02c4a1-763f-459d-8ebd-c14a7564047d&utm_source=so&utm_medium=mail&cid=9e6b7dcb-cbf2-4493-b6e1-8c977b52855a)

Also, three items about Chester's **Industrial Heritage**, focusing on **Chester: a heritage port; Chester's waterways, wharf and weir; and A walk along the canal**. All at:

[https://www.chesterheritagefestival.co.uk/industrial-heritage?utm\\_campaign=4b02c4a1-763f-459d-8ebd-c14a7564047d&utm\\_source=so&utm\\_medium=mail&cid=9e6b7dcb-cbf2-4493-b6e1-8c977b52855a](https://www.chesterheritagefestival.co.uk/industrial-heritage?utm_campaign=4b02c4a1-763f-459d-8ebd-c14a7564047d&utm_source=so&utm_medium=mail&cid=9e6b7dcb-cbf2-4493-b6e1-8c977b52855a)

**The Royal Archaeological Institute** hosts live talks in London. Some of these have been recorded (depending on copyright restrictions for images/new research).

These are talks by leading specialists about new investigations and research on sites and finds in Britain of various periods and types. Something for everyone.

Talks are available at:

<https://www.royalarchinst.org/events/recorded>

### Other online resources

**Wigan Archaeology Society** have been investigating an exciting archaeological site of a **ring ditch near Aspull** and have an informative blog about the site, with links to excavation diary blogs for 2022 & 2023 at:

[https://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk/blog/?page\\_id=2333](https://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk/blog/?page_id=2333)

**Oxford Archaeology** is one of the biggest commercial archaeology units in Britain, and it also undertakes research and community projects. It is currently celebrating its 50 birthday with a newly designed web presence.

<https://www.oxfordarchaeology.com/>

<https://www.oxfordarchaeology.com/blog/february-highlights-oas-50-years-archaeology>

Starting in Oxford, it has incorporated various other regional units, including one based in Lancaster which is **Oxford Archaeology North (OAN)**, currently celebrating 45 years since its original formation. OAN has undertaken many projects in our region and you can see updates of, for instance, the nationally important **Mesolithic and Neolithic waterside sites at Windy Harbour** near Poulton le Fylde (currently in post-excavation assessment stage),

Two webinars available on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqjEkukOlev9fFWIZjyCOlyUQb02nXRlq>

and **Stainton West** near Carlisle (which should be published as part of the Carlisle Northern Development Route monograph in 2024).

<https://www.oxfordarchaeology.com/news/cndr-news>

And OAN also excavated a Mesolithic house at **Ronaldsway Airport** on the Isle of Man:

<https://www.oxfordarchaeology.com/project/project-ronaldsway-isle-man>

As well as the two **webinars** on Windy Harbour, there are 5 more, ranging in archaeological period from **Bronze Age, through Roman, Early Medieval medieval and the Industrial era.**

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqjEkukOlev9fFWIZjyCOlyUQb02nXRlq>

**Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU)** hosts the **Centre for Public Histories and heritage.**

<https://mcphh.wordpress.com/>

You can sign up to a monthly newsletter with news of events and articles. The public lectures seem to be in person (moving around different venues in and around Manchester) but there are also two seasons of podcasts and a blog. The emphasis is on recent history rather than archaeology but there are some 19<sup>th</sup> century items.

The **Bloombergconnects app** can be downloaded for free to access digital material from a wide range of art galleries and museums around the world including the Anchorage Museum (Alaska), The Courtauld (London), El Museo del Barrio (Harlem)

<https://www.bloombergconnects.org/about/>

**Tenochtitlan, Mexico**, was the capital of the Aztec Empire. There are stunning visual reimaginings of what the city may have looked like in its 16<sup>th</sup> Century heyday, with comparisons to Mexico City today. The 'aerial' views of the Aztec city in its wider landscape are particularly effective.

<https://tenochtitlan.thomaskole.nl>

There are online resources about **Jamestown**, Virginia (the first British settlement in north America, named after King James 1<sup>st</sup>/VI<sup>th</sup> and begun in AD 1607). Resources include an interactive map, virtual video tours, dig diaries, digital collections and weekly video updates. It is clearly a very active long term project.

<https://historicjamestowne.org/education/jamestown-from-home/>

**Brooklyn Historical Society** have uploaded over 1,500 digitised maps from their collections. **Maps** depict New York City, Long Island, New England and beyond, spanning the **17<sup>th</sup> Century to the present**.

**NOT ONLINE but possibly of interest to MAS members:**

**Peter Davey** was an early and long-standing member of Merseyside Archaeology Society who led several important excavations and contributed much to the society. Working for the University of Liverpool, he became the first director of the new Centre for Manx Studies, which was a partnership between the university's School of Archaeology, Classics & Oriental Studies (now the department of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology) and Manx National Heritage.

His new monograph on Rushen Abbey is now in press and available to pre-order from the publisher, Archaeopress, where you can also download a pre-publication sample of 21 pages of Contents, Introduction and copious Acknowledgements: several MAS members are name-checked!

Pre-publication orders are now being taken £40 paperback (and it will also be available digitally).

**Rushen Abbey, Isle of Man**  
**A Hundred Years of Research and Excavation**  
By Peter Davey

<https://www.archaeopress.com/Archaeopress/Products/9781803275710>

H 205 x W 290 mm

290 pages

313 figures (colour throughout)

Published Nov 2023 [sic]

Archaeopress Archaeology

ISBN

Paperback: 9781803275710

Digital: 9781803275727

DOI 10.32028/9781803275710

Rushen Abbey was a Cistercian monastery founded in 1134 and suppressed in 1540. It was the most important religious institution on the Isle of Man wielding significant secular power as well as ecclesiastical authority. This book aims to provide a synthesis of all the available evidence for Rushen Abbey under one cover.

Rushen Abbey, now owned and managed by Manx National Heritage, was a Cistercian monastery founded in 1134 and suppressed in 1540. It was the most important religious institution on the Isle of Man wielding significant secular power as well as ecclesiastical authority. Its location in the middle of the Irish Sea and its political connections made it one of the most influential houses in western Britain and Ireland.

The first known excavations were carried out in the late 1890s by Deemster Gill, one of the most senior law officers on the island. They were followed in 1912 and again in 1926 by more extensive investigations of parts of the east range the north transept of the church by William Cubbon then owner of the site. The modern study of the site began in 1978 and 1979 with excavations of the presbytery and both transepts by Dr Lawrence Butler, who followed them in 1988 and 1989 with a complete exploration of the east range. In between these two programmes of work Dr Larch Garrad of the Manx Museum carried out an important rescue excavation to the east of the church in 1984, locating a new chapel, part of the monastic cemetery and a charnel pit.

Under threat of development for a hotel complex the site was purchased by the Manx Government in 1998 and the Centre for Manx Studies, University of Liverpool was asked to carry out exploratory excavations in the first place, followed by more extensive investigations of a number of areas of the site. These were carried out each year from 1998 to 2008 and succeeded in defining the plan of the church and claustral buildings together with parts of the western courtyard. In addition, to the south of the Cistercian complex an already disturbed early medieval cemetery was investigated.

Alongside the excavations, medieval documentary sources were reviewed, and extensive fieldwork was carried out on the abbey's lands throughout the island.

This book aims to provide a synthesis of all the available evidence for Rushen Abbey under one cover. Given the numbers of excavations, their complexity and the richness of finds, the detailed evidence on which this overview text is based is provided by a set of 20 online reports.

## **Contents**

Chapter 1: Preface

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Chapter 6: The monastic estates

Chapter 7: New insights into Manx Christianity, monasticism, material culture and history

Chapter 8: Future research

Appendix 1: The abbots of Rushen

Appendix 2: The coin evidence

Appendix 3: List of carbon dates

Appendix 4: List of MNH accession numbers for finds from Rushen Abbey

Bibliography

## Dates for your diary in 2024

The local annual **Chester Heritage Festival** will be held from **21st – 30th June 2024**

The national annual **CBA Festival of Archaeology** will be held from **13-28 July 2024** and the theme will be **Community Archaeology**

**Thanks to Mark Adams** for information about Wigan Archaeology Society's project at Aspull ring ditch

PLEASE contact Sue with information about **online resources** that you think other MAS members might be interested in.

And we would love to hear suggestions for **next summer's fieldtrips** as well. Anywhere you've been this summer that you think others would also enjoy (or sites on your hit list that you haven't made it to yet)?

[Sue.Stallibrass@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:Sue.Stallibrass@liverpool.ac.uk) 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023