



Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 2/2018

Registered Charity No 510831

MAS Membership Subscriptions 2018

Subscriptions for 2018 fell due on 1st January. Please contact the Membership Secretary if you have not yet paid.

MAS Lectures at The Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool

Lectures - Winter 2018

Merseyside Archaeological Society meets at the Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool, L1 3BT. Tea and Coffee is available from 7 p.m. and lectures start at 7.30 prompt. All are welcome including non-members. There is a small charge.

Thursday April 19th Annual General Meeting followed by a special talk by our President, Professor Keith Dobney.

‘Joining the dots: Can Archaeological Science save the world?’

Over the last 10,000 years we have fundamentally changed the way we live - moving from hunting and gathering to agriculture, rural to urban living, industrialisation to globally connected societies. However, we remain ignorant about the specific role that major changes in human behaviour had on our evolutionary history, specifically what the legacy of such changes has had on modern health. New developments in biomolecular archaeology are now allowing us to interrogate the past in entirely new ways, where novel bio-archaeological data can be re-purposed as a natural experimental system. The talk will explore this concept using joint research undertaken by the Universities of Liverpool and Adelaide.

Keith Dobney is Professor of Human Palaeoecology at the University of Liverpool and specialises in the study of ancient human-animal relationships and how that has impacted our evolutionary history. His main research interests involve the transition from hunting and gathering to farming some 15,000-10,000 years ago - specifically the domestication of animals.

Field Trips and Visits - Summer 2018

For more details on any of these trips please contact Maurice Handley (0151 426 8157) or mahandley@tesco.net

If you can offer a lift or need a lift, let Maurice Handley know.

Sunday May 13th - The Vikings exhibition at The Atkinson and Southport's Architecture

The ‘Vikings: Rediscover the Legend’ exhibition combines material from the British Museum and the Yorkshire Museum and includes the Vale of York, the Cuedale and

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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Bedale hoards. A rare chance to see all this material together with a special tour led by a curator accompanied by 'Vikings'. There is a reduced admission charge of £4 for groups. (Note that The Atkinson is not normally open on Sundays).

We will spend the morning in the museum and after lunch we will have a walk in the town centre looking at the interesting buildings, led by architect and MAS member, David Scott.

Meet in The Atkinson cafe at 11.00 am. The Atkinson is on Lord Street and can be reached from the station exit by following Cambridge Walk, the narrow street opposite M & S. There are several possible places for lunch.

(Also see below for Viking talks at The Atkinson)

Saturday June 9th - An invitation to Castleshaw with Norman Redhead

The Castleshaw Valley (near Delph, Oldham) has archaeology from all periods including a Roman fort, medieval iron smelting and post-medieval textile industry. The visit will be a walking tour and walking boots/ stout shoes will be needed as well as clothing and waterproofs suitable for an exposed environment. A packed lunch will be required.

This is a joint meeting with Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society and final details have to be confirmed. Transport will be by private car. For more information and to book a place, please contact Maurice Handley (0151 426 8157 or mahandley@tesco.net).

Weekend of 14/15th July - South Cumbria

This will be arranged so that you can join the trip on either one of two days or both days combined with an overnight stay in the area.

On Saturday we will walk in the area around the village of Orton (near Tebay off M6 Junction 38) looking at Iron Age remains, a stone circle and a Roman road amongst other features. On Sunday we will walk in the valley at Smardale (10km east of Tebay) following an old railway to see prehistoric settlements, medieval fields, a drover's road and 19th and 20th century industry. Walking boots or stout shoes and waterproofs are recommended and a packed lunch should be carried.

Details have still to be finalised. For more information please contact Maurice Handley (0151 426 8157 or mahandley@tesco.net).

Saturday August 18th - Norton Priory and Halton Castle

Following the recent talks to the society by Lynn Smith and Sarah Cattell, an opportunity for an enhanced visit to the newly rebuilt Norton Priory Museum and a chance to see Halton Castle with a fabulous view of the landscape. There is also a medieval event with re-enactors demonstrating crafts, fighting techniques, fashions etc. throughout the day. Meet in the museum cafe at 10.30am. There is a reduced group rate of £5 entry to the Museum. Please let Maurice Handley know if you are coming (0151 426 8157 or mahandley@tesco.net).

Norton Priory is located off the A558 Daresbury Expressway - follow the brown signs.(Satnav: Tudor Road WA7 1BD) There are no direct public transport links to the site - the nearest railway station is Runcorn and there is a bus station in Runcorn Old Town. It is hoped drivers will offer lifts - please contact Maurice Handley if you can offer a lift or if you need a lift or to be picked up in Runcorn.

Note that if you cross on the new Mersey Gateway bridge there are no toll gates and you must pay online or by phone on 01928 878878. The charge is £2 one way and you must pay before midnight the next day or risk a fine!

More dates for your diary:-

Talks at the Atkinson (see above for directions)

Steve Harding's Viking DNA talk will be at 1pm on the 23rd of May. No need to book. £2 per person on the door.

Also, on the evening of the 4th of April Paul Sherman will discuss the legacy of the Vikings along our coastline including local Viking legends, place names, settlement distribution and archaeology including recent research which hints at Viking Age trade between our coast and the Baltic.

MAS Autumn 2018 Meetings at the Quaker Meeting House 7.00 pm.

Speakers and titles are provisional:-

September 20th 'Lancashire Place Names': Pam Russell

October 18th 'Medieval and Early Modern Graffiti' (Speke Hall) : Carolanne King and Ellen McInnes

November 15th 'Early Man' (Olduvai): Lis Rushworth

December 13th Member's Evening

Provisional meeting dates for 2019 - Jan 17th (Gina Muskett: 'Fibulas, focolare and false teeth: the Etruscan Collection in World Museum, Liverpool'), Feb 21st, Mar 21st, April 18th AGM (Easter 19-21 April).

Saturday October 13th: One day conference at the Museum of Liverpool 'Recent developments in Merseyside Archaeology'

Merseyside Archaeological Society jointly with National Museums Liverpool will hold a one-day conference in the Museum of Liverpool at Pier Head. A series of talks will cover recent archaeological discoveries in Merseyside ranging from an 8000 year old Mesolithic hunter-gatherer site to 20th century defence structures. The provisional programme is:-

Mark Adams: 'Mark Rake, Bromborough'

Alison Burns: 'Fort Crosby'

Ron Cowell: 'The Mesolithic site at Lunt'

Vanessa Oakden; 'PAS finds'

Rob Philpott; 'Excavations in Prescott'

Liz Stewart; 'The Secret History of Pembroke Place'

There will also be a handling session and book sale.

The cost will be £10 for MAS members, unwaged £12.50 and £15 for non-members.

Admission is by ticket and these will be available through Eventbrite.

A Volunteering Opportunity...Stanley Bank Copperworks

Mark Adams will be returning to Stanley Bank (members might remember the slitting mill excavation several years ago) to excavate 3-4 trenches on the site of the adjacent copperworks. The works were established by the Warrington industrialist Thomas Patten in 1773 to smelt ores from Anglesey and taken over by Thomas Williams in the 1780s. They continued to operate until c. 1814 and were demolished in the 1820s. The project is being sponsored by RSK Environment and there are limited spaces available for volunteers to take part directly. The fieldwork will take place between Weds 13 and Mon 18 June, though the last day is likely to be largely taken up with backfilling.

If you'd like to take part please contact Mark at mhadams@rsk.co.uk specifying which dates you'd like to attend.

Another Volunteering Opportunity...Graveyard Recording at All Saints, Childwall

Graveyard Recording at All Saints Childwall will continue in 2018. We are looking for additional volunteers to finish this work and welcome any MAS members who might be interested. No prior experience is required. For further details of what we are doing and how to become involved please contact Dave Roberts (e-mail: drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk. Tel: 427 2980).

CBA Festival of Archaeology

The Council for British Archaeology will not be organising a Festival of Archaeology this July.

This has been a difficult decision to take. As a result of not being able to raise sufficient additional funds for the festival following a drop in grant income, the trustees have decided instead to focus efforts on developing a new festival for 2019. This will coincide with the 75th anniversary of the Council for British Archaeology and creates an exciting opportunity to build a better and bigger festival next year.

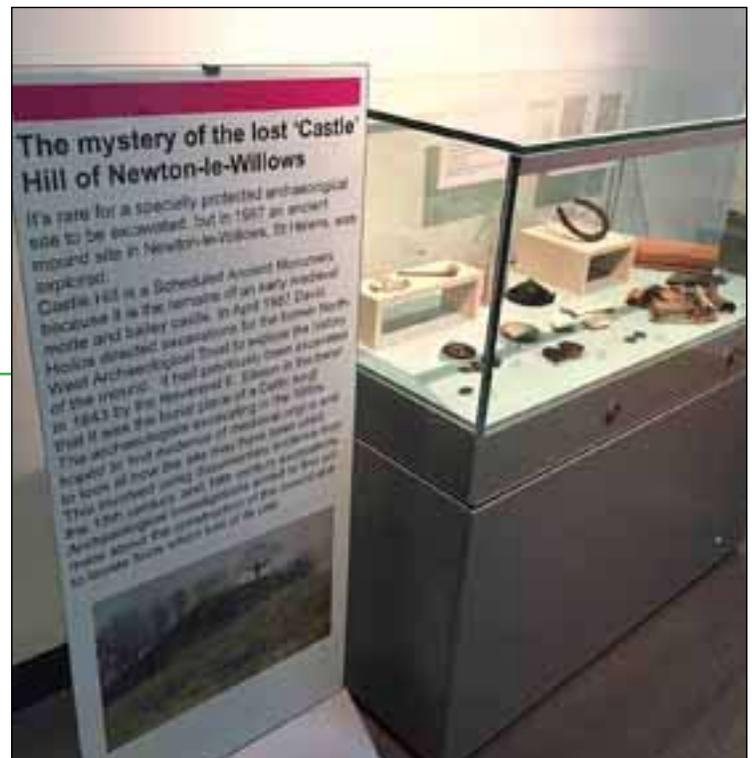
The good news is that Museum of Liverpool, Chester Archaeological Society and Grosvenor Museum will all be running Archaeology events over the Summer. Details will be available from the respective organisations and on their websites.

Archaeology Extravaganza

Museum of Liverpool is hosting an 'Archaeology Extravaganza' on 24, 25, and 26 July, 11am-4pm. Get hands on with the past as you get the chance to look at, touch, and find out about real objects from the Museum of Liverpool's archaeology collection. Forget glass cases, this activity gets you closer to the artefacts than ever before!

The mystery of the lost 'Castle' Hill of Newton-le-Willows.

A new display of finds from Castle Hill, Newton, went on display on Monday 12th March at the Museum of Liverpool. This little-known site is the remains of a Norman motte and bailey castle. Excavations in the 1980s explored the site's history. A selection of finds are on display including a fragment of Roman pottery, the base of a 17th century drinking cup made in Rainford, and butchered animal bone. The display will be on until the end of July 2018.



The Historic Buildings Casework Team

The CBA plays an important role in protecting and managing the development of historic buildings in the UK. Around 150 applications for historic building consent are received by the CBA every week. The CBA is asking for volunteers to help the casework team add these applications to a public database and flag any issues for immediate action. This is such an important aspect of the work of the CBA and all volunteers will be supported and can volunteer from home.

Skills and attributes sought and developed:

- the ability to work independently
- Interest in changes to listed buildings
- Attention to detail and a systematic approach
- Proficiency using a computer and access to the internet/email as all information is sent electronically
- The ability to access planning documents
- The ability to read architectural drawings

If you feel you can support this work or are interested in general, find out more by emailing casework@archaeologyuk.org .

This work is very important and volunteering can make a real difference to the protection of the historic environment in our region.

CBA North West Spring Conference 28th April 2018

This year's Spring conference is being run as part of the North West Regional Research Framework Update Project. As this is funded by Historic England this will be a FREE conference, although booking is still required. In addition, CBA NW is also holding a series of members' walks on the Sunday 29th April to Lunt, Helmshore, Norton Priory, and Castlefield. Further details regarding these tours will be available shortly.

To book on the Saturday 28th April conference in Salford either email Kirsty Whittall at the University of Salford (K.Whittall1@salford.ac.uk) or follow the instructions on the Meetings page of the CBA NW website:

http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbanw/CBANW_meetings_intro.html

You can also book direct here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/north-west-regional-research-framework-with-cba-north-west-conference-tickets-43544446612>

Norton Priory Museum

On 15th March, Lynn Smith, Senior Keeper at Norton Priory Museum gave a fascinating talk to the Society entitled 'Norton Priory: Monastery to Museum'. Below is a summary of what she had to say:

Norton Priory was founded by The Baron of Halton in 1134 and upgraded to an abbey in 1391, thriving until its Dissolution in 1536. The land was subsequently acquired by Sir Richard Brooke in 1545 and a Tudor house was built on the site. In 1750 the 5th Sir Richard Brooke built a Georgian mansion incorporating the medieval Undercroft. Much of the house was demolished in 1928 although the Undercroft still survives.

Norton Priory has many claims to fame. It is Europe's most excavated monastery. It has the greatest variety of monastic tiles found in Britain. It has the most elaborate cloister of 13th century date. Its statue of St. Christopher is one of the most important surviving examples of medieval sculpture in the country. The site also has 900 years of history and the Museum owns around 70,000 artefacts.

The £4.5 million Museum opened its doors in August 2016. There are 3 public spaces on 2 floors. On the Ground Floor the impressive Atrium covers the Undercroft entrance and houses the 'giant' statue of St. Christopher together with a small number of display cases. The Exhibition Room holds the majority of the collection which tells the story of Norton Priory. On the First Floor there is a second Exhibition Room and spacious Viewing gallery from which the visitor can observe the 'Ruins' of much of the monastic site.

The human remains of the 130 plus individuals recovered during excavations at Norton Priory are well represented. Osteoarchaeology has shown that Paget's disease was prevalent on the site. A skeleton, tentatively identified as that of Geoffrey Dutton, a knight, who died in 1248 is sympathetically displayed. The facial reconstructions of important figures throughout Norton Priory's history bring life to this section of the exhibition. A short video explains the importance of DNA testing in discovering more about our ancestors.

The exhibition continues on the first floor. A series of models shows the evolution of the buildings 'from priory to family house and mansion to museum'. There are further displays of human remains and ceramics. There is also plenty of information regarding the post-medieval and modern estate at Norton Priory and the wildlife that can be found on the site today. A very interesting display of material recovered from Halton Castle, which had a close relationship with the priory, is situated at the far end of the room.

Dave Roberts



Calderstones Book

The MAS publication entitled 'The Calderstones - A prehistoric tomb in Liverpool' is now back in print at the cost of £5 plus p.&p. and can be purchased direct from the Society. Alternatively, there should be copies available in Liverpool Museum shops.