

## CURRENT NEWSLETTER



*Merseyside Archaeological Society*

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### NEWSLETTER 1/2010

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Our next meeting is the **Annual General Meeting**. It will be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April starting at 7.30pm in the Quaker Meeting House at 22 School Lane. Coffee and tea will be served before the meeting and the room is open from 7.00pm so do come early enough for a chat and a drink. Following the short business meeting, our speaker will be Jamie Quartermaine, who is known to many of us. The subject of his talk is “Recent findings in the Buttermere and Loweswater area”.

Your business papers, including a copy of the Rules of the Society, are included with this Newsletter. The page with the Agenda lists the current members of the Council who are willing to stand for re-election and those nominations for new members, received to date. There are vacancies on the Council and new members would be very much welcomed. If you are interested in joining the Council, please do contact the Hon Secretary, Jenny Woodcock before the AGM for encouragement and more information!

She can be contacted by email on [iolanthe93@o2.co.uk](mailto:iolanthe93@o2.co.uk) or by telephone on 0151 727 8243.

### SUMMER EVENTS PROGRAMME 2010

**Merseyside Archaeological Society field visits.** (application forms on page 6)

**Saturday 22 May – North Wales**

Fiona Gale (Denbighshire Countryside Service) will lead a guided tour of sites in and around Ruthin town ranging in date from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages and including Ruthin Castle, Nantclwyd House and Cefn Coch Barrow.

Cost £13 plus an additional £3 for optional entry to Nantclwyd House to be paid on the day.

### **Saturday 19 June - Derbyshire**

In the morning, Helen Ullathorne and Stella Maguire (author of the archaeological section of the Stanton Moor Conservation Plan) will guide us round some prehistoric sites on Stanton Moor in Derbyshire. In the afternoon we will visit the Peak District Mining Museum and Temple Mine, Matlock. Cost: £17 which will include all museum entries.

**July** It is intended that there will be a further field visit during **July**. Details will be announced in the next Newsletter.

### **ADVANCE NOTICE OF WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME 2010/2011**

Our evening lecture series will, once again, be held in the Quaker Meeting House in School Lane. The programme is currently being arranged but it may be useful to note the proposed dates in your diary. This venue is **easily and safely accessible**, near to all the central Liverpool stations and both bus stations.

Thursday 21 October 2010; Thursday 18 November 2010 and probably Thursday 9 ~~or~~ 16 December 2010 depending on responses to the questionnaire about the Christmas meeting. In the New Year, we will be meeting on Thursday 20 January 2011; Thursday 17 February 2011; Thursday 17 March 2011 and Thursday 21 April 2011.

Further details and any alterations in date will be included in future Newsletters. Meetings are held in the Institute Room on the first floor and will start at 7.30 pm and finish round about 9.00pm but members are invited to arrive before that time, say at 7.00pm, as there is a small kitchen attached to the meeting room and we are able to invite you to enjoy tea or coffee and biscuits before each meeting and spend a little time on informal socialising.

### **ITEMS OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS**

#### **1 Council for British Archaeology, North West Regional Group.**

The Spring Reports Meeting and AGM will take place on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010 at Stalybridge Civic Hall, Trinity Street, Stalybridge, SK15 2BN starting at 9.45 with coffee and registration and finishing at 3.45 with questions, tea and concluding remarks. The subject of the meeting will be *Archaeology in our Community* and will feature the following contributions:

Mike Nevell on *Twenty Years of Tameside Archaeological Survey*

Ron Cowell on *Tameside Archaeological Society Rescue Excavations on an Upland Late Mesolithic Site near Stalybridge.*

Bryan Sitch on *Making Exhibitions of Ourselves? New Archaeological Displays at the Manchester Museum*

Brian Grimsditch on *Tameside Graveyards Survey: a Pilot Study at St. Lawrence's, Denton*

Frances Stott and Pearl Malcolmson on *Ongoing Excavations at Royton Hall*

Marie Widger on *Archaeology in the Community at Mellor*

The Annual General Meeting (open to CBANW members only) follows lunch at which time there is an option for a guided walk led by Alan Rose of Stalybridge Historical Society. Further information including cost and registration is available on the website:

[http://www.britarch.ac.uk/cbanw/CBANW\\_meetings\\_intro.html](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/cbanw/CBANW_meetings_intro.html)

- 2 **North West Regional Industrial Archaeological and History Conference.** This conference will be held at the National Waterways Museum in Ellesmere Port on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2010. The cost is £25 to include lunch, or £17.50 without lunch. Contributions will include *19<sup>th</sup>-century Workers Housing; Excavations of Liverpool Museum; Lee's Tapestry Works, Birkenhead; Salt-making in Cumbria and Cheshire and the management of a museum Large Object Store*. There will be an opportunity to visit behind the scenes at the Museum. Further details will become available.
- 3 **National Festival of Archaeology.** This year the national Festival of Archaeology is scheduled to take place between 17<sup>th</sup> July and 1<sup>st</sup> August. The Society is planning some local events one of which will be held on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> July and Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August at Childwall Parish Church where the Society is currently undertaking a survey of the graveyard. The event will be organised by the Merseyside Archaeological Society's Churchyard Survey Group. New members are always welcome to join in with the ongoing survey and these open days will give you a chance to see what they have achieved and how you may also become involved.
- 3 **Norton Priory** is once again planning a series of events this Spring and Summer and would welcome help from Society members with the family activities/events listed below. **If you are free and would be willing to help**, please contact Lynn Smith at Norton Priory (Tel: 01928 569895).

**Bank Holiday Monday 3 May 1.00-4.00pm**

**"Where did you get that hat?"**. Have fun with hats and headgear through the ages.

**Monday 26 and Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> July. 1.00-4.00pm**

**"Drawing the Past"**. Find out how archaeologists record what they find in the ground, have a go yourself and create your own artwork using photographs and drawings.

**Bank Holiday Monday 30<sup>th</sup> August 1.00-4.00pm.** Use your senses to discover the colours, sounds and smells that once brought Norton Priory to life.

- 5 **MANCET.** Following the closure of the **University of Manchester's extra-mural department** it has come to our notice that some of the former lecturers have banded together to continue providing a programme of lectures and day courses. The

administrator can be contacted by email at the following address [latinteacher@btinternet.com](mailto:latinteacher@btinternet.com) and their web page is <http://www.mancent.org.uk>

- 6 **New Publication.** In 2004 an important new Viking silver hoard was discovered near Huxley, Cheshire. The hoard, which consists of 21 silver arm-rings and an ingot, was declared Treasure in 2005, and was acquired jointly by National Museums Liverpool, the Grosvenor Museum Chester and Cheshire Museums Service, with a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Huxley Viking Hoard monograph has just been published by National Museums Liverpool.

James Graham-Campbell and Robert Philpott (eds) 2009 *The Huxley Viking Hoard: Scandinavian Settlement in the North West*, National Museums Liverpool.  
ISBN: 978-1-902700-40-3, 104pp. Retail price £7.99

In this book, leading specialists in Viking-age studies have contributed a series of papers on the hoard and its context which were first delivered at a conference held in Merseyside Maritime Museum, Liverpool in November 2008. They set out the latest research into Scandinavian settlement and activity in the North West and Wales, including the archaeological evidence and the contribution of place-names, historical research and stone sculpture to our understanding of the period. There is a definitive account of the objects themselves, their likely origin and date of manufacture (in late 9th- or early 10th-century Ireland) and the intriguing question why the hoard was buried in England and by whom. Finally, the Huxley find is considered alongside other Viking silver hoards in Britain and Ireland.

- 7 **The Calderstones Neolithic Monument.** The Calderstones monument has been close to the heart of the Merseyside Archaeological Society for some time now. As our recent publication *The Calderstones: a prehistoric tomb in Liverpool* sets out, this monument is of considerable local and national archaeological importance. A great deal of concern has recently been expressed about its current deteriorating condition and the plans for its future preservation. It is now hoped that some funding may be found to preserve it for the future of Liverpool. Progress will be reported to the membership in future Newsletters.

- 8 **Advance notice of an exciting new exhibition.** Dr Alan Greaves of the University of Liverpool has been awarded £50,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a new museum exhibition at the University's Victoria Gallery and Museum. The exhibition, to be called "*The Lost Gallery*" will document Liverpool archaeologist John Garstang's work on the Hittite civilisation of Turkey and aims to re-imagine the Liverpool Museum gallery, which was destroyed in the Blitz of 1941, for a 21<sup>st</sup>-century audience.

The Merseyside Archaeological Society was involved in the initial design of the project and there will be opportunities for MAS members to get involved in various aspects of the venture. In the autumn term there will be a lecture about the project in which Members of the Society can learn about the background to the scheme and comment on the proposed design of the exhibition. When the exhibition opens, there will be also opportunities to volunteer to work in the exhibition area as gallery assistants. There will also be a series of lunchtime lectures and Continuing Education courses throughout the duration of the exhibition.

The exhibition will open in the VG&M in March 2011 and will run for one year before touring other museums in the region.

Further information will be circulated to members when available.

### **CHRISTMAS PARTY FEEDBACK**

The Council has been increasingly aware of falling numbers at our annual Christmas party. In recent years it has been held at the Piazza Café, taking the form of a lecture followed by a buffet supper. In order to establish why so few members appear to wish to attend this social gathering, a questionnaire has been created and is reproduced towards the end of this Newsletter.

Most societies try to have at least one annual essentially social ‘get together’ and it has been disappointing to watch our efforts diminish in popularity as the years have gone by. With your help perhaps we can remedy the situation.

*It would be very helpful if you could complete the questionnaire and either bring it with you to the AGM, send to Jenny Woodcock, at 42 North Sudley Road, Aigburth, Liverpool L17 0BG or pass it to any member of the Council.*

### **MERSEYSIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY WEBSITE**

A new MAS website is currently under construction. Details of how to access it will be communicated to all members as soon as they are available.

### **MERSEYSIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL**

The next volume (13) of the Society’s journal is at the printer. Sadly it will not be ready in time for the Annual General Meeting, but it will be circulated, either by hand or by post, to all **fully paid up** members of the Society as soon as possible, **BUT** see below .....

### **OVERDUE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS – 2010**

**A number of members have not yet paid their annual subscription.** A form is included at the end of the Newsletter. Please could you complete this form and send it with your cheque to Eveline van der Steen, at Flat 3, 12 South Drive, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 8JL as soon as possible. If you are not sure whether you have paid or not, give Eveline a call at 07870 198368 or email her at [evdsteen@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:evdsteen@liverpool.ac.uk) to find out.

**Individual membership** - £12; **Junior** - £2; **Family** £15; **Concessions** £7 **Institutional membership** - £20.

Cheques should be payable to Merseyside Archaeological Society.

### **BREAKING NEWS**

Julia McLaughlin Cook has been able to make arrangements for the proposed July field visit which will take place on **Saturday 17 July** and will consist of a visit to **Caer Alyn**

**Archaeological and Heritage Project, Wrexham.** Here, Phil Cox, who gave a talk to the Society in March, will show us round the community archaeological and heritage project. The site includes a Bronze Age tumulus and an Iron Age hill fort. Excavation will be taking place there from 10 July onwards. Afterwards we will visit Gresford church, one of the seven wonders of North Wales, where there is a Roman stone that might have come from Caer Alyn.

Cost: £11. Further details and an application form will be included with the next Newsletter.

**MERSEYSIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
2010 Subscription renewal**

To: Dr Eveline van der Steen  
Flat 3, 12 South Drive, Wavertree L15 8

I enclose my subscription for 2010 (Cheques payable to Merseyside Archaeological Society)

Name.....

Address .....

Telephone ..... Email .....

Please indicate the type of subscription you are eligible for:

Individual membership: £12.00.          Junior: £2.00          Family: £15.00

Concessions: £7.00                          Institutional £20.00

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**BOOKING FORMS - FIELD TRIPS 2009.**

**Please post to - MAS FIELD TRIPS, 3 Calton Avenue, Mossley Hill, Liverpool L18 1EL**

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**SATURDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> May Ruthin and area**

**Name (Capitals please).....**

**Phone.....Email.....**

**Mobile (If you will have it with you on the day).....**

**PICK-UP POINT (tick)    Pier Head..... or    Bromborough Retail Park.....**

**Number of seats..... £13 each (excluding Nantclwyd House)    Total £ .....**

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**SATURDAY 19<sup>th</sup> June Stanton Moor and Matlock**

Name (Capitals please).....

Phone.....Email.....

Mobile (If you will have it with you on the day).....

PICK-UP POINT (tick) Pier Head.....or 'phone 0151 733 1017 for advice .....

Number of seats.....at £17 each                      Total £.....

**QUESTIONNAIRE – CHRISTMAS MEETING OR ANNUAL SOCIETY SOCIAL EVENT?**

As reported above, the Council and organisers of the annual Christmas celebration have become aware that support has been gradually declining over the years and we would like to seek advice from the members why this has happened. We would like to canvass opinion for future celebrations. Perhaps we are all too busy around Christmas and New Year and another time of the year would be suitable but the Council members feel that holding an annual, essentially social, event is desirable. **Please could you respond to the questions and/or suggestions below as fully as possible. If there is insufficient space, please do continue your comments overleaf.**

*Please return completed form as suggested on page5 of this Newsletter.*

**1      The date and timing ..... IF December is an appropriate season, please indicate your preferred choice for 2010**

(Thursday) 2 December..... 9 December ..... 16 December .....

**OR** another day of the week (2010), please indicate your choice .....

**OR a different time of year**, perhaps a summer event (afternoon or evening). Please give your opinion and suggestions .....

.....

**2      The cost (currently around £11.50)**

Would you attend if the cost was lower? ..... **OR** what would be an appropriate cost, under £5; £5-£10; £10-£15; £15-£20 or more than £20?

**3      Format for the evening - what sort of activities would you like at a Christmas or other social meeting?**

Invited speaker with "slides" and an informal meal (present format).....

A celebratory Christmas restaurant meal with no speaker .....

A celebratory Christmas meal and after-dinner speaker .....

A quiz with light refreshments in informal surroundings .....

A members' holiday/archaeological slides in informal surroundings .....

Something new - picnic or summer barbeque (suggestions please) .....

.....

**4 The Venue (currently the Piazza Café, by the Metropolitan Cathedral)**

If you do not like the Piazza café as a venue, please give your reasons (parking; public transport; the meal?) .....

**OR**

Please could you suggest an alternative venue? A pub (suggestions please);  
A restaurant (suggestions please); Quaker Meeting House (no alcohol), **OR** other ideas

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## Merseyside Archaeological Society

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### NEWSLETTER 2/2010

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### 1 Evening lecture programme for 2010 and 2011

Our regular Thursday evening lectures will, once again, be held in the Quaker Meeting House in School Lane, Liverpool. As you will now be aware this venue has proved to be popular. It is easily and safely accessible from all the main Liverpool stations and for buses. Meetings start at 7.00pm with tea, coffee and biscuits and an opportunity for informal discussion, with the lecture starting promptly at 7.30pm.

#### Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2010

Speaker: **Margaret Carter** of Manchester University, talking on '*Rehydroxylation dating - a new method for fired clay ceramics*'.

**Biography:** Margaret has worked with Moira Wilson at Manchester University to develop a technique for dating pottery.

**Summary of talk:** The technology is called rehydroxylation and the talk will present the techniques of the technology and how it has been successfully used to date pottery.

#### Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2010

Speaker: Howard Williams (Chester University) on '*Digging the dead of Viking Sweden*'.

During **December** we are hoping to organize some kind of Christmas celebration. The date, venue and form of the 'party' has yet to be decided and will be based upon your responses to the questionnaire included in the last Newsletter. If you have not yet expressed your opinion, the Council would very much like to hear from you.

### **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

Speaker: Chantal Conneller (Manchester University) on *Star Carr for the new millennium: results from recent excavations at a waterlogged Mesolithic site.*

### **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

Speaker: Melanie Giles (Manchester University) on **Chariot Burials – (the definitive title remains to be confirmed)**

### **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

Speaker: Hannah O'Regan (Liverpool John Moores University) on **Cave Archaeology – (The definitive title remains to be confirmed)**

The final meeting of the year, our **Annual General Meeting**, will held in **April 2011**. Further details and the date will appear in future Newsletters.

## **2 Saturday Outings Programme 2010**

Following the outings in May and June, there remains one further outing this summer on **Saturday 17 July: Caer Alyn Archaeological and Heritage Project, Wrexham**

### **Departure from Mann Island: 9.00 am**

Phil Cox, who gave a talk to the Society in March, will show us round the community archaeological and heritage project at Caer Alyn. The site includes a Bronze Age tumulus and an Iron Age hill fort. Excavation will be taking place there from 10 July onwards. Afterwards we will visit Gresford church, one of the seven wonders of North Wales, where there is a Roman stone that might have come from Caer Alyn. **Information:** Wear shoes for walking over rough terrain and bring wet weather gear and a picnic lunch. **The cost will be £11.**

Anyone interested in coming should contact Julia McLaughlin Cook at 3 Calton Avenue, Mossley Hill, Liverpool L18 1EL *as soon as possible*, either by phone (0151 733 1017), or preferably by using the Booking Form at the end of the Newsletter.

## **3 Field Visit to Orkney 2011**

Julia McLaughlin Cook writes “Last year we announced that we were thinking of arranging a Merseyside Archaeological Society field visit to Orkney. The trip will go ahead over the weekend of Friday 29 April – Sunday 1 May 2011. For those with only a short time to spend in Orkney, there will be two days of visits (Saturday 30 April – Sunday 1 May) to Maes Howe Chambered Cairn, the Ring of Brodgar, Stones of Stenness, Skara Brae Neolithic village and other well-known sites. The cost for these visits in the company of a guide with a mini bus and for an Orkney Explorer entry card will be £130.

For those with more time to spare I propose an extra day in Kirkwall and a day trip to Rousay to visit Midhowe Cairn and Broch. The cost of visiting sites in Kirkwall will be covered by the Orkney Explorer ticket and the cost of the trip to Rousay will be about £12 to cover bus fare and ferry fare.

Accommodation, meals and travel between Merseyside and Orkney will be extra; there is a range of accommodation to suit everyone from youth hostels to hotels; I will provide information and make bookings when I know how many people intend to go. Travel options include flying (direct flights from Leeds/Bradford, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen), train and ferry, bus and ferry or driving and ferry. Contact me for further information if required.

If you are interested, please send a £5 non-returnable deposit per person payable to “Merseyside Archaeological Society” to by completing the form at the end of this Newsletter by **17 July 2010**. I will send you further information about the visit including terms and conditions of booking and a booking form. You will be asked to pay a deposit of 35% at the time of booking”.

#### **4 Festival of British Archaeology - 31<sup>st</sup> July – 1<sup>st</sup> August 10.30 – 16.00**

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 last summer to record the whole of the churchyard. This involved plotting every grave onto a plan, photographing every monument and recording the detail of each gravestone or memorial. To date about 10% of the churchyard has been recorded and the details of more than 300 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century graves and their occupants entered onto a database which is retained at The Field Archaeology Unit at Liverpool Museum.

**During the last weekend in July the Society will be hosting its contribution towards the Festival of British Archaeology at Childwall. Members of the public and Society members are invited to visit the church and see us at work. There will be a display of our work to date in the church hall and the opportunity to come and have a go at graveyard recording. In order to make the weekend a success we require volunteers to help plan the weekend, man the display and act as guides. No prior experience is required. If you are interested in helping out or require further information please contact Dave Roberts, Tel: 0151 427 2980 e-mail: drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk.**

#### **5 Interactive Mapping Project at the new Museum of Liverpool**

As part of the History Detectives resource in the new Museum of Liverpool it is planned to install a huge interactive map of Merseyside which will enable visitors to explore the history of the place in which they live. The intention is to allow the visitor to click onto a location on the map and view historical photographs, read a brief history of the place and hear local recollections. Although the project will primarily be a visual aid, more detailed information will be available for those who require it and it will be possible to link together places, buildings and people where appropriate.

Merseyside Archaeological Society has been asked to contribute material for this exhibition. The starting point is to be information already available in the Society's 'Changing Face of Liverpool' which was published in 2007. The gazetteer entries will require editing to ensure the right level of detail is incorporated and some additional work will be needed to track down photographs and other archive material. Other entries from the wider Merseyside region will be included where they are available. It is hoped that there will be at least 6 entries per township when phase 1 of the project goes live later this year.

**This is a very exciting and ambitious project which is on a very tight timescale. Volunteers are required to help edit the material in the 'Changing Face of Liverpool', a task which should be complete by the end of September. In addition any member who has conducted, say a buildings survey or a local history project, within a Merseyside township and is willing to contribute material for this project, should get in touch with me urgently. Dave Roberts, Tel: 0151 427 2980 e-mail: [drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk).**

## **6 Members of Council**

Following the AGM held in April, the following members were elected to serve on the Council of the Society in various roles.

**Hon Chair** – Dave Roberts; **Past Chair** – Barry Faulkner; **Hon Secretary** – Jenny Woodcock; **Hon Treasurer** – Peter Lucas; **Membership Secretary** – Eveline Van der Steen.

**General members of the Council** include Gina Muskett, Len Kata, Roy Fletcher, Bill Highcock, Chris Wood, Roy Forshaw, Carolyne Kershaw, David Hulme, David Head and Julia McLaughlin Cook.

There remain vacancies for the positions of **Vice Chair** and **Events Secretary**. If any members are interested in joining the Council, please contact Jenny Woodcock on 0151 727 8243 – Email [iolathe93@o2.co.uk](mailto:iolathe93@o2.co.uk). New members will be much welcomed.



**ORKNEY FIELD TRIP 2011**

**Please fill in this slip and send it with a £5 non-returnable deposit for each person by 17th July 2010 to: MAS ORKNEY VISIT, 3 Calton Avenue, Liverpool, L18 1EL.**

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Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....Email.....

Number of people booking..... Deposit enclosed £.....

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**Cael Alyn Archaeological and Heritage Project visit  
Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July**

**Post to MAS Field Trips, 3 Calton Avenue, Mossley Hill, Liverpool L18 1EL**

**Name (Capitals please).....**

**Phone .....Email.....**

**Mobile if you will have it with you on the day .....**

**Pick-up Point (tick) Pier Head .....or telephone 0151 733 1017 for possible alternative**

**Number of places at £11 each ..... Total £.....**

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*Merseyside Archaeological Society*

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**NEWSLETTER 1/2011.**

**A REMINDER:** *In the last Newsletter, the Society announced the launch of our new Website. There may be a few minor teething problems but we remind you all to take a look. Your comments will be appreciated.* <http://merseysidearchsoc.weebly.com/>

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**1 THURSDAY EVENING LECTURE PROGRAMME**

We continue to hold our Thursday evening lecture meetings in the Quaker Meeting House in School Lane. As usual the talks start promptly at 7.30 pm but the room is open from 7.00 pm when we serve tea and coffee giving everyone an opportunity to socialize before the start of the formal meeting. Our next meetings will take place on .....

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011** when the speaker will be Melanie Giles from Manchester University. She will talk on the subject of ‘**Chariot Burials**’

**and on**

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011** when the speaker will be Hannah O’Regan from Liverpool John Moores University. Her talk will be on ‘**Cave Archaeology**’.

The final meeting of the year, our **Annual General Meeting**, will be held on **Thursday 21st April 2011**. To lighten the proceedings, Elizabeth Royles will come along and talk to us about ‘**Chester before the Romans**’.

The Minutes of the last AGM together with the Agenda and other documents will be circulated to you before the meeting. *There will be a number of important issues about the future of the Society to discuss with members, so it is hoped that you will come along and take part in the proceedings and, indeed, enjoy the talk.*

## **2 SATURDAY FIELD VISITS PROGRAMME – Dates for your diary.**

### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May - Kendal town**

For 2000 years Kendal, lying on the river Kent in South Lakeland, has been an important settlement. The Romans built a fort at Watercrock (*Alauna*) a few miles south of the town. In the Middle Ages Kendal was a centre for cloth weaving, leather-working and horn working. In the 18<sup>th</sup>-century it was the northern junction of the Lancaster Canal, which ran north from Preston and which was not joined to the rest of the country's national canal system until the Millennium. Across the canal lie the remains of Kendal Castle, the family home of Katherine Parr, the sixth wife of Henry the Eighth.

It is a town of attractive old grey stone buildings, many of which have been renovated for modern use with the aid of Kendal Civic Society. Kendal Museum tells the story of the town's history, the Museum of Lakeland Life holds a folk life collection and the Abbey House Art Gallery is of regional importance. Our guide will be Pat Hovey, the secretary of Kendal Civic Society.

In addition to the many well-preserved buildings and yards we will visit the remains of the castle and the 18<sup>th</sup>-century Lancaster Canal.

### **Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June - Ribchester and the Ribble Valley**

Ribchester was Roman *Bremetenacum Vetanorum*, a crossing on the River Ribble where several Roman roads met. There is an old saying, "It is written upon a wall in Rome, Ribchester was as rich as any town in Christendom". Now it is an attractive small village upriver from Preston, last visited by the Society in 1999. Our tour will be led by a guide from Oxford Archaeology North. In the afternoon we will be visiting another site in the area, details remain to be announced.

### **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July - Poulton Excavations and other sites around Chester**

The Poulton excavation was undertaken to find the remains of a Cistercian abbey. It has turned into a vast multi-period site covering the Neolithic to the Romans. "Current Archaeology" No 213 highlighted the discovery of a Bronze Age henge. But the monastery is still waiting to be found!

**Further information** about all these trips, the cost and booking forms will be available at the lecture meetings and will appear in our next Newsletter. **NOTE:** Usual departure time is 9.00 am from Mann Island, Liverpool

## **3 RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND VISITS**

We normally arrange one weekend trip away each year. Previous trips have included Roman villas in the Cotswolds (and much more), the St David's peninsula in West Wales, two trips to Hadrian's Wall (the west and east sides) and Flag Fen Bronze Age site at Peterborough, on the edge of the Fens. Watch out for news of further weekend trips away. New and old members are welcome to come. We try to keep costs low, without sacrificing comfort or conviviality.

**Trip to Orkney.** Members of the Society will be converging by car, train and plane on Orkney for the weekend 29 April-1 May 2011. We will visit some of the most stunning archaeological sites in the United Kingdom, including Skara Brae prehistoric village, Maes Howe chambered tomb and the Ring of Brodgar stone circle. Some of us will be staying an extra two days for a trip to the nearby island of Rousay, home to many prehistoric and medieval sites, and to the town of Kirkwall, which has a wealth of fine medieval buildings. Further details about the trip will be sent out shortly to all those who have booked.

If you have been to Orkney and want to recommend any places to visit, from souterrains to tea shops, please contact Julia McLaughlin Cook on 0151 733 1017.

## **4 REPORTS**

### **i) The Christmas Party held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

The annual Christmas meeting took place at the Friends Meeting House on Thursday 9 December 2010. Twenty-seven people booked and paid to attend the evening. We had three guests, including our undergraduate student prizewinner for the year and Martin Greaney who has put in so much work on our website.

The evening began with hot non-alcoholic punch made from to a Roman recipe. It was exceedingly good and anyone wanting the recipe should have a word with Eveline van der Steen who was principally responsible for its production. There then followed a series of short presentations based upon the recent popular radio programme on “A History of the World in 100 Objects”. The following people spoke about objects that were important to them: David Garner – a piece of coral; Jenny Woodcock – two prehistoric stone axes; Gina Muskett – a coin from Nelson’s flagship *The Foudroyant*; Barry Faulkner - a stone axe that he had found; Jennifer Mirdamadi – a doorstop made from wrought iron from SS Great Britain and Diana Goodier – her certificate for completing part of the Camino de Santiago del Compostella.

This event was followed by a quiz set by Julia McLaughlin Cook, Gina Muskett and Jenny Woodcock with questions on prehistory; the classical world, Egypt; the Middle East; the East and the Americas. In his role as Chair of the Society, Dave Roberts presented the Merseyside Archaeological Society Student winner with her cheque and Martin Greaney with a book token in appreciation of his work in setting up the new website. Other awards were made to Rob Philpott and Sarah-Jane Farr for their help to the Society. Rob especially has often stepped in in an emergency when booked speakers failed to materialise.

Everyone enjoyed the splendid cold buffet selected and purchased by Roy Fletcher and augmented by contributions from members, including two superb Christmas cakes made by Jenny Woodcock.

The traditional raffle was conducted by Neil McLaughlin Cook. So many members generously contributed prizes that everyone won at least one prize this year!

### **ii) The visit to Liverpool Old Dock - Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

The visit was arranged by Barry Faulkner in liaison with Sarah-Jane Farr (Merseyside Archaeological Service), who kindly agreed to conduct us around *The Old Dock Experience*. Sarah-Jane, having been involved in the archaeology and planning stages of Liverpool One from its inception, was entirely familiar with and had experienced all the trials and tribulations of



negotiating the survival of the archaeology lying beneath the Liverpool One development. We could not have had a better or more knowledgeable ‘tour guide’.

Some 23 members of the Society met at the Maritime Museum and sneaked a cup of coffee in the coffee shop before crossing the road to a vantage point where Sarah-Jane was able to point out various surface features such as the edge of the old dock marked by a dark line of paving slabs in the footpath, something easily overlooked by the casual visitor. From this position she was also able to point out the approximate position of the early trial trenches undertaken to establish that the remnants of the 1715 dock did indeed survive, and the probable extent of the original dock.

Until the construction of the dock, the huge tidal range meant that it could take up to two weeks to unload ships in Liverpool. The pioneering design of the enclosed dock, however, meant that loading and unloading could take place at any time of the tide. The dock was infilled in 1811 and more docks were built further out into the river. The fine neo-classical Customs House was then constructed on the site, only to be badly damaged during the blitz and subsequently demolished.

The concealed entrance to the Old Dock display was accessed via the basement of the waterfront Q-Park. Everyone appreciated the well designed and interesting interpretation panels around the site, but it was the remains of the brick-built dock that was so astounding, rising as the walls did up to more than 20 feet from the excavated channel of the red sandstone bedrock of the pool itself. As Sarah-Jane pointed out, it was fortuitous that it was this area, the only part of the new development to remain unaffected by buildings, which encompassed both a large portion of the north side of the dock and the east, or landward edge of the structure. All this is now preserved and accessible to demonstrate to visitors the skills of the original dock engineers.

## **5 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

The subscriptions for 2011 are now due. Please could you complete the form on the last page of this Newsletter and return it to Eveline, our membership secretary as instructed. In view of the ever escalating costs of duplication and postage it is hoped that everyone who has an email address will be willing to receive their Newsletter on line. Please indicate on the renewal form if you now have a computer with email facilities.

## **6 THE HITTITES EXHIBITION**

As many members will be aware, in May of this year an exhibition on the Hittites based on the work of Professor John Garstang of Liverpool University and featuring some of the material from the ‘Lost Gallery’ of Liverpool Museum which was destroyed by enemy action during the last war will be opening to the public in the Victoria Gallery and Museum on Brownlow Hill. The Society is currently involved in helping to publish the book to accompany the exhibition. It is now possible to follow the progress on the forthcoming exhibition online. Members are encouraged to visit the site <http://sace.liv.ac.uk/lostgallery/>. It is also possible to subscribe to updates via an RRS feed (bottom right on the home page). Dr Alan Greaves of the Department of Archaeology at the University and the person behind the exhibition writes that ‘there are lots of lovely images, a short academic article, and lots of personal stories by interns working on the digitisation project which I think MAS members will find interesting’. He also suggests that comments from members will be very welcome!

**MERSEYSIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY:  
2011 Subscription Form**

To: Dr Eveline van der Steen,  
44 Oakdene Avenue,  
Warrington WA1 4NU.

I enclose my subscription for 2011

(Cheques to be made payable to 'Merseyside Archaeological Society')

Name: .....

Address:.....

Telephone: .....Confirm current email address .....

**I am now on email** and would like to receive my newsletter by this means, please indicate and give your new email address .....

Please indicate which type of subscription you are eligible for:

Individual membership: £12.00      Junior: £2.00      Family: £15.00

Concessions: £7.00      Institutional: £20.00



*Merseyside Archaeological Society*

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**NEWSLETTER 2/2011.**

**A REMINDER: Don't forget to check our Website regularly. . <http://merseysidearchsoc.weebly.com/>**

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**1 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.**

The AGM will be held at our usual Venue, the Quaker Meeting House, in School Lane, and, as usual, there will be coffee and tea served before the start of the business meeting. Following the meeting there will be a talk by Elizabeth Royles on **Chester before the Romans.**

The papers for the Annual General are included with this short Newsletter which also contains details of events which will be taking place during the coming months with dates for your diaries.

**2 SATURDAY OUTINGS PROGRAMME 2011**

**Please Note:** Wear shoes for walking over rough terrain and bring wet weather gear and a Picnic lunch

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May Kendal town**

Situated on the river Kent in South Lakeland, Kendal has been an important settlement for 2000 years. The Romans built a fort at Watercrock (Alauna) a few miles south of the town. In the Middle Ages Kendal was a centre for cloth weaving, leather-working and horn working and the family home of Katherine Parr, the sixth wife of Henry the Eighth.

Our guide will be Pat Hovey, the secretary of Kendal Civic Society, who will take us to the remains of the castle and the 18<sup>th</sup>-century canal in the morning. In the afternoon she will lead

another guided walk round some of the many well-preserved buildings and yards that run down to the river. For those who do not want to walk so far, the coach will park at Kirkland, where you will find the Abbot Hall Art Gallery, the Museum of Lakeland Life and the 800-year-old parish church of the Holy Trinity.

*Terrain:* hilly, grassy in the morning. Pavement in the afternoon, some steep climbs.

### **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June Ribchester and the Ribble Valley**

Ribchester was Roman Bremetenacum Vetanorum, a crossing on the River Ribble where several Roman roads. It was last visited by the Society in 1999. Our tour will be led by a Rachel Newman of Oxford Archaeology North. Ribchester is the home of the only dedicated Roman Museum in Lancashire, which reopened in 2001 after being redeveloped with the aid of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant (admission price £3.00).

In the afternoon we will have a guided tour of Clitheroe Castle, one of the smallest Norman keeps in the country, famous as the site where the Pendle Witches were imprisoned. The castle reopened in 2009 after the major repairs to the keep and complete refurbishment of the museum (admission £4.65).

*Terrain:* grassy or muddy in the morning. Some steep steps in the afternoon.

### **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July Poulton Excavations and other sites around Chester**

This trip takes in a multi-period site spanning 9000 years at Poulton; the medieval market town of Holt; and a motte and bailey at Aldford.

After an optional comfort stop at the Grosvenor Garden Centre, off the B5445, we will have a guided tour of the excavations in progress at Poulton (last visited by Merseyside Archaeological Society in August 2006). The excavation was undertaken to find the remains of a Cistercian abbey. Finds range from the Neolithic to the Romans, including a Bronze Age henge.

We will move onto Holt for a picnic lunch, where there are public toilets and a pub, the Ring of Bells (which does not serve food). In the afternoon, members of Holt Local History Society will guide us round the ruins of The Castle, begun in 1277; St Chad's church, established around the 1280s; and the 14<sup>th</sup>-century sandstone bridge linking Holt with Farndon across the River Dee. If time allows, we will pay a self-guided visit to an easily-accessible example of a motte and bailey at Aldford.

*Terrain:* some uneven ground, bare soil and grass, which could be muddy; also paths, pavements and steps.

## **3 EXHIBITION AT THE VICTORIA GALLERY AND MUSEUM**

Dr Alan Greaves has notified the Society of the new website on the proposed exhibition about **John Garstang and his work on the Hittites** which is due to open at the Victoria

Gallery and Museum at the top of Brownlow Hill towards the end of May. He would be glad if members would look at the website and comment:

<http://sace.liv.ac.uk/lostgallery/>

In due course members may be interested in helping to guide visitors around the exhibition: further information will be available once the exhibition is established.

#### **4 FESTIVAL OF BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY 16th to 31st July 2011**

The Society is not organising anything special for the Festival of British Archaeology this year, but requests for help have been received from other organisations and members of the Society might be interested in volunteering their help.

##### **World Museum Liverpool**

The World Museum Liverpool is planning to hold an event in the Weston Discovery Centre during the second week of the Festival (23<sup>rd</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> July). It is planned that the Society will have a display table during this period to showcase the involvement of the Society locally and to sell our publications. If any members are willing and interested in helping out for short periods of time during that period, please contact Julia McLaughlin Cook who has details of what is needed (Tel: 0151 733 1017).

##### **Norton Priory Museum**

There has also been a request from Norton Priory for some help during this period. Whilst final details are not yet fully sorted, it is planned to hold an event entitled 'Saints and Stories' which will take place between 1pm and 4pm on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of July, as a part of the Festival of Archaeology. The precise content has yet to be confirmed, but it will be focusing on the significance of the statue of St Nicholas; why he was created and the links with the river. Further information will be available shortly, but anyone interested in assisting the staff at Norton Priory should contact Jenny Woodcock (Tel: 0151 727 8243 or email – [iolanthe93@o2.co.uk](mailto:iolanthe93@o2.co.uk)) for further details.

**SATURDAY OUTINGS PROGRAMME 2011 BOOKING FORM -**

**Note: ALL TRIPS DEPART MANN ISLAND AT 9.00 AM**

Please post booking forms and cheques payable to 'Merseyside Archaeological Society' to -  
MAS FIELD TRIPS, 11 South Bank Rd, Garston, LIVERPOOL, L19 9AR. For inquiries and  
late bookings, phone 0151 494 9809.

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**SATURDAY 14<sup>th</sup> May Kendal town**

Name (Capitals please).....

Phone.....Email.....

Mobile (If you will have it with you on the day).....

PICK-UP POINT (tick) Pier Head.....or The Rocket.....

Number of seats..... £18.00 each Total £ .....

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**SATURDAY 18<sup>th</sup> June Ribchester and the Ribble Valley**

Name (Capitals please).....

Phone.....Email.....

Mobile (If you will have it with you on the day).....

PICK-UP POINT (tick) Pier Head..... or The Rocket.....

Number of seats..... at £14.50 each Total £ .....

N.B Museum entry is extra

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**SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> July Poulton Excavations, Holt and Aldford**

Name (Capitals please).....

Phone.....Email.....

Mobile (If you will have it with you on the day).....

PICK-UP POINT (tick) Pier Head.....or ..... Bromborough Retail Park .....

Number of seats.....at £12.50 each Total £.....



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 3/2011

Registered Charity No 510831

## From the Editor:

Welcome to the new-look Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter. Over the next few issues I will try to improve the style of the Newsletter and hopefully increase its appeal to members. There may be a few changes in format along the way so please bear with me.

The Newsletter satisfies two purposes. Firstly, there is the 'News' bit which keeps members informed of what the Society is doing and keeping you up to date with some of the things that are happening in archaeology within Merseyside. Secondly, it provides an opportunity to publish and promote archaeology related work and events that are taking place in the region. There are a number of individuals and organisations with Society connections carrying out projects in the area who span both the professional and amateur archaeological community. This Newsletter is one way of getting news of your research and 'grey literature' out of the dusty filing cabinet and into the public domain. I am looking for contributions of about 500 words plus photographs for future issues. I am also considering including articles on walking tours and book reviews. Any other ideas are welcome.

With advances in technology there is the opportunity to make considerable improvements to the old-style Newsletter. Those who use e-mail will already be receiving this document on-line. This has several advantages. Firstly, it saves the Society money in postage costs. Secondly, you get a far better version with colour photographs and computer links to individuals and other sites of interest. If you are receiving this Newsletter by post and you can be contacted by e-mail please send your e-mail address to Eveline. For the contributor we now archive all our Newsletters on our website. Each issue has a unique number so referencing your work is not a problem.

This brings me to the current Newsletter. As well as information regarding our 2011/12 lecture programme and Christmas party this issue includes the latest news on the closure of the Merseyside Archaeological Advisory Service and the announcement of a new post in the Field Archaeology Unit at NML. On the lighter side, there are articles on recent Society visits and a review of the 2011 Cheshire Archaeology Day. I hope you enjoy it!

## Merseyside Archaeological Society on Facebook

To go with the revamp of the website, the Society now also has a Facebook page. Up to date information about events will appear on this page, and you will get a reminder so you need never miss an event again. Its much more than that though, it is the place for all members of the Society to share information, or publicise events that they think might be of use or interest to others. We hope that you will find this a useful addition.

You can now follow us on Facebook:-

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1481822652#!/groups/151058304987687/>

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

Chair:

Jenny Woodcock

e-mail: [iolanthe93@o2.co.uk](mailto:iolanthe93@o2.co.uk)

Hon Secretary:

Eveline Van der Steen

email: [Eveline.Van-Der-Steen@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:Eveline.Van-Der-Steen@liverpool.ac.uk)

Hon Treasurer & Newsletter Editor:

Dave Roberts

e-mail: [drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk)

*Merseyside Archaeological Society publishes three newsletters each year. Contributions are invited on all aspects of archaeology in Merseyside. If you wish to contribute information that you feel would be of interest to members of the Society, 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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Merseyside Archaeological Society

Web Site: <http://merseysidearchsoc.weebly.com>

### ***Increase in Subscriptions for 2012 and Lecture charge***

Those of you who attended the AGM will know that the meeting agreed the Council's proposal that from January 2012 membership subscriptions should be raised to the following amounts: Ordinary membership £15; Concessional membership £10; Family membership £18 and Institutional membership £25. It is felt that this small increase in subscriptions will help with increased costs associated with the general running of the Society. It is some years since subscriptions were last raised and although we are trying to keep our costs as low as possible this is becoming more difficult in the current economic climate.

In addition, the Council have agreed that a small charge of £1 should be made to members attending lectures. The charge for non-members will consequently increase from £1 to £2. It is not unusual for Societies such as ours to make a small charge to attend lectures in addition to the membership subscription. The reason for this is to off-set some of the costs that we pay for booking the lecture room at The Quaker Meeting House. Most people will agree that the facilities offered by The Quaker Meeting House are the best that can be found for the money in a convenient central City location and we hope you feel that the introduction of this small cost is justified.

### ***Closure of Merseyside Archaeological Advisory Service***

Merseyside Archaeological Advisory Service was set up in 1991. It provided an Archaeological Planning Advisory Service hosted by National Museums Liverpool on behalf of the 5 local authorities (Liverpool, Sefton, Knowsley, St Helens and Wirral) that funded it. The main areas of work consisted of giving advice on individual development proposals, local authority management plans, strategies and policy. It also provided a guide on behalf of local authorities on how to fulfil their obligations and assist the work of developers and their consultants with regards to heritage within the local government planning system and gave advice on a range of planning issues associated with the conservation and management of the overall historic environment, that is, evidence of our past as seen in archaeological remains, historic buildings and landscapes. It also managed the development of and access to the Merseyside Historic Environment Record which it used to assist in the provision of advice and information to a range of enquirers including English Heritage and student and professional researchers. All of this was the responsibility of one person. The Service closed in March 2011 because the 5 district partners cut all funding.

On behalf of the Society, I recently wrote to the leaders of the 5 metropolitan boroughs asking them to explain why their funding has been withdrawn and what provision each of them intended to make for informed archaeological advice in the planning process, to meet the requirements of the Government's Planning Policy Statement 5, otherwise known as PPS5. The responses received indicated that the funding was withdrawn because the authorities felt that they were not getting 'value for money' and that they were seeking to fulfil their obligations by continuing to provide 'a service'. No detail was given on how this process will work.

This is a very unsatisfactory outcome. Funding has been terminated apparently because the districts have not received value for money, hardly surprising when the service was chronically under-staffed from the outset. On Merseyside, one person has fulfilled this role for the last 20 years where similar organisations have a team of 3-4 people doing the job. Consequently, an archaeological input into the planning process in the 5 districts in Merseyside is now dependent upon overworked conservation officers or similar who do not have professional archaeological qualifications or experience and who do not have access to the HER, which is the primary archaeological resource for informed judgements on archaeological matters in the planning process. If the process isn't working you don't throw it away, you fix it! Each of the 5 districts has contributed annually about £10,000 to the service, which covers salary and all overheads, a paltry sum which I take as a sign of how highly the districts have valued the archaeology of their areas. If this had happened 8 years ago we would have lost all the exciting and important archaeological discoveries made in advance of the development of the Liverpool waterfront.

Six months on we are just beginning to see the impact of all this. Communication with the local authorities over archaeological matters appears to be inconsistent and piece-meal. There are grave concerns that sites of archaeological significance and historical buildings will be lost if something is not done quickly. At a time when public interest in archaeology has never been higher, the people of Merseyside will lose out very significantly if this situation is allowed to continue. The last chance, in many cases, of uncovering the history and origins of their communities will be lost through this appallingly short-sighted attitude by the districts. The Council of the Society will be deciding what further steps need to be taken shortly. In the meantime, if any member becomes aware of development activity within areas of known archaeological sensitivity please send me details.

*Dave Roberts*

### **MAS Christmas Party – a date for your Diary**

This year's Christmas party will be held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 in the Upstairs Room at **The Ship & Mitre** public house which is situated at the tunnel end of Dale Street adjacent to the flyover. The room is large and comfortable with a private bar. There will be more details available at the November lecture. We shall also publish further information on the web-site and on our new Facebook page in due course.



### **2011/2012 Lecture Programme**

We continue to hold our Thursday evening lecture meetings at the Quaker Meeting House in School Lane. As usual the talks start promptly at 7.30 pm but the room is open from 7.00 pm when we serve tea and coffee giving everyone an opportunity to socialize before the start of the formal meeting. Our next meetings will take place on .....

20th October: Steve Cross, *An Ancient Flash Flood and Stratigraphy in the Valley of the Kings*

17th November: Brigitta Hoffman, Liverpool University. *Title TBA*

6th December: *Christmas Party (see above)*

19th January: Anne Teather, Chester University. *The Neolithic art in the flint mines of southern England*

16th February: George Nash, Bristol University. *The Calderstones and its wider implications: a monument in transition*

15th March: David Symons, Birmingham Museum. *The Staffordshire hoard*

19th April: Colin Richards, Manchester University. *On the road in Rapa Nui (Easter Island)*

A small entrance charge will be made: Members £1 and Non-members £2.

### **New Community Archaeology Post at National Museums Liverpool**

Samantha Rowe is the newly appointed Community Archaeology Trainee for National Museums Liverpool. This post is one of a number of Community Archaeology Training Placements run by the CBA and is funded through a Heritage Lottery Fund grant. Samantha is an archaeology graduate from the University of York and has worked on a number of archaeological research projects across the country as a volunteer.

Since graduating she has worked as a commercial archaeologist and on two historic mapping projects based in North Wales and Greater Manchester to complement their Historic Environment Records. Over the coming year she will be working with community groups on a range of projects across the Merseyside region, giving local people hands-on archaeological experience.

Samantha will be learning how to manage and organise community projects and through working with local people and professionals will help to make archaeology fun and accessible to the public and to amateur archaeologists in the North West.

Contact: [sam.rowe@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:sam.rowe@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)  
Tel: 0151 4784560



### **Test Pitting at Rainford, 21-22 September 2011**

On 21-22 September a series of small test pits were dug in a back garden in Rainford. The dig was more successful than we could have imagined: we discovered a dump of kiln waste which included pottery wasters, saggars, and clay pipe, some material dating to the C16th. We now have bags upon bags of material waiting to be washed, catalogued and processed. If any Society member is interested in helping out please contact me. The work would have to be carried out at the Dock Traffic Office on weekdays. No prior experience is necessary.

*Sam Rowe*

### **CBA North-West Autumn 2011 Conference**

The Conference entitled 'Unravelling the Archaeology and Historic Environment of the North and North West' will take place in Kendal on 29 October. The venue is Kirkland Hall, next to Kendal Parish Church. See the web-site for details:

[www.britarch.ac.uk/cbanw](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/cbanw)



*Dave Lawrence at The Stones of Stenness*

***Report on Orkney trip 30 April -3 May 2011***

This spring 13 intrepid members of Merseyside Archaeological Society made the long trek north to Orkney to visit some of the finest prehistoric and Viking Age archaeology in the British Isles. After travelling by land, sea and air we met up in Stromness on the day of the Royal Wedding in time for some of us to explore this historic port, which was the last port of call for the Hudson Bay Company boats on their return to Canada in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Our programme for Saturday and Sunday was led by Dave Lawrence of Orkney Archaeological Tours, a professional archaeologist who lives in Orkney. The morning was given over to prehistory: Unstan chambered cairn; two stone circles, the Stones of Stenness and the Ring of Brodgar, which are situated on a quiet and beautiful strip of land between two lochs and Skara Brae, the stone village which was covered by sand for 5000 years. No amount of reading or TV can you prepare you for the experience of seeing these sites with your own eyes.

In the afternoon we moved forward to the Viking Age. We saw the Earl's Bu (dwelling) and the Round Kirk at Orphir, where an Orkney earl was slain, now the site of an Orkneyinga Saga visitor centre with some amusing art work by local school children, before making our way to Kirkwall, the capital of Orkney. Although a very small town, Kirkwall boasts the remains of two medieval palaces, the Earl's and the Bishop's, as well as St Magnus Cathedral. While we were there we saw a modern folk custom, as at least two bridegrooms-to-be were blacked up and paraded round the town centre by their friends to the accompaniment of car horns and hooters before being tied up to a cross outside the cathedral.

On the Sunday our first port of call was Maes Howe Chambered Cairn, which has a central chamber large enough to hold about 20 visitors at a time and boasts Viking graffiti in the interior. From there we went to the Iron Age site of the Broch of Gurness on the east coast of the island. This faces the west coast of the island of Rousay, where you can see more broch sites all along the coast. The second broch we visited was at Birsay, after which we walked across a causeway that is covered at high tide to the site of the Earl's Palace. We had a guided tour of the nearby 19<sup>th</sup>-century Barony Water Mill, the only mill in the

British Isles that still grinds here, an early form of barley. Finally, we ended the afternoon at the Farm Museum at Kirbuster, a traditional farmhouse whose internal arrangement of central hearth and built-in dresser is reminiscent of the stone houses of Skara Brae. After this we said goodbye to Dave, who not only provided a great deal of information about all the sites but also allowed the time and space to go round them on our own so that we could soak up the atmosphere.

While six of our group had to go home on Monday the seven of us who were left took a ferry to the nearby island of Rousay. We booked a guided tour round the island, which took us right round the coast before we stopped at Mid Howe. Here there is the famous Chambered Cairn, housed in a shelter so that visitors can walk above it and look down into the chambers of the tomb; well-preserved remains of a broch and related houses; and a mile-long archaeological trail covering Viking Age farms and religious buildings. To complete the tour we went inside Taversoe Tuick and Blackhammer Cairns, which had to be entered by the roof.

On Tuesday two more of the group returned to Liverpool. Four of those remaining hired a car and drove down to South Ronaldsay to visit the Tomb of the Eagles, a prehistoric tomb nearly as famous for its owner and discoverer as it is for the remains, while a fifth explored the medieval streets and buildings of Kirkwall and the sixth went for a walk in the countryside around Stromness.

Our last night at the hotel was tinged with sadness at the prospect of leaving Orkney. Surely few places can match the islands for their wealth of archaeological sites, their beauty and remoteness and the serenity this evokes in the visitor. Orkney is one of those places that all those who are interested in the past of the British Isles should try to see. You will be amply rewarded for the effort.

Thanks must go to Neil McLaughlin Cook for ably driving our minibus for three days and to Carole Brooksbank for organising the trips to Rousay and the Tomb of the Eagles.

*Julia McLaughlin Cook*

***Latest news on the Graveyard Survey Project at All Saints Church, Childwall, Liverpool***

Since the summer of 2009 the Merseyside Archaeological Society has been recording the gravestones at All Saints church in Childwall, Liverpool, with the aim of recording every grave in the cemetery. A database of all graves and individuals commemorated is retained at The Field Archaeology Unit at Liverpool Museum and is currently being updated. The compiled data will be made accessible to local communities for those interested in family history and genealogy.

On 2 July the society invited a group of children from the Young Archaeologists' Club to a recording session in the churchyard. Around 10 children and some parents came to the event where they were taught how to read the epitaphs and record the gravestones. They also completed rubbings of the decorative motifs on a few of the stones and were taken on a tour inside the church. All in all the day was a great success and the weather was very kind to us!



*Young Archaeologists Club visit to All Saints, Childwall*

A small group meet on a regular basis to continue the recording project at Childwall. If anyone is interested in joining us please contact Dave Roberts or Sam Rowe.

*Sam Rowe*

### **Cheshire Archaeology Day 2011**

The 2011 Cheshire Archaeology Day, organised by Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service, was held at the Winsford Lifestyle Centre on the 9<sup>th</sup> April. The venue has a large multipurpose hall as well as smaller meeting rooms and conference areas. Around 400 people attended with some 20 displays and stalls set around the walls of the hall. Jill Collins thanked the Cheshire Local History Association, Chester Archaeological Society and Middlewich Town Council whose support had made it possible to re-launch the event after a gap of 2 years.

Simon Ward from Cheshire West & Chester Council Historic Environment Team was the first speaker; ***'Reddy to fall into further decay unless it be speedilie prevented': Understanding and restoring Chester's Walls.*** He illustrated his colleagues work in undertaking the first complete survey of the walls which will now inform future consolidation and restoration. This followed the collapse of a section of the wall. While disturbing, this did have a silver lining for archaeologists, in that it provided a view of a complete cross section of the wall which revealed that due to ground conditions the Romans had also suffered masonry mishaps with the section.

Ian Miller, Senior Project Manager with Oxford Archaeology North spoke next; ***Murgatroyd's of Middlewich:*** The first part of Ian's talk told the story of George Murgatroyd a bit of a maverick who rebelled against the Salt Union Ltd monopoly and sank his own shafts looking for brine streams. He struck lucky and the remains of his works contain the last wild brine pump in the North West. It is now a Scheduled Monument in Brooks Lane industrial estate and is the only intact pump with an original shaft left in the UK. The second part focused on what to do with the standing and subterranean remains. ECOSAL Atlantis is a European Union funded Heritage Team which focuses on the culture and history of salt-producing areas

in the Atlantic. They have visited the site to talk about including it in a trail linking sites from mid-Cheshire with Portugal, Spain, France and others in the UK. Ian has been working with Middlewich Town Council on a restoration project after Heritage Officer Kerry Fletcher secured a £25,000 grant from English Heritage.

***Swords and Crosses: Looking at the Staffordshire Hoard*** was the title of the talk by Dr Kevin Leahy, the National Adviser on Early Medieval Metalwork to The Portable Antiquities Scheme. This was a real treat. To get a close view of the objects and have an expert point out and explain the symbology of the detailed engravings was fantastic as was the consideration of the origins and meaning of the hoard, I had no idea the objects were almost entirely parts of sword handles.

During lunch there was an opportunity to view and participate in some of the interactive exhibits such as pot washing and using the Cheshire HER database.

After lunch Dan Garner, the Project Officer (Archaeology), Habitats & Hillforts from Cheshire West & Chester Council talked about ***Prehistoric Promontories: Recent work on the Hillforts of the Cheshire Ridge;*** Dan is re-examining the archaeological evidence for six Hillforts on the Cheshire Sandstone Ridge (Helsby, Woodhouse, Eddisbury, Kelsborrow, Beeston and Maiden Castle). His work has resulted in new interpretations regarding the methods of constructing the hillforts defences and indeed questioning whether or not some of the earthworks are in fact defensive in nature. By re-opening old excavation trenches Dan has been able to obtain a number of environmental samples and radio carbon dates which have established a new chronology for the construction and occupation of the monuments as well as shedding new light on their function and the role they played in the landscape of the Cheshire plains.

The final thought provoking talk was by Chief Inspector Mark Harrison's on ***Heritage Crime and the steps that can be taken to combat it.*** Chief Inspector Mark Harrison has been seconded to English Heritage to advise the organisation on the best way forward - Under the strategic guidance of English Heritage, the Police (through the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)) and the Crown prosecution service The Heritage Crime Initiative (HCI) will seek to introduce systems, structures and partnerships, necessary to tackle offences such as architectural theft, including metal theft, criminal damage, illegal metal detecting, graffiti, vehicle nuisance and arson. A memorandum of understanding has been agreed to delineate responsibilities between the three strategic partners. This includes developing a nationwide network among enforcement bodies, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, professional groups and amenity societies.

Representatives from more than 40 organizations, ranging from The National Trust, The Church of England, Crime Stoppers and Ministry of Defence to National Parks, The Woodland Trust and The Historic Houses Association Canterbury City Council and Cheshire Council amongst others have formed the Alliance to Reduce Crime against Heritage (ARCH). ARCH is a voluntary national network that will be used to take forward the initiatives and galvanize local action. Local history societies, amenity groups, neighborhood watch and residents associations will be encouraged to raise awareness of the risk of criminal damage to historic sites and buildings in their area.

*John Roberts*

## Merseyside Archaeological Society July 2011 Field Trip

On the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2011, Merseyside Archaeological Society went on a field trip which would prove to be a remarkable day out. Arranged by Barry Faulkner and Roy Fletcher, the trip was to the site of the Poulton Research Project, near Chester. The tour was lead by an enthusiastic Mike Emery, Director of the Project.

At the Poulton site MAS members were shown a remarkable tree henge dating from the Late Neolithic; such a find is very rare for this far north. The henge had been reconstructed using identical types of wood: silver birch posts surrounding a central oak post. The types of wood used were determined from burnt remains found in the post holes; the builders burnt the wooden ends to preserve them and also burnt the clay of the circle. Later Bronze Age additions include a mound and ditch. A further two henges exist on the site.

We then went on to see the excavation of Poulton Chapel. In the middle of the Chapel a body was found and it is suspected that it is that of Sir Nicholas Manley, though this is still speculation for the moment. Outside the Chapel there is a large graveyard and 52 burials were retrieved last year alone. MAS members were shown a Roman ditch that lies below the level of the graveyard.

The Poulton Research Project has no direct funding; it relies on volunteers, donations and inventive money-making schemes. For example, forensic science students from Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) use the Chapel site to learn how to excavate a burial, and LJMU pay the Project for this training.



*The Tree Henge at Poulton (photo courtesy of Joyce Hughes)*

The tour then went on to Holt and we were given a splendid tour by a husband-and-wife team from the Holt Historical Society. The tour centred on the splendid bridge between Holt and Farndon, the Church and the Castle.

From Holt we went on to look at a motte-and-bailey near Aldford. I was expecting to see a wooded hillock of some sort. However, I was astounded by what I saw. The motte is just magnificent, and clear of trees. The ditch extends under the Church graveyard and has caused the bottom course of stone to fall away on parts of the graveyard wall. The Church itself is partly built over the ditch and subsidence of the Church wall that is over the ditch can clearly be seen. The bailey extends right up to the Church and is best seen by climbing the motte. Everyone was impressed with the site and it was a fine way to end an excellent day trip.

*Chris Wood*



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 1/2012

Registered Charity No 510831

## From the Editor:

A Happy New Year to you all and welcome to the first Newsletter of 2012. The change in the format of the Newsletter has not gone un-noticed, so many thanks to those of you who have made favourable comments. As I mentioned last time it is my intention to broaden the appeal of the Newsletter and the more contributions I receive the better. If you have short pieces describing fieldwork you have done which you wish to get into the public domain or any items on archaeology related to Merseyside which you feel may be of interest to other members this could be the place for them. MAS is also keen to hear from others outside the Society who have an interest in archaeology in the region so if you are a member of a formal or informal group involved in archaeology related activities please get in touch.

With this in mind, this Newsletter contains contributions from Wirral Archaeology and Bidston Community Archaeology telling us about themselves. We also have further news of the exciting finds from Rainford and the start of what will hopefully become a regular feature on finds which have been recorded by the Finds Liaison Officer at the Portable Antiquities Scheme at NML. There is the latest news on the progress of the Merseyside Historic Landscape Characterisation project and on a more sombre note there is an update on the current position regarding the closure of the Merseyside Archaeological Advisory Service.

Together with other small pieces of news and forthcoming events I hope that members will find something of interest within.

Dave Roberts

## Merseyside Archaeological Society on Facebook

To go with the revamp of the website, the Society now also has a Facebook page. Up to date information about events will appear on this page, and you will get a reminder so you need never miss an event again. Its much more than that though, it is the place for all members of the Society to share information, or publicise events that they think might be of use or interest to others. We hope that you will find this a useful addition.

You can now follow us on Facebook:-

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1481822652#!/groups/151058304987687/>

## 2012 Subscriptions

Subscriptions for 2012 are now due and a renewal form is enclosed with this Newsletter.

If you have not supplied us with an e-mail address please do so in order that we can issue the newsletter and other correspondence more efficiently. It will also save the Society money on postage.

## 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 that you feel would be of interest to members of the Society, 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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### ***Closure of Merseyside Archaeological Advisory Service***

In the previous Newsletter I detailed the background to the closure of MAAS in March last year. On 7<sup>th</sup> December Jenny and I attended a meeting convened by Gill Chitty, Head of Conservation at CBA and founder member of this Society, along with others involved in archaeology in the Merseyside region to discuss what further action could be taken to preserve the level of service formerly delivered by MAAS and the future of the Historical Environment Record (HER). We had discovered that the Liverpool City Region (LCR) District Planning Officers (DPOs) were scheduled to meet in early January to discuss what form the service formerly provided by MAAS might take within Merseyside. Our meeting was invited to provide input to the DPOs by the submission of a short paper outlining our preferred options.

We discussed and submitted a number of options ranging from keeping the service on Merseyside to an offer made by Cheshire West and Cheshire (CwaC) to host the service and HER. The latter option seemed to be quite attractive as it came with the offer of further funding from English Heritage. The DPOs subsequently met a few weeks ago and after lengthy discussion the CwaC offer was rejected, mainly on the grounds of increased costs. However, they have said that discussions will continue to find a solution so all is not yet lost.

In the meantime, I have written to Merseyside MPs outlining the MAS stance, largely as reported in the last Newsletter. The replies I have received to date have been broadly supportive of our position and we intend to keep the pressure on until a satisfactory solution can be found. In the meantime, it is important that MAS members continue to remain vigilant with regard to planning applications which may impact archaeological sites or buildings of historical importance. There is some evidence beginning to emerge that without the specialist archaeological knowledge within the planning departments sites will be missed and subsequently lost to development. If anyone becomes aware of any such cases please respond to the relevant authority and copy the correspondence to me. More next time.

The Historic Environment Record currently remains open to enquirers for information with guidance and details on charges etc at [www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/historicenvironmentrecord](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/historicenvironmentrecord)

*Dave Roberts*

### ***2012 Lecture and Field Trip Programme***

We continue to hold our Thursday evening lecture meetings at the Quaker Meeting House in School Lane. As usual the talks start promptly at 7.30 p.m. but the room is open from 7.00 p.m. when we serve tea and coffee giving everyone an opportunity to socialize before the start of the formal meeting. Our next meetings will take place on .....

16th February: George Nash, Bristol University. *The Calderstones and its wider implications: a monument in transition (see page 3)*

15th March: David Symons, Birmingham Museum. *The Staffordshire hoard*

19th April: Colin Richards, Manchester University. *On the road in Rapa Nui (Easter Island) & MAS AGM*

A small charge will be made: Members £1 and Non-members £2.

### ***2012 field trips***

Chris is currently putting together thoughts for the 2012 trips. One of his ideas is a tour of Binchester Fort at Durham. Excavations are ongoing, and the site was recently in Current Archaeology. It is felt that this is a very worthwhile trip although it is further than we normally travel. Before going ahead with the arrangements we would like to ask members if they would be happy to make the journey. Please speak to Chris or any committee member at the February lecture or contact Chris by e-mail if you are interested in supporting this field trip.

Finally, if any member has an idea for a future fieldtrip please speak to Chris.

[C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk)

### ***MAS Christmas Party – feedback***

Our recent Christmas party held at The Ship & Mitre public house was a moderate success. Although not as well attended as the 2010 event most people present seemed to enjoy the evening which included an excellent lecture from Sam Rowe on the recent excavations at Rainford. If you attended the event we would like your views on the venue, the food, the format of the evening etc. so we can make improvements in 2012. If you did not attend for a specific reason (e.g. the choice of venue) we would also like to hear from you.

### ***Lecture from George Nash on 16th February***

We do not usually give special promotion to any of our guest speakers. However, George Nash is a good friend of the Society and an internationally recognised authority on prehistoric art. George is travelling a long way to give what should be a fascinating lecture on his latest thoughts on the origins of The Calderstones. In 2007/08 the Society collaborated with George in conducting a new photographic survey of the stones (photo) which brought 'to light' new prehistoric artwork. The work was subsequently published in The Calderstones book written by Ron Cowell and in Volume 13 of our Journal.



### ***CBA North West Spring Meeting***

The date of the Spring conference has been confirmed as 12th May 2012 and will be held at Bebbington. There will be a number of local speakers who will talk about Wirral related topics.

See the website for details in due course: [www.britarch.ac.uk/cbanw](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/cbanw)

### ***Merseyside Historic Landscape Characterisation Project***

The Merseyside Historic Landscape characterisation project reporting has been completed by the Merseyside Archaeological Officer, Museum of Liverpool. Covering the entire urban and rural landscape of Merseyside, the project documents and consistently maps (database digital modern and historic maps) the present day landscape as an aid to understanding and describes its evolution and the scale of change. Part of an English Heritage national programme, characterisation work is about providing information to support the intelligent management of change within our dynamic landscapes, boosting the local Historic Environment Record (HER) in informing a range of planning, conservation and other strategies which involve change within the historic environment. The digital survey is already integrated into the HER where it can be queried alongside the existing information on individual archaeological sites, artefacts, investigations etc. Five district reports have been produced covering Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. These include an historic character analysis of each district, using statistics and graphic examples to demonstrate project findings, interpretation and analysis. In addition, the project carried out studies into each district's historic settlement. All reports are expected to be available via National Museums Liverpool web in the next couple of months.

Sarah-Jane Farr, Merseyside Archaeological Officer, Museum of Liverpool, NML



### ***Rainford Week - Volunteering Opportunity***

Date: 6th-10th February 2012

Host: Museum of Liverpool

Location: Dock Traffic Office, Albert Dock

Time: 10.00-4.30pm weekdays

Summary: Opportunity to catalogue, photograph, and label pottery from the Rainford assemblage to form part of the Regional Archaeology Collection at MOL.

Note: space is limited to around 5 people per day.

To book a place, contact Sam Rowe:

[sam.rowe@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:sam.rowe@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

Tel: 0151 478 4560

### ***Childwall Graveyard Survey - Volunteering Opportunity***

We are now entering the 4th year of this long-running project which started in 2009. To date, over 800 monuments, dating mainly to the 17th to 19th centuries have been recorded. Currently, we are tackling the backlog of forms which need entering onto the database at the Field Archaeology Unit. The Survey will start again soon, following a break due to Christmas and the recent cold and wet weather. It is anticipated that the recording of the ancient part of the chuchyard will be completed before the end of 2012. If anyone is interested in joining us please contact Dave Roberts. No prior experience required.



## *Archaeological Investigations in Rainford – Current and Future Work*

As mentioned in the last newsletter and the MAS Christmas Party talk, a small community excavation took place in the village of Rainford last September. It was organised by the Field Archaeology Unit of the Museum of Liverpool to investigate the archaeology and stratigraphic sequence of a resident's back garden. Uncovered was a collection of ceramic material forming a waste dump from a local pottery kiln. The assemblage predominantly contained pottery wasters of dark-glazed ware (fig. 1) and kiln furniture, mostly saggars (fig. 2) and parting sherds. The assemblage dates to the 16th century, which makes it the earliest pottery assemblage to be uncovered in Rainford so far. The vessels in the assemblage vary considerably in form, indicating a community-based, individual 'made-to-order' mode of production.



*Fig 1: Sample of dark-glazed vessels from the Rainford assemblage*

On further investigation of the site in January 2012, it was clarified that the assemblage formed one phase of pottery dumping into a hollow which lay close to an ancient field boundary. More pottery was uncovered, expanding the range of forms of dark-glazed vessels present. A second smaller concentration of dark-glazed pottery was found in a shallow gully near to the original assemblage but these vessels appear to differ slightly in form, and it may represent a slightly later episode of dumping.

Future research potential into this project is high. The MAS, in conjunction with the Museum of Liverpool, is proceeding with a Heritage Lottery Fund grant application to undertake a community archaeology project. If successful, we will be able to investigate the history of Rainford village further, with the help and co-ordination of local people and volunteers, through means ranging from documentary research, field surveys to excavation.

Museum of Liverpool staff are currently undertaking analysis and documentation of the material already uncovered at Rainford. For a week in February, volunteers and members are invited to come and help staff at the museum to catalogue the assemblage.

In conjunction with these discoveries at Rainford, a workshop entitled "Bringing Pottery to Life" will be taking place in February/March this year (date TBC). The session will include talks by local specialists and handling sessions.

*Sam Rowe*



*Fig 2: Sample of saggars from the Rainford assemblage*

### *Wirral Archaeology*

We are a small landscape research group, founded in 2004 as a successor to the Wirral Field Group, of which we are surviving members. We are a group of individuals working together on joint projects, rather than a Society, and have acquired a great deal of knowledge and experience over many years, 47 years in the case of this writer. The group has the benefit of qualifications and life - skills from varied professional careers, not just archaeology, although one of us is a fully qualified archaeologist. We have also received superb training and experience on archaeological sites both in this country and abroad, and keep up to date by means of membership of several Archaeological Societies, and subscriptions to leading archaeological publications. We are entirely self-funding.

### *Projects*

We have several projects in hand at the moment, working on them as time permits. We have made much progress on the Roman road system in Wirral, a project which is still on-going, and is proving to be more complicated than expected. The only stratified dating evidence is from the Chester/Meols road. We have discovered an unsuspected length in Storeton, which appears to be a minor road leading to a probable farmstead.

This township is the subject of a detailed research project to investigate the possibility that the battle of Brunanburh was fought in the area. We are using our Bartington 601 magnetometer and metal detectors to search for burial pits and any surviving metal objects, and also use Lidar and aerial photography. We have hundreds of finds of all periods to tell the story of this important township, but the documented site of a burial pit is so far proving elusive, as is the field where hundreds of arrowheads used to be found when ploughing. Still, it is early days yet, as we have only examined a very small percentage of the land available. We have, however, discovered crop marks of great interest, and also the base of the Storeton Cross, last mentioned in 1390.

We also undertake archaeological projects with local schools, mainly field visits, with the occasional Roman road excavation for good measure.

Since buying our magnetometer just over a year ago, we have



also undertaken surveys on other sites, for both professional archaeologists, and local societies. We have been very busy at Holt, where we have surveyed the castle ruins for Holt Local History Society, and also for Wrexham museum. We located the missing curtain walls, five towers, the moat inner edge, and the Watergate. In the area, we have surveyed two of the nine cropmarks of suspected Roman military origin, and using Lidar have helped to identify lengths of Roman road and a farmstead.

At the hillfort of Caer Alyn, we have located roundhouses, pits, hearths and what looks like a processional avenue leading towards a tumulus. We have been working with students here during the summer, to give them practical experience in using geophysics in the field, and also to help them interpret the results. This project will be resumed this year.

We have also been invited to a site near Whitchurch, where we were able to plot a re-aligned course of a newly discovered Roman road, and where we also found a large curved wall, associated with Samian and Roman glass. We will be back here soon to continue.

Despite our advancing years, we remain very busy!

*Peter France.*

### ***Bidston Community Archaeology***

In Summer of 2010 many of us who did not know the difference between a mattock and a trowel. An advert in the local paper soon changed that - "Volunteers wanted" for a community dig on Bidston Hill. It was to be a community based project at Tam O'Shanters Urban Farm. After a training weekend we were all raring to go and throughout the summer we carried out excavations on Bidston Hill under the direction of 2 local archaeologists and completed training in all aspects of field archaeology, recording and archive research. The archaeology bug had truly bitten us, we all had become firm friends and we knew that our lives would never be the same again. Our group ranges in age from 70 to 14, some with experience and some without, but all with one thing in common... A love of archaeology and bucket loads of enthusiasm! Our confidence



*Excavation on Bidston Hill*

as archaeologists grew as did our thirst to experience more.

When the first dig ended we completed a further course in archaeological excavation at Liverpool University under the direction of Ron Cowell, giving us the opportunity to dig and tap into his amazing expertise at his site at Latham. In Autumn 2010 several of us embarked on an AS Level in Archaeology and completed further courses in archaeology at the university.

Before we knew, it was summer 2011 and we were raring to pick up our trowels and continue where we left off but no further funding was available and we faced the prospect of having to disband. We couldn't let this happen, we had learnt so much, we had these amazing new skills between us and we would not give up! We made the decision to go it alone and Bidston Community Archaeology was formed making our base at Tam O'Shanters.

Following a number of interesting pottery finds by farm volunteers, we produced a detailed excavation rationale for the "Pig field" at the farm and with the backing of the Rangers, and Friends of Bidston Hill our trowels were not to become rusty after all.

Work commenced on the "Pig field" in the summer of 2011, revealing evidence of occupation from the early post Civil War period to the 1900's plus a single knapped flint suggesting yet much earlier occupation. Watch this space!

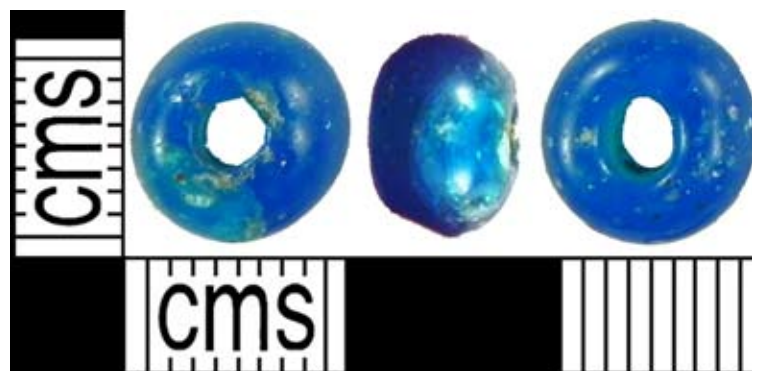
It was not all work, fun is just as important; during 2011 we visited archaeological sites and landscapes from Anglesey to Stonehenge and will visit Orkney in June.

Our aim is to add to the history of Bidston Hill through responsible archaeology and education. 2012 is going to be a very exciting year with further excavations, a plan for building a round house and extending community involvement.

For more information go to our Facebook page Bidston Community Archaeology:

Or email [Bidston-community-archaeology@hotmail.com](mailto:Bidston-community-archaeology@hotmail.com)

*Betty Nesbitt*



***An Iron Age Bead from the Portable Antiquities Scheme Database***

This small blue glass bead dates from the late Iron Age to the post Roman period, (300BC-1066AD). It is a medium sized generic bead. This type is particularly common in the late Iron Age and the Roman Period but some are also known on early Anglo-Saxon necklaces. The bead is sub-spherical in plan with flattened ends and a central hole. The surface of the object has been chipped and scratched. The

bead contains small white inclusions. The internal diameter of the perforation measures 3.45mm.

This type of bead can be classified as Guido Group 6 IVb (Guido 1978, 155ff.). Guido lists a parallel from Wilderspool. Guido and Welch 1999, 48, stress the fact that they occur in all areas of Anglo-Saxon settlement and cannot be chronologically limited. In fact they discuss these as evidence for lower strata in society, to judge from a small scale study of their occurrence in grave assemblages. The bead which was found in Merseyside by a local farmer has been recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database, [www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database), as LVPL-9494B3.

Two other beads are also recorded on the PAS database from the Merseyside area. LVPL-ACC747 can be dated to the Post-Roman period; however the exact date is unknown. It is a cylindrical

sectioned bright yellow glass bead. LVPL-AC8807 is a blue glass bead and has been dated from the Medieval period. Twenty-eight beads in total have been recorded from the North West dating from the Bronze Age through to the Post-Medieval period. There are currently 834 beads recorded on the database from England and Wales. The majority of finds recorded on the database are found and reported by metal detectors and as such the numbers of beads and other non-metal objects are low in comparison to metal objects which can be more easily detected. Due to their small size they can often be missed by field walkers or lost within spoil heaps also, although some as with the examples above are brightly coloured. Of the 834 beads on the database, 134 have been recorded with an unknown date and there is therefore potential for more work to be done in the future.

*M. Guido and M. Welch (1999), The Glass Beads of Anglo-Saxon England, c. AD 400- 700.*

*Vanessa Oakden*



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 2/2012

Registered Charity No 510831

## From the Editor:

Welcome to the MAS Summer Newsletter. This issue contains features on Hilbre Island, the recent fieldtrip to Formby, a review of the Council for British Archaeology North West (CBANW) Spring Meeting at Bromborough, an impression of the archaeology displays at Liverpool Museum and an article on a Roman copper annulus found in a spoil heap in Liverpool. There are also the usual smaller pieces of news and details of our forthcoming 2012-13 lecture programme.

Dave Roberts

## MAS Fieldtrip to Llandudno

Our next fieldtrip will be on Saturday 21st July to the Bronze Age mines on Great Orme. Uncovered in 1987 during a scheme to landscape an area of the the Great Orme, the copper mines discovered below the ground represent one of the most astounding archaeological discoveries of recent time. Dating back 4,000 years to the Bronze Age they change our views about the ancient people of Britain and their civilized and structured society 2,000 years before the Roman invasion.

The price of the trip will be £25 which will include the cost of a coach, leaving from outside Dr. Duncan's pub in the city centre, and entrance to the mines. Please note this trip will not be viable if less than 20 people attend. Early booking is therefore advisable. For further information contact Chris: [C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk)

## MAS 2012-13 Lecture programme

18th October. Christine Longworth, MAS/Freelance Archaeologist, *The Archaeology of Hilbre Island*

15th November. Brian Grimsditch, Salford University, *The 'Dig Manchester' Project*.

17th January. Prof. Nancy Edwards, Bangor University, *Medieval Churches*.

21st February. Dr David Robinson, University of Central Lancashire, *The Stonehenge Riverside Project*

21st March. Dr Vicki Cummings, University of Central Lancashire, *The Structure of Dolmens*.

18th April. Dr Kate Waddington, Bangor University, *The Whitchurch Project*.

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk please pass the information on to Chris as an idea for a future speaker.

## Merseyside Archaeological Society on Facebook

You can now follow us on Facebook:-

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1481822652#!/groups/151058304987687/>

## 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 that you feel would be of interest to members of the Society, please contact the Newsletter Editor. Please note that contributions may have to be edited.

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### ***Closure of Merseyside Archaeological Advisory Service***

Since the last Newsletter there have been a number of developments. MAS has been engaged in a long round of correspondence with the Liverpool City Council Chief Executive and his Building Conservation team regarding how they intend to meet their obligations with regard to the preservation and conservation of archaeological sites with the demise of the MAAS. In the meantime government legislation with regard to this has changed. The former PPS5 has been replaced by the National Planning Authorities Frameworks.

Liverpool City council have taken the stance that they continue to meet their obligations under the new legislation. MAS has issues with this statement as one of the key clauses is to have access to and maintain an Historical Environment Record. However, the Merseyside Historical Environment Record closed on 31st March 2012 so how can this be the case? The dialogue continues and MAS has been joined by English Heritage, CBA and academics in the north-west in further rounds of correspondence.

On the wider front on Merseyside the situation is not quite as bleak. There are some signs, on Wirral in particular, that active steps are being taken to find a resolution. Although I do not have firm details I hope that I shall have something more positive to report in the Autumn.

*Dave Roberts*

### ***The Calderstones***

Some years ago MAS collaborated with the Dept. of Parks and Greenspaces, Liverpool City Council in the preparation of a Heritage Lottery Fund bid to re-locate the Calderstones to a more favourable environment. The state of the 1960s vestibule in which the stones are housed had become a major cause for concern and was in urgent need of repair. Unfortunately, the response to the HLF project submission was unsuccessful but the Council have since explored interim measures to conserve and improve the plight of the Calderstones.

MAS is pleased to report that with support from the Council's Premises Management Unit, Parks and Greenspaces have prepared a scheme to refurbish the Harthill Vestibule with the main objectives to improve the environmental conditions and security of the stones. A secondary objective is to enable improved, managed access to the stones, including better provision of information. The works, which have now started, will comprise the reinstatement of the brick, timber and glass structure incorporating additional ventilation while restoring the structural integrity – and security - of the building. It is intended to include a notice board at the entrance to display information about the stones. Notably these improvements to security, access and the appearance of the Calderstones monument should enable greater promotion of the stones, and hopefully the basis for developing increased awareness and potentially a renewed project bid, in due course.

### ***Further news on Rainford***

Following the exciting finds at Rainford last year a Heritage Lottery Fund bid has been prepared to support a 21-month project to investigate 'Rainford's Roots'. The project will be wide-ranging including a detailed geo-physical survey, field-walking and extensive trial trenching of several sites which have the potential to reveal further information regarding Rainford's industrial past. From previous experience the amount of material recovered from sites in Rainford could be huge so it is expected that post-excavation work will be a time-consuming and important part of the work. There will also be a research programme, delving into documentary evidence of Rainford's past to produce a guide book and local walking plan. Should the bid prove successful there will be opportunities for MAS members and local residents to take part in a number of activities. Hopefully, we should hear whether the bid has been successful by the time the next Newsletter is due, so more then.

### ***Other Grants***

The Heritage Lottery Fund has launched a new £1 million grants programme called "All Our Stories" to support local projects across the UK that want to explore their local heritage. A wide range of voluntary and community sector organisations (including charities, community groups, and heritage organisations) throughout the UK can apply for grants of between £3,000 and £10,000. If anyone is keen to set up a project please get in touch. Some urgency is required as the deadline for submission is 31st July.

## Hilbre Survey

Hilbre Island is located just off the coast of West Kirby and has a history dating back to the prehistoric period although most of the visible remains relate to the 19<sup>th</sup> century maritime connection.

Four years ago I decided to do a small project recording the main buildings on the island associated with the visual telegraph system linking Holyhead with Liverpool and the Trinity House buoy store where buoys aiding navigation on the River Dee were maintained. It soon became clear that a survey record for the rest of the island was very basic and therefore the project was extended to cover the whole of Hilbre.

The survey is done by traditional methods using tape measures to construct a triangulation framework covering the island off which ground features were recorded. The method is similar to the first ordnance survey of the British Isles and I am trying to achieve an accuracy of 50mm between points over the whole island.

The drawing is being prepared using computer aided design software which allows historical information to be superimposed in layers. The historic environment record was accessed before its closure and the finds information included on the plan. Excavation information such as Ecroyd Smith's 1868 dig and Newstead's 1926 search for monastic remains have been superimposed. National Museums Liverpool has also kindly provided excavation drawings and these have also been incorporated into the record.

Building elevations have been measured and by digitally removing any photographic distortion a scaled photographic image can be used to 'trace' over to record the bonding of the brickwork and stonework. This has been a useful exercise as many of the buildings have had a variety of uses over the years with numerous adaptations. Finely worked sandstone blocks can be found incorporated in otherwise basic buildings such as cart sheds and animal houses. It is hoped to analyse the various finishes to these blocks to identify whether they are salvaged materials used elsewhere throughout the island or in situ foundation remains of earlier structures.

The survey is also using state of the art technology to evaluate the landscape and the KOREC group, located in Crosby, are providing a detailed photographic survey of the island using SenceFly equipment used for civil engineering and archaeology. A detailed photographic plan to scale can be produced along with a 3D model. LiDAR laser scan data is also being purchased from the Environment Agency which also allows 3D modelling of the island to an accuracy of 250mm. A partnership has been set up with National Museums Liverpool who will cover any archaeological excavations and Oxford University who will carry out a geophysical survey of Hilbre and Middle Eye.

The survey work is an ongoing labour of love. With having more spare time recently a large portion of the work has been done whilst living on the island in four and five day blocks which has amounted to over 6 weeks since September. Breakfast watching the sun rise over the Wirral and a glass of wine on the cliffs as it sets over Liverpool Bay with archaeology literally on the doorstep during the day all adds to the enjoyment of the Island. The summer compensates for freezing icy rain in January. When work is half an hour outside before returning to stoke up the log fire in the cottage to thaw out



*Programming the SenceFly - Hilbre Islands*

icy fingers. There is no water on the island so all provisions have to be brought on beforehand in bottles. The electricity supply to the one plug socket is wind dependent so illumination is by gas light and heating is by whatever wood can be scavenged for the fire. This all adds to the experience which is similar to earlier inhabitants. The benefit is that the knowledge of the archaeology on the island is greatly increased as more remains are identified and recorded which may form the basis for further archaeological excavation in the future.

*Roy Forshaw*

## Field Trip to Formby

On Saturday June 16 Dr. Mark Adams, archaeological project officer at Liverpool Museums, led our first fieldtrip of the year, to the beach at Formby Point. Here coastal erosion regularly reveals the subfossil footprints of humans (adult and child), mammals (aurochs, cattle, red deer, roe deer, unshod horse, dog / wolf, wild boar, sheep / goat) and wading birds (crane, oystercatcher and rail) in the late Holocene silt exposures. The footprints are generally dated in the Mesolithic to mid-Neolithic period (ca 8,000- 3,000 BC), although some of the higher layers also have footprints of Iron Age domestic oxen.

Sub-fossil footprint exposures in an open, unprotected environment are rare. Some have been found in other Holocene, intertidal environments such as the Severn Estuary, South Walney Island and Jersey (Channel Islands) in the United Kingdom, the Canche Estuary in northern France, and the Pampean Coast of Argentina. Of these locations, Formby Point has yielded the greatest number of prehistoric, human footprint trails.

In the past over 200 human footprint trails have been recorded at Formby Point, of men, women and children. A statistical analysis of 75 of the best defined trails suggested that the men were 1.66m tall, and the women 1.45m. Analyses of the distance between the individual footprints suggested occupations such as food gathering (shrimps, razor shells and other sea food) by the young women and children, while the male footprints could sometimes



*Animal footprints on Formby Beach: photo Jennifer Mirdamadi*

be directly associated with red and roe deer tracks, suggesting hunting activity.

According to Professor Geoffrey Wainwright (English Heritage): “The intertidal zone, because of its nature and because of the fact that it is in an inundated landscape, can give us a great amount of information about the past environment of the last six thousand years, and this gives us a picture of human settlement which, ironically, gives us a more complete picture of Man and his lifestyle and his environment than we get from the dry, terrestrial sites. It is a very important environment for us to study and, indeed, a very neglected environment. It is also very difficult to put a human face on archaeological evidence, and with these footprints you have actually the mark of the people concerned, and that is what makes them so important”.

Because most of the footprints are located in the intertidal zone, timing was essential. So at 11.00 sharp 16 MAS members in wellies and cagoules set out under Mark’s expert guidance, in spite of the rain (which fortunately cleared fairly soon). While prints of birds were common, the first large footprints found were those of roe and red deer, and eventually some aurochs footprints were also found in the hardened silt layers. Towards the end of the walk we eventually found some trails of human footprints, the icing on the cake. The whole trip took some 4 hours. Our thanks go to Mark Adams, for his expert guidance and extensive and informative explanations.

Source:[http://www.seftoncoast.org.uk/hist\\_footprints.html](http://www.seftoncoast.org.uk/hist_footprints.html)

*Eveline Van der Steen*

### **The Archaeology Galleries at The Museum of Liverpool**

The new Museum of Liverpool (MoL) opened in July 2011, and was officially opened by the Queen in December 2011.

The first thing to understand about MoL, is that it is not just about Liverpool, it includes items from the rest of Merseyside and its environs. In particular, most of the earliest exhibits are from the Wirral. Liverpool itself is singularly lacking in any early finds.

The exception to this though is the Calderstones, which formed part of a Neolithic burial chamber some 4-5,000 years ago. On the floor

of the atrium is a depiction of a spiral from one of the stones, and this is also reflected in the form of the elliptical staircase. Given that MoL have chosen to give such prominence to this image, they are very coy about explaining what it is. Just a small card affixed to the nearby staircase; if you weren’t looking you definitely wouldn’t see this. There are other exhibits relating to the stones in different contexts, and it is a matter of opinion whether they would be better displayed all together. Most particularly, on the first floor, there is a nice art installation of a number of concentric circles presumably referencing the stones (there is no explanation); these would be very effective if displayed on the staircase beside the spiral motif.

One of the major galleries is History Detectives, this is described as “a time travellers dateline ... packed with objects”. For some reason, (probably purely down to space) the early pre history – ice age, Calderstones etc is included in the “Great Port” gallery. The timeline starts from 5,000 BC, it is unfortunate that the first part of the timeline is in an area barely 8’ wide; the constant flow of people passing makes it difficult to view the exhibition. It is however a good mix of information, actual exhibits, and replicas, video, and illustration. In the Roman section, the eye is drawn to the large hedgehog occupying centre stage in the middle of the Roman finds, but all becomes clear as the narrative explains that hedgehogs were eaten at this time.

The next key section is that covering the Viking period. On display is “The Huxley Hoard”. This was discovered in November 2004 during a weekend metal detector rally at Huxley, Cheshire. The hoard is thought to date to the first decade of the 10th century AD. Also in this section is a replica hogback stone from St Bridget’s in West Kirby, and is the most southerly example found in the British Isles.

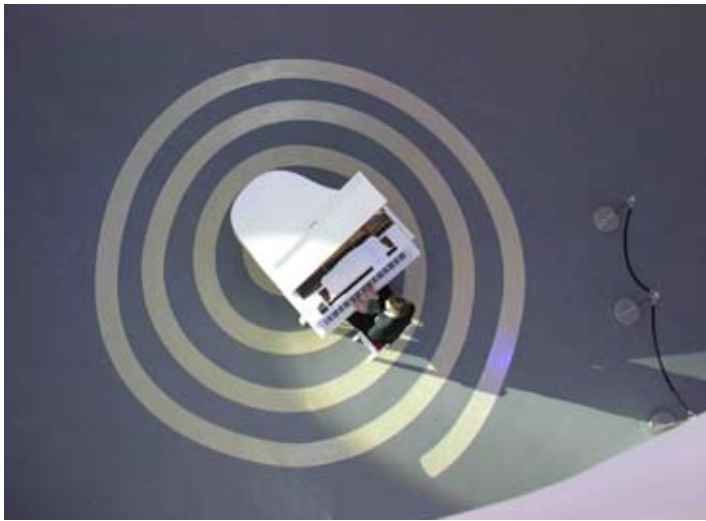
After this we move on to Medieval Liverpool (1066-1485), the start of more recognisable objects referencing things people are more familiar with, a good selection of events and objects, well illustrated.

Alongside the main timeline, there is a series of exhibits focusing on a particular area:- eg South Castle St, Toxteth Park, Lydiate Hall, Meols. All very interesting and well exhibited.

There is also a key exhibition of the finds of the excavation of the Manchester Dock, showing the diverse range of pottery used as infill for the quayside – this could be improved by more specific dating information rather than just saying “creamware” or “Staffordshire pottery”. The reconstruction of the Manchester Dock starting from the bedrock, and showing the various layers of infill is excellent.

Another key feature of the History Detectives Gallery is the interactive maps. I’ve visited a number of times, and sadly have never found all 6 in working order. But when you can access one working, it is extremely interesting; well put together, with information on a variety of aspects of Liverpool history. What is disappointing though was the number of icons that still have the legend “image coming shortly” This has been planned for a number of years now yet the images still aren’t there, and indeed some – a much smaller number – don’t have any text. It is to be hoped that someone within MoL is still working on this. That said, you could easily spend a couple of hours exploring this part of the exhibition.

There is a general criticism though of this gallery, which is the way information is presented. There doesn’t seem to be a ‘house style’ to



*Calderstones Spiral - Museum of Liverpool Atrium*

distinguish the various information panels. They are all white text on differently coloured background, some more legible than others. This problem is compounded by the lighting which variously casts a shadow in some places, and a glare in others; all in all does not lead to easy reading. (This probably has little to do with MoL staff, more to do with an expensive graphics company!)

Another key gallery is “The Great Port”. The exhibition entitled “The Development of Liverpool Docks” consists mostly of a series of paintings depicting the docks at different periods, and a small number of information panels, giving really quite sketchy information. The exhibition includes one of the dock gates excavated from the Manchester Dock, (on which the museum is built). There is a model of the Albert Dock, and surrounding docks, this could be greatly enhanced by the addition of a simple illustration of the whole of the dock estate – this model is only a tiny section, and that is not really apparent.

My last visit was during a wet and windy half term, and there were lots of grandparents and children – both groups seemed to be deriving equal enjoyment. The model demonstrating how goods were loaded and transported was of particular interest – one elderly chap had a few children enthralled with his stories of how it all worked.

I’ve not even touched on the other galleries: Wondrous Place, The People’s Republic, Global City etc. If you haven’t already visited, then you must do so. At once. You won’t be disappointed.

*Joyce Hughes*

### **CBA North West Spring Meeting 2012 at Bromborough**

On a sunny Saturday morning, Helen Caffrey, CBANW Chair welcomed over 100 members to the CBANW Annual Spring Meeting held in 2012 at St Barnabas Village Hall, Bromborough. This year’s meeting had a Wirral theme featuring top class speakers from near and far.

Proceedings commenced with talks from Christine Longworth and Roy Forshaw who described the archaeology and recent survey work on the Hilbre Islands. Christine summarised the human presence on the islands from the earliest to modern times. There is abundant evidence of the presence of early man on Hilbre from Mesolithic midden sites, Neolithic flint tools and possible Bronze Age field boundaries.

Further finds from the Bronze Age include a socketed axe and a bucket-shaped urn. The Roman period is represented by a small number of finds but no structures. Early Medieval finds include a glass bead and an Anglo-Norse cross head which may be related to an early religious presence on the Islands. It has long been suspected that there was an early Christian chapel site on Hilbre but so far it’s location has proved elusive. The discovery of a tiny fragment of Medieval floor tile in 2006-07 adds to the evidence for a religious foundation somewhere on the Island. The later historic period is well documented including leases relating to the 17th and 18th-century salt trade of which there is abundant evidence on the ground. Roy Forshaw described recent survey work he has carried out on the Islands. Detailed drawings of the surviving buildings and industrial remains related to the aforementioned salt industry have been produced. The navigational history of the Islands, in the 19th and early 20th centuries has been investigated including round the 19th century Telegraph Station which still survives today. Other recent maritime history is represented by the mid 19th -century Life Boat Station and Mersey Canoe Club which was based on the Islands.

Our next speakers were David Griffiths and Dean Paton from the University of Oxford who gave us a summary of their recent work on the evidence for the British, Anglo Saxon and Viking presence on the Wirral peninsula. From the late prehistoric onwards there is much evidence for the importance of Wirral as a centre of trade. Many of the finds come from the ancient port at Meols. Wallasey was an important British centre in the 5th century AD. Coin evidence from the Iron Age, through the Roman and post-Roman periods demonstrates the importance of the Meols, Leasowe and Moreton areas as part of a trading network having connections in the 6th century with the Mediterranean and beyond. Continuity of settlement on Wirral is represented by sites such as Irby, which have produced Roman material and Anglo-Saxon and Viking finds. During the Saxon and Viking periods the Dee and Mersey estuaries became strategic outposts. It was suggested that the Viking period was a relatively transitory phase between the Anglo Saxon and Medieval periods although there is a dense group of Viking place names in Wirral. Using evidence from documents, place-names and archaeology Dean Paton has concluded that the relationship between the Anglo-Saxons and their Viking neighbours was complex with lots of crossovers and the intermingling of peoples. Using map evidence Dean is investigating places situated on parish boundaries e.g. Thingwall. Interpretation of the evidence for this period is complicated and will only be resolved by a structured programme of landscape interpretation.

After lunch Frances McIntosh, University of Newcastle, described her work on Wirral brooches, a distinct type of Roman bow brooch. They are locally produced and found mainly on Wirral as stray finds in rural areas, 8 of which were found at Meols. Wirral brooches were likely to have been worn by the local people rather than the military. However, there are 2 sub-groups of brooches outside the core area, one in Scotland and the second in the Northern Military Zone. In the Roman period the Cheshire Plain area was rich in natural resources which the Romans were keen to exploit, such as lead extraction on Halkyn Mountain and salt production at Northwich. There also appears to be a link with the production of mortaria at Wilderspool, many of which have been found on Hadrian’s or the Antonine Wall. These industries could explain the link between the distribution of brooches between



*Anglo Saxon CrossFragments - Bromborough*

Wirral and the military-zone sub-groups, the brooches either being traded or lost by the merchants engaged in these industries.

Our final speaker was Rob Philpott, who summarised recent work on the finds from Meols, which he described as Wirral's oldest port. Over 10,000 finds were recovered from Meols by the end of the 19th century. Meols would have been an important haven on the Irish Sea and in antiquity would have been dry land centred around Dove Point. Between 1792 and 1847 the coast eroded rapidly and the finds came to light. Although many of the finds were recorded they were spread across about 20 separate collections. A recent detailed study brought the finds together and a catalogue was produced in 2007. Together this represents a complex and highly specialised group of material dating from the Mesolithic period to the 19th century AD. By the Iron Age, Meols was a port of some status having contacts with Gaul and the Mediterranean perhaps through connections with the salt trade. In the Roman period Meols appears to have been a trans-shipment point between estuarine and ocean craft for the Roman fort at Chester although there are both civilian as well as military artefacts. Meols shows continuity as a port through the Dark Age period with Viking and Byzantine finds. There is a remarkable collection of Medieval finds including 900 buckles and over 100 shoes. Meols would have been a small community which makes the collection remarkable. It appears that material was being manufactured as well as consumed. During the Medieval period there were many episodes when the medieval village was encroached upon by the sand dunes. This had a devastating effect which led to the demise of the settlement.

The meeting was followed by a short talk from Dean Paton on the reconstructed Anglo Saxon cross in St Barnabas churchyard. This was an excellent day and CBANW are to be commended in putting together such a diverse and interesting group of speakers. MAS will no doubt be inviting some of them to speak to us in the future as their research progresses.

*Dave Roberts*

### A copper alloy nummus of Constantius II, (323-361)

This copper alloy coin was an unusual find as it was discovered in a spoil heap in the centre of Liverpool during recent road works by a passer by. The coin was brought to the Portable Antiquities Scheme at National Museums Liverpool for recording and identification.



*Roman Copper Alloy Nummus*

The coin is a copper alloy nummus of Constantius II, (323-361) and reads:

Obverse: FL. IVL. CONSTANTIVS NOB. C; Laureate and cuirassed bust right.

Reverse: GLORIA EXERCITVS; Two soldiers standing either side of two standards.

In exergue: SMK[A].

The coin was minted in Cyzicus, modern day Turkey, and can be dated to AD 331-4. The abbreviations on the coin's legend can be translated as FLAVIUS JULIUS CONSTANTINUS NOBILISSIMUS CAESAR. Nobilissimus translates as 'most noble' which was commonly used for junior emperors on late Roman coins.




Constantius II was born in A.D. 317 and was the second son of Constantine I and Fausta. In 324 he became Caesar after the defeat of Licinius. His brothers Constantine II and Constans also minted nummi with this reverse which was common during the fourth century AD. When the empire was divided after the death of Constantine I, Constantius II received the eastern territories.

The nummus was a low value coin and currently there are only 58 nummi recorded from Merseyside. It is great to have one from the city centre where there is not much opportunity to record stray finds due to the nature of the landscape. Across England and Wales we have recorded 87,411 nummi only 369 of which are from the North West.





*Roman nummi from the North West.*

-  - A yellow marker signifies a single findspot awaiting validation.
-  - A green marker signifies a single findspot for a validated record.
-  - A blue marker signifies a cluster of findspots.

*Vanessa Oakden*



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 3/2012

Registered Charity No 510831

## From the Editor:

Welcome to the MAS Autumn Newsletter. There are two significant pieces of news this quarter. Firstly, Eveline Van der Steen our Secretary and Membership Secretary has recently moved house to Wales. Consequently, she feels that she will no longer be able to maintain the level of involvement she has had with MAS and has reluctantly stood down from Council duties. However, Eveline will still keep in contact with the Society and we are sure she will attend future events. We are very grateful to Joyce Hughes, who has volunteered to fulfill Eveline's former roles. Secondly, over the last month MAS has heard that it has been successful in obtaining an HLF grant to carry out a 2-year project based in Rainford. Although the Society has carried out successful funded projects in the past, for example, the research that produced *The Changing Face of Liverpool* publication and new work at *The Calderstones*, this is the most significant project the Society has ever undertaken. There will be plenty of opportunity for MAS members to become involved in documentary research and excavation etc. There are more details on page 3 of this Newsletter.

Dave Roberts

## MAS 2012-13 Lecture programme

Our new season of lectures commences this month. Meetings are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre. The room is booked from 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30. All welcome - including non-members.

18th October. Christine Longworth, MAS/Freelance Archaeologist, *The Archaeology of Hilbre Island*

15th November. Brian Grimsditch, Salford University, *The 'Dig Manchester' Project*.

17th January. Prof. Nancy Edwards, Bangor University, *Medieval Churches*.

21st February. Dr David Robinson, University of Central Lancashire, *The Stonehenge Riverside Project*.

21st March. Dr Vicki Cummings, University of Central Lancashire, *The Structure of Dolmens*.

18th April. Dr Kate Waddington, Bangor University, *The Whitchurch Project*.

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk please pass the information on to Chris as an idea for a future speaker. [C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk)

## Merseyside Archaeological Society on Facebook

You can now follow us on Facebook:-

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1481822652#!/groups/151058304987687/>

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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 that you feel would be of interest to members of the Society, 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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Merseyside Archaeological Society

Web Site: <http://merseysidearchsoc.weebly.com>

### ***2012 Christmas Party***

The 2012 Christmas Party will be held on Thursday 13th December at The Quaker Meeting House, School Lane. The meeting will feature a buffet, short talks from guest speakers and hopefully a quiz as well as plenty of opportunity for socialising. More details will be provided at our October and November meetings, and in due course via Facebook and the MAS website. If you receive this Newsletter by post please ring Jenny Woodcock Tel: 0151 727 8243.

### ***Merseyside Historical Environment Record (HER)***

Many members of MAS will be aware that the Merseyside Historical Environment Record (HER) has been closed for the last 6 months. The HER was formally funded by the five local authorities (Liverpool, Wirral, Knowsley, St. Helens and Sefton) and hosted by National Museums Liverpool using taxpayers' money. The body of data contained in the HER is the key archaeological archive on Merseyside and was formerly consulted on a regular basis by professionals and amateurs alike. No meaningful archaeological research can be conducted without consulting the HER. Former projects undertaken by this Society e.g *The Changing Face of Liverpool* would not have been possible to complete within the timescales given had it not been for the existence of the HER.

The HER should be a 'living' record not a static one. The fact that it is not currently accessible means that it is not only unavailable for consultation but also any new data is not being added. New data is at best being stockpiled in the hope that it will one day be possible to update the database and in the worst scenario lost altogether. This is a scandalous state of affairs and as archaeologists, both amateur and professional, we should endeavour to do something about it. It is interesting to note that around the turn of the year a similar situation arose in Greater Manchester with threats to the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS). In that instance, the professional archaeological body was able to work successfully with the Greater Manchester local authorities and find a solution leading to the survival of GMAAS as an organisation along with their HER.

At a recent MAS Council meeting it was agreed that MAS should produce a stock letter which members can copy, sign and send off to the local authorities reminding them of their responsibilities in resurrecting the HER. It is hoped that this letter will be available shortly. The Council encourages all its members (and interested non-members) to send off this letter to their local authority representatives. They cannot ignore it. Hopefully, this will pave the way to open a dialogue which will have a successful outcome.

### ***The Calderstones***

In the last Newsletter MAS was pleased to report that with support from the Council's Premises Management Unit, Parks and Greenspaces had prepared a scheme to refurbish the Harthill Vestibule where The Calderstones reside.

The work started in early Summer with the Stones being individually protected with plastic sheeting overlaying surrounding wooden frames while work on the roof was carried out overhead. At the end of July the work came to a standstill. There was initially some concern as the vestibule resembled an abandoned building site and the stones could potentially suffer damage due to condensation accumulating within the plastic sheeting. Upon making enquiries of the Park authorities it emerged that there had been some unforeseen problems with funding. MAS is now pleased to report that these difficulties have been overcome and the site has been tidied up and work has resumed. It is hoped that refurbishment will be completed shortly.

### ***Journal of Merseyside Archaeological Society Volume 14***

The Society is pleased to announce that the next of our occasional Journals, Volume 14, is almost complete and should be available around the end of the year. This volume is wholly dedicated to the 2002 excavation carried out by the Archaeological Field Unit at National Museums Liverpool at Big Lea Green Farm, Sutton near St Helens. The Journal is approximately 120 pages in length and not only contains a report on the excavation but also chapters on significant collections of pottery, clay pipes and other artefacts recovered from the site. The authors are Andy Towle and Jeff Speakman with contributions from other professionals.

The volume details the history of a yeoman farmstead on Merseyside from the 13th century until its demise in 2002 when Somerfields plc constructed a regional distribution centre on the site. Somerfields plc kindly funded the excavation and MAS were pleased that the Co-operative Membership Community fund have made a generous grant towards the publication of the findings and the production of our Journal. Thanks are also due to Rob Philpott who has prepared this Volume for publication.

JMAS14 will be distributed free to existing Society members and will also be available for sale in due course.



*The 2011 Rainford excavation team*

**Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant awarded!**

**“Rainford’s Roots: A Community Archaeology Project”**

In June this year, Merseyside Archaeological Society put in a bid to the ‘Your Heritage’ Heritage Lottery Fund scheme, and we are delighted to report that the bid has been successful.

The Society has been awarded a grant of £75,100 for a new community project known as ‘Rainford’s Roots’. The project will be focused on the village of Rainford near St Helens and will explore the industrial heritage of the village, focusing on its post medieval potting and clay tobacco pipe cottage industries.

This project has been set up in collaboration with National Museums Liverpool and many aspects of the project will be supervised and supported by their Field Archaeology Unit. The museum will also be host to a Community Project Officer who will oversee the running of the 21-month project.

Rainford has a rich industrial heritage which will be investigated through various means of fieldwork, including surveys and excavations, as well as through documentary research. One of the main aspects of the project will be to encourage community participation, through training, local activities, and outreach programmes.

The project aims to:

- Undertake an archaeological investigation of Rainford
- Engage with the local community by providing opportunities for volunteering and learning new skills
- Encourage wider participation and learning through a programme of outreach activities
- Present the project and its outputs to a wider audience through exhibitions, digital and printed media

*How did we get the idea for this project?*

This project developed from a small community excavation which

took place in the autumn of 2011, and was carried out by the Society and the Field Archaeology Unit of National Museums Liverpool. The results of this excavation were reported on briefly in the last Society newsletter, and a presentation took place at last year’s Christmas party.

To summarise the results of this investigation, a series of pottery dumping episodes from a local kiln was uncovered near an ancient field boundary at the back of a local resident’s property. A large group of 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century dark-glazed finewares and coarsewares were discovered (see photo), along with a collection of kiln furniture including saggars. Even though this assemblage is made up of waster vessels which had been thrown out and discarded by the potters, the quality of the fineware cups and mugs was truly astonishing.

The deposit forms the earliest locally produced ceramic material to be discovered in Rainford, pushing back the dates of known manufacture by several centuries. The collection also forms the first Cistercian-ware kiln group to be discovered in the North West of England.

A report on the initial findings of last year’s investigation is currently being developed by National Museums Liverpool and should be published as an MAS journal sometime in the future.

Due to the success of the excavations last year and the potential to uncover more sites like it, the Society was very keen to develop a project on a larger scale.

The Rainford’s Roots project will continue on from the success and achievements of these excavations. There is great potential to uncover other similar sites in the area, and a more in depth investigation of the area will hopefully further our understanding and knowledge of this important local cottage industry.

*What will be happening and how can I get involved?*

The project has been designed with the local community in mind. A lot of the fieldwork will involve the support and co-operation of local residents and venues. Throughout the running of the project the Society will endeavour to encourage and promote community



*Sample of fineware vessels from the Rainford assemblage (2011)*

participation, providing training, support and opportunities for local people and volunteers to take part in all aspects of the project.

Some planned activities for the project include:

- Fieldwork including surveys and excavations
- Documentary research: the development of guide leaflets and Heritage Walk materials
- Finds processing and handling sessions
- Lectures and talks
- Local museum displays and exhibitions
- Outreach events and open days

For further information and to keep up to date and in touch with the project:

Email the project: [rainfordsroots@gmail.com](mailto:rainfordsroots@gmail.com)

Project website: [www.rainfordsroots.com](http://www.rainfordsroots.com) (under construction-launching soon!)

You can also follow the project on facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/RainfordsRoots>

*Merseyside Archaeological Society - Council*

### Community Archaeology Events

During September the Sefton Coast Landscape Partnership, an HLF funded project, ran two Community Archaeology events in collaboration with the Museum of Liverpool.

The Formby Promenade Dig took place over the weekend of 8-9<sup>th</sup> September with a group of six volunteers from the Sefton area. The site was also visited by a steady stream of Formby residents (about 100). The dig exposed the remains of Formby Promenade which was built during the late 1870s by the Formby Land and Building Co. which had purchased 105 acres of the coastal area of Raven Meols, south of Formby for £12,100. The Company aimed to create a new residential resort, which it was hoped would rival Southport and was going to be known as Formby-by-the-Sea. However, the whole venture collapsed as a result of WWI and the following Depression. Work got as far as laying out the roads, which still survive in the dunes, building several large houses and constructing



*Formby Promenade Excavation*



*Recording the bunkers at Alicar*

a double-tiered promenade of brick, joining up the westerly ends of two new roads, Albert Road and Alexandra Road. The promenade, 1000ft long, still exists but is now almost entirely covered by the dunes and most of the properties actually constructed have disappeared. Volunteers helped expose and record the steps to the Promenade and expose the top of the lower tier.

The following week, as part of the same project, volunteers also recorded a set of recently rediscovered WWII bunkers at Altcar Training Camp near Hightown. The bunkers were part of Merseyside's WWII air defences and were used to control a Heavy Anti-Aircraft battery of four 3.7in guns. During the 1950s the site was adapted to form part of the Newton Orange Yeoman system which was controlled by a radar base at Frodsham. Little is known about the Altcar battery but it seems to have consisted of a battery of four adapted 5in naval guns, the WWII command post and four satellite bunkers. The command post in the photograph has several unusual features and seems to have been adapted for the new system. Newton Orange Yeoman was never completed as the technology was overtaken in the arms race between NATO and the Soviet Block but the radar system formed the basis of the Bloodhound missile system used in the 1960s and 70s.

*Mark Adams*

### Carving up Myths on Bidston Hill

Carving upon naturally outcropping sandstone is a ubiquitous phenomenon throughout human history and continues still today. Dating such carvings is almost impossible in many circumstances, but stylistic comparisons made with well understood (and dated) examples provides a reasoned starting point for any research or interpretation.

Bidston Hill in Wirral is home to a number of carvings which have been treated (or mistreated) to a host of interpretations often based upon very little research or enquiry. One particular carving (pictured) has suffered the misfortune of having a range of labels and dates apportioned to it, from a Viking Sun Goddess to the more elaborate claims of TV 'archaeologist' Mark Olly who has interpreted the carving as a "Romano-Celtic Moon Cat God with Egyptian influences" – surely a more considered and plausible explanation exists considering it would be the world's only known depiction of a Viking Sun Goddess and a Moon Cat God is just sheer nonsense.



On left - *The Bidston Carving*      On right - *The Llanychaer Cross*

The image has been created using a crude technique known as ‘pecking’ and clearly represents a crudely carved human figure, arms outstretched with what appears to be lines representing the cuffs of clothing or a robe. A ‘sun’ shape can be seen at the feet of the figure. The depiction of a person in robes with arms outstretched in front of the sun seems to have potential Christian connotations linked to the crucifixion or ascension of Christ, both common themes in early Christian imagery. With the only dateable stone sculpture from Bidston being a Viking Age hogback, a consideration of other Early Medieval Christian carvings in Britain may help shed some light upon the Bidston Hill mystery.

A cursory search shows a number of very similar early Christian sculptures found in coastal regions of Western Britain. Phillack in Cornwall has a stylistically similar crucifixion, whilst at Llanychaer near Fishguard an almost identical carving to Bidston can be seen on a 10th-century cross linked to Hiberno-Norse trade and settlement in the area. This depiction of Christ in an almost rigid outstretched pose is comparable to a multitude of similar portrayals in 9th- to 11th-century Irish metalwork and stone sculpture, which itself has roots in even earlier Christian iconography in Ireland. Wirral’s connections to the Hiberno-Norse world have long been recognised, and a case clearly exists for re-examining some of the carvings in a more reasoned context, even if this current hypothesis proves to be a false one. A proper recording programme across Bidston Hill would be an ideal starting point for this, it’s a long-term and important task but not something that requires much in the way of resources to undertake. This may be something which the recently-formed Bidston Community Archaeological group would be ideal organisers of as part of some of their wider community activities.

However, as a light-hearted word of caution, a prehistoric ‘phallic symbol’ was recently reported to the author by a keen-eyed member of the public – but given that it was found upon the face of an early 20th-century quarry, it has unfortunately been assigned to the not-so-rare “Schoolboy Penis” class of sculpture which I’m sure will baffle archaeologists and ethnographers in years to come, but serves as a warning to us all that our ‘Bidston Deity’ amongst others may simply be another example of the work of a bored schoolboy!

Dean Paton

### A Bronze Age flat axe from PAS

Recently a Bronze Age flat axe was brought in to the Portable Antiquities Scheme at Liverpool to be recorded. The axe is a complete cast copper alloy developed flat axe dating from the Early to Middle Bronze Age. The object is a narrow butted flat axe with a median bevel / proto stop ridge. It has straight sides, a rounded butt and a flared cutting edge with concave shoulders. The cutting edge is crescentic in plan and measures 1.68mm thick. The tips of the crescent shaped blade have been damaged through either abrasion or wear, as has the blade edge itself.

The majority of the patina has broken away leaving just two small patches on each face. One patch of smooth dark brown patina shows up the median bevel / proto stop ridge while another patch of the patina on the opposite face is just above the cutting edge. The remaining surface of the object is brownish green with patches of bright green corrosion.

The object can be classified as a developed flat axe most probably an undecorated type Bandon (corresponding to Type Derryniggin in Ireland). These are dated to the Early Bronze Age (EBA phase II / III), of metalworking stage IV-V (more likely V), which corresponds to Needham’s (1996) Period 3 circa 2000 - 1700 CAL. BC. This flat axe probably dates from c.1850-1750 BC. Similar examples have been found at Margam, Port Talbot (Savory 1980, No. 122) and Breach Farm, Vale of Glamorgan (Savory 1980, No. 338) associated with a cremation burial recently radiocarbon dated to c. 1750 - 1600 BC.

Schmidt and Burgess (1981, p.59) trace the development of the flat axe in Britain and Ireland. They identify the trend, “...from broad, simple, triangular forms with splaying sides and flat, even slightly convex, unembellished faces, to increasingly narrow forms, with ever-straighter sides that diverge less and less, approaching and even attaining, the parallel sided form typical of flanged axes. The trend is towards slightly dished faces, the edges of the faces are worked up into slight flanges, and a median bevel is an increasingly common feature. Decoration...becomes a commonplace...”



Bronze Age Flat Axe

Schmidt and Burgess (ibid.) explain that these developments were in part a function of changing hafting methods - the knee handle, with forked angled end required a narrower shape to fit snugly between the prongs of the fork. Furthermore, dished faces and raised edges made the seating more secure, and the median bevel reduced the tendency of the axe to be driven up into the fork. The axe has been recorded on the PAS database [www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database) as [LVPL-37DCA6](#). It is the only example of a Bronze Age axe which is recorded on the PAS database.

Savory, H. N., 1980. [\*Guide Catalogue to the Bronze Age Collections\*](#) Cardiff : National Museum of Wales.

Rohl, B. and Needham, S.P., 1998. [\*The Circulation of Metal in the British Bronze Age: The Application of Lead Isotope Analysis\*](#)

London : British Museum102.

Schmidt, P K and Burgess, C B, 1981. [\*The Axes of Scotland and Northern England\*](#) Munich.



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 1/2013

Registered Charity No 510831

## From the Editor:

Welcome to the MAS Spring Newsletter. Since the last Newsletter we have lost three long-standing members of the Society. They will be sadly missed and short obituaries can be found on page 2.

This issue contains contributions from Dean Paton and Vanessa Oakden together with the usual news items. There is also an update on the current situation regarding the state of archaeology on Merseyside.

Finally, you will note that this Newsletter is significantly shorter than previous issues. The Editor relies on contributions from members to give the Newsletter a more topical appeal. Articles can be on any subject related to archaeology whether it be a visit to a site of archaeological interest, a book review or a museum visit. The visits are not restricted to events organised by MAS. Articles are typically about 500 words in length plus a photograph(s). Hopefully, the Summer issue will contain more members' contributions.

Dave Roberts

## Subscription Reminder

**Please note that membership fees for 2013 were due on 1st January. Subscriptions should be paid to Joyce as soon as possible.**

## MAS 2012-13 Lecture programme

Our season of lectures continues this month. Meetings are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre. The room is booked from 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30. All welcome - including non-members.

18th April. AGM & Dr Kate Waddington, Bangor University, *The Whitchurch Project*.

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk please pass the information on to Chris as an idea for a future speaker. [C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk)

## AGM Reminder

Please note that that the 2013 AGM will be held on 18th April at 7.30 at the Quaker Meeting House. Please make every effort to attend. The AGM papers are included with this Newsletter.

## Merseyside Archaeological Society on Facebook

You can now follow us on Facebook:-

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1481822652#!/groups/151058304987687/>

## 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 that you feel would be of interest to members of the Society, 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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### ***The Merseyside Historic Environment Record (HER) and Archaeology on Merseyside***

In the last Newsletter it was reported that the HER remained closed and MAS and individuals were continuing to lobby the 5 local authorities pointing out their obligation to provide an archaeological service for Merseyside. It was also the intention at the time of writing to provide a stock letter for members to send off to their elected council representatives in an effort to widen the protest. In the last 2 months there have been further developments which have delayed this process.

The Merseyside HER has recently been re-opened by NML. However, the current charge for access is £500 per day plus VAT. The responsibility for providing access to the HER under Clause 169 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) rests with the local planning authority. Furthermore, development plans owned and published by each of the 5 local authorities pledge support for the maintenance of the Merseyside HER. It is clear that responsibility for the future of the Merseyside HER and for providing reasonable access to its database rests with the local authorities.

In a recent letter to each of the Council leaders and the departmental planning heads it was pointed out that the local councils had a clear obligation to provide access to an HER and have a proper service in place to ensure that Merseyside's archaeology is properly protected. A reply from Joe Anderson, Mayor of Liverpool, stated that talks between the 5 local authorities, NML and English Heritage were now taking place 'to seek a common agreement to establish a new arrangement for the Record, to ensure that its condition and availability will meet the ongoing responsibilities we share with the adjoining planning authorities'. He also stated that we 'are close to an agreement which appears to be capable of being implemented. This is subject to (the) resolution of some contractual issues which are currently being finalised between the relevant parties but I am optimistic that the matter will be capable of being resolved in (the) relatively near future'.

This sounds like good news and gives cause for cautious optimism. However, MAS Council members will continue to press the local authorities to try and ensure that a positive outcome emerges from these discussions. More next time.

### ***Sad News!***

Since the last Newsletter we have learnt of the death of three of our long-standing members. We send our condolences to their families and friends. They will all be sadly missed.

**Bill Highcock** died in December last year after a short illness. He was 84. Bill was an active member of MAS and during his membership he was also an enthusiastic member of the Society Council, resigning through ill-health only last year. One of Bill's interests was the use of dowsing as a method of detecting underground structures. He was passionate about the subject and time and time again he would defy the sceptics and be proved right by subsequent excavation. In recent years he was also involved in the archeological project at the site of the Stanley Bank Mill in Blackbrook, St Helens. Bill was a busy man and was Chair of St Helens Heritage Network and served on the Committee of the Sankey Canal Restoration Society as well as other local heritage groups. He lived in Crank and served on Rainford Parish Council for more than twenty years. He will be remembered for his boundless enthusiasm and commitment to the subject of archaeology, which he loved deeply.

**Jim O'Neil** passed away on 22nd December, tragically, the day after he retired as a college lecturer at the age of 60. Although he did not attend many MAS functions in his latter years, he was a member of the Society for twenty years or more. Jim lived in Hoylake and was a keen local historian with an interest in archaeology. One of the many projects that he was involved in was the restoration of the old village pump in Greasby. Always friendly and approachable, Wirral has lost one of its greatest enthusiasts in Jim.

**Richard Arthur Benjamin Jarvis** came from Norwich to the North West to live in Prescott some 50 plus years ago and for many years taught at Cowley School in St Helens where he was Head of Mathematics and later Assistant Head Teacher. Richard and Margaret, his wife, have been members of the Society for many years and Margaret was saying that on his retirement, Richard, on realising that she was really having more fun from her interest in MAS than he was with his own interests, decided to join her. Their family membership was the start of a long relationship with the Society and, even after Richard's health started to give him problems, they were both regular and loyal attendees at the monthly lecture meetings, the summer field visits and indeed some of the weekend meetings so ably organised by Julia and Neil McLaughlin Cook.

### **Graveyard Recording at All Saints Church, Childwall**

With the hope of warmer weather ahead, graveyard recording at All Saints Church, Childwall will resume after Easter. About 850 monuments have been recorded to date and we hope to complete the documentation of the oldest graves this year. If you are interested in joining this project please contact Dave Roberts. Tel 0151 4272980 email: [dbrandpr@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:dbrandpr@blueyonder.co.uk)

### **“Rainford’s Roots: A Community Archaeology Project”**

Last time we reported that MAS has been awarded a grant of £75,000 for a new community project known as ‘Rainford’s Roots’. The project will be focused on the village of Rainford near St Helens and will explore the industrial heritage of the village, focusing on its post medieval potting and clay tobacco pipe cottage industries. This project has been set up in collaboration with National Museums Liverpool and many aspects of the project will be supervised and supported by their Field Archaeology Unit. The museum will also be host to a Community Project Officer who will oversee the running of the 21-month project.

We are pleased to announce that Sam Rowe has been appointed as Community Project Officer. The project is still in its initial stages but there has already been a lot of local interest and two successful ‘Drop-in’ days have been held in Rainford to launch the project. There will be opportunities for MAS members to become involved in due course and details will be announced in future Newsletters or visit the website at [www.rainfordsroots.com](http://www.rainfordsroots.com).

### ***Journal of Merseyside Archaeological Society Volume 14***

The Society is pleased to announce that Volume 14 is now available. This volume is wholly dedicated to the 2002 excavation carried out by the Archaeological Field Unit at National Museums Liverpool at Big Lea Green Farm, Sutton near St Helens. The Journal is approximately 120 pages in length and not only contains a report on the excavation but also chapters on significant collections of pottery, clay pipes and other artefacts recovered from the site. The authors are Andy Towle and Jeff Speakman with contributions from other professionals.

If you were not a member during 2011 or 2012 and wish to purchase a copy they are available from Julia McLaughlin Cook at £10 each plus postage. e-mail: [mclaughlinjulia@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mclaughlinjulia@yahoo.co.uk)

### **CBA North West Spring Meeting**

The CBA North West 2013 Spring meeting and AGM will be held on Saturday 11th May. The meeting is entitled ‘The Mesolithic of North West England: Current Research’. Details of the venue and further information, including a registration form, will be available at [http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbanw/CBANW\\_meetings\\_intro.html](http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbanw/CBANW_meetings_intro.html) in due course.

### ***Norton Priory Evening Talks - A series of talks on a range of historical and archaeological themes by local experts and researchers.***

8 April ‘A Medieval Murder Mystery at Norton Priory’ by Lynn Smith, Senior Keeper

13 May ‘For the salvation of our souls: the Dutton family and Norton Priory’ by Dr Andrew Abram, Lecturer in Medieval History

10 June ‘Cheshire’s Military Contribution in the 14th Century - the Archer’s tale’ by Gary Ashby & Dan Garner, re-enactors

8 July ‘The History of the Norton Priory Georgian Walled Garden - Secrets Revealed’ by Paul Quigley, Ranger

9 Sept ‘Archaeology and Development: The work of the Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service’ by Mark Leah, Development Control Archaeologist

14 Oct ‘Fascinating Folk-lore: The everyday story of country folk, their cures, superstitions and witchcraft beliefs’ by Christine Allison, Historian

Monday evenings 7pm. £3 per person. Places are limited and must be booked in advance. Go to [www.nortonpriory.org](http://www.nortonpriory.org) or telephone 019828 569895

## A Healthy Interest in the Past...

With swathes of heritage cuts across Britain taking hold, you'd be forgiven for thinking the death-knoll was beginning to chime for our historic environment. Yet, more people than ever are showing an interest in local history, which invariably offers fun and educational days out that cost very little. The recession has witnessed an increased interest in visiting historic sites and monuments across the UK, but it's not just people's bank balances that are benefitting. Indeed, whilst a heritage trip might save a few pounds from your wallet, it's more likely to lose you a few pounds from your waist-line.

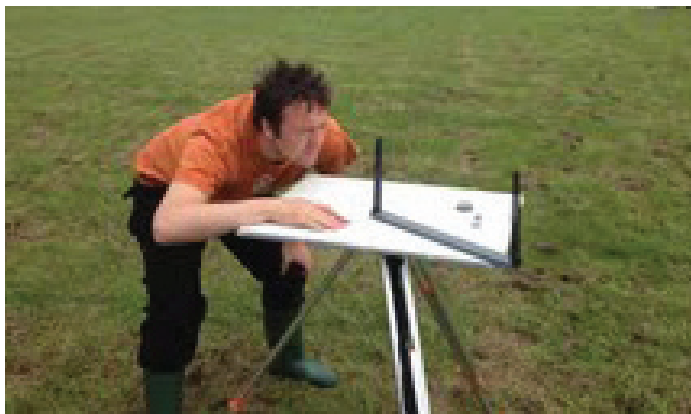
Big Heritage is a Social Enterprise based in Bromborough. The company was founded as a way of engaging people from non-traditional backgrounds with archaeology and heritage, and to harness the power of the past to tackle 21st-century problems, one of which is lack of exercise and obesity. Over the course of 2013, Big Heritage will be helping 45 men (aged 55+) deemed to be at higher risk of physical and mental health issues in exploring the landscape archaeology of Wirral. The project will include training in map regression, walk-over surveys, basic earthwork surveying techniques and field walking – all of which offer gentle introductions into exercise, and will leave participants with a set of skills that they can use independently once the project is complete.

NHS Wirral has provided direct funding for the project from its Public Health Innovation Fund, and hopes that the project will act as a springboard to engaging more people in the recently published "Five Ways to Wellbeing" which the NHS recognise as important factors in living a healthy lifestyle. The project will be running in Wirral, a place which is bristling with unexplored and unrecorded features from the past, from medieval field systems to World War II practise trenches. Target locations for this project include Bromborough, Spital and Arrowe Park.

That great father of English landscape history, W.G.Hoskins remarked that a sturdy pair of boots and a good coat are all that is required to start exploring the nation's rich past – and this is also the first step to getting our nation off its collective backsides and out into the great outdoors.

For more details, visit the History for Health page at [www.BigHeritage.co.uk](http://www.BigHeritage.co.uk) – places are still available for men over 55 but are restricted to specific postcodes. Email [info@bigheritage.co.uk](mailto:info@bigheritage.co.uk) to see if you can apply.

Dean Paton



Learn surveying techniques with 'Big Heritage'.

**A 9th-century copper pin** This cast copper alloy disc-headed pin was recently found in the parish of Formby and was reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme. The object has a flat circular head which measures 16.43mm in width and is 1.50mm thick. The outer face of the disc is decorated with five punched ring-and-dot motifs surrounding a central ring-and-dot. The dots have an internal diameter of 1.55mm. The rear of the head is undecorated. The shaft is straight and tapers to a rounded point which appears to be complete. The object has a light to mid green rough patina and is corroded. A similar example can be found in Mills (2001), p58, AS128 and has been dated from the late 8<sup>th</sup> to early 9<sup>th</sup> century.



These types of pins date to the 9th century; the plate headed types are late in the sequence being most common after the Viking conquest of Yorkshire in AD867, Haldenby, FRG datasheet 44.

Currently this is the only Early Medieval pin recorded from the Merseyside area. You can view the complete record at [www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database) as [LVPL-A6C291](http://www.finds.org.uk/database).

Mills, N., 2001. [Saxon and Viking Artefacts](#), Witham .

Vanessa Oakden, *Finds Liaison Officer, Cheshire, Greater Manchester & Merseyside.*



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 2/2013

Registered Charity No 510831

## MAS 2013-14 Lecture programme

Our season of lectures starts next month. Meetings are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre. The room is booked from 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30. All welcome - including non-members.

### Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> October

Gina Muskett, Curator of Classical Antiquities, National Museums Liverpool

*'Bryan Faussett: a pioneer of Anglo-Saxon archaeology'*

Between 1760 and 1773, Rev. Bryan Faussett excavated over 750 Anglo-Saxon burials, all close to his home in Kent. This evening's talk explores how a clergyman from Kent succeeded in excavating one of the finest groups of Anglo-Saxon material ever discovered, now part of the collections of National Museums Liverpool.

### Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> November

Ron Cowell, Curator of Prehistoric Archaeology, National Museums Liverpool

*'Excavations at a rare prehistoric hunter-gatherer wetland settlement at Lunt Meadows Sefton, Merseyside'*

The Museum of Liverpool are currently excavating the site of two Mesolithic houses dating to about 8000 years ago in the floodplain of the River Alt. This is a deeply buried, stratified site with associated wet deposits that should provide a detailed picture of the contemporary landscape. As such this makes Lunt Meadows potentially one of the most important in the country for Mesolithic studies.

### Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> December

*Christmas Meeting*

This year our annual pre-Christmas meeting will feature short talks from local archaeologists, including Sam Rowe, Community Archaeologist.

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk please pass the information on to Gina as an idea for a future speaker. [DrGeorgina.Muskett@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:DrGeorgina.Muskett@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

## Merseyside Archaeological Society on Facebook

You can now follow us on Facebook:-  
<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1481822652#!/groups/151058304987687/>

## 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 that you feel would be of interest to members of the Society, please contact the Newsletter Editor. Please note that contributions may have to be edited.

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### ***The Merseyside Historic Environment Record (HER) and Archaeology on Merseyside***

Since the last Newsletter further discussions between the local authorities, English Heritage and NML have taken place regarding the future provision of a Merseyside HER. It is believed that a resolution has now been found and that there will be a formal announcement shortly. This is good news following two and a half years of uncertainty. However, it is still unclear what processes the local authorities have implemented to take on the planning issues formerly dealt with by Merseyside Archaeological Advisory Service particularly around the policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is hoped that we shall have further detailed information to pass on in the next Newsletter at the end of the year.

### **West Kirby Museum**

The newly refurbished West Kirby Museum is now open. Formerly known as the Charles Dawson Brown Museum, it was hidden away for over a century, available to view by appointment only. Charles Dawson Brown was the local historian, antiquarian and benefactor who preserved the ancient stones which were being unearthed during the rebuilding of St. Bridget's Church in 1869. These stones form the core of the museum collection.

The old museum room has been completely transformed into a modern, spot-lit and accessible display area and the museum space now extends into a second room, allowing sufficient space for the exhibits to be enjoyed by the public. The collection tells the story of a thousand years of St. Bridget's Church including pre-Norman, Norman, Medieval and recent acquisitions relating to the church. It is supplemented with information about the old village of West Kirby, the old school and other items found in or around West Kirby.

The stone collection includes 10<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Saxon stone cross fragments, a Saxon font, Viking grave slabs, and a 12<sup>th</sup> century child's coffin. There are some fine architectural pieces including Norman pillar bases and capitals, stone heads and window tracery.

The museum is located within the newly created St. Bridget's Centre, St. Bridget's Lane, West Kirby. The museum research group meet weekly in one of the large rooms within the Centre and regularly mount displays of their work at special events.

We opened with a celebration weekend in mid July to coincide with the national Festival of Archaeology. The research group put on a splendid display which created a lot of interest and there was a selection of archaeological hands-on activities for all ages.

There is a website to get up-to date information – [www.westkirbymuseum.co.uk](http://www.westkirbymuseum.co.uk)

We are in the process of arranging our winter opening and expect to open every Saturday morning 10am – 1pm. Please check the website for further details.

*Christine Longworth*

### **'Life and Death - Stories of Norton Priory'. A conference to be held on Saturday 26th October at Merseyside Maritime Museum, Liverpool.**

Tickets costing £35 (£25 concessions) each, including a buffet lunch and refreshments, can be obtained from the reception desk at Norton Priory or by visiting their website at: [www.nortonpriory.org](http://www.nortonpriory.org) or telephone 01928 569895

Speakers to include:

Lynn Smith - Senior Keeper The Norton Priory Museum Trust

Dr Andrew Abram - Lecturer in Medieval History, School of Archaeology, History and Anthropology, University of Wales, Trinity Saint David

Dr Martin Heale - Lecturer in Late Medieval History, School of History, University of Liverpool

Shirley Curtis-Summers - PhD Researcher, University of Liverpool

John Larson - former Head of Sculpture Conservation, National Museums Liverpool

Jane McCormish - Field Officer, York Archaeological Trust

Tom Holland - Author and TV Presenter

Conference Chair - Frank Hargrave, Director, The Norton Priory Museum Trust.

### **CBA North West Autumn Meeting**

The CBA North West 2013 Autumn meeting will be held on Saturday 9th November at Waddington, Lancashire. The meeting is entitled 'The Vernacular Architecture of Buildings' and will include a guided walk. Details of the venue and further information, including a registration form, will be available at [http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbanw/CBANW\\_meetings\\_intro.html](http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbanw/CBANW_meetings_intro.html) shortly.

### **Royal Archaeological Institute Conference, Chester**

A public lecture entitled 'Re-assessing the transformation of rural society in the Roman Rhineland' will be delivered by Professor Nico Roymans on Friday 11th October at 7.30 at the Riverside Innovation Centre. Places are free but must be booked in advance by e-mail to [csraison@gmail.com](mailto:csraison@gmail.com). Further information is available at [www.royalarchinst.org/conferences](http://www.royalarchinst.org/conferences).

Abstract:

Central in my lecture will be the study of the transformation of rural communities in the Roman Rhineland following their integration into the empire. I will focus attention on the first two centuries AD in the province of Lower Germany and the adjacent hinterland of Belgic Gaul. The integration of these regions in the imperial power structure triggered fundamental social changes, the most spectacular manifestations being the introduction of Roman-style towns and the associated urban culture, and the creation of a highly militarised frontier zone with the Rhine limes as the central axis. Just as important, however, and inextricably linked to this was the transformation of the countryside, where at least 90% of the population lived.

I will analyse developments from a rural perspective, based on a multi-dimensional approach. I am not opting for a single all-compassing 'grand theory', but rather a pragmatic, eclectic approach that takes account of social, economic and cultural aspects, and looks at structures changing over time as well as the agency of individuals and groups. In my lecture I will discuss the following topics: 1. Reconsidering rural settlement patterns; 2. The agrarian basis of the rural economy; 3. Rural change and the agency role of veterans; 4. Case study: the villa of Hoogeloon and the archaeology of marginal area; 5. Material culture and the articulation of interconnectivity and regionality. I will finish with some prospects for future research.

For many regions, a reasonably good picture of the rural settlement patterns has emerged in the last decades, thanks to a dramatic increase in large-scale excavations in combination with surveys and the systematic registration of sites. This enables us to re-assess the rural settlement patterns. The habitation densities of many landscapes have proven to be considerably higher than was assumed until recently, and in the so-called villa landscapes the relative proportion of post-built sites appears to have been seriously underestimated. Until now, studies have placed too one-sided an emphasis on stone-built sites, while post-built sites that are more difficult to detect have been virtually ignored.

This re-evaluation of settlement evidence has major ramifications for the study of rural changes. First are the demographic implications. Everywhere, we should reckon with significantly higher population densities than we have previously assumed. Secondly, the new findings have implications for our social interpretations of rural landscapes. Especially in villa regions, the variation in settlements has proved greater than we thought, and we probably should assume complex relationships of dependency between the post-built farmsteads and different kinds of villas.

What strikes us most are the large regional differences. Perhaps the most important insight within regional archaeological research over the past decades is that Roman rural landscapes didn't form a homogeneous whole in terms of either their physical appearance or social organisation. Stimulated by the post-colonial agenda, much more attention is now being given to the heterogeneity and regionality of rural landscapes.

Finally we should not forget that the Rhineland was situated in the Germanic frontier zone of the Roman empire where troops were stationed on a vast scale. Although Rhineland archaeology has traditionally placed a heavy emphasis on both Roman military studies and rural research, the theme of interconnectivity between the military and the rural world long remained an underexplored field of study. This theme allows us to gain a better understanding of the social changes in the countryside and in particular the agency role of veterans in this region that was illustrious for its intensive ethnic recruitment.

### **Re-Capturing the past of Salford Quays. A one day conference at Ordsall Hall, Salford on Friday 18th October 2013**

2014 will be the 120th anniversary of the opening of the Manchester Ship Canal, and it is 30 years since the closure of Manchester Docks. This conference aims to illustrate and explain the history and archaeology of the docks and to discuss their transformation to Salford Quays. Further information and a booking form can be found at [www.mrias.co.uk](http://www.mrias.co.uk).

### **Graveyard Recording at All Saints Church, Childwall**

Excellent progress has been made this Summer with over 1000 graves now recorded. This year work will continue through the Autumn. If you are interested in joining this project please contact Dave Roberts. Tel 0151 4272980 email: [drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk)



*Excavating at Rainford*

## **Community Archaeology in Rainford**

### ***Rainford's Roots Project Update***

Rainford's Roots launched in January this year and so far has seen a lot of success. The project aims to increase people's knowledge of the history of Rainford village near St Helens, whilst widening participation and dissemination of community archaeology in the region.

Over the summer the project team has carried out a number of test pit excavations in the village, to investigate the archaeological deposits around the village core. The team along with volunteers from the community have uncovered a wealth of artefacts including pottery ranging in date from the 16th-20th centuries, clay tobacco pipes, glass, and post medieval flint.

In April the project uncovered more of a deposit of 16th century fineware ceramics which had been identified in 2011 on an earlier community dig. A whole range of cups and mugs were uncovered at the site, alongside kiln furniture which had all been dumped in a field boundary ditch running through the heart of the village. This community dig coincided with a commercial watching brief at Rainford tennis courts, where over 2 metric tonnes of 17th and 18th century pottery was recovered. Some of the vessels found during these two excavations are currently in a temporary display at the Museum of Liverpool on Liverpool waterfront until the end of September.

In July, the project hosted a number of events during the Festival of Archaeology 2013, including a number of artefact handling sessions, displays, and walking tours of the village. Further events will take place throughout

the project.

In August the project carried out an excavation at Rainford library on Church Road. Rainford library is the former site of a public house; one of many in Rainford. In the mid 19th century a pipe shop was built on this site, later to be known as 'Laithwaites'. Pipe production on the site ceased c.1912, but the building was intact until the construction of the current library, built in 1955. This pipe shop was one of a great number in operation in and around Rainford at this time. Investigating known former industrial sites helps us understand the activities that were taking place in the village, and highlights the sorts of materials and objects that were being produced, used, and traded in Rainford.

### ***Rainford History***

Rainford has always been a farming community with some of the earliest farms and houses situated on the outskirts of the current village core. In the early 17th century, the clay tobacco pipe industry began to flourish in the village, with pipe shops being built alongside farmsteads, and then later on in the village core along the main roads of Church Road, Mossborough Road, and Pasture Lane in particular. The Rainford's Roots project aims to shed light on the industrial history of the village, through various means of surveys, excavations, documentary research and finds analysis, and sharing these discoveries with local communities.

### ***Opportunities to get involved***

#### *Book*

As part of the project, a book and walking tour are being developed, exploring the history of the village, including some of its more significant industries and sites. We would like contributors to help research some of the local industries, buildings, and families of Rainford, to include as case studies in our project publication. This would be perfect for somebody looking for a small concise research project that has a guarantee of getting your work published. If you are interested in helping out with the project, please contact us.

#### *Finds Processing*

A wealth of material has been recovered from recent excavations in Rainford, which all needs to be processed and catalogued. This is an ongoing project

based at the Museum of Liverpool and anyone is welcome to help out. Please contact us to learn about our latest sessions.

### Contact details

By Email: [rainfordsroots@gmail.com](mailto:rainfordsroots@gmail.com) or Telephone 0151 478 4560. Up to date information can be found at [www.rainfordsroots.com](http://www.rainfordsroots.com)

### Museum of Liverpool court housing oral history project

Kerry Massheder is the Council for British Archaeology's Community Archaeology Placement holder based at the Museum of Liverpool until April 2014. Kerry currently serves on the MAS council, is a PhD student at the University of Liverpool and is particularly interested in industrial archaeology, oral history, workers' housing and community archaeology. To record and share her placement experiences she regularly updates her blog at <http://kerrymassheder.wordpress.com>.

As part of her placement Kerry is working on an oral history project to capture memories of Liverpool's court housing. She writes....

*'Members of MAS who have visited the Museum of Liverpool may recall the reconstruction of court housing in The People's Republic gallery. The reconstruction provides visitors with an insight into typical poor quality housing available to Liverpool's working class from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*



Liverpool Court House

*'Courts' were a form of back-to-back housing built around a narrow courtyard. Typically they were small, overcrowded, of poor quality and lacked sanitation and drainage resulting in them becoming 'slums'. Slum clearances occurred from the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and sadly no examples of court housing have survived.*

*Within the Museum of Liverpool collection we have maps, photographs, models and contemporary written descriptions of court housing. Now, we are looking to record first hand memories of Liverpool's 'courts'.*

If you can contribute memories to the project, or would like further information, please get in touch with me [Kerry.Massheder@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Kerry.Massheder@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk) 0151 478 4033.'

### MAS Visit to York - 27th July 2013

A small group of members made the train journey to York on a warm sunny day to be expertly led by Peter Connelly, Director of Archaeology at York Archaeology Trust and archaeology graduate of Liverpool University. Our first stop was at the area around the modern station located just outside the city walls, to be told the original station was positioned just inside the walls. Both station sites lie above Roman archaeology since they are near to the Roman route which led to the river crossing. Following this route we soon reached the south bank of the River Ouse close to the Saxon Church of All Saints. On the opposite bank we could see the Guildhall, rebuilt following WW II damage. Beneath it there is a water gate, where the characteristic cream building stone was brought by river from Tadcaster and delivered to the Minster along Stonegate (the Roman *via praetoria*).

Crossing the Ouse Bridge, Peter pointed out the high flood levels which frequently inundate the riverside properties. He explained that York is situated on a moraine which is cut through by the river at this point. The city lies at a 'nodal point' with access to the sea as well as inland. Sailing barges called Humber Keels were able to reach here from the Humber estuary.

Our leader skillfully navigated us through the edge of the city centre, pausing near the Jorvik Centre on Coppergate ('the street of the cup makers') and observing the regular width (c5m) of the properties indicative of Viking town planning. With a certain amount of glee we were informed that a nearby





*Guided Tour at York*

excavation at Lloyds Bank had produced a large Viking coprolite - analysis indicated worm infestation. Diving through narrow passageways, we passed a 'one up - one down blind-back' cottage which was not as long as the car parked next to it.

Eventually we reached the Hungate ('street of the hounds') dig site located in a loop of the River Foss south-east of the city centre. The dig has been ongoing since 2006 and the site's substantial headquarters has accumulated over 1700 boxes of finds, of which two thirds are animal bones. Excavations on the proposed site of a basement car park have uncovered the remains of Victorian slums, horticultural soils, medieval rubbish, Viking age buildings and Roman burials. The current community archaeology dig is concentrating on finding the site of St John's in the Marsh church; dismantled in 1580 it is one of several 'lost' churches in the area. William the Conqueror dammed the Foss to form a castle moat and a large marshy 'fish pond' - hence the church's name.

The Victorian industrialist Seebohm Rowntree described Hungate as the poorest section of the city and this is confirmed by the present excavations of the foundations of 19th century workers' dwellings which Peter thinks lie above the footprint of the church. Documents such as maps and census returns led to the conclusion that most of the occupants were poor incomers from rural Yorkshire. We could see the outline of a small terrace of 'one up- one down' houses with their communal lavatories. Peter appeared proud of the Duckett's tipper flush toilets that had been found at Hungate - for more information on these and the site in general, visit the excellent website: [www.dighungate.com](http://www.dighungate.com)

Finally we made a brief visit to the DIG exhibition

'Looking Back at Hungate' to see some of the significant finds including a Roman skeleton, Viking ice skates, Saxon boat timbers and also watch videos of the excavation. Thanks were expressed to our guide who had made the trip so worthwhile with his comprehensive knowledge and archaeological experience coupled with his ability to explain the landscape and social context of the sites.

*M.A. Handley*

## **CBA North-West Spring Conference**

The CBA North-West Spring Conference; 'The Mesolithic of North West England: Current Research' was held on the 11th May 2013 in the accessible Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester.

The conference opened with 'The Map is not the Territory' - Andrew Myers giving his thoughts on the Mesolithic of NW England. This included Bayesian statistical modeling of population density estimates during the Mesolithic. He also suggested that although migration was possible across the North Sea at 11000 BP, the Irish Sea was inundated so that Ireland was not colonised until about 7000 BC. This lecture was followed by 'A tale of 27,000 buckets', an account by Paul Clark of excavating a transitional mesolithic site at Stainton West, Carlisle. Apart from the buckets there were also around 6000 microliths and the vast number of finds meant that the team purchased one company's national stock of plastic boxes for storage! Randy Donahue, the final speaker before lunch, described the use of geochemical analysis for identifying the source of black chert. A variety of techniques were used including Neutron Activation Analysis, X-ray Fluorescence and Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry. He was able to identify a north-south divide in the distribution of chert and suggested that hunter-gatherers moved east-west between upland and lowland. He compared the mesolithic hunter-gatherer with the First Nation people of his homeland Canada. They were able to memorise long distance routes and topography using stories and mnemonics.

After lunch a presentation on the Formby Footprints by Alison Burns provided a refreshing approach to the subject and demonstrated her enthusiasm for the archaeology. In addition to the animal footprints, she provided a well illustrated selection of the human footprints revealed on

the coastal erosion surface. The photographs of the casts showed features such as missing toes, claw foot and toe nail drag. Allison demonstrated the difference between male, female and children's prints as well as an uneven gait caused by arthritis. The following lecture by Paul Preston returned to the subject of chert. His research found that although there was a significant number of Mesolithic sites in the Central Pennines, there was no local source of chert and he could find little or no evidence for knapping so concluding that blades were imported. The excavation of a mesolithic village on the Isle of Man was described by Fraser Brown. Because the site was at the extension of the airport runway they had to work at night.

Finally, Ron Cowell gave his thoughts on the Mesolithic structures and artefacts found at Lunt Meadows in Sefton. The site lies at the boundary of the Shirdley Hill Sand in the wetland belt of the west Lancashire plain. Finds included chert tools sourced from North Wales and large stone tools or weights. There are pits with tightly packed stones suggestive of settlement structures. A date of 5800 BC cal had been determined. Ron graphically illustrated the reality of digging in wet weather - after all it was a wetland site!

*M. A. Handley*



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 3/2013

Registered Charity No 510831

## MAS 2013-14 Lecture programme

Our 2014 lectures start next month. Meetings are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre. The room is booked from 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30. All welcome - including non-members.

Thursday, 16th January

Dr Vicki Cummings, Reader in Archaeology, University of Central Lancashire  
*'The Structure of Dolmens'*

Thursday, 20th February

Dr Sue Stallibrass, English Heritage Archaeological Science Advisor for North-West England  
*'Roman NW England: Just another part of the Empire or a Regional Speciality'*

Thursday, 20th March

Dr Andy Shuttleworth, Honorary Research Fellow, the University of Liverpool  
*Title tba*

Thursday, 17th April

AGM followed by a talk from Kerry Massheder  
*'Liverpool's Court Housing: An Oral History Project'*

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk please pass the information on to Gina as an idea for a future speaker. [Georgina.Muskett@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Georgina.Muskett@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

## MAS December Meeting

The Society's Christmas meeting was held on Thursday 12th December. We had two really good and interesting presentations from 'home grown' speakers. Sam Rowe gave an excellent run down of the first year of work on the Rainford Roots Community Archaeology project and Betty Nesbitt talked of her research and the fieldwork undertaken by the Bidston Community Archaeology Group on the archaeological and historical evidence of the flag signalling system used to alert shipping owners of the sighting of their ships heading for the Port of Liverpool. However, only 12 members attended the meeting, (including the two speakers) which is far less than the usual numbers at monthly meetings. We would therefore like to hear from those who did not attend to help us decide what to do at future December meetings.

## 2014 Subscriptions

Subscriptions for 2014 will be due on 1st January. A membership renewal form is included with this Newsletter.

## Merseyside Archaeological Society on Facebook

You can now follow us on Facebook:-

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1481822652#!/groups/151058304987687/>

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

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Rob Philpott

e-mail: [Rob.Philpott@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Rob.Philpott@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

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Dave Roberts

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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 that you feel would be of interest to members of the Society, 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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Merseyside Archaeological Society

Web Site: <http://merseysidearchsoc.weebly.com>

### ***The Merseyside Historic Environment Record (HER) and Archaeology on Merseyside***

Responsibility for the Merseyside Historic Environment Record (MHER) has now passed to the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS), who are facilitating access to the Record, and maintain and update it on behalf of the five Merseyside borough councils (Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Sefton and Wirral).

MEAS is an existing joint local authority advisory service hosted by Sefton Council. National Museums Liverpool will lend the paper-based MHER documentation to MEAS so that it can be digitised. MEAS will appoint an HER Officer who will be responsible for overseeing the digitisation process and subsequent maintenance of the Record. In due course a web-site presence for the HER will also be established.

During the transitional period, which began on 14 November 2013, access to the Merseyside HER will be restricted to the provision of point-data index information from monument records, which National Museums Liverpool will endeavour to offer on an interim basis. The daily fee remains at £500; with a minimum fee of £100 per enquiry. From 1 April 2014, all enquiries should be directed to MEAS at: First Floor, Merton House, Stanley Road, Bootle, L20 3DL. During this transitional period the contact officer at MEAS is Paul Slinn, telephone: 0151 934 2791 or email [paul.slinn@eas.sefton.gov.uk](mailto:paul.slinn@eas.sefton.gov.uk).

While the digitisation project is ongoing, MEAS will not be offering planning advice to the districts, but will facilitate access to the archive from 1 April 2014 to enable assessment of the archaeological potential in areas of proposed development. The access fees will be confirmed in due course.

Securing a positive future for the Merseyside Historic Environment Record has been a priority for National Museums Liverpool and many stakeholders including MAS. This transfer has been achieved through agreement between National Museums Liverpool, MEAS and the five Merseyside districts, with the support of English Heritage.

Further information regarding the HER can be found at: <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol/collections/historic-environment-record>

### ***Publications***

Many of you will know that Julia McLaughlin Cook has stood down as Publications Secretary after many years in the job. The Society is indebted to Julia for her enthusiasm in fulfilling the important role of promoting and selling Society publications as it is one of the key ways in which we generate our income. MAS is pleased to announce that Sam Rowe has kindly offered to take over from Julia. Sam can be contacted by email at: [Sam.Rowe@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Sam.Rowe@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

Work has started on Volume 15 of the Journal of Merseyside Archaeological Society. The publication will be available in the first half of 2014. We are also gathering material for Volume 16.

Articles received so far include 2 excellent papers from Jen Lewis concerning Speke Hall. The first article discusses the structural history of the house and the second reports the results of an archaeological survey undertaken in 1993 on the site of the Speke Hall Home Farm. Both are significant additions to an understanding of what is possibly Merseyside's finest building and its landscape.

We have also received a paper from Oxford Archaeology North outlining the results of an excavation at Old Millfield Lane, which lies to the north of Haydock. The excavation was undertaken during the construction of the United Utilities West-East Main pipeline. It uncovered several post-medieval ditches, a small enclosure, as well as a small eighteenth-/nineteenth-century building.

### ***MAS Council***

We are happy to announce that the Council has recruited and co-opted a new member. Martin Cox is an active participant of the Rainford's Roots Project and we are pleased to welcome him to serve on the MAS Council. Martin has kindly volunteered to take on the vacant role of Secretary.

### ***Graveyard Recording at All Saints Church, Childwall***

Excellent progress has been made this year with over 1000 graves now recorded. If you are interested in joining this project please contact Dave Roberts. Tel 0151 4272980 email: [drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk)



*Rainford Open Day and Mayoral Visit*

### ***Rainford's Roots - Project Update***

The Rainford's Roots community project has had an excellent year engaging local people with the archaeology of the area. Between April and September this year the project has run four excavations in the village, one building recording exercise, several heritage walking tours, and numerous outreach and exhibition days. The excavations have uncovered a wealth of exciting material, teaching us about the history of the village; from 16th-17th century pottery assemblages, clay tobacco pipe scatters, ceramic manufacturing waste, to a post medieval gun flint. The project has run a mixture of volunteering and outreach events so far, including practical fieldwork and finds processing days, open day events and handling sessions.

Our last excavation at Rainford library gained huge interest from the public. During the 7 days of the dig, 59 volunteers helped out totalling 413 hours working on-site! 209 visitors came to see the progress of the dig during the two open days, as well as council members, library staff, and the St Helens Mayor .

Since the excavation at Rainford library, the project team and its volunteers have been focusing on processing and archiving the boxes of material recovered from fieldwork activities during the year. This has included over five weeks of finds processing sessions with volunteers, including local Rainford residents, as



*Rainford Finds Processing*

well as students from the University of Liverpool and many other enthusiastic individuals. The project team based at the Museum of Liverpool has been hosting three student placements from the University of Liverpool since October. The students have been helping the team to process material from sites in Rainford, as well as doing historic research and assisting with project events.

### *Activities and events since the summer*

In September, the Rainford Heritage Society hosted a heritage weekend event at Rainford village hall, focusing on what life was like in the village during World War II. The Society organised many local businesses and groups to be involved, and the Rainford's Roots team had a stall at the heritage event. Around 500 people visited the event on Saturday 14th September and it was a great success for the local community.

On 11-12 November Liverpool was host to the annual Museum Association Conference. 42 people attended the Rainford's Root project workshop on the benefits and achievements of community archaeology, which allowed the team to present the progress and experiences of the project to date to an international audience. Two of the project's volunteers, Martin Cox and Becky Gardom presented alongside the Project Officer, Sam Rowe.



*Museum Association Conference*

The project has been working with youth groups and schools during November. The project ran an event for the Young Archaeologists' Club at the Museum of Liverpool where they ran interactive activities, teaching young people how to research historic maps and sites, as well as how to prepare for an excavation, and how to sort and record archaeological objects. For a week in November the project team also ran a series of school workshops at the museum for 101 children from three schools in St Helens, including workshops for children with Special Educational Needs.

### *Project statistics for 2013*

Total volunteering hours: 2198  
 Total visitor numbers: 999  
 Number of days processing material: 50  
 Number of days excavating: 21  
 Number of outreach events: 17

### *News and upcoming events*

From the end of November, some of the best finds from recent

excavations in Rainford will be on display at the Museum of Liverpool. This exhibition forms part of the 'recent finds' case in the History Detectives gallery on the first floor of the museum. The exhibition will be running into the New Year. Please come along and see some of the objects the project has discovered.

On Tuesday 14th January 2014 the project will be holding a talk at Rainford Library, Church Road WA11 8HA to talk about the latest news and discoveries from the project. The talk will start at 2pm and include a small display of some of the artefacts discovered during the excavation at the library. Contact Rainford library for details on 01744 677820.

The project is now on Twitter! Search @rainfordsroots to hear the latest news on the project. You can also still follow us on facebook [www.facebook.com/rainfordsroots](http://www.facebook.com/rainfordsroots).

### *To get involved*

Rainford's Roots is always looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help out with the project. In the New Year there will be plenty of opportunities to help the team catalogue and archive material from the 2013 excavations, ready for storage and display purposes. There will also be more fieldwork to get involved with (dates and arrangements tbc).

By email [rainfordsroots@gmail.com](mailto:rainfordsroots@gmail.com) or telephone 0151 4784560

Up to date information can be found at [www.rainfordsroots.com](http://www.rainfordsroots.com)

### *Sam Rowe*

#### *Processing finds from Rainford*

My name's Barny Hoffman and I am a 2nd year Evolutionary Anthropology student, studying at the University of Liverpool. I am currently taking part in a placement with National Museums Liverpool (NML). The placement has included processing finds from the excavations currently taking place at Rainford. Rainford itself is a village outside St Helens, which, through recent archaeological digs, has exhibited sites rich with post-medieval culture that is invaluable to the archaeological record.

I personally found the finds processing session to be extremely enjoyable and valuable. A number of archaeologists/archaeology students gathered in a relatively informal setting and proceeded to group similar finds together, then bag them up. For example, pottery made out of the same material would be grouped together; clay pipes were grouped together (with the exception of pipes featuring patterns or designs on them which would be grouped separately); glass was grouped together, and so on. Waste material was put to the side as this is not kept but is noted in the archaeological record. In terms of bagging the grouped material up, it was deposited into carefully labelled bags which could then be categorized in order and referred back to.

The general atmosphere was great – everyone was relaxed and keen to get involved. You could have had no previous knowledge of archaeology or the site itself and still got stuck in and enjoyed yourself, as well as coming out of the experience more informed about Rainford and archaeology in general. All in all, I found it not only interesting but – dare I say it – fun, and highly recommend it

to anyone expressing an interest in archaeology, or even if you are just curious about what archaeology is about/has to offer.

*Barny Hoffman*

#### *Liverpool's Court Housing: An Oral History Project*

Court housing was a type of poor quality, high density 'back-to-back' style housing in urban Britain that existed from the late 18th Century until the mid 20th Century. This form of housing was particularly common in Liverpool where landlords took advantage of the population increase and the resulting demand for low rent accommodation.

In Liverpool, courts were commonly built three storeys high, sometimes with a cellar. Court houses were built both 'back-to-back' and 'side-to-back' with anything from two to ten houses in each court. Courts were constructed in both an 'arched court'/'closed court' style, entered via a narrow passageway and 'open court' style where the entrance was the same width as the court itself resulting in improved ventilation.

Court houses were built around a shared central court typically with an ashpit, and toilet for the use of all residents. As with other forms of Industrial Revolution era urban housing, courts were often overcrowded, insanitary, lacked adequate ventilation and were inhabited by the often poverty stricken working class thus becoming labelled as 'slums' and their residents 'slum-dwellers'.

Drawing public attention to the housing conditions of the urban poor developed into a popular exercise in the 19th century with reformers such as Friedrich Engels, Charles Booth, James Hole and Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree carrying out investigations into the causes and characteristics of poverty. These reformers are partly responsible for the negative connotations surrounding the term slum that exist to the present day. To these reformers a lack of good sanitation, poor quality housing and overcrowding were evidence an area was a slum. However the inhabitants of such areas were also 'studied' and their characteristics often criticised as criminal in nature, disorganised, unemployed, and feckless with a lack of motivation to escape their poverty stricken lives and as a result the term slum involved the buildings, the neighbourhood and its inhabitants.

Many residents of courts were moved into new build communities such as Kirkby and Norris Green following forced eviction and demolition of inner city 'slum' housing. Sadly, there is only one remaining example of court housing left in Liverpool today located at 35-39 Pembroke Place.

Pembroke Place included two courts: Watkinson's Buildings and Watkinson's Terrace. They do not appear on Gage's map of 1841 but do appear on the OS First Edition map of 1848. They originally consisted of eight houses per court, four houses on each side of a shared courtyard. The courts abutted the frontage buildings of Pembroke Place. Today, only two houses of Watkinson's Terrace survive behind number 35 and number 37 Pembroke Place and one house of Watkinson's Buildings survives behind number 39 Pembroke Place. The remains were listed in 2009 for the following reasons: 'They have special architectural interest as individual survivals of court-dwellings, a once numerous but now near-extinct



*Pembroke Place Court Housing*

building type' and 'they have special historic interest in the context of Liverpool's massive early-mid C19 growth as a port city, and beyond as documents of early-C19 urban vernacular at its near humblest, poignant testimonies to the realities of working-class urban living'.

Dr Liz Stewart (Curator of Archaeology and the Historic Environment, Museum of Liverpool) and I are currently undertaking an oral history project to record first hand memories of living in a Liverpool court house.

Liverpool's Court Housing: An Oral History Project aims to: Identify potential sites for future archaeological investigation, map and record the standing remains ('ghosts') of court houses in Liverpool, enhance the existing collection of court housing material within National Museums Liverpool, produce an archive of oral testimony about Liverpool's court housing for storage and future use, collect documentary evidence of court housing in Liverpool from the community in the form of maps, drawings and photographs, and gain a better understanding of life in court housing in Liverpool in the twentieth century.

We appeal to anyone with memories of court housing to come forward. Please contact Kerry Massheder at [Kerry.Massheder@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Kerry.Massheder@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

I will be giving a talk on this project at the Society's AGM on 17th April 2014.

*Kerry Massheder*

### ***News from Norton Priory***

The first excavation to take place at Norton Priory for 26 years ran for two weeks from the 23rd of September – a real community archaeology project organised by Senior Keeper Lynn Smith and directed daily by Dan Garner. The aim of the investigation was to try and locate the southern-most extent of the moat system associated with the Priory's medieval water management. The trench was laid out just outside the area of the scheduled monument within which excavation could not be undertaken without special permission from English Heritage.

The vegetation and topsoil was removed from the surface of the

trench using a mechanical digger and thereafter it was volunteers on their hands and knees with the usual trowels and buckets. Very little of note was found but some linear and sub-circular features appeared and were investigated and volunteers were shown how to collect soil samples which were then processed in the on-site flotation tank which afforded them a bit of a break from the hard work of excavation.

Dan supervised, cajoled and directed more than 80 local volunteers with great enthusiasm and patience over the two week period and everyone seemed to enjoy the experience despite the rain, the mud and an unbelievable number of vicious mosquitoes which dominated the first few days of damp warmish weather.

The only finds were a large fragment of decorated medieval floor tile, a sherd of Cistercian ware drinking cup of probable 16th-century date, some small fragments of cremated bone, occasional pieces of brick and many unidentifiable fragments of stone. Despite the fact that the original objective of the excavation was not fulfilled, all was not lost. The discovery, by Dan Garner himself, of a fine but broken prehistoric flint tool of probable Neolithic date, was greeted with great satisfaction. As Lynn Smith said "I am delighted that after 26 years we have started digging here again and despite the extensive excavations in the 70s and 80s, no finds from before the medieval period were recorded. It is fantastic that we finally have some evidence of prehistoric life here at Norton".

*Jenny Woodcock & Lynn Smith*

### ***Sun Moon & Man: Astronomy in Prehistoric Britain***

On 2nd November, as part of the Bluecoat's nocturnal themed day, Dr John Hill of The University of Liverpool's Department of Continuing Education gave a talk entitled 'Sun, Moon & Man: Astronomy in Prehistoric Britain'.

He started by describing the chronology of natural events and human development from the last Ice Age (15,000 – 12,000 BC), via the Mesolithic hunter gatherers (10,000 – 4,000 BC) and the Neolithic farmers (4,000 – 2500 BC), to the Bronze Age (2,500 – 800 BC). He then described the evidence for ancient astronomy which stretches from the start of the Neolithic period to about the middle of the Bronze Age (4,000 – 1800 BC). This evidence includes a variety of monuments, some burial chambers, but mainly stone (and a few wood) circles of differing size and complexity. Although it has long been assumed that Stonehenge had an astronomical purpose, Dr Hill explained that there is still not enough evidence to prove this to be the case. As a completely unique construction, Stonehenge cannot be compared and analysed with similar ancient monuments.

However, the evidence for astronomy can clearly be found in the many other stone circles found across Britain. Dr Hill talked about the circles found in Aberdeenshire (about 120 in all) which have very similar features, including two vertical stones separated by a horizontal stone. These three stones, in all cases, aligned to various phases of both the sun and the moon.

Dr Hill's research into ancient astronomy has included some elements of experimental archaeology. In particular, he has built a reconstruction of a stone circle in Ness Gardens, which has been called 'Nesshenge'.

He has discovered, through his work on sites in and around Derbyshire, that these circles were probably constructed using a single length of rope – this rope would have measured exactly 135 feet long. Using this length and then by halving the rope a number of times, all the dimensions of the circle could be established, including the outer ring banks and the spacing of the stones themselves.

These monuments were first marked out on the ground, using the midday shadow to establish the line of true North. The circle would then be quartered with an East – West line and finally the position of the stones would be established using the rope and ‘petal geometry’ to intersect the circle at regular points.

Dr Hill concluded his interesting talk by describing some recent discoveries near Stonehenge. A Neolithic settlement called Durrington Walls has been unearthed about two miles from Stonehenge. Within the settlement there were some 400 buildings – enough to house about 4,000 people; making it the largest Neolithic settlement in Northern Europe. There is evidence of feasting, but little of domestic habitation. This site is believed to be temporary accommodation for visitors to Stonehenge for particular festivals. These people would have processed along the River Avon and then across the plain to the monument, before returning to feast at Durrington Walls. The following day, they would have cleared up, thrown their rubbish in pits and returned to their homes.

*Ed Godfrey*

### ***Knutsford Roman Hoard***

In May 2012 a metal detectorist made a remarkable discovery. Whilst detecting in a field in Knutsford he found a Roman silver coin and over the course of a week found six more coins and an object, later identified by the Portable Antiquities Scheme as the foot to a silver gilt brooch. The finds were reported to Vanessa Oakden, the Finds Liaison Officer for Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside. A small excavation was undertaken on the site, carried out by National Museums Liverpool and Cheshire Archaeological Advisory Service alongside the Finds

Liaison Officer, to recover information on the circumstances and context of burial.

A series of test pits were excavated and the location of finds was logged with a global positioning system. Over 100 Roman coins were recovered from the site, mainly silver denarii dating to the 2nd century AD, as well as finger rings, pottery fragments and three trumpet brooches. The finds had been dispersed from a pottery jar by the plough. The objects were sent to the British Museum for further study and cleaning.

Who buried the hoard and why is uncertain. However, the silver-gilt brooches are magnificent specimens, amongst the finest from Roman Britain, and show the accumulation of considerable wealth by one individual. He appears to have been a rich landowner and was perhaps a member of the decurial class. Did he acquire some of his wealth through involvement in the lucrative trade in Cheshire salt?

The hoard remains at the British Museum awaiting assessment by the Treasure Valuation Committee. It is one of the most significant finds reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme from the North West in recent years. It is hoped that the hoard will be retained in the region through a museum partnership so that it can be displayed to the wider public in the future.

*Sam Rowe*



*Trumpet Brooches from the Knutsford Roman Hoard*





# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 1/2014

Registered Charity No 510831

## MAS 2014 Lecture and Fieldtrip programme

Our lectures are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre. The room is booked from 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30. All welcome - including non-members.

### Lectures

Thursday, 17th April  
AGM followed by a talk from Kerry Massheder  
'Liverpool's Court Housing: An Oral History Project'

### Fieldtrips

Thursday 19th June (evening).  
Visit to Liverpool Library

Saturday 12th July 2014  
Field visit to Rainford

September (date tba)  
Visit to Knowsley Park and Prescott,

Further details regarding these trips can be found in this Newsletter on page 2.

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk or site visit please pass the information on to Gina as an idea for a future event. [Georgina.Muskett@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Georgina.Muskett@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

## MAS AGM

The 2014 AGM will be held on Thursday 17th April before our lecture advertised above. The AGM is an important event in the Society calendar as it enables members to hear first-hand what the Society has been doing in the previous 12 months. It also gives attendees the opportunity to air their views on Society matters. More importantly it gives members a chance to become involved in the running of the Society by joining the MAS Council. Please make every effort to attend the meeting.

## 2014 Subscriptions

**Subscriptions for 2014 were due on 1st January. Please contact Joyce Hughes if you have not yet paid.**

## Merseyside Archaeological Society on Facebook

You can now follow us on Facebook:-  
<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1481822652#!/groups/151058304987687/>

## 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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## 2014 Fieldtrips

### Visit to Liverpool Library, Thursday evening 19th June 2014

An evening visit to Liverpool Library has been arranged for MAS members on 19th June. We will be guided by an archivist around the refurbished building and there will be an opportunity for a 'look behind the scenes' in the new archive store and conservation area. Numbers will be restricted on this visit so **booking is essential**. To reserve a place email Maurice Handley at: [mahandley@tesco.net](mailto:mahandley@tesco.net)

### Field visit to Rainford on Saturday 12th July 2014 - leader: Samantha Rowe

Rainford, seen today as a large semi-rural village, was formerly a hive of industrial activity which included the manufacture of pottery, clay smoking pipes, brick, tile and earthenware drain pipes, as well as extensive coal mining, stone quarrying, peat recovery and sand extraction for the glass industry.

Samantha Rowe has led a very successful community archaeological project in Rainford. On the walk you will get the chance to explore the changes and developments in the village core and learn more about the history of local landmarks. The Rainford's Roots community project has unearthed thousands of ceramic objects in the last year or so and this is your chance to visit the sites and hear first hand from archaeologists about the discoveries and their significance to the archaeology of the North West region.

For more information on the Rainford archaeology project visit [www.rainfordsroots.com/](http://www.rainfordsroots.com/)

Rainford is reached from the A570 which runs between the M58 (J3) and the East Lancs Road (A580). Church Road (B5203) is the main road running through Rainford. Parking is available opposite the Community Hall at the junction of Mossborough Lane and Church Road. There is also restricted parking opposite the church [SD 479007] or behind the church with access by the side of the Golden Lion.

There is a frequent bus service from St Helens Bus Station which is close to St Helens Central Railway Station. Arriva 38 takes about 20 minutes.

We will meet at the Parish Church at 10.30 am For those wishing to have coffee and visit the toilet beforehand we suggest the Rainford Deli which is about 300m from the church on Ormskirk Road. Walk north from the church with the Golden Lion on your left and after passing the Eagle and Child look for a group of shops on the right. The Rainford Deli is the last one in the group. There is limited parking by the side of the shops.

The walk will be split into two loops with a break for lunch in the village centre. It is suggested that you bring lunch or alternatively there are several places in the village where you can purchase food etc.

### Visit to Knowsley Park and Prescot, September

We hope to visit Knowsley Park and Prescot in September. Details will follow when arrangements have been finalised.

## The Merseyside Historic Environment Record Reopens

The Merseyside Historic Environment Record (HER) began as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) in 1977. It was intended to be a county record for all known archaeological sites and to record archaeological work and new discoveries. It was hosted by National Museums Liverpool until the closure of the Merseyside Archaeological Advisory Service in 2011. From April 2014 the HER will be maintained and operated by the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service. There is a newly appointed Historic Environment Record Officer, Dr Ben Croxford, who will be dedicated to the digitisation and enhancement of the HER, the first time the HER will have had such a post. There will also be an HER Project Officer, funded by a grant from English Heritage, who will be in post for two years to assist with the process. The first task will be to digitise the old paper records of the SMR. These consist of about 10,000 entries covering sites, findspots and later buildings dating from the Mesolithic to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with some coverage of industrial and Second World War sites. This information was largely collated during the Archaeological Survey of Merseyside, carried out to build the SMR from 1977 until the mid 1980s.

The designated heritage assets (Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, etc.) of Merseyside will also be included in the HER. Incorporating this information offers an opportunity to ensure they are correctly recorded, to maximise our knowledge about the historic environment and to develop the HER into a comprehensive and reliable digital resource.

Subsequently, all data generated by archaeological excavations in recent decades (currently generally only available as grey literature reports produced by archaeological contractors) will be processed and incorporated into the HER. Following the completion of that

stage, there will be a number of enhancement projects targeting specific site types or information sources to improve the coverage, accuracy and detail of the HER. There is therefore a three to five year plan for the development of the HER.

Once the service is established there will be opportunities for volunteering: assisting in the data cleaning, research and enhancement work on the HER. Further details will be made available once this becomes possible. We will also want to hear from local societies and researchers, to incorporate their findings and to work with them in developing the HER as a resource for them to use.

The HER is intended to be used as a resource to ensure archaeological/historic environment concerns are featured in the planning process. Getting the information currently held on paper into a modern digital database is the important first step in this process. Until the digitisation process is completed it will not be possible to easily assist in any research or general interest enquiries. Eventually, however, the resource will be made publically available online via the Heritage Gateway website (<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>). There is an interim charging policy for commercial enquiries. The HER service can be contacted via [Merseyside.HER@eas.sefton.gov.uk](mailto:Merseyside.HER@eas.sefton.gov.uk).

*Dr Ben Croxford  
Historic Environment Record Officer  
Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service*

### **MAS Council**

In the next few Newsletters we shall be including a brief profile of Council members. We start with our most recent and longest serving members:

#### **Martin Cox (Hon. Secretary)**

Thank you to all members and the Council for the very warm welcome I received back in December as the newest (co-opted) member of the Council and also on taking up the post of Hon Secretary. I am very happy to assist the Society in this respect and will do my utmost to serve the very best interests of the Society as a whole. My humble apologies to anyone who has been victim of errors or blunders I may have made but I am learning fast (or hope so)!

My background has been as a volunteer with the highly successful Rainford Roots Project and before that as a history teacher. I have always been interested in landscape history and the use of primary evidence in the classroom has been a lifelong passion. I have long threatened family and friends of my intention to disappear on an archaeology dig and the Rainford Roots project turned up on cue (I live in Rainford). It is a totally absorbing project and a golden opportunity to learn from highly professional people who are also great company – even friends! It seemed a natural progression to be involved with MAS and widen my education further, one which I greatly enjoy.

It is my hope that I can contribute to the current debate as to how we might widen our MAS membership, particularly to volunteers, students, schools and young people – very much the future of MAS.

Please do feel free to contact me with your suggestions, interest or concerns. I am always happy to hear from you.

You can find me at: 86 Lathom Drive, Rainford, St Helens WA11 8JR  
Email: [martincox3@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:martincox3@hotmail.co.uk)

#### **Dave Roberts (Hon. Treasurer)**

I have been a member of MAS from its foundation in 1976, apart from a 4 year break in the late 1970s and early 80s. Since then I have continuously served on the Council and represented the Society on more than one occasion as Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. In recent years I have also been heavily involved in the production of the Society Journal and acted as editor of this Newsletter.

I have a degree in Prehistory and Archaeology from Sheffield University and have participated in excavation and fieldwork projects in Britain and abroad but my main activities and interests have always been within Merseyside having participated as a volunteer in many archaeological projects run by National Museums Liverpool. In 2007 and 2008 I organised and ran the grant funded MAS projects which produced the Changing Face of Liverpool and Calderstones booklets. I am currently overseeing the MAS graveyard recording project at All Saints Church, Childwall.

Outside MAS I also sit on the committee of the Council for British Archaeology (North West) where I am newsletter and web site editor.

## Rainford's Roots project update

Over the winter the Rainford's Roots community project has been focusing on processing the finds, researching, and archiving the reports from fieldwork carried out in 2013. Four excavations and one building recording, as well as a lot of historic research equals a lot of paperwork! The team has had fantastic support and assistance from volunteers who have helped to process the material uncovered in the field.



*Excavation at Rainford library, August 2013.  
(c) National Museums Liverpool*

### **Rainford library artefacts – clay tobacco pipes**

Last August the team excavated the back garden of Rainford library; the site of a former clay tobacco pipe workshop. The team has been working to get the clay pipes from the site catalogued and researched. Over 8,000 clay pipes have now been catalogued from this one site alone and have revealed a lot about the local cottage industry. One of our volunteers spent a week with us researching the clay pipes and wrote a blog on her experiences, which is available to view on the project website <http://www.rainfordsroots.com/blog.html>.

Clay tobacco pipes were made in huge numbers throughout the industrial period and were discarded frequently as they broke very easily. Rainford was a significant centre for the manufacture of clay pipes from the early 17th century and a large quantity of fragments have been discovered through chance finds and excavations in the village.

Clay pipes are not always the most exciting finds on digs, but they are great for dating sites and give an insight into local manufacturing practises. Pipes recovered from Rainford library date from the mid



*Sample of decorated clay pipes from Rainford library dig.  
(c) National Museums Liverpool*

18th century up to the early 20th century and cover the span of known industrial activity on the site. The assemblage also contains pipes with stamped maker's marks which can help us to identify the individual maker of a pipe. A catalogue of decoration and bowl types has been established for the Rainford library site, which can be used as a reference guide for future investigations and will also form an important part of the finds report.

### **Recent events**

#### *Behind the scenes museum tours*

Getting volunteers involved in post-excavation activities on the project has given them an insight into the time and resources required to process material once work on site is complete. The project team recently ran 'behind the scenes' tours of the archaeology stores at the Museum of Liverpool, where people got a chance to see the collections that are not currently on public view, and to handle some of the items in the Regional Archaeology Collection, including material from Rainford, Prescot, Eccleston, and Buckley in North Wales.

#### *Wirral History and Heritage Fair*

The project hosted a stall at the Wirral History and Heritage Fair on Saturday 1st March. Over 70 local groups and societies were present and hundreds of people attended on the day which was a great success. The project stall had recent finds on display from Rainford, including pottery and clay tobacco pipes, as well as on sale MAS journals.



*Sam Rowe, Project Officer, showing people finds from the local area. (c) National Museums Liverpool*

On Tuesday 11 March the project team were at Rainford library, teaching people the various aspects of finds processing including how to mark finds and how to take impressions from stamped clay tobacco pipes. There was a great turn out, and a photographer from the local newspaper attended.

### *Upcoming spring and summer events*

The project will be at Cheshire Archaeology Day on Saturday 26th April at Winsford Lifestyle Centre. Talks will take place on local archaeology and there will be book stalls and local societies present.

Two exhibitions of finds from Rainford will take place this July for the Festival of Archaeology: one exhibition will take place in Rainford library, and the other will be in the Museum of Liverpool. More details will be available nearer the time on our website.

More heritage walking tours around the historic village of Rainford will be taking place this summer. If your group or society would like to book a tour, please contact the project. Tours are free and walks range from easy to moderate terrain.

### *Elizabethan Extravaganza! Rural Tudor craft day - Saturday 2nd August*

The project team are running an event on Saturday 2nd August at Rainford Parish Hall. Rainford's Roots invites you to attend 'Elizabethan Extravaganza'; a rural Elizabethan craft fair. The event is free and everyone is welcome (costume optional!). Take part in traditional crafts such as candle making and spinning, meet costumed Elizabethans and musicians, sample food and drink of the day, listen to a wise woman share stories of myth and folklore and hold birds of prey. All this and much more...

### *Get in touch*

Rainford's Roots is always looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help out with the project. You can contact us:  
By email [rainfordsroots@gmail.com](mailto:rainfordsroots@gmail.com) or telephone 0151 4784560

Up to date information including the latest project news and volunteer blog posts can be found on our website [www.rainfordsroots.com](http://www.rainfordsroots.com)

*Sam Rowe*

### *9th century runic stone at Overchurch*

The ninth century runic stone, discovered at Overchurch, has been reconstructed by Big Heritage for a pop-up museum at the Pyramids Shopping Centre in Birkenhead on Wirral. The decoration is a mixture of Mercian and Northumbrian influences but it is the runic inscription that makes this fragment particularly interesting. The inscription reads:

*"The people raised up a monument; pray for Aedelmund"*

The inscription may seem simple enough but the raising of the monument by the people to commemorate an individual is very unusual, as monuments were usually raised by individuals for individuals. In terms of its regional importance, along with the



*The Overchurch Stone*

Sandbach Crosses, this is the earliest stone sculpture from Cheshire and the only one with a runic inscription from the Anglian period.

Only a quarter of the original monument survives but there is enough of the form and decoration to infer its original shape and likely decorative repertoire. The shape of the reconstruction is all extrapolated from the surviving fragment. The surviving angles of the monument indicate that it would have bulged at its centre. This gives an approximate length of 1.2m and a width of 0.6m at its centre. This shape is found at other sites of a comparable date with similar designs, such as Levisham 5, East Yorkshire. Its function is not clear. It could either be grave slab or possible cover for a sarcophagus.

As with any reconstruction taken from a partial fragment, there is an element of guesswork involved but this is always based on the surviving evidence. The design is a mixture of extant decoration on three of the of the six sides and influences taken from other monuments from the same time period with similar decoration, such as the beast on Side C of Otley ?, in West Yorkshire, which the decoration on the side of the Overchurch reconstruction was largely based on.

The colour scheme was inspired by stone sculpture with surviving paintwork, such as the Lichfield Angel. Using these extant monuments, it is possible to copy their colours, such as black, red, yellow and white. It was also highly probable that these monuments were sometimes adorned with gilding, metalwork and gems but there is no sign of this on the Overchurch fragment.

Reconstruction has two major benefits. Firstly, they are a great way of helping the public visualise stone sculpture, which is often fragmented, heavily worn and rarely has its paintwork surviving. Secondly, the process of reconstructing a piece of early medieval stone sculpture is also incredibly informative, in terms of understanding decorative choices, layout and design. Occasionally it is possible to identify where mistakes have been made and subsequently rectified.

*Dean Paton  
Big-Heritage*

## Heritage Together

MAS were delighted to welcome Dr Seren Griffiths from Manchester Metropolitan University at their well attended evening meeting on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February where she gave a short presentation on a brilliant new project aiming to provide new information about heritage sites and their locations using 3D digital models, which can be generated from digital photographs.

Dr Griffiths, through a range of examples, demonstrated conclusively how 3D imagery can advance our understanding of heritage sites by revealing previously unnoticed markings on ancient stones or revealing how sites had been constructed.

Martin Cox, Hon Secretary writes: "I think all of us are aware of the increasing pace of change in new and smart technology. However, its application and potential for archaeology is amazing. There was huge interest from our audience who recognised the benefits, not least by the fact that anyone of us could make a contribution – a digital camera is all that is needed".

Researchers at Bangor, Aberystwyth and Manchester Metropolitan Universities have collaborated with Gwynedd Archaeological Trust to coordinate the project whose focus is on a range of monuments throughout North Wales. However, Seren has encouraged us to make a Merseyside contribution which will be acknowledged by the project and a subsequent exhibition. No doubt the example of this important project will be replicated as research proceeds.

The project has a real community dimension. Members of the public will contribute to the project by uploading digital photographs of heritage sites that they visit. From these photographs researchers will be able to generate 3D models. This "citizen science" will allow a much greater coverage of monuments leading to a comprehensive catalogue of the heritage of North Wales, providing new research into the state of monument preservation, providing new views of monuments and new evidence of monument use (in the form of rock art, for example).

At the end of the project, the 3D models will be freely and publically available to provide a research resource for members of the public and researchers, through the Historic Environment Record and via Archwilio. The project will acknowledge the contributions of all individuals to the project, and contributors will be invited to the project exhibition, highlighting the 3D modelling results. At the exhibition a number of citizen scientists will be acknowledged who the project feels have made an outstanding contribution to the project.

Dr Seren Griffiths writes: "We're really excited about this project. Members of the public can actively help co-produce a digital record of the archaeology of north Wales. This will be an invaluable resource, to produce 3D digital representations of these monuments; to better understand the landscape, and inter-relationships of different sites; and to provide a visual archive of the current conditions at individual sites. Part of the output will be a display using a special touch surface table, which users can

call up and display information on the sites. We're very interested in responding to themes people are interested in, so if members of MAS had a pet project they'd like to record, we'd very much welcome that. If people were interested further, I'd encourage them to come to our open days at Barclodiad y Gawres passage tomb on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2014; Bryn Celli Ddu on the 21<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>th</sup> June 2014; and at Bryn Celli Ddu again on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2014."

More details and information can be found at : [www.heritagetogether.org](http://www.heritagetogether.org)

*Martin Cox & Seren Griffiths*

### *Visits to the Museum Store - 2 views....*

#### *Rooting Around - A behind the scenes archaeology tour*

You may be surprised to learn that the 700 items on display in Liverpool's Museum constitutes less than one per cent of the total collection. The remainder, with additional items from other local museums, are kept in the Museum's storage facility located in deepest north Liverpool. As part of the Rainford Roots project, a small number of participants, guided by curator Liz Stewart, were taken on an interesting and informative tour of the impressive stores.

First was the Land Transport store room where we saw bicycles, bath chairs, carriages from Croxteth Hall and a superb Vulcan Car made in Southport early in the 20th century. Next we climbed the stairs to the Antiquities section which holds artefacts from all over the world. The high point of our visit was on the top floor where the regional finds included those from Rainford. We were allowed to handle some of the pottery from Rainford, particularly the flared cups of early post medieval age. Alongside these were similar finds from Prescot including a large storage jar and an unsuccessful attempt to copy a German cup. There was also more elaborate pottery from Buckley in North Wales with raised slip decoration and sgraffito where the decoration is scratched through the slip.



*Vulcan car in the Museum Store*

Finally we were shown several drawers full of flint implements and were able to hold axe roughouts from Mynydd Rhiw on the Lleyn peninsula and a few of the fine collection of Neolithic arrow heads. The latter looked in almost pristine condition especially alongside rusty iron arrow points from medieval Meols. The time spent in the store passed very quickly and having seen only a fraction of the stored items, we wished we could have stayed for a whole day.

*Maurice Handley*

### *Museum Stores Tour Report*

The 25<sup>th</sup> February was my second day on placement in the Museum of Liverpool Archaeology Department and I was taken to the museum stores to assist with, and take part in, the 'Behind-the-Scenes' tours of some of the thousands of objects which are not currently on display in the various museums on Merseyside. After meeting the people who had booked onto the tours at the train station, we saw the Antiquities Department stores, with artefacts from around the world, including beautiful, intricate metalwork and pottery from North Africa and Peruvian ceramics from one of the museum's earliest collections.

We viewed part of the transport collection, my favourite part, where we saw a range of different antique vehicles, from simple horse-drawn carts to opulent carriages to an early 20<sup>th</sup> century automobile. Several of the carriages had belonged to the Earl of Stanford, and had come from Croxteth Hall. There were even bicycles, wheelchairs and street vendor's carts, many in almost perfect condition. Unfortunately, we weren't allowed to sit in the vehicles or take them out for a test drive! They were still an amazing sight.

Finally reaching the Regional Archaeology section, we listened to a talk from the Curator, Dr Liz Stewart, on the finds from the 5 excavations undertaken by the Rainford's Roots community archaeology project, that have taken place in the area in the last 14 months. We were able to handle some of the more complete finds, showing the kinds of pottery being produced in the area from the late 16<sup>th</sup> through to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We also saw some of the finds from the same period and region that are stored in the museum archives. Of the whole Regional archaeology collection from Merseyside, about 10% comes from the Rainford area!

*Kara D'Arcy*

### *Neolithic Stone Axe from Caldy*

This stone axe head was discovered in a garden in the Caldy area of Wirral and brought in to the Portable Antiquities Scheme for recording. It is a broken stone axe head dating to the Neolithic period (c 4000-2500BC). The axe is sub-trapezoidal in plan with convex curved faces. Both the butt end and cutting face have been knapped and re-flaked, perhaps for a secondary use or for re-hafting. The faces of the axe are worn with scratch marks and the polished surface is faded. The stone is a light greenish brown colour, possibly a volcanic rock originating from the Scafell Pike area of the Lake District. You can view the full record at [www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database) record number LVPL-FA1F01.



### *Caldy Stone Axe*

There are currently 158 records of stone axes recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database. 14 of these have been recovered from Cumbria, 1 from St. Helens recorded as [LVPL-7D4596](http://www.finds.org.uk/database) 1 from Cheshire recorded as [LVPL-8F10F8](http://www.finds.org.uk/database) and this example from the Wirral. Due to their construction material stone axes are usually found by members of the public while gardening or field walking and are found less frequently by metal detector users. This accounts for the small numbers recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database compared with later copper alloy axes.

*Vanessa Oakden*

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

### *Old Dock Tour*

For Members interested in the archaeology and heritage of Liverpool, this tour is a must!

The tour takes you to visit the oldest standing structure in Liverpool—the Old Dock. The tour starts at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, walks over to Liverpool 1, and then enters the Old Dock beneath the shopping centre. The tour takes about an hour and is run by Danny and Yazz—two very knowledgeable, humorous and enthusiastic guides. Warning—this report contains spoilers!

The Old Dock in Liverpool was the first commercial (used purely for trade) enclosed wet dock in the world. It was designed by Thomas Steers, a canal engineer and best friend to the Lord Mayor, in 1709 with construction starting in 1710. In 1715 the first three ships sailed into the dock and it had its official opening in 1719. The Old Dock design included locked gates to control tide levels enabling efficient loading and unloading from ships no matter the tide. At capacity the dock could hold up to one hundred ships, although the highest recorded number at one time was eighty two ships. It is as a result of this dock that Liverpool expanded as a city and became the gateway to an empire. Due to the trade the Old Dock attracted, workers housing was built in the surrounding area and businesses soon followed suit. The Old Dock was so financially successful that other docks were constructed in Liverpool to take advantage of the trade. Danny and Yazz were keen to point out that,

as an archaeological site that has impacted our present, the Old Dock is more important than Stonehenge (and as a Post Medieval Archaeologist I agree!).

The Old Dock closed in 1826, both as a result of ships being built bigger and therefore unable to fit into the dock and due to the amount of human waste being dumped into the dock. The Old Dock was sealed so new buildings, including a new Custom House (1839), could be built on the site.

The tour stops outside the Hilton to explain the significance of the architecture of Liverpool 1 shopping centre. Interestingly, the grey path leading from the Hilton to John Lewis represents the route of the river and can be followed through the city centre. Liverpool 1, particularly the area surrounding the Bierkeller pub, was designed so its aesthetics represented Liverpool Castle (despite Liverpool Castle being located at Castle Street, where the modern day law courts are situated). The water fountains also have a hidden history-look down and see the inscribed information on the pavement. William Hutchinson spent twenty-nine years observing and recording high tides. His studies have resulted in the water fountains levels representing high tides and the grey tiles representing the coast line.

John Lewis (on Custom House Place) stands on the site of the Original Custom House and outside is the Old Dock viewing hole (often confused as being a well!) which gives a sneak peak into the site. Sadly the glass of the viewing hole has been damaged due to an attempted break-in.

The Old Dock Tour is an outcome of a nine year archaeological investigation conducted by Oxford Archaeology North, who started initial excavations in 2001. The tour itself allows you to view the north-east corner of the Old Dock, the rest is under Liverpool 1 shopping complex, in situ but filled with sand. The Old Dock site is three and a half acres and about one twentieth of the Old Dock wall is currently visible. The location available for viewing on the tour was selected for accessibility-a hole in the Old Dock wall enabled a walkway to be constructed around the archaeological remains. The Old Dock wall is constructed of hand made bricks rather than stone like later docks. Bricks were made in a kiln on the quayside to enable the wall to be constructed with speed. William Bibby supplied the lime mortar which archaeologists noted was particularly strong and certainly contributed to the walls excellent survival. Potentially, stone from the ruins of Liverpool Castle was used in the construction of the Old Dock, with additional stone coming from the nearby yellow sandstone quarry next to Liverpool Cathedral. Danny and Yazz provide visitors with a rich account of the history and heritage of the Old Dock and point out particularly interesting aspects of the wall such as engineering supports, the failed waste pipe and tunnel entrances.

I found the tour interesting and entertaining and enjoyed seeing the archaeological remains in situ and well preserved. The tour is a wonderful opportunity to gain access to the Old Dock and learn more about its history. Tours take place on Tuesdays

and Wednesdays at 10.30am, 11.30am and 2.30pm. The tours are free but must be booked in advance via the Merseyside Maritime Museum on 0151 478 4499.

The Old Dock is often quoted as being 'The heart and start of Liverpool' and after this Old Dock Tour you may well agree!

*Kerry Massheder*

### ***Young Archaeologists Club***

*What it means to be a Young Archaeologist....*

#### What do you like about the Mersey and Dee YAC's?

I like the variety of the sessions. We have different themes each month learning topics relevant to archaeology, the historic environment and historical events. I particularly like socialising with like minded people.

More recently I have enjoyed the increased responsibility of guiding the new and younger members of our branch.

#### What are your favourite memories of YAC from the last ten years?

In no particular order!:

- The visit to the Williamson Tunnels.
- Being interviewed by Barney Howard as part of his Big Toe Radio Show on Radio 5.
- A trip to York to explore the historical city and visiting Jorvik.
- Visiting Birkenhead Archaeology Society.
- Test pitting in the grounds of a local pub.
- Meeting and working alongside professional Archaeologists.

#### What have you learned during your time with YAC?

Many things! I have learned how to excavate, how to analyse archaeological finds and leadership skills. During my work experience at National Museums Liverpool I was placed in a mentoring role, working with school groups, which I really enjoyed. He I also helped to deliver tours of the docks.

#### What would you like to do in the future?

I would like to become an Archaeologist and/or teach Archaeology, History and Heritage.

*Daniel Ford*





# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 2/2014

Registered Charity No 510831

## Merseyside Archaeological Society Conference 2014

**Book Now!** Please see further details on page 2 of this Newsletter.

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

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Dave Roberts

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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.

## MAS 2014 Lecture and Fieldtrip programme

Our lectures are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre. The room is booked from 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30. All welcome - including non-members.

### 2014 Fieldtrips

#### Saturday, 6th September

**Field trip to Knowsley Park and Prescot**, led by Maurice Handley and David Scott

Saturday 6th September 10.00 a.m.

The morning will be spent interpreting the landscape of Knowsley Park, the home of Lord Derby who has given special permission for this visit. Afterwards there will be an opportunity for lunch in Prescot followed by a guided walk around the historic town. The walk in the Park will be 2-3 km, partly on rough ground which may be muddy. Waterproof clothing and stout footwear will be needed. There are no toilet facilities inside the Park.

Booking is essential for the visit to the Park, directions and further information can be obtained from Maurice Handley (details below).

To book a place contact Maurice Handley: [mahandley@tesco.net](mailto:mahandley@tesco.net) (0151 426 8157).

Note that we will not be visiting Knowsley Hall or the Safari Park. The Hall is not open to the public except in October 2014. For details of this see :- <http://www.hha.org.uk/Property/585/Knowsley-Hall>

### Lectures

#### Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014

Dr Ben Croxford, Historic Environment Record Officer, Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service

#### Merseyside Historic Environment Record

The Merseyside Historic Environment Record (HER) has recently transferred from National Museums Liverpool to Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service. As part of this the entire paper archive is going to be digitised and updated. The aim is to make this information freely accessible to the public online. There is a lot of work to do first and this talk will go over some of that, including explaining how MAS members can assist.

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#### **Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

Dr. John Hill, the University of Liverpool

Astronomy in Prehistoric Britain

This talk explores the cosmological beliefs of the British Neolithic and Early Bronze Age communities (circa 4000 – 1800 BC) and explores the quest to incorporate the secrets of the universe into the design of British prehistoric monuments. Arguably, many ancient cultures used the sun for determining direction; the moon for determining time; and the stars for determining the seasons. But were our British prehistoric ancestors doing the same? And if so, was it science or symbolism?

#### **Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

Members' Evening

This year our annual pre-Christmas meeting will take the form of a members' evening. All members are invited to bring a few photographs, either digital or hard copy, of their favourite archaeological site or visit. As usual, we'll have a digital projector on hand, so a USB drive/'memory stick' with individual photos or a 5-minute powerpoint presentation would be ideal. With mince pies and cake on hand, this promises to be an enjoyable evening in good company.

#### **Spring 2015 lecture dates are:**

Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> January; Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> February; Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> March and Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> April (AGM).

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk or site visit please pass the information on to Gina as an idea for a future event.  
[Georgina.Muskett@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Georgina.Muskett@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

#### ***MAS Conference 18 October 2014***

The Society is hosting a conference on Saturday 18 October on recent archaeology projects in the North West.

Title: The Archaeology of Merseyside: recent work in the region and beyond

Date: Saturday 18 October 2014

Time: 10.00-16.15

Venue: Museum of Liverpool, Pier Head, Liverpool

A range of speakers will be attending, presenting talks on various topics including the Prehistoric Formby Footprints, the Mesolithic site at Lunt Meadows, recent Roman treasure hoards from Cheshire, and the Rainford's Roots community archaeology project.

Booking is essential. Please fill in the attached form and return it, with payment, to Sam Rowe. You can also download the form from our website <http://merseysidearchsoc.weebly.com/>

#### **MIHS Anniversary Lecture - an invitation to MAS members.**

The Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society will be holding a special 50th Anniversary Lecture in the Quaker Meeting House (where MAS meets), on Monday October 13th at 7 pm. The distinguished speaker will be Sir Neil Cossons.

Booking is required and a supper will be available. For more details visit the MIHS website [www.mihs.org.uk/](http://www.mihs.org.uk/) or contact the secretary Malcolm Verity at [malcolm.verity1@btinternet.com](mailto:malcolm.verity1@btinternet.com)

## **MAS Annual General Meeting 2014**

Our 38<sup>th</sup> AGM was held at the Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool City Centre on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2014. The well attended meeting was chaired by Nancy Jenkins.

Formal minutes will be circulated, as usual, prior to next year's AGM but this report, albeit a summary, is intended to keep all our members up to date on the main issues of business.

The current Council was re-elected as follows:

Rob Philpott, Hon Chair.

Dave Roberts, Hon Treasurer.

Martin Cox, Hon Secretary.

Joyce Hughes, Membership Secretary.

Members: Diana Goodier, Maurice Handley, Nancy Jenkins, Kerry Massheder-Rigby, Gina Muskett, Sam Rowe, Chris Wood and Jenny Woodcock.

Council was asked to consider the co-option of Ben Croxford (HER Officer) at their next meeting.

The Treasurer's report (Dave Roberts) described the success of the Society's grant applications, last year seeing the award of a substantial grant for the Rainford's Roots project. The accounts reflect the first part of the Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £37550. Membership subscriptions had shown an improvement along with an increase in revenue from lectures but publications sales are down. Overall the cash situation continues in the same vein as the previous year. The Society's financial situation is "sound and should remain so if we can maintain our current level of membership".

Rob Philpott's Chair's report for 2013-14 spoke of "significant progress" in one of the most intractable issues that had faced the Society, namely the withdrawal of funding and closure of the Merseyside Archaeological Advisory Service. The districts have now reached an agreement to fund the HER and Dr Ben Croxford has been appointed as the new HER Officer. A two year project will see the creation of a new digital record. This will be supported by a new HER Project Officer funded by English Heritage.

Two new MAS journals are expected in the near future: Speke Hall and Newton-le-Willows.

Many members will know of Bill Highcock's contribution to MAS. Bill sadly died on 13 December 2012 but typical of his openhearted and generous nature, a legacy of £4500 was left to support a new publication. This will be used to bring together the narrative of the Rainford Tennis Courts excavation which began with the work of Peter Davey in 1979-80, producing a huge quantity of pottery and clay tobacco pipes dating from 1630-50. David Higgins and Susie White have been responsible for much of the work for publication.

There has once again been a stimulating and expert programme of lectures arranged by Dr Gina Muskett with a further programme of field trips arranged for this summer. Rob also commended the work of officers and council members in their diligence in ensuring the good running of the Society and enthusiasm and ideas for the future.

A highlight of the year has been the Rainford's Roots Project led by Sam Rowe and its success as a model for community archaeology. It is hoped that this can be replicated whether in Rainford or elsewhere.

NML continues to suffer ongoing cuts and the sector is now suffering serious damage. On a more positive note, the Reader Organisation has been successful in its HLF bid to develop the Mansion House at Calderstones Park as a secure home for the prehistoric stones and their interpretation.

Sam Rowe presented a comprehensive overview of the Rainford's Roots project which had seen over 1700 visitors and the donation of over 3000 volunteering hours. Its work is well documented both through the Newsletter and the Roots website. However, it is worth noting that its community engagement objectives have been enhanced by 40 finds processing sessions for volunteers and a range of workshops, lectures, events, open days and walking tours for members of the public. The project has supervised four student placements and created a wide ranging partnership network including the NML, University of Liverpool, St Helens College, local schools and societies and Young Archaeologists Club.

The project is now in a post-excavation phase with the preparation of site excavation reports and objects being catalogued. A popular book is in preparation and a paper will soon be published by the Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage discussing community archaeology in Merseyside.

(Note: the full versions of these reports are available from the Secretary).

Members requested that Council undertake a review of the Society's constitution (not undertaken for some time) and details of its requirements as a charitable trust. A report will be presented to the Society's next AGM.

*Martin Cox, Hon. Secretary*

### ***MAS Council***

We continue our profile of MAS Council members:

Council member: Maurice Handley - in brief

Qualifications	Degree in Mechanical Engineering (City University, London) Certificate in Technical Education (University of Birmingham) Diploma in Landscape Interpretation (University of Liverpool)
Career	1959 -1966 employed in Engineering Industries 1966 - 1993 Further Education Lecturer
Member	Merseyside Archaeological Society (MAS) Liverpool Geological Society (LGS) Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society (MIHS) Council for British Archaeology (CBA) Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA)
Volunteer	MAS Council member MIHS Committee member and Journal editor CBA Listed buildings correspondent, Knowsley Borough
Interests	Landscape Archaeology, Industrial Heritage
Likes	World travel visiting Archaeological and Geological sites (and grandchildren), Scotland, China, Railways.
Favourite Archaeological Site	-Tikal, Guatemala

### ***The Merseyside Historic Environment Record Update***

Dana Campbell has been appointed as the new Project Officer on a 2 year contract. The digitisation project has started with the Wirral records and is 12.5% complete. Ways of making the HER publicly accessible are currently being investigated.

The HER service can be contacted via [Merseyside.HER@eas.sefton.gov.uk](mailto:Merseyside.HER@eas.sefton.gov.uk)

### ***CBA North West***

The next meeting is entitled Castles to Castellations and will be held on Saturday 8 November 2014 at the Grosvenor Museum in Chester. More details (i.e. speakers!) will be available shortly at:

[http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbanw/CBANW\\_meetings\\_intro.html](http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbanw/CBANW_meetings_intro.html)

### ***Merseyside Archaeological Society on Facebook***

You can now follow us on Facebook:-

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1481822652#!/groups/151058304987687/>



Rainford Tudor Craft Day

### **Rainford's Roots**

#### **Tudor Craft Day, Event Review**

On Saturday 2 August the Rainford's Roots project team hosted an 'Elizabethan Extravaganza' craft day at Rainford Village Hall. The day featured a host of demonstrators and different crafts for people to make and take home.

The stalls included candle making, basket making, weaving, dyeing, grinding grain, clay-pipe making and pottery making. Horus Birds of Prey set up on the front lawn which enabled visitors to hold the birds and helped attract passers-by into the hall. Visitors were treated to an array of period songs by the talented Squeake's Noyse. The children's craft table remained busy throughout the day and Elizabeth Morris from 'A Tale to Tell' told a range of mythical children's stories.

In just 6 hours the event saw more than 300 visitors pass through the doors; the poor weather clearly hadn't put people off from venturing out! The Society is delighted that the event was so successful and the team has many positive comments from visitors:

"the event... was out of this world! My children and I had a wonderful time, the activities were really engaging and educational and fun."

"I just had to comment on the wonderful day we had in Rainford... a great topic for the children... a massive thank you for the kindness and time all [the] stall holders showed us..."

Visitors were treated to tastes of the Tudor period including flavoured cordials and homemade cakes from local resident Barbara Hurst who has always shown great support for the community project. The event took a lot of organising and a big thank you to the volunteers who helped the day to run smoothly. The Society would also like to show their thanks to all the demonstrators who shared their skills and knowledge and helped to make the event such a success.

#### **Other news**

The Rainford's Roots community archaeology project is coming to an end this autumn and the project team are busy editing their

popular book entitled "Rainford's Roots: the archaeology of a village" which will be published in the next few months.

The team would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has been involved in the project over the last 2 years. The project has been a tremendous success, with over 3,500 volunteering hours given and almost 2,500 visitors attending events and sessions throughout the course of the project!

*Sam Rowe*

### **Ruin, Regeneration and Re-use: The Lister Drive Carnegie Library**

Lister Steps, a childcare charity, have secured initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund to regenerate the Grade II listed former Lister Drive Library in Tuebrook.

The Library, known locally as Lister Drive Library, was established with funding from an Andrew Carnegie grant, and opened in 1905. The library is a one-storey brick built structure with stone dressings, a slate roof and an octagonal turret. It was designed by Liverpool Corporation architect Thomas Shelmerdine who was responsible for a number of Liverpool's libraries. The library originally contained a lending library and a number of reading rooms. Sadly, following health and safety concerns, the library closed in 2006 and has remained vacant since. This period of un-occupation has resulted in the library being subject to theft, vandalism and neglect. Items stolen from the library include lead flashings, the glazing to roof lights and feature ridge tiles. There has been substantial rainwater ingress which has severely damaged the timber structure and internal decorative plasterwork and joinery and dry rot is common throughout the building.

The 'Lister Steps Carnegie Community Hub' project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is currently in its development stage, however once completed Lister Steps aim to relocate their existing childcare services into the building. The regenerated building will also serve as a centre for community engagement, a 'hub' offering refreshments, activities and training opportunities for the local community and visitors.



Lister Drive Library, Tuebrook



*Lister Reading Room Doors. Image reproduced with kind permission of James Sanderson.*

The project will shortly begin a period of consultation with stakeholders and members of the community. The project aims to host a number of heritage activities in the near future such as tours of the library and grounds, an oral history project, building recording activities and training opportunities. We welcome comments, suggestions and advice from Merseyside Archaeological Society members via our online survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NPBB39Z> and we are keen to hear from members willing to share their research, best practice ideas and suggestions for match funding.

Please follow our progress on Facebook ([facebook.com/listerstepscarnegiecommunityhub](https://www.facebook.com/listerstepscarnegiecommunityhub)), Twitter ([@ListerStepsHub](https://twitter.com/ListerStepsHub)) and on our website (<https://listerstepscarnegiecommunityhub.weebly.com>)

*Kerry Massheder-Rigby, Heritage Development Officer*  
[Kerry.Massheder-Rigby@listersteps.co.uk](mailto:Kerry.Massheder-Rigby@listersteps.co.uk)

### **MAS Visit to Liverpool Central Library**

A dozen members visited the Liverpool Central Library on the evening of June 19th. We were enthusiastically led by Roger Hull, researcher in the Liverpool Record Office, who gave us an informative tour of the impressive re-modelled library. He also revealed that the library had just been voted one of the top ten UK attractions by TripAdvisor.

Starting from the stunning entrance area with a view rising to the the atrium four floors above, Roger took us into the children's 'Discover' area - once used as a Concert Hall. Here riveted iron girders exposed in the ceiling indicated the 19th century origins of the building and contrasted with the smooth modern support columns of the 21st century rebuild. On the floor immediately above is the circular Picton Reading Room, named after its benefactor and retaining many of its original features despite the WWII bombing which destroyed the adjacent part of the main library and neighbouring museum. We learnt that during the recent rebuild, valuable books were stored in the Cheshire salt mines whilst others were kept in the Merseyside area.

An exit from the Picton Room took us past an Art Nouveau copper plaque to H. F. Hornby who funded the Hornby Library - a surprisingly light hall-like room with stone columns supporting a gallery. A smaller adjacent room lined with shelves of valuable books, displayed a volume of the Audubon Book of American Birds. The library holds five volumes worth several million pounds and one volume is displayed in a special glass case with pages turned weekly by the library's conservationist.

Leaving the public area on the third floor, we entered the Search Room where items from the archives can be consulted (n.b. items must be booked at least one day in advance - see the Library's website). To visit the new archive storage and conservation building, we crossed a narrow bridge over a startling drop to the ground floor below. A variety of techniques to conserve books and other paper items are employed in the bright naturally lit conservation room. Fortunately the group was small enough to squeeze through the air lock into the temperature and humidity controlled store. We visited only one of the four floors to see the motorised mobile shelving system and briefly look at the storage for workhouse records and the extensive collection of maps.

Finally we finished an interesting and worthwhile visit on the top floor's outside balcony, which is accessible to the public and has extensive views across central Liverpool. A delightful finish on a beautiful sunny summer evening.

*Maurice Handley*



*MAS Visit to Liverpool Central Library*



*Silver-Gilt Dress-Hook*

### ***Silver-gilt dress-hook***

This silver-gilt dress-hook was discovered by a local metal detectorist and reported as Treasure under the 1996 Treasure Act, (Treasure number 2014 T71). On top of the back plate is a sub hexagonal cushion and shaped with this are four domes, one of which is placed in the centre, two now damaged. Around the base of each dome is a filigree wire border. The edges of the object are undulating and each point is decorated with a rounded pellet. More pellets separate each of the domes. On the reverse is a transverse attachment bar, under which is a hole. This hole may have accommodated a pin that secured an additional decorative element to the front, now missing. There is also part of the recurving hook in place, the remainder now missing.

This dress-hook has been identified as a Read class D, Type 10 (Read 2008, p84-85). Similar examples can be found on the PAS database (2013 T627, [WAW-BBB610](http://finds.org.uk/pas/record/id/600027) // 2003 T23; 2003 TAR, p.120; PAS ID: NMS2204).

The object has been soaked in olive oil by the finder obscuring the detail. The dress hook can be dated from AD 1500 – 1650. In terms of age and as the object contains a minimum of 10% precious metal it qualifies as Treasure under the stipulations of the Treasure Act 1996. The full treasure act can be viewed at <http://finds.org.uk/treasure>. Depending on valuation National Museums Liverpool hopes to acquire this find.

The full record for this object on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database can be viewed at Oakden, V (2014) LVPL-4A0113 A POST MEDIEVAL DRESS HOOK Webpage available at: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/600027>.

*Vanessa Oakden*

### ***Mersey and Dee Young Archaeologists' Club***

The Mersey and Dee branch of the Young Archaeologists' Club have had a busy few months.

We celebrated World War One during our May meeting by taking a tour of the Museum of Liverpool (<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol/visit/galleries/peoples/western-front.aspx>), learning

about local and national heroes and by taking part in a debate about the validity and availability of source material. We particularly enjoyed using the handling collection to learn about clothing worn by Soldiers in the war. One of the more meaningful activities we engaged in involved each of us learning about a particular war hero, and then sharing our story with the group. This made us understand the human sacrifice of the war-some of the Soldiers were the same age as our oldest members!

In June we put on our new high-visibility vests and went on a fieldtrip to the Victoria Gallery and Museum (<http://vgm.liverpool.ac.uk/>) at the University of Liverpool, the original red brick university building. We took part in their Edwardian dig activities which involved us dressing up in traditional Turkish dress, digging for evidence of Hittite culture and making our own Cuneiform tablets. Education Officer Kirsty Hall then took us on a tour of the museum and gallery. We were particularly impressed with the Turner painting 'The Eruption of the Souffrier Mountains'. To end our fieldtrip we relaxed on huge beanbags to watch a cartoon which was being shown in an old lecture theatre!

Big Heritage (<http://bigheritage.co.uk/>) are leading our next two sessions which will involve taking part in pre-excavation activities before heading out to Bromborough in August to dig.



*YAC Visit to the Victoria Gallery and Museum*

If you know a young person aged 8-16 years who would like to get involved in YAC (<http://new.archaeologyuk.org/join-a-yac-branch>) please e-mail [jon.marrows@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:jon.marrows@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

*Kerry Massheder-Rigby*



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 3/2014

Registered Charity No 510831

## MAS 2015 Winter Lecture programme

Our lectures are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre. The room is booked from 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30. All welcome - including non-members.

### Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2015

**Rethinking the West Kirby Hogback:** *Professor Howard Williams, the University of Chester*

Over recent years, the hogback stones of northern Britain have been firmly and repeatedly interpreted within a context of early tenth-century Viking colonisation around the Irish Sea and either side of the Pennines. They have been widely seen as mortuary monuments raised over the graves of settling and converting Hiberno-Norse elites. This presentation draws on this work using the case study of the West Kirby hogback.

### Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2015

**Discovering Bromborough 2013:** *Joanna Kirton, Project Manager, Big Heritage*

Over the last 2 years Big Heritage has been leading a community archaeology project on Wirral, based around the village of Bromborough. In 2013, 27 test pits were opened around the village core and a further 23 test pits followed in 2014. As part of the 2014 season a survey and small-scale excavation were undertaken at Bromborough Court House. This talk will set out the findings from both the Court House excavation and the test pitting project.

### Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2015

**Curvilinear Enclosures in Willaston:** *Anthony Annakin-Smith*

The lecture will focus on the large features identified in some medieval or earlier landscapes, known as 'oval' or 'curvilinear' enclosures in one Wirral township but there will also be discussion of such enclosures elsewhere in the north-west and in the rest of the UK. The form and apparent origin of these features is very varied and they have been relatively little studied, but they may help take us back to the very roots of communities.

### Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 (AGM)

**Augustinian lifeways: reconstructing medieval diet, disease and trauma from Norton Priory, Cheshire:** *Shirley Curtis-Summers, the University of Liverpool*

This talk will present key results from recent PhD research on the Norton Priory skeletons (12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> c. AD); with evidence for diet (from stable isotope analysis) and disease and trauma (from osteological investigations). The extent to which a religious way of life had an effect on the medieval body will be discussed.

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk or site visit please pass the information on to Gina as an idea for a future event. [Georgina.Muskett@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Georgina.Muskett@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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## **In Memory of Ron Whyard**

It is with great sadness that we have to report the recent passing of Ron Whyard. Ron was a stalwart member of MAS for nearly 40 years. He took part in most MAS activities and was a regular attendee at lectures, fieldtrips and weekends away. He also attended numerous WEA and Liverpool University Continuing Education courses. Ron also took part in many field archaeology projects on Merseyside including the Rainford excavations in the late 1970s. Although he rarely spoke about his life outside MAS, Ron will be remembered for his great enthusiasm for archaeology and his good humour. He will be sadly missed.

## **MAS has a new Membership Secretary....**

After many years on the MAS Council, Joyce Hughes has decided to stand down as Membership Secretary. The Council would like to thank Joyce for the time and effort she has put into the job. We are pleased to welcome Anthony Sinclair to the MAS Council and he has offered to take over the role of Membership Secretary later this year. Please note that in the interim period, cheques etc. should be sent to Dave Roberts at the address on the renewal form.

## **Award Success!**

Merseyside Archaeological Society's Rainford's Roots community archaeology project has been highly commended in the national Marsh Award for Community Archaeology, and has won the 2014 St Helens Heritage Network Award for Archaeological projects.

The project involved MAS members, local people and students in six excavations, two building recording exercises, and research. Hundreds of people donated a total of over 3000 volunteering hours to the project. Thousands more people attended events, village walking tours, handling sessions, museum store tours, and exhibitions.

The project has now come to a close, and a book about the archaeology of the village is available for purchase: <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/onlineshop/books/archaeology-books.aspx>

## **Publications**

The Rainford's Roots project (see above) is now drawing to a close and the findings are being published. The popular booklet "Rainford's Roots : The Archaeology of a Village" is already available. Work is almost complete on the first 'Rainford monograph' which should be completed within the next couple of months. A second monograph will follow during 2015.

Work is well underway on JMAS Volume 15 which will contain papers on Speke Hall, the excavation on the site of Garston Mill and the Meadow Lane excavation in West Derby. We are expecting to produce this publication in time for the 2015 AGM.

## **Merseyside Archaeological Society Conference: The Archaeology of Merseyside: recent work in the region and beyond**

MAS's conference was held at the Museum of Liverpool on Saturday 18th October 2014. Papers covered a wide range of periods and topics, and presented some of the latest research underway into the archaeology of the region. The day started with papers from Vanessa Oakden, Finds Liaison Officer and Liz Stewart, Curator of Archaeology at Museum of Liverpool. They both considered recent Portable Antiquities Scheme finds and the ways in which they are contributing to our understanding of culture, wealth and identity in the region in the Romano-British and early Medieval periods. A pair of papers then explored recent research into the prehistory of the region – Alison Burns, researcher at the University of Manchester spoke about the Formby footprints, and the ways in which they are revealing more about the lives and activities of individuals from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age. Then Ron Cowell, Curator of Prehistoric Archaeology, Museum of Liverpool presented the excavation he's been undertaking at Lunt Meadows, revealing Mesolithic structures.

In the early afternoon delegates were invited to undertake a tour of the History Detectives gallery in the Museum of Liverpool where they were able to see a number of the finds mentioned in the talks throughout the day, and participate in a handling session with finds from the recent Rainford's Roots community archaeology project with Project Officer, Sam Rowe. The final paper from Mark Adams, Senior Archaeological Project Officer, Museum of Liverpool, considered the archaeology and documentary research he's been undertaking to reconsider the history of Newton Hall, Newton-le-Willows.

64 people attended the conference and feedback from delegates was very positive. Congratulations to Liz Stewart and Rob Philpott for putting such an interesting programme together and thanks to the Museum of Liverpool for hosting the conference.

## **2015 Subscriptions**

MAS Subscriptions for the new year are now due. A membership renewal form is enclosed with this Newsletter.

## MAS Fieldtrip to Knowsley Park and Prescot

Undeterred by showers, an intrepid group explored a small part of Lord Derby's Knowsley Park estate. Starting at the ruined paddocks where previous Lords had kept their horses, we saw the high sandstone wall which runs for ten miles around the estate.

There has been horse racing in Knowsley Park since the early 18th century and a race course is marked on Greenwood's Map of Lancashire of 1818. The Tithe Map of 1847 shows the course in the area around Mizzy Dam. Although part of the course ran in what is now the Safari Park, it is possible to visualise the route as it climbs the hill between Mizzy Dam and Riding Hill. An enigmatic ditch was spotted and thought to be a remnant of the course.

Proceeding towards Stand Wood, we diverted to visit Bridge Lodge, a roofless, stone castle-like ruin (1847) over a picturesque dell linking White Man's Dam and Octagon Pond. From there we climbed to the trig. point where a Tower still survives and probably provided a view of the races. Close by is White Man's Statue from where we could see the surrounding countryside and identify features such as Billinge Hill, Kirkby Industrial Estate, the Helsby-Frodsham escarpment and our afternoon destination - Prescot.



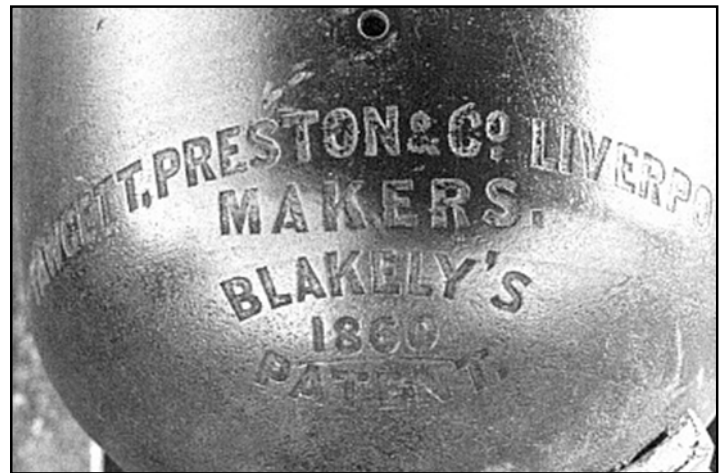
*Tower in Knowsley Park*

After an excellent lunch at The Clock Face, an attractive 1830s refacing of an earlier house associated with the Knowsley estate, we ascended West St with Margaret Jarvis (local resident and MAS member) looking at vernacular dwellings and a former clock workshop attached to a Victorian house. A broad alleyway led to the RC church by Joseph Hansom (1856-7) and Vicarage Place with its Georgian houses complete with rocco coat of arms of Kings College Cambridge saved from a demolished court house. The parish church of St Mary is possibly built on a pre-Christian site and had been subject to much rebuilding. The tower and spire are by Henry Sephton. Eccleston St. built originally as a late medieval

new street, retains at least one original half timbered building dated 1614. Nearby is Knowsley's relocated public library and local museum which successfully outlines the history of Prescot and the growth/decline of its clock and watch making industry. Further exploration revealed more watch making workshops off Atherton St & Ackers St. Nearby, the 'Flat Iron' building was a store for the clock industry and later workshop for the successor to The Lancashire Watch Company. Adjacent is the graveyard of a long gone Methodist chapel. Eventually we arrived in Albany St to look at what remained of the factory built for LWC in 1889. Fortunately much has remained and is to be converted to a residential building. We gradually wandered back along neat terraced streets, looking at our final workshop off Grosvenor St before returning to the Clock Face

*Maurice Handley*

## The Past in Shadow - Fawcett Preston & Co. Ltd (1860 – 1865)

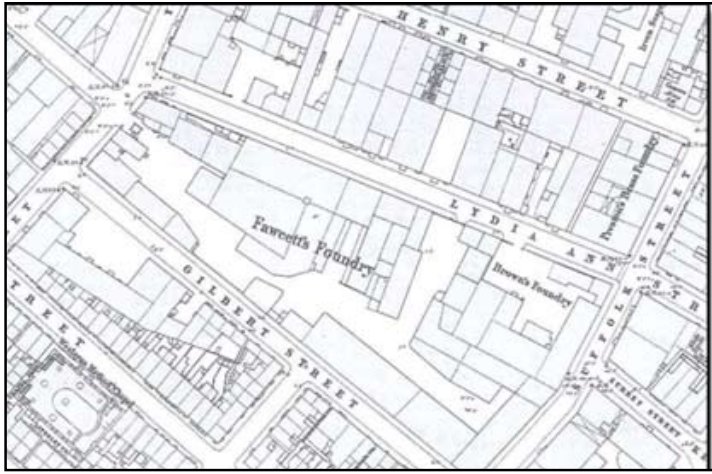


*The base of the first rifled cannon used in America*

In York Street, close to the Albert Dock and the (now lost) Custom House, was located one of the most important suppliers of ordnance and engineering expertise to the Confederate States during the American Civil War (1861-1865). The picture (above) provides an illustration of the trademark which survives to this day. Indeed, this cannon was the first of its kind to be used in anger on the American continent. It was unique, not only because it was rifled, but also because of its controversial design. Its effectiveness was heralded by the Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard, when it was used in the bombardment of Fort Sumter S.C. (April 1861), an action that precipitated the American Civil War.

The history of the maker is linked to the industrial growth of Liverpool, and that of skulduggery, parliamentary controversy and crushing post-war reparations. The designer, while heralded as a visionary, was entangled in a labyrinth of claim and counter claim in terms of patents, patronage and nepotism. The purchaser was the banker for virtually all Confederate activity in the United Kingdom and Europe. All had substantial links to Liverpool and are now in jeopardy of being forgotten.

Fawcett Preston & Co. was established in Liverpool in 1758, when George Perry opened a foundry which specialised in manufacturing



*The location of the foundry in 1864*

three-legged iron pots. The arrival of William Fawcett, first as manager, and then owner changed the emphasis of production. Ordnance and steam machinery had become very lucrative and the opportunity was grasped in earnest. The company developed a reputation for excellence and innovation which did not go unnoticed by the agents of the Confederacy, who were searching for suppliers who could service their need for arms and ships. However, the role of Fawcett Preston was always under close scrutiny by Union agents and questions were asked in the House of Commons (1863). Nevertheless, over 30 examples of ordnance, including those recovered from Confederate surface raiders (CSS Alabama, CSS Florida) survive to illustrate the level of involvement. Unfortunately, such involvement led to reparations of over \$15 million being awarded to the United States (Treaty of Washington 1872).

The designer, under whose patent many of the cannon were manufactured, was Theophilus Alexander Blakely (1822-1868).



*Fawcett Preston foundry in 1935*

His contribution to the development of rifled ordnance has been obscured because of a dispute about the originality of his design. Sir William Armstrong decisively registered a similar patent during the same year (1855), Armstrong was responsible for ordnance procurement for the British military, and as a result, no Blakely

patented ordnance was ever acquired. Blakely's widow continued to seek redress and questions were still being asked in the House of Commons in 1900, but without satisfaction.

The purchaser of the cannon was Charles Kuhn Prioleau. A native of South Carolina, with strong business links between Charleston S.C and Liverpool. He ran Fraser Trenholm & Co., situated in 10 Rumford Place, near St Nicholas's Church. It was through this business that financial support was given to the Confederate procurement agents. Most notable of these was the purchase of the CSS Florida and CSS Alabama, built by W. Miller & Sons and Laird Bros, respectively. The cannon was a gift, which had inscribed on a plaque, "*Presented to the State of South Carolina by a citizen resident abroad in commemoration of the 20th December, 1860. . .*". It now resides in a memorial park in Galena, Illinois. Curiously, it is also the birthplace of Union general and later U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant. Prioleau is buried in Kensall, London, but the home he built in Liverpool, survives at 19 Abercromby Square, later more famous as the residence of the Chavasse family.

The above, albeit brief, sketch demonstrates the level of involvement of Liverpool in the American Civil War. Nevertheless, it is in danger of being forgotten. The Maritime Museum, has attempted to rectify this, but the exhibition focuses, unsurprisingly, mainly upon the naval aspect. More, significantly, the archives of Fawcett Preston and Fraser Trenholm, despite being fragmentary, have received limited interest. The foundry has long been demolished and the artefacts are mainly situated abroad. Those buildings that survive, are little known, or have become understated. Has the legacy of Fawcett Preston and its involvement with the Confederate war effort become an inconvenient truth? It is with this question that I ponder, is indeed the past in shadow?

*Peter Norris, PhD student at the University of Liverpool in Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology.*

### **The Lister Steps Carnegie Community Hub project**

The Lister Steps Carnegie Community Hub project aims to regenerate the former Andrew Carnegie Library on the corner



*Green Lane Elevation - Full Building*



*Lister Drive Reading Room*

of Lister Drive and Green Lane. The project is currently in a Heritage Lottery Fund development stage as we investigate the extent of the damage in the former library and carry out consultations with stakeholders and the community to identify new uses for the building.

The emergency holding works are ongoing at the former Library. Contractors from Robinsons Preservation Ltd have continued to work hard to stop the rot by removing the saturated and mouldy plaster and vinyl flooring and preparing the building for a period of drying out and ventilation. They have completed this work ahead of time and have now moved on to investigating the condition of the timber structure. Sadly the roof continues to leak significantly in places and so we are in discussions with Liverpool City Council to resolve this as part of the £100,000 emergency holding works they are funding.

The great news is that preliminary investigations hint that much of the historic fabric will be saved and retained rather than replaced which is fantastic news for the conservation of the building. Much of the plaster detailing has been left in situ at this stage while some has been wrapped in bubble wrap to ensure we have samples saved and some has been sent off to be dated. Curiously investigative work has found that not all the plasterwork is authentic to the Edwardian period! Much of the plaster detailing is hollow plaster board and so we are researching the Library Museum and Arts Committee minute books to find out when the plaster replacement work took place. The consultation process to identify new uses for the building is ongoing and we welcome the input of MAS members. Please visit [www.listerstepshub.co.uk](http://www.listerstepshub.co.uk) for more information and for regular project updates.

*Kerry Massheder-Rigby*

**The Poulton Research Project**

The Poulton Research Project was founded in 1995 as a training and research excavation in rural Cheshire, but the story starts in the late 1960s when the farmer kept hitting a buried structure within a 52 acre area known as Chapel Field. He conducted a small excavation which recovered a glazed medieval floor tile and human mandible. This raised interest locally as Poulton has long been known to be the site of a short-lived but now lost Cistercian

Abbey which existed in the 12th/13th century.

The 1995 excavation focused on the area where the ecclesiastical finds had been recovered but instead of an abbey, the foundations of a tripartite rural Chapel with Tower, Nave and Chancel were uncovered, in addition to a graveyard with an estimated 2,000 burials. The foundations of the structure showed clear evidence of being enlarged from a single celled building of possibly late Saxon date (supported by finds of 10th century pottery). What was even more surprising was the recovery of a large Roman assemblage from the grave fills (it is now known that the Chapel sits on top of a Roman building), which indicated a high-status settlement in the vicinity. Resistivity survey of the surrounding area revealed a circular feature approximately 40m to the north, but instead of a Roman structure, excavation surprisingly revealed an Iron Age roundhouse.

Continual excavation from 1995 until 2014 has revealed a large landscape with continuous occupation from the Middle Iron Age through to the early post-medieval period. The earliest structural phases comprise an extensive Iron Age lowland settlement, with multiple roundhouses built on the same site generation after generation. The ceramic and overall assemblage is large and indicates that a wealthy trading settlement existed. Later Roman activity currently comprises land division, industrial remains, some structures and a large and diverse assemblage indicative of high-status settlement from the late 1st-early 5th centuries AD. The Saxon period is represented by the single celled structure and a large assemblage of 10th century Chester Ware ceramics. This phase finally links into the tripartite Chapel, which records reveal was completely demolished by the early 18th century.



*Poulton - Ring Ditches II and III*

The archaeology of Chapel Field is of great importance for several reasons. Firstly, the extensive archaeology, continuity in occupation and deep stratigraphy is more akin to an urban than rural excavation. The remains are well preserved and very rare in Cheshire, a region which is still seen as being sparse for evidence in the late prehistoric, Roman and even possibly medieval periods. With this in mind, the multi-period assemblage now comprises approximately 75,000 items. This research excavation has the potential to become a type-

site, whilst simultaneously rewriting the distribution maps of several periods in British archaeology.

*Kevin Cootes*

### A Roman Lamp Holder from Kelsall, Cheshire.



*Oakden, V (2014) LVPL-3A55A3 A ROMAN LAMP Webpage available at: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/646088>*

This incomplete cast lead alloy object was reported to Portable Antiquities Scheme by a local metal detectorist and is recorded as LVPL-3A55A3. It is a lamp holder of Roman date. The object is sub-oval in plan and consists of a sheet of lead, the edges of which have been folded inwards. In the centre of the object is a drilled hole with an internal diameter of 9.61mm. The object has a light brown patina and is undecorated.

Lead lamp holders were used during the Roman period to hold oil lamps, candles and lanterns. Although the perforation could be used to drain oil spilt from a ceramic or metal lamp a parallel with a hole has not been found and it may have caused impracticalities.

An example of an un-perforated lead lamp holder can be seen from the National Museums Scotland online catalogue <http://nms.scran.ac.uk/database/record.php?usi=000-100-102-484-C>. Another example at the Grosvenor Museum, Chester can be seen at <http://aroundchester.blogspot.co.uk/2013/03/roman-lead-lamp-holder.html>.

Currently on the PAS database only 3 lamp holders have been recorded while we have records of 17 Roman lamps of various forms. In this flattened condition this lamp holder could have easily been dismissed as scrap so it is fortunate that the finder was able to recognise its importance and bring it along to a finds surgery for identification.

*Vanessa Oakden*

### The Mersey and Dee branch of the Young Archaeologists' Club

The Mersey and Dee branch of the Young Archaeologists' Club have had a very busy summer!

The team at Big Heritage (<http://bigheritage.co.uk/>) led our two fieldwork sessions last summer. We joined them on their 'Discovering Bromborough' community excavations. In July we spent time with Big Heritage researching Bromborough and identifying changes in the landscape over time by looking at historic maps. In August we started our session by going on a tour of a local church where Dean from Big Heritage asked us questions about the landscape and how it might have changed over time, allowing us to put our research into practice. We then walked to site where, despite a heavy and lengthy downpour (!), we enjoyed helping Big Heritage to dig test pits, sieve and record. We especially enjoyed working with Film Fallon to record our day digging using handheld camcorders and interviewing site volunteers. Thank you Big Heritage ☺



*YAC - Big Heritage at Bromborough*

If you know a young person aged 8-16 years who would like to get involved in YAC please visit <http://new.archaeologyuk.org/join-a-yac-branch> to find your local branch, or for the Mersey and Dee branch please e-mail [Fay.Eaton-Franks@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Fay.Eaton-Franks@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

*Kerry Massheder-Rigby*



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 1/2015

Registered Charity No 510831

## 2015 Subscriptions

*MAS Subscriptions for the new year were due on 1st January. If you have not yet paid your membership fee please do so as soon as possible.*

## From the Editor

Welcome to the first Newsletter of the year. 2015 brings sweeping changes to the way in which archaeology is organised and funded in this country, at the national and local level. This comes at a time when threats to our heritage are as great as ever. It is therefore appropriate that much of this issue is dedicated to highlighting some of the important changes that are currently taking place.

## MAS Council

Several committee members will be standing down from the MAS Council at the 2015 AGM in a few weeks time. Under our 2-year rule, our current chairman, Rob Philpott must also vacate his position. This will leave a number of Officer and Ordinary posts that we wish to fill. Details of the vacancies are contained in the AGM papers which accompany this Newsletter.

## MAS Lecture and Field Trip Programme

Our lectures are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre. The room is booked from 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30.

All welcome - including non-members.

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk or site visit please pass the information on to Maurice as an idea for a future event. [mahandley@tesco.net](mailto:mahandley@tesco.net)

### *MAS 2015 Winter Lecture programme*

**Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 (AGM)**

**Augustinian lifeways: reconstructing medieval diet, disease and trauma from Norton Priory, Cheshire:** *Shirley Curtis-Summers, the University of Liverpool*

This talk will present key results from recent PhD research on the Norton Priory skeletons (12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> c. AD); with evidence for diet (from stable isotope analysis) and disease and trauma (from osteological investigations). The extent to which a religious way of life had an effect on the medieval body will be discussed.

## 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.

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## **MAS 2015 Field Trip programme**

If you are coming on the field trips please let Maurice Handley know by email ([mahandley@tesco.net](mailto:mahandley@tesco.net)) or phone 0151 426 8157.

### **Saturday May 9th - West Kirby Museum and Hog Back Stone: with Christine Longworth**

Meet for coffee etc. at 10.30am in the Dee Hotel which is the Wetherspoons pub opposite West Kirby Station. At approximately 11a.m we will take a short walk along the former railway line to the Museum. Car drivers may wish to go directly to the Museum where there is limited parking.

11.30 Assemble at St Bridget's Centre, West Kirby. The Centre is located behind St Bridget's Church in the old village of West Kirby on St Bridget's Lane adjacent to St Bridget's Primary School. Access is available from St Bridget's Lane or through the Churchyard from Rectory Road and Church Road.

Introduction by Christine Longworth, followed by visit to West Kirby Museum. More information about the museum will be found at [www.westkirbymuseum.co.uk](http://www.westkirbymuseum.co.uk)

12.30 approx. Break for lunch. It is suggested that you bring lunch. There is a room available for the Society's use in the Centre. Toilets are in the building.

1.30 – 2.30pm St Bridget's Church: an opportunity to see the hogback (the subject of last January's lecture) and other features of interest inside the church.

2.30pm St Bridget's churchyard and church exterior, followed by a walk through Old West Kirby.

### **Saturday June 13th - Walk Mill and Poulton Archaeological Project: with Kevin Cootes and Ben Jones (the Miller).**

Meet at 10.30am in the cafe at Walk Mill (between Tarvin and Waverton).

Walk Mill is a working water driven mill rebuilt on the site of a long established fulling mill. It is an excellent place to see and understand how the process worked and also learn about the numerous mills on the River Gow. There is a pleasant cafe where we can meet for coffee before taking a guided tour of the Mill and a brief look at the surrounding area. (<http://www.walkmillflour.co.uk/>). We can lunch in the cafe or just bring a picnic.



*Walk Mill near Tarvin. A recently rebuilt working mill. It has a high efficiency water wheel.*

After lunch we will drive to the Poulton archaeology site arriving at 1.30pm. The Poulton Project was founded in 1995 as a community based research excavation to hunt for a lost Cistercian Abbey which was recorded as existing for roughly 60 years in the 12th and 13th centuries. Although this structure has yet to be found, an extensive multi-period archaeological landscape has been revealed. The earliest finds comprise a significant assemblage of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age flints which indicate extensive activity in the area. The earliest structural evidence is found in the Iron Age, with elements of 11 roundhouses so far excavated, characteristic of an aggregated settlement. Later Romano-British field boundaries, industrial and structural remains indicate a high status settlement. Later archaeology comprises a significant volume of Saxon pottery and the foundations of a medieval chapel with associated graveyard. The Poulton Project is exceptional in the abundance and rarity in continuity of settlement. (<http://www.poultonresearchproject.co.uk/contact>)

Directions: From the A55 Chester South by-pass, follow the A51 east towards Nantwich. After the roundabout turn right at the brown sign for Walk Mill. Follow the route over the Gow then turn left at the waterwheel. [Sat. nav. CH3 7RZ , Grid. Ref. SJ 483642]

Directions to Poulton from Walk Mill: At the exit turn left to Waverton, then after the canal bridge turn right on the A41 towards Chester. At the traffic lights take the A55 towards Wrexham. Exit south towards Wrexham on to the A483 then left at the traffic lights on to the B5445 towards Pulford. After passing the Grosvenor Garden Centre, turn left on the Straight Mile to Poulton. Just after the cross roads you will see a security entrance to the Grosvenor Estate on the left. Further directions on the day. [CH4 9JH, SD 403583]

There may be some rough ground at Poulton - suitable footwear may be needed. The locations are not accessible by public transport. If you require a lift or can offer to take someone who needs a lift please contact Maurice Handley at [mahandley@tesco.net](mailto:mahandley@tesco.net) or phone 0151 426 8157.

### **Saturday 11th July - Fort Crosby, Hightown: with Mark Adams**

Fort Crosby was once one of the major components of the port of Liverpool's defences. It was established in the early 20th century as a battery of three 6 inch naval guns and expanded in World War II to include anti-aircraft defences, searchlight batteries and barracks. Towards the end of the war it served as a POW camp but was closed down in the 1950s and finally demolished in the late 1960s. Once a significant local landmark, the site is slowly being reclaimed by the dunes or destroyed by erosion, though some sections are still visible and will be explored on this walk. Tide and time permitting, we also hope to see evidence of a Neolithic wooden trackway and the remains of a post glacial 'fossil' forest. There may be some uneven, sandy or muddy surfaces. The walk will be about 4km with some walking on sand dunes and wet sandy beach.

Meet at the Hightown Hotel for refreshment etc. at 2pm. The Hotel is next to Hightown station on the line to Southport. By road, follow the signs to Altcar Training Camp from the A565. [L38 0BA, SD 299036]

### **Archaeology Matters: Give the Past a Future**

What links rescue archaeology, wrecks, the campaign against treasure hunting, archaeology insurance, industrial archaeology, the Young Archaeologist Club and the Festival of Archaeology? Answer: the **Council for British Archaeology (CBA)**. These are all subjects that the CBA has campaigned about over the last 70 years. Indeed, without the CBA Britain's past would have been greatly impoverished. No-one else promotes archaeology across the professional, museum and voluntary sectors. Whilst other organisations have dropped the word 'archaeology' from their titles or use because it might be seen as too narrow (though as it's the study of the physical remains of the human past you can't get more breadth!) or because they want to appeal to a 'wider' professional sector, the CBA has championed archaeology as a way of looking at the past and interpreting the present, at a time when archaeology has become part of our popular culture. That's why I was proud to be elected a Trustee of the CBA in 2013.

The CBA is the oldest national campaigning body for archaeology in the UK. Founded in 1944, the Council for British Archaeology has acted as the independent champion for archaeology, combating the pressure on Britain's archaeological monuments and the wider historic environment from post-war redevelopment<sup>1</sup> and successive waves of boom-and-bust construction to the neglect of property and landowners and the threat of the illegal antiquities market. It was instrumental in founding the discipline of Industrial Archaeology<sup>2</sup> and in saving hundreds of industrial sites from demolition. It has supported and promoted voluntary, professional and academic archaeology. Its regional groups have been helping local archaeology societies since the 1970s with campaigns to save sites and in educating a wider public through conferences and publications. Thus, the CBA has been representing the interests of its members and everyone who is active in archaeology in the UK and cares about its future for over 70 years. Recently,

- in 2014 over 7,800 young people participated in their local YAC Branch supported by 600 volunteers;
- in 2014 a quarter of a million people experienced archaeology across the UK through the Festival of Archaeology;
- since 2011 51 trainee community archaeologists have carried out year-long work placements;
- and the CBA continues to champion archaeology in the planning system, and its advocacy work has enhanced protection for wreck sites, set up better systems for safeguarding portable antiquities and pushed for archaeology in the formal education curriculum.

The CBA's main source of income has been withdrawn. 2016 will be the CBA's first without the funding that has been in place since the early days of the organisation in the 1940s. The result is that it will have a third less money to sustain its vital advocacy work and participation programmes. The timing of this cut couldn't be worse, as the practice of archaeology in Britain, whether voluntary, professional or academic, faces great uncertainties. This is the result of cuts to the professional archaeology teams advising the local planning decisions that protect our archaeological heritage, a reduction in students applying to study archaeology at university and the declining membership of many of the traditional local archaeology societies. Furthermore, the number of professional archaeologists in the UK has fallen from a peak of c.7,000 in 2008 to around 4,000 in 2013, with a significant loss of the skills needed to drive the large-scale archaeology projects and innovative research for which British archaeologists are renowned the world over.

Without increased funding from membership and charitable income, the CBA's activities will be reduced in the short term and along with that, its ability to make a difference now. In a few years there may not even be a Council for British Archaeology to speak up for the future of Britain's past. We can all help save the future of our shared past by becoming a member or donating online at [www.archaeologyuk.org/shop](http://www.archaeologyuk.org/shop). If those of us who care about the past don't shout about the current threats who will? **Archaeology Matters: find out more here [www.archaeologymatters.org.uk](http://www.archaeologymatters.org.uk).**

1) Jones G D B J, 1984, *Past Imperfect. The Story of Rescue Archaeology*. London: Heinemann, 48-52.

2) Palmer M, Nevell M & Sissons M, 2012, *Industrial Archaeology: A Handbook*. CBA Practical Handbook 21, 1-9.

*Mike Nevell, Chair CBA (North West)*



## New name for English Heritage Government Advice Organisation

On 1st April 2015, the non-departmental government body English Heritage, which reports to and advises the Dept of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) will divide into two parts. The nationally owned properties and collections will retain the English Heritage name and red logo but will be run by a charitable Trust. So if you are a member of English Heritage and like to visit properties like Beeston Castle, Birdoswald Roman fort or Stonehenge, everything will seem very familiar, and your English Heritage membership continues as normal. <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/>

The government advice side of our work also continues in much the same way as before, but under the new name of Historic England and with a new stripey logo (green for landscape & archaeology, red for buildings and blue for maritime). The split occurs on 1st April but the big launch will come in June (as government activities are under election purdah in the run up to May 7th).

The Historic England local office for NW England remains at Canada House, Chepstow Street, Manchester M1 5FW Tel: 0161 242 1416 and we now have a twitter account [http://www.twitter.com/HE\\_NorthWest](http://www.twitter.com/HE_NorthWest). See our new website on: <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/>



Sue Stallibrass

## Protecting Merseyside's Heritage

The following article is based on an earlier article which appeared in the Bulletin of the Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society:

Concern has been expressed about Merseyside's heritage structures and sites, particularly following Sir Neil Cossons recent address at Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society's 50th Anniversary celebration. Sir Neil urged the audience to become involved in preserving our heritage and 'recognise what we've got and needs saving'. Society members can contribute by using their 'domain knowledge' - that is they know the structures, sites and history of their own area. A building may be listed, part of a conservation area or in the Historic Environment Record (see below). It may be on a list drawn up by another society or heritage group in the area. The borough council may have a local list of historically important buildings which will carry some weight if the building or site is the subject of a planning application. Ideally it is best to identify buildings which might be threatened or have outstanding historic value and ensure they are listed or protected.

Additionally if the building is unoccupied it may be given legal protection as a Scheduled Monument. For example the Cannington Shaw Bottle Shop in St Helens is a Scheduled Monument and a Grade II Listed Building. It is in a ruinous condition and is on the English Heritage at Risk register. The Transporter Bridge at Bank Quay in Warrington is also a Scheduled Monument 'at risk' and listed Grade II\* - the second highest classification. A new group, the Friends of Warrington Transporter Bridge has just been started to help preserve the bridge and the St Helens Heritage network is actively pursuing the adaptive reuse of the Cannington Shaw structure.



*Cannington Shaw Bottle Shop, St Helens. A Scheduled Monument which is listed Grade II and is a building 'at risk'. It sits forlornly in a Tesco Car Park, neglected and ruinous. The St Helens Heritage Network has formed a group to obtain funding to adapt and reuse the building*

To check for national listing visit the The National Heritage List for England (<http://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>). A building name or place name search will produce a list of designated heritage assets and this may include similar buildings which are nearby and can be cited in any application or representation. The Images of England site contains photographs of listed buildings (<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/>). Note that this website may not have recently listed buildings on it.

It may be worth looking at the criteria for protection as this will help you to assess the value of a site ([www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/)). Also worth consulting is the Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings produced by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The principles involve architectural and historic merit, age and rarity, state of repair and appearance, and national interest. For further guidance on particular types of buildings follow the link to Selection Guides at <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/selection-criteria/listing-selection/>.

Some sites may have additional protection because they lie within a Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, or a Regionally Important Geological Site (for example, an abandoned railway cutting).

Members can keep a watch for planning applications for listed buildings or sites likely to be of particular interest by trawling through the local council's planning web site. This can be reached from the Planning Portal (Google 'planning portal') or from the council's planning website which may contain weekly lists. A council may use specific notation for application numbers which can be used to simplify the search (e.g. /LBC for listed building consent). Some planning authorities will send lists of planning applications to societies and other interested groups. An early indication of sites which might be threatened can be found by consulting the borough council's Local Plan which sets out the strategy for a decade ahead and includes the development of 'Brownfield' Sites and the release of Green belt land.

In the event of opposing a planning application, the English Heritage guidelines will give a flavour of the jargon which can be used. At this stage it is preferable to make a representation with the backing of a society or other local group. It might be worthwhile to get the council's conservation officer on board although this may run contrary to the council's own strategy (for example when the promise of jobs is seen as more important than heritage). Also councils might not have a conservation officer and farm the job out instead.

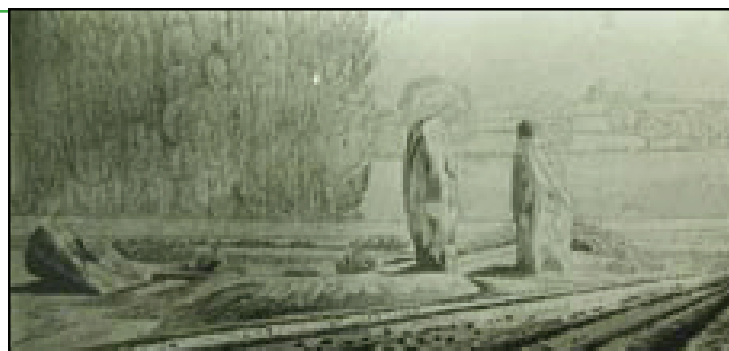
Parliamentary guidelines place the onus for archaeological investigation on the developer and this can have unsatisfactory implications. Developers will have consulted experts and planners at an early stage in the planning application process. They may apply for exemption from listing or even destroy a building before it can be listed or recorded. Some building proposals do not require planning permission, for example the conversion of a pub into a fast food outlet, and there is a risk that archaeological or historical features will be damaged or lost.

If possible use 'domain knowledge' and stay ahead by getting protection first. Even though a building cannot be listed nationally or locally it can still be recorded on the Historic Environment Record (HER). This makes it an undesignated heritage asset that needs to be considered as part of the planning process and is a step in the right direction. For more information on the HER visit the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service's website ([www.meas.org.uk/wider-role/historic-environment-record.aspx](http://www.meas.org.uk/wider-role/historic-environment-record.aspx)). Ben Croxford, Merseyside's HER Officer represents MHER on the MAS Council. It now seems hardly credible that less than 50 years ago the Albert Dock was derelict and its demolition was actively contemplated. Without the opposition from local societies and institutions we would not have the benefit of this superb group of Grade I listed buildings.

*Maurice Handley*

### **Connect at Calderstones**

'Connect at Calderstones' is a project led by The Reader Organisation - a Liverpool based reading charity to engage the public with the local heritage of Calderstones Park. It is part of a Heritage Lottery Fund bid to restore the Grade II listed Calderstones Mansion House in Calderstones Park and provide a new home for the Calderstones. Although the house dates from the 19th Century its name is centuries older and comes from six highly decorated megaliths, thought to be the remains of a Neolithic passage grave.



*The Calderstones on their original site in 1825*

The Calderstones, a scheduled ancient monument, has for the past 50 years been located within a park greenhouse and has somewhat fallen out of public consciousness.

Working closely with partner agencies The Reader Organisation wishes to re-engage people with their shared heritage through events, workshops and projects. Part of our plan is to conduct a community archaeology dig in the park in conjunction with National Museums Liverpool. This dig will run from 27th April – 8th May. To register as a volunteer on the site, or get involved in other activities associated with the project contact [richardmacdonald@thereader.org.uk](mailto:richardmacdonald@thereader.org.uk)

*Liz Stewart*

### **The Poulton Project**

The Poulton Project is a multi-period rural excavation 3 miles south of Chester and also the destination for our field trip on 13th June. The Project offers students the opportunity to excavate well-preserved archaeology from a variety of periods. Currently, Iron Age roundhouses, Roman industrial structures, field boundaries, and the Medieval Chapel and graveyard are available on their field courses.

The dates for the 2015 season are March 29th-April 17th and 29th June-21st August.

Contact: Kevin Cootes e-mail: [kvecootes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kvecootes@hotmail.co.uk) for further details.

There is also a website: [www.poultonresearchproject.co.uk](http://www.poultonresearchproject.co.uk)

*Kevin Cootes*

### **Lister Steps Carnegie Community Hub**

Significant progress has been made by Lister Steps in their quest to regenerate the former Andrew Carnegie Library on Green Lane. Emergency holding works have been ongoing since August 2014 and have made the building watertight, treated the wet and dry rot, removed the mould, replaced severely damaged timbers and recorded the decorative plaster in anticipation of the next phase of work. The building is now fully secure, watertight and is drying out ready for conservation works to start (funding permitting!).

Lister Steps need to find £800,000 match funding in order to successfully receive £4.5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Support from the Heritage Lottery Fund will enable Lister Steps to regenerate the building for community use and run a programme of heritage themed activities such as test pitting, historic building recording, an oral history project, site tours, talks and much more. The building redesign and ideas for activities are currently being discussed. Lister Steps welcome your input by taking their short online survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/H8YFMCF> or by contacting [Kerry.Massheder-Rigby@listersteps.co.uk](mailto:Kerry.Massheder-Rigby@listersteps.co.uk) to arrange for Lister Steps to call you.

*Kerry Massheder-Rigby*



*Lister Drive Reading Room*



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 2/2015

Registered Charity No 510831

## 2015 Subscriptions

*MAS Subscriptions for the new year were due on 1st January. Quite a few people who were members in 2014 have not yet renewed their subscription. If you have not yet paid your membership fee please do so as soon as possible.*

## MAS Council

We are pleased to welcome David Scott and Sue Stallibrass as new members of MAS Council.

There are a number of positions still vacant on MAS Council. With the prospect that we will be losing further long-standing committee members next year, we are eager to attract new council representatives particularly younger members of the Society in order to maintain continuity for the future. If you are interested please contact our Secretary, Martin Cox (contact details aside).

## MAS Lecture Programme

Our lectures are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre. The room is booked from 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30.

All welcome - including non-members.

If you have heard a particularly interesting talk or site visit please pass the information on to Maurice as an idea for a future event. [mahandley@tesco.net](mailto:mahandley@tesco.net)

## MAS 2015 Field Trip programme

**Thursday October 15th** - '50,000 years in the rainforests of Borneo - geoarchaeology of cave sediments': Dr Chris Hunt (JMU) 7.00pm in the Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool

The great rainforests of the world have long been regarded as 'green deserts' hostile to human life because most wild food items are widely spaced in time and space and many animals and birds live their lives in the high canopy, high above the forest floor and largely inaccessible before the invention of projectile weapons. Archaeology is really difficult to do in rainforests, so very little research has been carried out.

This talk will discuss the results of 15 years research in three projects in Borneo although it will concentrate on results from a project at the Great Cave of Niah. The story is far more complex than we had thought. Modern people had entered forest environments in Borneo before 50,000 years ago and had developed highly skilled strategies to live in these difficult and dangerous habitats. They learnt to manage the forest using fire, to detoxify poisonous plants and to exploit animal populations. But they lived through times

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

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Vacant

Hon Secretary:  
Martin Cox  
email: [martincox3@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:martincox3@hotmail.co.uk)

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Anthony Sinclair  
e-mail: *tbc*

Hon Treasurer & Newsletter Editor:  
Dave Roberts  
e-mail: [drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk)

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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of dramatic environmental change with very rapid climatic and vegetational shifts. And they developed some of the cultural traits that characterise Borneo people to the present day, with complex secondary burial and ritual involving human heads appearing before 35,000 years ago. They also developed very early food production.

**Thursday November 19th** - 'The Volcanic Eruption of Santorini and its effects on the Bronze Age Minoans of the Eastern Mediterranean.' Prof. Silvia Gonzalez (JMU) 7.00 pm in the Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool

Around 3,500 years ago, the Santorini Volcano in the eastern Mediterranean Sea produced one of the largest volcanic eruptions known in Europe. At the time of the eruption the Minoans were a sophisticated Bronze Age seafaring culture that lived in the region. During the talk we will discuss the impact of the eruption on the Minoans and will explore in detail the evidence of their culture derived from the study of Akrotiri "The Greek Pompeii", a city that was covered suddenly by volcanic ash, with amazing preservation of buildings, frescos, etc giving a unique and vivid picture of life at the time of the eruption.

**Thursday December 17th** - Members evening at 7.00 pm in the Ship and Mitre, 133 Dale St, Liverpool L2 2JH An open evening when members can bring a short presentation or an artefact for discussion. There will also be a brief introduction to the 2016 Summer Field Weekend in the Lleyen peninsula. A sandwich buffet will be provided.

### Provisional programme for 2016

**January 21st 2016** - Mike Taylor 'Fields and Field Names at Thelwall'

**February 18th 2016** - Dr David Jordan (JMU) Forensic Archaeology t.b.a.

**March 17th 2016** - Paul Knight 'The role of Archaeologists in Mesopotamia in World War One'

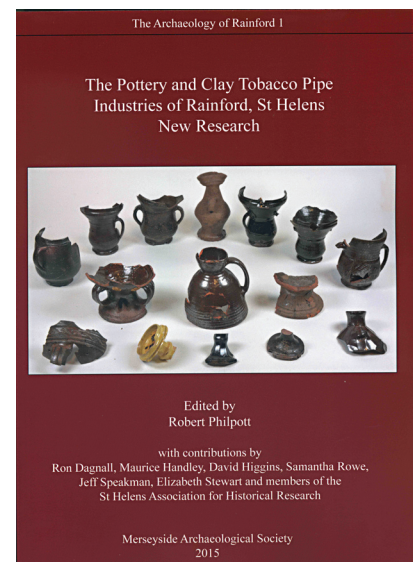
**April 21st 2016** - AGM followed by 'a. n. other'.

### Rainford's Roots - new publication

MAS has published the results of the Rainford's Roots project in a monograph. This book presents an overview of the archaeology of the historically rich village of Rainford, near St Helens. The archaeological excavations produced regionally significant groups of 16th and 17th century pottery and clay tobacco pipes dating from the 17th through to the early 20th century. The manufacture of pottery and clay tobacco pipes became an important cottage industry for the local community. It is written by MAS members, local historians, and archaeologists from the Museum of Liverpool and has been published in partnership with the Museum of Liverpool. It explores a range of evidence for the heritage of Rainford, and presents the results of the archaeological investigations which have revealed fresh evidence of the village's industrial past. It focusses on the research carried out between 2011 and 2014 as part of the HLF-funded Rainford's Roots Community Archaeology Project.

The monograph contains 226 pages and is illustrated in colour.

The book is available from Liz Stewart at the Museum of Liverpool and costs £20.00 plus £3.50 p&p.



### Calderstones - Big Dig

On 26th October a small exhibition will open at the Museum of Liverpool to display some of the finds and findings of the recent 'Big Dig' in Calderstones Park. While excavations didn't reveal any prehistoric remains, the finds tell some of the history of the park over the last 300 years. A group of fragmentary C18th ceramics could be remains of the practice of spreading town 'night soil' on agricultural fields; a series of parallel ditches in another trench might date from the Second World War 'dig for victory' campaign; and the method of construction of the sunken haha wall was investigated.

*Liz Stewart*

## Merseyside Historic Environment Record update

The Merseyside Historic Environment Record (MHER) digitisation and modernisation project continues, now having reached 62% completion. All of Wirral and large parts of Sefton, Liverpool and Knowsley are now complete with information from the original paper Sites and Monuments Record entries transferred to the new system. This brings us a lot closer to having a fully functioning HER that can be used in the planning process to ensure archaeology is properly considered during redevelopment.

The MHER is also now available on Heritage Gateway (<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>), the national web portal that enables HERs across the country to be searched for free. The data on the website is a little out of date, as it is only uploaded periodically, and as such you will find a lot of placeholder records with not a lot of information attached to them. New uploads will be made in the coming months and areas gradually filled in as we complete the digitisation project. If you use the online service and spot any errors or omissions, please do let us know: [Merseyside.HER@eas.sefton.gov.uk](mailto:Merseyside.HER@eas.sefton.gov.uk).

Finally, if you would like to get involved in working on the MHER, you can volunteer! No previous experience of working with HERs or archaeological information is required as full training is provided. We can also reimburse travel expenses (public transport within Merseyside or equivalent). If you have a day or two (or more) a week that you can spare, do get in touch for more information. It is a great opportunity to get involved in the preservation of our area's heritage and all from the comfort of an office.

*Ben Croxford*

*Historic Environment Record Officer*

*Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, 1st Floor Merton House, Bootle*

## Museum of Liverpool - Recent Acquisitions

We've had an exciting new acquisition to the Regional Archaeology Collection at the Museum of Liverpool – two hoards of Roman treasure! The Knutsford and Malpas Hoards were both found by metal detectorists and reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme to Vanessa Oakden, Finds Liaison Officer, based at the Museum. The hoards of coins and jewellery have now been acquired by Museum of Liverpool in partnership with Congleton Museum with the support of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The funding has covered the purchase price and will buy equipment to create a touring exhibition of the hoards, which we hope to open at Museum of Liverpool in early 2016.

Go to <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/507605> to see one of the Knutsford brooches

*Liz Stewart*



*Artefacts from the Cheshire Hoards*

## Continuing Education course at the Atkinson, Southport:

*Introduction to the Archaeology of Merseyside and Beyond Part 1* - Dr Robert Philpott  
5 meetings from Wednesday 14 October 2-4pm

The North West of England has a rich and fascinating history. Archaeological discoveries over the past three decades have changed our understanding of the past, casting new light on the people of the region, their lives and occupations, and the material possessions they used in everyday life and to display their status and identity. The course will take an overview through time from the Iron Age to the 18th century of the archaeology of the North West region of England. Based on Merseyside and its neighbouring counties, we will look at case studies of excavations and other research to gain new insights into life in the past. Some familiar modern themes - trade, industry, identity, the north-south divide and immigration - may turn out to have surprisingly ancient roots.

Further information : [www.liv.ac.uk/continuing-education/](http://www.liv.ac.uk/continuing-education/)

## **MAS 39th AGM Thursday 16th April 2015 held at the Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool.**

At a well attended and successful meeting, proceedings were opened with Rob Philpott in the Chair. Apologies were received from Geoff Woodcock and Cathy Ingram. With a minor amendment, the minutes of the 38th AGM 2014 were accepted as an accurate record.

Dave Roberts presented his report on the 2014 accounts. The society has moved from a deficit in 2013 to a current surplus and a further expected surplus in 2015. Much of this has been due to the Rainford's Roots Project and income from the October conference. Publication sales have also improved due to the sales of the Rainford's Roots publication and sales at the conference. Membership subscriptions have been very similar to that of 2013.

Our expenditure (and income) on lectures has increased, due to expenses, but administration costs have remained the same as 2013. The Society remains in a healthy financial situation providing our current level membership remains the same. Our membership list is some 105 though at this date, 50 memberships remain due.

Thanks were given to Neil McLaughlin Cook for examining the Society's accounts this year.

Our outgoing Chair, Rob Philpott, reported on a successful past year. There has been continued progress on the Merseyside HER which has been transferred to the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, managed by Dr Ben Croxford and assisted by Dr Dana Campbell. The two year project to create a digital record is well underway.

The Society has two journals in planning. Volume 15 is themed on Liverpool District and Volume 16 on Newton-le-Willows. There has been a highly successful programme of lectures, expertly organised by Dr Gina Muskett, from the curvilinear enclosures in the Wirral, astronomy in prehistoric Britain, the Big History project in Bromborough, West Kirby Hogback, to progress with Merseyside HER.

Excellent field trips have been organised by Maurice Handley taking us to Knowsley Park and Prescot, Liverpool Central Library archive and Rainford. Our grateful thanks to all our excellent speakers and field trip leaders.

Rob thanked Dave Roberts for his outstanding work in ensuring a sound financial basis for the Society and in particular our high quality newsletter, essential to the good working of MAS. Rob also thanked all Council members for their continued support and hard work.

Rainford's Roots has now reached its conclusion. This highly successful project was led by Sam Rowe who has now left to take up a funded PhD at Huddersfield University. A hallmark of the project was the engagement with the local community and this year saw the publication of an article on the society by Dave Roberts, Sam Rowe and Liz Stewart in the new journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage, Vol 1 no 2, exploring the role of MAS in community engagement since its inception 40 years ago.

The day conference 'The Archaeology of Merseyside': recent work in the region and beyond' was held on 18th October 2014 and was very well attended and promoted the value of the society to a wider public.

The Heritage Lottery Fund continues to be a good friend to the heritage of the region supporting, for example, work on coin hoards in Cheshire and the development of the mansion House at Calderstones Park.

Ben Croxford reported on progress with Merseyside HER with 40% digitisation of the record to date, to be completed by March 2016. This is very good progress.

The meeting received the report of progress with our constitutional review. The meeting supported the next steps proposed to improve our constitution in accordance with the best advice of the Charity Commission, subject to the approval of the Society.

The following were elected to Council for 2015/ 16:

Dave Roberts – Treasurer/ Editor, Newsletter  
Anthony Sinclair, Membership Secretary  
Maurice Handley, Events Co-ordinator  
Rob Philpott, Past Chair  
Martin Cox, Secretary  
Ben Croxford, Michael Chapman, Diana Goodier, Sam Rowe,  
Sue Stallibrass, David Scott, Chris Wood, Jenny Woodcock.

The meeting was unable to elect a Chair. A vote of thanks was made to outgoing members: Nancy Jenkins, Kerry Massheder-Rigby and Dr Gina Muskett.

### **NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY**

The majority of our communications are by email and often by group email. There may be a problem with group email insofar that such an email might be 'junked' or in the case of a professional email address, blocked by a firewall. This is not a common problem but may have happened in the instance of one of our members. If you think this may be happening to you, please ring me (07843 200486) and I will endeavour to solve!

*Martin Cox, Secretary*

### **Bright Park – a Bright Future**

Bright Park in Knotty Ash is the former site of Ashfield, the house of Henry Arthur Bright, 19th century shipping magnate, philanthropist, poet and gardener. Bright's family left the park and house to the council for the education of girls in the early 20th century.

The house was closed in 1987 and vandalism led to its demolition in 2003. The council, unwilling to invest in the park, gave the site to Liverpool Lighthouse, an Anfield based charity that serves the community and runs education courses.

The site is being revived for the community beginning with a

Heritage Open Day launch on the 13th September 2015. Plans for the park include a heritage centre, outdoor theatre and perhaps a Viking Longhouse reflecting the park's position in Thingwall, a centre for a Viking parliament a thousand years ago.

In conjunction with National Museums Liverpool and Travellers Through Time, the park is launching a community project, including an Oral History film of memories of the house, a geophysics survey of the site undertaken by local schools, culminating in a community dig in summer 2016, discovering the site of the original house and for any traces of Viking activity in the area.

See [www.brightpark.co.uk](http://www.brightpark.co.uk) and [www.facebook.com/brightparkheritage](http://www.facebook.com/brightparkheritage) for further information

*Kerry Massheder-Rigby*

### Lister Steps Carnegie Community Hub

The team at Lister Steps, and the local community, continue to work hard to progress plans to regenerate the Grade II listed former Lister Drive Library (Carnegie Community Hub). The 'development' phase of our Heritage Lottery Fund bid is well underway and we have taken the comments and feedback received from our community consultations and used it to shape what the Hub will offer.

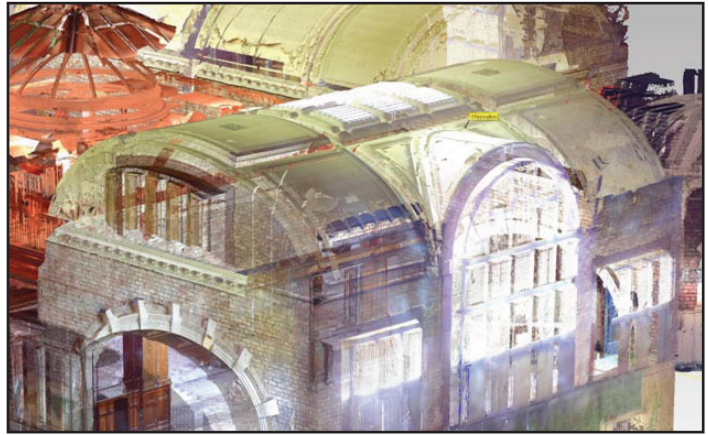
Summer at Lister Steps has been full of activities and great fun! Our Playscheme children have worked hard to produce the 'Tuebrook Heritage Trail' (which was kindly funded by Carillion plc) by visiting and researching historic places in our local area. We have been working with Film Makers and Community



*Lister Steps Playscheme*

Journalists from Periscope CIC to create a campaign video which we plan to release as part of our crowd funding appeal to raise money for the heritage project to go ahead.

We have appointed a 'Design Team' to work with us to develop our plans for the building and are in the process of appointing a Project Manager to support us through this critical stage of the Heritage Lottery Fund process. The team at Lister Steps has



*3D laser scan image taken on 12th May 2015 by Dr Oriel Prizeman, Cardiff University*

been very busy working towards our Heritage Lottery Fund 'Stage C' review. We have developed our 'Business Plan' and written an 'Activity Plan' detailing what the Hub will offer. A huge thank you to everyone who has attended our consultation and conversation events, completed surveys and commented on social media - your input has helped us shape and develop our proposals for the Hub.

We are planning a number of events to show everyone the first draft of the building designs so please visit [www.listerstepshub.co.uk](http://www.listerstepshub.co.uk) or 'like' us on Facebook to find out more.

*Kerry Massheder-Rigby*

### A Roman Hair Pin

This copper alloy hair pin fragment was discovered in Farndon near Holt in Cheshire by a local metal detectorist. It has been recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) database, [www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database) as LVPL-B4BC19.

The object is a fragment from a hairpin of Roman date. It depicts a dog or lion, but more probably a lion surmounted on an oval platform. The animal has a narrow face with pellet eyes and lentoid ears flat against the head. The mouth is open with the snout projecting beyond the lower lip. Surrounding the animal's neck is a thick collar, representing a rope or chain, with a rectangular projection below the neck to the front of the collar. The top of the head and the shoulders below the collar are decorated with deep grooves intending to represent a mane. The centre of the back is waisted which emphasises muscular hips and the back legs are standing but bent slightly forward. The animal is resting on its forelegs and appears to be in a 'pouncing position'. The tail curls up and forward over the animal before falling to one side.

Below the oval platform the object narrows into a circular-sectioned stem below which are two circumferential collars. Below the lower collar the object terminates with an ancient break. The object has a dark greenish brown patina and is in good condition.

Similar examples of Roman zoomorphic hairpins are illustrated in Kaufmann-Heinimann in August 26, p28. Currently on the PAS database we have 187 Roman hair pins recorded, most of which terminate with a conical or bi-conical knop. Only three examples,





*Fragment of Roman hairpin*

including this one, have zoomorphic terminals with both other examples being in the form of birds.

Dimensions: 26.41mm in length, 27.72mm in width, 9.22mm thick, 13.3g.

*Vanessa Oakden*

[Vanessa.oakden@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Vanessa.oakden@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

Twitter: [@VOakden\\_FLO](https://twitter.com/VOakden_FLO)

01514784259



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 3/2015

Registered Charity No 510831

## 2016 Subscriptions

MAS Subscriptions for the new year were due on 1st January. Please note all subscriptions for 2016 must be received before the AGM in April otherwise you will cease to be a member. A booking form is enclosed with this Newsletter. There is now an option to pay direct via standing order or electronic transfer from your bank. See page 2 for details.

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

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Vacant

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Hon Treasurer & Newsletter Editor:

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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.

## Lectures - Spring 2016

Our lectures are held at the Quaker Meeting House, School Lane in the City centre. Tea and coffee is available from 7.00 p.m. and lectures start at 7.30.

### January 21st 2016 - Mike Taylor - 'Fields and Field-Names in Thelwall'

Landscape historian, Mike Taylor will be considering the landscape of Thelwall that existed before and after enclosure by the Lord of the Manor in the 1740s. Thelwall enjoyed a broad-based agricultural economy that also included fishing and flax-growing and processing. Evidence for these and other activities can be found in field and place-names as well as from the direct record.

### February 18th - Dr David Jordan - 'Detecting the Dead: The future of sub-surface detection methods for archaeology and forensic investigations'



Ground penetrating radar at Petra

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David is a Senior Lecturer at Liverpool John Moores University and is a Fellow of the Geological Society of London. He is also a Member of the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists and the British Society of Soil Science. His students are involved with activities ranging from Poulton to Petra so his talk promises a geophysical bonanza. (The photograph on page 1 shows two of David's students from his previous post at Mainz in Germany, using ground penetrating radar to map buried buildings at Petra.)

### **March 17th 2016 - Dr Paul Knight 'The Role of Archaeologists in Mesopotamia in WW I'**

Major Paul Knight PhD is the Army's First World War project officer for the North West of England. He served in Iraq between 2005 and 2007, and is the author of *The British Army in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918*. He will speak on the role of archeologists in the Mesopotamia campaign, especially Gertrude Bell and T.E. Lawrence, whose abilities as linguists and explorers filled a void in the military's capabilities.

**April 21st 2016 - AGM followed by a lecture to be arranged.**

### **Summer weekend visit to the Llyn peninsula**

It is proposed to arrange a visit in July to the Llyn peninsula in north west Wales. The peninsula has a beautiful landscape peppered with archaeological remains from the Neolithic to the Post-medieval. We will include a visit to Bangor University's project at Meillionydd near Rhiw - a double ringwork enclosure of Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age, ([www.meillionydd.bangor.ac](http://www.meillionydd.bangor.ac)).

It is intended that we will use private cars with car sharing to cope with the narrow roads. Participants will need to arrange their own accommodation in the area. At this stage I would like an expression of interest and I will then prepare more detailed information. Please contact Maurice Handley (0151 426 8157: [mahandley@tesco.net](mailto:mahandley@tesco.net)).

### **MAS Subscriptions**

Subscription renewal via standing order or electronic bank transfer is now available. Details are on the renewal form. Please ensure that you include your name or names (if a joint or family renewal) and 'MAS Subs' in the Reference box when you complete the transaction from your bank in order that your payment can be identified on the Society bank invoices.

Society members are also entitled to a discount on Society publications. Our recent publication 'The Archaeology of Rainford (1)' is available at a discounted price of £16 plus p&p (full price £20 plus p&p) to members. We also expect to issue Volume 15 of the Society's Journal (see below) in 2016 which will be available 'free' to paid up members. If you are not a member (or know someone who isn't but attends lectures regularly as a guest) this is a good time to sign up.

### **Forthcoming Publications**

**Volume 15** of the Society's occasional journal is almost ready for publication. Contents are as follows:

Speke Hall - an Introduction - *Carolanne King*

Speke Hall - A study of the structural history of the house - *Jennifer Lewis and Anthony Tibbles*

The Home Farm Speke: an archaeological survey, 1993 - *Jennifer Lewis*

An Archaeological Evaluation in the New Orchard at Speke Hall Merseyside, September 2009 - *Carolanne King*

Excavation at Millfield Lane Merseyside - *Richard Gregory (Oxford Archaeology North)*

Excavations on a Medieval Site at Meadow Lane, West Derby, 1989 - *Robert Philpott*

Further information in the next Newsletter.

### **Fort Crosby**

Alison Burns has written a well illustrated book about Fort Crosby which is available to download (40 pages) as a pdf at:- [http://www.academia.edu/17314554/Forgotten\\_Fort\\_Crosby\\_Dune\\_Heritage\\_Revealed](http://www.academia.edu/17314554/Forgotten_Fort_Crosby_Dune_Heritage_Revealed)

## NML Exhibition

The Cheshire Hoards  
13th February 2016-20th June 2016  
Museum of Liverpool

The first exhibition of two recently discovered Romano-British Cheshire Hoards. Delivered in partnership with Congleton Museum.

The Malpas Hoard, found in 2014, is a group of Iron Age and Roman coins buried in the mid-1st century AD, shortly after the Roman conquest of Britain. The Knutsford Hoard, found in 2012, is a group of Roman coins and jewellery items, including three large and decorative silver gilt brooches. These

items were buried in the late 2nd century AD. This exhibition explores the hoards, and their context in the Romano-British North West.

Acquisition of the hoards by the Museum of Liverpool and Congleton Museum, and this exhibition have been funded by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.



## NML Conference

'The Cheshire Hoards and the Romano-British North West'  
27th February 2016.  
10am-5pm.

A day conference on the Cheshire Hoards and their historical context in Romano-British north west England. The Cheshire Hoards are two groups of Roman Treasure from Cheshire recently reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme and now acquired by Museum of Liverpool and Congleton Museum jointly through a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Speakers from around the UK will present the two hoards and contextual information about numismatics, Romano-British small finds and north west England through the 1st and 2nd centuries AD.

This is a 'free' day conference at the Museum of Liverpool, Liverpool Waterfront funded by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

No booking necessary.



*Iron Age Coins from Malpas*

- *Organiser: National Museums Liverpool*
- *Email: [liz.stewart@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:liz.stewart@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)*
- *Website: <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol/events/>*

## Lister Steps

Join Lister Steps on Tuesday 26th January for a delicious scouse supper and a fascinating and fun talk entitled 'Curious Tales of Tuebrook and Old Swan' to raise funds for the Lister Steps Carnegie Community Hub. The meeting takes place at St. Cecilia's Function Rooms, Green Lane, L13 7EA. Doors open at 6.30 p.m. with the supper at 7.00 p.m. Tickets: Adults - £5, under 18s - £3, family ticket - £15 (not suitable for children under 12). Tickets can be purchased by dropping into Lister Steps or by contacting [supper@listerstepshub.co.uk](mailto:supper@listerstepshub.co.uk)

*West Kirby*



*Christine telling us about the Hog Back Stone*

In May, the Society visited West Kirby, starting at the small museum named after Charles Dawson Brown, a local historian in the 19th century. Housed in a refurbished building next to St Bridget's Church, the museum contains a fine collection of stone crosses and other artifacts from the early middle ages. There are lucid descriptions of the items on display as well as a concise history of the village. This compact gem of a museum is well worth a visit.

Situated in St Bridget's Church, the Anglo-Norse Hogback stone dates from the eleventh century and was discovered when the Church was restored in 1869-70. Christine Longworth and Elizabeth Davey gave us a tour of the church pointing out some of the unusual features including two Bread Charity plaques and a magnificent relief painting over the chancel arch attributed to C. E Kempe. On the outside of the 15/16th century tower we could just see the outline of a sundial and, on the north side, evidence of a former school room.

In spring sunshine, Elizabeth took us on a short perambulation of the village where there are cottages and houses sitting directly on exposed bedrock. Echo Lane, a shady way leading originally to a hill-top windmill, invited a return visit for further exploration.

*Walk Mill and Poulton Archaeological Project*

In June we spent an enjoyable and informative morning at Walk Mill near Tarvin. This working mill was rebuilt in 2008 on the site of a former mill which was demolished in 1960. It was one of numerous mills on the River Gowy and operated as a fulling mill from at least the 17th century, changing to a flour mill about 1800.

The miller and local farmer, Ben Jones, gave a comprehensive description of the operation of the machinery as well as the hurdles he faced in rebuilding the mill. Very little of the previous mill remained but he was able to find second hand components from other redundant mills. The original damsel, a device for vibrating the grain chute so that it flows evenly to the grind stone, was found in the rubble and reused. The waterwheel was specially made to a highly efficient design. In a sole application of modern technology, a plastic pipe containing a flexible screw fed the flour to sacks. This flour is used to make loaves which several members of the group purchased before departing for our next location.

The afternoon was spent at the Poulton Archaeological Research Project guided by site stalwart, Kevin Cootes. The area overlooks the River Dee and is level enough for a World War II airfield. Since the visit of MAS a few years ago, the site has expanded considerably. What was thought to be a henge monument turned out to be one of numerous Iron Age round houses. The research is revealing a complex archaeological landscape with evidence for 10,000 years of human activity. The original search which featured on Time Team in 2006, was for a lost Cistercian Abbey. However, field name evidence suggested the presence of a medieval chapel which has now been excavated with its graveyard containing around 2000 burials. Remnants of salt containers of a type known as Very Coarse Pottery (or VCP) indicate that trading was taking place during the Iron Age. The proximity of a routeway and Romano-British industrial structures together with high status finds imply the possible presence of a Roman villa. There's enough archaeology here to last a lifetime.

This was a day when we saw archaeology ranging from the Mesolithic to the Post-Medieval. The weather also varied from warm and sunny to brief showers which did not detract from an excellent day enjoyed by all.

*Fort Crosby and the Alt Estuary: 11th July 2015*

In the mixed weather typical of 2015's summer, a group of members and friends met in Hightown for a walk led by Mark Adams of the Museum of Liverpool. Armed with a comprehensive handout of maps, plans and photographs, the group sallied forth alongside the Alt estuary. After stopping briefly to hear about the story of the Alt firing range accompanied by the noise of gunfire, we followed the edge of the river where there had been a few finds of Roman age, to arrive at the first objective - the so called 'fossil forest'.



*Members of the group inspecting a section of a tree thought to be pine - Photo. M. Cox*

Following the end of the Ice Age, the coast has fluctuated with the post-glacial rise in sea level and more recent erosion and deposition. In a peaty layer, now exposed from beneath the sand close to the sailing club, we saw large logs and tree roots together with small woody fragments and the occasional fern. The age of these remains indicate that 5000 years ago the coast was further to the west. Proceeding southwards, Mark was eventually able to find a small section of the Neolithic trackway thought to have been built to gain access across marshy land to the tidal part of the estuary which at that time lay further out. It was just possible to see pieces of branches forming part of the lattice structure.

Climbing over bomb site rubble dumped along the beach after World War Two, we headed into the sand dunes in search of Fort Crosby where naval guns were set up to defend the approaches to the port in both World Wars. They were never fired in anger and after WW II the fort fell into disuse and was eventually demolished. Oblique low-level air photographs show extensive structures, but most of the remains are now buried beneath the sand dunes with only parts of the WW II Anti- Aircraft Battery visible. Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) clearly shows pock marks left by the demolition of the mine fields which protected the site. Following the route of the 'main street' of the site now hidden beneath the newly surfaced cycle route, we found our way back to the station just before the rain started. Thanks to Mark we all had a fascinating and informative visit.

*Maurice Handley*

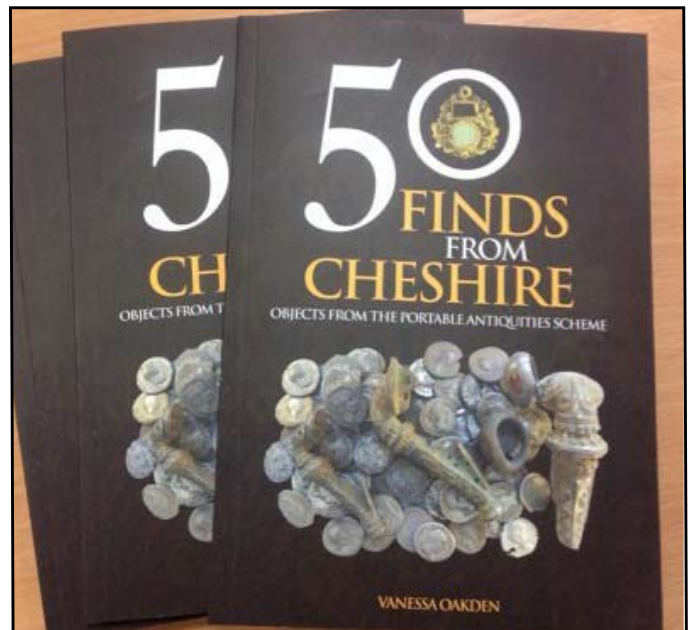
### **Book Review: '50 Finds From Cheshire'**

It was a lovely pre-Christmas treat when my signed copy of '50 Finds From Cheshire' dropped through the letterbox. Written by Vanessa Oakden, the Finds Liaison Officer for Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside, the book presents fifty of the most

interesting artefacts to be found in Cheshire and reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) since 2004. The fifty finds or groups of finds were selected by the author to represent Cheshire's rich and lengthy heritage.

The book begins with a foreword from Dr Michael Lewis, Head of the Portable Antiquities Scheme, explaining the importance of stray and detected finds and their recording by the Scheme to help piece together our understanding of the past. The chapters then run chronologically from the Neolithic to the Post Medieval period. Each chapter begins with an introduction to the period in regards to Cheshire as a region. The finds are then presented in a coherent and accessible manner. For each find the author gives details of the object type, its date, when and where it was discovered, and a record number so the reader can go online to the PAS database for more information. Each object is also represented with colour photographs and a blurb describing the object and its significance. It is no surprise to find that the Roman chapter is significantly longer than others. This is in part due to the affluence of Cheshire in this period, but also due to the discovery of five new Roman hoards since 2012. This number of discoveries in such a short space of time reflects how active detectorists are in England and stresses the importance of accurate and professional recording through the PAS.

I was lucky enough to be involved in the recovery of two of these



Roman hoards. In 2012 a detectorist quickly contacted Vanessa Oakden and a team was brought out to excavate and retrieve what became known as the Knutsford Hoard; comprising Roman silver and copper coins, silver trumpet brooches, finger rings, and fragments of a ceramic vessel. It was such a thrill to see coin upon coin being extracted from the soil, most in extremely good condition even after being buried for over 1800 years. The Knutsford and Malpas Hoards have now been jointly acquired by the Museum of Liverpool and Congleton Museum.

In 2015 I was also able to attend the excavation of the Peover Hoard, where thousands of 3rd century copper alloy radiates had

been deposited in a storage vessel, most of which was intact apart from the very top of the vessel which had been clipped by the plough. The vessel was meticulously excavated under controlled conditions at the British Museum and the images contained in the book reflect the intricacy of the recovery and conservation techniques.

This publication is an accessible and enticing read into Cheshire's past with the added bonus of the plentiful colour images throughout. The reader will pick up on the fact that many artefacts and aspects of Cheshire's rich archaeological heritage would not have been recovered, recorded, or fully understood if it wasn't for the work of responsible dedicated detectorists and Finds Liaison Officers.

**Oakden, V (2015)** 50 Finds From Cheshire; objects from the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Amberley, Stroud. Available to purchase from the Museum of Liverpool, WH Smith Cheshire, the Grosvenor Museum, Congleton Museum, online from Amazon, or direct from Amberley publishers.

*Samantha Rowe*

### Henry IV Gold Coin



This gold half noble of Henry IV, (AD 1399-1413) was discovered by a metal detectorist in February 2012 and was reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme, (PAS). The obverse depicts the King standing facing in a ship, crowned and wearing armour. He is holding a sword and shield quartered with the arms of England and France. Surrounding this the legend reads HENRIC[DI GRA REX ANGL Z F]RANC [D]N[S HIB Z AQ] which can be translated as Henry by the Grace of God King of England and France, Lord of Ireland and Aquitaine. The reverse depicts a floriated cross with a fleur-de-lis at the end of each limb and an ornamented compartment in the centre. In each angle, a lion passant, guardant, with a crown above. All within a tressure of eight arches. There is a trefoil in the fourth quarter of the reverse. The reverse legend reads [DOMINE NE IN] FVRORE TVO ARGVAS [ME]. This translates as O Lord rebuke me not in Thine anger.

This was part of the light coinage of Henry IV which dates from AD 1412-1413. This coin is of particular interest as it has

no annulet next to the trefoil on the side of the ship and it therefore appears to be a variant type. The half noble has been lightly clipped and is in good condition. It was discovered in the parish of Bold, St. Helens.

Currently on the PAS database we have 1,141,238 objects within 717,272 records to which more are being added daily. However there are only seven records containing half nobles including a coin hoard from Powys, see record no. NMGW-936845. During 2015 the PAS recorded a further 82,272 objects on to the database including 1,001 Treasure cases from England, 37 from Wales, and 2 from Northern Ireland.

The coin is recorded on [www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database) as LVPL-004154.

*Vanessa Oakden - Finds Liaison Officer (Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire)*

### Christmas Quiz

For those of you who did not attend the December meeting in the Ship & Mitre, Maurice's Christmas Quiz is reproduced below. Many of the answers, which appear at the end (please don't look!) can be found in this newsletter.

1. A Romano British salt container found at Poulton Archaeological site is a type known as VCP - an abbreviation for:-

- a) Vitrified Ceramic Pottery
- b) Vinum Crudus Praesulsus
- c) Very Coarse Pottery
- d) Vindolanda Ceramic Pottery

2. In April 2015, English Heritage was split into

- a) Historic England and English Cultural Heritage
- b) National Heritage and Historic England
- c) English Heritage and Historic England
- d) Historic Environment and English Heritage

3. In June MAS visited Walk Mill near Tarvin. The name of the mill originates from:-

- a) a fulling mill for treating wool
- b) a mill powered by a treadmill
- c) a miller called Walker
- d) a mill only accessible by footpath

4. In a flour mill, the device that shakes the chute (or 'shoe') as it feeds grain to the millstones is called:-

- a) a quantum
- b) a stutterer
- c) a maiden
- d) a damsel

5. The Minoan Bronze Age settlement buried by ash from the eruption of the Santorini volcano is known as:-

- a) Thera
- b) Akrotiri
- c) Knossos
- d) Herculaneum

6. The Merseyside HER is being digitised by Ben Croxford and his team.  
HER stands for:-

- a) Historic Environment Register
- b) Historic England Register
- c) Hypertext Environmental Record
- d) Historic Environment Record

7. A Sniggery is:-

- a) a pond for breeding eels
- b) a local dialect name for a pigsty
- c) a medieval lovers' meeting place
- d) a prehistoric trackway across a marsh

8. The West Kirby Museum is named after:-

- a) a university professor
- b) a sugar refiner
- c) the wife of a soap company owner
- d) a local historian

9. An Anglo-Norse hogback stone can be found in:-

- a) St Chad's Church, Kirkby
- b) St Bridget's Church, West Kirby
- c) St Mary's Church, Widnes
- d) St Helen's Church, Sefton

10) Is it true or false that Fort Crosby had:-

- a) a Prisoner of War Camp in WW II?
- b) an anti-aircraft battery in WW II?
- c) a WW I training camp called Sniggery Barracks?
- d) a WW I coastal defence battery never fired in anger?
- e) a WW II Starfish bombing decoy?
- f) its own railway station in WW I?

[Answers:- 1c, 2c, 3a, 4d, 5b, 6d, 7a, 8d, 9b, 10 - a,b,c,d, are true e,f, are false]





# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 1/2016

Registered Charity No 510831

## 2016 Subscriptions

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## MAS Conference

MAS is hosting a weekend Conference on 8th/9th October. Please see page 2 of this Newsletter for further information.

## Lectures - Spring 2016

Our lectures are held at the Quaker Meeting House, School Lane in the City centre. Tea and coffee is available from 7.00 p.m. and lectures start at 7.30.

**April 21st 2016** - AGM followed by a presentation on 'The Archaeological Survey and Proposals for Hilbre Island' by Roy Forshaw and Rob Philpott covering the recording of the topography and how it relates to the islands history / archaeology. It will show plans and drawings from the Maritime Museum Archive which mostly relate to 18th Century buildings which can be illustrated using 3D photogrammetry models and ground survey work.

## Fieldtrips - Summer 2016

The Summer fieldtrips are being arranged. Details will be sent out in due course.

## MAS Weekend - Llyn Peninsula

Saturday 16th July and Sunday 17th July

Meet at 10.00 am on Saturday in Aberdaron at the Thatched Coffee Shop and Bakery. There is a National Trust Car Park in the village; from there we will car share in the area around Rhiw. The main visit will be to the Meillionydd dig (<http://meillionydd.bangor.ac.uk/>) followed by visits to the site of Mynydd Rhiw Neolithic axe factory, Plas yn Rhiw (National Trust, Cafe) and other archaeological features depending on time and weather. On Sunday we will be visiting sites in the Nefyn area.

If you plan to stay overnight, you are advised to book accommodation asap. There are hotels in Aberdaron but they are usually extremely busy at the weekend. Other hotels, cottages, B & B's and camp sites are within a few miles at Nefyn, Abersoch and Pwllheli. An itinerary is in preparation and will be available from [mahandley@tesco.net](mailto:mahandley@tesco.net)

Meanwhile let me know if you intend to come and if you will need a lift or can offer one.

Maurice Handley (0151 426 8157)

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

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Mark Adams

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Martin Cox

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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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## **William (Bill) Blinkhorn: 28th September 1925 - 10th February 2016**

Bill Blinkhorn was a long standing member of the Society who served on the Council during the late 1970's and as Membership Secretary during the 1980's. He is remembered as an enthusiastic amateur archaeologist and that enthusiasm passed on to his son Paul who recalled childhood visits with his dad to sites in the north of England and Wales. Their first experience of a site excavation was at a Viking farmstead in northern England. Consequently Bill and his young son joined the newly formed MAS at the beginning of a lifelong interest in archaeology and history.

In 1973 Bill founded the Whiston Historical Society and remained its honorary secretary until recently. He wrote several books on the historical aspects of Whiston and Prescot including the definitive History of Whiston: From the Stone Age to the Plastic Age published in 2004.

Bill was a generous man willing to help others and never lost his sense of humour. He was immensely proud of his son's achievement in the field of television and archaeology but Paul would be the first to admit that his dad played an important role in that.

*Maurice Handley*

## **Save a Date: Past Forward Conference 8th and 9th October**

The Merseyside Archaeological Society celebrates its 40th anniversary this year! This will be marked by a display at the Museum of Liverpool June-August, and a conference on 8th and 9th October. The conference will consider the achievements of the society and the challenges and opportunities it faces going forward into its next decade.

As part of the build-up to the display and the conference we're interested to hear about the memories you have of your involvement with MAS – post your thoughts to the MAS facebook page or tweet with hashtag #MASat40.

### **Rock Art**

On 3rd and 4th June, the University of Liverpool and the Museum of Liverpool will be hosting a two day conference bringing together researchers working within the field of rock art. This year's British Rock Art Group Annual Conference incorporates field visits and conference papers. The first day will be dedicated to a field trip including a guided tour of the prehistory section of the Museum of Liverpool. A selection of papers highlighting recent research in the field will be delivered at the University the following day.

### **Cheshire Hoards**

The 'Roman Treasures of Cheshire' display will be moving from Museum of Liverpool to Congleton Museum in July. The opening on 2nd July will see Romans around the streets of the town, and activities and events. A summer programme of events will follow.

*Liz Stewart*

## **Journal of Merseyside Archaeological Society Volume 15**

The next issue of the Journal is currently with the printer. We are hoping that it will be available for issue in time for the AGM. Anyone who was a paid up member in 2013, 2014 or 2015 is entitled to a free copy.

### **The History of Place Project**

The History of Place project is looking for volunteers with enquiring minds to join their Liverpool based Research and Archive Group. You could help them with a Heritage Lottery Fund funded, ground-breaking national project which will celebrate the lives of deaf & disabled people through history. In Liverpool the group will carry out research into the Royal School for the Blind, record oral histories and identify unique stories to share via a website, films, games and exhibitions at M Shed, Museum of Liverpool and V&A. If you have a bit of spare time and are interested in doing some detective work, please call 01303 259777, email [info@accentuateuk.org](mailto:info@accentuateuk.org) or visit <http://historyof.place> to find out more and register. Volunteers will receive a full induction, ongoing training and support to carry out the role.

*Kerry Massheder-Rigby*

## CBA North West Spring Conference

The CBA North West Spring Conference and AGM will be held on Saturday 7th May at Staining Village Hall near Blackpool. Speakers include Michael Nevell (University of Salford): 'Lytham Hall: New light on an ancient monastic site', Norman Redhead (GMAAS): 'A Tale of Two Cities: Understanding the medieval Archaeology of Manchester & Salford', Dot Boughton (PAS Officer for Lancashire & Cumbria): 'Medieval finds from the Portable Antiquities scheme in the North West', Carolanne King (GMGS): 'The Greater Manchester Graffiti Survey', Sarah Cattell (University of Salford): 'Excavating Halton Castle, Cheshire'.

Further details and a booking form can be found on the CBA NW website: <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbanw/>

### A note from the Editor

In each issue of this Newsletter I try to include reports on archaeological work, events etc. to make it a more interesting read for the membership. It is always difficult to persuade people to write short articles which may be of interest. The Spring issue has received fewer contributions than normal therefore the Newsletter is much shorter. Anyone can make a contribution as long as the topic is relevant to archaeology. Past subjects have included book reviews, field visits etc. If you are visiting archaeological monuments, excavations etc. over the Summer please take the time to write a short report and take a few photos and submit it to me for the Autumn Newsletter.

For my sins, I am also Editor of the Council for British Archaeology North West Newsletter. The last issue included one of the most interesting articles that I have received in recent years from the 'Greater Manchester Medieval Graffiti Survey'. Apologies to those of you who are also CBANW members but I thought the article was worth reproducing here with some additional photos as it is perhaps something that the MAS Council could consider for the future on Merseyside.

### Greater Manchester Medieval Graffiti Survey (shortened to Greater Manchester Graffiti Survey GMGS)

Inspired by the Norfolk Medieval Graffiti survey set up by Mathew Champion in 2010 our project aims to recruit, train and support a wide range of volunteers and groups to undertake the recording of a diverse range of deliberately made marks within the pre-1700 buildings of the Greater Manchester Area. This range of buildings has been chosen to cover any surviving medieval buildings and the more commonly surviving buildings of the mid-16th to late-17th centuries. The period saw major social and economic upheavals along with profound change in religious beliefs and practices which may be reflected in the graffiti we find.

A large-scale survey project such as the GMGS can only come into being and succeed with the involvement of volunteers. From the beginning one aim of the project has been to bring together different groups within the area including local government, professional organisations, researchers, families and interested societies. In particular we want to make the project open to



*Recording engravings on the lead roof at St Wilfrid's Northenden © Andy Coutts*

volunteers at any stage including the recording, archiving, interpreting and dissemination of information. As a more accessible alternative to traditional fieldwork GMGS can open up archaeology and local heritage to new audiences and help groups and individuals develop new skills.

The original project in Norfolk has 659 surviving medieval churches to explore. By comparison our area, which covers the ten unitary bodies that make up Greater Manchester, has around 400 buildings (including churches) with elements constructed before 1700. For this reason while there is an initial focus on churches we aim to consider all buildings of the period in our area. Though the GMGS is hoping to identify medieval graffiti the nature of the building stock in the region means we will be encountering mainly Reformation/early modern material. It is not just graffiti that we are looking at but the full range of marks that might be found including carpenters' marks, masons' marks, Baltic timber marks and burn marks along with other apotropaic (protective) marks. The importance of recording burn marks is underlined by recent research by John Dean and Nick Hill 2014 which suggests that many burn marks are deliberate, probably done as a form of protection, but they are seldom, if ever, recorded. The aim of recording such a broad range of marks is to expand the typology being developed by the Norfolk project and enable a regional picture to be constructed.



*Compass drawn symbol with other graffiti at St Wilfrid's Northenden © Margaret Wells*

The marks in buildings represent different aspects of the lives of the people who built and occupied them and are a means of understanding how they related to the buildings in which they lived and worked. Marks are made for a variety of reasons all of which add to the story of the buildings and their occupants. It is important that those recording and interpreting a building understand the range of marks they may find and do not misinterpret marks made as part of the construction process for other more personal marks. The best way of doing this is to have a good reference record with many different examples. A regional record will provide a sound base for analysis and interpretation. The aim is for the images and data collected to be added directly to the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record. A catalogue, original record sheets and image archive will be kept by the project and eventually it is hoped to add the data to the national graffiti database being developed by other projects.

GMGS is currently at the planning and development stage. As a part of this we are working with Greg Forester the recently retired Rector of St Wilfrid's Northenden and the South Manchester Archaeology Research Team (SMART) to trial our methodologies.

St Wilfrid's Church is typical of the Greater Manchester area. There has probably been a church on the site since before Domesday but the current building was constructed between 1873-6. The later medieval building that was in a very poor state of repair was demolished in 1873. The Victorian rebuilding came across evidence for at least two probable previous structures. The one element that was not demolished was the late-14th or early-15th century west tower which may have originated in the 13th century. With this amount of demolition and rebuilding we were not expecting to come across marks of any significance. However, the results of the survey surprised

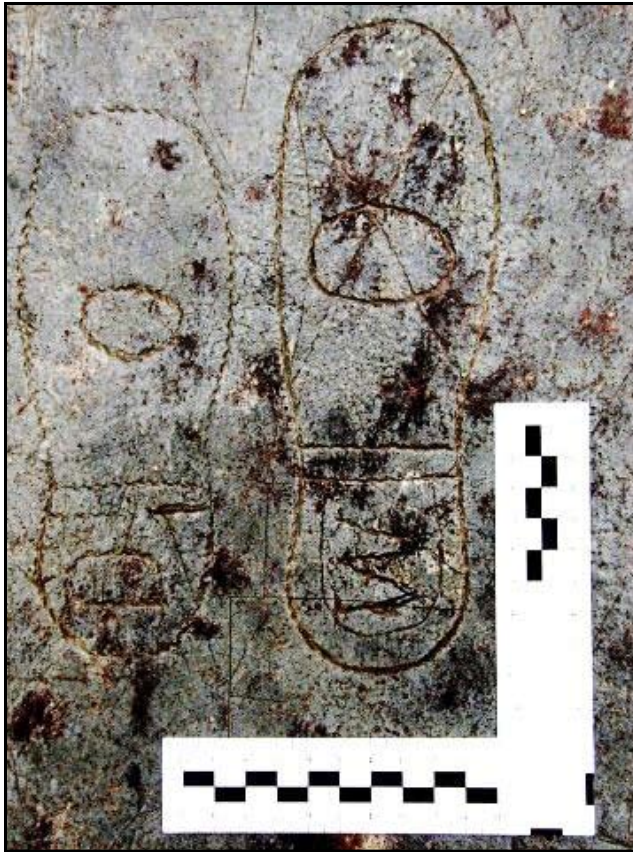
us. The church still contains some medieval architectural fragments retrieved during repairs and rebuilds along with two wooden screens that came from the demolished building. The Victorian nave, aisles, chancel and vestry had no marks of any significance but the tower was a very different case. We found at least three different masons' marks from the medieval period and a compass drawn design that may also be medieval. Alongside these were some protective marks, probably dating to the Reformation, and dates that appear to be from the 1600s. An architectural drawing scratched into plaster almost certainly pre-dates the 1873 demolition while a range of other dates and initials come from the 19th and 20th centuries.

Our most exciting find was a large number of engravings on the lead of the roof of the tower. Engravings on lead roofs are known from other churches, castles and stately homes but apart from recording prior to repairs or replacement there do not seem to be many, if any, in-depth studies undertaken. The engravings at Northenden fit into the pattern seen elsewhere with hand and footprints dominating. These are usually interpreted as being cut by roofers and steeple jacks and the occasional visitor. The sheer numbers of engravings that are being found on old lead roofs suggest that other interpretations might be needed. We have not yet been able to count the number of engravings at Northenden but there are probably well over a hundred separate images.



*A medieval mason's' mark at St Wilfrid's Northenden © Margaret Wells*

The Northenden engravings are primarily footprints with hand prints but there are at least 3 knives and a wheel barrow along with many names, dates and initials. The earliest date on the lead at Northenden is 1774 which is on an official plaque set up by, and naming, the church wardens at the time. It was always thought that the lead was replaced at this date. However, a close look at the engravings shows that some of the lead panels have been lifted and turned. This is indicated by engravings that are cut off at the edge of panels and by at least two major re-alignments at 90 degrees to each other. If some lead was reused in 1774 then there is the potential



*Boot prints with initials at St Wilfrid's Northenden © Andy Coultts*

that some of the engravings could be earlier than that date. The wide range of shoe types visible within the footprints seen in the Northenden engravings might give a means of dating the engravings as sole patterns and shapes changed with the fashions. It is hoped that members of SMART will be able to undertake a detailed survey of the engravings later in the year.

Our preliminary results at Northenden have shown us that even with a building that has had many alterations and major demolition it is still possible for significant graffiti to survive. This is especially true of the lead on roofs which is under considerable threat from the need to repair and increasing thefts. Recording is vital if the full range of marks in and on buildings is to be identified and interpretation of their meaning attempted.

GMGS is at the development stage and we hope to launch in late spring 2016 with a web site and contact details.

*Carolanne King*

#### **A further word from Carolanne...**

'We are not yet set up to run the survey outside the Greater Manchester area but we are hoping eventually to have a North West Medieval and Early Modern Graffiti Survey so if there was anyone in the Merseyside area thinking of setting up a

survey for that area we might be able to help or work in partnership. Our data is going straight to the Greater Manchester HER. Other surveys have built their own data bases but we don't have the expertise to do this (yet).

We will be talking about the preliminary results of the initial trial at the CBA NW conference in May.'



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 2/2016

Registered Charity No 510831



## A short note from the Editor:

This 2-page Newsletter is a special addition to give you further information regarding the forthcoming MAS Conference which is being organised by the Society in partnership with the Museum of Liverpool. There is also some news about work to be undertaken by NML as a part of the Galkoff's and Pembroke Place project and how to become a volunteer. The next Newsletter will appear in September and contain details of our Autumn lecture programme and the usual news articles.

### Past Forward Celebrating Forty Years of Merseyside Archaeological Society

8th and 9th October 2016  
Museum of Liverpool, Education Room 3

A full two-day Conference organised by Merseyside Archaeological Society in partnership with the Museum of Liverpool to be held on the 8th and 9th October 2016 at the Museum of Liverpool

Since the formation of the Society in 1976 much has changed in the state of knowledge of the archaeology of Merseyside. Using a combination of short lectures, workshops, discussion groups and tours, the Conference will review the evolution of archaeology on Merseyside over the last 40 years. It will look back on the way in which the Society has worked with local communities and institutions within and outside Merseyside to advance archaeological research and deliver a series of successful projects. The role of Merseyside Archaeological Society and other local society engagement in research, advocacy and governance in archaeology will be explored. The Conference will also look forward into the next decade to envisage the challenges and opportunities that await and how the Society might have to adapt in order to build on its past achievements.

Merseyside Archaeological Society has brought together a prominent group of speakers with local, regional and national interests who will describe their experiences of working with the Society and how these successful collaborations might continue over the coming years. Attendees will have the opportunity to describe any memories of their involvement with the Society and will be able to put forward their ideas for the future of archaeology on Merseyside.

Invited speakers include Gill Chitty, University of York; Ben Croxford, Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service; Peter Davey; Mike Heyworth, Director CBA; Rob Lennox, University of York; Mike Nevell, Head of Archaeology, University of Salford; Jamie Quartermaine, Oxford Archaeology North and Norman Redhead, Heritage Management Director, University of Salford.

Discussions on Community Archaeology, Young Archaeologists, and the Portable Antiquities Scheme will take place at scheduled Workshops. Free guided tours of the

## 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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Galkoff's and Pembroke Place Project.....2

Old Dock and the Museum of Liverpool are included in the ticket. A drinks reception will be held at the Baltic Fleet pub on the Saturday evening.

The Conference is open to all and no prior knowledge of archaeology is required. A choice of Weekend and Day tickets will be available, including a discount for MAS members. The full Conference programme is due to be issued within the next few weeks and will be e-mailed or posted to Society members together with a booking form. There is also a facility to book place(s) on-line via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/united-kingdom--liverpool/merseyside-archaeology/?crt=regular&sort=best>

## **Funding Support for Local Heritage**

### ***Galkoff's and the Secret Life of Pembroke Place project wins Heritage Lottery Fund support.***

Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) and National Museums Liverpool have received initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support a collaborative project looking at two important heritage sites on LSTM's campus. Galkoff's and the Secret Life of Pembroke Place is a project that will, over the coming months, investigate the history of Court Housing and the former Galkoff's butchers shop, situated opposite LSTM's original 1914 building. Galkoff's butchers shop opened in 1907 and was a supplier of kosher foods to the passenger ships that sailed to and from Liverpool including Titanic. The 1930s green faience tiles are a distinctive feature on Pembroke Place, but have been falling off the derelict building over the past 20 years. Development funding of £52,400 has been awarded to help LSTM and National Museums Liverpool carry out exploratory work with local people and organisations to progress plans and apply for a full grant next year.

Assistant Mayor and City Centre Councillor Nick Small said, "I'm really pleased the grant has been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This will allow all the partners involved to develop an excellent project and involve members of the public, as well as building a strong case for further support from the Heritage Lottery Fund." If successful in attracting further funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project will undertake extensive research into both sites on Pembroke Place, revealing stories of life in this area from the late 19th century to present day. Archaeological investigations will unearth evidence of how people lived in the Court Housing, the only example left in Liverpool and one of the few examples of this housing type that remains in the UK. The proposed project would see the removal of Galkoff's historic tiles from a rapidly deteriorating building, conduct essential conservation works and remount the tiles in a new installation, alongside a Secret Life of Pembroke Place display within The People's Republic gallery at the Museum of Liverpool.

There is now an opportunity to give this historically important local business a prominent place in the city's award-winning Museum of Liverpool, which receives about 750,000 visitors each year. Education activities, including workshops and talks will also allow the public and local schools to learn more about this unique history and become involved with the project. Janet Dugdale, Director of the Museum of Liverpool, said: "We're very pleased to have been granted a first round pass by the Heritage Lottery Fund for this important project. Exploration of both the beautiful frontage of Galkoff's and the remains of court housing at the rear, will unlock fascinating information about the people who lived in and around the area. Our curators and dedicated project team will be working closely with LSTM and the local community on this next stage to build a deeper understanding of the work required to create a meaningful interpretation and legacy of both Galkoff's and Pembroke Place."

All work will be supported by a team of volunteers. Janet continues: "We are particularly interested in working with people from Liverpool's Jewish community and local historians who are familiar with the area and may have knowledge of the secret life of Pembroke Place. We have a public consultation event taking place at the Museum of Liverpool on Sunday 18 September 2016 at 2pm, so please do also contact us if you would like to attend to discover more about the project, provide feedback or register as a volunteer."

Email enquiries about the project and becoming a volunteer can be sent to: [museumofliverpool@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:museumofliverpool@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 1/2017

Registered Charity No 510831

## MAS Membership Subscriptions 2017

Subscriptions for 2017 fell due on 1st January. Renewal forms have already been issued. If you have not received a renewal form or wish to ask a question please contact the Membership Secretary.

## MAS Lectures at The Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool

Our lectures are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre (post code L1 3BT). We meet at 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30. All are welcome including non-members.

**January 19th** - Mark Roughley - 'An introduction to the work of Face Lab at Liverpool John Moores University: Facial depictions of people from the past'

Mark Roughley is a researcher and lab manager at Face Lab, based at Liverpool John Moores University's Science Park. Face Lab carries out forensic and archaeological research which includes craniofacial analysis involving facial reconstruction of historical figures and for archaeological investigation. Face Lab has recently created an image of the face of Robert the Bruce and previously reconstructed the face of King Richard III.

**February 16th** - Rachel Pope - 'Hillforts of North Wales'

Rachel Pope lectures in the Department of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology at the University of Liverpool. She has been responsible for directing research excavations in the UK at Eddisbury and Penycloddiau hillforts and has an active commitment to research-led fieldwork training.

**March 16th** - Rai Karl - 'The Meillionydd Archaeological Project: seven excavation seasons'

Rai Karl is Professor of Archaeology and Heritage at the University of Bangor. He has several research areas including the Late Bronze and Iron Age archaeology of Britain and the Continent and public archaeology.

**April 27th** - Annual General Meeting followed by Samantha Rowe - Title to be confirmed but its about her PhD research.

Samantha Rowe made her mark as the project officer managing the highly successful 'Rainford's Roots' community archaeology project. She is currently a PhD student at the University of Huddersfield and will be telling us about her research.

## MAS Web site

Please note the change to our web site address below. We have now made MAS Journals 1-10 available on-line in PDF format on the Publications page.

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

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## **A Brief Summary of Autumn Term Events 2016**

Our first talk of the Autumn session on September 15th was given by Richard MacDonald. He spoke about the history of the Neolithic Calderstones, explaining they had been moved from their original position in the middle of a roundabout to their present location in Calderstones Park. Richard was responsible for the plan to move them to a more accessible and secure site in the grounds of Calderstones House.

On October 20th MAS regular, Kevin Cootes gave an illuminating talk on the Poulton Project which he manages. Poulton, near Chester, is an extensive multi occupancy site with evidence from the mesolithic to the modern era and continues to produce new finds although the abbey site still remains elusive.

In November, Megan Clement from the Museum of London, introduced us to the CITiZAN project (Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network). This initiative concerns the archaeology of the intertidal zone which is threatened by erosion, storms and sea level rise. The project has been focusing on the Sefton Coast although there is scope for further investigation on other local coastal and estuarine areas.

The Member's Evening on December 16th commenced with a montage of photographs taken by participants on the summer weekend in the Lley Peninsula followed by a short video of their exploits. Our Chairman Mark Adams, gave a fascinating presentation on some of the recent excavations carried out by the Museum's Archaeology Unit. There was a surprising collection of artefacts for discussion including a Japanese sword with a carved handle and other interesting features. A collection of flints stimulated an impromptu lesson in knapping and how to recognise it. A short multi choice quiz (which is reproduced below for those of you who weren't there) kept the audience occupied between presentations.

*Maurice Handley*

## **Autumn 2016 Newsletter**

Due to a clerical mix-up the August 2016 Newsletter was not issued to the membership. However, you have not missed out as all the articles which were submitted for inclusion are contained in this issue and are as relevant now as they were then. The Council wishes to offer its apologies and hope that no one was inconvenienced by this error.

## **Graveyard Recording at All Saints, Childwall**

A dedicated group has resumed recording work at All Saints Childwall. We are aiming to complete at least one day per week during the winter and hopefully more when the weather improves. 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](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk). Tel: 427 2980).

## **New Housing Development at Harthill Gardens**

Members who live in South Liverpool will be aware that Redrow have submitted a Planning Application (16F/2049) to Liverpool City Council to build a new estate at Harthill Gardens, near the site of The Calderstones. Full details, including the archaeological desk-based assessment, can be found on the Planning Department website:

[http://northgate.liverpool.gov.uk/DocumentExplorer/Application/folderview.aspx?type=MVMPRD\\_DC\\_PLANAPP&key=1009440](http://northgate.liverpool.gov.uk/DocumentExplorer/Application/folderview.aspx?type=MVMPRD_DC_PLANAPP&key=1009440)

## **Past Forward - MAS 40th Anniversary Conference Update**

The 'Past Forward' Conference took place last October. It was a great success despite the relatively low turnout from the membership. Important lessons were learnt regarding how the Society has succeeded (and failed) in the past and how we can continue to make the Society more successful over the next decade. We are hoping to issue a one-off Newsletter before the AGM summarising what took place at the weekend. We have also received videos of the Speakers' presentations which are due to be made public shortly. More information soon.

## **Journal of Merseyside Archaeological Society Volume 15**

The latest issue of the Journal is now available. Anyone who was a paid up member in 2013, 2014 or 2015 is entitled to a free copy if you have not already received one and can be picked up at the monthly lecture meeting. Alternatively, a copy can be purchased from the Society at the cost of £10.00 plus p&p.

## 2016 Field trips report

### *St Helens Industrial Archaeology - 25th June 2016: Mark Adams and Maurice Handley*

St Helens has been described as one of the most significant places in the 'industrial revolution'. Originally a collection of small townships, St Helens grew with the opening of the Sankey Canal in 1757 which enabled coal to be exported to Liverpool and the Cheshire salt works and raw materials to be supplied for the glass, chemical and copper industries which flourished in the town. Starting from the World of Glass Museum, a small group of MAS members strolled along the towpath of the Sankey Canal - England's first industrial canal. The towpath is edged with stone sleeper blocks, probably recycled from the nearby railway to Widnes which opened in 1832. The blocks had proved unsuitable for steam powered trains and were soon replaced by wooden sleepers.

As part of the museum, a 19th century glass cone, designed to act as a ventilation device for the workers in the furnace area, still stands alongside the canal where Pilkington's company produced sheet glass. Nearby, the Cannington Shaw Bottle Shop survives as a ruin despite its historic importance as a Scheduled Monument and Grade II listing. Originally part of the largest bottle making company in the world, it also has a cone structure and some elements of its design are unique; a Preservation Trust is hoping to save the building.

A visit to the Quaker Meeting House - the oldest building in St Helens - was kindly made possible by Mike Skidmore the chair of St Helens Historical Society. The sandstone building has many features which stimulated discussion, including a blocked doorway which Mark had investigated a few years ago.

After lunch at the World of Glass, the group drove to the Stanley Bank area at Blackbrook where the remains of a slitting mill stand close to a branch of the Sankey Canal. The water driven mill was used to cut iron bars into strips suitable for making nails. A sandstone wheel pit shows scouring from the water wheels indicating that two wheels operated in tandem. Following the route of an incline, passing the site of Copper House Row cottages and discovering lumps of copper slag in the undergrowth, we reached the location of the copper works, a potential community archaeology project. Finally there was time to drive over to the 19th century Welsh Chapel in Sutton Oak; built from blocks of copper slag by Welshmen employed in the copper industry.

### *The Lleyn Peninsula, North Wales - 16/17th July 2016*

The first day of our weekend trip in the Aberdaron area was blessed with rain and fog which made an overview of the landscape impossible. However the party was able to spend an interesting and informative couple of hours at the Meillionydd dig where Bangor University University students and volunteers

spend the summer learning techniques of field archaeology. The site, occupied from the late Bronze Age to the Middle Iron Age, contains evidence for wooden and stone roundhouses within two concentric enclosure banks. A small number of finds included lead loom weights probably made from lead mined near Abersoch. If anyone is interested in volunteering at Meillionydd next summer, be it just for a day or for a more extended period of time, then contact Professor Raimund Karl ([r.karl@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:r.karl@bangor.ac.uk)) or Katharina Möller ([k.moeller@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:k.moeller@bangor.ac.uk)).



*The Meillionydd site with post holes and storage pit in foreground (photo C. Wood)*

Meillionydd lies on the flanks of Mynydd Rhiw a small mountain surrounded by prehistoric sites including a Neolithic Axe 'Factory' - really a series of small quarries which yielded a metamorphic rock suitable for knapping. After a brief glimpse of the quarry site we were able to dry out in the National Trust cafe at Plas yn Rhiw. From here, a short walk up a steep hill took us to Tan y Muriau - thought to be an example of a Cotswold-Severn long cairn with massive capstones.

At Porth Ysgo, we visited the remains of a manganese mine. Manganese is used in tough steel alloys and the mine worked before the 1914-18 war and reopened briefly in WW II. There is a deep cavern in the side of the valley with small drainage tunnels lower down. In the mist, it was just possible to see partial remains of the winding gear used to lower the ore to a small jetty at the base of the cliff.

The weather improved for our second day and we started at the Felin Uchaf Centre where several experimental timber and thatch roundhouses have been built in 'Iron Age style'. Then we visited Cefnawlech Cromlech - a portal dolmen typically found in western Wales, Ireland, Cornwall and Brittany; ('cromlech' is a Welsh word meaning 'bent slate' and 'dolmen' has a Breton source meaning 'stone table'). The community run museum housed in a redundant church in the centre of Nefyn provided an ideal place for refreshment. The church lies on a monastic site and a video showed a female cist burial beneath the church foundations which was discovered during recent repair work. In the Middle Ages, pilgrims journeying to Bardsey Island

were able to stop at churches along the route. One of the most delightful can be found at Pistyll, where the twelfth century building lies in a sheltered hollow within view of the sea. A little further along the coast at the foot of a steep descent, is the former quarrying community of Nant Gwtheyrn. Setts were quarried here until the 20th century and shipped to Liverpool to surface the streets. The village has been restored and is now a residential cultural and language centre with a heritage display housed in the former chapel. In warm sunshine we could see along the coast to the promontory fort at Porth Dinllaen, with the coast of Ireland just visible over the horizon. Following a late lunch at the excellent cafe our group went separate ways - some returning to Meillionydd, others to the large church at Clynog Fawr before travelling home.

**Williamson's Tunnels, Paddington, Liverpool - 6th August 2016**

Guided by enthusiastic members of the Friends of Williamson's



*Jenny Woodcock emerges from the Banqueting Hall. The remains of the facade of Williamson's House in the background.*

Tunnels, we took a subterranean tour of parts of the extensive tunnels and vaults under Paddington and Mason Street located to the north of the railway between Lime Street and Edge Hill. The tunnels, mostly formed by brick stone arches built over sandstone quarries, were constructed in the first half of the 19th century by Joseph Williamson to provide work for unemployed men. Descending by stairs down four levels at Paddington, we observed the methods of quarrying, stone masonry and arch



*The 'Wine Bins' cellar below Williamson's House (photo I. Jones)*

construction. The Friends have a display of the large collection of artefacts collected from the 'rubbish' dumped in the voids during the 19th century. On the site of Williamson's house in Mason Street, we climbed down ladders to reach the 'Wine Bins' and the impressive stone arched 'Banqueting Hall'. The latter featured wedge shaped voussoirs indicating that Williamson employed skilled stonemasons. Elsewhere we saw complicated intersecting brick arches which would have not looked out of place in one of the 19th century dock warehouses. A big thank you to Lynn Mills and her cohort of volunteers for a very worthwhile visit. The Friends of Williamson's Tunnels have a well illustrated and informative website at <https://williamsonstunnels.com>

*Maurice Handley*

**The Battle of Brunanburh: New Light on an Old Mystery  
A lecture by Michael Wood, 11th April 2016, University of Liverpool**

Michael Wood, Professor of Public History at Manchester, and of TV fame, gave a lecture presenting the contents of his paper in the Yorkshire Archaeological Journal concerning the battle of Brunanburh. It would appear that recent consensus has developed for this epic battle of 937 having taken place at Bromborough, on the Wirral. To simplify the arguments for, this is based upon Bromborough being similar to Brunanburh; there is also an Anglo-Saxon poem that includes mention of what could be a place name that could relate to Thingwall nearby.

Michael Wood's paper and lecture set out the convincing counter to such thinking, relocating the conflict from Wirral to somewhere south of York, near the Humber. The linguistic and historical evidence is set out in full in his paper (available for free online - Wood, M. 2013. 'Searching for Brunanburh: The Yorkshire Context of the 'Great War' of 937'. Yorkshire Archaeological Journal: Vol. 85, Issue 1: 138-159 -<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1179/0084427613Z.00000000021>) but can be summarised as follows:

the earliest sources spell the battlefield name with two 'n's, making it the fort by the spring, not Brun's or Brom's fort; a Northumbrian source names the battlefield as being near Wendun, perhaps a hill near the river Went; the main areas of conflict between the north and south at this time were along the road that is now the A1; the invading fleet sailed up the Humber; the reference to Thingwall is better read as a literary reference to the sea in general; it took one Irish king until the next April to return to Ireland, suggesting a more circuitous route than a simple crossing of the Irish Sea. All this, and more, strongly suggests a location on the east coast of England, near York and the Humber. The argument is compelling but leaves a few questions, inevitable with a historical issue when viewed by an archaeologist. Can we ever truly pinpoint the battlefield? Historians appear to be still arguing over a geographic region in which the battle took place, let alone a specific field.

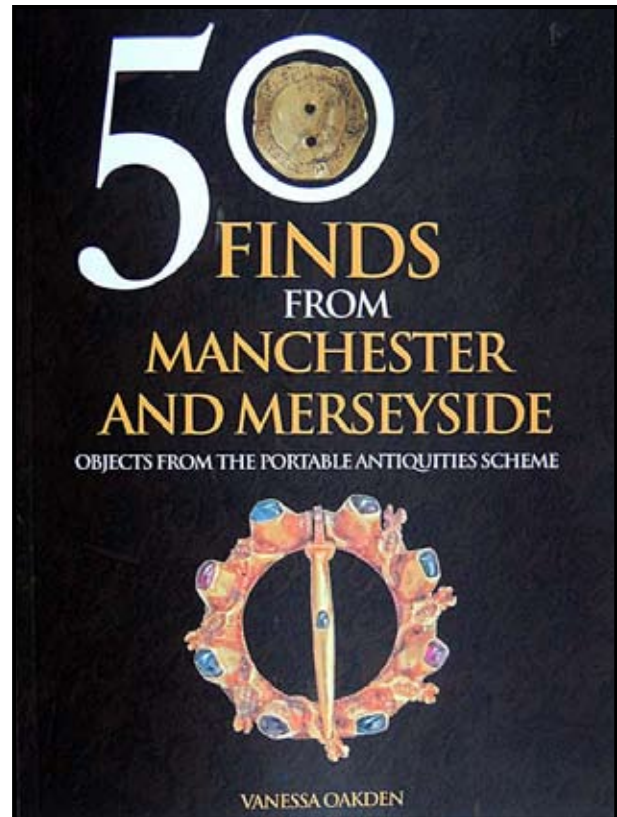
Turning to archaeology then, incontrovertible evidence would be locating the mass graves of the supposed 30,000 soldiers and 800 captains slaughtered on the field. This has not happened and is perhaps unlikely to (though victims of the battle of Chester of AD 613 found at Heronbridge in the 1930s have been identified in Cheshire, illustrating that such feats are possible). Another possible insight is the associated traces left by armed conflicts of this age, namely the numerous small metal objects lost during such engagements – strap ends, buckles, armour fittings and coins. A search of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) database quickly shows that there have been no such finds of 10th century material reported from Wirral but there are concentrations of such objects in the east of the country (<https://finds.org.uk/database/search/map/fromdate/900/todate/1000>). This is far from conclusive, given the inherent biases of PAS data (variations in land available for detecting on, reporting and recognition) and the general paucity of such material for much of Britain, not just the Wirral, but does neatly show at least a considerable absence of evidence for 30,000 plus casualties left on the field in our region. Remembering the old adage that this is not evidence of absence, it is still more likely than not that the battle of Brunanburh was fought in the east, and not at Bromborough.

*Ben Croxford*

*Merseyside Historic Environment Record Officer*

### **50 Finds From Manchester and Merseyside – Objects from the Portable Antiquities Scheme by Vanessa Oakden**

A unique way of understanding our heritage is through the objects lost by our ancestors in the past, rediscovered and subsequently recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). The author has chosen 50 objects discovered by the public in Greater Manchester and Merseyside from over 6,176 finds recorded on the PAS database. Many of the discoverers are metal detectorists who are often working in places not frequently visited by archaeologists, thus making an important contribution to understanding the material culture of our past.



The 96 page book is divided into two parts with finds from Greater Manchester and Liverpool arranged chronologically within each section. Each part is divided into 5 historical periods, Prehistory (500,000 BC – AD 42), Roman (AD43 – 409), Early Medieval (AD 410 – 1066), Medieval (1066 – 1539) and Post Medieval (1540 – 1900) with a Chapter dedicated to each. The context for each period is set with a brief description of some key sites which have yielded important finds.

Each artefact is lavishly illustrated, often with more than one view of each object. The description includes the place and year of discovery and the reference is included if the reader wants further information via the PAS database at [www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk). The descriptions are relatively brief but there is enough information to satisfy, both the enthusiast and the casual reader. A distribution map is included in some cases, where the find type is rare in the north west e.g. the Roman *Kraftig Profilierte* type brooch discovered in Wigan in 2007. The 180 illustrations are probably the book's key selling point with photos occupying about 75% of the publication.

The broad selection of objects described keeps the reader interested. They range from the more interesting objects commonly found in museum cases throughout the country to the truly exotic e.g. the medieval Victoria Street brooch from Manchester, which is illustrated on the front cover of the book. Although there are several examples of coins, ranging from the single coin to hoards, each find has a different story to tell. Some of the objects handed in have resulted in important archaeological discoveries. I particularly liked the example of

the Roman Samian flanged bowl which was discovered during WW2 at Irby, kept in a powdered milk tin for 40 years and then handed in to National Museums, Liverpool. Information provided by the finder resulted in the discovery and excavation of the multi-period settlement site at Irby in 1992.

The objects described also summarise the depth of our knowledge of different historical periods. While most periods are well represented with many finds, giving the author a difficult choice of what to include, the early medieval period on Merseyside is represented by only 3 finds on the database, two of which are included in the book. The book highlights the importance of bringing finds to the attention of the PAS and the part that detectorists, in particular, can play in contributing to our collective knowledge of our past. This will become more important in the future with further advances in detector technology and easier methods of accurately recording find-spots using GPS devices.

In conclusion, *50 Finds from Manchester and Merseyside* is an excellent publication and should appeal to anyone who has an interest in their heritage. It also reminds us of the part we can all play in contributing to our knowledge of the past when out walking, digging in our garden or passing the building site spoil heap in the city centre and having a careful look to see if there are 'objects' waiting to be discovered and bringing them into PAS for identification.

The book is available online from Amberley publishing along with Vanessa's first volume '50 Finds from Cheshire' and volumes from other Finds Liaison Officers at <https://www.amberley-books.com/discover-books/local-history/50-finds-series.html>. It is also online on Amazon. In bookshops, it should be available in local branches of WHS (but not all), Waterstones in Liverpool One and Manchester Museum & Museum of Liverpool (once re-opened).

*Dave Roberts*

## **Norton Priory Museum**

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. Does the new Museum do justice to Norton Priory's historical importance?



*Norton Priory - Main Exhibition Room*

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 main Exhibition Room showcases a small fraction of the 70,000 artefacts discovered at Norton Priory. A collection of stonework includes several coffins from the monastic site and sculpture from the later houses, in open display cabinets. The lower part of the rebuilt medieval pottery kiln and reconstructed arches of the cloister are among the larger exhibits on show. A medieval wooden coffin is of particular interest. Of the smaller objects to be viewed, the exhibitions of original and replica pottery and tiles are most impressive and include a replica tile effigy of a medieval knight.

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 and one of the many 'touch' screens describes herbs prescribed for various illnesses.

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.

So, does the new Museum live up to expectations? Yes, it does. Overall, the objects on show are presented to their advantage with a good mixture of artefacts in closed cabinets and on open display. There is a nice balance of original and replica material. Large information boards and interactive displays describe the main themes of the exhibition. The lighting in the main Exhibition Room is subdued giving the space an intimate feeling. The visitor is not overwhelmed with lengthy descriptions although there is sufficient information to follow the story of the site. By way of contrast, the upstairs Exhibition Room and Viewing Gallery is more open and its large windows from which the visitor has a magnificent 'aerial' view of the monastic remains below provide the natural light for this space. There is something here for visitors of all ages, from the interested observer to the hardened historian.

Justifiably, the new Museum is proving to be a huge success with over 10,000 visitors in its first few weeks of opening. As 'a site that can act, as few can, as a model for inter-disciplinary research, covering several hundred years of history' and with 70,000 objects to choose from it will be interesting to see how the exhibition develops over the coming years.

*Dave Roberts*

#### **MAS Christmas Quiz 2016 - Abbreviations and Acronyms**

1. In November Megan Clements spoke about CITiZAN, which stands for:-

- a) Community Intertidal Zoning Archaeology Network
- b) Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network
- c) Coastal and Inland Tidal Zone Archaeological Network
- d) Coast and Island Tidal Zone Archaeology Network

2. At the Anniversary Conference in October Vanessa Oakden talked about the PAS in and around Merseyside. PAS means:-

- a) Prehistoric Archaeological Sites
- b) Portable Artefact Scheme
- c) Portable Antiquities Scheme
- d) Port Archaeology Survey

3. The abbreviation ASM. was mentioned at the conference. It meant:-

- a) Archaeological Survey Methods
- b) Ancient Scheduled Monument
- c) Archaeological Service of Merseyside
- d) Archaeological Survey of Merseyside

4. Archeological surveys often use LiDAR , an acronym for:-

- a) Laser Imaging, Detection and Ranging
- b) Laser Detection and Ranging
- c) Light Detection and Ranging
- d) Laser Induced Direction and Ranging

5. In February, David Jordan spoke with great enthusiasm about UAV's:

- a) Urban Archaeological Visits
- b) Unidentified Arretine Vases
- c) Undiscovered Atlantic Vikings
- d) Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

6. The University of York provides the online ADS - an abbreviation for:-

- a) Archaeological Data Service
- b) Archaeological Digital Survey
- c) Archeological Detection Survey
- d) Archaeoastronomical Data System

7. The AEA is:-

- a) Association for Environmental Archaeology
- b) Association of European Archaeologists
- c) Association for Ethnology and Archaeology
- d) Acronym Elimination Association

8. CIfA is an abbreviation for:-

- a) Community Identified Finds Advisor
- b) Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists
- c) Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- d) Complete Index of Field Archaeology

9. Which of the following is not true? MAS is an abbreviation for:-

- a) Middleton Archaeological Society
- b) Marine Antiquities Scheme
- c) Maritime Archaeological Society
- d) Merseyside Archaeology Society

10. Which of the following are correct?

- a) BCE = Before the Common Era
- b) CBA = Council for British Archaeology
- c) AIA = Association for Industrial Archaeology
- d) MOLA = Museum of London Archaeology
- e) GIS = Geographic Information System
- f) YAC = Young Archaeological Club
- g) HAIRNET = Historical and Archaeological International Research Network

**The answers appear on page 8.**

*Maurice Handley*

**The Windmills and Watermills of Wirral: A Historical Survey  
by Rowan Patel**

This book is the most extensive history of Wirral's windmills and watermills ever produced. It records around seventy mills, which stood on Wirral between the Domesday survey and the demise of traditional milling. There are individual sections covering forty-three mills - many of them ancient sites, which have rarely, if ever, been written about before. References to mills are examined at each place, and efforts have been made to trace the history of milling at each location, from the first known records, until each mill fell into disuse. Where possible, the site of every mill has been identified on the present day landscape. Structures which remain have been described in detail, both remaining buildings and lesser archaeological features.

The paperback book measures 21 cm by 24.5 cm and comes to 263 pages, with appendices and indices. It costs £19.95 + £3.50 P&P and contains 220 maps, photographs and diagrams, with many of these illustrations printed in full colour. The book is available from the author:- Email: rowangp@yahoo.co.uk

*Rowan Patel*

**Quiz Answers:**

1 b, 2 c, 3 c, 4 c, 5 d, 6 a, 7 a, 8 c, 9 d, 10 all except: f = Young Archaeologists' Club; g, a homophone for HEIRNET 'History Educators International Research Network'



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 2/2017

Registered Charity No 510831

## MAS Membership Subscriptions 2017

Subscriptions for 2017 fell due on 1st January. If you have not yet renewed your membership please return the form which was sent to you at the beginning of the year or contact the Membership Secretary now.

## MAS Lectures at The Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool

Our lectures are held at The Quaker Meeting House in School Lane in the City Centre (post code L1 3BT). We meet at 7 p.m. for tea and coffee and lectures start promptly at 7.30. All are welcome including non-members.

**April 27th** - Annual General Meeting followed by a talk from Samantha Rowe entitled- 'Assessing the condition of battle-related artefacts from conflict sites'.

Samantha made her mark as the project officer managing the highly successful 'Rainford's Roots' community archaeology project. She is currently a PhD student at the University of Huddersfield.

## MAS Fieldtrips - Summer 2017

*Saturday 3rd June - Castlefields, Manchester with Norman Redhead.* Roman remains, workers' housing, railways, warehouses, canals and 21st century civil engineering. Meet at 10.30 in the Museum of Science and Industry cafe. The museum is near to Deansgate Station and Metro tram stop. There is car parking on New Quay street (see the Museum's website). This is a joint meeting with the Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society. Please let Maurice Handley know if you coming on this trip.

*Saturday 5th August - Pen y Cloddiau Hillfort with Fiona Gale and Rachel Pope.*

*Sunday 6th August - From the Vale of Clwyd to the Dee Valley:* a transect over the watershed visiting some little known localities.

This weekend can be done as separate days or combined with an overnight stay in the Ruthin area. Further details to follow.

Arrangements for additional trips will be confirmed by separate newsletter. For more details please contact Maurice Handley by email: mahandley@tesco.net or phone 0151 426 8157

## MAS Web site

Please note the change to our web site address below. We have now made MAS Journals 1-10 available on-line in PDF format on the Publications page.

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

*Hon Chair:*  
Mark Adams

*Hon Secretary:*  
Dana Campbell

*Membership Secretary:*  
Michael Chapman  
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*Hon Treasurer & Newsletter Editor:*  
Dave Roberts  
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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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## Remembering Ken Lamb

It is with great sadness that the Council has learned that Ken Lamb passed away at the end of 2016 after a lengthy illness. Ken was an active, long-standing member of the Society and when he finally resigned from the Council due to his deteriorating health he was awarded a life membership for the many years he served as Events Secretary. Ken was a lively, enthusiastic, individual and always managed to produce outstanding lecture and fieldtrip programmes. He had a great passion for archaeology and will be sadly missed.

## World Heritage Big History Fair

The Big History Fair will be held at St George's Hall on Saturday 29th and 30th April. Admission is £2 and as well as tables, displays from local Societies (including MAS) and Institutions there will be a programme of talks from guest historians plus some special guests. Tickets for these sessions will be available on the day of the event.

We are currently short of volunteers to help run our stall on both days. If you have a few hours to help out please e-mail (contact details on page 1) or phone Dave Roberts (0151 427 2980).

## MAS Conference - Past Forward 2016

Those of you who attended our 2-day Conference will be aware that the event was filmed. Videos of many of the talks are now available on You-Tube. If you want to see what you missed or wish to re-live the experience there is a link from which you can watch on the MAS web-site Events page:  
<http://www.merseysidearchsoc.com/events-and-field-trips.html>

## Museum of Liverpool, Festival of Archaeology 2017

To Celebrate the Festival of Archaeology the Museum of Liverpool will be hosting a range of free events to explore the archaeology collection and the long history of human activity in Merseyside!

### *Facelab*

Discover the skills and technology behind Liverpool John Moores University's Face Lab with hands-on activities. Explore facial reconstruction including celebrity face ID from plaster casts, basic facial reconstruction skills and techniques, trials with haptic 3D modelling software, surface scanning and computerised facial reconstruction. Suitable for all visitors.  
27th July 1pm-4pm

### *Stone Age Pendant-making*

Join Travellers Through Time to try your hand at using a stone age bow drill to make your very own pendant. Suitable for all visitors.  
29 July, 12.30-3.30pm

### *Little Diggers*

Follow the clues to find the treasures hidden around the museum in this fun and informative hunt especially for our younger visitors. Suitable for children 3-7 years old.  
22, 24-28 July, ticketed sessions 11.30am, 1pm and 2.30pm

### *Roman Fibula-making*

Join Travellers Through Time to make your own Roman-style brooch using bent wire and beads. Suitable for all visitors.  
22 July, 12.30-3.30

### *Let's Be Archaeologists*

Be an archaeologist and make your own discoveries about Liverpool and the surrounding areas. Carry out excavations of Roman, Viking, Tudor and Victorian sites, whilst learning about the importance of evidence and investigating the finds. Suitable for families.  
24-26 July, ticketed sessions at 11am, 2pm and 3pm

### *Archaeology Crafternoon*

Get making! Learn more about the archaeology of our region and make something to take home with you too! Suitable for families.  
24, 26, 29 and 30 July 1-4pm  
25 and 27 July, 11-12.30 and 1-4pm

### *Curatorial Talks*

Join our archaeologists to learn about latest discoveries and highlights from the collection in a series of five curatorial talks. Suitable for adults.  
12.30pm-4.30pm

### *Archaeology Object Handling*

Join the Museum's Education Team as we investigate our archaeology handling collection. Suitable for all visitors.  
At intervals each day 24-30 July

### *Fun Finds*

See some of the latest discoveries from Merseyside and learn how archaeologists interpret and record finds. Suitable for all visitors.  
24 July 1.30-4pm

### *Timeline Tours*

Explore our timeline of Merseyside's past from Ice Age to present through this fascinating tour.  
27 July 11.30

Ron Cowell is also planning to run some Lunt site visits, but the dates aren't set yet.

Keep an eye on the Museum of Liverpool web-site for further details and booking arrangements.  
<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol/events/>

## Community Excavation on Hilbre 2016



*Hilbre Excavation 2017 - View of the North trench. Photo: Dave Roberts*

In summer of 2016 a community excavation took place on Hilbre island, funded in part by Wirral Borough Council's Your Wirral fund, and in collaboration with the Friends of Hilbre. The work followed on from an excavation to create a pond in the Bird Observatory garden on Hilbre, in 2006-7, directed by the writer. The excavation revealed the remains of a structure defined by a series of post-holes cut into the top of the underlying bedrock, with stones packed around the original, now vanished, posts. In 2016, two new trenches were opened, one at each end of the 2006 trench, to examine the possible extension to the line of postholes.

The provisional results from the excavation show the following archaeological sequence. Under the modern topsoil, was a deep deposit of windblown sand which included modern finds. This had buried a turf and old topsoil layer of compact dark-grey soil which contained finds dating from the 16th – 19th centuries, including coal, window glass, and two very finely made Cistercian-type ware cup rims. This in turn lay above a weathered sandstone brash which was the weathered surface of bedrock. Within this deposit were a few small semi-circular edge areas of dark silty sand associated with one or more stones set on edge. The spacing and alignment was regular supporting the interpretation as a row of post-holes, which aligned on those found in 2006.

In the middle of the north trench there is a strong concentration of cobbles. These stones were probably collected from the beach and transported for use as building material. They seem to have been carefully selected for their size (8-15 cm) and rounded shape. At the west side of the area the stones are tightly packed between two larger cobbles before fanning out and becoming less concentrated at the east end. This cobbled area lies precisely along the projected line of postholes and appears to have been laid to consolidate an area of ground that was subject to a lot of wear or trampling. The most likely interpretation is that the area formed the threshold to the building.

So far we have not found any objects allowing us to date the building. The structure is earth-fast so is unlikely to be later than the 14th century or so, and the slight curve evident in the post-hole alignment

is reminiscent of Scandinavian-type houses. Our best estimate is currently that it belongs to the period between AD 400 and 1200. During the initial 2006 excavation, the contents of postholes were sieved in an attempt to find pieces of charred material suitable for radiocarbon dating. Unfortunately, no fragments were found so dating remained uncertain.

Further test-pitting on the northern part of the island by Roy Forshaw as part of the same project has begun to investigate the remains of the salt-works which are known to have been present in the late 17th and early 18th century.

Grateful thanks are due to Your Wirral fund, and Wirral Borough council for permission to excavate, Matt Thomas, the Friends of Hilbre and all the volunteers who did the hard work! A display in West Kirby Museum will present the results of the excavation, opening on 1 April.

*Rob Philpott*

## West Kirby Museum commemorates Charles Dawson Brown

The newly refurbished West Kirby Museum opened in July 2013. Formerly known as the Charles Dawson Brown Museum, founded in 1892, it was hidden away for over a century, available to view by appointment only. It is housed in a pyramidal-roofed building, part of a range of traditional sandstone buildings which in turn form part of the St Bridget's Community Centre. The centre lies in the West Kirby Old Village Conservation Area which is dominated by the adjacent Grade II\* listed St Bridget's Church.

Charles Dawson Brown was the local historian, antiquarian and benefactor who preserved the ancient stones which were being unearthed during the rebuilding of St. Bridget's Church in 1869. These stones form the core of the museum collection.

The original museum room has been completely transformed into a modern, spot-lit and accessible display area. This room tells the story of a thousand years of St. Bridget's Church including pre-Norman, Norman, Medieval and recent acquisitions relating to the church.

The stone collection includes 10th century Anglo-Saxon stone cross fragments, a Saxon font, Viking grave slabs, a 12th century child's coffin and what is thought to be a 10th century pilgrimage footbath. There are some fine architectural pieces including Norman pillar bases and capitals, stone heads and window tracery.

The museum space now extends into a new second room. This space allows us to include displays about the old village of West Kirby, the old school and other items found in or around the parish of West Kirby. Two additional new display cases provide an opportunity for the Museum Research Group to mount temporary exhibitions. These are changed every few months. The Research Group is very active and meets once a week in St Bridget's Centre.

*Christine Longworth*

## **Mersey and Dee Young Archaeologists Club (YAC)**

Mersey and Dee YAC is open to everyone aged 8-16 years. At our club you will be able to come along and learn about different periods of history, visit and investigate local archaeological sites (and take part in excavations!) and historic places, try out traditional crafts, join in half term and summer clubs, and so much more!

We are based at the Museum of Liverpool on the iconic Liverpool Pier Head and, usually meet every other month and a few times through the school holidays; to get an idea about what we have to offer in our sessions, check out our 'What's On' page.

*<http://www.yac-uk.org/clubs/mersey-and-dee/whats-on-at-mersey-and-dee-yac>*

Our club is run by members of National Museums Liverpool's archaeology department, education department and, a team of dedicated YAC volunteers. If you'd like to know more about how we recruit our volunteers, please have a look at our FAQs at *<http://www.yac-uk.org/faqs-grown-ups>*

Our membership costs £30 for the year and includes both our weekend (running from 10am to 11:30 am) and school holiday sessions (lasting all day).

If you know anyone who would be interested in joining please contact Liz Stewart:

Tel:0151 478 4443

Email:[madyac@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:madyac@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 3/2017

Registered Charity No 510831

## MAS Membership Subscriptions 2017

Subscriptions for 2017 fell due on 1st January. If you have not yet renewed your membership please return the form which was sent to you at the beginning of the year or contact the Membership Secretary now.

## MAS Lectures at The Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool - 2017 Autumn meetings

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.

### 21st September - 'Discovering early modern Prescott and its Playhouse' - Rosemary Tyler

Early modern Prescott was a relatively small market town in South West Lancashire, it however has an intriguing cultural history - it was the site of the first known purpose built Elizabethan Playhouse built outside London. This talk will explore the history of the early modern town, using contemporary and later data, that will place the Playhouse within the town and the immediate region.

### 19th October - 'The Neanderthal "burial" site at Shanidar: a reappraisal' - Chris Hunt (JMU)

In the 1950s Robert Solecki discovered the skeletons of a number of neanderthals at Shanidar Cave in Kurdish Iraq. He interpreted the finds as burials. Sediment close to one cluster of skeletal material, Shanidar V, yielded clusters of pollen interpreted at the time as the remains of flowers, sparking the stories of the "Shanidar flower people". Sadly, the political situation in Iraq made further work on the site impossible until quite recently, in spite of the intense controversy engendered by Solecki's work. Our new project at Shanidar has now obtained enough evidence to be able to reappraise Solecki's findings, but there is still much to learn about this most challenging site.

### 16th November - 'Recent excavations at Halton Castle (Runcorn)' - Sarah Cattell

Sarah from the University of Salford, led the recent excavations at Halton Castle where "they didn't find what they expected but instead found surprising and unexpected things".

### 14th December - Members' evening

An opportunity for members and friends to bring photographs, artefacts or just themselves. If you need help with a slide presentation let Maurice Handley know. There will be a short multi-choice quiz (non-competitive). Tea, coffee and mince pies will be available from 7pm. Contact: mahandley@tesco.net.

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

Hon Chair:  
Mark Adams

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Liz Stewart

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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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### ***Provisional dates for next year***

January 18th - Fred Bezombes (JMU) 'Archaeology by drones'

15th February - t.b.a.

15th March - t.b.a.

19th April - Annual General Meeting + speaker t.b.a.



*Halton Castle - July 2017*

### **Message from Mark...**

After 23 years and 2 months (no I haven't been keeping count, it's what my record with HR tells me) at Museum of Liverpool I'm leaving to take up a new post with RSK, an environmental consultancy based at Helsby. I've had a great time at the Museum, working on some fantastic projects with some great people, but it really was time to move on. Highlights of the past couple of decades are many but include (in no particular order)... Irby, the Formby footprints, Court Farm, Hilary Breck, Stanley Bank, the Museum of Liverpool site and Mark Rake (which is featured in this newsletter). If anyone can claim to have worked on all of those with me I probably owe them a pint or two for putting up with me. Although I'll be working in Helsby I intend to keep involved in Merseyside's archaeology and will stay on as Chair.

*Mark Adams*

### **MAS Web site**

Please note the change to our web site address below. We have also now made MAS Journals 1-10 available on-line in PDF format on the Publications page.

### **CBA North West Newsletters**

CBA North West (CBANW) is gathering together an archive of old Newsletters to publish on its website. The organisation, which

at the time was called CBA Group 5, is missing several Newsletters from the 1970s and early eighties. If you have retained any of these documents and are willing to lend them to CBANW for copying please contact Mike Nevell. E-mail: [m.d.nevell@salford.ac.uk](mailto:m.d.nevell@salford.ac.uk)

### **Childwall Graveyard Survey**

The MAS graveyard survey at All Saints Childwall is still on-going. If you have a few hours to spare doing work in the churchyard, recording monuments, or in Liverpool Museum, entering data into the project database, please contact Dave Roberts - details on page 1.

### **Excavation at Mark Rake, Bromborough**

During November and December 2016 archaeologists from the Museum of Liverpool led by Mark Adams conducted an excavation at Mark Rake, Bromborough ahead of the construction of housing on what, until then, had been the Rectory gardens.

The site lies in the historic core of the village of Bromborough, adjacent to the churchyard of St. Barnabas church which almost certainly pre-dates the Domesday Survey. The medieval church was demolished in 1827/8 after it had become impossible to maintain. Eventually the new church became too small for the rapidly expanding village and was itself demolished and rebuilt on a much larger scale in 1862-4. During the rebuilding fragments of Anglo-Saxon sculpture were recovered from the foundations of the 1820s church and were stored on the lawn of the Rectory until they were lost during reconstruction of the Rectory in the 1930s.



*Neolithic pottery being excavated from a small pit*

The aim of the excavation undertaken in 2016 was to locate any surviving fragments of sculpture and to record any other archaeological deposits which might have been disturbed by building works. The excavation found evidence for Neolithic activity on the site which consisted of shallow pits and post-holes scattered, apparently at random, across the site. None of them seem to define recognisable buildings or structures, though at least one contained small fragments of burned bone which has since been identified as



*Sandstone fragment highlighted in the 1880s photo*

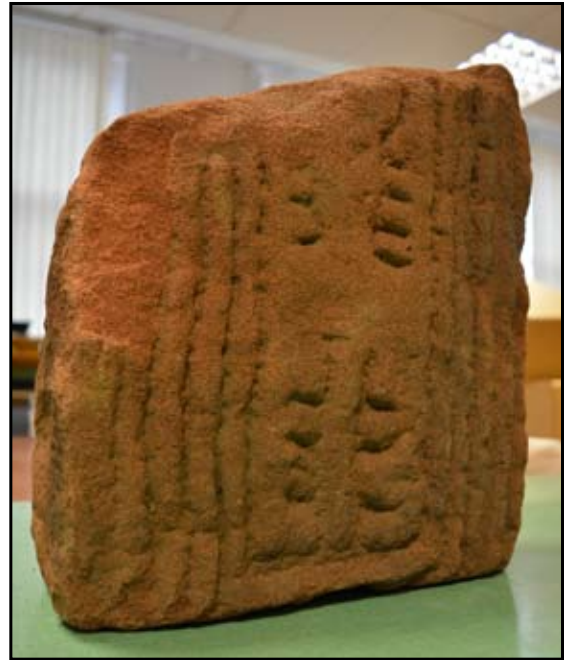
human. The Neolithic date is based upon fragments of locally made carinated bowls (a common type of Neolithic pottery) and flintwork found in some of the features, though this may change once the features have been radiocarbon dated.

The site was crossed by three small ditches (or deep gullies depending upon one's perspective ) which ran parallel to the churchyard boundary. One of these was assumed to be Bronze Age based upon the only datable find it contained, a fragment from the rim of an Early Bronze Age Collared Urn, though processing of the soil samples has found oat, rye or bread wheat-type cereals in the fills which suggest that they are likely to be medieval; again radiocarbon dates are awaited. It's possible that the Collared Urn fragment was originally associated with the cremation burial and ended up in the ditch/gully during the medieval period, though it's unlikely that we'll ever know.

Part of the brief was to look for surviving fragments of Anglo-Saxon sculpture. After about three weeks of turning over every fragment of sandstone larger than head size, the piece in the photograph was found. It is recognisably one of the pieces shown in a photograph taken in the 1880s of the carvings stacked on the Rectory lawn and forms part of a slab decorated with a cross motif probably carved in the 10th century AD.

Despite the fact that no recognisable building plans or similar evidence was recovered from Neolithic and Bronze Age phases, the finds are significant as some of the first excavated evidence for Neolithic settlement from the Wirral. The earliest definite settlement at Irby was Bronze Age, although some earlier stone tools were present they were all found with later material, and Mark Rake has demonstrated the potential of sites close to early churchyards on the Wirral for evidence of much earlier settlement. Whilst it was great to find at least one surviving fragment of the carvings, the piece was found in a thin layer of red sand. This suggests that the local story about the builder of the 1930s Rectory grinding them up for sand to make mortar may sadly be true.

*Mark Adams*



*10th century slab fragment decorated with a cross motif*

## **2017 Field trips report**

### *Castlefields 3rd June*



*Norman Redhead describes the Roman site at Castlefields*

Seven members of MAS joined nine members of the Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society for a sunny morning walk around Castlefields in Manchester led by Norman Redhead of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service at the University of Salford. Starting at the White Lion pub on Liverpool Road, there is a small heritage park where there are the exposed building foundations, ditches and a gatehouse reconstructed on the remains of the Roman fort which existed for 300 years and gives Manchester its name. Norman told us there are considerable Roman remains in the area, much of it is found less than 25cm below the surface. Evidence has been found of iron working, which makes it the earliest industrial archaeology site in Manchester.

After the Roman period, the centre of Manchester developed around the Cathedral area and Castlefields declined until the construction by James Brindley of the Bridgewater Canal in the 1760s. The canal terminates at the Castlefields canal basin where several warehouses were built between 1770 and 1840. The surviving warehouses show typical design elements of warehouse architecture. The multi-storey buildings have loading bays with hoists directly above the waterside. A classic feature is the internal 'boat arm' that brought the canal to the centre of the warehouse directly beneath a water wheel powered hoist system. Brindley redirected the River Medlock via a tunnel that takes the water underneath the basin and connects with an overflow system at the western end of the basin. Permo-Triassic sandstone was seen outcropping in various parts of the canal area with a small quarry probably providing a source of suitable building stone for the canal. This sandstone doubtless provides a suitable bedrock for the numerous inappropriate very high rise buildings proposed for the area. Earlier, on Liverpool Road, we saw vernacular workshop dwellings with long attic windows. The Roman dig nearby also revealed the foundations of back to back and blind back houses of the 'affordable' type criticised by Friedrich Engels in 1842.

During the 19th century railways became a dominant feature of the Castlefields area with every type of bridge carrying the lines at high and low level across the canals. The first railway station in the world is on Liverpool Road and, with the earliest example of a railway warehouse, now forms part of the Museum of Science and Industry. Work is well advanced on the construction of the Ordsall Chord; although a number of listed structures have been removed or affected, George Stephenson's impressive skew arch bridge over the Irwell remains intact. Thank you Norman for an excellent visit.

### ***Neston - July 6th***

Setting out on a pleasant evening in the quiet backwater of Little Neston, our guide Anthony Annakin-Smith, pointed out that in the 18th and early 19th centuries, this was once a hive of industry in the most populous part of Wirral (i.e. before the growth of Birkenhead). Coal mining and associated industries such as brickmaking and limeburning, took place in Neston from 1750 to 1927. The collieries exploited an extension of the Flintshire coalfield which lies under the Dee estuary. Canals were constructed underground to transport coal from the coal-face to the bottom of the pit shaft. Coal was exported from Denhall Quay to Chester, North Wales and Ireland - remains of the quay can still be seen near the Harp Inn. The collieries were principally owned by two families - the Stanleys and the Cottinghams. There was a long running dispute between the two owners with allegations of trespass and sabotage which culminated in the Stanleys paying a fine of £2000 in 1827. By 1866 the railway had reached Neston and this revitalised the declining coal mines.

Walking along old railway lines, our guide took the party past capped shafts of former coal mines, the sites of Deeside Electric Works and a House of Correction where Irish vagrants were imprisoned before deportation. Finally we passed a row of miner's cottages before returning to the Harp where Anthony was thanked for an enjoyable and informative evening.



*Rachel Pope explains the stratigraphy at Penycloddiau*

### ***Field weekend 5th-6th August 'From the Clwyd to the Dee'***

On Saturday morning 5th August we visited the excavation at Penycloddiau 'Iron Age' hillfort, joining a large guided tour led by Fiona Gale (County Archaeologist, Denbighshire). We walked up the hillslope to a stile, where we were treated to a hailstorm and heavy rain shower that cleared the air for marvellous views. Traversing the middle of this 23 hectare enclosure to reach the excavations at the far side made it clear that this is not a defensible site. Rachel Pope (site director, University of Liverpool) suggested that it might be a summer grazing area for livestock in her site talk. One trench exposed a hut platform cut into the hillside. Last year the team 100% sampled the hut's floor layers. Wet sieving in the university's lab is discovering many pieces of fired clay, some of it pottery and some of it probably structural material (daub), together with plenty of charcoal that can provide samples for radiocarbon dating. Although called an Iron Age hillfort, it has not yet been securely dated and may have originated in the Bronze Age. In another trench, the exposed inner face of the rampart was revealed to be constructed of dry-stone walling, possibly built in sections, although most of the bank is earth and rubble. The trench across the rampart was deliberately sited to investigate an area previously damaged by a farm track, but the excavations did not confirm any original entrance at this location. About 40 tonnes of rock were moved during the excavation which puts into perspective the impressive effort required to build the 3 km multivallate circumference. This was the final season of excavation. Publication will probably be in a monograph together with Oxford University's current excavations at Moel y Gaer (Bodfari) a little further along the Clwyd ridge, possibly also with the Clwydian Range Archaeology Group's work at Moel Arthur- although they are excavating Bronze Age material on a spur outside the hillfort. The Offa's Dyke walk passes between Penycloddiau and Moel Arthur, towards Moel y Gaer and you can walk around Penycloddiau itself: park at the Coed Llanwyfan car park. For a fuller description of the hillfort see the University's website or visit [www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/penycloddiau/](http://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/penycloddiau/)

The afternoon was spent on an informal visit to Ruthin Gaol a



*The inner rampart at Penycloddiaw*

19th century prison modelled on Pentonville - it is now a museum and also houses the County archive. The group also visited Nantclwyd y dre, the oldest timbered town house in Wales, started in 1435 and subsequently extended several times. There are views of the castle and the surrounding landscape from the newly replanted garden.

On Sunday 6th August we made a series of brief stops and short walks at locations between the Vale of Clwyd and the River Dee. A narrow gorge at Pwll Glas is overlooked by a possibly Bronze Age hillfort. The quiet village of Llanelidan has a church which sits on a circular platform implying a pre-Christian site. A nearby mound, recorded as a 'tumulus'. was thought to be a glacial feature. A steep climb led to Gwndir on the former common and the historic boundary between the counties of Denbigh and Merioneth. The 19th century straight enclosure roads contrasted with the meandering stone and earth banks defining the earlier 'encroachments' on which a simple cottage and byre was built.

Across the watershed, a cup marked stone at Bwrdd y tri argllwyd marks the meeting point of the three lordships of Denbigh, Glyndwr and Yale. A Roman road follows the ridge at this point - gold was transported along this route between Bala and Chester. A Roman military route branched off to Prestatyn avoiding the gorge at Pwll Glas, and in the 18th century, drovers followed a similar path on the way to Ruthin.

A quick stop was made to look up at Caer Drewyn, a hillfort commanding views over Corwen and the Dee valley. Finally at Glyndwfrdwy, a pleasant walk along a wooded valley led to the Nant y pandy slate works where there were the ruins of a large waterwheel, workshops and a small section of wooden rail in the tramway which carried slate from the quarry to the railway. Thank you to all who contributed to and participated in this weekend.

*Sue Stallibrass & Maurice Handley*

### **Museum of Liverpool - The Huxley Hoard**

This year celebrates 20 years of the 1996 Treasure Act coming into force. It is through the implementation of the Act that many museums

have the opportunity to acquire Treasure which has been reported and enhance their collections. Treasure is any object more than 300 years old which is more than 10% gold or silver, for coins it is two or more gold or silver coins found together or 10 or more base metal coins found together, two or more prehistoric objects found together, and any objects which are found in association with Treasure are also classed as Treasure. For example the pieces of lead discovered with the Huxley Hoard and the pottery found with the Knutsford Hoard are Treasure by association. When Treasure is discovered legally the finder has 14 days to report it to the local coroner for the area in which it was found. This can be done through the local Finds Liaison Officer. To celebrate museums around the country are placing Treasure 20 stickers on their displays which have come to the museums through the Treasure Act, to highlight the work of the Act. The introduction of the Treasure Act resulted in the creation of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS).



*Early Medieval Brooch from Liverpool Museum*

At the Museum of Liverpool the Huxley Hoard has been highlighted and there will also be a small temporary display of Treasure finds and non-Treasure finds which have been reported through the PAS. The display will run from mid-September to November and will feature interesting finds such as a sestertius of Lucilla found by 12 year old George Fowles and a fantastic Early Medieval brooch with decoration similar to that which is found in the Book of Kells.

On Friday the 22nd of September a talk will be given at the Museum of Liverpool by Vanessa Oakden on 20 years of Treasure at 1.30 followed by some object handling and a talk by Liz Stewart about the Viking Huxley Hoard. All are welcome to attend these free events.

### **Bronze Age Palstave from Sefton**

This Bronze Age palstave axe was discovered in Sefton by a metal detectorist and was brought to the Museum of Liverpool to be recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme. It has been recorded on [www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database) as LVPL-CD9D36.





*Bronze Age palstave axe*

The axehead is of Middle Bronze Age date, probably of the Acton Park or Taunton metalwork assemblage dating from c.1500 to c. 1300BC and has been miscast. The blade of the palstave is worn and uneven with a blunt, convex cutting edge. The rear of the axehead has been damaged or miss-cast so that the septum (the area between the flange facets and the stop ridge) is missing or 'filled in' on one face and complete on the opposite face. On each side of the axehead is a proto-trunnion stop to aid the hafting of the axe, stopping it from moving as much. This suggests that the axe did not have a side loop. The blade is worn, slender and slight and the casting seems have been trimmed and hammered flat. The object has an undulating and pitted surface with a mid-green patina however it has been coated in wax.

Matthew G. Knight has examined images of the axe head which he discusses below:

*The nature of palstave septums and flanges makes this area a structurally weak point in the design, which was quite liable to breaking (at least theoretically - more work needs doing on this). There seems to be a different patination/corrosion in the break, which suggests the absent septum broke in antiquity, and was not a miscast feature.*

*However, interpretation of the damage to the flanges is more problematic as this damage is not consistently corroded/patinated with the break across the septum. If it was it might be concluded that the flanges and the break across the septum occurred at the same time. In fact, the whole palstave apart from the break, appears to be smooth and well worn.*

*Regarding the damaged face, worn and abraded palstaves are encountered in the archaeological record, but not to the extent that an entire stop has been worn away. This suggests that the palstave was probably miscast but still prepared (e.g. by working the casting seams) and maybe used, though the blade is quite thick and does*

*not appear to have been hammered. Every now and again one sees what might be considered 'practice pieces', which seem to be objects that have gone wrong or have never been finished properly, as though an individual was simply practicing. It is possible this is one such example, where it may have been cast by an inexperienced caster, learning techniques like mould preparation, metal-working etc. On a less speculative note, it could just be a failed casting!*

*All things considered, it is probable this is a miscast object, but for whatever reason some basic preparation was taken. The broken septum was likely an accident that occurred after production of the object and possibly post-deposition.*

The axe head has been kindly lent for display at the Museum of Liverpool as part of the PAS Treasure20 exhibition from September to November.

*Vanessa Oakden & Matthew G. Knight*



# 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](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.



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 3/2018

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.

## A note from the Chair

I had my car serviced recently and I had to sign a consent form so that the garage can send me an MOT reminder. At one stage this year hardly a day passed without some communication from a society, association or business regarding the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Merseyside Archaeological Society stores members' information so that they can be kept informed about events and activities. The MAS Council is developing a Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice. Your personal data is stored securely and we will not pass it to a third party without your consent.

We are very lucky in Merseyside to have so many museums and most are free. The Terracotta Warriors exhibition at the World Museum has been a huge success and more than matched the 'Wow' factor of the Mayan exhibition of 2015. It was a unique opportunity to see the soldiers and other finds so closely and without the overcrowding that was my experience in Xian. The exhibition included information about the history and description of the artefacts and I certainly learnt a lot about China's heritage. The Atkinson in Southport has also had a superb exhibition which brought a once in a lifetime chance to see several priceless collections from the Viking hoards. Norton Priory has a superb new building and excellent displays.

I will continue with events organisation until the end of the year so that there will be a transition as Mark takes over the role with a small sub-committee. We are also finalising the one day conference in October. Many of our speakers at evening meetings are recommended by members so please continue with those suggestions. I hope you find the autumn lectures appealing and I look forward to seeing you at the Quaker Meeting House.

Maurice Handley

## MAS Lectures at The Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool

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, September 20th 'Place Names in West Derby Hundred': Pam Russell

Pam's research degree was on The nomenclature of the West Derby Hundred and she has published several articles and chapters on various aspects of this subject. Her talk will look at some place-names that will be of interest to members.

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

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Maurice Handley

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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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***Thursday, October 18th ‘The North West Historic Graffiti Survey’: Carolanne King and Ellen McInnes***

The North West Historic Graffiti Survey is recording the marks & graffiti found in accessible areas of buildings. These tell the story of the hopes and fears of ordinary people not often seen in the official histories of the time. The Survey is also adding to the nationwide recording that is developing around the original Norfolk Medieval Graffiti project.

The talk will introduce the project and give a broad overview of its discoveries. These range from the apotropaic, marks made to protect against witchcraft that include deliberate burn marks and daisy wheels, to names, dates and initials commemorating more recent events such as WWII. A fundamental aim is to provide training for a volunteer activity that can be undertaken throughout the year by local groups.

***Thursday, November 15th ‘Developments in the understanding of early man’: Lis Rushworth***

Research into hominin development is closely interlinked with the environment in which our early ancestors lived. The availability of fresh water, food, shelter and geological resources for stone tool making are all essential for hominin development. This talk will focus on how we can reconstruct the environments in the understanding of early man at Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania. It will describe how our early ancestors lived and developed by considering the environmental and ecological drive to that change

***Thursday, December 13th: Members’ Evening***

As usual, a chance for members and friends to bring an artifact for discussion or a few Powerpoint slides of a site they have visited. There will be a non-competitive quiz and mince pies will be provided with tea or coffee.

***Thursday, January 17th 2019 ‘Fibulas, focolare and false teeth: the Etruscan Collection in World Museum, Liverpool’; Gina Muskett***

World Museum in Liverpool has one of the most representative Etruscan collections outside Italy. Bronze brooches, mirrors and vessels, ceramics of various types and intricate gold jewellery, including splendid examples of false teeth, illustrate aspects of life and death, giving a fascinating insight into pre-Roman society in central Italy.

***Provisional meeting dates for 2018 - Feb 21st, Mar 21st, April AGM (date to be confirmed as it is 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.

Further information and access to tickets via Eventbrite can be found on our web-site. [www.merseysidearchsoc.com](http://www.merseysidearchsoc.com)



## IMPORTANT NEWS

### The Calderstones, Calderstones Park, Liverpool. Heritage Open Days

Liverpool's 4,000 year old Neolithic Calderstones comprise a collection of internationally significant prehistoric rock-art and represent the earliest evidence of settled life in the region. Originally part of a passage-grave which stood adjacent to the boundary of the modern Calderstones Park, the 6 highly decorated Stones were moved to a glasshouse in 1964, an unsuitable environment which has accelerated their deterioration. Thanks to funding secured by The Reader from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Liverpool City Council, the ancient monoliths are to be removed to undergo essential conservation work approved by Liverpool City Council and Historic England and carried out by Orbis Conservation Ltd. in London. Early next year the Stones will return to a new, specially designed home within the gardens of the Calderstones Mansion House when it reopens in Spring 2019 as The Reader's International Centre for Shared Reading.

Their journey starts on Heritage Open Days, during the week beginning 10th September, when conservation specialists will remove the Stones from the ground and unearth the hidden secrets below. Visitors will have the opportunity to watch the work as it's undertaken, to discover the history – and future – of the Stones and the Mansion House which is currently being transformed into The Reader's International Centre for Shared Reading.

On Thursday and Friday, 13-14th September, The Reader will be running free heritage tours which will also explore the rich history of Calderstones Park itself. Each tour has a capacity of 12 people and can be booked in advance at <https://www.thereader.org.uk/events/heritage-open-days-digging-up-the-secrets-of-the-calder-stones/>

### Norton Priory 2018 bi-annual Conference - Saturday 6th October

Norton Priory's third bi-annual conference will cover the latest exciting research into the site and environment, and the extensive archaeological collection. Speakers will explore a diverse range of topics from the eighteenth century landscape to evidence for medieval inter personal violence! Preliminary results from the first season of a new series of research excavations at Norton Priory will be presented including some finds, as well as latest thoughts on Halton Castle.

Norton Priory and Halton Castle will have free entry on Sunday 16th September. There is also an Osteoarchaeology Workshop on Saturday 22nd September. Further details and booking at [www.nortonpriory.org](http://www.nortonpriory.org)

### Museum of Liverpool Facebook Page

With a new focus on community archaeology the Museum of Liverpool has a new Facebook page which will feature posts from the archaeology team, Museum of Liverpool Archaeology. The page will feature archaeology at the Museum of Liverpool, within Liverpool city region, Merseyside and the North West and updates from the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). We are keen to work in partnership with our local communities, to facilitate accessible archaeology and to engage with people from diverse backgrounds who may traditionally have felt excluded from archaeology. Like and follow the page to hear updates from the team and find out about events and opportunities to get involved!



### Lister Steps Project

Lister Steps childcare charity is restoring the Lister Drive Library, helped by National Lottery Players & HLF to be a flagship for community regeneration, education and fun. The renovated building will be a sustainable multi-use heritage destination, allowing them to relocate their existing childcare services and deliver an extended range of community services and events. The Old Library was formerly 'The Andrew Carnegie Library' serving the West Derby constituency in East Liverpool. Designed by architect Thomas Shelmerdine, it was the only library in Liverpool that wealthy philanthropist Andrew Carnegie chose to fund directly. Opening in 1905, this impressive and historic building served the public as a library until its closure in 2006.

Working in partnership with archaeologists from the Museum of Liverpool, Lister Steps are undertaking historic building recording of the old Carnegie Library on Lister Drive. The Old Library building recording project will take place over 11th, 15th and 19th

September 2018 and volunteers will learn new skills which are used in archaeological building recording. We are also looking for volunteers to take part in some research about the library building and grounds. This will be followed by a community excavation in the New Year within the grounds of the library.

The Museum of Liverpool and Lister Steps are looking for volunteers to get involved in the building recording, research and the excavation. If you're interested in helping us learn more about The Old Library and recording its heritage for future generations then email [olivia.johnson@listersteps.co.uk](mailto:olivia.johnson@listersteps.co.uk). Or sign up on the Lister Steps website <https://listersteps-theoldlibrary.weebly.com/volunteer-with-us.html>



### **A Volunteering Opportunity....Graveyard Recording at All Saints, Childwall**

Graveyard Recording at All Saints Childwall has continued 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](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk). Tel: 427 2980).

### **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.

### **Field Trips Report**

#### ***Southport: The Atkinson and Lord Street: Sunday May 13th***

On a sunny morning we were greeted by Viking re-enactors outside the Atkinson and then inside the museum we were conducted on a tour of the special exhibition - 'The Vikings: Rediscover the Legend' by curator Joanne Chamberlain. The legend was represented by an impressive display of Viking artefacts and hoards from Cuerdale, Silverdale, Bedale and the Vale of York. The hoards are a mixture of bullion, hacksilver - cut and bent fragments. Archeometric analysis of the Bedale hoard indicated that objects were made from silver from western sources and ingots were from melted down Arabic coins. It is thought that silver was acquired by trading with Arabs or as a 'tribute' in return for not attacking Anglo-Saxons.

Displays of everyday items also included amber beads, bone ice skates, chess pieces made from Walrus ivory and jet gaming pieces from a board game called Hnefatafl. In addition to the comprehensive explanatory notes with each display, Joanne's commentary helped to reinforce the idea that the Vikings were people who were more than just plunderers, pillagers and warriors - they had a particular influence on language and place names.

After lunch, MAS member David Scott took us on a short walk looking at the architecture along Lord Street. Southport developed from a sea bathing and fishing location in the 19th century. Many of the buildings on Lord Street were built between 1820 and 1900. Looking above the ground floor facade of the buildings we could see a great variety of architectural styles. Several buildings have changed use, for example the former Lord St. Railway Station is now a hotel; others have vanished such as the Winter Gardens complex of 1870 complete with conservatory, concert pavilion, aquarium and opera house. At the junction of Portland Street and Lord Street we came across a 'Sewer Gas Destructor Lamp' - basically a street light fueled by a mixture of town gas and methane from the Victorian sewer beneath the street. Archaeology is always full of surprises.

#### ***Castleshaw: June 9th***

A small group from Merseyside Archaeological Society, joined by members of Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society and the Friends of Castleshaw, visited the Castleshaw Valley at Delph near Oldham. Led by Norman Redhead from the University of Salford, we started at the first of an excellent set of information boards placed around the site, Norman used a time line to introduce the idea of a palimpsest of occupation covering all periods from the mesolithic to the modern. Moving on we saw the embankment of a temporary railway built to bring supplies for the construction of reservoirs in the 19th century. Nearby there were the faint traces of the agger of the Roman road leading to Castleshaw fort. The route of the road (Margary 712) crosses the Pennines at its narrowest point between Chester and York.

The site lies below the crest at the head of the valley and is really two forts - a smaller later fortlet situated inside the larger fort established by Agricola in AD 79. Circumnavigating the fort we visited each of the four entrances. At the east and west entrances, the

road appeared to enter at an oblique angle. At the north entrance, a road was constructed for about 50m but ended abruptly possibly at a building. On the east side of the fort there is no defensive ditch but on the south side the defensive ditch has been obscured by a sunken way. The larger fort was abandoned by the mid -AD 90s and in AD 105 a fortlet was built within it about one third of its size. Excavation in the fortlet revealed a barracks accommodating about 50 men, a commander's house and a large granary thought to have supplied other military outposts in the area

The acidic soil in the valley does not preserve bones, coins or even pottery. Flints have been found - chalk flint from east of the Pennines and chert probably from the Carboniferous limestone suggesting that trading or exchange may have taken place at this crossing point. There was evidence for medieval and post-medieval development in the area around the forts - at Lower Castleshaw hamlet there were weavers cottages, farmsteads and a school.

There are two 19th century reservoirs retained by damming the valley. Although they avoid the Roman site, post-medieval mill buildings now lie below the water level. At the head of the upper reservoir we were taken to the site of a medieval bloomery - a small cylindrical furnace where a mixture of locally sourced ironstone, limestone and charcoal was smelted to produce a spongy mass of iron called a 'bloom'. Lumps of slag were scattered across the site and a slag heap of about 29 tonnes has been found nearby. Typically the waste material contains about 50% iron. Evidence for roasting the ironstone before smelting has also been found. Other nearby earthworks were associated with the construction and maintenance of the reservoirs.



Moving downstream we were able to view features in the landscape related to the water supply as well as medieval trackways, boundaries and the line of the Roman road. Norman had saved a surprise for last. At a point close to the Roman road, recent test pitting has discovered that a small section of the walls of a ruined building are part of a much larger building covering an area of about 75m x 10m. Most of the walls of the building have been 'robbed out' but fragments of pottery give a 13th century date. Norman interprets the building as belonging to the Grange of Friarmere held by the monks of Roche Abbey near Rotherham. Further investigation at this and at other locations in the valley will no doubt shed more light on a fascinating multi-period landscape. In the words of two of our members, Norman 'built up a picture of the archaeology of the valley' and 'brought every feature to life'.

### ***The Westmorland Dales - South Cumbria: 14/15th July 2018***

The sites visited during this weekend are not far from Tebay/M6 junction 38 and easily reachable on a day trip from Liverpool.

*Orton - Saturday July 14th , Leader: Sue Stallibrass*

The village of Orton lies at the southern edge of the Vale of Eden flanked by the Lake District to the west, the Howgills to the south and the Pennines to the east. Evidence of early occupation is indicated by a neolithic stone circle just over a kilometre to the east and finds of flint artefacts in the vicinity. The village church dates from the 13th century and has a sturdy 17th century tower built as a defence against the 'Border Reivers' (raiders and cattle rustlers). The settlement grew in the 18th century when the Appleby to Kendal turnpike passed through. A Roman road associated with a 'Street Lane' led to the Lune gorge at Tebay where there is the site of a fort at Low Boroughbridge and the modern M6 and main railway line squeeze through alongside the river.

Following footpaths and climbing on steps over stone walls, Sue led us to the stone circle at Gamelands [NY 64003 08164]. Described as an 'embanked' stone circle, it consists of 40 large boulders which, with one limestone exception, are of Shap granite - glacial erratics deposited by ice during the Ice Age. The site appeared to lie on a route now followed by Wainwright's Coast to Coast footpath and a drover's road now forming part of a long distance cycle route between Whitehaven and Whitby. Finds in the area include locally sourced chert tools and chalk flints from east Yorkshire suggesting a trading arrangement from mesolithic times.

We then walked to the modern farm of Friar Biggins ('Biggins' means buildings) - the name suggests a monastic connection and in the fields beneath the limestone escarpment of Orton Scar there is the site of a medieval monastic grange [NY 63845 09496]. This was a large structure similar in size to that described by Norman Redhead at Castleshaw, and was a farm owned by the Friary of Conishead at Ulverston. The fields below the farm appeared to lie on a spring line and despite the long dry summer still showed signs of flowing water. Following quiet lanes and footpaths along the contour we eventually arrived back at Orton just above the mill pond supplying Mill House, now without its wheel and undergoing 'gentrification' like many of the older buildings in the village.

After a tea break at the Orton Scar Cafe, the group drove in convoy to Crosby Ravensworth and then turned towards Shap, stopping briefly to look east across the Vale of Eden from a roadside viewpoint. Descending a steep and narrow track to Shap Abbey [NY 548152] we found this hugely impressive ruin in a secluded valley alongside a river for a self guided tour with clear information panels

and no entrance fee. This peaceful site in late afternoon sunshine was a fitting end to the day but the arrival of a drone enthusiast cut our visit short and we retreated to the M6 and our accommodation in the hotel in Orton or B&B's in Newbiggin.

*Smardale - Sunday July 15th, Leader: Maurice Handley*

Starting from the cafe at the garden centre in Newbiggin on Lune, following an old railway track we crossed the watershed into the valley of the Scandal Beck - a tributary of the Vale of Eden. The South Durham and Lancashire Union Railway opened in 1861 to bring coal and coke from the coalfields near Darlington to the ironworks at Barrow in Furness; it closed before the Beeching era. The track is now the linear 'Smardale Gill National Nature Reserve' with information boards at various points and profuse wildflowers at the south western end. To the north of the railway on Crosby Garrett Fell, are the remains of an extensive Romano-British settlement - one of several Iron Age settlements established on the thin soils of the limestone plateau [NY 719064]. These nucleated 'villages' and field systems show clearly as crop marks on the satellite view (www.bing ) but are difficult to recognise at ground level.



From a convenient bench overlooking the Smardale Valley a myriad collection of archaeological and landscape features could be observed. Beneath us lay Smardale Bridge, a substantial stone bridge on the route used by packhorses carrying wool and other goods from Kendal to Barnard Castle. The track from the bridge climbs eastward up the hillside between dry stone walls which gradually fan out on to Smardale Fell. This 'funnel' would enable cattle to be driven off the fell and led down to the bridge and drinking water. Upstream a linear bank running along the valley side parallel to the beck is thought to be associated with medieval land division. To the west of the bridge we could see 'Strip Lynchets' - medieval cultivation terraces running along the contours of the hill side [NY 719058]. A substantial 3m high wall defined the boundary of a deer park - a farm named 'Park House' is nearby. Another farm called 'Friar's Bottom' implies monastic landholding. On the opposite side of the valley and downstream of the bridge, we could see 'Pillow Mounds' strangely marked as "Giant's Graves" on older maps [NY 725060]. These are rectangular earth mounds about 16m X 5m surrounded by a ditch and located on sloping land to facilitate drainage. They are the remains of artificial rabbit warrens thought to be a medieval farming system.

Moving further along the railway, we reached a limestone quarry with a pair of industrial size lime kilns [NY 724065]. These provided lime which was transported by rail to the iron smelters where it served as a flux. Across the valley we could see quarries in the sandstone which lies beneath the limestone of the fell. A short distance further along the railway we crossed the valley on Smardale Viaduct [NY 726068] - an impressive stone structure built by Sir Thomas Bouch, the engineer best known as the designer of the ill-fated Tay Bridge. Returning along the east side of the valley, our path followed the spring line beneath the sandstone, from which copious water flowed despite the drought conditions. Passing close to the quarries which provided sandstone for the railway bridges, we crossed Smardale Bridge to wend our way back to our starting point. The weather remained kind throughout the weekend - not too hot and no rain.

***Norton Priory: August 18th***

Our guide for this visit was Frank Hargrave, Director at Norton Priory, a very knowledgeable and excellent guide. Starting in the standing remains of the 12th century Abbey and 18th century mansion, we progressed through cloisters and out to the extensive ground level excavations of the monastery. Since 1970 Norton Priory has been the subject of numerous digs - the most recent in summer 2018. There are 100,000 objects in the collection and over 130 skeletons have been removed. A few of the skeletons are on display with an analysis of their cause of death and other injuries. Those from the Dutton family displayed symptoms of Paget's disease (a painful bone condition) and there was a full video explanation of this illness. The indoor section of the museum covers two floors and has something for everyone.

There was a rare opportunity to see a letter written by Henry VIII, on temporary loan from The National Archives. The letter was drafted in 1536 because the canons had prevented the King's men from closing the Abbey during the Dissolution. Henry first called for the Abbott to be hung, drawn and quartered, then changed his mind and asked for him to be hung; however, the abbot survived. Accompanying the display was a highly decorative gold Monstrance - a vessel used in churches for displaying the host. The abbey must have had similar valuable objects which Henry would have wanted to acquire.

Our visit was enhanced by the presence of a large group of medieval re-enactors indulging in fierce mock battles. They also gave demonstrations including cooking, crafts and weaponry which gave an opportunity to talk to the re-enactors. If you haven't been since the rebuild, the new Museum is well worth a visit. The Priory and Halton Castle will be open on September 16th and there will be free entry. There is also a one day conference on October 6th.

*Maurice Handley & Nancy Jenkins*



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 1/2019

Registered Charity No 510831

## MAS Membership Subscriptions 2019

Subscriptions for 2019 fell due on 1st January. A renewal form is enclosed with this Newsletter

## A note from the Chair

The one day conference in October organised in conjunction with the Museum of Liverpool was a success and well attended. The day trawled through the last ten thousand years of Merseyside archaeology starting with Ron Cowell's work at the Mesolithic hunter-gatherer camp at Lunt, illustrated with a virtual tour of the site 9000 years ago. Mark Adams typically covered a huge range of ideas and investigations ranging from Neolithic to late medieval, Liz Stewart talked about the intriguing history of Pembroke Place court housing and Galkoffs Jewish butcher's shop, and Alison Burns gave a well illustrated talk about Fort Crosby. Finds specialist Vanessa Oakden described some recent additions to the portable antiquities collection and also community archaeology projects and Clare Cunliffe and Jeff Speakman presented an impressive collection of pottery from Rainford including some incredible examples re-assembled from a jigsaw puzzle array of broken pots. The speakers were mainly drawn from museum staff, highlighting the strong relationship between the society and the museum. A big thank you to the speakers, organisers and helpers.

In November I attended the Greater Manchester Archaeology Day and one of the best talks was given by Samantha Rowe who will be remembered for her principal role in the highly successful Rainford's Roots Community Archaeology Project. Sam has completed her PhD and is now Finds Officer at Salford Archaeology at the University of Salford. An article related to one aspect of her research appears in this Newsletter. Recently, Sam has been sifting through over 6000 sherds from the recent excavation at the Shakespeare North Theatre site in Prescott - amongst the 17th and 18th century finds was a broken, but superbly decorated slipware plate. Perhaps we can look forward to a talk from Sam - we already have a fascinating series of lectures in the Spring term.

In common with many societies, MAS is run by volunteers who serve on the Council or contribute to the society in other ways. In April we will be having our AGM and if anyone would like to become involved in helping to run the society then why not put yourself forward for election or just arrange to come along to a Council meeting to see what its like.

Meanwhile best wishes for 2019.

Maurice Handley

## 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.

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## Answers to the Quiz that appears on pages 5-6

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

## **MAS Lectures at The Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool**

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, January 17th 2019 ‘Fibulas, focolare and false teeth: the Etruscan Collection in World Museum, Liverpool’; Gina Muskett***

World Museum in Liverpool has one of the most representative Etruscan collections outside Italy. Bronze brooches, mirrors and vessels, ceramics of various types and intricate gold jewellery, including splendid examples of false teeth, illustrate aspects of life and death, giving a fascinating insight into pre-Roman society in central Italy.

***21st February 2019 ‘The Fort in the Wood-Lancashire’s Lost Roman Fort’: Steve Baldwin***

This talk will describe the results of recent fieldwork and geophysical survey on a Roman military site in South Lancashire conducted by Steve Baldwin. Although fieldwork to date has been limited it has already changed some of our ideas about Roman military activity in the area and the site has potential to radically revise our current understanding of the Roman occupation of the region.

***21st March 2019 ‘Recent archaeological discoveries at the Roman Fort and Medieval Grange in the Castleshaw valley, Saddleworth’: Norman Redhead***

This talk will discuss recent fieldwork on the medieval Grange of Friarmere, held by the Cistercian Roche Abbey, near Rotherham, from the late 12th century to the Dissolution of 1538, and Castleshaw Roman fort. Medieval granges were estate farms to provide food surpluses for the use of the mother abbey and intensive farming was undertaken by labourers under the supervision of lay brothers. Fieldwork on the fort site has shown that the archaeology is far more complex than was thought and that multi-phased, stratified Roman archaeology survives across much of the site.

***Thursday April 18th AGM followed by a lecture from Sue Stallibrass entitled ‘Where the wild things are: hunting in the frontier region of Roman Britain’***

Hunting wild game animals was the sport of civilian and military elites, but their attitudes towards wild animals were extremely complex and often ambiguous or downright contradictory. This talk examines a range of archaeological evidence including animal bones, religious iconography, writing tablets and artefacts, to consider whether people were hunting for pleasure or enlightenment.

## **Archaeological work in Merseyside in 2018**

The planning/development management system oversaw several archaeological investigations in 2018. In Liverpool there were a number of evaluations at Princes Dock. These investigated the site of the fort, exposing the earlier phases of dock walls and locating structures probably associated with the dock’s construction. Elsewhere in the city centre there were investigations of Drury Lane, finding mostly 19th century cellars, and of Hardman House, formerly St Philip’s Church, an iron church built in 1816 by John Cragg and Thomas Rickman. Further out, at Garston, a number of features were only identified as of prehistoric date due to radiocarbon dating. A paper looking at the importance of scientific dating of ceramic features will appear in the MAS journal in due course. At Melling an excavation of an 18th century farm found a dump of kiln waste and pottery of late 16th and early 17th century date. The pottery is very similar to the material from Rainford and a paper on this development will appear in the MAS journal in due course. Finally, an excavation at the site of the Old Hutt at Halewood (see MAS Journal Vol. 8) did not find any traces of the buildings or of the moat. This may have been because the site is still buried at depth beneath modern dumped material.

Details of these sites are available via the Heritage Gateway website (<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>) and digital copies of the reports can be requested from the Historic Environment Record (Merseyside.her@sefton.gov.uk).

*Ben Croxford*

## **A Volunteering Opportunity....Graveyard Recording at All Saints, Childwall**

Graveyard Recording at All Saints Childwall will continue in 2019. 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](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk). Tel: 427 2980).

## A Faithful Interpretation of the Past

The Museum of Liverpool has a new display of finds, exploring themes of religion in everyday objects. Open on the first floor, until the end of March.

Faith and spirituality are a very important part of many people's lives, and archaeological evidence suggests that this has long been the case. Including Roman, medieval and modern objects, this display looks at religious references in objects – picking out the detail which might have meant a lot to the people who owned and used them.

When we look at objects in the 21st century we bring our own beliefs and pre-conceptions to them. We try to find out about what people believed from some of the objects we find. Even small details might give us ideas about people's faith and world-view. However, even in modern objects religious details are overlooked, such as the lettering 'Elizabeth II DG REG FG' on coins, standing for 'Dei Gratia Regina Fidei Defensor': 'By the Grace of God, Queen. Defender of the Faith'.

Liz Stewart



*Roman patera handle featuring Cupid.*

## Dale Hall

Members who are residents of Mossley Hill will probably have noticed the ongoing work at the old University halls of residence, Dale Hall, on Elmswood Road. The site is being redeveloped by Elan Homes for housing and as part of the planning condition has been the subject of an archaeological strip, map and sample investigation undertaken by archaeologists from RSK.

The excavations were undertaken in light of evidence thrown up by a desk based assessment noting the potential for prehistoric archaeological remains. The grounds of the halls contain a small mound covered in trees with large undressed fragments of sandstone protruding from it. The mound is depicted on the 1841 Garston tithe map with mature trees so is clearly not part of the 19th Century landscaping of the site and was tentatively identified by Andy Towle of RSK as a possible Neolithic passage grave. The mound will be preserved in the new development because of its mature trees, although adjacent areas are being built upon.



*Top soil stripping in progress*



*The tumulus*

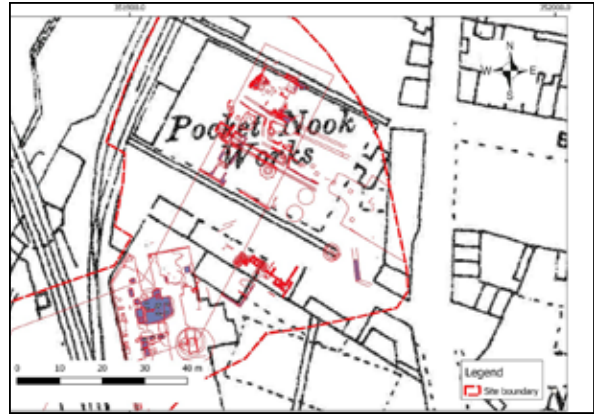
The archaeological investigations, which took place last year, found very few archaeological features, though a post-hole was noted close to the potential tumulus. It contained no finds but a large lump of charcoal from a small well-defined post hole proved to be more interesting. It has a radiocarbon age of 3790 BP +/- 27. i.e. in the Neolithic period. Although not conclusive, the presence of this feature strengthens the case that the mound is indeed a tumulus and forms part of a developing pattern of Neolithic settlement on Merseyside, complementing the evidence from Mark Rake, Bromborough excavated by Museum of Liverpool in 2016. This evidence suggests that Neolithic settlement in the area is largely represented by small, scattered post-holes and pits representing short-lived occupation of a site and that permanent buildings, such as those excavated at Manchester Airport in the late 1990s are probably relatively rare. The findings raise questions on methodology for evaluating and defining similar sites in the area, and will be the subject of further discussion in a forthcoming MAS article.

## Atlas Street

In spring and summer archaeologists from RSK excavated the site of the Pocket Nook Smelting Works on Atlas Street, St. Helens. The works was established in 1854 to smelt copper ores probably imported from South America via Liverpool and operated until the 1890s when the site was taken over by the Waterloo Iron Foundry.



Remains of the Atlas Foundry



Excavated features superimposed on the 1894 OS map

The 19th century phases had been disturbed by construction of the Waterloo Foundry in the late 19th century but the walls of flues and the wall of the building survived at the western end of the site.

Mark Adams

### Assessing the condition of battle-related artefacts from conflict sites



Figure 1: Moreton Corbet bullet with severe pitting, discoloration and lack of surface detail

I have recently completed my PhD entitled “Factors affecting the survival of metal ploughsoil assemblages: an assessment of lead bullets from 17th-century fields of conflict”. I will discuss one aspect of my work here: methods for assessing the condition of artefacts.

The majority of archaeological data on battlefields consists of unstratified metal artefacts in ploughsoils. Topsoils are vulnerable to disturbance from weathering, agricultural activities and erosion, and the condition of buried artefacts is often unclear and hard to estimate. For instance, are artefacts stable in the topsoil or are they corroding at an accelerated rate? Several factors affect an artefact’s condition in the ground, including the soil chemistry and geology, the historic and current land use, and the composition of the object itself. By systematically assessing battlefield assemblages, we can begin to understand what state of condition objects are in and we can begin to design strategies to reduce the impact various factors have on their deterioration.

I devised a systematic assessment for 17th century lead bullets and applied it to three assemblages from Civil War sites of conflict. The assessment addressed the condition of bullets using a set of categories, scoring the bullets accordingly. The condition assessment analysed the smoothness of the bullet surface, the preserved shape of the bullet, visible surface detail, the amount of corrosion products, and the stability of the surface of the bullet. The assessment centred on surface condition as this is where the most valuable archaeological data is available. The surface of a bullet can tell us how the object was manufactured, how it was loaded and fired, whether it impacted a target, and its history in the ground. Corrosion and abrasion in the ground affect the condition of these objects and ultimately how much archaeological data we can obtain from them. Common signs of actively corroding lead are powdery surface residues, severe cracking, surface breakdown, flaking and denting, all of which formed a part of the assessment.

Some bullets scored very high as their surfaces were pitted, cracked and no surface details were visible (figure 1). Others scored very low and were in very good condition with smooth stable patinas/surfaces and clear manufacturing marks (figure 2). The bullets were then analysed spatially to correlate soil conditions with object condition to address the reasons behind the condition of bullets. The three case studies used were the battlefield of Edgehill in Warwickshire, the siege site of Moreton Corbet in Shropshire, and the siege site of Wareham in Dorset (see location map figure 3).

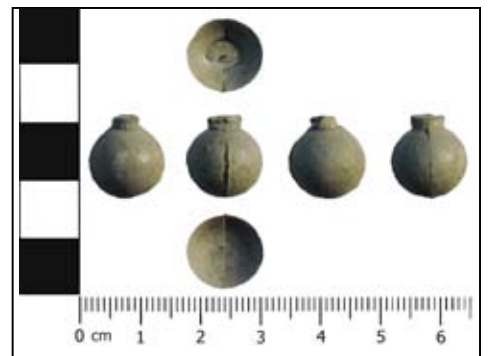


Figure 2: Edgehill bullet with smooth stable patina and clear manufacturing marks





Figure 3: Location of Civil War sites mentioned in text

Overall, the bullets from Edgehill were in very good condition. This is down to their burial environment. The site resides in an area of alkaline clay with impeded drainage, which reduces oxygen flow in the soil and reduces the rate of corrosion. The lack of sand in the soil also reduces abrasion damage to the bullet surfaces. Clay particles are plate-like with smaller pore spaces between particles, resulting in slower oxygen and water flow, which will slow down the rate of corrosion. Significantly, the battlefield consists of large areas of well-preserved medieval ridge and furrow which has not been cultivated since at least the mid-18th century. The lack of ploughing and soil disturbance in the upper 20-30cm of the soil in the last two centuries has clearly aided the preservation of the buried assemblage.

Bullets from Moreton Corbet and Wareham were in poorer condition, particularly at Wareham where 70% of the assemblage were in fair to poor condition. Soil conditions at Wareham are acidic (pH 4.5) and very sandy, resulting in well drained oxygenated soils. Sand particles are large and granular with large spaces between particles, allowing greater rates of abrasion as well as oxygen and water flow, which will promote corrosion. The landscape has also been under almost constant arable cultivation since the early 19th century, which will have accelerated the process of corrosion of bullets in the soil.

My research has shown that the most significant factors affecting the condition of bullets in ploughsoils are soil pH, soil texture, and historic land use. To promote the best preservation of bullets on battlefields, soils should be neutral to alkaline, with a clay content greater than 30%, and sand content <20%, and ideally be retained under pasture as ploughing has the most damaging effect on the preservation of buried material. Further work needs to be carried out on more collections and other object types in order to evaluate whether similar patterns occur with other metal types. Nonetheless, the results of this work suggest that ploughing should be restricted where vulnerable topsoil assemblages may be present in order to reduce corrosion rates and preserve assemblages for future generations.

Samantha Rowe

### MAS Christmas Quiz 2018

1. At our members' evening in December 2017, talks were given by Mark Adams, Roy Forshaw and Warren Kern. Match the talks to the speaker.

- a) Maps and plans of Merseyside   b) Tong Church, Shropshire   c) The keys of Parr Hall, St Helens

2. In January 2018, Fred Bezombes demonstrated drone application to virtual 3D mapping at three of the following sites. Which one was mentioned but NOT shown?

- a) Scladina Neanderthal Cave, Belgium   b) Poulton Archaeological Site, Chester   c) Williamson's Tunnels, Liverpool  
d) Burnt remains of the Echo Arena car park

3. In February Joanne Chamberlain gave us an enthusiastic talk about the display in the Atkinson museum of artefacts collected in the 19th century by Mrs Anne Goodison. Which one of the following is the subject of the Goodison collection?

- a) Mycenaean ceramics   b) Egyptology   c) Football memorabilia   d) Chinese silk

4. In March Lynn Smith told us about an internationally significant statue of a saint which has been at Norton Priory since the late 14th century. Which saint is it?

- a) Saint Augustine   b) Saint Anthony   c) Saint Christopher   d) Saint Ethelfleda

5. Professor Keith Dobney's talk in April 'Can Archaeological Science save the World?', addressed the issues of diet in modern humans compared with that of our ape, Neanderthal and hunter-gatherer ancestors using the ancient DNA of oral microbiota. He said that the human body has more bacteria than human cells by a factor of:-

- a) 10    b) 100    c) 1000    d) 1000000

6) In May we visited the 'Vikings' exhibition at The Atkinson in Southport. We saw 'HNEFATAFL' which is a Viking name for:-

- a) a meatball    b) a board game    c) an anvil    d) hack silver

7) In June we visited Castleshaw Valley with Norman Redhead. He took us to the site of a medieval BLOOMERY - a small furnace which smelted ironstone to produce a lump of iron called a:-

- a) pig    b) bloom    c) ball    d) casting

8) During a weekend in July a small group saw a stone circle near Orton and strip lynchets in Smardale; both sites are in the former county of:-

- a) Cumberland    b) Northumberland    c) Yorkshire    d) Westmorland

9) MAS visited Norton Priory in August and on display was a letter written by King Henry VIII during the dissolution of the monasteries. The abbot had prevented the king's men from entering the monastery and Henry demanded that the abbot should be:-

- a) hung, drawn and quartered    b) deported    c) beheaded    d) defrocked

10) In September, Pam Russell gave a fascinating talk on local place names. She explained that Pendle Hill consists of the Celtic word pen meaning 'hill' and the Old English hyll also meaning 'hill'. Thus Pendle Hill is a:-

- a) triple tautological compound name    b) triple redundant compound name    c) tertiary multi-lingual constructive name  
d) technically convoluted name

11) 'APOTROPAIC' is a category of historic graffiti described in October by Carolanne King and Ellen McInnes; it refers to:-

- a) construction marks made by a joiner or stone mason    b) individual commemoration using initials and dates  
c) protective marks to ward away evil    d) sacrilegious graffiti

12) Our November speaker was Lis Rushworth who gave a talk about the environment of early hominims in:-

- a) the Karkos Mountains, Iran    b) Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania    c) Cresswell Crags, England  
d) the Gobi Desert, Mongolia

**The answers can be found on Page 1.**



# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 2/2019

Registered Charity No 510831

## MAS Membership Subscriptions 2019

Subscriptions for 2019 fell due on 1st January. A renewal form is enclosed with this Newsletter.

## A note from the Chair

The AGM seems to have come round very quickly and I'm half way through my stint as chairman. At the AGM we elect the members of Council who run the society and act as trustees of the registered charity. The membership of MAS consists of professional archaeologists and very knowledgeable 'amateurs' and the make up of the Council reflects this distribution. For members of the society who work in full time jobs and especially those who have young families, helping to run the society and attending meetings can be demanding. I would like to express my thanks to all who contribute in whatever way to helping the society and making it a success.

The society also functions as a meeting place for the exchange of information and ideas and as a base for learning and extending experience. It is reassuring to see that the University of Liverpool is still offering Continuing Education courses in archaeology - many others have ceased to do so. Such courses are a source of new members who need to supplement or extend their knowledge of the subject. MAS has a number of members who have developed their interest in this way and a few have gone on to complete their education as far as post-graduate level.

For our events this summer, Mark Adams is arranging a mix of trips and is also providing an opportunity to gain experience in archaeological techniques. Unfortunately it is too expensive for us to arrange coach transport for field trips so we have to rely on car sharing or public transport. After a fallow year, the Council for British Archaeology is again coordinating The Festival of Archaeology which provides an opportunity to celebrate local archaeology. The festival theme this year will highlight the scientific and technical aspects of archaeology. Look out for activities in July - details will be on the festival website:

[www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk](http://www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk)

*Maurice Handley*

## A Volunteering Opportunity....Graveyard Recording at All Saints, Childwall

Graveyard Recording at All Saints Childwall will continue in 2019. 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](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk). Tel: 427 2980).

## Merseyside Archaeological Society

*Hon Chair:*  
*Maurice Handley*

*Hon Secretary:*  
*Liz Stewart*

*Membership Secretary:*  
*Chris Wood*  
*e-mail: [C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:C.M.Wood@ljmu.ac.uk)*

*Hon Treasurer & Newsletter Editor:*  
*Dave Roberts*  
*e-mail: [drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:drandpr@blueyonder.co.uk)*

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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## **MAS Lectures at The Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool**

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 18th AGM followed by a lecture from Sue Stallibrass entitled 'Where the wild things are: hunting in the frontier region of Roman Britain'***

Hunting wild game animals was the sport of civilian and military elites, but their attitudes towards wild animals were extremely complex and often ambiguous or downright contradictory. This talk examines a range of archaeological evidence including animal bones, religious iconography, writing tablets and artefacts, to consider whether people were hunting for pleasure or enlightenment.

## **Field Trips 2019 (Provisional arrangements)**

***Sunday 12 May 13.30. Venue: Central Liverpool***

Details: We'll start at Lime Street Liverpool and, using historic maps, follow the town's Civil War defences, the Pool, castle and other sites. The walk will take approximately 2-3 hours. Meet at the entrance to Central Library.

***Sunday 23 June 12.30. Venue: Roman Wigan***

Details: The Roman fort at Wigan, known as Coccium, was built early on in the Roman campaign into North West England, probably around 70 AD but was abandoned by 160 AD. The bath house was excavated in 2008 by Oxford Archaeology North. We'll meet at Wigan Wallgate station at 12.30.

If you wish to do some preparatory reading before this trip a free booklet entitled: 'Discovering Coccium. The archaeology of Roman Wigan. Greater Manchester's Past Revealed No. 3' can be found at:

[https://diggreatermanchester.files.wordpress.com/2018/01/gmpr03\\_wigan.pdf](https://diggreatermanchester.files.wordpress.com/2018/01/gmpr03_wigan.pdf)

***June (date to be confirmed). Venue: The Calderstones***

Details: Provisional arrangements are in place for a preview visit to the Calderstones but are subject to construction timetables so dates are not currently available.

***Saturday 13th July 10 a.m. Venue: Runcorn***

Details: Trip in conjunction with Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society. Meet at 10.00am in the cafe at the Catalyst museum. Visit Spike Island and then walk across the Jubilee Bridge to Runcorn Old Town for lunch. Afterwards investigate the Bridgewater Canal and lock flight down to the Ship Canal. Walk back over the bridge or return on bus or train from Runcorn. There is a car park at the Catalyst museum and it can also be reached by bus from Liverpool or by train to Runcorn.

***Saturday 24 August 10 a.m. Venue: Hilbre Island***

Details: Roy Forshaw will guide a walk of Hilbre Island which has evidence for Prehistoric, Roman, medieval, Post-medieval and Victorian settlement and industry.

Details of meeting points etc TBC, please contact Mark Adams in advance.

***Sunday 22nd September. Venue: Tong Castle & Church, Shropshire, Stafford Castle***

Details: The church and castle at Tong have connections with Liverpool (and Shakespeare) via the Stanley family. The church also has the ruins of a medieval college. The remains of the castle are little known but well worth the trip. Details TBC

**Contact: Mark Adams 07469 144227/07773938120 [mhadams@rsk.co.uk](mailto:mhadams@rsk.co.uk) if you require further information.**

## Merseyside Archaeological Society AGM

The 43rd Annual General Meeting will take place at 7.30pm on Thursday 18th April 2019 at The Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool.

A copy of the Agenda is below:

1. Attendance and Apologies
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 27th April 2018
3. Reports
  - a) Hon. Chair's report
  - b) Hon. Secretary's report
  - c) Hon. Treasurer's report and appointment of auditor
4. Election of Officers and Council Members
5. Any Other Business

MAS Council 2019/20

Current nominations

Hon. Chair: Maurice Handley

Hon. Secretary: Liz Stewart

Hon. Treasurer and Newsletter Editor: Dave Roberts

Membership Secretary: Chris Wood

Past Chair: Mark Adams

Events Organiser: Mark Adams (with subcommittee)

Ordinary Council Members: Ben Croxford, Clare Cunliffe, Roy Forshaw, Rob Philpott, Samantha Rowe, Sue Stallibrass, Vanessa Oakden,

Nominations will be accepted from the floor and by e-mail to the Society prior to the meeting.

<https://www.merseysidearchsoc.com/contact-us.html>

Last Year's AGM papers including Officers' reports can be found at:

[:https://www.merseysidearchsoc.com/evening-lectures.html](https://www.merseysidearchsoc.com/evening-lectures.html)

## Finds Recording

Ben Jones, the Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) at the Museum of Liverpool has created a new finds day that is hosted at the Lady Lever Art Gallery in Port Sunlight, Wirral. This is to replace the former visits to the West Kirby Metal Detecting Club, firstly as the demographics of metal detecting are changing and more independent finders are coming forward, secondly because it offers a weekend access to a FLO that was unavailable earlier.

The FLO is always interested to record your finds, whether they be from detecting or from fieldwalking. Objects which are over 300 years old are recorded with grid references or a well-documented find spot. If in doubt, bring it along!

This year's dates for the Lady Lever finds day are the first Saturdays of July and October, 10:30-13:30.

*Ben Jones*

## Garstang Festival of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology University of Liverpool (70th anniversary Garstang Museum)

Events will take place on the following days:

**Friday eve. 5th April 18.00-21.00** Public Lecture & Speed Date the Experts over Canapes at Victoria Art Gallery & Museum

**Saturday 6th April 11.00-15.00** Hands-on get-involved events various venues: Please book each session separately.

Bookings Fri & Sat through eventbrite links available at :

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/archaeology-classics-and-egyptology/events/>

Both events are free but must be booked in advance.

## Grave of WWI warhorse at Halewood given national protection as Grade II listed monument

Blackie was a horse owned by Lt Leonard Comer Wall and they both served from Sept 2015 on the Western Front in the 275th Brigade Royal Field Artillery 'A' Battery- 55th West Lancashire Division. In 2017, at Ypres, Lt Wall was killed (aged 20) and Blackie was badly injured by shrapnel. Blackie served in several other WWI battles including Arras, Somme and Cambrai.

At the end of the war, Lt Wall's mother bought the horse from the army, repatriated him, and lent him to the Territorial Riding School in Liverpool. In 1930 he was 'pensioned off' and retired to live at the Horse's Rest in Halewood (now the RSPCA Liverpool Animal Centre) until his death in 1942, aged about 35 years. Blackie used to lead the Liverpool May Day Horse Parade alongside another ex-warhorse, called Billy. On 23rd August 2018, the first National Purple Poppy Day occurred, in remembrance of the c 8 million horses, mules and donkeys that died in WWI.



*Blackie's inscribed headstone Halewood RSPCA*

Lt Wall, an only child, was a war poet. His poem, 'The Rose of Lancaster' was written in Flanders two months before he was killed. It included the line 'We win or die who wear the Rose of Lancaster' and this was adopted later in 1917 as the motto of the 55th West Lancashire Division. It can be seen on their monument in the Anglican cathedral in Liverpool.

Lt Wall was born in West Kirby. His body was buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery in Flanders, and he is commemorated on a memorial plaque inside St Bridget's Church, West Kirby, and also on the Hoylake & West Kirby war memorial at the top of Grange Hill.

In his will, Lt Wall requested that, if he did not survive the war, his faithful horse Blackie should be buried with his medals or decorations. This was done, and Blackie's grave slab is inscribed with his military affiliations, like a soldier's.

In 2017 the grave received Grade II listing because of its historic interest, reflecting the close bonds between soldiers and their horses on the Western Front. It is a very rare memorial to an individual animal that served in, and survived, the major battles of the First World War. The gravestone is listed in the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) as entry 1436263.

Thanks to Christine Longworth for the reference to the National Purple Poppy Day ceremony.

*Text by Sue Stallibrass, Photo by Roy Forshaw.*

## 'New' old maps of Liverpool

A few years ago whilst undertaking research into Fort Crosby for the Sefton Coast Landscape Partnership I came across several references to maps and plans of other batteries in the Liverpool area held by the National Archives at Kew. At the time I wasn't able to access them, there was too much to look at for Fort Crosby, but I made a mental note to go back for a look as I'd got quite interested in Liverpool's defences. A lot has been written on the subject, including Alison Burns' excellent booklet on Fort Crosby:

[https://www.academia.edu/17314554/Forgotten\\_Fort\\_Crosby\\_Dune\\_Heritage\\_Revealed](https://www.academia.edu/17314554/Forgotten_Fort_Crosby_Dune_Heritage_Revealed)

and Ken Pye's work on the wider military history of Liverpool:

[https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Liverpool\\_s\\_Military\\_Heritage.html?id=mB-zuwEACAAJ&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Liverpool_s_Military_Heritage.html?id=mB-zuwEACAAJ&redir_esc=y)

but I wondered whether there was more to say.



*A Survey of the Town of Liverpool and River Mersey from thence to the Sea dated 1759*

In February I managed to find the time for a return visit to Kew and it was well worth it. I spent the entire day in the search room photographing maps ranging in date from 1759 to the early 19th century. I've not had time to tot up how many maps I looked at but it's well into double figures. There are too many to describe in a newsletter article but a sample are illustrated below.

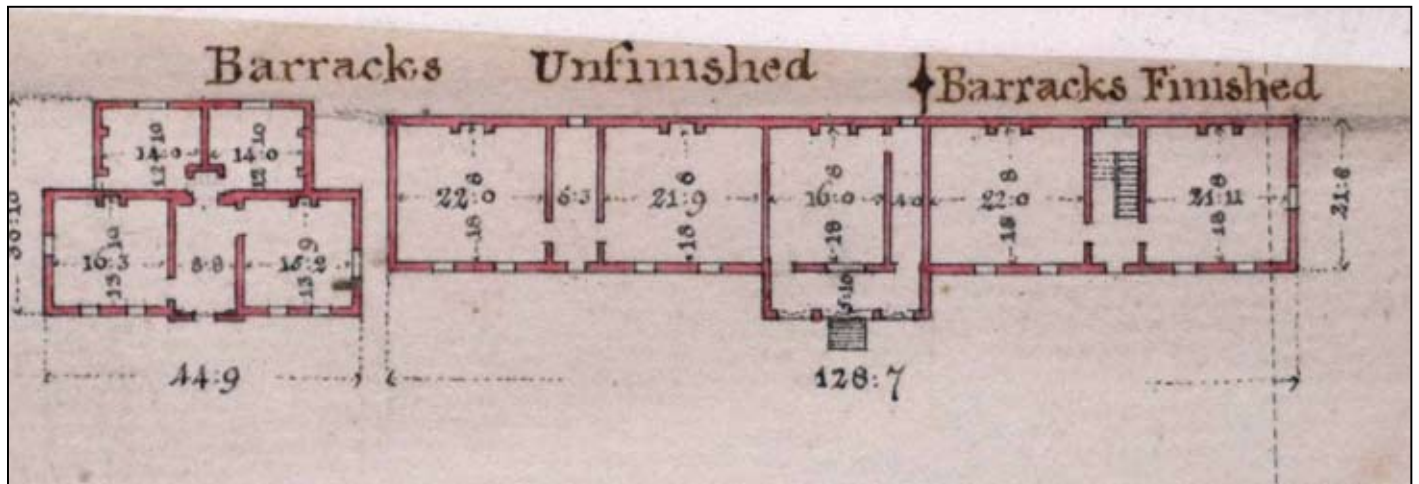
The earliest was 'A Survey of the Town of Liverpool and River Mersey from thence to the Sea' dated 1759 which is the third oldest map of the area I know of, though the 1644 De Gomme survey of Liverpool's defences doesn't give much detail and the 1725 Chadwick plan only covers central Liverpool. This survey includes the wider area around Liverpool in detail not seen until much later. There are actually several different copies of this map in the file, they were used as a base to show different proposals for new artillery batteries, though some are relatively rough tracings. It's not clear who the surveyor was, at least one was signed on the back by a Captain Heath, though it's not clear whether he was the surveyor or the designer of the proposed fortifications or both. I've attempted to identify him, as yet without success.

There's far too much of interest on the survey to go into a detailed description here, but highlights include the water mill at Bootle, the Merchant's Magazine on the Wirral coast, the Woodside and Seacombe Ferries and details of central Liverpool.

The second survey is titled 'Plan No. 1 Shewing the Present State of the New Battery Built near the North End of the Town of Liverpool as in April 1782' by James Bramham and is dated May 2nd 1782. This is the fort which was situated at the north end of Princes Dock but was demolished 1810-20 when John Foster constructed the dock. Construction of the fort had probably begun in c. 1776, probably



*Detail from the 1782 Plan showing the Barracks, Magazine and Baths*



*Interior detail of the Barracks*

as a response to the American War of Independence, but the barracks and other elements are shown as unfinished on Bramham's plan so work clearly continued into 1782. The plan gives several other details not seen on other drawings of the fort (e.g. on Horwood's 1803 plan of Liverpool). The structure in the centre is a magazine, the drain crossing the site is possibly that exposed by Salford Archaeology's recent excavation. It is listed as having 11 32 pound, 1 24 pound and 18 16 pound guns, though it isn't made clear whether this was the intended complement or the actual complement at the time of the survey. The flap covering the fort lifts to reveal an internal plan of the barracks.

The plan also shows interesting details of the surrounding area including the Baths, slipways around the fort and brickyards on the northern fringes of Liverpool. The same file includes sections across the fort and elevation drawings of the buildings.

The files also include plans by John Foster of the proposals for Princes Dock which I'll write about in the next newsletter.

*Mark Adams*





# Merseyside Archaeological Society Newsletter 3/2019

Registered Charity No 510831

## A note from the Chair

As a qualified mechanical engineer I naturally have an interest in Industrial Archaeology (I A). In common with several other members of MAS I am also a member of the Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society (MIHS). Founded over 50 years ago, originally as ‘North Western Society for Industrial Archaeology and History’, and renamed MIHS in the 1990s, it is in a way our ‘big brother’. Other cities such as Bristol and Manchester also have Industrial Archaeology societies although they have retained the I A in their title.

Industrial Archaeology is concerned principally though not exclusively with the archaeology of industry of the post-medieval and modern periods, particularly those industries which developed during the period of rapidly increasing industrialisation of the 18th and 19th centuries. In Merseyside the opportunity to excavate former industrial sites usually arises as part of a planning requirement for a commercial development, as for example Mark Adam’s recent watching brief at the Atlas Foundry site in St Helens. Commercial ‘digs’ rarely offer the opportunity to visit a site and are often subject to strict health and safety restrictions - there may even be a risk of hazardous chemicals or metals on a former industrial site.

Archaeology embraces the study of past human activity through the discovery, recording and analysis of material remains which include buried sites as well as standing earthworks and buildings. The Association for Industrial Archaeology publishes a quarterly newsletter, usually 24-28 A4 pages. It is significant that in recent issues there has been little or no mention of sub-surface excavation - almost all the articles are about standing buildings and often about their threatened demise. So IA has also become concerned with the identification, recording and conservation of existing structures and machinery or what might fall under the heading of ‘Industrial Heritage’.

In Liverpool there are now numerous examples of the adaptive reuse of former industrial buildings - not least the conversion of warehouses into museums, art galleries, shops, bars and restaurants, hotels and in many cases living accommodation. It seems incredible that fifty years ago the Albert Dock was under serious threat of demolition! There is now great interest in workers’ housing from the industrial period, - including occupied buildings (Hartley’s Village, Vulcan Village, Port Sunlight and Price’s Village) and uninhabitable (Galkoff’s Court Housing and hopefully temporarily Eldon Grove).

There is no doubt that Industrial Archaeology is of great significance in Merseyside and the surrounding area, and it forms an important part of our cultural heritage. Next August, the Association for Industrial Archaeology will be holding its Annual Conference at Hope University and MIHS will be hosting the week-long event. A few members of MAS are involved with this either as lecturers, field trip leaders or organisers. It is hoped that some of the lectures will be open to MIHS and MAS members.

*Maurice Handley*

## 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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## Field Trips 2019

**Saturday 21st September. Venue: The Calderstones and The Mansion House, Calderstones Park**

Details: Meet at The Reader Cafe (part of the Mansion House) at 11 a.m. We will be hearing about the relocation of the Calderstones to their new setting and the exciting work that has been undertaken by The Reader Organisation in restoring The Mansion House.

**Contact: Mark Adams 07469 144227/07773938120 mhadams@rsk.co.uk if you require further information.**

## MAS Lectures at The Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool

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 19th September 2019. Bonnie Effros. 'Violence, Ideology, and Classical Archaeology during the Early Decades of French Colonization in Algeria'.**

In 1830, in a last-ditch effort to save his reign, the Bourbon king, Charles X, authorised a French attack on the city of Algiers with the excuse of putting an end to piracy and white slavery on the Barbary Coast. In the course of the invasion and subsequent "pacification" of the region, the French army in North Africa (known as the armée d'Afrique) confiscated homes, land, and mosques from the indigenous population and massacred tribes that resisted French domination. Along with the normalisation of violence against civilian inhabitants, classical monuments fared badly, being reused as fortifications or destroyed as material for building French barracks, roads, and hospitals. This talk will examine the contributions of nineteenth-century officers, who, raised on classical accounts of warfare, developed interest in the Roman remains they encountered throughout Algeria. Linking archaeological studies of the Roman past to French narratives of the Algerian occupation, I will examine the role of Roman archaeology in fostering an identity for military and civilian settlers. I will show how classical studies were deeply entangled with politics in metropolitan and colonial France, and how French archaeological studies were shaped by the colonial experience of war.

**Thursday 17th October 2019. Sam Rowe. 'A Kiln dump at Shakespeare North Playhouse, Prescott'.**

In late 2017 Salford Archaeology excavated the site of a car park in Prescott town centre prior to the construction of a new theatre. The quantity of pottery recovered from the site was overwhelming, with 744kg of artefacts retrieved. This includes over 6,000 sherds of pottery, as well as kiln waste and kiln furniture. The majority of the pottery is 17th-18th century in date and includes dark-glazed coarsewares, mottled wares, sugar moulds, and beautiful examples of local slipwares. This talk will review the large assemblage, the circumstances of the finds, and their regional significance.

**Thursday 21st November 2019. Lancaster & District Heritage Group. 'The Roman Archaeology of Quay Meadow, Lancaster'.**

This talk will discuss recent community archaeology excavations on the banks of the River Lune at Lancaster which have found interesting evidence for Roman settlement beyond the fort.

**Thursday 19th December 2019. Members' evening.**

**Thursday 23rd January 2020. Zosia Archibald. 'Tectonic plates – geological, cultural, and historical: recent archaeology in the northern Aegean and the Theraic Gulf'.**

Awaiting abstract.

**Other 2020 dates:**

Thursday 20th February and Thursday 19th March - speakers and topics to be confirmed. Thursday 22nd April AGM. Further details will be in the January Newsletter.

## A Volunteering Opportunity....Graveyard Recording at All Saints, Childwall

Graveyard Recording at All Saints Childwall continues in 2019. 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).

## Field Trip Reports – Summer 2019

On a beautiful sunny afternoon in mid-May, a 15 strong group were led by Mark Adams around the Civil War sites in Liverpool. Using maps and plans from the 17th and 18th centuries, Mark indicated the position of the pool of Liverpool, the defences and location of the castle and various excavated sites.

In June we visited the site of the Roman town of Coccium (i.e. Wigan) again led by Mark. We were surprised to find a reconstruction of a Roman hypocaust found in a dig in the town centre. A Roman fort had occupied the highest part of the town commanding views over the River Douglas and on the road from Manchester to Ribchester. We explored the narrow medieval alleys of the town centre before visiting the Georgian quarter to the north. There were sites of Civil War battles and the strange story of Mab's Cross. We also saw the town's manor house and Victorian mills before reaching the Leeds and Liverpool Canal to see the underwhelming Wigan Pier. As often with towns like Wigan, there is more history and archaeology than might be apparent at first glance.



*Hulks of Mersey Flats and the new Mersey Crossing from Spike Island*

*Maurice Handley*

### Hilbre Island 24th August 2019

On a beautiful day in late August, Roy Forshaw led a combined group from Merseyside Archaeological Society and Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society to the Hilbre islands. Starting from the marina at West Kirby, the islands of Little Eye, Middle Eye and Hilbre were approached on foot across the sands at low tide. Eye is the Norse word for island. Unfortunately a fire on Hilbre, the largest of the islands, meant that we were prevented from exploring further than the northern tip of Middle Eye.

Middle Eye has evidence for Bronze Age cultivation and a burnt mound - a collection of cobbles which were heated in a fire and then dropped in to a container of water to boil food or treat skins. A cremation urn had also been discovered in the 1950s but has subsequently been lost. Roy also explained what archaeology had been found in an excavation behind the bird observatory.

Sitting on the grass after lunch, we were treated to a description of the buildings and archaeology on Hilbre. Roman pottery has been found there and also the remains of a Saxon or Viking building. In 1080 a cell and church were established on the island and were linked to Chester Cathedral.



*Approaching Little Eye*

For our July trip we joined Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society for a walk over the Mersey. Led by Maurice Handley and Malcolm Verity we started from the Catalyst Museum at West Bank and walked across the traffic free Silver Jubilee Bridge viewing the site of the Transporter Bridge and noting the shields and coat of arms on the 19th century railway bridge. Arriving in Runcorn, we followed the Bridgewater Canal to its terminus at Waterloo Bridge and then visited the site of the lock flight that took the canal down to the Mersey. We were shown round by Graham Wallace, Chairman of the Runcorn Locks Restoration Society. There is currently a £12-15 million project to restore the ten-lock flight, replacing it with a boat lift and inclined plane between two extant lock chambers. After lunch in Runcorn, we returned across the bridge to complete our visit with a short walk around Spike Island. An island formed between the Sankey Canal and the Mersey, it was the site of chemical works and the railway from St Helens terminating at the world's first purpose built railway dock. Pleasant late afternoon sunshine made a fitting end to the day.



*Hilbre from Middle Eye*



*The layer in which Mesolithic artefacts have been found*

The island is rich in industrial archaeology. A salt works was set up in 1692 where rock salt from Cheshire was boiled using coal from Flintshire. We could easily pick out the Buoymaster's House as it is the largest structure and is the only listed building on the islands (Grade II). Built about 1836, it was used for maintaining the buoys in the approaches to Liverpool. In the 19th century, stone sleeper blocks and cast iron rails, discarded by the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, were reused to provide a tramway ramp to the island. We also saw the scant remains of a navigation mark used by mariners to find the way in to the mouth of the River Dee. The island has been an important military facility in the past. It was used as a staging post for troops going to Ireland and in WW2 attempts were made to use the island as a decoy for German bombers. Due to the fire, the early telegraph that linked with similar signalling devices between Anglesey and Liverpool to indicate the arrival of ships from America, and the former lifeboat station would have to be visited on another day.

Everyone enjoyed the trip which was blessed with clear skies and high temperatures. A strong breeze kept us comfortable though. So many thanks to Roy for arranging and acting as guide on this trip.

*Maurice Handley & Chris Wood*

### ***Courses at Liverpool University***

Liverpool University is running a series of daytime and evening courses related to archaeology in 2019/20. Course details and booking instructions can be found here:

[https://payments.liv.ac.uk/conferences-and-events/continuing-education?mc\\_cid=a81ac2dc12&mc\\_eid=%5bUNIQID%5d](https://payments.liv.ac.uk/conferences-and-events/continuing-education?mc_cid=a81ac2dc12&mc_eid=%5bUNIQID%5d)

### ***Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) Conference***

The IHBC's North West Branch has launched its Day Conference for 2019, on 'Improving Accessibility – Overcoming the Barriers to Heritage', which will include local tours of sites, and takes place on 10th October in the Liverpool Medical Institution.

Heritage plays a key part in how we define our identity and, at a time of great debate over ideas of local and national identity, making heritage assets more accessible to a broader range of people is of great importance. Improving access to heritage can help promote a stronger sense of belonging and understanding of a place as well as stimulating wider public benefits such as improved health, wellbeing and job creation. Informed management of heritage assets can help to sustain and enhance those assets so that they become better used and valued both now and in the future. The conference will explore these interrelated themes, focussing on how to successfully overcome the accessibility barriers that can exclude groups from enjoying and experiencing historic buildings or sites or participating in heritage activities. These barriers may be both intellectual as well as physical, and the conference will provide an opportunity to learn of new and innovative approaches to formal and informal learning about, and engaging with, heritage.

Further details and booking information can be found here:

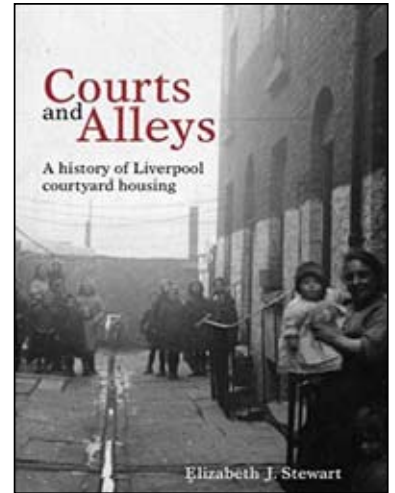
<https://ihbconline.co.uk/newsarchive/?p=23291>

### ***Courts and Alleys: A history of Liverpool courtyard housing by Liz Stewart***

Liverpool was a burgeoning trading centre and rapidly growing town in the early 18th century, developing into a thriving mercantile metropolis by the 19th century. The demand for new housing was high, and court housing largely filled that need. Court housing was a form of high-density back-to-back housing around courtyards. It provided homes to nearly half of Liverpool's working-class people by the mid 19th century. Contemporary descriptions highlight the cramped, dark and often damp conditions in these houses. This book uses a range of historical and archaeological evidence about courts to consider their development, life within them, and the measures eventually taken to rid Liverpool of them. It also makes international parallels to courts as well as some of the people involved in investigating this type of housing, providing historical context to this fascinating aspect of Liverpool's past.

The book is available on Amazon:

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/s?k=courtyard+housing+liverpool&ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss](https://www.amazon.co.uk/s?k=courtyard+housing+liverpool&ref=nb_sb_noss)



### ***Lancashire & Cheshire Antiquarian Society Day school - Edge of Empire - Recent work on Roman history in the North West***

A day school to be held at Wigan and Leigh College, Parson's Walk, Wigan on Saturday 5th October 2019. Non-members are welcome to enrol for this. Further details can be found at:

<http://www.landcas.org.uk/WiganProgramme.pdf>

### ***Lelia Shipwreck granted heritage protection***

One of the North West's most historically-significant shipwrecks the Lelia has been granted heritage protection by the DCMS on Historic England advice. The 19th century paddle steamer was on its maiden voyage to run guns and supplies for the Confederate Forces of the American Civil War when it foundered in Liverpool Bay in stormy weather on 14 January 1865, with the loss of 47 lives. In 2017, Historic England commissioned an assessment of the Lelia, as part of a larger project to carry out a national overview of vessels with early iron and composite hulls.

*Sue Stallibrass*

### ***Young Archaeologists Club Mersey & Dee Branch***

The Young Archaeologist Club (YAC) is for 8-16 year olds who love the past and want to get hands-on with archaeology. The Mersey and Dee branch of YAC is hosted at the Museum of Liverpool and enjoys around 9 sessions a year, a summer school and when possible field work. This year our Summer School ran across two days and had a great turnout. On August 12th Travellers Through Time <http://www.travellersthroughtime.co.uk/> came and led a 'Sheep to Shirt' day which included spinning, weaving and designing clothes and textiles from throughout world history, from the middle East to Meso-America. The children had great fun learning and finished the day, experimenting with different dyes, recording their results and designing their own t-shirts!



On Tuesday the Young Archaeologists headed to Chester where we had a full day of events lined up. We began exploring Chester Cathedral where the children spotted graffiti, reused stone work and learned about the history of the priory and cathedral. We then headed to the falconry to watch a demonstration and discussed how we can spot evidence for falconry in the archaeological record. Luckily the sun came out for lunch and the children had some downtime before heading to Dewa Roman Experience where they learned about the life of a Roman soldier.

We had 22 children attend our YAC summer school and they all behaved brilliantly. It is great to know that we have so many enthusiastic young archaeologists getting excited about the past! If you would like to know more about the Mersey and Dee Young Archaeologists Club visit our website to find out more <https://www.yac-uk.org/clubs/mersey-and-dee>

*Vanessa Oakden*

### More 'new' old maps of Liverpool

In the last newsletter I discussed a recently discovered set of historic plans of the Liverpool area, held by the National Archives at Kew, which cover the period from 1759 to the early 19th century. The previous article briefly described the earliest, 'A Survey of the Town of Liverpool and River Mersey from thence to the Sea' dated 1759 and a detailed survey dated 1782 of a fort which was located where the northern end of Princes Dock was constructed at the beginning of the 19th century.



*Horwood Plan 1803*

The National Archives also hold copies of drawings by John Foster Senior of his proposals for a new dock, later named as Princes Dock, and it's those which will be described here. They're broadly contemporary with the Horwood map of 1803 and the 1785 Eyes map of Liverpool, but show the area in more detail.

By the late 18th century the site now occupied by Princes Dock lay on the northern fringes of Liverpool. In addition to the fort described in the last article, baths were constructed '...a little northward of the North Dock...', and consisting of separate baths and rooms for the sexes, each supplied with water and steps outside for '...swimmers who chose to launch into the open-water'

(Aiken 1795, 357). These are the baths shown on the 1759 map covered in the last article, though they do not appear on the Chadwick map of 1725 which shows that they were constructed in the period 1725-59. Aiken also discusses the custom of the '...lower class of people.....for many miles up the country...' of visiting Liverpool for '...the purpose of washing away all the collected stains and impurities of the year.....covering the beach with their promiscuous numbers'. The late 18th century shoreline in the area around the site is also described in Hughes (1863); 'Beyond the baths there were no houses, all was open shore consisting of boulder stones, sand and pools...there was hot as well as cold water bathing in the baths, and a palisade ran out into the river, within which, at high water persons could swim'. Another description of the area is provided by Troughton (1810, 361) who states that '...a person may either descend immediately into the river, by a flight of stone steps, or into private partitioned baths, in the same manner'. Troughton also mentions the bathing machines.

A guide to the town 'The Stranger in Liverpool', published in 1812 (<https://archive.org/details/strangerinliver00kaygoog>) provides the following account of the area north of Georges Dock '...pursuing a straight direction, we arrive at the south end of a gravelled terrace 280 yards in length, running along the side of the river; this is called the Parade, and is reserved solely for the purpose of a public walk. This is terminated by the Pier-head, on which is erected a battery of six guns...'. References to bathing machines on this part of the shore in all the contemporary accounts suggest that the sea wall at this point need not have been a substantial barrier, or that suitable access points such as ramps were provided. Contemporary illustrations of this section of the waterfront provide little evidence; those in Troughton (1810) imply a mix of stone and timber but are of uncertain reliability. There is some excavated evidence from recent fieldwork which suggest the use of stone (e.g. Gregory et al 2014, 78).

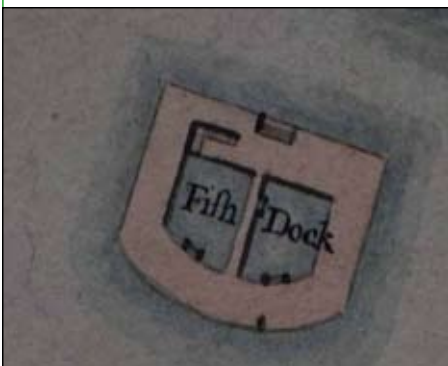
Princes Dock was named after the Prince Regent and constructed between 1810 and 1821. Numerous delays were experienced during its construction, largely due to problems raising money and manpower during the Napoleonic Wars. Additional problems were created by the acquisition of the fort, which occupied part of the site, and by mismanagement and corruption (McCarron & Jarvis 1992, 71-73; Jarvis 1991, 8-22; Jarvis 1991a). Two Acts of Parliament were required to allow construction to progress and even after the dock's official opening on the 19th July 1821 substantial work remained to be done. Although the dock and entrance were completed, few of the buildings were finished, most had yet to be started and the passage to Georges Dock was incomplete, despite being shown on contemporary plans (Jarvis 1991, 29). It was constructed by the then Dock Surveyor, John Foster Senior, with some preliminary work by William Jessop and John Rennie, and was the largest dock on the Mersey until superseded by Jesse Hartley's docks to the north 20 years later. Hartley



*John Foster 1793 Existing Plan*



*John Foster 1793 Proposed Plan*



*Fish Dock*

or Horwood maps. Its precise function is unclear, though it was presumably used to store catches brought in by fishing vessels as it is too large for a fish trap. Some details of the structure are discernible. There are two tanks, the northern one appears to be accessed by steps and two structures on the west side are possibly sluices. The fish were probably sold at the town's Fish Market.

'A Plan of the North West Part of Town of Liverpool with the intended Alterations and Improvements, January 1793' shows extensive reclamation of land in the area north of the proposed dock. This was laid out with streets and a new battery is shown at the northern end. The battery was never constructed, presumably a victim of cost-cutting. Other details include proposals for warehouses along the eastern quay, though these were never constructed by Foster, and there is no evidence for the dock boundary wall. Elsewhere on the map the areas shaded pink are land 'now laid out for building upon', whilst dotted lines mark the streets and fort to be removed by construction of the dock.

The next set of proposals is dated 1803, though the drawing, untitled but also by Foster Senior, is too large to reproduce in full here. This shows a different scheme for land reclamation north of Princes Dock, including two small basins at the southern end. The proposals for Princes Dock had been reduced in extent, the fort was to be left in place and the graving docks and half-tide basin are not shown.

In the same file is a copy of Charles Eyes map of 1785. This has been annotated with revised proposals for Princes Dock, a note on the back dates them to 9 June 1808. This drawing shows the dock back to its original extent, though this time with the addition of a half-tide basin and two graving docks to its north.

These maps provide a useful addition to Liverpool's cartographic history, bringing new sites (e.g. the Fish Dock) to light and refining the locations of others. In addition, the copies of Foster's maps provide an insight into the design processes at work during the construction of Princes Dock which was clearly originally envisaged as being part of a much larger whole with the land reclamation to its north,

was appointed as Foster's replacement following the scandals surrounding its construction; accounting procedures were tightened up and an attempt made at making the Dock Committee more accountable (Jarvis 1991a). The earliest map to show the finished dock is Sherwood's map of Liverpool of 1821 which shows the dock empty of buildings prior to the construction of Hartley's transit sheds in 1826/7.

The first drawing described here is 'A Plan of the North West Part of the Town of Liverpool in its Present State, January 1793', is signed by John Foster and shows the fort with a very similar layout to that depicted in the 1782 plan described in the last issue. Also shown is a small square structure to the north of the fort which is labelled as a 'Fish Dock'. This seems to be an existing, not an intended, structure but was previously unknown. A search of the main documentary sources for the period, including town guides, has revealed no other details and it is not shown by the Eyes



*John Foster 1803 Proposed Plan*



*John Foster 1808 Proposed Plan*

though those works were not undertaken. Several changes were made to the proposals for its layout and extent, warehouses came and went, graving docks were added and removed, and the dock changed in size at least once. The reasons behind these will have been complex, but in large part will have been linked to changing finances for the scheme.

Aiken J. 1795 Forty Miles Around Manchester. Archive CD Books.

Gregory R., Raynor C., Adams M., Philpott R., Howard-Davies C., Johnson N., Hughes V. & Higgins D., 2014 Archaeology at the Waterfront vol 1: Liverpool Docks Lancaster Imprints; Oxford Archaeology: Oxford.

Hughes J. F. 1863 Recollections of Old Liverpool by a Nonagenarian. Archive CD Books.

Jarvis A. 1991 Prince's Dock: A Magnificent Monument of Mural Art. Merseyside Portfolios, Birkenhead.

Jarvis A. 1991a Liverpool Central Docks: An Illustrated History. NMGM, Liverpool.

McCarron K. & Jarvis A. 1992 Give a Dock a Good Name? Merseyside Portfolios, Birkenhead.

Troughton T. 1810 The History of Liverpool, From the Earliest Authenticated Period Down to the Present Time, William Robinson, Liverpool.