

# THE FIELDWORKER

## LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS NEWSLETTER

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### 1. THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be **Thursday November 17<sup>th</sup>** at 7.30pm at Jewry Wall Museum, St Nicholas Circle, Leicester, LE1 4LB. The speaker will be Grahame Appleby on 'Cambridgeshire - Twenty years of extraordinary archaeology'. Between 1996 and 2016 the Cambridge Archaeological Unit excavated several fen-edge sites in Cambridgeshire from quarry sites to the Must Farm Bronze Age site near Peterborough. The preservation and results of these excavations are remarkable for the scale, type and preservation of the archaeology dating from Bronze Age through to Late Roman. Grahame worked for the Cambridge Unit for over 10 years and was involved in many of these sites. Since January he has been Leicester City Archaeologist and the meeting will be a chance to introduce him to the group.

### 2. DIARY DATES FOR 2016-7 (at Jewry Wall Museum at 7.30pm unless otherwise advised)

January 19<sup>th</sup>: Richard Clark on 'Planning for Leicestershire's Past'

March 16<sup>th</sup>: Dr. Jeremy Taylor on 'Middle and Late Iron Age Leicestershire'

May 18<sup>th</sup>: Prof Julian D Richards on 'The Viking camp at Torksey'

June 15<sup>th</sup>: Annual General Meeting, speaker TBA (Trip to tie in poss Sat 17<sup>th</sup> June)

### 3. EXCAVATION NEWS

**University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS)** have continued their large scale excavations at **Enderby**, although these are now almost completed. Although there is much work to do on the finds from over 2000 contexts it would appear that much of the site is Bronze Age in date. In the northern area are a series of large Bronze Age and later ditches crossing the site, a D-shaped enclosure and a large roundhouse, plus an array of pits and postholes. This is in addition to the three Bronze Age roundhouses excavated earlier in the summer. The large house is 14m in diameter and has produced Bronze Age pottery and a loom weight from the ring 'gully'. Cutting through this is the large D-shaped enclosure which measures some 50m across, which may be late Iron Age in date. North of this was a small rectangular building, a couple of four-posters, and several post-alignments, while to the west was a series of quarry pits, possibly for pottery production.

Across Leicester Lane from this site evaluation has produced an Iron Age and Roman site and some possible traces of the Fosse Way.

At **Leicester Castle** monitoring work inside the Castle Hall as court furniture was removed from the northern courtroom has identified blocked stone arches in the north wall and possible earth floors still surviving in the east aisle.

At **Great Central Street, Leicester**, work has started on a large excavation. A Roman street with adjacent stone buildings has been found with good survival of floor surfaces (some further tessellated floor patches). Some evidence of timber structures are also hinted at. There is little medieval activity; some pits but generally fairly undisturbed Roman levels. A small area of medieval street frontage does survive on the Highcross Street side.

**Albion Archaeology** are excavating an Iron Age site on the west side of Market Harborough with enclosures and round houses. It lies between previous excavations at Airfield Farm and Lubenham Hill which together show a large area of Iron Age landscape. It is hoped to arrange a site visit here.

**CFA Archaeology** have excavated a medieval site at **Claybrooke Magna** which consisted of pits and post holes and a sunken trackway.

**Oxford Archaeology** have excavated an Iron Age enclosure at Dunton Bassett. There were few internal features.

**Trent and Peak Archaeology (York Archaeological Trust)** have followed up a Roman pottery scatter at **Ibstock**, originally found by Witan Group, and found a series of rectilinear enclosures. There was evidence of lime burning.

**Wessex Archaeology** working in advance of the East Midlands Gateway, a large rail freight terminus north of **East Midlands Airport**, found an Iron Age settlement site with burnt mounds close by, also a Roman farmstead site. On the associated **Kegworth** bypass they found an Iron Age/ Early Roman farmstead site. This is a very large development and the work here will reveal a whole block of landscape.

#### 4. **FIELDWALKING**

The annual in-field training has taken place at **Slawston**, where 4 more fields were walked producing a small new Roman site (around 50 sherds of pottery). More work was done on the site of **Othorpe**, producing large amounts of Stamford Ware.

The **Rutland Local History and Record Society's archaeological team** have been out field walking around **Ridlington**. Two small fields have been completed to date; one near the village has a concentration of iron slag pointing to smelting nearby. A large third field west of the enigmatic scheduled earthwork thought to be an Iron Age hill fort and/or a motte and bailey, has now been started.

**Oadby & Wigston Fieldworkers** are currently on a programme aimed at systematic walking of the ploughed fields of **Stoughton, Thurnby and Houghton**. They have almost completed a block just north of Stoughton that has yielded a scatter of mostly medieval pottery, a hint of Roman - and a neolithic arrowhead.

**The Lutterworth Group** have returned to Hilltop Farm in South Kilworth and have walked an extensive field north of the farm. Substantial quantities of post medieval as well as high medieval pottery were found and one piece of Roman greyware. There were a number of flint flakes and one tool. They also organised a bone washing and identifying session at Lutterworth College with Teresa Hawtin of Leicestershire County Council. This was only a morning event but could easily have been a whole day.

**Hoby & District Local History Society** walked a field at **Hoby** with Richard Knox and have found a previously unknown Roman site. It is hoped that members of the society will form the nucleus of a new **Wreake Valley Fieldwork Group**. Anyone interested in joining should contact Peter Liddle.

**Charnwood Roots** have permission to walk fields at **Thurcaston**. It is hoped that this will happen later in the month once the crop is established. Anyone who missed the September training session is welcome to attend **indoor training** on the mornings of **November 22<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>** at **Thurcaston Church** to be followed by **infield sessions** in the afternoons with further fieldwalking on December 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>. The indoor sessions will go ahead whatever the weather throws at us, but the infield sessions are weather dependent. Booking is essential. Please email [charnwoodroots@le.ac.uk](mailto:charnwoodroots@le.ac.uk).

#### 5. **MAGNA PARK EXTENSION EXCAVATIONS**

Members of the group were invited by CgMS consulting and Albion Archaeology on the site of the Magna Park excavations. This was extremely useful experience working alongside professionals who explained their recording systems.

#### 6. **CASTLE HILL BEAUMONT LEYS, LEICESTER**

The Castle Hill Community Excavation was a resounding success. ULAS supervised some 40 volunteers during the 2 weeks of excavation. The site, just north of Beaumont Leys in the City Council's Castle Hill Country Park, comprises a large rectangular earth work (bank and outer ditch) containing numerous other humps and bumps. These have never been excavated before but are suspected to be the remains of a Knights Hospitallers manorial centre dating from the mid-13th to late 15th century. The three trenches produced well preserved medieval evidence, particularly in the third trench which produced a layer of broken roof slates mixed with 13th/14th century pottery, broken ridge tiles (including pieces of loop-handled decoration) and iron slag. The rubble overlies large areas of stone and earth surfaces. Iron slag concentrated in particular areas and there was also have evidence of

hammerscale, suggesting smelting and smithing were both occurring on site. On the last day the stone footings for a large rectangular structure were found. Another season is planned.

7. **COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY WORKSHOP**

On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December from 1 – 4pm at The Newstead Centre, Tilford Rd, Newstead Village, NG15 0BS there will be a workshop organised by the Nottinghamshire Archaeology Panel and the HLF. This event is the first in a series of workshops and is particularly aimed at members of community groups. Places are free, but please register through EventBrite to assist them with refreshments, etc. :<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/nottinghamshire-archaeology-panel-tickets-29112075000>. Although principally aimed at Nottinghamshire, this workshop will have some important information about Heritage Lottery Funding. All are welcome.

8. **NEWS FROM LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Planning team, run by Richard Clark, has moved to a new space in Room 200 of County Hall. Enquiries to the Historic Environment Record are still welcomed but the new space is smaller than their previous premises and the parish files have now been moved off site. If you need to see these please let Helen Wells ([helen.wells@leics.gov.uk](mailto:helen.wells@leics.gov.uk)) know when you make your appointment and they can be called up with 24 hour notice.

Work has started on the Extensive Urban Survey of market towns in the County, part of a national programme of surveys of the archaeology, topography and historic buildings of England's historic towns and cities. This is funded by Historic England and is being undertaken by Trent and Peak Archaeology and is starting with North-West Leicestershire.

9. **ANGLO-SAXON LEICESTERSHIRE COURSE AT JEWRY WALL MUSEUM**

Peter Liddle will be running his Anglo-Saxon Leicestershire course at Jewry Wall Museum starting on Saturday February 25<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 1pm. Contact Peter (details below) for further information.

10. **GROUP NEWS - SUBSCRIPTIONS**

2016-7 subscriptions became due at the AGM in June. If you have not paid (c80 of you!) you will have received a 2<sup>nd</sup> reminder email and renewal form in October plus one can also be downloaded from the website. Postal members please check the front of your envelope for your status. Queries to Kathy Elkin on [info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk](mailto:info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk) You can also pay at the meeting. Final reminders in late December following which you will be removed from the mailing list.

11. **TREASURER NEEDED**

Our Treasurer, John Maloney, has to reduce his commitments and we urgently need a volunteer to take on the role. John will help with the hand over and training for the new incumbent. You don't have to be an active fieldworker. Please contact the Chairman, Paul Bowman on [p\\_bowman@ntlworld.com](mailto:p_bowman@ntlworld.com) if you are interested.

12. **MEDIEVAL LEICESTERSHIRE BOOK**

Our most recent publication, Medieval Leicestershire, has now broken even and the Committee has decided to cut the price to £10. This would make a super Christmas present! Contact Kathy on [info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk](mailto:info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk) or Peter on [peter.liddle51@gmail.com](mailto:peter.liddle51@gmail.com)

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