

THE FIELDWORKER

LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS NEWSLETTER

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1. **THE NEXT MEETING: PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF SPEAKER FROM ORIGINAL LISTING**

The next meeting will be on **Thursday May 18th** when Dr. Jeremy Taylor will speak on **'Middle and Late Iron Age Leicestershire'**. His research is a by-product of the Burrough Hill Project, one aim from the outset was to better place hillforts within the wider landscape of the region in the 1st millennium BC. Consequently as post-excavation work on the project continues we have been drawing together information from a wide range of other excavated sites across the East Midlands in order to better understand the historical context in which the hillfort developed and its relationship to wider society in the Iron Age. This talk will summarise some of the results of this work to date and offer some thoughts on the changing nature of the middle-late Iron Age landscape of the region. Jeremy Taylor is a lecturer at Leicester University and an authority on the Iron Age and Roman periods as well as geophysics.

2. **DIARY DATES FOR 2017-8** at Jewry Wall Museum at 7.30pm unless otherwise advised)

June 15th: Andy Gaunt (Mercian Archaeological Services): King John's Palace and Sherwood Forest (see also Trip below)

September 21st: Prof David Mattingly: Dust, donkeys and drones: new fieldwork in the Moroccan Sahara.

November 16th: Prof Mike Parker Pearson: The Beaker Burial Project

January 18th: Mathew Morris: Recent excavations in Roman Leicester

March 15th; John Thomas: The Iron Age cauldrons from Glenfield Park

3. **GROUP TRIP TO SHERWOOD FOREST**

This year's trip is to Sherwood Forest. Following on from Andy Gaunt's talk on June 15th the trip, on Saturday June 17th, will be to look at the sites and landscape that he is talking about, including a visit to King John's Palace, a royal hunting lodge in the Forest, where excavation and geophysics has revealed much about a previously neglected site, as well as the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre, the Major Oak and Rufford Abbey. A booking form and more information will be sent out when we have the details finalised.

4. **EXCAVATION NEWS**

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) continues to be very busy around the county and beyond. At **Great Bowden** a small evaluation close to the parish church revealed fairly dense later Roman occupation in the form of ditches and pits and likely buried soils.

In **Leicester** four trial holes were excavated in the car park of **Jewry Wall Museum** to investigate the survival of archaeology, which might be affected by the construction of a new classroom below the existing structure. Robber trenches, wall foundations and the remains of pits and layers originally recorded by Kenyon were identified.

The former **Stibbe** factory site on Great Central Street has had an incredibly popular series of open days showing off the very fine mosaics from a Roman town house, which had hypocausts and painted plaster, but the site has revealed much more including very early evidence for timber buildings and post Roman structures built over the Roman streets. The public building thought to be the macellum now seems to have curving walls leading to a rethink on function. Could it be a theatre? A late Roman apsidal building (some 10m by 5m) adjacent to the East-West Roman street probably once had a grey tessellated pavement with red border. The north-south Roman street is well preserved, extending across the site for over 50 metres.

On the **Highcross St/Vaughan Way** site the end of the excavation alongside Highcross Street revealed large areas of medieval pitting had largely destroyed the Roman archaeology.

Usefully though, the pits formed lines, revealing the position of at least six medieval burgage plots. In the corner of Highcross Street and Vaughan Way more substantial medieval remains were recorded, including more of a wall found previously during the evaluation which is thought to be part of St Johns' Hospital. Another nice medieval feature was a stone-lined pit which produced three intact medieval jugs, and in the final week an unprepossessing piece of stone rubble, badly damaged by three piles, turned out to be a bottomless stone-lined cess-pit, possibly a reredorter attached to a range of buildings associated with the hospital. Excavation of the Roman courtyard house unpicked a complicated sequence of floor surfaces in at least four different rooms. One final discovery was a roadside ditch for the Roman street running beneath Highcross Street, the first time this particular section has been pinned down.

At **Lockington** further work around the quarry produced Neolithic and Iron Age features. The Neolithic pits produced Early Neolithic carinated vessels and Peterborough Ware.

At **Mountsorrel Quarry**, evaluation produced no features but a very fine Acheulian handaxe, made of greenish-grey volcanic stone raw material, similar to finds at Brooksby and Rearsby.

At **Newbold Verdon** an extension to Cadeby Quarry produced a Bronze Age ring ditch (barrow?) and a Roman kiln.

At **North Kilworth** Early Bronze Age and Iron Age activity was recorded. An Early Bronze Age pit contained sherds from three Collared Urns, flint, charred hazelnut remains and calcined bone. The corner of an enclosure ditch, post-holes, ditches and gullies were located associated with mid to late Iron Age pottery.

At **Tugby** there was evidence for late 3rd or 4th century activity in the form of ditches, a possible pit and a post-hole. One of the ditches produced a remarkable Roman military object, a third-century baldric terminal plate that would have been attached to the end of the wide strap (baldric) from which a sword scabbard was suspended.

Wessex Archaeology are continuing their work on the huge **East Midlands Gateway** site, mostly in **Lockington-Hemington** parish. An Iron Age landscape is being excavated with a series of farmsteads on the spring line and a second set on the top of the ridge. Enclosures, pit alignments and burnt mounds have all been excavated. Four sites are currently under excavation and include a Roman farmstead close to the airfield with a rectilinear enclosure complex dating principally to the Late 2nd / 3rd centuries and, south of Lockington, an irregular polygonal enclosure of Iron Age date with 2 ring gulleys.

MOLA (formerly Northants Archaeology) are evaluating sites south of **Melton Mowbray** and have found a range of sites including an Iron Age enclosure with round houses.

5. **MEMBERSHIP & GROUPS NEWS**

We are looking for a new Membership Secretary to work with the Treasurer. Kathy Elkin has done this for the last two years but would like to hand over to someone with organisational skills and a computer. You do not need to be otherwise active in the Group and can choose whether or not to join the committee. Membership subs are due in June and Kathy will email you all in June with renewal forms from the info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk email address (or to remind you that you are paying by Standing Order and don't need to pay again!)

Also, as you may be aware, our membership subscription has stayed the same for several years. In order to simplify the work of membership and also to increase our income a little the committee have decided to drop the distinction between 'waged' and 'unwaged' and also the £4 subscription. We will now have only two subscription levels - £6 for an individual and £10 for two people/family at the same address. We hope this is acceptable.

Hallaton Field Work Group have been successful in obtaining a £1,000 grant from CBA East Midlands to carry out Isotope testing on the skeletons found during the excavation at St Morrell's chapel in Hallaton.

Oadby & Wigston Fieldworkers are having a stall and showing finds from field walking at the Spring Garden Party at Brocks Hill Country Park on Sunday 4th June 10.30 - 4pm.

6. **NEW GROUP AT THURCASTON AND ROTHLEY**

There will be a meeting on Tuesday May 30th at 7.30pm to set up a new local Fieldwork Group in **Thurcaston and Rothley**. This will be in the Harrison Room attached to Thurcaston Parish Church. The aim is to set up a group to continue the fieldwalking started under the auspices of the Charnwood Roots Project. Peter Liddle will outline what is known about the archaeology of the 2 parishes and then a discussion leading (we hope) to the inauguration of the new group and plans for fieldwork to start in the autumn.

7. **FESTIVAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY 2017 – July 15th to 30th**

The programme is now almost finalised. The leaflet will be available shortly and details will be found at <http://leicsfieldworkers.co.uk/festival-of-archaeology> (in due course) or www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk/whatson. We are still accepting bookings for stalls at **Bringing Our Past To Life**, The Festival Launch Event, at Jewry Wall Museum on **July 9th**.

8. **BEST TWENTY TREASURE CASES – YOUR VOTE NEEDED**

The Hallaton Hoard and the Bosworth Boar have been shortlisted for the best 20 Treasure cases of the last 20 years, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Treasure Act. They need your vote! To vote go to

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/wellbeing/mood-and-mind/treasure-20-vote-favourite/> If anyone needs reminding of the importance of these two amazing treasures cases go to

<https://finds.org.uk/counties/Leicestershire/treasure-20-leicestershire-objects-make-top-twenty-treasure-vote> The vote closes on 15th May.

9. **CHARNWOOD ROOTS HERITAGE FESTIVAL**

The Charnwood Roots Heritage Festival will be held on **Sunday 21st May 2017**, 10am – 4pm, at Beaumanor Hall, Woodhouse, Leicestershire. Charnwood Roots is exploring the history of Charnwood Forest and the towns and villages that surround it, and will be celebrating this history in a one day event in May. The centrepiece of the festival will be a large exhibition showcasing some of the research compiled by over 600 volunteers. This covers the period from medieval times to the present day. Films of the community test-pitting undertaken in Rothley, Whitwick and Anstey, and of historical research techniques and archaeological surveys, will be shown during the day, along with clips from oral history interviews. There will also be talks by guest speakers on the history and archaeology of Charnwood Forest. Other features of the day include an outdoor area of archaeology displays and living history, and displays by local history and heritage groups. A children's area will include history games, hands-on archaeology, and adventure stories in which they can take part themselves. To join the mailing list for more details nearer the time, see www.charnwoodroots.org. Also note talks have to be pre-booked via EventBrite. The Fieldworkers will be running the bookstall – please drop by to see us and have a browse.

10. **LUTHER AND THE EAST MIDLANDS**

The one-day conference to mark the 500th anniversary of the beginnings of the Reformation is being held at De Montfort University, Leicester on **30th September 2017** from 10am – 5pm with speakers including Richard Buckley, Deirdre O'Sullivan and Chris Brooke. The conference, including lunch and refreshments costs £25 waged or £20 for concessions. Details from Prof Elizabeth Tingle elizabeth.tingle@dmu.ac.uk

11. **BOSWORTH LINKS COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT – volunteers wanted!**

The Market Bosworth Society in partnership with the University of Leicester has been awarded a grant of £29,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for their 'Bosworth Links' community archaeology project. Over the next two years the Society, supported by archaeologists from University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS), will investigate the history of their town, providing hundreds of opportunities for people to come together and get involved in an archaeological project that will uncover thousands of years of shared heritage on their doorsteps. Over the weekend of 22nd - 23rd July residents of Market

Bosworth and its wider community will carry out archaeological excavations, by digging test-pits and recording their findings, in their gardens and other places around the town in order to make new discoveries about the history of the spaces they inhabit. Volunteers will have a unique opportunity to contribute to ongoing national research into the development of settlement in Britain, and investigate their local history with the help of professional archaeologists. They are looking for experienced volunteers to help with Bosworth Link's Big Dig on the weekend of the 22nd -23rd July. You can sign up by visiting <http://marketbosworthsociety.com/bosworth-links/>.

12. **ARCHAEOLOGY JOURNALS**

The Fieldworkers have been given some journals by Archaeology Planning at County Hall which they can no longer find room for. If you are interested in these please email Kathy on info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk. They will be available to look through at the Charnwood Roots event on the 21st as above. A small donation for them will be welcome otherwise FREE and if there are no takers we will throw them out after the Festival. Kathy can also bring to the next lecture if you email her or contact her as above to make other arrangements. They are:

Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society: 1970, 1971, 1980 -92, 1997 – 2010

Britannia: 1970/71, 1991/94, 1997-2012

Post Medieval Archaeology: 1988, 1994/7/8, 1995/7, 1999 - 2008

Medieval Archaeology and Indexes: 1972-74, 1977-80, 1989, 1990/97, 2004-09

Archaeological Journal and Antiquaries Journal also available, dates unknown at the moment.

Tony Brown, previously a lecturer at Vaughan College, is downsizing and has a complete run of **Medieval Archaeology 1965 – 2008** (minus 1975!). He would like 50p a copy (ie £20 would do it). However if you want only some of them please let Kathy know. We are collecting other stuff from him so can pick these up at the same time in early June.

The FIELDWORKER editor is PETER LIDDLE, 57 STANFELL ROAD, LEICESTER, LE2 3GE. 0116 2214508, e-mail: peter.liddle51@gmail.com. Contributions welcome!
Website address <http://leicsfieldworkers.co.uk> Email info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk.