

THE FIELDWORKER

LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS NEWSLETTER

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1. THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Thursday June 21st at 7.30pm when **Peter Liddle** will speak on **Excavations at Thistleton – a Roman town, villa and temple**. The excavations were carried out by Ernest Greenfield for the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works in the late 1950's/early 1960's when extensive Roman buildings were encountered in Stewart and Lloyd's ironstone quarries at Thistleton. Initially, a villa was excavated and it then became clear that the next quarry was destroying a large Roman site, now identified as part of a Roman 'small town'. Finally, aerial photography located a Roman temple site in the very next field and the Ministry sent Mr Greenfield back to excavate that. Sadly, the site was never written up despite extensive post excavation work in the early 1990's. Peter is now hoping to publish something on the site and will illustrate the results of the excavations but also the frustrations of trying to understand a site you never saw and that has inadequate and fragmentary records.

The meeting will be held in **Lecture Theatre 2** in the **George Davies Building, Centre for Medicine, University of Leicester**. Lecture Theatre 2 is on the first floor but there is a lift. Reception is also manned until 10pm. Parking is available across the road in the Medical Sciences Building car park on the left side of Lancaster Road from University Road and is available after 6pm on the road. A picture of the venue and car park are on our website.

2. DIARY DATES FOR 2018

September 20th : Andrew Fitzpatrick: Julius Caesar in Britain

November 15th : Dr Phil Harding (not the Time Team one!): Metal detecting in the Wreake Valley (this replaces Gavin Speed on the Stibbe site who will give this lecture next year)

3. EXCAVATION NEWS

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) continue to work at full stretch. In **Leicester** evaluation in connection with the Waterside Regeneration Project has revealed medieval burials, probably part of the same medieval churchyard, first found on a very recent site south of **All Saints Road**. A robber trench may indicate the site of the church, probably the lost (but hopefully now found) **St Clements**. Close by, west of **Bath Lane**, Roman walls have been recorded, including an interesting circular stone feature. Further excavation will be undertaken. At **Great Bowden** work on the Roman site mentioned in the last issue has moved to the excavation phase. At **Brooksby** stripping in advance of an extension to the quarry has revealed ditches, not yet excavated but thought to be Iron Age, while more Palaeolithic material is coming out of the quarry. As well as artefacts, a tooth of a straight tusk elephant has been found. At **Kegworth** evaluation has revealed medieval structures in the form of post holes, slots, ditches and pits, while at **Sapcote** Roman ditches have been recorded near to a known villa site. At **Carlton** medieval ditches have been recorded.

At **Measham** ULAS (financed by Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society) has supervised volunteers in cleaning up and recording structures close to the course of the Ashby Canal. A brick structure was recorded close to the site of a railway partly overlying a tramway that brought coal down to the canal.

Allen Archaeology completed the first area strip of a site at **Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray**. As expected, a large Iron Age settlement bounded by large ditches (but not a hillfort) has been revealed. Many ring ditches have been found as well as possible stock enclosures. The site is characterised by East Midlands Scored Ware pottery. **Albion Arch** are excavating at Airfield Farm, north-west of **Market Harborough**. Several sites are under excavation including 5 ring ditches associated with Iron Age material, a set of rectilinear enclosures associated with Roman material and representing a Roman farmstead of the sort becoming

familiar in the local landscape. An additional scatter of other ring gullies has yet to be excavated. **MOLA** have been evaluating at **Fleckney** and found Iron Age features.

4. **BRADGATE EXCAVATION AND OPEN DAY**

The 4th season of excavations in Bradgate Park is now well underway. This year the excavations are concentrating on the stable block across the river from the main house. This is proving to be a large L-shaped building. The main rectangular block is over 40m and some 6m wide, with a porch facing the house and an extension at the south-west corner. Only tiny areas of floor survive but enough to suggest a brick floor laid in herringbone fashion. The walls are of Charnwood stone and the building had a slate roof. Masses of domestic debris have accumulated against the south wall of the building, including pottery, bone and clay pipes. This material suggests activity from the 17th century until around 1800. Early drawings show this as a two story building with, presumably, horses below and people above.

There will be an Open Day on July 1st from 11am to 4pm and there will be an exclusive Fieldworkers tour on July 2nd starting at 2pm. No booking necessary – just turn up.

If you are in the Park please come and see us – we welcome visitors. We are on site every weekday until the beginning of July.

5. **FESTIVAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY 2018**

The full programme for the 2018 Leicestershire and Rutland Festival of Archaeology has now been published. Printed leaflets are being distributed at present. Please help us by passing leaflets or links to the online version to anyone who might be interested. Copies of the leaflet will be at the next meeting. If you need copies to distribute they can be collected from 57 Stanfell Road, Leicester, LE2 3GE, where there will always be boxes in the porch. It can also be found online on our website at www.leicsfieldworkers.co.uk/latest-news/festival-of-archaeology-2018/. The online version will be constantly updated. We are on Facebook and Twitter @LeicsArchFest. It is very useful if you can share and 'like' the posts.

We are still looking for volunteers to help at the **Launch Event on July 8th** at the Jewry Wall site and St Nicholas Church. In particular, we need craftspeople to demonstrate skills such as spinning, weaving and pottery making.

6. **STUART BAILEY**

We are very sad to report that Stuart Bailey, Chairman of Leicester Civic Society and Treasurer of the Friends of Jewry Wall Museum has died. Stuart was a great champion of Leicester's heritage and a supporter of the Festival of Archaeology. He will be sadly missed.

7. **MEDIEVAL EARTHWORKS OF SOUTH AND SOUTH-EAST LEICESTERSHIRE**

The long awaited final volume in Robert (Fred) Hartley's medieval earthworks series has gone to the printer and will be available shortly. The first volume (Rutland) was published by Leicestershire Museums in 1983 – so our publication of the Harborough earthworks (Lutterworth, Harborough, Billesdon) will mark the end of a 35 year enterprise! The book will cost £10 (extremely reasonable for a book of this size!). Two lectures by Fred are being arranged at the Record Office (evening) and Harborough Museum (week daytime) for late September. Details and a book order form will be sent around as soon as details are finalised. The book will also be available (we hope) at the Festival launch day 8th July. Please check the front page of our website for further details when we have them.

8. **Subscriptions and AGM**. Our AGM will be held in or by early September at the University and papers will be sent out at least two weeks beforehand as per our constitution. Subscriptions are due in June and updated forms will be sent out with a specific email depending on how you pay. Please wait for this to arrive before sending Kathy any money by cheque or internet banking. Subs can also be paid at the meeting. Please bring a form along if you can.

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