

# THE FIELDWORKER

## LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS NEWSLETTER

No: 278  
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LEICESTERSHIRE  
FIELDWORKERS

### 1. THE AGM & NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on **Thursday September 20<sup>th</sup>** at 7.30pm when **Andrew Fitzpatrick** will speak about his project '**In the Footsteps of Caesar**'. The project aims to review the evidence for Julius Caesar's activity in Britain in 55 and 54 BC. This includes geophysics and excavation of a site at Ebbsfleet, Kent, that has been identified as the fortified site built to protect Caesar's ships.

This will be preceded by the **Annual General Meeting**. As you will have seen in the AGM papers there have been serious issues that require a longer than normal meeting and we are also introducing a new Constitution. We desperately need new members of the committee who will take on active roles in the group. The AGM is 5.45 pm for a 6.00pm prompt start with the aim of finishing before the lecture at 7.30pm. Food will be available from 5pm. **Please email [info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk](mailto:info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk) if you wish to come for the buffet so that we can order the correct amount from University Catering.**

**All papers are now on our website including all the finance sheets from 2012/13 onwards.**

The meeting will be held in **Lecture Theatre 2** in the **George Davies Building, Centre for Medicine, University of Leicester**. This is the striking new building on the corner of University Road and Lancaster Road. Lecture Theatre 2 is on the first floor but there is a lift. Reception is also manned until 10pm. Parking will be available from 6pm or earlier across the road in the Medical Sciences Building car park on the left side of Lancaster Road from University Road and is also available after 6pm on the road. A picture of the venue and car park are on our website. If you haven't been to a lecture recently you will be impressed by our new surroundings! There is also a large pay and display car park on Victoria Park near De Montfort Hall which is £2 for the evening after 5pm.

### 2. DIARY DATES FOR 2018/19

November 15<sup>th</sup>: Dr Phil Harding (not the Time Team one!): Metal detecting in the Wreake Valley

January 17<sup>th</sup>: to be arranged

March 21<sup>st</sup>: Matthew Beamish: The Enderby Iron Age Shield

May 16<sup>th</sup>: To be arranged

June 20<sup>th</sup>: AGM and lecture to be arranged

September 19<sup>th</sup>: Julia Walker: The Nottingham Caves

### 3. TRAINING DAY – September 16<sup>th</sup>

The 2018 Training Day with Peter Liddle and Mathew Morris will be held at the School of Archaeology at the University of Leicester on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September from 9.30 to 1pm. This will include a hands-on identification workshop covering flint and pottery and advice on fieldwalking techniques. Please email Peter on [peter.liddle51@gmail.com](mailto:peter.liddle51@gmail.com) to book a place.

### 4. GROUP NEWS

**Melton Fieldworkers** have a talk at Melton Carnegie Museum on Sept 26<sup>th</sup>, when Richard Thomas will speak about the 4th season of excavations at Bradgate, when the stable block of the house was excavated. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30 pm start. Ring 0116305 3860 to reserve seats. The talk will cost £5.

**Hallaton Fieldworkers** are excavating at Hare Pie Bank in Hallaton in the first two weeks of September with an open day on 8th September from 11 until 3pm. Geophysics has taken place at Gartree road in Corby on a scheduled site, with Historic England permission looking for evidence of the Roman Road. A training day for site recording techniques also took place in advance of the dig.

**Oadby & Wigston Fieldworkers** have just embarked on a new set of fields near Stoughton. The discovery of a rather fine barbed and tanged arrowhead has sparked new impetus. The group also had a very enjoyable trip to Ticknall to look at an ongoing dig and explore the area's rich history in the production of pottery. A trip to Creswell Crags is also planned. A number of speakers are already booked for meetings over the coming months.

## 5. EXCAVATION NEWS

**University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS)** are very busy in the City, County and beyond. In **Leicester** work continues to be concentrated in the north-west of the historic core. On **Bath Lane** the Merlin Works site continues to reveal intriguing archaeology between areas of modern disturbance. Substantial stone walls indicate an important Roman building complex seen in previous excavations to the south. A circular stone building was built in the corner of two straight walls. Its use is uncertain but may be a plunge bath in a large baths building. In the north-east corner of the site a small area of well-preserved archaeology includes 3 rooms including a partially robbed hypocaust with partially preserved pilae stacks. Not too far away on **All Saints Road** around 140 burials have been lifted, half of which have come from multiple graves, the biggest of which had 21 burials. These are medieval but have yet to be more closely dated. Presumably plague or famine is indicated. The burials lie north of a building that partly lies under the modern road and may well be St Clements Church. Work continues to fully understand the town defences in the area. Walls and ditches have been recorded but there is some uncertainty how they link up. Four late Roman inhumation burials, one with grave goods, have been excavated, while a Roman masonry building with in-situ box flue tiles has been recorded. A little to the north on a site bounded by **Northgates and Soar Lane**, and outside the town walls, was a well preserved medieval building, some 5m across and over 9m long with a plaster floor and clay, masonry and mud walls. A series of hearths were recorded. This was probably a timber framed building fronting Northgates. A second property to the south was separated by a narrow alleyway. Closer to the town wall were Roman buildings with solid opus signinum floors. External walls were of stone and internal walls were of clay.

Across the city, work at **Clarence Street** revealed evidence of truncated Roman timber buildings dating to the first half of the second century. At **Castle Street** evaluation revealed a very disturbed site with the possible siting of the castle's bailey ditch.

At **Brooksby** a sub-rectangular enclosure, a ring gully and linear features were associated with Iron Age pottery and form part of a larger settlement. Glass beads associated with ashes suggest an Anglo-Saxon cremation. More Lower Palaeolithic finds continue to be recovered. At **Lockington Quarry** pits and post holes were thought to be Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age and there were pits with much ash, charcoal and heated stones. The northern part of the site contained a trackway and two intercutting driveways, the latest of which was medieval in date. At **Peatling Magna** a strip, map and record exercise revealed ditches, pits and post holes of Late Saxon and medieval date including what appeared to be a trackway. At **Wigston** evaluation revealed a spread of features including a possible driveway, a gravel trackway, ditches, gullies, pits and postholes associated with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century Roman material.

**Allen Archaeology** are excavating a very large Iron Age site on the edge of **Market Harborough**. The site is bounded by ditches but is not a hillfort although it is on a prominent hilltop site. A reasonably even scatter of enclosures and ring gullies is spread across the site associated mostly with East Midlands scored ware. There appears to be some Late Bronze Age material and there is, in the midst of the site, a scatter of cremation burials, also possibly Bronze Age. One crouched inhumation burial was, regrettably, disturbed by a 'nighthawk'.

**Albion Archaeology** are excavating an Iron Age landscape on the edge of **Market Harborough** this includes enclosures for stock rearing and management as well as occupation. This was replaced by a much more rectilinear Roman farmstead site with an aisled building. This appears to date from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Cotswold Archaeology** are excavating next to Watling Street near **Hinckley**. This has revealed a Roman period ditch parallel to Watling Street, a pit alignment and a Roman period rectilinear farmstead of mid to late Roman date.

**SLR Consulting** have found some Iron Age material at **Desford Brickworks**; **Commercial Archaeology** have excavated a prehistoric linear feature at **Gilmorton**; **Headland Archaeology** are evaluating at **Stretton en le Field** and 2 rectangular enclosures have been found; **Warwickshire Archaeology** are excavating an Iron Age double ditched enclosure at **South Kilworth**; and **Oxford Archaeology** have found a single ditch with Roman pottery near **Leicester Forest East**.

#### 6. **FESTIVAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY 2018 Leicestershire and Rutland**

The 2018 Festival was a great success with record numbers at many of the 80 events despite the cancellation of the national Festival. We will now be planning the 2019 Festival. We await news on whether the national CBA Festival will be revived but we are considering moving the date of the Festival to a different slot. Committee helpers welcome.

#### 7. **BOSWORTH LINKS**

The second year of the Heritage Lottery Funded Bosworth Links project successfully took place in Market Bosworth in July during this year's Festival of Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeology. Altogether, over 100 people and 180 school pupils, supervised by ULAS staff, dug 28 test-pits across the market town (taking the project total to 53 test-pits). The project was delighted to welcome Carenza Lewis (of Time Team fame) who spent a day exploring the town and chatting to the dig teams, and remarkably the project attracted diggers from as far afield as the Netherlands, South Africa and America. ULAS are now analysing the results which will be reported back at a meeting in late November. Preliminary indications suggest that parts of the story (based on last year's results) will be refined. More medieval and late medieval pottery has been discovered around the market place this year, and in a few peripheral locations which might hint at more dispersed settlement. Anglo-Saxon pottery has been found on Silk Hill and Roman pottery has also been found in new locations, as well as some Neolithic pottery. This won't be the end of the project; the committee is keen to carry out additional fieldwork over the coming years and is already planning for 2019.

#### 8. **MEDIEVAL EARTHWORKS OF SOUTH AND SOUTH-EAST LEICESTERSHIRE**

Robert (Fred) Hartley's final volume in the medieval earthworks series has now been published, costing £10, which is incredibly good value for a book of over 200 pages with two colour A3 illustrations. It is packed with information about the medieval landscape of our largest district with plans of parishes in the Lutterworth, Market Harborough and Billesdon Districts. It will be available at all our meetings and from committee members. An order form is also attached.

#### 9. **LECTURE BY FRED HARTLEY**

Fred Hartley will be giving a lecture to promote the book at Roman Way Community Centre, 37 Roman Way, Market Harborough, LE16 7PQ on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7.30pm. Free and a good opportunity to buy a copy of the book. Some carparking at the Centre and then on surrounding streets. Please email [info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk](mailto:info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk) if possible to let us know if you are attending as there is a limit on numbers and we are providing refreshments. The lecture will also probably be opened to members of the LAHS so this is your opportunity to get a seat in advance. We are also looking at another venue nearer to the city for another lecture but as yet not confirmed so you will be emailed in due course.

#### 10. **COURSES AT MELTON AND OAKHAM**

There are two courses by Peter Liddle starting this September. On Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> September from 2pm to 4pm '**A Long View of Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeology**' will start at Rutland County Museum. This will look at 6 topics, such as religion, houses and burial from earliest times. On Friday 14<sup>th</sup> September '**The medieval archaeology of Leicestershire**

**and Rutland'** will start at Melton Carnegie Museum. Both will cost £30 for the 6 lectures or £6 per individual lectures. For more information or to book a place please contact Peter.

#### 11. **UNRECORDED WAY PROJECT**

Our Oadby and Wigston Group are involved with the 'Unrecorded Way Project' with the County's footpaths team. This involves looking at paths and other rights of way not on the definitive maps. An informal evening for volunteers (and potential volunteers) will be held at Groby on Tuesday evening 27<sup>th</sup> November from 19.30 to 21.00. More details from Michael Miller- email: [miller@miller-art.co.uk](mailto:miller@miller-art.co.uk)

#### 12. **ICE AGE JOURNEYS**

Ice Age Journeys project recently won Heritage Lottery Funding to continue their project in partnership with Bradgate Park and Creswell Crags, the East Midlands Sites that reveal the lives of the first colonizers of the East Midland at the end of the Ice Age 14,000 years ago. The project starts on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> September, beginning with a Flint Knapping demonstration/workshop in Sconce Park, Newark, followed by opportunities to become involved with field work To take part please send your name, post-code and confirm that you are over 16 to [info@iceagejourneys.org.uk](mailto:info@iceagejourneys.org.uk) They will confirm if you've been successful. Also see their website: [iceagejourneys.org.uk](http://iceagejourneys.org.uk) for further information.

#### 13. **LATEST LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS ARCHAEOLOGY NEWS**

A new display on animal bones in archaeology is currently at Charnwood Museum in Loughborough. This features a fantastic Aurochs (extinct wild cattle) skull found at Wymeswold Meadows Nature Reserve in 1990 by two young brothers. This is the first time the skull has been displayed and is timely as scientists are currently attempting to recreate the mighty Aurochs to help with land management on the continent.

For any community archaeology or archaeological collections enquiries contact [archaeology@leics.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@leics.gov.uk).

#### 14. **Hallaton Excavation Open Day**

As noted above Hallaton Field Work Group are holding an open day at their Hare Pie Bank excavation on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> September**, 11am – 3pm. See the 2018 excavation and finds, and chat to the archaeologists. The excavation is taking place at Hare Pie Bank near Hallaton. It is on the Langton Road after the church at the top of the hill on the left hand side as you head out of the village (there is a map on the front-page Post on our website).

Access is down the green lane where there is some limited parking.

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