

# THE FIELDWORKER

## LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS NEWSLETTER

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FIELDWORKERS

### 1. A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I have the privilege of chairing the Fieldworkers until the next AGM. I would like to thank the people who are no longer on the committee who have put in so much hard work for the group, particularly Kathy Elkin who has steered us through the last difficult years and Paul Bowman who was our chair for many years. Thanks also to Alan Clark and Mike Hawkes. All money has now been repaid to the Group and I am confident that we can now put the difficult period behind us and concentrate on building the group for the future. We would like to launch new local groups and enhance our support for existing groups and individual members in the form of more and better training opportunities. Your new committee has made a very positive start. Please let us know what is needed in the form of training and kit and we will do our best to provide it.

### 2. THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on **Thursday November 15<sup>th</sup>** when **Dr Phil Harding** (not the Time Team one!) will speak on '**Metal detecting in Leicestershire: insights from detailed recording**'. Phil Harding has been detecting in Leicestershire for almost 30 years, working the fields alone and supporting formal archaeological investigations. He has recorded 2,700 objects on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database, with the greatest possible detail captured for everything. Examples are given of spatial and temporal analysis to demonstrate the insights that thorough recording can bring. These include evidence for shifting settlement patterns, changing activity over time, and some special objects with their own story to tell.

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 is available across the road in the Medical Sciences Building car park on the left side of Lancaster Road from University Road and 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!

### 3. DIARY DATES FOR 2018/19

January 17<sup>th</sup>: Robert (Fred) Hartley: "Forty Years' Research - the rich inheritance of Medieval Earthworks in South and South-East Leicestershire".

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 Prof Helena Hamerow: Anglo-Saxon female burials

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

November 21<sup>st</sup>: Gavin Speed: The Stibbe excavation

### 4. GROUP NEWS

**The Committee for 2018-9** is Peter Liddle (Chair), Alison Skinner (Secretary), Maynard Davison (Treasurer), John Lacey, Mathew Morris, Gemma Tallis, Roger Thomas, David Brown and Margaret Grindall. The committee has already met and is working on a series of steps to improve the working of the group.

**Melton Fieldworkers** are continuing their series of talks at 7.30pm on **November 28<sup>th</sup>** when **Kevin Winter** will be speaking on '**Warts and All: the English Civil War in the East Midlands**' at Melton Carnegie Museum. To book a place phone the museum on 0116 305 3860 or email [meltonmuseum@leics.gov.uk](mailto:meltonmuseum@leics.gov.uk). The cost is £5. The group has been fieldwalking at **Burton Lazars** and will be processing the finds soon.

**Hallaton Fieldworkers** have completed their excavation at St Morrell's chapel. They are sad to report the death of Anthony Goode, a keen member of the group and a conservation builder with an expertise in, amongst other things, cob walls.

**Hinckley Archaeological Society** will be meeting at 7.15 on **January 7<sup>th</sup>** when **Dr. Sarah Johnson** will speak on "**Seeing the World from above : Aerial Photography & LIDAR**". The talk will be at The United Reformed Church (room at rear of Church), The Borough, Hinckley, Leics LE10 1NL.

**Oadby & Wigston Fieldworkers** have been very busy fieldwalking over the autumn months and have discovered a Roman farmstead site in **Stoughton** parish close to the Gartree Road with over 300 sherds of pottery, mostly grey ware but with some samian ware and colour coated pottery suggesting both early and late Roman occupation. We have also found a number of small sherds of Anglo-Saxon and prehistoric pottery. Fifty people also enjoyed a trip to Creswell Crags. More fields have been identified for winter walking around **Little Stretton**. Our Secretary, Elaine King, has moved away to Devon. She was instrumental in setting up the Group and we wish her all the very best for the future.

**Rutland Group** have resumed walking fields around Ridlington and have found a good scattering of worked flint on the edge of the high ground nr Park Farm.

## 5. EXCAVATION NEWS

**University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS)** have, as usual, been the most prolific archaeological contractor locally. At **Seagrave**, in advance of Leicester City's new training ground, two areas have been excavated. In one, a large rectangular enclosure has been completely stripped. The ditches had been recut and it incorporated two smaller circular enclosures while pit alignments were revealed. The second area produced two smaller sub-rectangular enclosures, one postdating one of the pit alignments. A lot of Iron Age pottery and animal bones were found. At **Lockington Quarry** three droeways were revealed, one of which had late medieval pottery in the backfill. There were numerous prehistoric pits and post holes, some of which had mid to late Neolithic pottery, while others had much ash, charcoal and burnt stones. At **Tilton** parish church a watching brief recorded many bodies and a possible earlier churchyard wall. In **Leicester** at the Merlin Works site on **Bath Lane** the excavation has now been completed. A large complex of well-preserved stone buildings seems to date to the Early Roman period. There is no indication of what the round building was used for. It may possibly have been a plunge bath if the rest of the complex is a bath site, although other possibilities include a shrine. A little to the north is the **Waterside Development**, where a large area in the north west of the walled town and to its north, is to be developed. The medieval cemetery has produced 151 skeletons. In other areas a north-south street fronted by masonry buildings, some with *opus signinum* and tessellated floors has been found. The team is working with the developers as demolition, groundworks and services go ahead. A small trench on **Great Central Street** to the north of the Stibbe site has shown survival of early Roman deposits. A large evaluation at **Beaumont Leys**, for the Ashton Green development, has been largely quiet although a small pocket of possible Iron Age features has just been uncovered.

**Wardell Armstrong** have been digging on the east side of **Bath Lane, Leicester** and have found the town wall and ditch. The wall was robbed but the rampart/bank was found. There were lots of pits, Roman demolition material, surfaces and possibly one building.

**Cotswold Archaeology** have been evaluating north of **Burbage Common** on a proposed rail-freight site. They have found what seems to be a 2<sup>nd</sup> century farmstead and a scatter of other features. Their work at **Hinckley Island** has also continued producing a 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century Roman farmstead with a post built barn. Evaluation at **Oadby, just north of Gartree Road** has produced a scatter of Iron Age features.

**Albion Archaeology** have continued their work at **Airfield Farm, Market Harborough** revealing an Iron Age farming landscape with ring gullies and stock enclosures replaced by a rectilinear farmstead to the east including an aisled barn and corn driers.

**Thames Valley Archaeological Services** have been evaluating in advance of an extension to **Shawell Quarry** and found evidence of Iron Age occupation in the form of pits and ring

gullies while in the south of the site were Roman pits and ditches, perhaps associated with the Roman settlement of Tripontium.

**Allen Archaeology** continue their excavation of the large Iron Age site at **Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray** showing several phases of activity including ring gullies, boundary ditches and stock enclosures.

**Oxford Archaeology** have been excavating at **St Bartholemew's Way, Melton Mowbray**. This has produced Early to Middle Iron Age sub rectangular enclosures with a corn drier and good assemblages of pottery and bone. At **Bottesford** evaluation has shown Roman activity, in the form of pits and ditches, close to the River Devon with early and late Iron Age activity cut by medieval features.

**MOLA** have been working at **Warwick Road, Kibworth**. Roman period enclosures alongside a trackway have been revealed continuing a site examined on the other side of the road. There is some indication of Anglo-Saxon activity.

## 6. **DIGGING FOR BRITAIN**

The BBC series 'Digging for Britain' with Alice Roberts will soon be back on our screens. Look out for ULAS' John Thomas with the Glenfield cauldrons, which will feature on an 'Iron Age Special' towards the end of November.

## 7. **BOSWORTH LINKS**

The Bosworth Links results will be revealed at a meeting on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November at 1pm at the Dixie Grammar School, Market Bosworth. The meeting will reveal the combined results of the two year project, premier the film of the second dig and give people a chance to see what was found.

## 8. **BOOKS**

Copies of our most recent publication, **The Medieval Earthworks of South and South-East Leicestershire** (£10) will be available at the next meeting as well as copies of our earlier publications, **Medieval Leicestershire** (now also £10), and **The Medieval Earthworks of South-West Leicestershire**. If you can't get to the meeting please let us know if you require a copy and we will do our best to get one to you by post or by arranging a convenient pick up location.

Kathy has a complete set of **Current Archaeology from Nbr 1 to 343/2018** to give away if anyone would like them. Some are in binders. Otherwise the individual magazines will be available individually for a donation to the fieldworkers at lectures and other events. Email [info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk](mailto:info@leicsfieldworkers.co.uk)

## 9. **WINTER SEMINAR MSRG**

Of interest to members may be the Medieval Settlement Research Group Winter Seminar meeting at Leicester on 8<sup>th</sup> December at Leicester University. The subject is **Settlement in the Danelaw**. Further details from: <https://medieval-settlement.com/events/conferences/> We hope to have the bookstall there.

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