



THE FIELDWORKER

NEWSLETTER OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS

JANUARY 2019: ISSUE 280

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Welcome to the first edition of The Fieldworker for 2019, our 280th issue! As it's a new year, and the format last changed in 1980, we thought it was time to give the newsletter a bit of a makeover and bring it into the 21st century.

The new format offers better content versatility, and we would really like to hear what you think and share more of the discoveries being made by our members.

Please contribute! If you have any news, want to write about a discovery, or simply have a photo of a really good find that you'd like to show off, please send them to Peter or Mathew (contact details on the back).

Hope you enjoy, and we're looking forward to another year of exciting discoveries across the county.

THE NEXT MEETING



The next meeting will be on **Thursday January 17th** when Robert (better known as Fred) Hartley will speak on "**Forty Years' Researches - the rich inheritance of Medieval Earthworks in South and East Leicestershire**".

Fred Hartley began making record surveys of Leicestershire's historic earthwork sites in the late 1970s, looking at deserted villages, moats, fishponds and mill mounds, and historic garden features. He began to publish reports on them when working at Jewry Wall Museum in the 1980s, but when he moved sideways to manage museum sites in 1995 the southern parts of the county still remained to be done, and funding to publish them was no longer available. Following retirement in 2012 he started work again to finish the final volume, on Harborough District. The resulting book, with over 140 sites, was published by

the Leicestershire Fieldworkers in 2018, with considerable help from Kathy Elkin as Editor.

This talk will follow the story of earthwork studies in the county, and the evolution of this book. We shall also look at the types of sites which exist in the Harborough District, which is especially rich in spectacular remains of deserted villages and deserves to be better known and better protected as an archaeological resource of national importance. Copies of the book (and our other publications) will be available at the meeting.

The meeting will be held in **Lecture Theatre 2** on the first floor of 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. Parking will be available 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.

DIARY DATES FOR 2019

- **March 21st:** Matthew Beamish: The Enderby Iron Age Shield
- **May 16th:** Prof. Julian Thomas: Excavation of a Neolithic long barrow at Dorstone Hill
- **June 20th:** AGM and Prof Helena Hamerow: Anglo-Saxon female burials
- **September 19th:** Julia Walker: The Nottingham Caves
- **November 21st:** Gavin Speed: The Stibbe excavation or Prof. Oegg (see below)

INTERNATIONAL LECTURE FOR NOVEMBER?

The committee is in negotiation with Professor Oegg of Innsbruck to bring him over to Leicester for a lecture (or a number of lectures) on "Ötzi" the Iceman.

This is the remarkably preserved body of a man from the very end of the Neolithic period found in an alpine glacier. This will be in partnership with the Prehistoric Society and others. Ötzi is one of the most exciting finds in modern archaeology and we are confident that we can bring the latest research to you.

GROUP NEWS

Melton Fieldworkers are continuing their series of talks on Wednesday 16th January at 7.30pm at Melton Carnegie Museum, when Peter Liddle will attempt to shed **Some Light on a Dark Age**, looking at the transition from Roman Britain to Anglo-Saxon England. Archaeologically, the 5th century is incredibly difficult to understand but a few chinks of light are now visible. To book a place phone the museum on 0116 305 3860 or email meltonmuseum@leics.gov.uk. The cost is £5.

The **Oadby & Wigston Fieldworkers** have had a very enjoyable year in 2018, with over 25 fields walked by almost 30 members of the Group. In the process they have located one Roman site and possibly a second. Monthly meetings have been held with excellent speakers, and two very interesting trips to Ticknall and Creswell Crags. Fieldwalking is currently continuing around Little Stretton and test-pitting is being planned for the summer in Oadby.

FLAG, having completed the excavation of the manorial complex at Croxton Kerrial, have set up the Croxton Kerrial Heritage Trust and have been awarded a grant of £46,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to consolidate, preserve and display the remains.

Lutterworth Fieldworkers have arranged a series of talks by Mathew Morris from ULAS. Mathew is a Project Officer at ULAS and has been involved with major projects in the area including the search for Richard III.

- **Saturday 19 January** – Richard III: The King Under the Car Park
- **Saturday 23 February** – Cardinals, Castles and Queens – The archaeology of Abbey Park, Castle Hill and Bradgate Park.
- **Saturday 23 March** – Archaeology after Richard III: Recent archaeological discoveries in Leicester.

The talks are at 10.30am in the Methodist Church, Bitteswell Road, Lutterworth. Tickets cost £5 per talk, £12 for all 3 talks.

TRAINING

On **Saturday 2nd March** we will be running a training course at the University of Leicester on digging and interpreting test-pits. The one-day course will look at why we dig test-pits, what to consider when setting up a project, how to dig and record test-pits and how to interpret the data recovered from them. The course will be run by Mathew Morris from ULAS. 20 places are available and the course is FREE for members of the Fieldworkers.

- 10.00-10.30 Registration, tea & coffee
- 10.30-12.30 Session 1 - why we dig test-pits, setting up a project, how to dig and record a test-pit
- 12.30-13.30 Lunch (not provided)
- 13.30-16.00 Session 2 - interpreting test-pit data, looking at the bigger picture

Book your place here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-to-dig-a-test-pit-tickets-54691350301>

EXCAVATION NEWS

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) have, as usual, been the most prolific archaeological contractor locally. The **Waterside Development**, where a large area in the north west of the walled town and in the suburb to its north is to be developed, has continued to be a busy area with work undertaken as buildings are demolished. The large medieval cemetery, probably associated with St Clements church, continues to be excavated as more areas become available. At least two high-status Roman town houses have been identified on either side of a north/south Roman street, both with surviving tessellated floors and masonry.

Outside the walls several further trial trenches have been excavated. More evidence of the medieval suburb fronting Northgate Street has been found, and in three trenches human remains have been recovered, probably part of a Roman cemetery.

At **Ashton Green, Beaumont Leys** an evaluation has found several Iron Age pits and early Roman gullies crammed with pot and at least 21 pits of an extensive pit alignment crossing the development area.



A quartzite handaxe from Brooksby Quarry.

At **Brooksby Quarry** the count of Lower Palaeolithic artefacts is now 864, most recently a fine handaxe (photo above). It is a small piece (as are a lot at Brooksby) formed from a quartzite cobble that had a

natural split which could be used as a platform for further flaking into the classic handaxe shape.

At **Lubbesthorpe** two Middle Bronze Age urned cremations of adults have been excavated. The vessels were buried more or less upright in small pits. Close to the urns were deposits that seem to have been related but were not in any way formal burials. The pottery vessels are bucket urns typologically belonging to the Middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury tradition. This is confirmed by the C14 dates with radiocarbon determinations from calcined bone producing date ranges (at 95.4% probability) of cal. 1404-1227 and 1419-1262 BC, which indicates a date early in the Middle Bronze Age.

At **Stoke Golding** a complex arrangement of boundary ditches reflecting activity from the medieval (12th/13th century) through to the post-medieval (17th/18th century) periods were excavated. One of the medieval ditches contained a complete jug (see below). In the northern area traces of an 18th/19th century cottage and associated boundaries were recorded near the street frontage and these lay above medieval remains including a pit containing pottery.



A large, complete medieval jug was found in a boundary ditch at Stoke Golding.

At **Norton-Juxta-Twycross** evaluation has revealed a surprising quantity of medieval features in the centre of the village. Several features contained quite early medieval pottery fabrics (dating from the 11th to the 14th centuries) and the features are certainly suggestive of potential occupation during the early medieval phase of the village.

At **Waltham on the Wolds** Roman material has been found in an evaluation, while at **Smeeton Westerby** trenching has produced medieval material.

Cotswold Archaeology continue their work at **Hinckley Island** excavating a curvilinear ditch of Iron Age or Early Roman date.

Trent and Peak are excavating a series of shallow ditches and gullies making up a set of enclosures of

probable Iron Age date at **Claybrooke Magna**.

Archaeological Research Services are investigating medieval features on the edge of **Husbands Bosworth**.

FACEBOOK



We are pleased to tell you that we have setup a brand-new Leicestershire Fieldworkers Facebook page. It can be found using the handle [@LeicestershireFieldworkers](https://www.facebook.com/LeicestershireFieldworkers) when searching Facebook. The closed group page will remain active and will be supplemented by this new community page which will be available for everyone to see. It will aim to share information such as lectures and events that are coming up as well as other archaeological news. Please do take a look and 'like' the page and spread the word to friends and family who also might be interested in keeping up to date with the Leicestershire Fieldworkers. The page is also a great place to get involved so please feel free to post, comment and tag away!

FESTIVAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

We are delighted to hear that the CBA's Festival of Archaeology will run again this year, from 13-28 July. Following a year off in 2018, it is hoped that the 2019 Festival will be bigger and better, and it will form part of the 75th anniversary of the Council for British Archaeology. Work is currently underway to update and improve the Festival's website which will launch sometime this month. Further information at <http://new.archaeologyuk.org/festival-of-archaeology/>

In 2018, the Festival of Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeology was a huge success, despite the absence of national support. We will of course be running our own festival again in 2019 in conjunction with the national festival and we also aim to be bigger and better than last year, for the first time spreading events across the full month. Further information on the Festival on Facebook [@LeicsArchFest](https://www.facebook.com/LeicsArchFest) or at <http://leicsfieldworkers.co.uk/festival-of-archaeology-2019/>

VOLUNTEERING AT SAINT NICHOLAS CHURCH

The Friends of Jewry Wall Museum are hoping to develop a programme of monthly opportunities to visit St Nicholas church and take a guided tour of the Roman City using their newly published Roman Trail leaflet. They are looking for volunteers to develop this.

If you are interested, please contact Jennifer Macgregor at jennifer.macgregor1@ntlworld.com.

JEWRY WALL MUSEUM

We finally have some positive news on the status of the **Jewry Wall Museum**. In December, Leicester City Council approved investing a total of more than £2.8million on projects to improve and develop two city museum buildings – the Jewry Wall Museum and the Abbey Pumping Station.

The plans will see £2.644million invested in essential repairs and operational enabling works at the Grade II-listed **Jewry Wall Museum** site, which are needed before the building can be brought back into any sort of use. The works include repairs to the roof and windows, a new walkway and entrance lobby suitable for disabled visitors, and a new lift shaft and stairs connecting the upper and lower floor.

In addition, £165,000 is proposed for further developing plans for the refurbishment and improvement of **Abbey Pumping Station** as part of a long-term project to improve the museum's existing main gallery space, refurbish the transport shed and add a new café.

At both sites, it is hoped that carrying out the work will move the redevelopments forward, enabling the city council to apply for further external funding for the design and installation of the new displays.

Jewry Wall Museum is envisaged as a state-of-the-art visitor attraction that celebrates Leicester's Roman history, showcasing the city's 2,000-year history and creating an educational resource for schools. While progress is continuing to secure funding for the new attraction, the proposed building works will bring the building up to standard by creating the clean 'shell' needed for any future use.

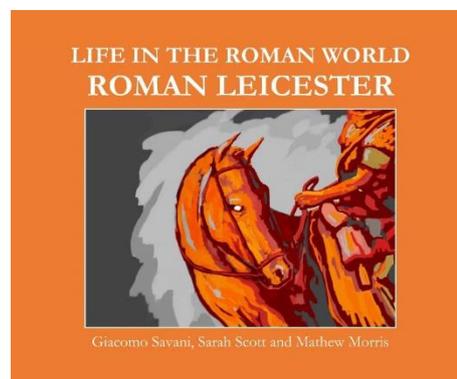
We await further news with anticipation.

NEW BOOK EXPLORES LIFE IN ROMAN LEICESTER

The University of Leicester has launched a new book which explores what life was like in the city over 1,600 years ago.

Through a combination of narrative and new archaeological research **Life in the Roman World: Roman Leicester** by **Giacomo Savani**, **Sarah Scott** and **Mathew Morris** explores the nature of everyday life under the Romans. Based on the world-class research of the School of Archaeology and Ancient History (SAAH), the excavations and publications of University of Leicester Archaeological Services

(ULAS), and objects at the Jewry Wall Museum and the Harborough Museum, the book explores topics which still concern us today, such as conflict, social inequality, multiculturalism, migration, diet, disease and death.



Inspired by recent archaeological discoveries in Leicester, the narrative imagines the experiences and responses of ordinary people living in the town through four centuries of Roman rule. Leicester is examined in detail because it is one of the most excavated urban centres in Britain, and the range of evidence shows us that it was a vibrant multicultural centre from its earliest phases.

Copies can be purchased from shop@le for £8.95: <https://shop.le.ac.uk/product-catalogue/books-and-gifts/leicester-leicestershire/roman-leicester>

The book is also linked to a new resource for teachers entitled **Life in the Roman World: Ratae Corieltaavorum (Roman Leicester)** which includes session plans, activities and worksheets exploring the culturally plural nature of the Roman world, as well as introducing Latin in the context of the archaeology of Roman Leicester. The resources are aimed at KS2-5 (11 to 18-year olds) and are available for free download from our website:

<https://le.ac.uk/archaeology/outreach/for-teachers/teaching-resources>.

CONTACT US

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