



THE FIELDWORKER

NEWSLETTER OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS

JUNE 2019: ISSUE 283

Welcome to the June edition of The Fieldworker. Read on to find out about the latest group news, what has been found recently in the county; find out about talks and training opportunities coming up and much more.

Hope you enjoy... – Peter and Mathew

AGM

The Leicestershire Fieldworker AGM will precede our next meeting (see below for details) on **Thursday June 20th** at 7pm. Because of our speaker's train times it will be suspended at 7.15pm for the talk and resume after the talk has finished. Papers are being circulated and it will consist of the normal reports and election of officers and committee.

THE NEXT MEETING



The next meeting will be on **Thursday June 20th**. **PLEASE NOTE** the talk will start at the slightly earlier time of 7.15pm.

Our speaker is **Professor Helena Hamerow**, who will be speaking on **Anglo-Saxon female burials of the Conversion Period**. Helena is Professor of Early Medieval Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford and an eminent scholar of Anglo-Saxon England and, indeed, Europe.

In 2015, a metal detector user uncovered several early medieval artefacts from land adjacent to the Rollright Stones, a major prehistoric complex straddling the Oxfordshire - Warwickshire border. He alerted the Portable Antiquities Scheme and a well-preserved female burial was subsequently excavated. The grave contained a number of remarkable objects on the basis of which the burial can be securely dated to the seventh century. It lay some 50m north-east of a standing stone known locally as the 'King Stone'. This

burial and its remarkable setting sheds new light on the role of women in Conversion-period England.

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.

<http://leicsfieldworkers.co.uk/new-meeting-venue/>

DIARY DATES FOR 2019/20

Remarkably, we now have a full and fascinating calendar of tours and talks booked through to November 2020.

- **June 19th:** Tour of the Oakham Castle excavation (see below for details)
- **July 1st:** Tour of the Bradgate Park excavation (see below for details)
- **September 19th:** Julia Walker talking on the Nottingham Caves
- **November 21st:** Prof. Klaus Oeggl talking on "Ötzi" the Iceman.
- **January 16th 2020:** Gavin Speed talking on the Stibbe excavation in Leicester
- **March 19th:** Ian Meadows talking on the Roman town at Irchester, Northants
- **May 21st:** Chris Fern talking on the Staffordshire Hoard and Helmet
- **June 18th:** AGM followed by Mathew Morris talking on the excavations at Oakham Castle
- **September 17th:** Peter Liddle talking on 50 years of Leicestershire Archaeology
- **November 19th:** Professor Simon James talking on Archaeology in a colonial maritime landscape: Roman and Byzantine Akrotiri, Cyprus

GROUP NEWS

Hallaton Fieldworkers have booked Debbie Miles to run an archaeological illustration course on **Saturday July 6th**. The cost is £20 in advance, if anyone would like to come then please email Debbie Frearson at hallatonfwg@yahoo.com. We do have limited space

but if enough people would like to attend, we can arrange another course.

Hinckley Archaeological Society has a coach trip to Birmingham organised for **Sunday September 8th**. They will be visiting the Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, the Pen Museum and the Coffin Works Museum. Price (including coach travel & admission) £32 per person. Essential to pre-book with Marion (01455) 233978.

Oadby and Wigston Group are planning a trip to Flag Fen and Peterborough Cathedral on **Monday September 9th**. For details contact Bob Gale on 0116 2885478 or robert.gale77@btinternet.com. Plans are well underway for test pitting in September in the Brock's Hill area of Oadby where Roman and Anglo-Saxon activity was noted when the houses were built in the 1950's. If you would be interested in helping, please contact Bob on the contact details above.

NEW WREAKE VALLEY GROUP

There will be a meeting on **June 19th** at 7.30pm at Paul Shaw's house at 50 Main Street, Barkby LE7 3QG to discuss the setting up of a new local group in the Wreake Valley. All welcome, but please let us know if you are planning to come by contacting Peter on peter.liddle51@gmail.com.

TRAINING

We will be running a workshop on **September 21st** at the University of Leicester on **Finds Identification** in the morning and **Fieldwalking Techniques** in the afternoon. You can book for either part or for the full day at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/an-introduction-to-finds-identification-and-fieldwalking-techniques-tickets-62949295036>

If there are any archaeological skills that you or your group would like training in please contact Mathew (mlm9@le.ac.uk) and we will see if we can arrange a training course.

FIELDWORK GUIDES

We have started to update the Resource page on our website. There is now a Fieldwork Guides page with a series of new guides on test-pitting, archaeological excavation, finds processing and photogrammetry.

More will be added over the coming year, including setting up a project, fieldwalking and report writing.

View them here:

<https://leicsfieldworkers.co.uk/our-resources/fieldwork-guides/>

OAKHAM CASTLE DIG



Excavation at Oakham Castle begins on June 12th and runs through to June 23rd (Wednesday to Sunday).

Dig places are now fully booked but visitors are welcome to drop by at any time to see what's going on. There is a tour for Fieldworkers on **Wednesday 19th June** at 2pm – no booking needed, meet in front of the Great Hall – and an Open Day on **Saturday June 22nd**.

For those that can't make it out to Oakham, the dig can be followed via ULAS's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ulasnews/>

BRADGATE PARK EXCAVATION

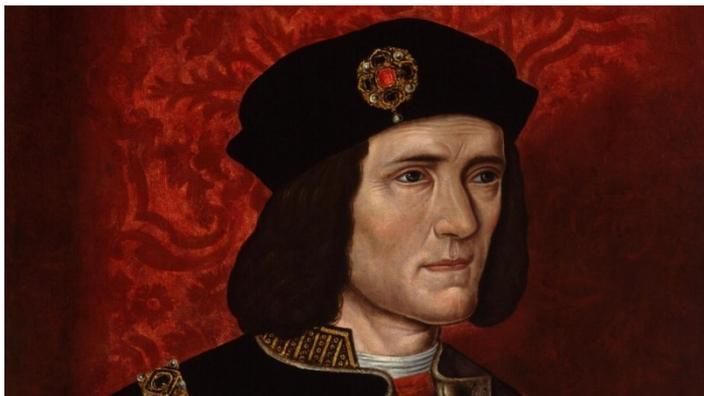


Excavation is now underway at Bradgate Park for the 5th season of the University of Leicester's Fieldschool, which aims to train archaeology students while researching the archaeology of the Park.

This year work is again concentrated on the ruins of the house and it is hoped that the date of the standing structure will be established – is it really Lady Jane Grey's House? Early days as we write but all will become clear (we hope!) by the end of the excavation.

The **Open Day** is on **Saturday June 29th** and there is a tour for Fieldworkers on **Monday July 1st** at 11am – meeting at the house.

THE RICHARD III PORTRAIT



One of the most popular pictures in the National Portrait Gallery Collection, the iconic portrait of Richard III is coming to **New Walk Museum** as part of the national COMING HOME project.

The work is one of 50 portraits of iconic individuals being lent to places across the UK with which they are most closely associated. Working in partnership with the King Richard III Visitor Centre and Leicester Cathedral, the exhibition will explore the story of King Richard III and his famous rediscovery in a Leicester carpark.

The exhibition is open daily from **Saturday June 8th** to **Sunday September 22nd**.

<https://www.visitleicester.info/whats-on/coming-home-the-richard-iii-portrait-from-the-national-portrait-gallery-p767491>

NEW WALK MUSEUM @ 170!

New Walk Museum turns 170 years old this year! And to celebrate they are holding a free day of exhibitions, craft, sketching and music activities on Saturday June 22nd, 11am – 4pm.

Exhibitors will be situated throughout the galleries, where they will be more than keen to talk to about their shared passion for heritage, museums and natural science.

These include Egyptology experts Prof. Joann Fletcher & Dr Stephen Buckley from the University of York, or you can learn more about the rare Enderby Iron Age shield found by ULAS in 2015, or take part in William Hogarth inspired sketching competitions and much more.

Find out more at:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/leicester-museums/new-walk-museum-birthday-celebration/2290391957907728/>

FESTIVAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY



Thousands of Festival leaflets have now been distributed around the two counties. The number of events continues to rise (check the website <https://leicsfieldworkers.co.uk/festival-of-archaeology> for new listings) and has now almost reached 100. We would advise booking early for events to avoid disappointment. The Festival Launch Event this year will be the Excavation Open Day at Bradgate Park on **Saturday June 29th**.

If you need leaflets, they can be obtained from 57 Stanfell Road, Leicester, LE2 3GE where a box is kept in the unlocked porch.

To find out more about what is going on elsewhere during the nationwide Festival, and to register your event nationally, visit:

<https://festival.archaeologyuk.org/>

FORMER TREASURER

Our former Treasurer appeared recently at Leicester Magistrates Court where he pleaded guilty to fraud by false representation in relation to his dealing with our society. He was sent to the Crown Court for sentencing where he was given an 8 month jail sentence. This was suspended for 12 months on the condition that he repays the outstanding £4000 that he has stolen.

EXCAVATION NEWS

As it's only a month since the last issue, excavation news is thin but **Archaeology Warwickshire** are excavating at **South Kilworth** where a double ditched enclosure and other boundaries forming possible field boundaries and stock enclosures have been excavated. Finds have not been plentiful but Iron Age and Roman material has been recovered. There are cropmark enclosures not far away and they may all be part of a larger complex.

West Yorkshire Archaeological Service are working at **Kirby Muxloe** where extraction pits, apparently under ridge and furrow, are associated with some Roman pottery.

RARE ANGLO-SAXON SWORD POMMEL CAP ON DISPLAY



A 6th – 7th century silver-gilt sword pommel cap found in **Scalford** has gone on display at **Melton Carnegie Museum** following acquisition by Leicestershire County Council Museums. This high-status object is similar stylistically to the pommels in the Staffordshire Hoard. Analysis of a green substance found on the surface has confirmed this sword handle component was decorated with enamel, a very rare feature. A similar material was identified on the Staffs examples but the analysis of this was inconclusive so the Scalford results help to shed light on these objects too. The Scalford pommel was acquired via the Treasure process and thanks to generous contributions from the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, Friends of Leicester and Leicestershire Museums and Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society.

For any Leicestershire community archaeology or archaeological collections enquiries, please contact archaeology@leics.gov.uk. For Melton Carnegie Museum visit www.meltonmuseum.org

THE ENDERBY SHIELD

The Enderby Shield, a unique 2,300-year-old bark shield, is the only one of its kind ever found in Europe. Back in March we were very fortunate to be give a preview of this amazing Iron Age discovery. The find has now gone live!

The shield was found south of Leicester on the Everards Meadows site in 2015, as part of routine investigations on the site by ULAS archaeologists on behalf of local family business Everards of Leicestershire. It was carefully constructed with wooden laths to stiffen the structure, a wooden edging rim, and a beautiful woven boss to protect the wooden handle. The outside of the shield has been painted and scored in red chequerboard decoration. Radiocarbon dating has revealed that the shield was made in the Middle Iron Age, between 395 and 255 BC.

Although prior evidence has shown that prehistoric people used bark to make bowls and boxes, this is the

first time researchers have seen the material used for a weapon of war.

Further information on the shield and the experimental work carried out as part of the project can be found here:

<https://www2.le.ac.uk/services/ulas/discoveries/projects/iron-age/enderby-shield>



CONTACT US

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Contributions welcome!

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