



# THE FIELDWORKER

NEWSLETTER OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS

SEPTEMBER 2019: ISSUE 284

Welcome to the September 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

## SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

The next meeting (details below) will start with a very short Special General Meeting. This is to agree a rewording of our aims and objectives to comply with the form required by the Charity Commissioners. There is no change to the substance. Details have been sent to members separately and can also be found at <https://leicsfieldworkers.co.uk/special-general-meeting/>

## THE NEXT MEETING



The next meeting will be on **Thursday September 19th** at 7.30pm. There is a change of speaker as our speaker on the Nottingham Caves has withdrawn. Instead **Peter Liddle** will be speaking on **Lady Jane Grey's House? Recent work on Bradgate House.**

This summer saw the last of 5 seasons of excavation by the University of Leicester at Bradgate Park. While it is early days in analysing the results, a new narrative of the history of Bradgate House seems to be emerging which is questioning everything we previously thought we knew about the site. In this talk, Peter will discuss the latest results from the excavations at Bradgate House.

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

- **September 22nd:** Excavation Open Day with the Hallaton Fieldwork Group (see Group News for details).
- **October 5th:** East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework conference (see Conferences for details)
- **November 19th:** Prof. Klaus Oeggel talking on "Ötzi" the Iceman at Rutland County Museum
- **November 21st:** Prof. Klaus Oeggel talking on "Ötzi" the Iceman at University of Leicester
- **November 23rd:** CBA East Midlands and Ice Age Journeys conference (see Conferences for details)

## 2020

- **January 16th:** 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

## BOOKING FOR THE NOVEMBER LECTURE

The November lecture on **"Ötzi" a Prehistoric Alpine Glacier Mummy** by Professor Oeggel of Innsbruck University will be open to the public. We expect this to be very popular and have moved the lecture to the larger Lecture Theatre 1 in the George Davies Building.

Before we publicise this to the public, we are giving our

members (and those of our partners in the Archaeological and Historical Society and the Prehistoric Society) the chance to book a place. This can be done by going to:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/otzi-a-prehistoric-alpine-glacier-mummy-tickets-71893329885>

Prof Oeggli will also be giving his lecture at Rutland County Museum on Tuesday November 19th at 7.30pm when our members will be welcome.

## CONFERENCES

Two very interesting conferences are taking place in the East Midlands this autumn.

On **Saturday October 5th**, 9am – 5pm the **East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework** conference will take place at Teaching and Learning Building, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD

CBA East Midlands will be jointly hosting the conference about how recent work has advanced our understanding of the research questions that have been highlighted in the East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework (EMHERF). It will include demonstrations of the online Research Framework and displays of recent projects, with presentations focusing on the post-glacial period.

The programme and how to book can be downloaded here:

[http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbaem/index\\_htm\\_files/EMHERF%20conference%202019%20booking%20form.pdf](http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbaem/index_htm_files/EMHERF%20conference%202019%20booking%20form.pdf)

The CBA EM autumn conference, in co-operation with Ice Age Journeys, will be on **Saturday November 23rd** from 10.30am to 5.30pm, at Newark Academy, London Road, Newark, Notts NG24 3AL.

The theme is **Sites and skills of the late Ice Age**. The conference will showcase some of the results from an HLF-funded enterprise to link the Ice Age Journeys project at Farndon Fields with the major Ice Age sites at Bradgate Park and Creswell Crags. The project has focused on mapping the Ice Age landscape and exploring past culture by making replica artefacts for use in resource boxes for primary schools. A flyer can be downloaded at:

[http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbaem/index\\_htm\\_files/CBA-EM%20Nov%202019%20programme.pdf](http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbaem/index_htm_files/CBA-EM%20Nov%202019%20programme.pdf)

Any queries should be addressed to David Ingham on 07717 866767 or [david.cba-em@albiondi.plus.com](mailto:david.cba-em@albiondi.plus.com)

## GROUP NEWS

The **Wreake Valley Fieldwork Group** held its first meeting on June 26th to see if it would be viable to set up a group in the Wreake Valley. Over a dozen people attended and four members agreed to form a planning group to take matters forward. A second full meeting was held on August 22nd. Bob and Linda Gale and Margaret Grindall from the Oadby and Wigston Group spoke about the types of activities they organise and the 'nuts and bolts' of fieldwalking. The next task is to find fields to walk...

We would very much welcome new members. If you would like further details please contact Jan Butler at [janbutler2609@btinternet.com](mailto:janbutler2609@btinternet.com)

**Hallaton Fieldworkers** have undertaken trial trenching and earthwork surveying at the mill mound close to their St Morrell's Chapel site. We will be following this up with a two-week excavation starting on September 13th. The excavation will have an Open Day on September 22nd, 11am - 3pm. Please contact [hallatonfwg@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hallatonfwg@yahoo.co.uk) for further information.

**Oadby and Wigston Group** is currently engaged in a programme of test-pitting in the Brocks Hill area of Oadby, seeking further information on Roman and Anglo-Saxon settlement that was identified when the estate was built. If any members live in that area and would like a test-pit in their garden, please let us know!

We have also just started a new season of fieldwalking near Little Stretton and have negotiated more fields to walk in the Saddington area. A visit to Flag Fen and Peterborough Cathedral has also been organised.

**Lutterworth Group** members ran a successful Archaeology Club with a local school, over a period of six weeks towards the end of term. The group successfully started a community test pit project in Walton, in June, and based ourselves at the Dog & Gun pub in the village. So far 5 pits have been dug and we still have a number to complete which may have to roll over into next year. The Festival of Archaeology saw us digging test pits at Cotesbach over successive weekends. Again, these were community based and we had great support, introducing many people to the pleasures of archaeology. In addition our Children's day was very popular with the wattle & daub experience being a great hit. We finished the Festival with Matthew Beamish giving a talk on Lidar and Dr Pam Fisher on Shopping and Leisure in 17th C Lutterworth, both of which were well attended.

**Melton Group** is gearing up for the new season of fieldwork.

In Rutland, a group of **Belton History Society** members has been fieldwalking and will become a local group of the Fieldworkers. Contact Pene Rowe at [Pene.Mayking@gmail.com](mailto:Pene.Mayking@gmail.com) for more information.

Similarly, a group of **Quorn Local History Group** members is forming a Fieldworkers Group. Contact John Adsley at [johnadsley@aol.com](mailto:johnadsley@aol.com).

## TRAINING

We will be running a course on **September 21st** on Object 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>

Due to building work at The University of Leicester the venue may have to change, we will notify course attendees once this is finalised.

We are also planning infield fieldwalking training. If you are interested, please email Peter Liddle at [peter.liddle51@gmail.com](mailto:peter.liddle51@gmail.com) for details. The course is subject to getting permission from farmers.

Over the winter ULAS will be running an exciting programme of Saturday training courses on a wide range of archaeological field skills including how to set up a project, desk-based research, fieldwalking, test-pitting, excavation, reading the landscape, recording historic buildings, photogrammetry, report writing and archiving. Each course will cost £20. Booking details will be circulated to members when available.

## PETE'S COURSES

A course of 6 lectures on **Key Projects in Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeology** by Peter Liddle starts at Melton Carnegie Museum on Friday September 13th at 11am. The course costs £30 or £6 per lecture. There is no lecture on 4th October. All welcome.

## LECTURE AT WYMESWOLD

Our friends at **Wolds Historical Organisation** have a lecture on Tuesday September 17th, 7.45pm in the upstairs meeting room of Wymeswold Memorial Hall, Clay Street, Wymeswold, LE12 6TY

Michèle Sanders will speak on **Animal magic and the Anglo-Saxon horse burials at Broughton Lodge**. The Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Broughton Lodge,

Willoughby on the Wolds, was excavated in haste between May and September 1965 in advance of a new bridge over the Fosse Way (A46). In addition to 120 human burials, the remains of five or more horses were discovered, of which two were whole-horse skeletons, both apparently young and healthy at the time of their death. Michèle Sanders is the daughter of the excavator, the late Malcolm Dean.

Non-members most welcome but will be asked to contribute £3.00. No need to book as there is (usually!) plenty of spare seats.

## EXCAVATION NEWS

**ULAS** has been busy this summer. At **Burnmill Road, Market Harborough** the stripping of a large site on the northern edge of the town, following geophysical survey and evaluation, has revealed a dense spread of Iron Age and Roman archaeology across two large fields. A north-south multi-phase boundary ditch flanks the western edge of the site with a handful of Iron Age pottery sherds recovered from excavated sections. An adjoining east-west ditch runs the length of Field 1, forming a large arc as it heads east.



*Large ditch terminals are excavated at Burnmill Road.*

This ditch also appears to contain several re-cuts, with finds including pottery (some possibly of a 'Belgic' style), slag and animal bone. Within the curve of the large arcing ditch several large banana-shaped short gullies have revealed themselves, two showing evidence of structural post holes at either end. The fills appear relatively organic and finds rich with initial processing of bulk samples showing signs of iron working debris. A scatter of discrete features has also been excavated, some containing further slag and pottery. Much remains to be done with dark organic rich ditches in the east of the field yet to be tackled and an additional field to the east that promises further complex archaeology.

At **Gilmorton** trial trenching in the village core revealed ditches and post holes associated with potential post-medieval properties fronting on to the

street. Stripping revealed medieval quarry pits that were later sealed under a medieval or early post-medieval building on a long and narrow plot of land with one narrow end lying on the street frontage. The building was defined by a rectangular plan of post holes with associated surfaces, whilst the rear of the property appeared to be sub-divided with ditches and further post holes.

At **Brooksby Quarry** stripping of a new area revealed a north-south pit alignment, a large enclosure with entrances on two sides and a circular feature at its centre and to its west a concentration of roundhouses and other features. Both the enclosure and buildings were associated with pottery of mid-late Iron Age date, but a small assemblage of worked flint from the roundhouse area might indicate Bronze Age activity in the vicinity. A small pit of uncertain date, with burnt stones and charcoal was located to the south of these linear features. To the north was a very deep but also undated, circular enclosure.

At **The Thring Centre** in the historic core of Uppingham a watching brief was carried out during rebuilding of a listed wall thought to be associated with a 17th century manor house. A north-south wall and a rectangular stone structure against the west wall of the area were recorded but there were no indications of medieval activity on this frontage.

At **Oakham** evaluation adjacent to a large Iron Age & Roman site excavated a few years ago revealed only a single undated meandering ditch, while at **North Kilworth** a small evaluation revealed prehistoric settlement activity associated with Iron Age ditches and a possible roundhouse.

**Trent & Peak Archaeology** completed their work at **Bottesford**. As well as the Iron Age and Roman features previously mentioned there were Anglo-Saxon features.

**CFA** have followed up geophysics in **the Lutterworth East Development Area**. Close to the M1 Junction 20 are burial mounds and an Iron Age farmstead. Elsewhere in the area is an area of Iron Age and Roman enclosures and an area of droeways and enclosures Anglo-Saxon sunken featured buildings have been located.

**Oxford Archaeology** have excavated a pit alignment and a large empty enclosure of Iron Age and Roman date at **Hugglescote**.

**Headland Archaeology** have excavated a small area of Roman features close to **Magna Park**.

## OAKHAM CASTLE EXCAVATION

The 2019 community excavation was highly successful despite some wet weather, extending areas started by Time Team and looked at last year. North of

the Great Hall the building in the courtyard proved to be approximately 6m wide and just over 20m in length with sturdy mud-bonded stone walls, divided into two large rooms with a doorway on its east side. Early features included a hearth against the east wall, which produced a small quantity of melted lead, and a stone-capped drain exiting the building via the doorway. After a period of neglect, the building was remodelled, its north end rebuilt with the inclusion of two large key-hole shaped stone hearths inside the building and a large stone platform built outside against the north wall, perhaps a brewhouse where hearths were needed for both roasting the malt and boiling the mash, two key processes in brewing beer.



*A volunteer from Operation Nightingale, excavates a key-hole shaped hearth at Oakham Castle.*



*The remains of the pilaster corner buttress on the chamber block west of the hall.*

The second area, west of the hall, clarified the finds from the earlier work. The earliest feature was a large stone structure, some 7m wide and 15m long, built against the curtain wall and probably the chamber block. Its stonework included fine ashlar masonry and a flat pilaster buttress (typical of the 12th or early 13th century) on the south-east corner of the building. It is now apparent that the earlier of the two walls discovered by Time Team was part of a pentice (covered) walkway which connected the chamber block with a doorway in the north aisle of the great hall. Later, probably in the late 14th century, the walkway was demolished and replaced by a new stone building (Time Team's later wall), and a timber porch supported

by sturdy vertical timber posts resting on large square padstones was added. A third building also appears to have been built against the curtain wall immediately south of the chamber block. It is possible that these structures may include the great chapel and the king's two great chambers mentioned in 1373, or the new chapel and chamber built in 1375 for the visit of Edward III, which were connected to the hall via a passageway which was stone walled, with a tiled roof and three glazed windows.



Some finds from this year's dig: L-R, A Nuremberg jetton (Hans Schultes 1553-1612), a hooked clasp for fastening decorative elements of clothing (15th or 16th century), and an arrowhead (long barbed variant).

Further information on the dig can be found at <https://ulasnews.com/tag/oakham-castle/>

## BRADGATE PARK EXCAVATION

As this is the subject of our September lecture we will only briefly describe this year's excavations which were all in Bradgate House. Five areas were excavated. Two were in the front courtyard area on either side of the stone building excavated in 2017. They showed that, as was previously suspected, it was part of a complex of buildings with apparently stone buildings running to the west and brick buildings to the east. A garderobe and ?stair turret were attached to the east wall of the '2017' building and to the east a well preserved brick hearth with flanking bread ovens suggests a kitchen.



A rich array of artefacts was found this year, including (L-R) a candle holder, a largely complete inlaid floor tile and a beautiful pilgrim's badge depicting the temptation of Adam and Eve.

To the north east of these trenches an area east of the Great Hall also continued earlier excavations and revealed a cellar or sunken room and walls of more buildings. North again in the 'Guest Lodgings' a brick fireplace and an area at the north end of the building

with a slate floor were excavated. There is much work to be done to date all these features, but they cast doubt on the traditional story of 'Lady Jane Grey's House'.

## INSPIRING BOSWORTH

**Inspiring Bosworth** is hosting free of charge lectures, walks and finds handling sessions at venues including Market Bosworth, Stoke Golding, Sutton Cheney, Dadlington and the Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre.

The events are themed around the Battle of Bosworth 1485 and explore issues such as the early rule of Henry VII and what the artefacts from the Battlefield landscape can tell us. To see what events are happening and get your free tickets visit:

<https://www.goleicestershire.com/Hinckley-and-Bosworth/inspiring-bosworth.aspx>

Inspiring Bosworth is managed by Leicestershire Promotions and made possible by funding support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Dixie Educational Foundation. If you have any queries regarding your ticket prior to the event, please contact Gemma Tallis by email: [gemma.tallis@l-p-l.com](mailto:gemma.tallis@l-p-l.com)

## FESTIVAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

The 2019 Festival was a tremendous success with a record number of events and record attendances at events. We were lucky with a month of good weather (until the last few days) and, pending final figures, we are confident that in excess of 5000 people attended events. Planning for 2020 will start soon and will almost certainly run throughout July again.

## WENDY SCOTT

Wendy Scott, the county's longstanding Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme, has left her post to start a PhD at the University of Leicester. It is at present unclear what future arrangements will be, but the Fieldworkers are involved in discussions.

## CONTACT US

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Contributions welcome!

Our webmaster is Mathew Morris who also welcomes details of events and news.

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