



# ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

No. 68 AUTUMN 2024



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## OUR NEW PATRON

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His Majesty King Charles III became the Patron of the Royal Archaeological Institute in May. We are honoured and delighted, especially as the King has long shown enthusiasm for our sphere of activities – archaeology, buildings, and landscape. In 1967 the young Prince went to Cambridge University to read archaeology and anthropology at Trinity College. Professor Charles McBurney, who was the Prince's Archaeology professor, led the first modern excavations at La Cotte de St Brelade in 1968, and the Prince took part in the dig. His Royal Highness is now Patron of Jersey Heritage's La Cotte de St Brelade Archaeological Project. He is also Patron of the Mary Rose Trust; he made a dive on the site, and was present in 1982 when the ship was raised.

The Prince changed to History for the second part of his degree, and spent a term studying Welsh language and history at the University College of Wales, in Aberystwyth. He graduated in 1970 and was awarded an MA in 1975.

More recently, His Royal Highness has been championing traditional craft and heritage skills. He was involved in the redesign of the house and gardens at Hillsborough, and has helped Historic Royal Palaces in their work to make the castle into one of the most significant tourist attractions in Northern Ireland. We are sincerely grateful for His continuing support of our areas of interest.

## EDITORIAL

Katherine Barclay

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At the State Opening of Parliament (17 July), key themes in His Majesty's speech included 'growth', 'stability' and 'service', which were reflected in legislative proposals by the new government, to accelerate development, and to improve standards of education and young people's well-being.

To further these ends, the Education Secretary announced a review of school curricula – 'an independent review of all key stages, and the creation of a new curriculum which all state schools (including academies) will be required to follow. There will be greater emphasis on cultural learning and life skills'. Professor Becky Francis CBE has been appointed Chair. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-curriculum-and-assessment-review>

Meanwhile, newly created Skills England, chaired by Richard Pennycook CBE, will assume the functions of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) to try to unify national and local governmental efforts to meet skills needs. This link covers both organs: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/about/skills-england/>

The Campaign for the Arts and Warwick University have published a study of the UK's arts and culture sectors. The report brings together research and official statistics on arts funding, provision, engagement, education and employment to highlight the challenges the UK faces to maintain its global reputation for culture and heritage. The authors wish the report to be seen as a 'call to action' for the sector. See <https://www.campaignforthearts.org/reports/the-state-of-the-arts/>

2 Please use these opportunities to comment and so keep our interests afloat.

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

### Archaeological Achievement Awards

These awards, which are now run by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) with the support of a steering group, celebrate archaeological achievements from across vthe United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. There are five categories, and the Awards have a number of cross-cutting themes that aim to help us consider the wider challenges and opportunities to be addressed in archaeology to demonstrate its wider public value. Judges include representatives from across the sector.

Award categories:

- Public Dissemination or Presentation
- Engagement and Participation
- Early Career Archaeologist
- Learning, Training and Skills
- Archaeology and Sustainability

There will be one award for overall Outstanding Achievement.

The Institute is continuing to sponsor the Early Career Archaeologist Award.

Nominations close on Wednesday 25 September. The next awards ceremony will be held at The Temple of Peace, Cardiff, on Friday 22 November 2024.

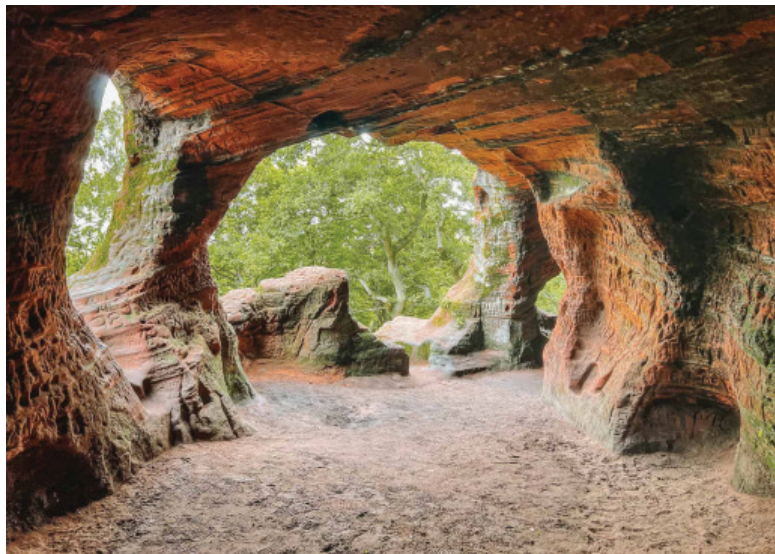
See more at <https://www.archaeologyuk.org/our-work/archaeology-awards.html>

### Council for British Archaeology Festival 2024

The CBA annual Festival of Archaeology was held from 13–28 July 2024, with the theme ‘Archaeology and Creativity’.

The Institute once again sponsored Youth Day during the CBA’s Festival of Archaeology. Taking place online on 24 July, the event saw the release of a new Young Archaeologists’ Club (YAC) resource pack for 8–16-year-olds – Archaeology and Community. The pack was developed by some of the CBA’s Young Advisors and student placements and includes a range of activities such as 3D modelling, mapmaking, storytelling through tattoos and creating a ritual deposition.

Nanny’s Rock, still from a talk on conservation of rock-cut dwellings given by Sophie Pearson at the CBA Festival Early Careers conference



## ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE RESEARCH GRANTS

The Institute awards the following grants annually:

**Tony Clark Fund** Up to £500 for archaeological work and dating

**Bunnell Lewis Fund** Up to £750 towards archaeology of the Roman period in the UK

**RAI Award** Up to £5000 towards archaeological work in the UK

Please download an application form at <http://www.royalarchinst.org/grants> or write to the Manager.

Closing date for applications: 9 December 2024. Awards announced in February 2025.

My Heritage, a new youth-focused photography project, was launched during the day. The project is being delivered in partnership with Photoworks as part of the CBA's Reconnecting Archaeology project funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund. My Heritage is seeking applications from young people who are keen to develop their creative photography practice with support from Photoworks and an experienced artist mentor. The participants will help the CBA explore how it reimagines what archaeology is for contemporary audiences.

Throughout the day a series of blogs showcasing the work of placement students and the CBA's Youth advisors were released. These can be found in the A Day in Archaeology section of the CBA website.

The day ended with the annual Early Careers Conference delivered by the CBA and Cifa's Early Career Special Interest Group, offering students and early career archaeologists a platform and chance to gain presentation experience. Recordings of many of the presentations can be found on the CBA YouTube channel. The dates for the 2025 Festival of Archaeology are 19 July–3 August and the theme is 'Wellbeing'.

## Current Archaeology Awards 2025

The 2025 awards will be presented at *Current Archaeology Live! 2025* on 1 March at University College London's Institute of Education. Each category is the Best of the Year for: Research Project, Rescue Project, Book, or Archaeologist. Voted for entirely by the public – there are no panels of judges – the awards celebrate the projects and publications that made the pages of the eponymous magazine over the past year, and the people judged to have made outstanding contributions to archaeology. The shortlists, and how to vote, will be on their website soon at <https://archaeology.co.uk/vote>

## RAI Dissertation Prizes

The RAI awards prizes for dissertations on a subject concerned with the archaeology or architectural history of Britain, Ireland and adjacent areas of Europe. In odd-numbered years, the competition is for the best dissertation submitted by a Master's student. In even-numbered years, the Tony Baggs Award is given to the best dissertation submitted by an undergraduate in full-time education. Nominations are made by University and College Departments. The winner will receive

£500 and the opportunity for a paper based on the dissertation to be published in the *Archaeological Journal*. The chief criteria considered are (a) quality of work and (b) appropriateness to the interests of the RAI as reflected in the journal. The prize will be presented at the Institute's December meeting.

## RAI Cheney Bursaries

As a result of a bequest left by Frank Cheney, the Institute has a small fund of money to enable students to attend conferences or RAI meetings. An allocation is available annually from which individuals can apply for a maximum sum of £250. Please check with our Manager that money remains in the yearly fund before you apply. Students who wish to apply for a bursary should email [admin@royalarchinst.org](mailto:admin@royalarchinst.org) or write to our Manager,

RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BE, at least six weeks before the event they wish to attend, stating: the institution in which they study, the event they wish to attend, the sum of money requested, a breakdown of how the money would be spent and a summary (up to 250 words) of why they would like to attend the event and in what way this would be useful to them. Successful applicants may be asked to produce a brief report of the event for the Institute. A bursary was awarded to cover travel costs for the Dissertation Prize winner to attend the presentation; two have been awarded for students to help them to attend the joint RAI and Tees Heritage Trust Joint Conference 2024: *A Neolithic Salt Production Site at Street House, Loftus, N-E Yorks.*, taking place 13–15 September.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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**Please note** that **non-members are not covered by the Royal Archaeological Institute's Public Liability Insurance** and they must arrange their own insurance to enable them to attend Institute Meetings.

*Places are limited, so please book promptly.*

## Forthcoming in 2025

**Spring Meeting** in May, led by Peter Ginn (details to be confirmed).

**Conference** to be held in April, as a prelude to a National Iron Age Research Strategy, at Cardiff University, jointly with the Cambrians, Prehistoric Society, and others (details to be confirmed).

**More information will be made available on our website as soon as possible.** Once events are confirmed, full information and booking forms will be on the Institute's Meetings and Visits Programme page, <http://www.royalarchinst.org/events/meetings>

If you would like further details of any meetings sent to you, please send your email or postal address to the Manager, RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, London W1J 0BE or [admin@royalarchinst.org](mailto:admin@royalarchinst.org)

## MEETING NOTES

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### 2023 Summer Meeting to the Lune Valley – Addendum:

#### A Roman Stone in Heysham Church

*Lindsay Allason Jones*

When the Institute visited St Peter's Church, Heysham Village, during the 2023 Summer Meeting to the Lune Valley, I noticed a rectangular, buff sandstone block of Roman date leaning nonchalantly against the south wall next to the famous tenth-century hogback. Having just published the *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani* volume which covers Lancashire, CSIR 1.11, I found this somewhat irksome as the stone had been unknown at the time of publication.

This summer I returned to Heysham to study the rather battered stone, which had started life as a typical double-corded frame of second- to third-century date. Such stones were prepared to take an inscription to record the erection of a building or as a dedication to an emperor or a deity or even, on occasions, an epitaph. The face has been retrimmed, sloping to an angled, off-centre, circular hole (diam.: 20mm) roughly cut through the thickness of the stone. The hole is slightly countersunk in the centre of a dished area with incised radiating grooves leading from the rim of the hole to end in a ring of dots. The stone's measurements are W: 71–4cm, H: 51–4cm, T: 22cm.

It is not clear if the face of the stone was always blank, had once had a painted inscription, or if the letters were removed in the repurposing process when the hole was drilled through – which the verger told me during my first visit was so the stone could be used for washing feet on Maundy Thursday. Sadly, so far, efforts have failed to discover when the stone reached the church, where it came from – the nearest Roman fort is Lancaster – or when it was last used for the Maundy Thursday feet washing.



Heysham's recycled Roman stone (photo L. Allason-Jones)

For similar double-cabled frames from Roman sites in the hinterland of Hadrian's Wall, see *CSIR* 1.11, no. 226 (Maryport, Cumb.), no. 232 (Ribchester, Lancs.), no. 235 (Bowes, Co. Dur.). See also *CSIR* 1.6, no. 249 (Vindolanda, Northumb.).

My thanks are owed to Prof. David Breeze for his help in recording this stone.

*CSIR Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani: Corpus of Sculpture of the Roman World. Great Britain.*

Allason-Jones, L. 2023, *CSIR* 1.11. *The Hinterland of Hadrian's Wall and Derbyshire.*

Coulston, J.C., and Phillip, E.J. 1988, *CSIR* 1.6. *Hadrian's Wall West of the North Tyne and Carlisle.*

### Corrigendum

Richard Andrews took part in excavations in 1977 and 1978 at the chapel and adjoining cemetery of St Patrick's, Heysham village. He was amused by the comment about the size of the rock-cut graves in the report of the 2023 Summer Meeting. This photograph taken during the 1978 excavations clearly demonstrates that the articulated bodies, of students at any rate, could fit into the graves!

Potter, T.W., and Andrews, R.D. 1994, 'Excavation and Survey at St Patrick's Chapel and St Peter's Church, Heysham, Lancashire, 1977-8', *Antiqs J.* 74, 55-134.



The rock-cut graves at Heysham (photo R. Andrews)

### Report of the Spring Meeting at Newark, 1 April 2024

*Brian Kerr, Alan Scott and Sue Shaw*

With our guide, Mark Gardiner, we assembled outside the magnificent parish church of Newark. From all angles, rearing up wherever the attractively diverse townscape allows, St Mary Magdalene is the star of the show, its lofty spire of the fourteenth century adorned with canopied lucarnes at four levels. Within, four piers at the crossing and massive rib vaulting in the crypt (now the treasury) are relics of the priory of 1180. The present church was begun around 1230 and largely complete by the late fifteenth century, with transepts added in the sixteenth. Almost cathedral size, being the sole parish church hereabouts

and benefitting from the profits of wool and cloth, this is now the Grade I highlight of a conservation area. To the north, beside the old song school, the burial ground is a public garden.

From the west door the vista down the long Perpendicular nave, under a restored oak ceiling, culminates in the sixteenth-century rood screen and then a large, gilded reredos of 1937 by Betjeman's hero Sir Ninian 'incomparable' Comper. There is important glass from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The church endured rough treatment in the so-called 'English' Civil War. Restoration by Sir Gilbert Scott ensured survival and has allowed us to enjoy an anthology of later glass. W.D. Caroe created side chapels, the one for/of St George a dark-panelled memorial to the Sherwood Foresters regiment (1920). A vast painting, *The Raising of Lazarus*, is in such need of a clean that one cannot tell if the art merits a resurrection of its own.

The Fleming brass of 1363 is one of England's largest, but we had not time enough to linger over the misericorded choir stalls of the 1520s. Did anyone get to see the library over

the south porch? However, we were able to note the seventeenth-century font and three monuments with busts. And the bizarre 'trinity' stone head: three noses, three mouths and far from pretty!

A rare sixteenth-century panel beside the Markham chantry reminded us that to be young, well-off and medieval had a tedious downside: no stroll in the woods was safe, it seems, from ambush by a gleeful trio of skeletons cackling 'As ye are now, so once were we; as we are now, so shall ye be'. But at least the painted skeleton here was into improv: offering the rich merchant a carnation while, with the other ex-carnated hand, pointing to a grave.

Simon Jenkins, awarding this church four stars, enthused about the contribution large town churches can and must make to the life of their communities. Indeed, St Mary Magdalene's Reawakening



Looking W down the nave of St Mary Magdalene Church, Newark, with Mirabilé rehearsing at the crossing (photo J.B. Kerr)

project was granted £2.5 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund not only for repairs but to establish the building as a social and cultural hub for the town. It recently held a workshop on heritage-related regeneration, and the Institute's visit (the first since 1989) had to compete, somewhat, with rehearsal by an impressive concert choir, *Mirabilé*.

Newark Castle is a ruin, with a Norman gatehouse on its northern side, and the spectacular river frontage on the west side. Newark formed a stronghold for Royalist forces in the East Midlands, and withstood several sieges, assisted by strong artillery defences of which the Queen's Sconce survives. Unfortunately, most of the castle was demolished, at some point after the surrender of the King's forces at the end of the first Civil War in 1646.

Archaeological excavation has shown that there was an enclosed cemetery in use between c. 950 and 1070. The remains of a motte and bailey castle have also been found, probably built in the winter of 1068–9 as part of the military campaign to re-establish Norman control, also known as the Harrowing of the North.

By 1086 the manor of Newark was in the hands of the Diocese of Lincoln, and it remained in episcopal ownership until 1547. In 1135 King Henry I granted Bishop Alexander of Lincoln a charter to permit him to divert the Fosse Way to the east, which allowed for the construction of a larger castle on a rectangular enclosed courtyard plan. Philip Dixon suggested to us that Alexander was taking advantage of Newark's situation, on the Trent, the Fosse Way, and the Great North Road, and of increased traffic and trade as the North's economy recovered from the impact of the Harrowing. Only two sections of Alexander's castle and palace remain; the gatehouse – one of the finest examples to survive from this period – and a tall, thin tower in the south-west corner. An elaborate Romanesque doorway from the castle has been reconstructed from excavated fragments and can be seen today in the nearby Registry Office. On our visit we saw the remains of Alexander's primary gateway, built



The spire, St Mary Magdalene Church, Newark  
(photo J.B. Kerr)



Very fine ashlar masonry of the early 12th-century gate at Newark Castle (photo J.B. Kerr)

in very fine ashlar, which was extended with massive buttresses later in the twelfth century. We were also shown into the upper floors of the Gatehouse and the interior of the south-west Tower.

There was a substantial remodelling of the castle between 1280 and 1430 with the west curtain wall being torn down and rebuilt but with its north end nearer the river. The evidence of apartments and of two halls can be seen in this wall. The work included the construction of the vaulted undercroft that we visited (now used for weddings). In the fourteenth to early sixteenth centuries, new windows and fireplaces were inserted, one window including the arms of Thomas Rotherham (Bishop of Lincoln 1472–80).

The castle reverted to the Crown in 1547, and thereafter was let to a series of noble occupants; the Earl of Rutland paid a peppercorn rent in 1581 on condition that he rebuilt and maintained the buildings, which were said to be ‘in great decay and ruin for want of repairing ...’.

The site was partly developed by the Duke of Newcastle, to whom it was leased in the eighteenth century, and the addition of further buildings continued into the nineteenth century. The castle was conserved at government expense in 1845–8 under the surveyorship of Anthony Salvin: a bath house was constructed in the grounds, and the cattle market on part of the site. A garden was opened in the grounds in 1877, and the Gilstrap Public Library (now the Registry Office) followed in 1883. In 1887 the cattle market was moved to the opposite bank of the Trent, and a public park was created in time for Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee, with simultaneous further conservation (albeit to a lower standard than Salvin’s work).

Following building analysis in the 1990s, a new development plan is being informed by further analysis and new excavations. We are grateful to Sarah Clarke, the Project Delivery Manager for Newark Castle, who provided us with a copy of the Conservation Management Plan on which this summary is based, and to Professor Philip Dixon, who summarised the key points of the extensive research on the castle. Through their good offices (and those of Pamela Marshall, who unfortunately could not attend), we were able to visit parts of the

castle that are not usually open to the public.

Lastly we visited the National Civil War Centre, opened in 2015 in buildings originally occupied by the Magnus School, endowed by Thomas Magnus, a churchman and diplomat who served Henry VIII. The original sixteenth-century school still stands, with additional school buildings from the early nineteenth century. First remodelled as a museum and offices in 1914 when the school moved from the centre of town, it had further restoration and conversion work in 2014–15 to add an entrance foyer, shop and other visitor facilities.

The exhibits tell the story of the English Civil Wars, focusing on Newark, a Royalist town. It suffered short sieges relieved by Royalists in early 1644 and January 1645, but a third plague-stricken siege lasted from November 1645 to May 1646, when, on the King's orders, the townsmen surrendered to a Scottish army. Afterwards the castle was slighted and most of the earthwork defences surrounding the town destroyed. The impressive remains of one sconce survive in the corner of a children's park.

The exhibits include surgical equipment for the treatment of war injuries, not very different from equipment still used today, and a reminder of the damage caused to the human body by seventeenth-century weapons and ordnance. Perhaps 5 per cent of the population died from war-related causes. Recent research has established that significant efforts were made to look after wounded men, particularly by the Parliamentary army, and suggests that the medical treatments used were more successful than we might have supposed.

The museum benefits from several items on loan from the descendants of Sir Thomas Fairfax, later Lord Fairfax, appointed by Parliament as commander-in-chief of the New Model Army in 1645 and substantially responsible for its formation. These include a sword



Newark Castle Gatehouse – an early 12th-century window, blocked with an inserted 16th-century window (photo J.B. Kerr)



The Fairfax wheelchair (photo S. Shaw)

with a double-edged blade, bearing the scars of battle, but the surprising item is his wheelchair.

It looks like an ordinary leather-upholstered chair with arms, mounted on a three-wheeled carriage, the single rear wheel acting as control. There is a footrest at the front and control mechanisms on the arms. The wheels are solid wood with metal tires, suitable for outdoor use. It is self-propelling, not designed to be pushed, throwing light on Fairfax's character: he was not a man to give up.

His cousin Brian Fairfax, writing in the 1680s, attributed Fairfax's need for the wheelchair to gout and the stone. However, like most generals at this period, Fairfax put himself at risk by leading from the front, was wounded at least three times, and his wounds continued to trouble him. Making this wheelchair must have been well within the capabilities of his estate workers, showing that by the seventeenth century a person with sufficient resources could mitigate disability. The question most worth researching may be 'Who designed it?'

# LECTURES

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## Access to Lectures Online

If the speaker permits, their lecture will be on our YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@royalarchaeologicalinstitu3335>

## Royal Archaeological Institute Lecture Programme and Abstracts: 2024/5

Meetings are held from October to May, on the second Wednesday of the month, at 5.00 pm in the Rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BE. In May, the lecture will be preceded at 4.45 pm by the Institute's Annual General Meeting.

Tea will be served at 4.30 pm, or before the AGM, at 4.15 pm.

For enquiries, the Institute's mobile number is 07847 600756.

The following lectures (October to May) will be held on Wednesdays in the Rooms of the Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BE. The Chair will be taken at 5 pm. We will continue where possible to record lectures which will be available on YouTube for those members who are unable to attend.

Members may introduce a guest. The meetings are open to members of the British Archaeological Association on a reciprocal basis.

Tea and biscuits will be served at 4.30 pm.

## 2024

### 9 October

#### **The Maison Domat, Mirefleurs (France): stories of Ancient and Modern Celts, Romans, Bourbons, Stuarts and Hollywood**

*Professor John Collis*

A number of intersecting stories spin off from a grant given to me in the 1970s by the Institute, to explore the origins of Iron Age oppida in the Auvergne (Aulnat, Corent, Gondole, Gergovie), in the area occupied by the Arverni, well known for its kings Luernios and Bituitos, and the leader of the Gallic revolt against Julius Caesar, Vercingetorix. That work led to the establishment of a research group for the Iron Age, l'Association pour la Recherche

sur l'âge du Fer en Auvergne, which has its base in a sixteenth-century house, the Maison Domat, in the village of Mirefleurs, near Clermont-Ferrand. The house itself is of architectural and art-historical interest but was also used in the process under which the 'Modern Celts' (inhabitants of Brittany, Ireland and Britain) were 'invented' in the sixteenth century by George Buchanan, and with such figures as Bremond Domat, John Stuart (Duke of Albany and Comte d'Auvergne), the Medici family, the kings of France, and was even the background for a Hollywood version of Cinderella.

### 13 November

#### **To be advised**

Details will be made available on our website as soon as possible.

**11 December**

**Stone heads in the Roman military zone and what they tell us about people**

*Lindsay Allason-Jones*

The conundrum of how one can tell the date of a carved stone head is one I had to wrestle with when preparing the *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani* Volume I, Fascicule 11 (see above, 7). This lecture discusses when human heads were first carved in Britain, why they are still carved and what they tell us about the human mind throughout the ages.

**2025**

**8 January**

**A Mesolithic experience: Excavations at Rubha Port an t-Seilich, Isle of Islay**

*Steven Mithen*

In January 2009, pigs snuffling in the bracken on east coast of the Isle of Islay, western Scotland, turned up some small pieces of flint on a small terrace known as Rubha Port an t-Seilich (RPAS). Investigations in 2010 and 2013, followed by excavations between 2017 and 2023, have shown RPAS to be one of the best-preserved and most-frequented Mesolithic sites in the UK, with activity likely starting in the Late Glacial and continuing for 5,000 years until the arrival of the Neolithic. It is also one of the most beautifully located, enabling one to see much of the wildlife also seen and sometimes exploited by the Mesolithic people. In my talk I will recall those excavations and explain how their finds are providing insights into Mesolithic lifestyles and how they changed over time. What was the attraction of that specific location? How does its campsite fit into the mobile settlement pattern of the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers in western Scotland? What

drove the changes in technology that we find through the sequence of excavated deposits?

**12 February**

**In Search of Britain's Oldest Pubs**

*James Wright, Triskele Heritage*

Numerous claims are made from all corners of the isles to be Britain's oldest pub. Pubs have been the beating heart of communities for centuries and there are firm regional rivalries when it comes to competing for the very oldest boozier. Is it ever possible to come close to identifying which establishment has been serving up the beers for the longest? Using a combination of archaeological and documentary evidence, this talk will delve deeply into the historical development of British pubs through the mediaeval period. Can we begin to define the physical characteristics and date of pubs from their architecture? The claims of well-known buildings will be put to the test and those of more obscure pubs brought to the fore. Just where is Britain's oldest pub?

**12 March**

**Archaeology in a nature and climate crisis**

*Hannah Fluck*

We are all aware that we are in the midst of a global nature and climate crisis, and discussions of the urgency of responses, for nature recovery, for looking after the natural world dominate media and public dialogue. However, it is less clear where and how archaeology fits within this context. What is the role of an archaeologist in a nature and climate crisis? How can we balance caring for our cultural and natural heritage? As the biggest private landowner in the country and a conservation charity with responsibility for nature, beauty and heritage for everyone, we are exploring the answers to these questions on a daily basis. This presentation will

draw on those experiences to try to pose some answers, and some challenges for an archaeology that is fit for such a tumultuous future.

## 9 April

### **Digging deeper: Initial results from the A428**

*Simon Markus*

Archaeological excavations conducted by MOLA ahead of The A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvement Scheme revealed evidence for Iron Age Pioneer Settlements in the Claylands of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, as well as Roman development of infrastructure and food production. A portion of deserted medieval village was also excavated along with two eighth–ninth century AD ovens and a post-medieval mill.

## 14 May

### **The President's Lecture**

#### **Royal Archaeological Institute Past: Women and the RAI**

*Nathalie Cohen*

Past Presidents' Lectures have examined the history of the Royal Archaeological Institute and those presidents who have gone before. This presentation will examine the role of women in the RAI, drawing on research undertaken by the 'Beyond Notability' project, which seeks to explore the histories of women active in archaeology, history and heritage, as revealed in the archives of the Society of Antiquaries of London and the RAI. In particular the role and activities of our first female President, Dame Joan Evans, will be discussed.

## British Archaeological Association Meetings

Royal Archaeological Institute members are invited to attend the meetings of the BAA; please see <https://thebaa.org/meetings-events/lectures/annual-lecture-series/> for the 2024 programme. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month from October to May, at 5.00 pm in the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Non-members are asked to make themselves known to the Hon. Director on arrival and to sign the visitors' book.

## London and Middlesex Archaeology Society

### **Lecture Programme 2024–5**

All lectures take place on the second Tuesday of the month, 6.30–7.30 pm, and booking is thorough the LAMAS website <http://www.lamas.org.uk>. Many lectures will be hybrid, taking place in-person and as Zoom webinars. Please check the lecture details for the in-person location.

## Society of Antiquaries of London Autumn Lectures

Lunchtime lectures and Ordinary Meetings will be both online and in person, for all other events, please see the event page for specific details. For non-members of SAL, to pre-book please write to [events@sal.org.uk](mailto:events@sal.org.uk). All will be held at Burlington House, unless otherwise stated, on Thursdays at 5–6 pm.

3 October, **The Evliyan Marbles: Ottoman viewers of Athenian antiquities** *Elizabeth Key Fowden*

10 October, **A landscape of curiosities: the Priors Hall Roman villa estate** *Paddy Lambert*

17 October, **A date with the two Cerne Giants: results of the National Trust's excavation in 2020** *Michael J Allen*

24 October, **Caesar, Boulogne, Portus Itius and Thanet – All sorted now?** *Mark Samuel*

Wednesday 30 October, 9.30 am–6 pm: Conference, **Queer(ing) Space(s), from antiquity to the present** (*paid event*)

31 October, **Urban borehole surveys and the origins of the Roman Forum** *Nicola Terrenato*

14 November, **Architectural history after Summerson** *Steven Brindle*

21 November, **Battle, ballads, burning and the Bible: a new interpretation of 'Sueno's Stone' at Forres** *Jane Geddes*

28 November, **Investigating historic building myths** *James Wright*

**Tuesday** 3 December, 1–2 pm: Lunchtime lecture, **All the world's on discs** *Christian Liebl*

5 December, **Warhorse: the archaeology of a medieval revolution?** *Oliver Creighton*

## MISCELLANY

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### Change of Address

Please remember to advise the Manager of any change of address, especially if you rely on the postal service for notices.

### Privacy Statement

Members are asked to read our Privacy Statement which can be accessed from this link <https://www.royalarchinst.org/privacy> or via the lists at the bottom of the RAI website home page.

### Local contacts

If members have links to local or learned societies anywhere in the UK, could they please register them with our Manager; local contacts are so helpful in the running of meetings.

### The RAI office

The telephone number for our Manager is 07847 600756, the email is [admin@royalarchinst.org](mailto:admin@royalarchinst.org)

royalarchinst.org and the postal address is RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, London W1J 0BE. The RAI has no office in London, but our Manager will usually be available at this address on the second Wednesday of each month from October to May, between 11.00 am and 3.00 pm.

### The Institute's website

From our website at [www.royalarchinst.org](http://www.royalarchinst.org) all readers can download booking forms for our meetings, and see the full programme for the next conference. Please send any feedback or suggestions for future improvements to the web manager at [website@royalarchinst.org](mailto:website@royalarchinst.org)

### Access for members

If you are a member, and haven't yet got your online log-in for the members' area of our website, please contact the Manager

with your email address. You will be sent a username and password which you can use to login to our website using the boxes at the top of its first page. Once logged in, you will be able to change your password to something more memorable. Full members may access the journals.

## The *Archaeological Journal* online

The *Archaeological Journal* from Volume 1 (for 1844) onwards is now available to ordinary members via the members' area of our website. Log on with your user name and password. On the publications page, you will find a link that takes you to the Taylor and Francis website, where the entire run of the journal is now searchable and copies may be downloaded. Online, each year the Journal will be issued in two parts, the first in January and the second in June.

For associate members and others, these same volumes are available on a pay-per-view basis on Taylor and Francis' website. Volumes 1 to 120 are still freely available to all on the Archaeology Data Service website at <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/archjournal>

## Book reviews

As soon as they are ready, we are now putting online the book reviews prepared for the *Archaeological Journal*. Further information is available on the publications page.

## Online lectures

The video recording of the Institute's lectures at Burlington House to link them to our website is continuing, at a much-improved quality since the Society of Antiquaries' technological services upgraded their equipment. All members may view them

by logging in to the members' area of our website.

Some of the Society of Antiquaries' lectures are available to all and can be viewed at [www.sal.org.uk](http://www.sal.org.uk), under News and Events.

## Members' email addresses

We are still seeking email addresses from members, and when we have sufficient we could mitigate the impact of increased costs of distribution by making more information digitally available. The impact of high postage costs would be reduced if we could send out material as attachments to as many members as possible. These might include the notices of forthcoming meetings, the Annual Council Report, the programme card, and possibly the Newsletter. If you would be willing to receive information digitally, please send your email address to [admin@royalarchinst.org](mailto:admin@royalarchinst.org)

## Subscriptions

The current rates *by direct debit* are: Ordinary member, £35, Associate £15 or Student, £20; Life member, £750 or £525 if aged over 60. Life membership represents good value for both the member and the Institute and it shows a member's commitment to the Institute.

## Gifts

Under the gift aid scheme, if you are a taxpayer, the government will refund to the Institute, 25p in the pound of the value of your subscription. If you would like to help, please ask the Manager for a form.

Please consider making a donation or a legacy, and if you wish, stipulate the area of our work to which it should be directed. A sum of £25,000 will increase our annual

grant giving by £1,000. A legacy to the Institute, an exempt charity, is extremely tax-efficient.

## A Dig in Derry

Funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, a sizeable archaeological excavation has been taking place in Derry (NI) for the first time in a decade. The site is at Nailor's Row, a street of demolished houses, at the grass banking beneath the Derry Walls. Alastair Ruffell, a geologist with the Queen's University, Belfast (QUB) Community Archaeology programme, carried out a Ground Penetrating Radar scan to pinpoint the best position in relation to the city's defensive ditch. The excavation which followed, directed by Ruairi Ó Baoill, from

the Centre for Community Archaeology, QUB, ended on 18 September. This was a joint project with The Friends of Derry Walls, and pupils from local schools and members of the public took part. The site will feature in the next series of BBC Two's *Digging for Britain*.

Although the city sets its origins in the sixth century and is ascribed to St Columba, in the Thornhill/Culmore area of the city, evidence has been uncovered of settlements in the region in the Neolithic period.

Derry was the first planned city in Ireland and the last walled city to be built in Europe: its walls are Northern Ireland's largest state monument. The seventeenth-century fortifications were never breached, withstanding several sieges, including that in 1689, which lasted 105 days.

## THE DESTRUCTION OF DEGANWY

Richard Nevell

Deganwy Castle (Conwy) on the north coast of Wales is strikingly positioned on top of a 110m-high hill overlooking the estuary of the River Conwy. It is one of the most intriguing and complex examples of castle slighting in the Middle Ages.

Control of the castle changed numerous times, swapping between England and Wales. The castle was established in the late eleventh century by Robert of Rhuddlan to cement Norman rule in north Wales. The Welsh pushed the Normans out of Wales, and Deganwy eventually ended up in the hands of Llywelyn the Great, Prince of Gwynedd. The thirteenth century here was especially eventful: the castle was demolished and rebuilt twice, attacked, and used as a prison. As well as being linked to Welsh royalty through Llywelyn the Great, the castle also came under the control of Henry III and Prince Edward, later Edward I of England.

Various documents record that Deganwy Castle was destroyed or slighted on three occasions, each time by the Welsh as part of their conflict with the Angevins. According to the *Brut y Tywysogyon* (Jones 1952, 84), Llywelyn the Great demolished the castle in 1210; his son Dafydd ap Gruffydd demolished it in 1241 for similar reasons, according to the *Annales Cambriae* (Williams 1860, 83 n. 3). Only the final event when the Welsh captured the castle from the English in 1263 has been found in the archaeological record, and after that it was never rebuilt.

Leslie Alcock led excavations at Deganwy Castle between 1961 and 1966 (Alcock 1967). Most of the excavated evidence from the site relates to the castle's final phases, the rebuilding after 1241 under Henry III of England, and its eventual destruction in 1263. Though documentary sources record that the castle was slighted in 1210 and 1241, it is exceedingly difficult to judge to what extent this happened. Alcock's excavations did not recover evidence of these episodes, but that could be either because the evidence was obscured or destroyed by later activity, or it may lie in unexplored areas.

Demolishing a fortification before an opposing force advances on it suggests that time would be the main determining factor in how extensive the damage was. When King John adopted a similar tactic in 1215 his instruction to slight Chichester Castle in Sussex was ignored, and it is entirely possible that his orders to destroy the castles at Pevensey and Knepp in the same county were also overlooked. The archaeological and documentary records do not always match, and being able to evidence the destruction through the archaeological record is important to understanding what was involved.

The slighting of Deganwy in 1263 was extensive. The excavations in the 1960s found that around 450m of walling had been toppled and parts had even been undermined. Mining was an uncommon method of slighting a castle (Nevell 2020, 119–20). It seems the Welsh did not intend to repair the site in the future or make use of materials such as dressed stone in other projects. The destruction was extremely thorough and Alcock noted that 'this is a striking testimony to the authority, power and malice of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd'. The ditches are packed with rubble from the stone buildings, a sign of just how much effort was involved in the slighting.

Deganwy stands out for how definitive its destruction was. One of the challenges in the archaeological record, of distinguishing slighting from damage caused by attack or accident, often comes down to scale. The destruction of 1263 far exceeded anything that would have been required to overwhelm the castle through attack, and the extent of collapse rules out accident or decay. At many castles the evidence is not so unequivocal.

This kind of pre-emptive destruction is somewhat unusual for slighting. It was more common for the destruction of castles to be used as a punishment rather than to deprive an enemy of a fortification, though there are significant events that fit that format (Nevell 2020, 124–5). The extent of the destruction at Deganwy suggests something deeper than a purely military motivation. The castle that stood proudly on its hill in 1263 was English – it had been built by Henry III replacing a Welsh castle and was a symbol of the Angevin rule.

Destruction was personal. The loss of the castle in 1263 would have been a blow to Prince Edward's prestige. When he conquered Wales nearly two decades later, rather than rebuilding Deganwy, Edward established a new castle on lower ground with better access to the river, at Conwy. The new castle and borough made a clean break from a site connected to the memory of Welsh resistance. The settlement that lay just north beyond Deganwy's walls outlasted the castle but eventually faded and was replaced by Conwy; the modern settlement grew in the mid-twentieth century.

As with many castles slighted in the Middle Ages, most of the remains are now buried, but a visit to Deganwy is an excellent bookend to a trip to Conwy Castle.



The remains of Deganwy Castle (photo © Fred Vincent@castle-finders)

Alcock, L. 1967, 'Excavations at Degannwy Castle, Caernarvonshire, 1961–6', *Archaeol. J.* **124**, 190–201.

Jones, T. (ed.) 1952, *Brut y Tywysogyon or the Chronicle of the Princes, Peniarth MS. 20 Version*, Cardiff.

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## ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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NEXT ISSUE Copy for the next issue must reach the editor by the end of January 2025 for publication in April 2025.

THIS ISSUE'S COVER PICTURE: His Majesty King Charles III, the Institute's new Patron, visiting Dunnottar Castle, Aberdeenshire in 2019, while Prince of Wales.