

THE FIELDWORKER

NEWSLETTER OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK GROUP

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 2006/7 were enclosed with the trip information in the last newsletter. These will be at the same rate as last year. Reminders are being sent out to those who have not paid.

THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on Thursday September 21st at Jewry Wall Museum, St Nicholas Circle, starting at 7.30pm. The speaker will be **Peter Liddle**, Keeper of Archaeology for the County Museum Services. He will be speaking on **Roman Medbourne and the Big Roman Dig**, putting the 2005 excavations undertaken for Time Team into the context of over 30 years work.

DIARY DATES (At Jewry Wall, 7.30pm)

November 16th David Smith: Early Brick in Leicestershire

December 15th Christmas meeting

January 19th Wendy Scott: Portable Antiquities Scheme in Leicestershire

BOSWORTH BATTLEFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

Following on from the annual training day at Jewry Wall and the in-field training at Bosworth, the Group hopes to contribute further to the project to reconstruct the landscape history of the Battlefield Area. Fieldwalking at Bosworth will continue regularly for anyone who is interested. We would like to run a group at the weekend and also one during the week. If you are interested in helping please ring Wendy Scott on (0116) 265 8325 or e-mail wscott@leics.gov.uk. We are compiling lists and plan to have a meeting to organise the project in the next few weeks.

EVENTS AT DONINGTON le HEATH MANOR HOUSE

The Manor House is hosting a new exhibition from 8th September, of the work of local artist, Keith Hill, who died in December 2004. Keith was born in Whitwick and throughout his life painted and sketched the people and landscapes of North-West Leicestershire. The exhibition is at Donington until November 30th. Well worth a look.

17th September, 11am to 4pm, is **Medieval Mayhem**, our annual celebration of the Middle Ages with 3 re-enactment groups – all welcome (helpers particularly!). On **October 4th**, 7.30pm, **Nick Marshall** will be speaking on '**The Monks of War**' – a look at the military orders in the medieval period with

emphasis on the Knights Hospitaller. FREE, but number restrictions make booking essential - (01530) 831259.

On October 15th, 11am to 4pm, there will be **Hands on Tudors**. This year's theme will be buildings and discovery. On **November 2nd**, 7.30pm, **Peter Sommer** will be talking about the **Making of Green Valley** – this is a talk about the making of the TV series by the Producer. In order to cover costs there will be a charge of £5.00 per person, including tea/coffee. There are limited tickets available from Donington (phone -01530 831259).

NEWSLETTER & Leicestershire Landscapes

We hope you got the **Down to Earth** newsletter. If you have now got two copies we would welcome the spare one back as the mix up left us rather short of copies to sell. Sales of **Leicestershire Landscapes** have been very good and we have few copies left. Copies will be on sale at the next lecture on September 21st.

EXCAVATION NEWS

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) are now finishing off the **Vine Street** excavations in the City – billed as one of the largest Roman town excavations in Britain. Although the area lies wholly within the Roman/medieval town walls very little evidence of medieval occupation has been found. In addition to a cross roads they have uncovered what appears to be a townhouse, a small bathhouse and a large number of reception rooms overlooking a courtyard. There was evidence of smithing activity over a long period suggesting that some of the complex may be commercial. Around 200 burials of medieval date have been excavated but St Michael's Church, with which they are associated has yet to be identified, although a structure being excavated at present with plastered walls is a candidate. Finds from the site include a coin hoard of c400 coins and 2 curse tablets. At **Highcross Street** a spread of rubble turned out to be a collapsed Roman wall which once stood 8m tall. Around 6 tile bonding courses, a relieving arch and the springing of another arch were recorded. It is almost certainly the east range of the macellum and must have looked very like Jewry Wall. Cutting into it was a sunken featured building sealed by 9th -10th century deposits. An early Saxon brooch was found in the area. Under the collapsed wall was a stone wall defining the west edge of the main street. Hearths were found cutting into the edge of the street metalling along with many late Roman coins. One suggestion is that this may be a food stall. The **Shires** excavation have revealed 3 sunken featured buildings as well as Saxon pits and finds and Anglo-Saxon Leicester is, for the first time, coming into focus. Between **Great Central Street and Highcross Street** the former Pretty Legs factory site has been stripped revealing good medieval archaeology on the Highcross Street frontage and Roman deposits surviving beneath cellars.

Fosse Park and Ride Enderby. Trial trenching was undertaken by ULAS on behalf of the City and County Councils. The projected line of the Fosse Way Roman Road was confirmed, revealing the survival of the 'agger' or causeway on top of which the road was constructed. Roadside ditches and surfaces may indicate something of the construction methodology. Iron Age archaeological features indicate the presence of a small farmstead. **Barrow on Soar** – more than 40 individual lime kilns were discovered showing the technological development of the industry from the 17th/18th centuries to the

end of the 19th century. **St Mary's Court, Barwell.** Evaluation by trial trenching and excavation revealed a complex of medieval boundary ditches defining plots within the medieval village. An enigmatic stone founded circular building produced no dating evidence but is likely to be prehistoric.

OBITUARIES

We are sorry to report the death of **Jack Lucas, FSA** who masterminded what was probably the longest running excavation in the country at the small Roman town of Tripontium. Many of our members were involved in the excavations. Jack will be sadly missed.

We are also very sad to report the death of Pamela Kilby - a long-standing member who was always enthusiastic and supportive of the activities of our Group. Pamela's wishes were that any donations in her memory should be made to the LMAFG or the Friends of Jewry Wall Museum, of which she was a committee member.

UWAG

We are pleased to announce the formation of the Upper Welland Archaeological Group (AWAG) of which our committee member, John Lacey, has been elected chairman. The parishes being covered by the group are: Great Bowden cum Market Harborough, Lubenham, Foxton, Theddingworth, Laughton, Mowsley, Knaptoft, Husbands Bosworth, Sibbertoft, Marston Trussel, East Farndon and possibly Great Oxendon. The initial walks in Lubenham yielded an excellent group of early Saxon pottery which is particularly interesting, the first in the area. This is an excellent start for the group and we wish them well.

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER CERTIFICATE IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Have you considered converting your interest in archaeology into a recognised University qualification that can contribute towards a degree in Archaeology? The University's School of Archaeology offers a part-time certificate course over two years on the main campus, which many members of the Leicestershire Fieldworkers have undertaken during the last 30 years.

The course runs from 6pm-9.30pm on Thursday evenings during term time, amounting to thirty weeks each year, with occasional fieldtrips at weekends. The course covers the Prehistoric, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval Archaeology of Britain alongside modules on Archaeological Methods, Public Archaeology, and the Analysis of Archaeological Materials, Environmental Remains, and Pottery. Assessment of the course is by essays during term time with a single exam at the end of the first year.

The Certificate is one of the most comprehensive in the country and good value for money at £525 per year. If you are interested please contact the Course Director, Nick Cooper at the School of Archaeology, University of Leicester (0116)2522847/8 (email njc9@le.ac.uk) or Joan Lamb at Vaughan College on 0116 2517368. There is a course induction morning on Saturday 23rd September and the course begins on Thursday 28th at 6pm.

EAST LEICESTERSHIRE TREASURE

The County Council have asked the group to support the acquisition of the East Leicestershire Hoard and associated finds. This will involve raising some £300,000 plus money for conservation, publication, educational resources, museum display and storage. The Group agreed at the AGM to support the appeal and donate £1,000 and asked members to donate additional funds. Thanks to everyone who has donated already (over £1000 so far!). The project as a whole will cost over £600,000. Most will (we hope) come from the Lottery and other national funding bodies but your support, both financial and with letters of support for the project, could be crucial. Please fill in the slip below and send to: Peter Liddle, Archaeological Services Team, Room 500, Leics County Council, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8TE.

Cheques payable to **Leics County Council**

Name

Address _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____