

THE FIELDWORKER

NEWSLETTER OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS
(LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK GROUP)

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1. THE NEXT MEETING will be at 7.30pm on Thursday January 19th at Jewry Wall Museum, St Nicholas Circle, Leicester, LE1 4LB. The speaker will be John Baker on 'Landscapes of Governance' John Baker is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Name-Studies, University of Nottingham, and a part-time Lecturer for the Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge. His research and publications focus on Anglo-Saxon settlement, culture and society, and on the significance of place-names as part of a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of human impact on the landscape.

The study of Anglo-Saxon assembly sites is fundamental to our understanding of the origins and evolution of early medieval government; yet, with a few notable exceptions, it has been largely neglected by scholars of the period. The Landscapes of Governance project hopes to re-emphasise the administrative centrality of these sites and to provide a methodology for their study that allows researchers to investigate the genesis of public assembly and trace its development through the Anglo-Saxon and early Norman periods. This talk will outline the aims and some of the approaches adopted by the project, discuss some of the preliminary findings, and explain how local research groups or individuals can get involved.

2. DIARY DATES FOR 2011-2 (at Jewry Wall Museum at 7.30pm)

March 15th: Dr Neil Christie on 'Burh to Borough: The Wallingford Project'

May 17th: Paul Bowman on 'In Search of the Heartland of Mercia'

June 21st: AGM and Reports Meeting

September 20th: Sue Brown and Janet Spavold on Research into the Ticknall pottery industry

November 15th: Richard Buckley on Excavations at Highcross, Leicester

3. EXCAVATION NEWS

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) have been quite busy recently. At Ketton observation of the digging of a new fishing lake produced 2 ring ditches, both around 15m in diameter, and associated features. At **Cadeby Quarry, Kirkby Mallory** the end of the excavations produced half of a ring ditch of c45m diameter with associated post holes on its inner edge containing 2 trough-like features containing fire cracked pebbles. Cut into the eastern side of the ring ditch was a small sunken featured building with Anglo-Saxon pottery with another large sub-rectangular pit to the north. At **Leaders Farm, Lutterworth** geophysical survey picked up substantial ditches. Evaluation has shown them to be Iron Age in date. Roman ditches have also been found.

Albion Archaeology have evaluated a Roman site at **Sileby** following excellent geophysical results.

4. GROUP NEWS

Our **New Members Booklet** has been out of print for some time. It is now being brought up to date. If you would like a copy please contact Peter and it can be e-mailed or posted when it is finished.

The Husbands Bosworth Group has moved onto a field about 250m to the north - west of the Neolithic causewayed enclosure. The field, gravel over boulder clay, falls away in a gentle slope to the north. Fieldwalking was limited nearer the scheduled site due to a stubble-turnip crop but work on the lower part of the field has already turned up a significant scatter of worked flint near the cropped area. A concentration of cores and a

number of tools including several finely worked blades and scapers have been recorded on the shoulder of the slope. It is hoped that further work, when the cropped area nearer the SAM is cleared, will show a continuing pattern of flint deposition towards the crown of the hill. The site has also turned up a significant manuring scatter of pottery, of mainly pancheon-ware and Staffordshire but including a few possibly early Medieval and Roman sherds.

The Lutterworth Group has been rewalking a field that has previously yielded a very rare Early Bronze Age jet type button; these buttons are normally associated with burials, so we thought that we might find some grave goods. So far we have an end scraper, a transverse arrowhead and 4 scrapers and of course lots of flint flakes. One of the scrapers is very thick with steep retouch, another is beautifully worked all around the edge, and another is very thin with deep retouch on a dark brown flint. None of the scrapers appear to have any use wear so they may be grave goods!!

5. HALLATON TREASURE NEWS

The Hallaton Helmet launch event at Harborough Museum will be on January 28th, from 10.30 to 4pm. The helmet was a really high status silver cavalry helmet that had been buried, along with 7 cheek pieces, in ritual fashion at the Hallaton Iron Age shrine. As well as a chance to see it fresh from conservation at the British Museum there will be an event including Roman cavalry (in the town rather than the museum!) as well as activities in the museum itself. To accompany the permanent display of the helmet there will be an accompanying temporary exhibition launched on the same day called "*Revealing the Hallaton Helmet*" which will go into the discovery, conservation and interpretation of the helmet in more detail.

The 'Friends of the Hallaton Treasure' will be launched in February or early March. Please e-mail Peter on Peter.liddle@leics.gov.uk if you would like to be kept informed

6. HOARDS, HOUNDS AND HELMETS: A Conquest Period Ritual Site at Hallaton, Leicestershire

The publication by Vikki Score of the Hallaton ritual site will be out by the end of January. It will cost £30 (plus £4.75 p&p). Until the end of the month it will be available at £25 (plus £4.75 p&p). Please send your cheques to Leicester Archaeology Monographs, School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RH. Cheques should be made payable to the University of Leicester. This will be a very important publication for Leicestershire Archaeology.

7. GARETH PONTING

The Hallaton Group have suffered a second sad loss with the death of Gareth Ponting after a short illness. Condolences to Ce and to all Gareth's many friends.

8. MEDIEVAL LEICESTERSHIRE BOOK

The long awaited publication of our conference on the Archaeology of Medieval Leicestershire is inching towards completion. It has been stalled by circumstances beyond our control, but progress is being made and we hope to have this out by Easter. We are very aware that many people paid in advance for this book and we are very sorry for the delay.

9. COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING TRANSFORMATION PLAN

The Museum Service (now part of the Communities and Wellbeing sub-department) is being reorganised. An Action Plan is open to internal consultation. The management of Libraries, Museums and Adult Learning is being integrated. More news as individual circumstances become clear.

10. 2011/12 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thanks to everyone who has paid their subscriptions, which were due at the AGM in June. Only 70 people haven't yet paid at this point. If you are one of them, a form should be included with this newsletter. A quick response would be appreciated. If you have paid and still receive a form or if you no longer wish to receive the Fieldworker please let us know.

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