

Medieval Archaeology

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Coinages of William the Conqueror and William Rufus, an Eric Fletcher Fund grant



The 52nd International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo attracted researchers from across the world. With over 2,000 speakers from a huge variety of disciplines the event offers insight into all aspects of medieval history.

I had been invited to give a paper in a session on 'Topics in Medieval Numismatics'. My paper presented the initial findings of my ongoing doctoral research into the English coinages of William the Conqueror and William Rufus: I have been examining the surviving coins held in public collections, and searching for patterns that might shed light on life in late 11th-century England.

My investigation of the coins reveals a complex monetary administration with regional variation and differing traditions.

It suggests that different mints were using different weight standards, and that some mints adhered to high levels of standardisation while others show great variety. There is also evidence of differing minting practice between towns. The system was inherited from the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, and was changed very little at the change of regime in 1066. In fact the level and longevity of continuity from the earlier period is surprising; not only were the same Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian moneyer families in charge of mint activity throughout the period, but the variation in the coins continues at least to the death of William II. This contrasts with the accepted numismatic tradition that by the end of William I's reign the coinage had become standardised and strictly regulated across the kingdom.

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With a packed Newsletter filled with useful insight, perhaps the most important detail for members to note is the date of the AGM, which is to take place in November at the British Museum in London. The AGM will be followed by a series of three short papers, designed to intrigue and inform. For more detail, please see the pages within.

There is also news of the upcoming SMA Student Conference, to be held in Newcastle on 1–2 December 2017, and the SMA Annual Conference, to be held in Durham on 13–15 July 2018.

We thank Rory Sherlock for his valuable and seamless work on the website these past few years; Rory has stepped down and passed the reins to Sarah Kerr.

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Left:
A penny of William I's 'Bonnet' type, minted at York around 1068–1070, by moneyer Sweartcol. It is currently in the collection of the Yorkshire Museum. Picture courtesy of York Museums Trust (Yorkshire Museum).

The coins have therefore revealed narratives of minting activity in different times and places. Through the moneyers they have also shown tales of individual people navigating the politics of a kingdom with a new ruling regime. My paper concluded with my hopes for developing these new narratives in relation to museum practice, to offer suggestions for how UK museums can use their numismatic collections to engage the public effectively with the history of the early Norman period.

My visit to Kalamazoo offered me an unparalleled opportunity to disseminate my research and discuss my findings with peers from different countries and academic disciplines, as well as being an instructive and fun experience. I am very grateful to the SMA for giving me the chance to contribute to the Congress.

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Research

Funerary landscapes and social change in Early Medieval northwest Europe, AD 400-900, introducing a British Academy research project

Amidst the upheaval generated by the collapse of the Roman Empire, emergent groups in northwest Europe began to forge distinct identities based on shared origin myths, material culture sets and assembly practices. In this competitive post-imperial milieu, the recurrent negotiation of social power and territorial control was manifested in a renewed investment in funerary monumentality. The powerful but transient display of the funeral, combined with the more permanent adaptation and monumentalisation of the landscape, acted as a key arena for social competition and cohesion. While there is a long tradition of looking to Scandinavia for Anglo-Saxon parallels and stimuli, research on the extent of contact between early England and the near Continent (France and the Low Countries) has only recently begun to gather momentum. Compelling archaeological evidence for cross-Channel interaction and mutual influence across this zone is now being amassed, yet the ways in which people commemorated their dead throughout this region have yet to be investigated from a landscape perspective.

A three-year British Academy-funded research project now under way at Durham University examines for the first time how communities on either side of the English Channel and southern North Sea adapted their inherited environment for burial, and how they harnessed the power of ancient

monuments and natural topography. Bringing together the Anglophone and non-Anglophone material will enable a rigorous and comprehensive survey of the landscape context of 5th- to 9th-century cemeteries and burial sites in southern England (Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, Isle of Wight), France (Normandy, Hauts-de-France), Belgium (Flanders) and the Netherlands (Zeeland). Exploring funerary activity at a range of scales, from the micro to the supra-regional, will provide new insights into strategies of landscape manipulation, the positioning of the dead and mortuary display. As well as illuminating previously overlooked areas, it will allow us to see whether the bigger picture remains a mosaic of regional traditions or if more universal patterns can be identified. This ambitious and timely project promises to enrich our understanding of early medieval society and add depth of perspective to the ways in which the European environment has been utilised and perceived. It offers enormous potential for revealing trajectories of social change on an international scale, across physical and perceived frontiers.

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Barrow reused for early medieval burial on the Marlborough Downs, Wiltshire.

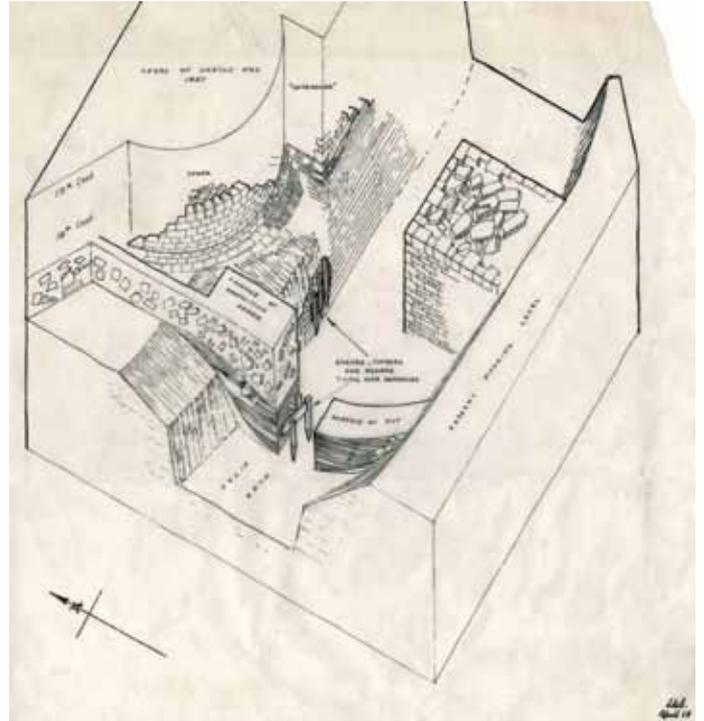
'Kentish' bird brooch found in France. Photograph Met Museum.



Archives and Archaeology – investigating the story of Sheffield Castle



Remains of courtyard buildings exposed 1929. Photograph Museums Sheffield.



Isometric drawing of gatehouse and moat by Butcher 1958. Photograph Museums Sheffield.

Sheffield is not often thought of as having a medieval past, with its later reputation as ‘Steel City’ being more widely known. Yet, amidst the modern townscape, elements of the city’s medieval past survive, in the form of its medieval parish church of St Peter’s (now the cathedral), Lady’s Bridge over the River Don, and the hunting lodge within the former manorial deer park, on the hill behind the train station. The focus of medieval Sheffield was its castle, located at the confluence of the rivers Don and Sheaf, which was dismantled after the Civil War, and the site sold off for redevelopment in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Despite the importance of the castle in the development of Sheffield, little is known about it. Now researchers at the University of Sheffield are carrying out a detailed analysis of the largely unpublished archive of mid-20th-century archaeological investigations at the castle, undertaken between 1927 and 1940 by A.L. Armstrong and J.B. Himsworth, and from 1958 to 1972 by L.B. Butcher. While the earliest investigation was published in 1930 by Armstrong (‘Sheffield Castle: An Account of Discoveries made during excavations on the site from 1927-29’, *Transactions of the Hunter Archaeological Society* 4, 7–27), the later work remains unpublished. The archive for the two periods of excavation is held by Museums Sheffield, and comprises handwritten notes, draft typed manuscripts, site drawings, engineer plans and numerous slides and photographs. Analysis of this archive in recent months has enabled us, for the first time, to understand where these excavations occurred on the site of the castle and what they uncovered. The extensive archive has been digitised as part of the current project, and this important body of data will be

made available as a digital archive. The findings from these excavations are being incorporated with the results of the most recent excavations on the site of the castle, carried out by the University of Sheffield in 1999-2000.

Alongside the paper archive, there are numerous artefacts including pottery, leather, architectural fragments, evidence for craft and industry and daily life, most of which have never been studied. The pottery is being assessed by Dr Chris Cumberpatch and Jane Young, who have identified medieval pottery manufactured in Sheffield. It is the first time that such wares have been found in Sheffield beyond the known production site at Norfolk Street (K. Baker *et al.* 2011 ‘Archaeological Investigations at the Upper Chapel, Norfolk Street, Sheffield, UK’, *Internet Archaeology* 29. <https://doi.org/10.11141/ia.29.4>). The presence of shell-tempered wares in the assemblage had given rise to suggestions that there was pre-Conquest activity on the site of the castle, but our analysis (funded by the Society for Medieval Archaeology) suggests that it dates to the 12th century and later. Quita Mould has been studying the leather from the site, which derived largely from excavations of the castle moat; most of the leather comes from 15th-century shoes, and the nature of the assemblage suggests that it is cobbling waste rather than domestic rubbish disposal.

The challenge for the project is to integrate the broad range of archaeological, historical and cartographic evidence, to explore the development of the castle and its environs, including the town and deer park, traces of which underpin the plan of the city to the present day. The medieval town and the deer park have had a lasting impact on the subsequent

development of Sheffield, even after the destruction of the castle, and this will be explored as part of the project. The castle was the site of a siege during the English Civil War, and there is a contemporary pamphlet that provides a detailed account of the siege, including information on the form of the castle itself. The subsequent redevelopment of the castle, and its part in the making of 'Steel City' may also be identifiable in the archaeological record, as it is known that there was post-medieval metalworking on the site.

The Castlegate Archives project is led by Professors Dawn Hadley and John Moreland, and Dr Gareth Dean from the Department of Archaeology, funded by the Pamela Staunton Bequest and the University of Sheffield, and builds on previous work by the department on the castle and hunting lodge funded by the AHRC and the Higher Education Innovation Fund. Wessex Archaeology North, Museums Sheffield and

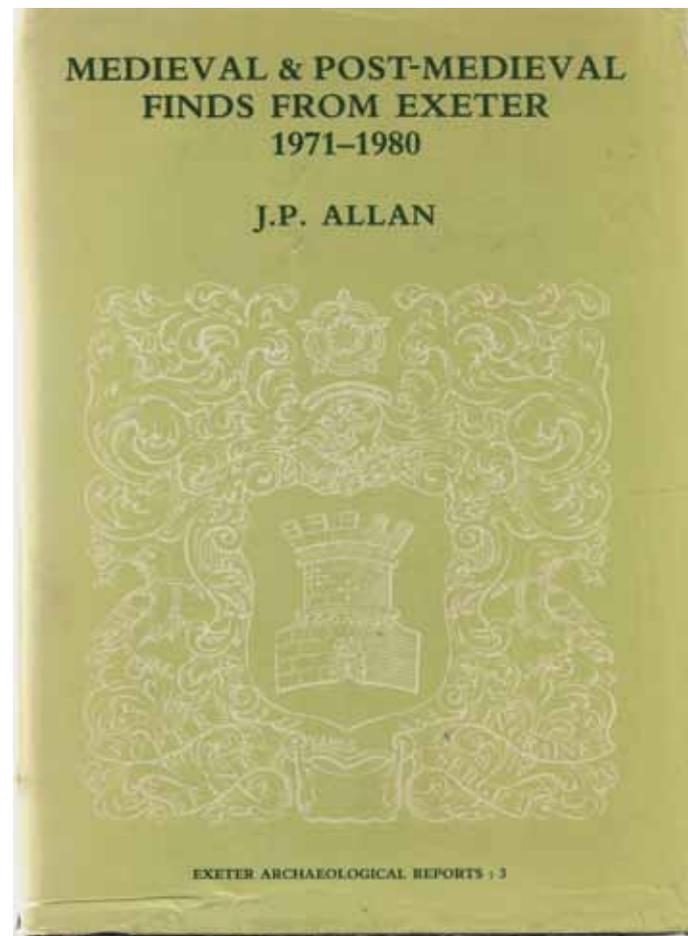
finds specialists are working with the department on the project. Our understanding of the development of Sheffield Castle, its association with the town and deer park will be transformed. The final publication of the project will provide a crucial overview of the archaeological and historical evidence from the original heart of the city of Sheffield, making a key contribution not only to academic study of the city, but the future use and redevelopment of the site, which is especially important considering the redevelopment of the castle site, announced by Sheffield County Council at the end of July 2017 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-40775382>).

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Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds from Exeter, 1971-1980 by John Allan (1984, Exeter City Council and the University of Exeter)

John Allan's classic study of the medieval and post-medieval finds from large-scale excavations within the city of Exeter has become a much sought-after volume that has long been out of print. The University of Exeter Press has kindly agreed that it can now be made available digitally as part of the **Exeter: A Place in Time** project (http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/place_in_time/resources/reports/). This AHRC and Historic England funded project, led by Professor Stephen Rippon (University of Exeter) and Neil Holbrook (Cotswold Archaeology), is writing up a series of the major unpublished excavations, and using modern scientific techniques to analyze some of the key assemblages stored within the Royal Memorial Museum in Exeter.

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News from the Journal Editor

Extras for Members in the Society for Medieval Archaeology's 60th Year

As Honorary Editor for our well-respected and internationally-received journal, I am delighted to announce that in this Anniversary Year of 2017 we are producing three issues. Issues 1 and 2 will arrive with members through the normal process. All of you will have received issue 61/1 this year, in which new discoveries in Scotland, Wales and Scandinavia are profiled. Articles touch on aristocratic strategies in Pictland, facial images in migration-period art in Scandinavia, and the coastal world of Septs and Castles on the late-medieval Irish sea-board. This issue also includes the winners of the 2017 Jope Award. In 'Placing the Pillar of Eliseg: movement, visibility and memory in the early medieval landscape', Patricia Murrieta-Flores and Howard Williams explore the locational aspects of the 9th-century Pillar of Eliseg in Wales. Issue 61/2 is imminent and will introduce members to the early medieval rock-cut graves of Iberia, monetary systems and ideas in migration period Norway, reconceptualising medieval 'hall houses' in Ireland, and reconsiderations of religion and

SMA Monograph 38

This year saw the publication of *The archaeology of the 11th Century: continuities and transformations*; volume 38 of the Society's monograph series. The volume is edited by the Honorary Secretary, Prof. Dawn Hadley, and one of the Society's Honorary Vice-Presidents, Prof. Christopher Dyer, who set the scene for the volume's contents in their introductory chapter. It is a well-illustrated tome, comprising fifteen chapters, which present new discoveries and fresh ideas about England in the 11th century, as well as important syntheses of key debates. While the Norman Conquest is central to the book, the contributors also discuss changes throughout the 11th century that were not caused by the Conquest. It sets the Norman Conquest in context, with respect to the impact of longer term developments and longer term contacts with the continent. Chapters by Mark Gardiner, and Stephen Rippon and Oliver Creighton explore transformations in rural settlements, while towns are the focus of chapters by Letty ten Harkel and Keith Lilley. Castles are discussed by Michael Shapland

religious transitions in medieval Europe. In addition, we are delighted to announce a 3rd online issue, freely available via Taylor and Francis **online**. Issue 61/3, will appear in December, only online, and represents an 'Editor's Choice' that selects seminal articles from across the life of the journal. These have been chosen by the President Carena Lewis, the Honorary Secretary Dawn Hadley and the Honorary Editor, and represent their selection of key articles that have influenced the discipline across 60 years of Society activities. A short introduction outlines the choices and the long-term context of the articles. Members will receive information on how to access this 3rd issue via email, social media and letter. This issue will remain freely accessible to all members in perpetuity as a marker of our 60th year.

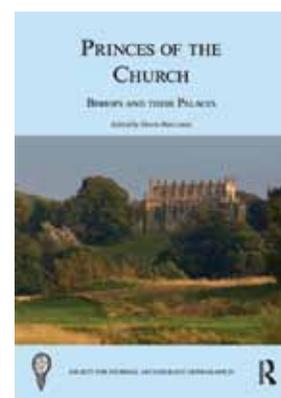
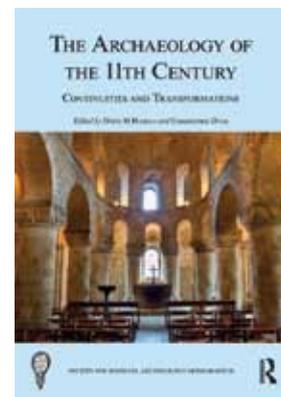
In addition, the Monographs Editor Chris Gerrard is pleased to announce the publication of two new Society monographs this year, one on the archaeology of the 11th century and another on palaces. Other monographs are in press. We are currently investigating the possibility of making our earlier monographs more widely available online. Several are now out of print and they can be very costly to acquire second hand.

Sarah Semple

Honorary Editor

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and Michael Fradley, and aspects of secular and ecclesiastical lordship are addressed in chapters by Aleks McClain and Paul Everson and David Stocker. Material culture is the focus of chapters by both Michael Lewis and Rosie Weetch, who examine the Bayeux Tapestry and lead-alloy brooches respectively. Ben Jervis, Alex Livarda and Fiona Whelan explore changes in cuisine, while leprosaria are the focus of the chapter by Simon Roffey, and burial practices are discussed by Lizzy Craig-Atkins. The volume is rounded off with a chapter by Hugh Thomas, who sets these archaeological approaches in the context of recent debates among historians, who have become increasingly interested in the social and cultural aspects of the Norman Conquest. Archaeologists are now also engaging in these issues, which offer particularly fruitful grounds for interdisciplinary dialogue. The volume retails at £115.00 in Hardback, and is available to members at a 20% discount, which can be acquired by purchasing the book from the Routledge website (www.Routledge.com) and entering the code MA20 at the online checkout. This membership discount applies to all Routledge books. It is also available in an e-Book format from the Routledge website for £39.99.



The Monograph series continues to deliver current research and context in Medieval Archaeology and remains a leading authority

SMA Annual Conference report: Women, Status and Power in Medieval Society

The Society's 60th anniversary conference was held on June 30–July 1, 2017 and addressed the topic of 'Women, Status and Power in Medieval Society'. Held in Lincoln, the conference theme commemorated the 800th anniversary of the successful defence of Lincoln Castle by the first ever female county sheriff, Nicola de la Haye. This occurred in 1217 when Lincoln Castle came under sustained attack for weeks from the forces of Prince Louis, who had been offered the English crown by rebel barons after the death of King John. Louis' campaign was very nearly successful: Gerald of Wales (1146-1223), writing in *The instruction of a Prince*, eagerly anticipated that England, 'oppressed for so long under the insufferable yoke of servitude, would see at last complete liberation and liberty'. Had Gerald's vision become reality and the English crown passed into French hands, the Battle of Lincoln would have eclipsed the Battle of Hastings in our island's historical narrative. The Battle of Lincoln turned the tide of Louis' campaign and Nicola's key role in the capture of the castle was recorded with admiration by contemporary chroniclers including the Barnwell Chronicle, the Dunstable Annals, the *History of the Dukes of Normandy* and the *History of William Marshall* although they struggled to avoid terms such as 'manful' to describe her conduct. French writers such as the chronicler of Bethune gave similar recognition to her agency although in less approving terms, describing her as cunning, bad-hearted and old.

Lincolnshire has a notably rich medieval history of remarkable women exercising power, including Countess Lucy (who added the shell keep to Lincoln Castle in the 12th century) and Katherine Swynford (who in the 14th century became the first commoner to marry an English prince, John of Gaunt). In 2017, the Chief Executive of Lincoln City Council, the Dean of Lincoln Cathedral and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Lincoln are all women. Lincolnshire also produced Britain's first ever female Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher...

While Nichola could easily be described as 'England's Joan of Arc', few people have heard of her today, as is the case for many other women who played an important role in the medieval period. This raises questions not only about the role of gender in the medieval period, but also about the role gender still plays in constructing our understanding of the medieval period. All this made Lincoln in 2017 the perfect time and place for the Society for Medieval Archaeology to discuss the latest research into the role of women in medieval society, and specifically the extent to which they could wield power - personal, administrative, political or ideological - over their own lives, over others and in times of conflict. The conference brought together specialists from a range of disciplines and more than 100 delegates to consider how evidence for the role of women in medieval society in archaeological and written records from the 7th to the 15th centuries might be lost, found and interpreted.

The aim was not to revisit outdated approaches simply identifying or critiquing androcentrism or looking for universal explanations of gender inequality. Rather it was about taking an enquiring look at the evidential base for our understanding of the role of gender in experiencing, constructing and understanding medieval society, using multiple lines of evidence where possible and taking into account our contemporary recognition of the fluidity, multi-dimensionality and mutability of the role of gender in society.

The conference papers were deliberately assembled to cast a wide net in order to see what a long-term, multi-disciplinarily perspective might reveal about the evidence for medieval women's access to power and perhaps to identify future research directions or themes. While making connections between studies focussing on very different periods of time is inevitably fraught with difficulty, bringing these together diversified the range of interpretive approaches and models and provided a stimulus to explore the validity of cross-cultural analysis. Overall, there was more common ground than might have been expected between perspectives offered using different forms of evidence, particularly in the pre-Conquest contributions. In spite, or perhaps because, of the diversity of subject matter and chronological range, a number of themes emerged. The observation that women are under-represented in the medieval documentary record might be thought to be a truism, but the scale of the issue was brought into sharp focus by Gale Owen Crocker's stark statistic that men are nearly twenty times more likely to be mentioned in Anglo-Saxon texts than women, a 'mini-visibility' which Jeremy Goldberg's analysis of bourgeois women's negligible presence in later medieval records showed to be still prevailing half a millennium later. Michael Wood's exposure of the excision of much of Aethelflaed's activity from Wessex chronicles suggested that the textual invisibility of medieval women might not be a simple indicator of their lack of autonomy, status or power, but be the outcome of a deliberate culturally-driven process of airbrushing women out of historical narratives that has roots deep in the medieval period.

Medieval women were often more visible in death than in life, and the relationship between memorialisation and female power was a recurring theme, with several papers exploring ways in which female power might be expressed, suppressed or instrumentalised in mortuary practice. Papers exploring this material focussed primarily on the representation of women, considering both what messages this was intended to convey to contemporary audiences, and what we can learn from these about female power. While it was clear that the mediated nature of such representation is what makes it particularly valuable as a source of evidence, this also epitomizes the circularity of the paradox that we need to understand female agency better in order to advance our understanding of female agency. It was apparent that osteological evidence

might provide one possible route out of this inferential gridlock, particularly with the increasing sophistication and range of scientific techniques now available. But it was also clear that, while useful, this risks focussing on the physiological experience of femaleness at the expense of understanding other aspects of how female power was conceptualised and experienced. That the dead cannot, of course, act for them themselves drew attention to the often latent nature of power bestowed on females, and that such power might not ever be instrumentalised by women.

One theme evident in several papers was the way in which female power could be derived from women's connection with place. This was evident in different ways in Wood's consideration of the attention given in contemporary sources to Aethelflaed's foundation of shrines, Helena Hamerow's elicitation of the relationship between female burials and estate boundaries, Barbara Yorke's analysis of the relationship between nunneries and important estate centres and Victoria Whitworth's linking of Anglo-Scandinavian landholding and sculptural stones depicting women. One explanation offered was that women leading less itinerant lives than men may have increased their connection with the places in which they resided. This connected with the theme of inheritance that was present in several papers, including Matthew Johnson's highlighting of women's role in bringing Bodiam into the Dallingridge family and in occupying the castellanship thereafter. The role of women in place-making, estate formation, tenorial authorization and inheritance offers interesting interdisciplinary scope for landscape archaeology to engage with gender.

Perhaps counter-intuitively, it was apparent in several papers that periods of conflict and transition provided particular opportunities for some women to exercise substantive political power. This was noted by Hamerow, Yorke, Wood and Louise Wilkinson, looking at different evidence from very different chronological periods. The context for this appeared to be contingency, with conventional restrictions on women exercising power capable of being overlooked if conditions favoured or necessitated this. While this phenomenon can currently be perceived in a limited number of higher-status women, it offers the possibility that such response may have been viewed similarly pragmatically much more widely in medieval society. The association of female power with periods of change or instability suggested that fluidity might be a useful concept, implicit in several papers: the irony that medieval humoral medicine held women to be 'wet' was not overlooked. Female access to power was seen by all speakers as contingent, integrally connected to identity and status, and mutable depending on age, life-course, heritage and, most of all, on circumstance.

A single conference could not hope, of course, to explore fully the role of gender on power, especially over such a long time period, even when focus was restricted to England, but it usefully drew together some diverse research on this subject and distilled out some themes and issues notably around the mediation and airbrushing of female authority which, it is hoped, might stimulate further research in the future.

Carenza Lewis
 President

SMA Gatherings

SMA Student Colloquium

Friday 01 – Saturday 02 December 2017, at Newcastle University.

Keynote address will be by Dr Steve Ashby, University of York, on Culture and Communication in the Long Viking Age. For further information, see www.medievalarchaeology.co.uk

SMA Annual Conference: Grave Concerns: Death, Landscape and Locality in Medieval Society

Friday 13 – Sunday 15 July 2018, at Department of Archaeology and the Calman Centre, Durham University.

Since 1990, a series of major conferences and publications have investigated aspects of death and burial in medieval societies in Europe and beyond. Some have delivered state-of-the-art research on early medieval and medieval funerary rites; others have profiled new advances in scientific research on the human body. Throughout, spatial consideration has emerged as a connecting research strand.

From understanding the distribution patterns of grave types and the use of antecedent landscape features for burial, to charting the rise of commemorative markers in stone, and the arrival of monastic and churchyard burial traditions; from exploring political signalling and polity formation through burial display, to identifying patterns of diseases and health in medieval populations and their mobility, the location of the grave has become a rich starting point.

This is the Society for Medieval Archaeology's Annual Conference for 2018 and brings together established and early career researchers working on aspects of death, dying and burial from AD 300–1500 in Britain, Ireland and further afield. Society Members will be able to register to attend for free.

Confirmed speakers include: Prof. Bonnie Effros (University of Liverpool), Prof. Roberta Gilchrist (Reading University), Dr Mary Lewis (Reading University), Prof. John Hines (Cardiff University) and Dr Duncan Sayer (University of Central Lancashire).



Longtown Castle.

Group Reports 2016

Castle Studies Group

In April 2016, around 70 members of the Castle Studies Group ventured to the Three Counties Hotel in Hereford for the Annual Conference and 30th AGM. The conference was organised by Chas and Frances Hollwey, Peter Purton and Jeremy Cunnington; a seasoned team also responsible for organising our conference to Essex in 2011. The conference was focussed on the castles of Shropshire and Herefordshire and show-cased a number where important work is being done to conserve and/or reinterpret sites. Tim Hoverd and Bill Klemperer presented evening lectures, putting the sites into context in terms of their histories, and in terms of their present situation and the challenges involved in preserving, researching and presenting them. The site visits included Goodrich, Longtown, Snodhill, Hay on Wye, Clifford, Richard's Castle, Wigmore, Clun, Brampton Bryan, Lyonshall, Ludlow, and Stokesay, and our site guides included Richard K Morris, Bill Klemperer, Ron Shoesmith, and Edward Harley, the owner of Brampton Bryan. A particular highlight was the visit to Snodhill Castle where the Snodhill Castle Preservation Trust is working to clear and consolidate the masonry remains. This work, supported by Bill Klemperer in his role at Historic England, has opened the site up from beneath a maze of vegetation and allowed its historical development to be debated after years of neglect. It is a credit to the dedication of local people in taking control of the site and ensuring its future.

At our AGM, Penelope Dransart was elected as our new Scotland Representative following the retirement of Geoffrey Stell from this committee post. Geoff has been a powerful advocate for Scottish Castles and he promises that this will not stop with his retirement in post. In fact he is already planning another Scottish Annual Conference in the near future.

The Call for Papers closes on 30 November. We welcome proposals of presentations or posters on new research findings, major projects and recent publications. We are particularly keen to include contributions on findings from Europe and the British Isles, AD 300–1500. Topics and themes of interest include mapping funerary rites, plotting grave attributes, interrogating monuments, sculptures and assemblages in spatial and geographic

Members went to Jordan in late September, co-organised for CSG by Denys Pringle and travel company Distant Horizons. The trip included visits to Amman, the Desert Castles of Qusair Amra, Qasr Mushatta, Qasr al-Kharraneh, and Qasr Al-Hallabat, the Byzantine and Umayyad mosaics of Madaba, the crusader castle of Shobak, a full day in Petra and a boat trip to Ayyubid Castle on the island of Jazirat Fara'un. With an itinerary like this it was impossible to fail and the trip was a great success. There was no Autumn Day Conference in 2016, however, in August, several members contributed to the Chateau Gaillard conference held in Roscommon, Ireland, on the theme of 'Castles and Landscape'. In September, several members attended a special conference in Dublin held to mark the 800th anniversary of the death of King John. Both conferences had a focus on academic papers, but also included castle tours.

The *CSG Journal* includes news of CSG activities, members' interests and updates on castle research. Castle-related publications for the year are listed and reviewed in the *CSG Bibliography* No. 29. The *Journal* is distributed to all members each December and is edited and produced by Neil Guy. In spring and August CSG interim E-Bulletins are distributed, compiled and edited by Peter Burton. Committee members can be contacted by email via www.castlestudiesgroup.org.uk.

Undergraduates and post-graduates who are writing a dissertation or thesis on a castle-related theme may qualify to attend the Annual Conference at half price. CSG also awards small grants of up to £1,000 to group projects involving castle research, details for which are on the website.

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terms, using burials to explore the formation processes of medieval power and political structures and exploring health issues, diet and mobility with landscape in mind. Contributions dealing with changes in burial rites from the late antique to medieval worlds, and from early to late medieval society, are also welcome.

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Finds Research Group



FRG members pose alongside the Broch of Gurness. Photograph FRG.

It has been a busy year, with the committee meeting at the Museum of London in December and then again in York in the summer. The York meeting included a tour of the recently reopened Jorvik Viking Centre, in which our Chair Christine McConnell played a major part.

In June, we had a very successful member's visit to Orkney, hosted by FRG committee members Gail Drinkall and Julie Cassidy, of Orkney Museum. A packed programme of talks and visits was interspersed with a great deal of networking and fun.

At the beginning of September we had one of our famous 'trippettes' to the Crossrail exhibition, 'Excavating Tunnel: The Archaeology of Crossrail' at the Museum in Docklands, curated by committee member Jackie Keily, just before it closed. Finds specialists from MoLA including Rachel Cubitt, Michael Marshall and Beth Richardson talked us through some of the spectacular finds from the excavations along the route of Crossrail, including well-preserved leather shoes and worked bone objects. We learned a little about the lives of some of the characters whose contexts the archaeologists unearthed, including some right scoundrels...

At the end of October, FRG members will be going to Leiden to view the fibulae exhibition at the National Museum

of Antiquities with our European correspondent Annemarieke Willemsen. The exhibition will run until January 2018, so there is plenty of time to take in 400 brooches that cover two thousand years of brooch making.

We were very pleased this last year to have published two of our Datasheets; numbers 47 and 48. Datasheet 47 was written by Tom Redmayne and discussed recent findings of 'disc-on-pin' buckles and Datasheet 48 'Post-Casting Modifications to Anglo-Saxon Strap-Ends; Hooked and Lugged Attachments' was researched and written by Bob Green. We have Datasheet 49 ready to go this Autumn and a special full colour 50th edition in the pipeline for next year. Visit our website for information on how to submit a proposal for a Datasheet, and for a free download of some of the earlier publications.

For further information regarding membership and meetings, please visit www.findsresearchgroup.com

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Medieval Settlement Research Group

2016 marked the 30th anniversary of the Medieval Settlement Research Group in its present incarnation, and our Winter seminar, held at the University of Leicester, celebrated this landmark event. Sixty attendees enjoyed papers from noted settlement scholars that looked both to the legacy of the Group's work, and to the future of settlement studies. Prof. Chris Dyer (Leicester) traced the development of the 'new' MSRSG, from its origins in 1986. Dr Gabor Thomas (Reading) reviewed recent advances in pre-Conquest settlement studies, whilst former Group President Dr Mark Gardiner (Belfast) assessed the last ten years of settlement study in the later medieval period, summarizing new scholarly directions. We turned toward the Mediterranean for an overview of exciting new techniques in the dating of landscape sediments from Prof. Sam Turner (Newcastle), while Prof. Carezza Lewis (Lincoln) discussed what lies ahead for settlement studies, raising interesting questions about future research approaches. As is traditional, we celebrated with a delicious birthday cake, ably cut and served by no less than five Presidents. Prof. Neil Christie even composed a birthday ode, which can be read on our website: <https://medieval-settlement.com/2017/02/05/winter-seminar-2016/#more-1008> – clearly, there are no limits to Neil's talent!

We travelled north for our Spring seminar, hosted by the School of History, Classics and Archaeology at Newcastle University, and organised by Ben Morton. Delegates enjoyed papers on Power and Place in the Middle Ages, alongside a walking tour of Newcastle, and trips to two deserted medieval villages. For this year's Winter seminar and AGM, we will return to Leicester on Saturday 9 December 2017, where we will be hosted by the Centre for English Local History. Our theme will be 'Animals in Medieval Settlements'; further details can be found on our website.

In addition to our traditional seminars, this year we sponsored sessions at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds in July 2017, organised by Duncan Berryman and Ben Morton. Session themes were 'Landscapes on the Margin' and 'New Perspectives on Rural Settlement'. Papers were presented by both PhD students and established scholars, including Susan Oosthuizen, Carezza Lewis and Duncan Wright. We now have a thriving student membership, and we are keen to encourage new settlement scholars into the fold through initiatives like these. To that end, we are hoping to launch student pages on our website later this year, which will give new scholars the opportunity to publicise their

work beyond their own institutions. On the theme of student participation, our John Hurst Prize offers an opportunity to celebrate outstanding MA dissertations focussed on settlement studies. This year's winner is Norma Oldfield (York), and an edited version of her dissertation will appear in *Medieval Settlement Research* 32, which we anticipate will appear in the Autumn. Relevant MA programme directors are encouraged to enter high quality submitted and passed dissertations of no more than 20,000 words on the theme of rural settlement and/or landscape by 31 December 2017 to the MSRSG Secretary.

We continue to offer small research grants of up to £500, alongside student bursaries to assist with the cost of attending relevant conferences. This year, we are also offering two special 'seedcorn' research grants, focussing on 'Medieval Field Systems', and 'Commons, Greens and Settlement'. Each award, worth up to £4,000, is designed to encourage researchers to conduct a pilot study that can then be used as the basis for a more substantial funding application, to be submitted to one of the major funding bodies. Full details of all our grants and bursaries, including detailed specifications for the special grants can be found on our website.

There have been a few changes to the Group's officers this year. Perhaps most significantly, Dr Robin Glasscock has stepped down as Treasurer after forty years in the role, passing the baton to Dr Andy Seaman (Canterbury Christchurch). We are delighted that Robin has accepted a Vice Presidency, so we will continue to benefit from his vast experience and wise counsel. Prof. Sam Turner has handed over the editorial reins of *Medieval Settlement Research* to Dr Letty ten Harkel (Oxford) after ten years at the helm, during which time the journal has gone from strength to strength. Anyone wishing to submit articles can write to Dr ten Harkel at medieval.settlement.research@gmail.com; author guidelines are on our website. Dr John Naylor has passed his secretarial duties on to Dr Susan Kilby (Leicester). Thanks to all our outgoing officers for their commitment and hard work!

Finally, it is now possible to join MSRSG online, and membership can be purchased at the bargain rate of £12.00 for full members, and £6.00 for registered students. We can also be found on Facebook, and on Twitter @MedSettRG, so do look out for us!

Susan Kilby, Hon. Secretary
sk565@leicester.ac.uk

Five Presidents and the Birthday Cake.



Other Grants

The Castle Studies Trust – open for Grant Applications



1 September saw the Castle Studies Trust open its grants' application process for its fifth round of grant awards. The Trust can grant of up to £7,500 in any one award, and has already received expressions of interest from a number of applicants for a wide range of sites, including:

- Berkhamsted
- Fyvie
- Hadleigh
- Pembroke
- Ruthin
- Shrewsbury
- Skipton
- Snodhill

The closing date for applications is **Friday 15 December**, and grants will be awarded in February 2018 after a rigorous selection process.

2017 Grant Awards Progressing Well

All five grants awarded in 2017 are progressing well, with one completed, one awaiting the report write-up and the rest continuing apace:

- **Castle Pulverbatch, Shropshire, England**, geophysical and photogrammetric surveys of this motte and bailey castle. All the survey work has been carried out on the site and the results have been processed and reports written. To see some aerial shots of the castle you can look at our [facebook](#) page.

- **Clifford, Herefordshire England**, the geophysical survey (ground penetrating radar) part of the work has been completed and has proved inconclusive, so the survey company has agreed to do another type of survey to see if it can reveal anything differently. The survey will help to

determine the locations of a series of excavation trenches, in addition to trenches located on the motte and hornwork.

- **Dinas Bran, Denbighshire, Wales**, co-funding the geophysical survey of the most complete, but little understood, native Welsh-built castle has been completed and initial indications are not promising due to a combination of much fallen masonry and the closeness of the bedrock to the surface. The project report has been completed and signed off by one of the Trust's assessors.

- **Fotheringhay, Northants, England**, the geophysical survey of the site is due to take place in the Autumn, while the aerial earthwork survey is due to take place shortly after that.

- **Lathom, Lancashire, England**, analysis of castle masonry from the completely destroyed late 15th-century castle built by Thomas, Lord Stanley. The analysis work has already started with the work expected to be completed within the time limit.

Help the Castle Studies Trust Fund More Projects

With many high quality applications on important sites anticipated this year we need your help to fund as many as possible. Donors of significant amounts will be able to attend exclusive site visits. To find out more, please visit <http://castlestudiestrust.org/Donate.html> for the different ways of supporting the Trust and help us fund more exciting work.

If you have any questions about the CST, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Jeremy Cunnington, Chair of Trustees
admin@castlestudiestrust.org



Media & Exhibition

Norse Gods on the Road Again: 'Odin, Thor and Freyja' at the Frankfurt Museum of Archaeology

The highlight of my exhibition year in terms of early medieval material culture is most definitely 'Odin, Thor and Freyja: Scandinavian Cult Sites of the First Millennium AD and the Frankish Realm'. This was staged at the Archäologisches Museum Frankfurt, from February to June 2017. Having been used to transiting through Frankfurt to make connecting flights to elsewhere, it proved a real pleasure to be able to explore the city, a city that fuses the financial-centre skyscrapers (the so-called 'Mainhattan', after the city's river) with the on-going, post-WW2 reconstruction of the old town. To this outsider there seems to be a clear strategic aim to celebrate its archaeology and history as part of a broad cultural portfolio to bring visitors in.

The essence of the exhibition was a story of religion and belief in pagan Scandinavia and subsequently during the Christian conversion. More specifically it explored religion and belief as an articulation of power and the physical manifestation of its semantics in Christian Northern Francia and Pagan Scandinavia. Artefact-wise the core of the displays was a loan exhibition from the National Museum of Denmark (summarising the fruits of over a decade of their research through excavation at the cult sites of Hoby, Gudme and Tissø) with a handful of additional loans from other Scandinavian and German museums. I feel sure that, like me, many would have found this a thrilling exhibition in its own right but we were given added value in Frankfurt through the exhibition's exploration of

the cross-cultural semantics of power, a fascinating comparison being drawn between how the Danish cult sites functioned and the operation of Frankish palace sites. It was no idle coincidence that Frankfurt is the location of one of those Frankish palaces; the remains of which lie no more than ten minutes walk from the Archaeology Museum, and with the remains of the better known Ingelheim Palace only a few kilometres away.

The Museum is itself a piece of archaeology, being housed in the remains of the former church of the Carmelite monastery. It certainly makes for a challenging re-use of space but the distraction is minimal thanks to the exhibition's rich assortment of objects, conventional graphics and imagery, digital reconstructions (notably the architectural story of the Frankfurt Palace), a selection of replica objects and a full-scale interpretative reconstruction of the Gudme cult building. A large screen digital-animation telling the story of Tissø untypically for such films includes animated people. For me the real highlight was the fascinating selection of material culture: the range of miniature votives and amulets from the Danish sites; the revealing correspondence between the Roman bowl depicting Aphrodite/Venus from Hoby and the Freyja figurines from Tissø; the feasting/banqueting axe from the Nydam sacrificial bog – their use for animal sacrifice I am familiar with, but their further use to slice cuts of meat at ceremonial banquets was a new,



Odin, Amulet from Tissø. Photographs Archäologisches Museum Frankfurt.



Luxury grave finds from Fürsten aus Hoby, 1st century AD.



Reconstruction of residence at Tisso; Reconstruction of Cult House at Tisso; Denarius of Ludwigs des Frommen from Tisso. Images Archäologisches Museum Frankfurt.

intriguing idea; the Ribe-found Carolingian gilded and niello silver pyx displayed with smaller beakers to convey the notion of re-use in Scandinavia as ritual drinking vessels; the double-child burial from beneath Frankfurt Cathedral (a Frankish princess with rich grave goods alongside a cremated Norse pagan child with eight cremated bear claws) and elements of the Hedeby boat chamber grave (the incumbent suggested to be Harald Halfdansson or 'klak', who offered homage to Louis the Pious in 826 at Ingelheim).

I left the exhibition intellectually refreshed and with new thoughts to apply in my Scottish context both with respect to cult/palace sites (where the Pictish investment in monasteries seems to have fulfilled elements of the palace function with an earlier phase of pagan/early conversion practice, signalled by Rhynie, not least its sculpture and its iron cult-axe pin) and (thinking of the Galloway hoard) the reuse of Carolingian pyxies. The exhibition also gave me a really helpful foundation for understanding the topography of Frankfurt's 'old town' centre. A fine legacy for the exhibition is its excellent catalogue, edited by Egon Wamers. In a bi-lingual format, it combines elegantly the exhibition text with a concise, comprehensively illustrated catalogue of the exhibition's objects.

What I most appreciated about the exhibition, beyond seeing its selection of powerful, animated objects, was the lucidity with which it presented some complex ideas and enabled its visitors to tap into wider research in its themes. Key here is Julie Lund's recent paper (2017) that explores the cross-cultural Viking and Carolingian attribution to objects of personhood (adding to the cultural parallels explored in the exhibition and its catalogue). The range of objects includes swords and human body-parts as relics. This is not a point of separation between early and later medieval Europe but one of variable continuity: it is witnessed by the on-going cults of saints and heroes, including King Arthur and his sword Excalibur.

The powerful sword as totemic with agency and personhood (e.g. see Amkreutz & Willemsen) was a central thread in the year's key pieces of movie-medievalism: *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword*; *Transformers: The Last Knight* and *The Dark Tower*. The first two are generally witless farragoes, liberally plundering previous Arthurian outings

and other fantasy epics, notably Jackson's *Lord of the Rings*. Their small compensations revolve around their re-focussing of the sword legend. In *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword*, the agency of Excalibur is rooted in its magical fashioning to be only compatible with Uther Pendragon and his blood-line descendants, a concept no doubt derived from *The Last Legion* (2007) in which the Excalibur only responds to the blood-line of Julius Caesar, which 500 years later includes Arthur. In both films the agency of the sword fits well into the concept of inalienable objects – they are connected to and derive their power from an original owner and can only be reused by a relative (Lund 2017: 96). In the *Transformers* film the agency is expressed differently as highly sophisticated technology perceivable as magic. Excalibur is an extra-terrestrial gift from the Transformers to Arthur; they also establish the Order of Knights and the Round Table (in the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey). It borrows heavily on the sleeping king trope, which is mashed-up with a wider heritage-medievalism that collapses space and time. Thus Bamburgh Castle and Alnwick Castle become one place just landward of the White Cliffs of Dover (and in a similar vein London absorbs part of Oxford). It is a medieval bricolage suffused with genealogy and ancestry and also the time-defeating presence of Stonehenge, a portal established before the continental drift that separated Pangaea.

The slightest of the three is perhaps the most striking. Based on a cycle of Stephen King novels this trans-world story of good vs. evil has gunslingers instead of knights, with the last one, Roland, the blood descendant of the warrior king, Arthur Eld, the steel of whose sword, Excalibur, was used to make his pair of six-shooters.

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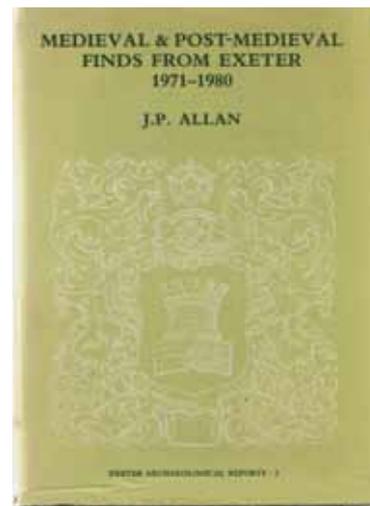
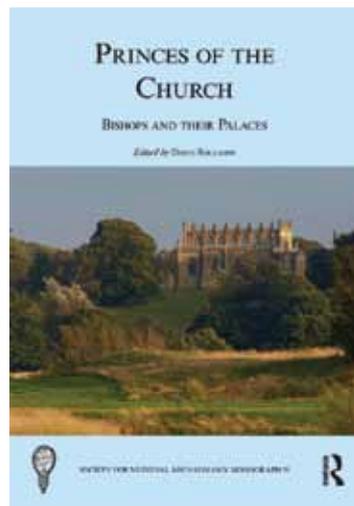
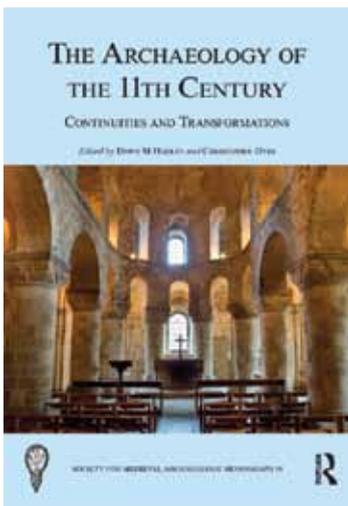
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Amkreutz, L. & Willemsen, A. (eds) 2016, *Vlijmscherp Verleden Het zwaard als wapen en symbol*, Leiden: Rijksmuseum van Oudheden.

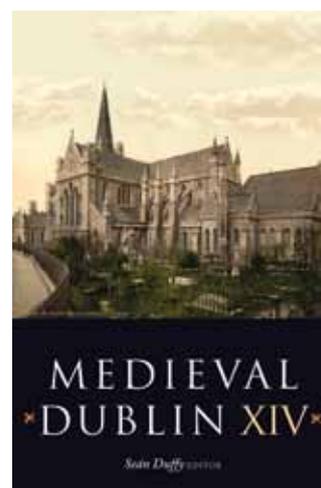
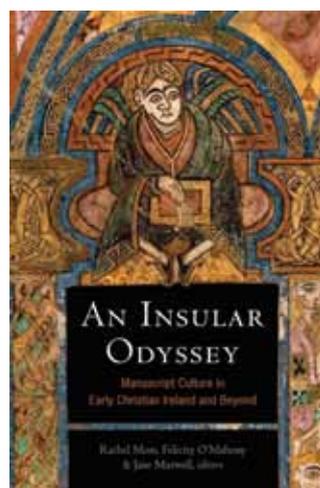
Lund, J. 2017 'Connectedness with things. Animated objects of Viking Age Scandinavia and early medieval Europe', *Archaeological Dialogues* **24.1**, 89–108.

New Titles

Let's not forget the titles noted already ...



Four Courts Press, www.fourcourtspress.ie



Ireland continues to deliver useful publication, and Four Courts Press remains a principal publishing house for all-things medieval. These are the most recent titles of interest.

BAR British Series 629, www.barpublishing.com

Clare Duncan, *The comparative palaeopathology of males and females in English medieval skeletal samples in a social context*, seeks to determine whether there is evidence to suggest that males and females in medieval England experienced differences in health and mortality which could be objectively demonstrated from their skeletal remains.

To advertise conferences/events in the Newsletter contact:

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medieval.archaeology@googlemail.com

Contribute to the Newsletter

We welcome submissions relating to current research projects in Ireland, the UK and on the continent, and ask that submissions do not exceed 800 words, with conference reports to be within 500 words.

Please do not embed pictures in Word/text files but do send pictures/plans as separate high quality JPEG files. The preferred format for site plans/maps is EPS, with layers clearly indicated and unlocked, and any linked files attached.

Send to Newsletter Editor by e-mail:
niallbrady100@gmail.com

The due dates for receipt of copy are:

Spring Newsletter: 15th February

Autumn Newsletter: 15th August

Credits

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Conferences & Events

— FORTHCOMING —

December:

1-2 December

SMA's Student Colloquium, The Boiler House, School of History, Classics and Archaeology University of Newcastle. <http://www.medievalarchaeology.co.uk/index.php/events/2100-2/>

9 December

MSRG Winter Seminar, 'Animals in Medieval Settlements', at the Centre for Local History, University of Leicester. <http://medieval-settlement.com>

January 2018:

8-10 January

'Gender, Identity, Iconography', A joint GMS/SFMFS conference, Corpus Christi College, University of Oxford. <http://medievalgender.co.uk/2018-oxford/>

18-19 January

'The Medieval Abbot: Expectations and Reality', The Old Council Chamber, Wills Memorial Building, University of Bristol. <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/events/2018/january/the-medieval-abbot-expectations--reality.html>

April:

16-18 April

'Alternative Facts and Actual Fiction: Constructing the Social Narrative', 4th International St. Magnus Conference, Centre for Northern Studies, University of Highlands and Islands, Kirkwall, Orkney. <https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/research-enterprise/cultural-centre-for-nordic-studies/conferences/4th-st-magnus-conference/>

May:

10-13 May

53rd International Congress on Medieval Studies, WMU, Michigan USA. www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress

The three lectures on recent archaeological discoveries to be presented following the AGM on November 24 at the BM:

Dr Dave Petts: Lindisfarne

Since 2016 Holy Island has seen a sudden acceleration of archaeological research on the site of the celebrated early medieval monastery, with fieldwork being carried out by Durham University/DigVentures and also under the aegis of the HLF Peregrini project. This talk will review some of the recent discoveries that have been made and look forward to future plans for taking forward research on the island.

Prof. James Graham-Campbell: The Galloway Hoard

The Galloway Viking hoard found in 2014 consists of over 100 objects of gold and silver (and other materials), part-contained within a lidded Carolingian vessel with textile wrappings. It was seemingly buried in the late 9th or early 10th century, as two separate deposits in a single pit, apparently inside a timber building within a large enclosure.

Dr Hugh Willmott: The Thornton Abbey Black Death cemetery

In 2013, Archaeologists from the University of Sheffield unexpectedly discovered a 14th-century mass grave at Thornton Abbey, Lincolnshire. Containing a minimum of 48 men, women and children, the grave is the first Black Death mass burial in England to have been identified outside of London. This paper will outline the discovery and excavation of the burial, and provide an overview of the on-going analytical work taking place on the dead.