

NEWS BULLETIN



THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No.74 December 2022

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne promotes the preservation, study and enjoyment of historical and archaeological heritage in general, and of the North East of England in particular. We have over 600 members, and always welcome new ones.

We have a full programme of public events, lectures, walks and visits, and social activities. We are guardians of world-class collections of antiquities and archives, and of a library of over 30,000 books and journals. We sponsor and publish research into North East history and archaeology of all periods.

For more information, look at our website, www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk or contact us at SANT, Great North Museum: Hancock, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PT, phone 0191 231 2700, e-mail admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



David introducing one of our lectures (from the Zoom recording)

This is my first 'message' in the *News Bulletin* since taking over as President. We have been facing many challenges in the last few years, and the next few promise to be just as challenging. With the financial headwinds against us, and the switch of Direct Debits provider, we have seen a drop in membership and so a loss of income. This has focused our minds on how we can increase our appeal and widen our activities.

We're now delivering our Monthly Meetings both in-person and remotely by Zoom. This has been a real technical challenge, with a steep learning curve especially for Richard Pears and Marta Alberti, who developed our arrangements with the help of Ian Wells. The last few lectures have been very well received by the remote audience, and the number

of people watching in this way has at times come close to equalling those attending in person, providing more value for their subscriptions.

Our Committee meetings are still being held via Zoom, but Council is now holding its meetings in-person, in the historic surroundings of the Castle.

However, I fear we are approaching another tempest, with the looming recession in the wider economy. How do we tackle that? We have to do what we are good at and do more of it, better.

Our 2021 volume of *Archaeologia Aeliana* should be finally in members' hands before this issue goes to print. As Don O'Meara explained in the last issue, the format is changing with the 2022 volume and the start of the 6th series. We're aiming to return to a regular rhythm of publication within a 12 month cycle. Once we've got that under way, we will be picking up on our aim to make out-of-print publications digitally available.

The planned conference to celebrate the bicentenary of the publication of *Archaeologia Aeliana*, organised in collaboration with Newcastle University's Medieval and Early Modern Studies group, had to be postponed due to the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, but the event was rescheduled for Saturday 3 December, after this *News Bulletin* goes to press. It will be reported in the next *News Bulletin*.

We have needed to think hard about Country Meetings – is going anywhere by coach viable, given the cost of fuel and post-Covid disinclination to sit closely packed together on a journey?

I must express special thanks to Sue Ward, as she steps down from the task of editing the *News Bulletin*, a means of communication that is very much appreciated by the membership. It is part of the glue that has held things together over the last few years.

David Heslop

Note from the retiring editor; I have been editing this News Bulletin for 23 years, nearly 50 issues, and it is time to give someone else a turn. I am not bowing out altogether – I am carrying on with the website and the e-circulars, at least until someone else wants to take over. All best wishes to David as the new editor.

COMING EVENTS IN 2023

Monthly meetings

In 2023, we are returning to our historic home, the Mining Institute, now renovated and rebranded as The Common Room. The Institute was built between 1869 and 1872, and provided the headquarters for The North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers. It hosted our monthly meetings until 2018, when it was closed for refurbishment. We will continue to livestream these lectures on Zoom, and record them where possible. We will also be restoring the tradition of holding a social after the January event, this time in the Bridge Hotel, Castle Garth. Please bring food for a shared table buffet. Drinks will be available from the Hotel bar.

We look forward to a rich programme of speakers in the coming year. January sees Steven Collison, from Northern Archaeological Associates, discussing the Berwick Infirmary Excavations. In February, Professor Matthew Kelly will talk about the women who saved the English countryside, and in particular Pauline Dower of Wallington, a founding member of the National Parks Commission in 1949.

March sees a return to Roman themes, with Dr. Andrew Tibbs reflecting on the orientation and features of Roman forts in Scotland. In the summer, Professor Helen Jarvis will talk to us about the incredible women of the Tyneside Geographical Society, the role they played and the battles they fought.

Looking into the autumn, for our public lecture in October, and to celebrate Black History Month, we are delighted to host Shaun Campbell, founder of the Arthur Wharton Foundation. Arthur was England's first professional black footballer, and an incredible sportsman and pioneer. He started his career in the rosters of the Darlington football club and ended his life as a miner in Yorkshire.



The Bridge Hotel, scene of our January social

We value our members, near and far, and have endeavoured – through hard work, dedication and trial and error – to make our lecture as widely accessible as possible. We hope you continue to join us in person and online for another year of exploring the past.

Marta Alberti

Outings and visits

Our summer excursion was to Minsteracres, Healey Church and Blanchland, where the small number of members present were joined by friends from other societies. It remains to be seen if the relatively low number of members (which obliged the cancellation of the coach and reliance on private cars) was due to ongoing concerns about Covid, or part of a wider trend. Our members joined in trips organised by other societies and there may be scope to plan joint activities in 2023.

Our final activity of 2022 is on 29 December, when our Winter Walk returns. 'The Toon at Table: a history of restaurants in Newcastle', to be led by John Griffiths. Histories of pubs are legion but few people consider the history of restaurants, cafés and other eating places. This walk will look at how, why and where the people Newcastle would eat out in the past, and some of the successes, disasters and changing trends in the catering industry. Meet Grey's Monument at 10.30 a.m. Please let us know if you would like to join us for lunch in one of the City's restaurants afterwards.

For over a hundred years, Roker Pier and Lighthouse have protected the entrance into Sunderland's harbour. We now have a tour of it booked for Wednesday, 26 April 2023. This will be one of our more adventurous visits! The tunnel inside the pier is low, dark and damp with rough and wet areas underfoot and there is a steep ladder and steep steps to climb in the lighthouse. Waterproof footwear is definitely recommended. Bad weather or high winds on the day could mean the closure of the pier, so it will be important for anyone booking to leave a telephone number or e-mail address that can be reached at the last minute. There will be a booking form on the website in good time.

Richard Pears and Rosie Serdiville

IN THE LIBRARY; THE SOCIETY'S SEAL



The original seal matrix, photo courtesy of Lindsay Allason-Jones

In September we were contacted by Sir Mark Jones, who is cataloguing works by the engraver and medallist William Wyon. Could we tell him more about the seal made for the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne?

The first edition of *Archaeologia Aeliana* (1816) noted that 'a Seal, engraven by Mr Wyon, of the Royal Mint, from a design by Mr Howard, RA' was commissioned and paid for by the Society's first president, Sir John Swinburne. It was presented by Swinburne shortly after the institution of the Society. A wax impression on Swinburne's own membership certificate from February 1813 suggests the seal had to have been made around the same time. Thomas Bewick then produced a woodcut from it, for use on printed matter.

'Mr Wyon' is less well-known in the seal's history because of its more celebrated connection with

Bewick. Sir Mark's enquiry gave us an opportunity to re-examine the original seal matrix. The first thing to note is that the piece is signed 'T Wyon'. This shows that it was made not by William Wyon but by his cousin Thomas Wyon the younger (1792–1817). When the seal was commissioned, Thomas was a 21-year-old probationary engraver at the Royal Mint. He became chief engraver just 2 years later in 1815. William joined the Royal Mint as second engraver the following year, and he worked under Thomas until the latter's untimely death in 1817.

The matrix exemplifies the fine workmanship associated with the Wyon family. Metalworker Peter George Wyon emigrated from Germany in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. His son, George, was apprenticed to King George II's goldsmith, and all his grandsons became die-

makers and engravers. One of these grandsons, Thomas Wyon the elder (1767–1830), was appointed chief engraver of his majesty's seals, and this connection presumably led to Thomas the younger gaining his position at the Royal Mint.

Sir Mark's enquiry has served as a reminder of the seal's great pedigree, and that Thomas Wyon's handiwork should be regarded as highly as Bewick's.

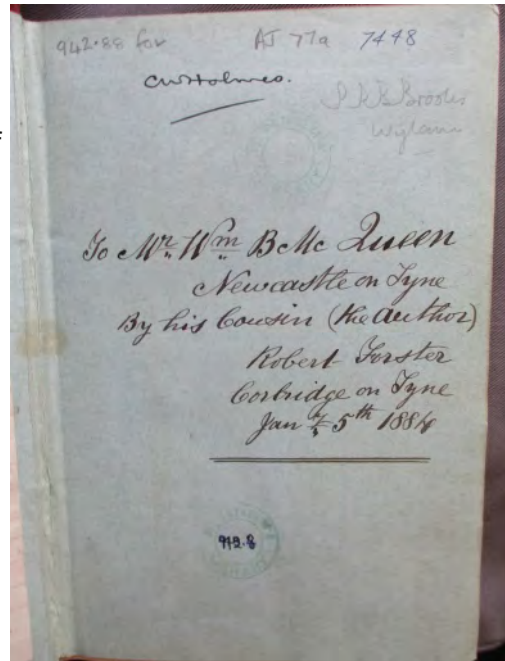
Tamsin Bapty

... and from the Librarian

In 2023 the library will be 210 years old, having come into existence at the Society's first meeting with the donation of a book. It now contains an estimated 30,000 items. It is essentially local, devoted to the history and archaeology of the four northern counties of England but spilling over at the edges to the original Northumbria, the Humber to Forth estuaries.

We share the library with the Natural History Society of Northumbria and the University Archaeology Department's Cowen collection. During 2022 we had Tamsin Bapty as the library administrator, and we are sorry that she has now left, though wish her well in her new job. We will let you know as soon as we have news of her successor.

Covid hit us as we were in the middle of sorting our books, transferring some to Discovery Store to find space for the next 10 years. This task is now complete with the help of four volunteers and we now want to embark on a complete shelf check, looking for errors in our list and for additional information in the books, bookplates, provenance, etc. and also the physical condition of the book. This will take time, especially as only one bay of the rolling shelves can be open at a time so a few volunteers would be useful and a good way to explore this wonderful library.



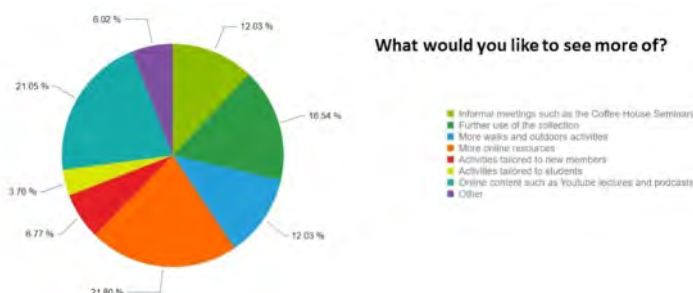
The author's inscription in the History of Corbridge, picture courtesy Howard Cleeve

Denis Peel

OUR MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

In 2020–21, we ran an online survey of its 650 or so individual members, and achieved a response rate of 10%. We wanted to find out which parts of our package our members enjoyed most, especially during the uncertain times between national lockdowns and the return to in-person activities. We also wanted to know what parts of our online package should be retained in the 'new' era, and what more could be done to ensure that we continue growing as a Society in the 21st century.

More men than women replied, and they were mostly born in the 1950s and 1960s. This suggests that our members are mostly retired people, with the time and disposition to enjoy our offer. While many members stay with us for a very long time, others lapse after the one- or five-years' mark. This is perhaps a reflection that we are failing to hang on to student members;



A pie chart from Marta's survey report

when students conclude their degrees, and move on with their careers, they tend not to renew their membership.

Archaeologia Aeliana was flagged as the main reason for joining the society, followed by using the library and the appeal of the monthly meetings. The *News Bulletin* and e-circulars, keeping members up-to-date with what is happening in the region, followed closely. Our regular e-circular was the main source for information on the Society, with 60% of the respondents citing it as their source of information against the 23% who mentioned website.

41% said that they found the monthly meetings to be the most engaging events, followed by 24% citing visits to the library, and 10% rating the country walks as the most exciting part of SANT's offer. Members also enjoyed the opportunity to join the monthly meetings remotely via Zoom, and the benefit of re-watching meetings over YouTube.

Overall, it seems that our members would like to see more online resources, and more online contents such as YouTube videos, lectures and podcasts. 16% would also like to see greater use made of our incredible collections of books and artefacts, both held at the Great North Museum.

Marta Alberti

Note; you can find a copy of the survey report in full on our website, in the Members' Section.

A POTTED HISTORY OF WEST NEWCASTLE



The museum display in preparation, picture courtesy Judith Green

As part of this year's Heritage Open Days events, there were exhibitions of clay models depicting the history of the West End of Newcastle in City Library and Discovery Museum. They were the outcome of a project organised by St James Heritage and Environment Group, a volunteer run, community based, heritage charity in the Benwell and Scotswood area in west Newcastle.

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, this was a very good example of heritage learning; a process that uses discovering your own history as a means of strengthening and preserving community by connecting to the past.

Previous projects have seen participants using knitting and felting skills to create an exhibitions, books and film-shows of buildings, objects and people drawn from West End history. This time the outcome was to be a series of pottery models. The first session was actually in 2018, with the last just a week or two before lockdown. The exhibitions were then delayed for two years, finally running from the beginning of September to the end of October.

An important element of the project was that participants decided themselves which people and scenes to depict in their models, based on preliminary sessions learning about key events in the area's history, along with ideas from participants' own personal or family history or their particular interests. Reminiscence was a major component of the sessions with older people, and pride in the local area was a key motivation.

I was involved in running the sessions with school children of different ages, and was surprised by the topics that appealed to them most. Women footballers (munitionettes) and the funeral cortege of victims of the Montague Pit disaster dominated the displays.

The result was a vivid portrait of everyday life as well as of momentous occasions.

Rosie Serdiville

Note; You can see some of the images from the project on the ChronicleLive.co.uk website. There are plans for a publication about it in time for the 2023 Heritage Open Days.

INTERNATIONAL FRONTIERS

The 'Limes Congress' – the International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies is normally held every three years. The first was in Newcastle in 1949, to coincide with the centenary of our own Hadrian's Wall Pilgrimage. The twenty-fifth was held in Nijmegen, the oldest city in the

Netherlands, in August this year. It was the biggest Congress so far, with nearly 400 attendees from 35 countries across the world, from the States to China and Australia. I attended with the support of the Society, for which I'm grateful.

Out of the many sessions, a highlight was *Feminists at the Gates*, which covered both Roman women and female archaeologists working on the Limes. There were also plenty of updates and new discoveries from Hadrian's Wall itself, for example Frank Giecco and Matt Hobson of Wardell Armstrong on the Carlisle Bathhouse Project and geophysics at Carrawburgh.

Being near to the border, we were able to visit many fantastic sites across Holland and Germany including Xanten Archaeological Park – the reconstructed Roman Colonia Ulpia Traiana. If you picked the coach wisely you could experience the (in)famous 'singing bus' on the way back!

I promoted the volume I co-edited with Marta Alberti, *Hadrian's Wall: Exploring its Past to Protect its Future*, which was part-funded by the Society. I also gave out copies of *Archaeologia Aeliana* and Bicentenary books, but the empty space in my suitcase was quickly filled with a wealth of other free books. David Breeze launched the latest multi-lingual *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* books. He had planned these to be the last of the series, but of course, left the Congress with a list of yet more sites and areas to cover! To his considerable surprise, he was given a Lifetime Achievement Award, by the Congress.

The next Congress is planned for 2024 in Georgia (the one in the Caucasus, not the US, so if circumstances allow) returning to the original three-year schedule after a slight hiatus caused by Covid.

Katie Mountain

Note; The History of the Congress of Roman Frontier Studies 1949–2022, by David Breeze, Tatiana Ivleva, Rebecca Jones and Andreas Thiel, the Frontiers of the Roman Empire books, and Marta and Katie's book, are all available from Archaeopress, as paperbacks and on open access for downloading.



The giant replica of a Batavian cavalry face mask on the beach at Nijmegen, courtesy Katie Mountain

ARCHAEOLOGIA AELIANA – STARTING THE 6TH SERIES

Volume 50 of the 5th Series of *Archaeologia Aeliana*, much delayed, should have reached all members before the arrival of this *News Bulletin*. It is a bumper volume, with nearly 450 pages.

Archaeologia Aeliana's editorial team are now working on the first (2022) volume of the 6th series, to be published in early 2023. This is part of our long-running intention to bring publication back into a regular annual cycle (a desire temporarily scuppered by Covid disruptions). The 6th Series will also herald changes we hope will improve the journal for both authors and readership, as foreshadowed in the June edition of this *News Bulletin*.

The current crop of articles for this first volume follows the aim of the editorial team to cover a broad range of research from the prehistoric to post-medieval periods. For the prehistoric period this will include the excavation of Neolithic remains at Threefolds, Northumberland, as well as Iron Age remains from Chopwell and Cramlington. For the Roman period a paper by David Breeze and Erik Graafstal addresses some of the perennial questions about the Vallum. David Jones' paper deals with deserted medieval settlements of Coquetdale. Tony Barrow writes about navel



Archaeologia Aelianas old and new, picture Sue Ward

impressment in the North East in the 18th century, with a focus on the activities of Captain John Bover. And coming up to the 19th century, there is a paper by Fred Miller, based on his research into the work of Newcastle's first public officer of health, H.E. Armstrong.

One notable article will be that by Paul Bidwell, on the excavations at Chesters Roman Bridge. This internationally important site had remained unpublished for almost 30 years, but Paul was determined to see it brought to publication. He recently raised the money to see the work completed and finished his editing of his paper during the summer. He will be greatly missed following his death in November, and this paper is testament to both his scholarship and dedication.

Don O'Meara

MONTHLY MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Note; members can view recordings of most of these talks on our YouTube channel (sign in via the members' section).

May 2022



Speed's 1611 map of Northumberland

Mike Barke talked about mapping Newcastle through the centuries. Maps could have a number of purposes, he explained, beyond place location and way finding. They included military operations, celebration of or propaganda about a place, economic development and urban administration. They needed a patron or a group of subscribers. Then there had to be a surveyor, a cartographer or designer, an engraver, and a colourist.

The first published town plan for Newcastle had appeared as an inset to John Speed's Northumberland County Map in 1611. Mistakes in the county map included Segedunum appearing next to Cramlington. Despite this, most other town plans that appeared over the next century were copied or derived from it. Dutch sea captain Lucas Waghenauer's 1585

'portolan' chart of the north-east coast, for the use of navigators, was enlivened with pictures of sea monsters and trawlers trailing nets. Earlier, military engineer Gian Scala had produced a perspective view of Newcastle in around 1545 to show the town's defences. A surviving sketch from the English Civil War, for commander Jacob Astley, was intended to show points where the town was overlooked from outside, and points from which defences could be mounted.

Charles Hutton's 1770 map, for which surveyor John Fryer did the footwork, was a celebration of the town. The most obvious 'propaganda' map was that by Wenceslaus Hollar in 1655, for Ralph Gardiner's tract *England's Grievance Discovered*. It was a mystery where Gardiner had found the money to pay Hollar, the most celebrated cartographer of his time.

By the nineteenth century, there were many maps for economic and administrative purposes. Civil engineer J.T.W. Bell produced maps of the Great North Coalfield in 1847, showing every pit and waggonway, but later efforts mapping Tyneside ruined him financially. Surveyor and architect Thomas Oliver produced a huge map in 1830, which has been lauded as the finest plan of the town ever published.

Mike can be contacted on mikebarke46@hotmail.co.uk. His book, co-authored with Brian Robson and Anthony Champion, *Newcastle upon Tyne: Mapping the City*, is published by Birlinn.

June 2022

This was a joint effort, with a recorded contribution from Elsa Price from Tullie House Museum, Carlisle, and a live one from Frances McIntosh from English Heritage at Corbridge, talking about Hadrian's Wall Collections.

They explained that the earliest museum collections from Hadrian's Wall dated from 150 years ago. By now there were over half a million objects scattered across different museums. While Tullie House had to care for objects from a wide geographical region, English Heritage's

museums were very site-specific. Corbridge was noteworthy, as being the most northerly Roman town in the empire.

Early excavation and collection policies had not been systematic, and much had been discarded which would now be kept. A more scientific approach dated from around the 1900s, with developer-funded excavations starting in the 1990s, and metal-detectorist finds after that. There was often a lack of provenance, particularly in earlier times. Some projects had never been written up, as at Carlisle where the Archaeological Unit went into liquidation before the end of the project.

As Elsa explained, in Tullie House there was a lack of suitable storage space, and of resources to analyse and catalogue what they had. This was very typical; in 2012 the Society of Museum Archaeologists had found that only a third of museums had specialist archaeological curators. This in turn could mean that what arrived was not properly packed. Older items might have been carelessly treated, as at the Corbridge collection where carefully sorted and marked pottery sherds had been jumbled together in general boxes at some unknown date.

Neither Tullie House nor Corbridge, Frances concluded, was unique, but they were more hampered than some other museums by the complicated history of their collections. The public saw only the tip of the iceberg, in terms of what was on display. Part of the solution was for museums to charge box fees to archaeologists, to defray the costs of long-term storage. These had to be written into the original contract, as part of the post-excavation expenditure. But this was resisted by those doing developer-led archaeology, because they tended to underbid for contracts in order to get the work.

Frances can be contacted on Frances.McIntosh@english-heritage.org.uk, and Elsa at elsa.price@tulliehouse.org.

July 2022

David Petts spoke about recent excavations at Lindisfarne. His project, crowd-funded via DigVentures, was running between 2016 and 2026, but with rather short seasons each year. Recording was digital, with no paperwork. Post-excavation work was carried out as they went along, and went up online immediately.

The earliest textual evidence concerning the island's history was a narrative in the *Historia Brittonum* Urien, prince of Rheged besieging Theodric of Bernicia there in the 6th century, perhaps on Castle Rock. The recent excavators had found a mysterious large wall, and many charcoal fragments dateable to 430–600 AD, well before the arrival of the monastery. It was known that such foundations were rarely on greenfield sites.

For the period of the monastery, they had found lots of burials in a crowded secular cemetery where graves were intercut and often contained bone fragments from earlier burials. C14 dating suggested this was in use from the 8th to the 11th centuries. There were some stone-lined coffins, but no grave goods. The cemetery for monks was quite separate, and there in the past they had found namestones similar to those known from Hartlepool, grave markers with cross shapes incised on flat stones. In recent seasons they had found eight more of these, all very fragmented, plus several fragments of cross-shafts, with small finely incised decorations.

There was evidence of iron-smelting, and a dump of copper-alloy working debris, very close to the cemetery. The monks did not appear to have used ceramics until the 11th century, but they had found a small glass gaming piece. It was a high-status lifestyle, with many animal remains and even a bear's claw. The remains of pilot whales suggested that there had been active whaling, not just use of beached whales.

Textual evidence suggested a move to Norham between 830–845, and then a final departure in 875 under Eardwulf. In this year's excavations, they had found a distinctive tomb-shrine, and a body in a large wooden chest. Sculptural fragments and other items suggested a continuing presence on the island well after they had been thought to have left. It was looking increasingly



Re-sorting the Corbridge pottery collection, picture courtesy Frances McIntosh



The playing piece found in this year's excavations, picture courtesy David Petts

likely that Cuthbert's bones had remained at Norham until the mid-11th century, and that there continued to be a monastic presence on the island, though not of senior personnel.

David can be contacted on d.a.petts@durham.ac.uk.

August 2022

Greg Finch talked about William Blackett and Commonwealth Newcastle. The first Sir William Blackett (1621–80), he explained, spent his early days in Newcastle in the turbulent days of the Civil War and the Commonwealth. He had been described in the past as a 'quiet royalist' but scrutiny of his record cast doubt on this.

The young William had been apprenticed by his father to William Sherwood, in June 1636, but Sherwood died in 1640. William was re-apprenticed to Joan Carr in 1642, after gap of two years. He then bought himself out of his apprenticeship in 1645, a year early. Very soon after, he married Elizabeth Kirkley, daughter of another Elizabeth who had carried on the family business after her husband's death. Probably she needed another pair of hands, now that trade was re-opening after the lifting of the Royalist siege. Newcastle was strategically important to Parliament because of the coal trade, and it now came under the control of a devoutly Presbyterian faction.

The older Elizabeth died in 1648, and Blackett took over the business. The Kirkley family were close to the Presbyterian leaders, Henry Dawson and Thomas Bonner, and Blackett was within that circle; one of his apprentices, Ambrose Barnes was given the responsible job of counting the bullion carted up from London to be paid to the Scots, in return for handing over the captured King Charles I in 1647. Blackett himself became a 'church officer' at All Saints that year, part of the Presbyterian hierarchy and the next year became a member of the Common Council of the town.

For a few years, 1649–56, he stepped back from this, possibly being too busy expanding his business. He was re-appointed in 1656, perhaps in connection with lobbying activity in London for the merchants of Newcastle. Two years later he signed an order removing one of the Royalist elder statesmen of the town, Leonard Carr, from his aldermanship. Come the Restoration, however, he gave £22 to Newcastle's celebration funds. Thirteen years later he was knighted by Charles II, and had a swaggering portrait painted to commemorate this.

Greg can be contacted on gregpfinch@hotmail.com. Tyne Bridge Publishing is currently printing a paperback edition of his book, *The Blacketts*. It won the Business Archives Council's annual Wadsworth Prize for an outstanding contribution to business history. Congratulations to Greg.

September 2022

Tony Wilmott gave us an Update on Birdoswald, discussing the excavations in 2021 and 2022. It was, he explained, one of the more complex sites along the line, and the place where the turf wall and stone wall bifurcated for a period.

The interior of the fort was well-known through campaigns of excavation from 1929 onwards. For the exterior, however, much less was known. In 1898 Haverfield had found a stone building in the 'chapel field', but was uncertain whether this was Roman or medieval. In the 1930s Ian Richmond had also done some trenching, including one right across the fort. This had established that there was a very boggy 'Birdoswald morass' in the middle, and terracing from each side of this low point. He had also found an extramural building surviving 13 courses high. There had been a number of other campaigns, including one with Time Team and an emergency one after a landslide into the river Irthing, and extensive geophysics.

The aims of the current project were to examine three extramural settlement areas, and to establish whether there were obstacle pits on the Wall berm. This second aim had been quickly met – there were none. In the first excavation area (A), they had found a possible bath house, and also the remains of a water main, iron rings which would have been used to link together wooden water pipes. Some mineralised wood remained, dateable to around 250–75 AD. There had been a later concentrated effort at backfilling and levelling out the slope.

The second area (B), was close to the principal east gate of the fort, where the north portal had been blocked off. They had found an entire strip building built across the line of the blocked portal, and also the *agger* for a new road to the open portal. A tentative hypothesis was that the turf wall was replaced with a stone wall further north in order to obtain more space for the *vicus*.

Conclusions for the season were that there were clear differences between the settlement zones to the north, south, and east, though this might not be the result of deliberate policy. The plan for 2023 was to excavate the western area, and dig one long trench connecting both.

Tony can be contacted on tony.wilmott@historicengland.org.uk.

Digital Lounge event

On 14 October we held what we hope will be the first of a series of events showcasing research from newer members and early career students and professionals, at the Digital Lounge of the Tyneside Cinema in Newcastle city centre.

Anna Robson, a recent graduate of Newcastle University, discussed her decolonisation research internship at the Great North Museum (GNM) discovering the hidden truths of the Museum's Natural History Collection. Working alongside Dan Gordon (GNM) and Dr. David Hope (Newcastle University), Anna explored the provenance of the taxidermy specimens on display in the Living Planet Gallery, and what they can tell us about the colonial history of Britain.

Kieran Carter explained that his project, the North-East Heritage Library (NEHL), stemmed from his passion for making local history accessible for all through online resources, and opening up opportunities for others to be involved. Kieran has amassed a wealth of information from Coal Archives, Sports Archives and Oral History projects. He also welcomes contributions from writers on all aspects of local history on his website. You can find his online resources at www.northeastheritagelibrary.co.uk.

Al McCluskey, from Newcastle University, shared his first encounters with archaeology and the Society as a young man, and how a nagging question he had throughout his military career brought him back to the North East to study a PhD on Roman frontiers. His talk brought new perspectives on the Roman frontier in Britain, with the concept of a possible 'west facing' border zone along the coast, rivers, Pennines and Southern Uplands to complement the north facing barriers of Hadrian's Wall and The Antonine Wall.

Finally, early career archaeologist, Gulfareen Kamran, took us through her progression from a volunteer with WallCAP digging at Corbridge and her brief fame on the Great British Dig, to her recently completed MA at Newcastle researching the medieval pottery from Coquetdale. (You can find Gulfareen's talk on our YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/user/NewcastleAntiquaries)

We hope to hold more events like this at the Tyneside Cinema in 2023. There are plans for the next showcase to be partnered with the North-East Heritage Library with a focus on Local History and Culture. More information will be shared by e-mail and on the website. Contact Katie Mountain on kt.c.mountain@gmail.com for details or if you would like to share your research at a future event.



A medieval pottery sherd from Coquetdale, picture courtesy Gulfareen Kamran

Public lecture, October 2022

The October meeting was also our annual Public Lecture, to a full house in Newcastle University's Curtis Auditorium.

Martin Goldberg, from the National Museum of Scotland, talked about Unwrapping the Galloway Hoard. He began by questioning how 'Viking' the hoard was, and why it had been buried. It had been discovered in Kirkcudbrightshire in 2014 by metal detectorists. After brief excavations, the hoard was declared Treasure Trove and in 2017 the National Museum of Scotland fundraised to save it for the nation. The overwhelming public response provided funding to do conservation and analysis, and the Scottish government funded a recent touring exhibition. The hoard is now back in Edinburgh for further research funded by the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council).



The rock crystal jar from the Galloway Hoard, picture courtesy National Museums of Scotland

The date of deposition 'around 900' made it the earliest Viking Age hoard in Scotland, and the second largest in Britain in terms of the number of silver armrings found. In the first bullion layer, there were also silver ingots and a pectoral cross of late Anglo-Saxon workmanship.

Beneath this top layer, there was redeposited, natural gravel disguising a richer lower layer.

There were twice as many armrings and ingots, with Anglo-saxon runic inscriptions on some items, including a full Old English name, Egbert. There was also a fragmentary wooden box nestled within a bundle of elaborately decorated arm-rings which were all bound together, as if in a contract. The box contained three gold objects including a beautiful bird-pin. A small silver-gilt lidded vessel was crammed full with the most unusual items. The vessel itself was decorated in a recognisably Central Asian style, with Zoroastrian motifs. It was wrapped in two layers of textiles, which had been carbon-dated to 670–780, a hundred years or more before the hoard's deposition date. The contents of the vessel included some 'dirtballs', perhaps collected from the soil of a holy place, and a tiny rock crystal phial encased in filigree gold, with an inscription that 'Bishop Hyguald had me made'.

All this might suggest a religious context for the Hoard, but there was much more work to be done, including hopefully excavation of the area around the find-spot, where traces of a building had been detected. The recording of Martin's lecture is on Newcastle University's Insights lectures website, and Martin can be contacted at m.goldberg@nms.ac.uk.

DEATHS

Joyce Reynolds

Probably our oldest and longest-serving member, Dr Joyce Reynolds, died in September at the age of 103, having been a member for seventy-two years. She was Reader Emerita in Roman Historical Epigraphy, Fellow of the British Academy, and Honorary Fellow of Newnham College, Cambridge, where she was Director of Studies in Classics from 1951 to 1979. She was also an honorary Fellow of Somerville College, Oxford.

She received a generous obituary in the *Guardian* by Tessa Dunlop, having been one of six centenarians interviewed for Tessa's 2018 book, *The Century Girls*, which considered how life had changed for women in the hundred years since the first women got the vote.

Jennie Du Cane

Jennie Du Cane, who was a member of SANT for fifty years, from 1972 until the beginning of this year, died in October. She generously donated Carrawburgh Roman fort to the nation in January 2020. The Du Cane family had owned the fort since 1950 and they regularly welcomed the decennial Hadrian's Wall Pilgrimages.

You can see a video of Jennifer talking about the finding of the nearby Mithraeum on our YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/user/NewcastleAntiquaries.

PAUL BIDWELL (1949–2022)



Paul Bidwell died after a short illness on 5 November 2022. He was one of the most respected Roman archaeologists of his generation, an expert in Roman pottery as well as a talented excavator.

Paul began his archaeological career in the south-west, publishing his excavation of the legionary baths at Exeter before he was 30. He arrived in the north to excavate at Vindolanda in 1980, and soon began his association with Arbeia, South Shields Roman Fort. He was based there, as Head of Archaeology for Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, for nearly three decades. As well as leading extensive excavations at Arbeia and Segedunum (Wallsend) he transformed our understanding of the urban landscapes of Tyneside with impeccably researched reconstructions of Roman buildings at both sites, and a length of Hadrian's Wall itself at Wallsend. He battled to remind archaeologists and planning authorities of the importance of the buried remains of Hadrian's Wall on Tyneside.

An introvert by nature, he nevertheless gathered together a team that transformed knowledge not merely of the Roman period, but of the Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon North East. Paul was well-known for the encouragement and support he gave to those starting out in archaeology. He

was determined that Roman Tyneside should be accessible to local people, nurturing the army of volunteers that worked at South Shields and Wallsend. This very much set the template for what would now be called community archaeology, recognised by his award of an OBE in 2013.

Paul was a frequent presence at our meetings, contributed many papers to *Archaeologia Aeliana* and served on our Council from 1988 to 1998. Some 30 colleagues have contributed to a volume of papers in Paul's honour. Luckily this was printed in time to be presented to Paul. Full details of this publication will be made available to members shortly.

Nick Hodgson

A NOTE FROM THE NEW EDITOR

I am looking forward to helping compile the Society's News Bulletin, when I take over as acting editor in the New Year. It is a rather daunting task to maintain the editorial standards of the publication and ensure that the reach and diversity of the publication truly reflects the variety and quality of the Society's contribution to the cultural life of the region.

As we continue our work into the future, the Bulletin should continue to play a crucial role in maintaining and building community within our Society, especially for those who can't attend our various activities in person, or who live far away but wish to stay connected. I appeal to all members to help me with this valuable work. Regular contributors, please keep sending material for the Bulletin, and to members who have not submitted stories or items of news or general interest, I say – give it go! The Bulletin will be what you make it!

My address is 15 Windsor Gardens, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE26 3BG. Tel 0750 4882625, or e-mail me at events@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk.

Copy deadline for the next edition is 9 May 2023. The mailing date will be 7 June. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Administrator by 31 May. If you want an insert included, please e-mail the Administrator on admin@newcastle-antiquaries in good time for details of the requirements. An electronic copy of any insert must also be provided (as a Word or pdf document) so that it can be included in the electronic mailing.

David Heslop