

Cheshire Archaeology Day

26 April 2014

Cheshire Archaeology Day 2014



Saturday 26 April 2014

9.45am - 4.00pm

Winsford Lifestyle Centre, The Drumber, Winsford CW7 1AD

9.15 **Doors Open**

9.45 **Welcome and Introduction**

Dr Jill Collens, Project Manager, Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service

9.55 **Finds beneath our Fields: The Knutsford Hoard**

Vanessa Oakden, Finds Liaison Officer, Portable Antiquities Scheme, National Museums Liverpool

10.35 **Heronbridge: Settlement, Monument and Massacre**

Dr David Mason, Principal Archaeologist, Durham County Council

11.15 *Tea and Coffee*

12.00 **Training for the Trenches: the Great War Camps on Cannock Chase**

Stephen Dean, Principal Archaeologist, Staffordshire County Council

13.00 *Lunch*

14.30 **Living with the Edge: the story of the Alderley Edge Landscape Project**

Dr John Prag, Hon. Professor Manchester Museum, Professor Emeritus of Classics, University of Manchester, Co-ordinator, Alderley Edge Landscape Project

15.10 **Excavating a Revolution – Recent work on the Industrial Archaeology of Cheshire**

Dr Mike Nevell, Head of Archaeology, University of Salford

15.50 **Closing remarks**

Dr Jill Collens, Project Manager, Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service

16.00 *Close*

Cheshire Archaeology Day 2014 is organised by Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service with the support of The Cheshire Local History Association, Chester Archaeological Society and Middlewich Town Council.

Finds beneath our Fields: The Knutsford Hoard

Vanessa Oakden, Finds Liaison Officer, Portable Antiquities Scheme, National Museums Liverpool

The Knutsford Hoard is an exciting new discovery which was found in 2012 by a local metal detectorist in the Knutsford area. The hoard consists of 103 Roman coins, 3 silver gilt trumpet brooches, two silver finger rings and fragments of pottery. The talk will begin by explaining what the Portable Antiquities Scheme is and how the hoard was reported. We will then look at the circumstances surrounding the discovery of the hoard. Then we will discuss the finds in more detail starting with the coins before we look at the jewellery and vessel fragments. The hoard will then be put into context discussing local parallels and possible reasons for deposition.

***Vanessa Oakden** has been working as a Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme for the last six years and is based at National Museums Liverpool. Before that she worked in Ireland as a field archaeologist for two years in commercial archaeology. She studied a BA in History and Archaeology at the University of Wales, Bangor and an M.Phil in Medieval History at Trinity College Dublin.*

Heronbridge: Settlement, Monument and Massacre

Dr David Mason, Principal Archaeologist, Durham County Council

The location known as Heronbridge lies beside the River Dee just under 2 km south of Chester city centre and about 0.5 km from the village of Eccleston. Crossed by Eaton Road, which perpetuates the line of the Roman road (known in later times as Watling Street) running south from Chester to Wroxeter and ultimately London, this seemingly unremarkable area of open countryside actually encompasses a multi-period archaeological complex of national importance with designated (scheduled monument) status. West of Eaton Road surface features can be discerned belonging to medieval and early post-medieval field systems and enclosures. East of Eaton Road the principal surface feature is a low curvilinear mound enclosing an area of 6 ha (14 acres). Once thought to be the agger of Watling Street the earliest excavations here in the period 1929-33 demonstrated that this was in fact the base of a once far more substantial bank, accompanied by a sizeable ditch on its outer (west) side, and probably defensive in nature. This same work also encountered a mass grave apparently containing only adult males who had died a violent death and thus thought to be battle casualties, and underneath, the masonry buildings of a significant and previously unknown Roman settlement. Further excavation in the 1950s and 1960s revealed the latter to extend along Watling Street for at least 500 m. However this work failed to provide evidence as to the purpose or date of the fortification or the date of the mass grave. This talk describes how a new campaign of investigation led by the speaker for the Chester Archaeological Society in 2002-05 produced evidence which strongly suggests that both features were associated with the battle of Chester fought c. 616 AD in which Aethelfrith of Northumbria engaged and defeated the forces of the kingdoms of North Wales, an event of major significance in the process which eventually saw the English settlement of Cheshire.

David Mason has been involved in the investigation and research of the archaeology of Chester and Cheshire for much of his career and although based in the North East since 2004 his research interests still encompass this area. He was a member of Chester City Council's archaeology section for many years, directing many excavations, and was the author of a number of reports in their monograph series. He has also written a number of books on the archaeology of Chester as well as one on Roman Britain and the Roman Navy. His main role now is Principal Archaeologist with Durham County Council but also serves as Archaeological Advisor to the Diocese of Durham, Chair of the Roman Maryport Research Advisory Group and Co-ordinator of the Hadrian's Wall Archaeological Research Group.

Training for the Trenches: the Great War Camps on Cannock Chase

Stephen Dean

Principal Archaeologist, Staffordshire County Council

Cannock Chase has been an amenity landscape in the control of one or more 'great landowners' for over a millennia. From William the Conqueror and the Bishops of Lichfield through to the Earls of Lichfield, it essentially functioned as a hunting estate. However, by the mid 19th century this unenclosed landscape was being put to other uses, including the training of local militia and volunteer forces. In 1894, the War Department considered the location of barracks and rifle ranges on Cannock Chase and while these plans were eventually shelved, they may well have been resurrected when, in 1914, the United Kingdom entered the Great War.

By December 1914, Kitchener's patriotic 'call to arms' had furnished over a million volunteer soldiers. But with only 175,000 spaces in existing military camps, an urgent programme of camp building was initiated to house and train the new recruits. Two such camps were constructed on Cannock Chase and between Spring 1915 and November 1918 they trained over 500,000 men for the front lines. This talk will consider the initial building of these camps, the facilities provided by them and the development of training features across the Chase landscape. It will particularly focus on the recent excavation of a unique terrain model created by veterans of one of the most successful allied offensives of the conflict; the Battle for Messines Ridge (7-14 June 1917).

***Stephen Dean** has an HND in Practical Archaeology, a BA in Archaeology and a Masters degree in the Archaeology of Buildings. He started his professional archaeological career in Hampshire working for a variety of field units before moving to the archaeological team of Gifford and Partners consulting engineers. In 2004 Stephen moved to Staffordshire County Council as their Planning Archaeologist. In 2008 he became the Principal Archaeologist at the Council and was involved in the excavation of the Staffordshire Hoard in 2009. Throughout his tenure in Staffordshire, Stephen has worked closely with ecologist and landscape colleagues in the management of Cannock Chase and has undertaken numerous projects to inform understanding of the camps and their attendant training landscape on this sensitive landscape.*

Living with the Edge: the story of the Alderley Edge Landscape Project

Dr John Prag Hon. Professor Manchester Museum, Professor Emeritus of Classics, University of Manchester, Co-ordinator, Alderley Edge Landscape Project

In 1992 there re-appeared a 4000-year-old wooden shovel, first discovered in 1875 at Alderley Edge in Cheshire and then apparently lost. Three years later 550 Roman coins were unearthed at the top of an old mine-shaft, and the Alderley Edge Landscape Project was born, a joint research venture of the Manchester Museum in the University of Manchester and the National Trust, who own much of the Edge. Inspired by the archaeology, its aim was to see the physical and human landscape of Alderley in its entirety, exploiting the many disciplines represented at the Museum, the University and the local area.

Alderley Edge has a rich, complex history of geology, archaeology, mining and social history. The character of the village below changed radically in 1842 when the railway created Britain's first commuter dormitory for Manchester's cotton kings, yet for many people it remains a special place, and its legend of a sleeping king, a wizard and a hoard of treasure is still very much alive. The project spawned several ventures and publications: Simon Timberlake and John Prag, *The Archaeology of Alderley Edge* (BAR British Series no. 396 and J. & E. Hedges (Oxford), appeared in 2005). *Living with the Edge: Alderley's Story* (ed. A.J.N.W. Prag), with thirty-one contributors, covers everything else you ever wanted to know about Alderley: it will be published by Manchester University Press in 2015, finally bringing the project to a close.

John Prag was Keeper of Archaeology at the Manchester Museum in the University of Manchester 1969-2004, Professor of Archaeological Studies 2004-5, and is now Hon. Professor at the Museum and Professor Emeritus of Classics in the University. Since 1996 he has been Co-ordinator of the joint Alderley Edge Landscape Project of the Museum and the National Trust and editor of its publications. A Classical archaeologist at heart, he has also worked on scientific analyses of Greek pottery and metalwork, and with Richard Neave has pioneered the use of facial reconstruction in archaeology.

Excavating a Revolution – Recent work on the Industrial Archaeology of Cheshire

Dr Mike Nevell, Head of Archaeology, University of Salford

The 21st century has seen several significant excavations and pieces of survey work on the industrial archaeology of Cheshire, from Nether Alderley Mill to the Old Silk Mill at Congleton. The presence of this year's Association for Industrial Archaeology annual conference at Chester University in September has also allowed a more general review of the surviving remains of the county's rich industrial past. This talk will review this new data, the location and spread of industry within the county, highlight the national quality of some of this material, and finish with the continuing threat to this nationally important legacy of industry.'

***Mike Nevell**, currently Head of Archaeology at Salford University, has more than 26 years' experience of North West archaeology, and has written extensively on industrial archaeology over many years. He is co-editor of *Industrial Archaeology Review*, the leading international journal on industrial archaeology; Chair of CBA North West and the North West Industrial archaeology Panel, and a Trustee of the CBA.*

The Portable Antiquities Scheme...

... is a national scheme to encourage the reporting of archaeological objects found by members of the public.

The Scheme has established a network of Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs) across the country. They can provide advice and record your finds within a national database (www.finds.org.uk).

This process is entirely voluntary and whilst I will need to borrow your artefacts while I record them, they will be returned to you.



What finds should be reported?

I am interested in all archaeological objects that you have found (dating up to approx. 1700). This includes not just metal but also pottery, flint, stone, leather and anything else you may find.

Under **The Treasure Act 1996** you have a legal requirement to report any treasure finds to the coroner within 14 days. I can help identify what is treasure and assist with the report to the coroner.



What information will be recorded?

- An identification and description of the object
- A digital image
- Weight and dimensions
- Where and how it was found

This information will be entered into the online database at www.finds.org.uk.

All personal information and details of the precise findspot will not be publicly released.

Please note the information given to us is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and the Data Protection Act (1998).



How long will this take?

Where possible, I prefer to borrow your finds for a while, so I can research, photograph and record them properly. You will be issued with a receipt whilst they are in my care. Your finds will be returned to you.



What your FLO can do for you:

- Identify and record your objects.
- Advise about conservation and how to clean and store your finds.
- Provide guidance about the Treasure Act and Agri-Environmental Schemes.
- Offer further information about the area where you found your artefact and the significance of your material for the understanding of our history.



• A socketed axe dating from the Early Iron Age, c. 800-600BC recorded on the PAS database www.finds.org.uk/database as [WMID-B87DC3](http://www.finds.org.uk/database)

- Provide guidance about how to use Ordnance Survey maps and how to take grid references.
- Put you in touch with your local resources including museums, Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs), archaeological units and conservators.

Finds Surgeries

Vanessa is based at Liverpool on the Albert Dock and is available most days there to see finds, appointment only.

Regular drop-in surgeries are held at:

Grosvenor Museum, Chester
2nd Friday of each month 10.30-4pm

Manchester Museum, Oxford Rd
3rd Friday of each month 10am- 4pm

Museum of Liverpool
3rd Wednesday of each month 14.00-16.00pm. Booking essential, contact the admin office on 0151 4784063.

Please get in touch for confirmation of dates.



The Knutsford Hoard 2012 T406
www.finds.org.uk/database



Contact your FLO

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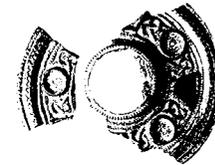
NATIONAL MUSEUMS LIVERPOOL

Can't make it to a surgery?

The majority of local museums are able to take in finds on behalf of the FLO – simply drop them off before the next Finds Surgery visit & you will be issued with a receipt.

PLEASE NOTE:

There may be some days when the FLO cannot make the usual finds surgery due to holidays or other work commitments. Please try to confirm (with the FLO) before to save a wasted trip.



Portable
Antiquities
Scheme

www.finds.org.uk

Archaeological Finds Recording & Identification In Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside



The Knutsford Hoard 2012 T406
www.finds.org.uk/database



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