

**Programme
October 2009
to April 2010**

All lectures will be held at Elvet Riverside, Room 141 New Elvet, Durham, at 2.30 pm (except where noted). Everyone is welcome to attend

2009

Saturday 10 October **The tomb-robbers of No-Amun Power struggles under Ramesses IX** Dylan Bickerstaffe Egyptologist
Joint lecture with the North-East Ancient Egypt Society

Saturday 21 November **Ordinary people's houses** John Grundy architectural historian and broadcaster
note In Elvet Riverside room 140 (change of room to accommodate a larger audience)

Saturday 12 December **Members' Meeting 2010**

2010

Saturday 9 January **Adopting and adapting metallurgy in prehistoric Italy** Dr Andrea Dolfini University of Newcastle

Saturday 20 February **Peel towers, hunting and anti-social behaviour** Lammerside Castle, Cumbria Erik Matthews
AASDN Fieldwork Officer

Saturday 6 March **The Bayeux Tapestry and the sea** Professor Gale Owen-Crocker University of Manchester

Saturday 13 March **Durham County Archaeology Day**
For details, contact the Archaeology Section, Durham County Council, telephone (01388) 663 089, e-mail archaeology@durham.gov.uk

Saturday 10 April **Re-evaluating early medieval Northumbrian contacts and the 'coastal highway'**
Christopher Ferguson Research student, University of Oxford

Archaeology course in Durham

Archaeology The big themes

An eight-week course open to all, taught by an archaeologist. Antioch House, Crossgate, Durham

**Tuesday 13 October to Tuesday 1 December
7.00 pm – 9.00 pm**

Cost £45 plus £5 Book Fund

There will also be two field trips at £8 each. Just turn up on the first evening or contact Ian Colquhoun at e-mail colquhouni@aol.com or telephone (01670) 818793.

E-mail list

The Secretary occasionally sends out e-mails with updates on the lecture programme, fieldwork, and other events in the area. If you do not already receive these communications and would like to be added to the list, please e-mail archandarch.dandn@dur.ac.uk.

Please could you also indicate whether you would be willing to receive posters for forthcoming lectures as e-mail attachments.

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ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

OF DURHAM AND NORTHUMBERLAND

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Lammerside Fieldwork Update



Five fieldwork sessions have been held since work on site commenced in earnest in March. The weather has been highly variable, with snow, high winds, heavy rain and baking heat, but not at all at the same time, thankfully! In addition to members of CBA North and the Society, we have been supplemented by members of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society and Appleby Archaeology, and by postgraduate students from Durham University. New volunteers are always welcome, so, if you are interested in this highly complex late medieval high status site, please get in touch.

Findings so far include evidence of a second earlier tower of possible 14th-century date, the front wall of which was later re-used as the back wall of the 15th-century tower. The surviving doorway had become substantially distorted by the weight of the 15th-century tower bearing down upon it. An inner chamber or oubliette has been identified as forming the private domestic office of the family, with evidence surviving of furnishing and the dramatic nature of the abandonment of the site in the mid 16th century. The tower is in quite a parlous state, with some fresh falls of stone since work has commenced.

Elsewhere, the modern boundary wall has yielded evidence of the late 16th-century park boundary and further evidence of the medieval stone bridge.

In future sessions, we hope to record in detail some of the building earthworks using our plane table. Particular areas of interest include the possible hall and chamber

block, the gatehouse area and the site of the manorial home farm. Over the winter, we may move our attention to the rabbit warren associated with the neighbouring estate of Pendragon Castle and to the nearby village of Nateby where a number of houses incorporate some reused high status architectural detailing, possibly from Lammerside.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Erik Matthews on 07951380829 or e-mail rubyna.matthews@btinternet.com



Interior of the northwest chamber within the tower at Lammerside, showing evidence of vault construction

Environmental archaeology

On 28 February, Paul Johnson and Lynne Lowrie of Northern Archaeological Associates led an environmental archaeology practical. The process of taking bulk samples on site was explained, and everyone took part in the processing and sorting of the material. While a couple of members donned heavy rubber gloves to break up the clods of clay in the flotation tank, Lynne explained to the others the process of sorting dry residues from a previous flotation. These were first sieved through a 4-millimetre mesh, the fine residues being scanned with a magnet to retrieve hamerscale, while the coarser material was searched for artefacts and ecofacts such as pottery, slag, fuel, animal and fish bones.

The Society is very grateful to NAA for providing this insight into their work, and we hope for further collaboration with them in the future.



Flotation using a Siraf tank, with Paul Johnson

The Society website www.durham.ac.uk/archandarch.dandn

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New excavations at Binchester

The new programme of excavation at Binchester Roman fort, in which the Society is a partner along with Durham University, Stanford University and the Archaeology Section of Durham County Council, commenced on 8 June 2009. The area selected for investigation during this first season lies inside the fort, close to the east corner. It includes the rear of the defences on the southeast and northeast sides, the internal perimeter road (*via sagularis*) and part of the forward zone of the fort (*praetentura*) thought to contain barrack accommodation.

The first three weeks of the season consisted of fieldwork training for Durham University first-year Archaeology students; the second block of three weeks saw a similar exercise for students from Stanford University; while the final three weeks was the 'community dig' element conducted under the aegis of our Society. The project has attracted considerable interest and resulted in nearly thirty new members for the Society.

Following removal of the turf and topsoil, a spread of rubble began to appear at a relatively shallow depth. Some of this consisted of stone derived from the collapse or demolition of Roman buildings that had been spread around by ploughing in previous centuries. Other areas, however, represented deliberate surfacing and these were associated with a rectangular building measuring approximately 5 by 12 metres overlying the *via sagularis* and the back of the fort rampart. Pottery recovered from deposits around it suggests that this was of 13th- or 14th-century date. The rubble foundations of walls, perhaps belonging to an adjoining yard or enclosure, were exposed along with a gully leading to a large pit. The latter had cut into the remains of a Roman building in this area but, generally, as excavation progressed, it became clear that there had been comparatively little robbing out of Roman structures.

The top of the clay bank forming the rampart behind the fort wall was exposed on two sides of the defences near the east corner. On the northeast side, a wall running in from the back of the fort wall seems likely to belong to one of the stone 'interval towers' spaced at regular distances along the defences between the gate-houses. The side walls of an angle tower at the east corner of the defences were also revealed. These are the first towers to be found at Binchester. Several features were detected along the southeast stretch of the defences, including the base of a bread-oven or kiln and possibly part of another interval tower. Behind the rampart, the latest surface of the *via sagularis* began to appear towards the end of this season.

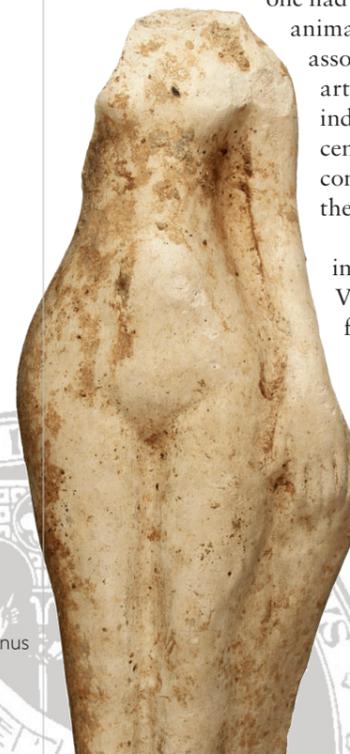
The rest of the excavation area was occupied by the remains of part of a long, narrow building about 7.40 metres wide, aligned at right-angles to Dere Street; the latter running through the fort as the main street known as the *via principalis*. The outer walls of the building rest on a foundation course about 0.90 metres wide and narrowing to about 0.60 metres at Roman floor level. Stretches of the latter appear to show more than one period of workmanship and may have been rebuilt. Traces of internal partition walls are visible,



Overhead view of the excavation, showing the walls and stone slab flooring of the barrack block near the east corner of the fort

Letter 'R' from an inscription on stone

White pipeclay figurine of Venus Scale 1:1



© David Petts Durham University



Fragment of glass vessel with snake-thread decoration c 200 AD Scale 2:1



Enamelled lid of a seal-box Scale 1:1



Rim of late second-century painted glass cup Scale 2:1

but some of these appear to have gone out of use in the latter stages of the building's occupation. The gap between the end of the building and the northeast rampart is much smaller than that between the side of the building and the southeast rampart; it may be that the building was originally wider and was later reduced in size. The top of what seems to be an earlier wall has been revealed about 4.60 metres closer to the rampart and this might be the original outer wall. The function of the building is uncertain as yet but it is in the right location and of the appropriate dimensions to be a barrack block.

One of the rooms contained a flooring of heavy stone slabs, some of which are clearly re-used fragments from earlier structures. In addition to the large pit cut through the building's remains mentioned above, another smaller one had a fill containing numerous fragments of animal bone and worked antler. Possibly associated with the manufacture of bone artefacts, this may well belong to industrial activity of the 5th and 6th centuries like that found on the site of the commanding officer's bath-suite during the excavations in the 1970s and 80s.

Notable finds from this season's work include a white pipe-clay figurine of Venus, the lid of a seal-box and several fragments of high quality glass vessels. Discovering an inscription is always the 'holy grail' for Roman archaeologists and we have made a modest start in this direction with the recovery of a single letter from one example.

David Mason President AASDN

23 May AGM visit to Seaton Delaval Hall

On the morning of the AGM, a large group, led by Harry Beamish of the National Trust, visited Seaton Delaval Hall. Designed by Sir John Vanbrugh for Admiral George Delaval, the magnificent building had a chequered history, with two disastrous fires, in 1752 and 1822, the latter leaving the structure as little more than a shell. Unfortunately, neither George Delaval nor his architect lived to see the completion of the hall, but the building is widely regarded as one of Vanbrugh's finest works.

The imposing forecourt, reminiscent of villas in the Roman Campagna, reflects Vanbrugh's background as a theatrical set designer. The façade is adorned with maritime and legal symbols, referring to the admiral's naval and political career. From the entrance, flanked by Doric columns, we proceeded into the great entrance hall, looked down on by statues representing music, painting, sculpture, architecture, geography and astronomy. These reflect the aspirations of 18th-century gentlemen, who, inspired by the Grand Tour, saw themselves as successors to the Roman aristocracy. In classical succession, the Doric of the façade gives way to Ionic in the entrance hall, and then to Corinthian in the saloon, where guests were lavishly entertained by George Delaval's heir, Captain Francis Blake-Delaval, with his eight sons and five daughters; the 'gay Delavals' who delighted in practical jokes of questionable taste.

Having visited the house, including the service area in the basement and the first floor gallery across the south end of the great hall, we descended from the south portico into the garden and visited the north west bastion, a garden feature inspired by Vanbrugh's military background.

The National Trust is currently fundraising to acquire Seaton Delaval Hall. It is now only £300,000 short of its appeal target of £6.3 million, and the Trust is hopeful that the property will be opened to the public in spring 2010.



The south front of Seaton Delaval Hall