

Programme 2012

All lectures will be held at Elvet Riverside, Room 141 New Elvet, Durham, at 2.30 pm unless otherwise notified. Everyone is welcome to attend

Saturday 21 April

From sun and sand to coal Saltmaking and the 'Long Industrial Revolution'
David Cranstone Cranstone Consultants

Wednesday 2 May
6.30 pm

Heirlooms and ancient objects Connecting the lives of medieval people and things
Professor Roberta Gilchrist Reading University

Saturday 12 May

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 9 June

The Gristhorpe Man Project Antiquarianism to archaeological science
Dr Janet Montgomery Durham University and **Dr Nigel Melton** Bradford University

Saturday 29 September

From Djoser's Pyramid to Durham's Cathedral Radiocarbon dating for archaeology
Dr Andrew Millard Durham University

Saturday 13 October
2.00–4.00 pm

Tell Mutubis and Karnak Spring Fieldwork in Egypt
Dr Penny Wilson and **Angus Graham** Durham University
Joint lecture with the North East Ancient Egypt Society

Saturday 17 November

Utter Karma in the Atacama Provisional title
Dr Paul Bahn Archaeologist, writer and broadcaster

Saturday 8 December

Members Meeting Details to follow

other events

Saturday 2 June

Sunderland History Fair
Any offers of help on the AASDN stall would be greatly appreciated. Please contact the Secretary

E-mail updates

The members e-mail list has recently been updated, but messages have bounced back from several addresses. If you do not currently receive occasional e-mail updates about events in the area from the society, but would like to do so, please e-mail archandarch.dandn@durham.ac.uk to be added to the list.

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ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF DURHAM AND NORTHUMBERLAND

Newsletter 17

spring 2012

Architecture and Archaeology A Wide and Fertile Field in which to Labour



Speakers at the AASDN 150th Anniversary Conference

left to right

Professor Colin Renfrew (Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn), Dr Pete Wilson, Martin Roberts, Mike Heyworth, Dr David Mason, Dr Rachel Pope, Professor Jennifer Price, Professor Dame Rosemary Cramp and Peter Ryder
Photograph Lee McFarlane

Durham Archaeology Explorers



11-year-old Catherine exploring Bronze Age Beaker culture

Now in its fifth month, Durham Archaeology Explorers (DAX) goes from strength to strength. Children aged 7–11 years have battled their way through prehistory, looking at topics as diverse as local rock art, the transition from hunter-gathering to farming, ancient Chinese oracle bone script and much more.

We are now about to embark upon the Roman period and, with the help of David Mason, we are organizing our first excursion to Binchester Roman Fort.

We've had lots of positive feedback from club members and their carers. One parent said, "DAX is brilliant! It gives children the chance to explore history and archaeology far beyond the National Curriculum. Izzy loves it and it has sparked a real passion for history in her".

DAX will be attending the Archaeology Day at County Hall in March with a display of the group's work to date. Please stop to have a chat with us and see what fantastic work young people can produce.

For further information about Durham Archaeology Explorers, please contact Charlotte Spink at archaeology.explorers@dur.ac.uk

A find from the River Wear

Members who attended the 2011 Archaeology Day will remember the talk given by Gary Bankhead and Frances McIntosh about the remarkable assemblage of artefacts that Gary and his brother Trevor had recovered from a dive site on the bed of the River Wear. Gary, a Society member and archaeology student at Durham University, continued to dive and, last October, he recovered a unique artefact that bears witness to the cult of St Cuthbert in the late medieval period. The following is his description.

A cast lead alloy object in the form of a pectoral cross, with equal-length flaring arms; the front face features decoration representative of the Anglo-Saxon cloisonné style. The rear face is undecorated with a flat, plain surface. The object's style has parallels with four 7th-century cross pendants from the early Christian period found in England; all displaying cloisonné inlays for garnets. However, the closest parallel is with the 7th-century St Cuthbert pectoral cross, with its simple square cut garnet inlays. A hole in the upper arm suggests the cross could have been worn suspended from the neck by a cord or chain, secured directly to an article of clothing (sewn on), or nailed to an upright structure. The object,



Gary Bankhead diving the River Wear
© Angela Bankhead

which may have been manufactured locally, was cast in a single open-air clay mould. Although there is evidence of casting flaws, the object still maintains a recognizable form, therefore it would still have had a function. An object, possibly a flanged-head nail, was incorporated into the mould process to form the hole in the upper arm. The percentages of lead and tin in



The front and back views of the pectoral cross found in the River Wear Actual size
© Jeffrey Veitch

the alloy suggest eutectic quality pewter, producing a bright surface when originally cast. The depicted iconography and find location close to Durham Cathedral suggests that the object is a pilgrim souvenir linked to the shrine of St Cuthbert. It was most probably manufactured in the early 15th century, with the intention of being sold by a vendor from a booth located on Elvet Bridge to pilgrims visiting St Cuthbert's shrine. Educated speculation suggests it was thrown into the River Wear either as a propitiatory gesture by a pilgrim for superstitious or votive reasons or by the manufacturer/vendor due to its casting flaws. No other parallels exist of a pilgrim souvenir in this form, dedicated to the Shrine of St Cuthbert.

Gary Bankhead

A day in the life of Rent a Peasant

The alarm goes off in the pitch dark at stupid o'clock in the morning and the first thought is not only, "Who am I today?" but also "When am I today?", followed by a mad scurry round to walk the dog and feed livestock, then home to change into costume and off to the day's engagement. On a weekday this is usually a visit to a junior school. Arrive, unpack the vehicle and get set up ready for 9 am start. A sea of small people swarm into the school hall and are mesmerised by the strangely dressed person and unusual objects in front of them. The ice is broken by choosing an 'ox-team' to demonstrate the ox-yoke. We then work through all the crops and animals needed on our imaginary farm, and their uses. The sheep fleeces elicit the cry of "That's minging, Miss!" As the fidgets set in, we break to play with snorie bones from pig's trotters, the feather game with geese down and peeling rushes for rushlights. The latter

creates a lot of waste which has to be swept up with the besom broom. Calm is restored and objects are passed round. "No, there was no plastic, that spoon is made of horn." "No, there was no electricity, that's why they made candles." "No, they didn't grow potatoes because America hadn't been discovered, that's right – no chips and tomato sauce in those days." It can be hard work, but the big "Thankyou!" at the end is a tremendous lift. Pack up, change and home. If there is no booking the following day, then unpacking is left to the next day and a relaxing evening with a beer and an early night feels well-earned.

Louisa Gidney

For further information on how to Rent a Peasant, visit <http://www.rentapeasant.co.uk/> or telephone Louisa on (01388) 731848

Hornby Castle fieldwork

Attention during the 'closed' season has focussed on the relationship between the Deserted Medieval Village and the site being excavated, as well as the curious painted panels, known to be of mid 15th-century date and Flemish manufacture, in St Mary's Church. The seemingly close physical relationship between the Deserted Medieval Village and the evidence of luxurious entertainment being uncovered within the medieval castle site has been somewhat puzzling. Indeed, the drainage system laid in earthenware pipes dating to the mid 14th century appears to head directly into the site of the medieval village. A possible explanation is given in Phillip Dixon's recent paper, 'The Pacification of the Castle', published in *The Medieval Great House* (edited by Malcolm Airs and Paul Barnwell). He cites two examples dating from the early 15th century, at Wingfield in Derbyshire and Herstmonceaux in Sussex, of new properties where a deliberate skyline of towers has been created to secure symbolic power and authority over the surrounding landscape. An examination of the skyline of the western approach to Hornby Castle, the direction that visitors from Middleham Castle would have used, suggests strongly that something similar may have occurred here. Visitors would have seen very little until they came to the slope directly to the northwest of Hornby village, when they would have been confronted by the medieval village below and the towers of the castle and church behind. A number of unusual features of the castle suggest that this may have been the principal approach in medieval times, including the rather curious north-south alignment of the Great Hall and the complete absence of a southwest tower, even though there was clearly scope for one. A southwest tower would have been obscured in the western view by the building currently being excavated in the castle grounds. Also significant is the fact that the church tower was heightened in the mid 15th century to enhance the visual relationship with the castle towers behind. The last unambiguous documentary reference to the village being occupied dates from 1382, some nine years before the castle was inherited by the Conyers. It is not



St Mary's Church, with the deserted medieval village in the foreground

difficult, therefore, to envisage a scenario where they might have wished to clear away the remainder of the village to enhance the view for their would-be guests. It is hoped to be able to test this hypothesis shortly by undertaking a test pit exercise within gardens in the modern village. The origin of the painted panels within the south aisle of St Mary's Church has also been a matter of great interest. A recent examination of a number of manuscripts associated with King Edward IV in the care of the British Library has thrown up a parallel with a border design identical to that depicted in the Hornby panels as a recurring theme. The illuminator of these manuscripts was Phillipe De Mazerolles who, having previously been associated with the court of the Burgundian Grand Duke Charles the Bold, spent time producing items for King Edward IV and his inner circle in the late 1470s.



Painted panels in St Mary's Church

Erik Matthews
Society Fieldwork Officer

The road to Flodden On 1 October 2011, the Society followed the English route to the Battle of Flodden (1513) with Chris Burgess



Weetwood Bridge marks the first crossing point of the Twill for the English army en route to Barmoor Castle. The guns and equipment would have been taken over the bridge while the troops waded through the river.



Twill Bridge, dated 1511, a ninety foot arch spanning the River Twill. James IV crossed the bridge in late August while heading for Norham Castle. The English army crossed on 9 September, the morning of the battle.



Looking over the site of the battle of Flodden at Branxton Moor. There is no reliable record of how many died. The Abbess of Coldstream travelled south to retrieve the bodies of the Scots nobility, James IV being the last British monarch to die in battle.