

President's Letter



The second half of 2022 has turned out to be a tumultuous time, with the death of the Queen, the accession of a new monarch, and political shenanigans that bring *Yes, Prime Minister* to mind. It has also seen a continuing return to normal life after the Covid pandemic, and with that the return of in-person Saturday lectures at Elvet Riverside. We have enjoyed three excellent excursions to Old Durham Gardens, Beamish Museum, and Gainford Hall. We are very fortunate that the Arch & Arch gives us access to knowledgeable guides, whose expertise really brought the story of these places to life. My thanks to Jenny Morrison, our indefatigable Secretary, and to Vice-President Julie Biddlecombe-Brown for their work arranging these excursions as well as to our guides Martin Roberts, Seb Littlewood, and Adrian Green.

Although a lot of people were unsure, at first, about using Zoom to attend lectures, as time went on it became a normal

thing. Since lockdown disappeared, some societies in the area have decided to hold in-person talks and to transmit them simultaneously by Zoom. There are some advantages to this, but it misses an important part of the normal experience – meeting other members, chat before and after talks, the chance to catch up on what else has been going on. We intend to stick to live talks, now that it is safe to hold them (and we use a large lecture theatre at Elvet Riverside, so the room isn't crowded). Audience numbers are creeping up, but they are still a bit below what we generally saw a couple of years ago. We hope that this trend will continue.

I look forward to seeing you at Elvet Riverside ER140, and perhaps in the Royal County Hotel later, on a Saturday afternoon in the future.

Richard Annis

President | Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland (AASDN)

Excavation of a Prehistoric Roundhouse at Middlestone Moor, Spennymoor

A roundhouse of Middle Bronze Age date was excavated in June 2020 in advance of a housing development on land at Durham Road, Spennymoor. This represents an important discovery as very few settlement sites of this period have been investigated in the region. This is particularly true for sites in lowland settings where fewer sites of this period have been identified than in upland areas. Taken in conjunction with recent discoveries of unenclosed Bronze Age roundhouses at the Milfield Plain, Northumberland the present site is helping to address a gap in the region's prehistoric settlement pattern. It is becoming clear that the settlement pattern of unenclosed Bronze Age roundhouses is likely to have been present in lowland as well as upland settings. There was no evidence for an enclosing ditch or palisade, the roundhouse belonging to the category of unenclosed settlement. Radiocarbon dating suggests that the roundhouse dates to a period between the late 15th-mid 12th century BC.

The roundhouse faced midway between ENE and east with a projecting passageway entrance. A wall slot survived on its eastern side being traced either side of the entranceway with a further length surviving on its northern side. The line of the wall slot can be projected on the basis of a series of scoops or shallow pits which lay immediately within the line of the exterior wall of the structure. The roundhouse was oval in shape and 13m by 11.50m in size. The entrance to the roundhouse was formed by two projecting linear east-west slots with outlying postholes each which would have held a post defining either side of a passageway or a covered porch leading into the roundhouse. The roundhouse was constructed with an outer wall trench and an inner ring of postholes, with



a 2m gap between the two. A circuit of postholes formed an inner oval area 8.5m by 7.5m in size.

A series of shallow features were located around the inside of the roundhouse in the space between the inner circuit of postholes and the external wall. These shallow pits or scoops were ranged around the inside of the northern, western, and south-western wall of the roundhouse. The majority of these features had a compacted metalling on their base. On balance it seems most probable that the shallow pits or scoops from the roundhouse relate to the stalling of animals inside the house, with metalling on their base laid to facilitate the mucking-out of bedding and waste materials.

A number of cut features and postholes were located within the central area of the roundhouse. Although much disturbed, a pit appeared to have had a stone lining and may perhaps have had or included a storage function. A 0.80m by 0.40m area of burning visible on the upper surface of the natural subsoil, is likely to indicate the former position of a central hearth, a common feature amongst Bronze Age roundhouses.

Jonathan McKelvey

Director | AD Archaeology Ltd

Spotting buildings that aren't there

Archaeology involves reconstructing past activities from material remains. Sometimes those remains are hidden beneath the ground; sometimes they are there in front of us. But things that survive above ground gradually disappear, because of disuse, decay, or redevelopment. A good example of something that demonstrates a slice of our local history, and something that is disappearing at a pace, is the farmstead gin gang. These rounded or angular farm buildings were once very common in the north-east, as in the south-west of England and in Scotland. In other parts of England, gin gangs are rare. Today, many have been demolished; some have been converted to living rooms or, as in the case of the Plough at Cramlington, into part of a pub. An excellent complete example forms part of the Home Farm at Beamish. Although many gin gang buildings have gone, you can still see traces of them if you look hard enough.



Gin gang at The Plough, Cramlington: from wheelhouse to alehouse.

Gin gangs, also called roundhouses, wheelhouses, or horse mill houses, were built in the late 18th and early 19th centuries after the invention of the powered threshing machine. Andrew Meikle, a Scottish engineer, devised the first practical thresher in the mid-1780s. His machine did away with laborious work of hand-threshing with flails, an unpopular job that occupied many farm workers throughout the winter months. The thresher was put on the upper floor of a barn, so that grain, straw, and chaff would fall to the ground floor for bagging, stacking or disposal. In the early days of their use, power for threshers came from horses. They were harnessed to a timber frame attached to a vertical drive shaft set up outside the threshing barn. Iron or wooden gears connected the vertical drive to another wooden shaft that ran into the barn and drove the machine. The gin gang was an open-sided shelter built to protect the horses and machinery from the weather.

Horse gins were not in use for very long. Within a fairly short period, portable steam engines were brought in to drive machinery in barns; later, contractors would travel from farm to farm with a steam engine towing a threshing machine. The 19th century saw many innovations in the mechanisation of farm work – and the horse gin was the first of those changes – but in time, gin gangs and portable threshing machines were superseded by combine harvesters.



A rare example of a gin gang where the drive shafts survive. The horizontal shaft enters the barn through a square hole at the middle of the picture.

Old gin-gangs are a familiar sight in many places and their curvaceous or angular roofs often add something to the appearance of a farmstead. They are easily spotted on early Ordnance Survey maps, where they appear as round or angular projections, often with dotted outlines. Old maps are easily available online through the National Library of Scotland website. But since gin gangs went out of use a long time ago, many of them have fallen into disrepair. Occasionally they retain parts of their old machinery, or signs of how the work of threshing changed over the years.



A Northumberland gin gang with its two-storey threshing barn behind.



Inside the same Northumberland building, an iron drive wheel and shaft for the travelling steam engine that replaced the horses.

If you are lucky, you may have the chance to look inside one of these dilapidated buildings. If you are extraordinarily lucky, the machinery or the old thresher may still be inside the wheelhouse and barn. More commonly, a ruinous structure may be all that remains.

In many places, the old wheelhouse may have disappeared, leaving only outlines and holes in the side of a barn. The typi-



Inside a Northumberland barn, the wooden and iron gear wheels of a thresher are attached to the drive shaft entering through the wall at the right. The scale divisions are 10mm long.

cal pattern of a squarish drive shaft hole, at about head height, with smaller sockets for big structural timbers, as well as traces of a sloping roof, may be all the evidence that survives. The holes may be open or blocked up; a blocked door between the barn and the gin gang is often a good clue. Hunting for these – in a way, spotting buildings that aren't there – can be an entertaining archaeological addition to a country walk.



A barn on the edge of Durham City. The line of the low-pitched roof of a vanished wheelhouse can be seen under the whitewash.



In this barn at Kepier, just outside Durham, traces of the gin gang are harder to spot, but the door and the central holes give its former presence away.

Landscape Futures

As climate change imposes irrefutable consequences upon the Northumbrian landscape, the practices through which it is designed, structured, and managed will need to change. Over the coming decades this landscape must adapt to incorporate cleaner industries, enable more sustainable modes of agriculture, facilitate the production of greener forms of energy, and provide ecosystems with increased biodiversity. Furthermore, we must find innovative ways of creatively re-using our existing rural building stock rather than building anew. To avoid the deleterious and irreversible effects of past 'revolutions' on the landscape; this 'green revolution,' whilst urgently necessary, requires a more compassionate, holistic attitude. This landscape still evidences the indelible consequences of historical, fleeting wholesale transformation. Such rapid domination often occurs from a single, technological standpoint, a position devoid of the specific physical and cultural qualities of place.

This required new 'revolution' need not mean the destruction of our regional landscape, but rather demonstrate a sensitivity to it by knowingly harnessing the latent potential of its existing structures and infrastructures in a way that helps us sustain a meaningful future. This emerging design research project considers the global ecological crisis, and the various ways in which it might be addressed, through a regional lens. We ask, what if forgotten, abandoned, and overlooked historical buildings and infrastructures, extant in the Northumbrian landscape, can be re-appropriated in ways which not only mitigate the effects of climate change, but retain, and even intensify, the specific character of our region?

To date, our research has been concerned with identifying, surveying, and making speculative design proposals for the re-appropriation of a variety of existing structures and infrastructures in the Northumbrian landscape. These seek to address the ecological crisis in a considered place-specific manner at a variety of different scales. One project re-imagines the 'Wannie Line', the route of the former Wansbeck Railway that ran from Morpeth to Reedsmouth and Rothbury (Figure 1), as a new type of linear landscape condition or 'corridor' connecting a range of new ecosystems, increasing biodiversity and contributing to carbon offset. These potential 'ecological corridors' also become a prototype for a new model polity, where currently disparate local rural communities become reconnected.



Figure 1. The 'Wannie Line', Scots Gap, near Morpeth.

A second project explores options for the creative re-use of a series of abandoned water towers on the outskirts of Morpeth (Figure 2). Alternative uses of these structures in their extant form are being explored alongside options for their de-construction and subsequent re-assembly in new locations to serve new purposes.



Figure 2. Point cloud capture of redundant water tower, Tranwell, near Morpeth.

A further project explores the potential re-appropriation of ruined lime kilns and their associated infrastructures in the surrounding countryside (Figure 3). This project explores the viability of the kilns as future sites for the production of environmentally responsible, locally sourced building materials, and the potential of the quarries associated with the kilns to be used as locations for new, biodiverse habitats.

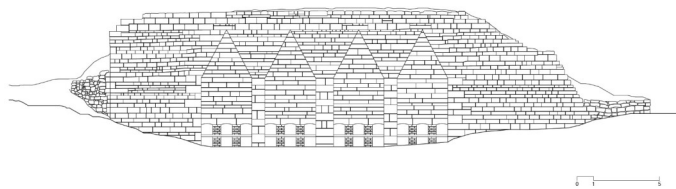


Figure 3. Survey drawing of redundant lime kiln, Hartington, Tuthill, Wallington.

These emerging propositions are not absolutes; they exist as provocative models, methods and scenarios evidencing future possibilities; new forms of harmonious occupation alongside an understanding of a moderated human demand. These, carefully executed, will add to the human continuum of making place in an ancient landscape, recording its stories, and generating new meanings.

Stephen Roberts, Shaun Young, & William Campbell
Department Architecture & Built Environment
Northumbria University

Hadrian's Wall Turret 3a

In the summer of 2021, Pre-Construct Archaeology were lucky enough to undertake an archaeological excavation over the line of Hadrian's Wall in the Ouseburn area of Newcastle upon Tyne. The site was located within the former footprint of Norris House on the east side of Crawhall Road. Excitingly, the works uncovered the remains of Turret 3a as well as the northern defensive ditch and six berm obstacle pits (potentially cippi pits). The turret is one of the largest yet

discovered and the only known example uncovered east of Newcastle.

Turret 3a was located at the northeast end of the excavation area and the north wall of the turret/curtain wall of Hadrian's Wall was exposed for a maximum length of around 12m, with foundations between 2.36m to 2.46m wide.



PCA Durham team cleaning the foundations for the north wall of the turret. © Pre-Construct Archaeology

Findings recovered from the turret were sparse with only a single fragment of Roman tegular roof tile recovered from the foundations of the northern wall. At first this would appear to suggest that the turret's roof was covered in tiles, however, where found, fragments of tegula are always in low quantities. Stone slates have also been found on other turrets along the Wall but again in low quantities. It has been suggested that wooden shingles and thatch may have been used (citing the pictorial representation on Trajan's Column that shows towers with pyramidal thatched roofs).

Prior to the discovery of Turret 3a, the largest known turret was at Melkridge (T40b) which was 0.03m wider internally at 5.79m however, externally the turret was at least 2.05m narrower east-west than T3a (T3a was 10.26m wide and T40b was 8.21m). As the upper walls of turrets are narrower than their foundations, the internal area within Turret 3a may have been wider depending on where the wall was constructed on top of the foundations e.g., if the wall was constructed away from the internal edge of the construction cut. It is therefore possible that T3a is the largest known turret being both wider externally (when including the width of the foundation trenches) and internally (if the walls of the turret were constructed away from the internal edge of the foundations).

The unusually large size of Turret 40b was thought to be attributed to the wide area within view of the structure with MC30 and MC50 being visible in clear weather. Development within urban Tyneside makes it difficult to ascertain but T3a may have had a similar panorama with the forts at Newcastle and Benwell situated c. 1.1km and 4.3km to the west, respectively. Sightlines to the fort at Wallsend, c. 4.3km to the east, would be blocked by Byker Hill, as the top of Stepney Bank lies at approximately 36m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) whilst Byker Hill lies at c. 62m AOD. T3a conceivably would have had good sightlines towards MC3 and T2b to the east.

The width and depth of Turret 3a's foundations were much more substantial than expected with the reasoning behind this perhaps related to the size of the turret, the local geology and the topography of the site. Turret 3a is one of the largest known examples and would have required well-built foundations to remain standing over the years. The foundations of the structure were cut into geological deposits of clay however slightly to the north and south-west were deposits of loose sand. It is unsurprising that the Wall does not survive where it crossed these deposits due to subsidence

issues that were likely present. The legionary construction teams perhaps knew of the existence of these deposits and tried to mitigate the risks of building here by excavating deeper and wider foundations. An additional risk to the stability of the turret was the topography of the local landscape. The turret was located on the western edge of the Ouseburn valley (at the top of Stepney Bank) with the land sloping down towards the Ouseburn to the east. The wider and deeper foundations on the eastern side of the turret were conceivably required to compensate for the slope of the valley.



Turret 3a showing berm obstacle pits. © Pre-Construct Archaeology

Six pits were noted within the berm (the area between the wall and wall ditch). The features are presumed to be berm obstacle pits due to their location and their collective form in plan. The system of pits would have been arranged in three rows parallel to the Wall, although variance in the pattern of pits varies across sites. Locally these have been seen during excavations on Shields Road to the east and Melbourne Street to the west and on geophysical survey results at Heddon-on-the-Wall. There are several types of defensive pits noted on Roman frontiers comprising entanglements (intertwined array of sharpened branches known as cippi or cervi/cervoli pits), entrapment (sharpened stakes covered with brushwood and leaves to act as traps known as lilia) and open pits (large pits designed to slow down attackers).

The pits uncovered at Crawhall Road were too shallow and small to have functioned as open pits and are therefore thought to represent cippi pits. Unfortunately, no remains of sharpened branches survived within the pits possibly due to the preservation of wood being poor within this part of the site and/or truncation within the periods following the abandonment of the Wall. The pits were all sealed by a medieval plough soil with ploughing perhaps truncating the upper part of the pits thereby removing any evidence of the timber entanglements.

The Wall ditch was exposed for a distance of around 9m and was 8m wide and over 2m deep. The ditch deposits were sampled and are potentially highly environmentally significant, however a more detailed level of analysis is required in order to ascertain the potential of these deposits.

The investigations at Crawhall Road have demonstrated that potential for significant archaeological remains relating to Hadrian's Wall can survive in the more built-up areas of urban Tyneside. The exact positioning of milecastles and turrets



The remains of the Wall Ditch that were overlain by the late 19th century Red Barns Saw Mill. © Pre-Construct Archaeology

within the Newcastle to Wallsend section is unclear with the structures not appearing to follow the assumed spacing; i.e., a milecastle at every Roman mile and two turrets spaced equidistantly between. Measurements from MCI suggest that the turret should be located to the southwest of the site around Melbourne Street however its positioning on the top bank of the valley suggest that strategic positioning outweighed the original spacing scheme.

Scott Vance

Project Officer | Pre-Construct Archaeology (Durham)

Oh Granny what big teeth you have....

As well as being places bustling with people the Later Medieval elite household was also one bustling with animals. One only has to view the illustration of the feast scene from the early 15th Century Berry Book of Hours otherwise known as Les Tres Riches Heures to get some understanding. It is rare however to see such activity clearly represented in the archaeological record. Dog skeletons often do not survive well with soil conditions and cat skeletons are rarer still. Detailed archaeological reports on the subject are also not common, an exception being that by Catherine Smith about Dogs, Cats and Horses in the Scottish Medieval Town in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (1998), Vol 128:859-885.

The fieldwork at Hornby Castle has proved a unique opportunity to examine the subject and also incidentally see the non-human casualties of Medieval conflict close at hand. The infill of the moat has produced evidence of an early 19th Century pet cemetery. Spaniel type dogs were in coffins, there were 7 mastiff type hunting dogs, a greyhound type dog and a cat, all sitting directly on top of the collapsed remains of the Medieval timber entrance bridge. The greyhound type dog had been killed by a crossbow bolt which was embedded in the former bridge deck beneath.

Most intriguing of all were the remains of two further mastiff type dogs both of extreme size from the same area. One was a female with an exceptionally well-preserved spine and the second a male who had secured a wound with a bladed weapon to the right forepaw. Both appear to have been guard dogs, *alaunts*, in Medieval terminology and were found with the near complete remains of a 15th Century Lincoln ware



drinking jug creating a possible association with the destruction of the site circa 1490. The skull of the male was also impressively heavy as approximately 3.5 kg, comparable to a modern fully grown adult Rottweiler for comparison! Further updates will be forthcoming as research progresses!

Erik Matthews
Fieldwork Officer | AASDN

2022 Excursions

Major Excursion: Bath and the Cotswolds

This year's major excursion – the tenth in the series - took place on September 6-14 and was centred on Bath with our party of twenty-two members staying at the four-star Francis Hotel in the centre of the city. The programme for the first day after our arrival – a Wednesday - featured a guided walking tour of Bath followed by a visit to the Roman baths, which were extremely busy, and the Abbey.

The following day had a prehistoric archaeology theme with a walk along the West Kennet avenue to the henge and stone circles at Avebury. After lunch and a visit to the Keiller Museum, our walk resumed with a route that took us passed the enormous, artificial mound known as Silbury Hill and onward to the long barrow on West Kennet hill. An outbreak of thunder and lightning prompted a rapid descent to rendezvous with our coach. In appropriate chronological



Silbury Hill



Tithe Barn

progress, Friday's itinerary saw the group tour the impressive Corinium Museum in the heart of Cirencester. Lunch at the Fleece Inn was followed by the short journey to Chedworth Roman villa to learn of the results of the latest research including the discovery that mosaics were still being laid here in the mid-fifth century.

Saturday was a free day for people to explore Bath further on an individual basis. This coincided with 'Jane Austen Day' with scores

of people parading around the city wearing costumes of the late 18th century.



Sunday commenced with a visit to the modestly sized but intriguing Farleigh Hungerford Castle. The group then travelled to Bradford upon Avon where lunch was taken at The Timbrells Yard café. The excellent local guide Phil Archer then led us on a walking tour of the town which took in the magnificent late medieval tithe barn along with the early Anglo-Saxon church of Lawrence. Lacock Abbey was the first port of call on Monday. Founded in the early 13th century, the abbey buildings were converted into a private residence after the Dissolution of the Monasteries though still retaining many elements of the earlier complex. In the afternoon, the group travelled to Newark Park situated near the delightfully named village of Ozleworth.

This country house has Tudor origins but was enlarged and much aggrandised in the later 17th century.

Owing to its closure to visitors in response to the official period of mourning for her late majesty, Wells Cathedral was replaced as the first part of the itinerary for Tuesday by a visit to the Lytes Cary medieval manor house. The afternoon was occupied by a self-guided tour of the impressive ruins of Glastonbury Abbey and the site museum. The principal stop during our return journey northwards was the delightful medieval moated manor house and surrounding gardens at Baddesley Clinton, located on the outskirts of Solihull. We arrived back in Durham just before the target time of 6:00 pm.



St Laurence Church

This will be our final trip with Barnard Castle Coaches in its present guise as the owner/driver Wayne Taylor and his wife Rose are selling the business and retiring to the vicinity of Stranraer at the western extremity of Dumfries and Galloway.



Baddesley Clinton

David Mason
Journal Editor | AASDN

Excursion & Annual General Meeting: Beamish Museum

On 11 June, we enjoyed a guided tour of Spain's Field Farm (which was moved stone by stone from Eastgate near Stanhope) and phase one of the new 1950s town with Seb Littlewood, Senior Keeper. Seb explained that many of the 1950s



buildings are replicas rather than genuine old buildings that have been carefully dismantled and moved, because 1950s architecture is often difficult to take apart in a manner which allows rebuilding, due to the hardness of the mortar. The Welfare Hall is a replica of that of 1957 at Leasingthorne Colliery, Bishop Auckland. Front Street terrace comprises John's Café, a recreation of that in Wingate; a recreation of the Spennymoor home of Norman Cornish, North East artist; and Elizabeth's Hairdresser's, which is based on a shop from Bow Street, Middlesbrough.

You can actually get your hair cut there! The fish and chip shop, which serves food in specially printed newspaper, is a replica of a shop from Middleton St. George, near Darlington.



Our AGM business meeting was held in the board room in Barclay's Bank in the 1900s town. The bricks and quoins for the recreated bank came from Park House in Gateshead. The board room has a magnificent carved oak overmantel or chimney piece dating to 1620 to 1630.



This came from the Beehive Inn on Sandhill, Newcastle. It was moved to the Mansion House in The Close in the early 1900s. On the abandonment of that building in 1835, the overmantel was donated to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, and so it came to be installed into the Great Hall in Newcastle Keep. It was donated to Beamish in 1987.



The central panel depicts a man being carried to heaven (said to represent the elevation of King James I to divine status - he died in 1625); a woman sat on a cloud, ready to receive him; and a woman sat on a globe, with a crown on her knee and the bishop's mi-

tre below her. The left panel shows the figure of Fortune with a horn of plenty, from which various objects are falling. The right panel shows a crowned woman with two masks in her hand. The overmantel also includes columns, masks, a lion's head, cherubs heads, birds picking fruit and flowers falling from a vase. After our meeting Helen Barker, Assistant Director Engagement Activity & Collections Access gave us an update on the Remaking Beamish project. The Society thanks Seb and Helen for a wonderful day.

Excursion: Old Durham Gardens

On 16 July, Martin Roberts guided our members through Old Durham Gardens, which were established over 350 years ago. The grade II Registered Historic Garden is owned by Durham County Council and since 2010 has been jointly managed with the Friends of Old Durham Gardens. There was an archaeological excavation between 1989 and 1992 (written up in Durham Archaeological Journal 1994 (volume 10, pages 69-92).

In the 12th century, Old Durham belonged to the rector of the Church of St. Nicholas, and in 1268 a chapel and private oratory were built. In 1443, Old Durham was seized by Bishop Neville and given to Kepier Hospital. The Master of Kepier Hospital leased Old Durham, from 1479, to his brother, Richard Booth, for 99 years.

After the Dissolution of the Monasteries the land owned by Kepier Hospital passed to John Heath I, but the Booth family continued to lease Old Durham and lived in a modest medieval manor house. In 1630, John Heath IV moved to Old Durham. The gardens were laid out at some point between 1630 and 1665. From this point until 1794, the Tempest family-owned Old Durham. John Tempest I and his son William were both MPs for Durham. Between 1725 and 1735 the gardens were renovated and the gazebo remodelled.

By 1748, the gardens were being run as a commercial nursery by John Thrackray, and remained in commercial use until the mid-19th century. Music concerts were held in the gardens during the 1750s. The house at Old Durham was demolished by 1776.



The trip included a tour of the 17th and 18th century walled gardens, the orchard, period planting and formal parterres, followed by refreshments. The early 19th century former Pineapple Inn survives, now a house. A group consisting of a late 17th or early 18th century barn, farm buildings and cot-

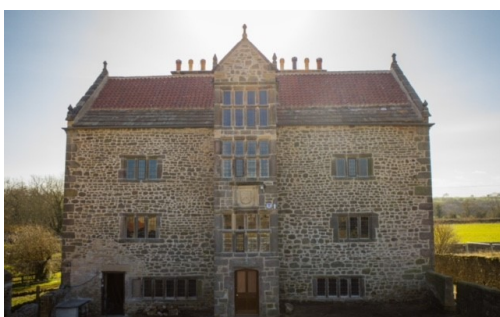
tages are listed grade II. The early 17th century square gazebo, with pyramidal roof, is also listed grade II.

AASDN is grateful to Martin and the Friends of Old Durham Gardens for our visit. You can read more about the history of Old Durham Gardens and its restoration at [here](#). Photo courtesy of Gil Mackay.

Excursion: Gainford Hall

On 8 October, the Society was very privileged to be allowed access to this wonderful grade I listed building by the Raby Estates. Gainford Hall, which was built at the end of the Elizabethan period 1600-1603, is currently being refurbished in order that it can be removed from the Heritage at Risk Register and brought back into use. The Hall is a cruciform (full-height porches at front and rear and stair towers on both sides) and double-pile (two rooms deep) plan-form house.

It was built for Reverend John Cradock, vicar of Gainford from 1594; and Archdeacon of Northumberland and Spiritual Chancellor to Bishop



Gainford Hall. © Raby Estates

Neile from 1619. It is thought to be the earliest house of its type in the North of England. When built, it was an example of cutting-edge design. The official listed building entry describes it as “an ingenious and intact split-level interior”. The front range comprises two storeys of principal rooms over a cellar and a long gallery in the attic. The hall retains beautiful plaster friezes depicting flowers, leaves, fruits, a mermaid and cupids with bows. Both hall and parlour are oak panelled. Above these are the great chamber and best bed chamber. The rear range had three storeys of service rooms (including a buttery and kitchen), three bedrooms and an attic. The exterior is built of sandstone rubble rather than dressed ashlar and would originally have been lime rendered.

Our guide, Dr Adrian Green, who has studied the building, compared Gainford with Gaythorn Hall in Ashby, Westmorland – of similar date and layout. Both houses remained as tenant farmhouses once neo-classical architecture became fashionable.

The 17th century grade II* listed dovecote has also been restored by the Raby Estates. Decorative dovecotes like this were a status symbol. They were used for breeding and



keeping doves, to supply the house with meat (and manure for the kitchen garden). The Gainford example is an impressive tapering sandstone structure with a domed roof and cen-

tral oculus, through which the birds entered and exited. Inside there are nest boxes and ledges. Originally there would have been a revolving ladder.

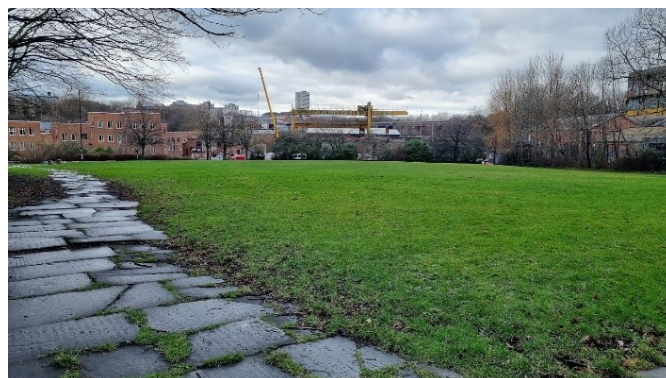
The Society thanks our Vice President Julie Biddlecombe-Brown for arranging the visit, and our Past President Adrian Green for guiding us around the Hall. Read more about the Hall [here](#).

Jennifer Morrison
Honorary Secretary | AASDN

Rediscovering Ballast Hills Burial Ground

Ballast Hills Burial Ground (BHBG) is in the Lower Ouseburn Valley Conservation Area in the Byker Ward in Newcastle. This green space is owned by the Newcastle City Council and is the site of one of the largest UK non-conformist burial grounds outside of London, with over 16,000 interments. This burial site, also known as Plaguey Fields or Grannies Park, was used primarily by dissenters (e.g., Protestant, Quaker, Baptist, and Methodist immigrants) and the very poor. It was also the last resting place for many victims of plague and cholera. In 1785, the Common Council received a petition stating that ‘numbers of swine were daily observed working and grubbing among the graves’ requesting a wall be built to enclose the burials, preventing animals and grave robbers from disturbing them.

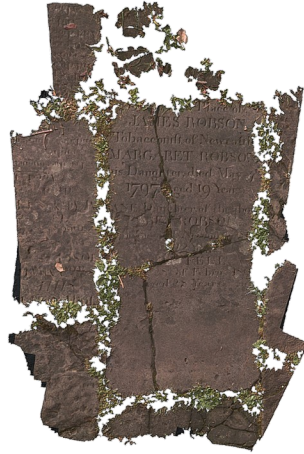
When in operation, the BHBG had more bodies interred there than in all the churchyards put together in Newcastle. The average number of interments from 1820 to 1825 inclusive was roughly 600 annually, each of which the Corporation of Newcastle upon Tyne received a sixpence. It was reported that in 1824, of the 1454 burials that took place in Newcastle, 805 were at BHBG, meaning that over half the citizens of Newcastle were denied ‘the civil advantages of burial’ afforded to Anglicans. Mackenzie (1827) reported “the burial-place was formerly much larger,” with Richardson (1838) reporting it covered about three acres. In the mid-1850s, because of the unsanitary conditions, all the Town’s churchyards were closed, BHBG closing in 1853.



View across Ballast Hills, with gravestone pathway, taken by Myra Giesen February 2022.

In 1930, the site was set aside as a park and continues as an open space now. Remaining headstones were laid flat as flagging for a pathway, while others were relocated to the sides of the space or elsewhere. The gravestones have suffered erosion and wear; today, only a few inscriptions are decipherable.

This past summer, we did a pilot using ground-penetrating radar (GRP) and 3D light scanning, with the GPR results in a 40 metres x 20 metres area showed the former pathway while clusters of higher amplitude anomalies that probably represent intersecting groups of burials. The light scanning produced excellent results despite being used on the uncleaned and grassy edges grave-stone.



James Robson gravestone enhanced in Sketchfab. Image provided by Alex Turner.

The BHBG project aims to reclaim identities of individuals buried there; forming connections with descendants; and telling stories of Newcastle's past – a past that is largely forgotten. The work has the potential to inspire the public to look afresh at historical sources and breathe life into the stories they hold within and place value to their existence. The range of benefits is broad, touching on heritage, community engagement, volunteerism, the arts, archaeology, burial practices, history, archives, education, conservation, religion, social policies/injustices, and health and disease. Connecting with one's past through family connections or links to a sacred place gives meaning to our lives, strengthens resilience, and contributes to our well-being.

This project is in its planning stage, so if you want to help shape its direction or want to be added to the list of interested parties, then please email [Myra](mailto:myra.giesen@ncl.ac.uk).

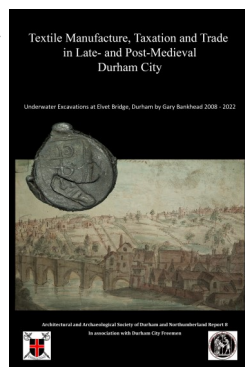
Myra Giesen
Newcastle University

New AASDN Monograph published!

We are delighted to announce the release of our first monograph for 14 years with a research report based on objects recovered by underwater archaeologist Gary Bankhead from a submerged riverbed, positioned just downstream of the twelfth century Elvet Bridge in Durham City. This 280-paged colour hardback book, published as an Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland monograph, in association with Durham City Freemen and the Finds Research Group, represents a cultural, scientific and technical study of 334 lead cloth seals recovered from the River Wear between 2008 and 2022.

These small, enigmatic objects represent the largest assemblage of such material available for analysis outside of London and, as such, are of crucial significance for understanding the cloth trade during the period to which they have been ascribed.

For more information see: diveintodurham.uk or contact [Gary Bankhead](mailto:gary.bankhead@durham.ac.uk).



New North East Publications

Alberti M & Mountain K (2022) [Hadrian's Wall: Exploring Its Past to Protect Its Future](#). Archaeopress, Roman Archaeology 90.

Archaeo-Environment Ltd. (2022) [A Conservation Management Plan for Darlington Rail Heritage Quarter](#). Borough Darlington Council.

Atkinson D (2022) [Elizabeth Davison and the Circulation of Chapbooks in Early Nineteenth-Century Northumberland](#). In: Stenner R, Kramer K, & Smith AJ (eds) *Print Culture, Agency, and Regionality in the Hand Press Period New Directions in Book History*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Barclay R, Barnes L, Ramsay G. Barclay C & Armstrong H (2022) 'Found in store': Working with source communities and difficult objects at Durham University's Oriental Museum. *Intersectional Encounters in the Nineteenth-Century Archive: New Essays on Power and Discourse*, 31.

Bidwell P (2022) Hadrian's Frontiers in Northern Britain. *Britannia*, 1-26.

Boll J (2022) Desiring Walls: Fantasies of Containment and Reimagined British Pasts. *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik*, 70(2):175-187.

Bowyer P (2022) [Landscapes through Time: Landscape Area 2](#).

Bradbury S & Thomas J (2022) [A Spirit of Place](#). In: NAFAE Annual Conference 2022: Making Communities and Making with Communities, 29 Apr 2022, Birmingham.

Breeze DJ, Ivleva T, Jones RH, & Thiel A (2022) [A History of the Congress of Roman Frontier Studies 1949-2022](#). Archaeological Lives. Archeopress Publishing.

Bruhn J & Hodgson N (2022) [The social and economic impact of Hadrian's Wall on the frontier zone in Britain](#), *Britannia*, 1-33.

[Bulletin/Teesside Archaeological Society. Bulletin #26](#). (2022) Content: Excavations at Kirklevington, Stockton-on-Tees 2021; Experiences of getting young people interested in archaeology; Recording St Mary's Churchyard, Norton, 2021 – Monuments; Recording St Mary's Churchyard, Norton, 2021 – People; Discovery and Excavation of the site of the Medieval Chapel of St Hilda in Kildale – Discovering Kildale's lost Chapel of St. Hilda and its history; Discovery and Excavation of the site of the Medieval Chapel of St Hilda in Kildale – Excavation of the site; Archaeology in County Durham and Darlington 2019-2021; The Portable Antiquities Scheme; Revealing Magna – 2021 Preliminary work results; Low Mill in Bilsdale – an 800-year old watermill; Some thoughts on new woodlands and archaeology in the North York Moors National Park.

Carstairs PJ (2022) [A generous helping? The archaeology of soup kitchens and their role in post-medieval philanthropy 1790-1914](#) (Doctoral dissertation, University of Leicester).

Coffield E, Markham K, Crosby J, Stenbom C, & Antoniou M (2022) ['Lacking' subjects: challenging the construction of the em](#)

powered' graduate in museum, gallery and heritage studies. Arts and Humanities in Higher Education.

Everett R & Taylor G (2022) [For peat's sake: peatlands, climate change and the future of archaeology](#), *Current Archaeology*, 387:50-52.

Fernández-Götz M, Cowley D, Hamilton D, Hardwick IJ, & McDonald S (2022) [Beyond Walls: Reassessing Iron Age and Roman Encounters in Northern Britain](#). *Antiquity*, 1-9.

Frodsham P & Sharpe, K (2022) [Abstractions Based on Circles: Papers on prehistoric rock art presented to Stan Beckensall on his 90th birthday](#). Archaeopress. ISBN Digital: 9781803273174.

Gardner A (2022) [Hadrian's Wall and Border Studies: problems and prospects](#). *Britannia*.

Gherardi F.(2022) [Compositional and Morphological Investigations of Roman Glass from Cremation Deposits at Birdoswald Fort on Hadrian's Wall, UK](#), *Heritage*, 5(1):362-377.

Hopkins L (2022) [Roman walls in English renaissance writing](#), *Cahiers Élisabéthains*, 108(1):107-119.

Hunter P, Waddington C, Grzybowska M, Parker L, & Hamilton D (2022) [An Early Iron Age palisaded enclosure in a multi-phase setting: excavations at Bleakmoor Hill](#), *Archaeological Journal*, 179(1):211-268.

Islam MS & De A (2022) [Ancient Boxing: A Narrative Discussion from Archaeological and Historical Evidences](#), *Montenegrin Journal of Sports Science and Medicine*, 11(2):71-78.

Jackson N, Petts D, Wilkins B, Jago I, Kahlenberg R, Swain B, & Ungemach J (2022) [Lindisfarne: The Holy Island Archaeology Project](#).

Kelly M (2022) *The Women Who Saved the English Countryside*. Yale University Press.

Langham R (2022) *The Wear & Derwent Railway*. Amberley Pub. Ltd.

Lotherington R, Miller I, & McDonnell G (2022) [A Further Phase of Archaeological Investigations at Swalwell Ironworks, Tyne and Wear](#), *Industrial Archaeology Review*, 44(1):36-47.

Mazel A & Nash G (Eds.) (2022) *Signalling and Performance: Ancient Rock Art in Britain and Ireland*. Archaeopress Publishing Ltd. ISBN-13: 978-1803272511.

McCorristine S, Low P, Rutherford H, Sandford-Couch C & McKee L (2022) [The Life and Death of Newcastle Gaol 1822-2022](#).

Radley S (2022) [D. TURNBULL AND L. WICKHAM, Thomas White \(c. 1736–1811\): Redesigning the Northern British Landscape](#), *Northern History*, 59(1):151-153.

Reddé M & Mees A (2022) [Hadrian's Wall and its Continental Hinterland](#), *Britannia*, 1-30.

Russell B, Romankiewicz T, Gardner T, Birley A, Snyder JR, & Beckett CT (2022) [Building with turf at Roman Vindolanda: multi-scalar analysis of earthen materials, construction techniques, and landscape context](#), *Archaeological Journal*, 179(1):169-210.

Steingraber A (2022) [Landscape and the making of the medieval Anglo-Scottish border: power, place, and perspective c. 1200-c. 1500](#). PhD thesis, University of York.

Stockdale S (2022) [The Grace Darling Museum](#).

Taylor G & Birley B (2022) [KEYNOTE: Revealing Magna and the threat of climate change to archaeological sites](#). In: *Roman Finds Conference 2022 Proceedings*.

Taylor G, Orr C, & Baldini LM (2022) [Chemical and microbiological tools for identifying climate change impacts at Roman fort sites, Northumberland, UK](#). In: *Goldschmidt Hawaii 2022 conference proceedings*.

Tibbs A (2022) *A Short Guide to Hadrian's Wall*. Amberley Pub. Ltd.

Walton P & Eckardt H (2022) [What Lies Beneath? Interpreting the Romano-British Assemblage from the River Tees at Piercebridge, County Durham](#). In: Lundock J & Sivilich M (Eds.) *Aspects of Roman Water*. University of Florida Press.

Williams H (2022) [Printing, Publishing, and Pocket Book Compiling: Ann Fisher's Hidden Labour in the Newcastle Book Trade](#). In: Stenner R, Kramer K, & Smith AJ (Eds.) *Print Culture, Agency, and Regionality in the Hand Press Period. New Directions in Book History*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

General Publication of Interest

Ever wonder "How do those who write history know the past?" Have a look at Readman P (2022) [Walking, and Knowing the Past: Antiquaries, Pedestrianism and Historical Practice in Modern Britain](#), *History*, 107(374):51-73.

Ever wonder what the music was in the North East between 1500 and 1800? Have a look at Murphy J (2022). [Music in North-East England, 1500-1800](#), *Folk Music Journal*, 12(2):122-125.

Ever wonder when that building was built? Then check-out the full list of guides at [Historic England Spotter Guides](#). The 2022 releases include:

- [A Guide to Traditional English Buildings](#)
- [A Guide to English Gothic Architecture](#)
- [A Guide to Norman Architecture in England](#)
- [Anglo-Saxon Architecture: Understated Jewels of England's Heritage](#)
- [From Lamp Posts to Litter Bins: The Stories Behind England's Street Furniture](#)

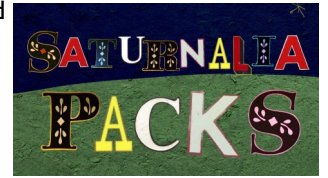
Remember to checkout what is happening with AASDN by visiting our [homepage](#) and our [news](#) page.

Festival 1900

Festival 1900 is still happening and you have time to get involved. Visit [here](#) to see the remaining activities and events. The last celebrations the Hadrian's Wall 1900 Festival is planning to commemorate a wonderful year and draw a close to the Hadrian's Wall 1900 Festival this December is [Saturnalia](#).

It is possibly the most popular Roman festival, and happens to be associated with Christmas and merrymaking. The word ‘Saturnalia’ means ‘an occasion of wild revelry or indulgence.’ The Festival organisers invite “anyone and everyone to join the festivities and deliver their own Saturnalia celebrations, events, and activities to make this a truly wall-wide knees up.”

Download your Saturnalia Activity Packs [here](#). Use these packs to help you with your celebrations. Pick from traditional Roman recipes, songs, games, and instructions on how to create paper crowns, nocturnal animal masks, and colourful window displays.



Vindolanda Adventure

[Vindolanda Adventure](#) is a free online game that brings a Roman fort back to life. It is the result of a collaboration between UK’s largest games development studio, Creative Assembly, Newcastle University, and the Vindolanda Trust. Combining the worlds of computer science, gaming, and archaeology, players journey back to Hadrian’s Wall at the start of the second century AD and through a series of mini-games and adventures discover how our understanding of life on the Roman frontier is still relevant today.

Players take on the role of two ‘sprites’, Tagomas and Lepidina, who feature in the original Vindolanda tablets. Tagomas is the standard bearer for the Vardullian cavalry based at Vindolanda. Lepidina, wife of the fort’s commander, is a wealthy woman and the invitee of perhaps the most famous of the Vindolanda writing tablets, the birthday party invitation, which contains the earliest example of a woman’s handwriting in Europe. Through these characters, players work through a series of mini-games that to allow them to attend the famous birthday party.

During the game you learn about artefacts discovered at Vindolanda and you can take a quiz to test your knowledge. The archives allow you to glean facts about Vindolanda, Hadrian’s Wall, the writing tables, Roman women, soldiers, and archaeology. Links also exist to learning resources in the form of worksheets, a word search, infographics, and a glossary.





AASDN Committee Members

President: **Richard Annis**[◊]

Past President: **Adrian Green**

Vice President: **Julie Biddlecombe-Brown**[◊]

Honorary Vice President: **Dame Rosemary Cramp***

Honorary Secretary: **Jennifer Morrison***

Honorary Treasurer: **Simon Alderson***

Honorary Journal Editor: **David Mason***

Assistant Secretary—Fieldwork: **Erik Matthews***

Assistant Secretary—Membership: **Jenny Parker***

Assistant Secretary—Webmaster/Social Media: **Gary Bankhead***

Excursion Coordinator: **Laura Anderson**[◊]

Minute Taker: **Sheila Hingley**[◊]

Newsletter Editor: **Myra Giesen**[◊]

At Large Committee Member: **Veronica Freitas**[◊] and **John Castling**[◊]

*annually re-elected, [◊]elected

Committee members' biographies are available [here](#). You can reach committee members by emailing archandarch.dandn@gmail.com.

AASDN Research Award

Are you doing research in the North East of England (Durham, Northumberland, or Tyne and Wear) and a paid-up member of the Society?

Then consider putting in a bid for the Society's annual research award (£500 maximum). The 2022 application deadline is **31 December 2022**, but you can apply at any time during the year. Consult [application guidelines](#) for more details or email [Jenny](#) with any questions.

Membership Secretary Message

The Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham & Northumberland has been providing a fascinating and stimulating programme of activities and events for all its members since 1861. Subscriptions are due on **1st January** each year and entitle everyone to a bi-annual newsletter, lectures, and regular email updates. There is an AGM trip and meeting each May and an annual members' event in December.

Newsletter Contributions

We are very interested in receiving news items and articles relating to archaeology, architecture, or heritage in North East England, including County Durham, Northumberland, and Tyne & Wear.

Please read the submission [guide-lines](#) before submitting an item for

consideration. We accept items from both members and non-members.

We publish twice annually, with submission deadlines normally on:

15th April for early May

15th October for early November

However, you can submit items at any time. Find previous newsletters [here](#).

AASDN Upcoming Events

26 November 2022 [lecture] **Scotch and Newcastle - excavation at Crowtrees Tileworks, Bowburn** **Richard Annis** (Archaeological Services Durham University)

3 December 2022 [lecture] **Work in Sudan** **Tina Jakob** (Durham University)

10 December 2022 [excursion] **Christmas Outing—details to be confirmed**

21 January 2023 [lecture] **Excavations at Vindolanda - exploring the past in the present and future** **Andrew Birley** (Vindolanda)

18 February 2023 [lecture] **WallCAP Community Archaeology on Hadrian's Wall** **Jane Harrison** (Newcastle University)

18 March 2023 [lecture] **Archaeological work at Bamburgh Castle** **Graeme Young** (Bamburgh Research Project)

25 March 2023 [conference] **River Wear Catchment Conference**—save this date, to be held at Durham University, details to be posted to members

All lectures are in person at 14:30 at [Elvet Riverside](#) (Room ER140), Durham University, followed by a drink at the County Hotel for those who would like to join in. Additional lectures will be added to our lecture calendar [here](#).

Do you work or volunteer with students?

If so, the AASDN committee are keen for you to help us in inviting more university students to become AASDN members.

Students can join for only £10 a year! As well as being able to join our lectures and excursions (and getting this newsletters!), student members can apply for our research award, which gives up to £500 towards a range of north-east based research projects. This grant is ideal to support dissertations and theses, especially post-graduate projects, so if you have contact with students studying architecture or archaeology, please encourage them that AASDN might be for them and direct them to our [website](#).

We are blessed in having a loyal and engaged membership who pay promptly either by Standing order or cheque. I would like to proffer a big thank you to all of you who have revisited their standing orders recently and updated them to pay the correct amount for next year and would urge you, if you have not already done so, to do the same.

To ensure you get the journal please download the [membership application](#), complete it, and then email it and/or any

questions about membership to our [Membership Secretary](#).

Subscription rates for 2023 are:

- **Ordinary**, includes Journal — £20.00
- **Joint** (two people at same address), includes one Journal — £25.00
- **Associate** (senior citizens, students, unwaged), Journal not included — £10.00
- **Institutional**, includes Journal — £25.00
- **Overseas**, includes Journal — £30.00