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The deadline for contributions for the digital Autumn Newsletter is 31 August 2010 and should be sent via email to Philip J Wise, acting Newsletter Editor, at [philip.wise@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:philip.wise@colchester.gov.uk).

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## Editorial

This edition of the Newsletter returns to the subject of human remains which are currently very much on the museum agenda with the imminent publication of the final decision on the fate of the prehistoric human remains held at Avebury Museum following the public consultation by English Heritage and the National Trust last year. Interest in this subject has extended beyond the 'once fusty old museum world' in the words of Jeremy Paxman as he introduced a report entitled 'Battle of the Bones' on BBC 2's Newsnight broadcast on Monday 22 February.

Emma Restall Orr reviews a recent conference organised by HAD in Leicester on various approaches to human remains – anthropological, museological, legal and spiritual – and one of these, on a current project being developed by Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service, is included here.

Also included is a review of last year's SMA Annual Conference in Winchester by Alan Gillott and preliminary information on this year's conference. As has become customary the minutes of the 2009 Annual General Meeting are published in full.

Members are particularly encouraged to attend a day seminar at Stockwood Park Discovery Centre which will explore the topic of sustainability and museum buildings in relation to several major projects in London and the East of England.

Another current development is the fashion for major medieval exhibitions. Following the opening of new galleries at the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum we have reports on two exhibitions at Perth and Colchester.

Finally, and on sad note, we include an obituary of David Clarke whose name will be familiar to older members of the society.

Philip J Wise  
Acting Newsletter Editor

(Katherine Baxter is on sabbatical.)

## Honouring the Ancient Dead (HAD) Conference 2009

It was in 2004 that I first met Hedley Swain, then a curator at the Museum of London, and spoke to him about HAD, the human remains advocacy group I had recently put together. The reputation of Pagans had, he said, been seriously compromised by a meeting held between certain archaeologists and protest Druids some time before: I don't know what happened at the meeting, but I can imagine that a fundamental difference in paradigms, values and language, was exacerbated by a simple unwillingness to hear, leaving everyone antagonised. Hedley suggested HAD run a conference in a positive attempt to clear away the residual mess.

In 2006 HAD did so, jointly with The Manchester Museum, on Respect for Ancient Human Remains. Papers were read by many of HAD's Council of Advisors – a group of Pagan and non-Pagan professionals working in the fields of archaeology, museums, law and related areas of the heritage sector. In 2009, HAD ran its first independent conference and, to me, it felt like the organisation's coming of age.

Supported by the Leicester Museums Service, who provided us with a venue at their beautiful New Walk Museum, papers were given by those working in HAD's areas of focus. Drs Joost Fontein and John Harries spoke from their social anthropological perspective about the materiality of death, and how the value or personhood of the dead is affected by the processes of time and the culture or poignancy of place.

Philip Wise then spoke of how Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service are addressing the issue of human remains in their care, looking at display, storage and disposal, and exploring processes of consultation and reburial. Piotr Bienkowski (University of Manchester) spoke of the contentious issues surrounding custody of human remains, and practical expressions of respect. Lawyer Charlotte Woodhead (University of Derby) gave a clear and concise overview of the legal situation, making sense of its various tangled interpretations and uncertainties.

Before a final session of discussion, I myself spoke about the work of HAD. All the papers are (or will soon be) available on the HAD website.

Running the conference within a Pagan premise of funding and resources, the ticket price of £15 was low enough for students, underfunded museum staff and members of the public who were supporters of or interested in HAD's work. Tickets sold out.

The success of the event, I felt, was more than this, however. The day reflected the normalcy of considering difficult and topical issues of human remains in ways that are educated, academic, well-informed, deeply considered – and yet not solely based upon scientific values. The social, cultural, emotional, spiritual were all addressed, together with the underpinnings and connecting threads of a broad understanding and reason. At the end of the day, feedback expressed was rich with curiosity and inspiration, and an eagerness to explore further. There had been no self assured declarations of truth, and as a result there was no antagonism of one truth grating against another.

HAD's remit is fundamentally about consultation: encouraging and allowing all interested parties to be involved in decision-making about human remains. The conference did just that. We were honoured, pleased and appreciative of all who attended, both those who were giving papers and those hearing them.

HAD's next event upon these lines will be held in the autumn of 2011. This will be a symposium on the reburial of human remains: an opportunity to talk in depth about why and how this is being done. We hope to have attending representations from museums, archaeological units, historical societies and so forth, together with individuals, who have been involved in the reburial of human remains over the last decade. It will be a day of discussion, covering theory and practice. If anyone is interested in supporting this project, in any way at all, please do get in touch.

This year, in October 2010, HAD will be holding a different sort of event: A Celebration of the Ancestors. This will be a gathering of artists, craftsmen and musicians, together with those working in the field of archaeology and museums, presenting original works that express respect for the ancestors of the Isles of Britain. Please refer to our website for further information and get in touch if you are interested in being involved.

Emma Restall Orr  
Honouring the Ancient Dead (HAD)  
<http://www.honour.org.uk>

### **Consultation, display and ethical disposal: Collections of human remains at Colchester and Ipswich Museums**

Honouring the Ancient Dead (HAD) first contacted Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service because of the publicity surrounding the publication in late 2007 of the final report on the Iron Age and Roman excavations at Stanway, near Colchester. In particular HAD were very interested in the so-called 'Druid's Grave', which is also known as the 'Doctor's Burial', and is dated to around AD 40-50 (Crummy et al 2007, 201-53). This burial contained a spectacular assemblage of objects including a surgical kit, a wooden game board and some mysterious bronze and iron rods possibly used for divining. The 'Druid' himself was represented by 158g of cremated bone.

There was an initial meeting with Emma Restall Orr, the founder of HAD, and Mike Fletcher, HAD's representative in the East of England, in June 2008. Since then there have been four further meetings with representatives of the local HAD group in the East of England, most recently on 22 September 2009. Our discussions have focussed on two museum collections, at Colchester and Ipswich.

Just prior to the first contact with HAD work had begun on trying to quantify the amount of human skeletal material held at Colchester and also to understand the significance of

this material. Research undertaken by Laura Pooley revealed that there are 429 boxes of human remains at Colchester. It is important to stress that this figure relates to the number of surveyed boxes in the stores not to the number of individuals. The largest date grouping is Roman with 282 boxes, which includes pagan and Christian burials from a cemetery at Butt Road in Colchester. The next two datable groups are represented by much smaller totals: 29 for medieval which includes several church sites and 18 for prehistoric or Iron Age which includes sites at Ardleigh and Chitts Hill, near Colchester. What is particularly striking in this analysis are the two groups where there is limited data, namely no provenance (17) and no date (78). By definition human remains with no provenance have no contextual information and are therefore impossible to date. Unless these display particularly remarkable evidence of disease or other medical conditions they are unlikely to be able to tell us much about the previous inhabitants of Colchester. Those human remains with no date at present have greater potential and, at least in theory, it might be possible to reassign some of these to a date category following careful study of the accompanying provenance information.

Prehistoric / Iron Age	18
Iron Age / Roman	3
Roman	282
Medieval / or later	29
No provenance	17
No date	78
Foreign	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>429</b>

At Ipswich, where there are considerably fewer human remains than at Colchester, the collection has been audited by Caroline McDonald, the Curator of Archaeology. The museum service has been able to find some funding for a partial survey of the human skeletal remains collection by a physical anthropologist Sue Anderson. This study has concentrated on a group of seven crates of unidentified human remains in which the skeletons have been divided up into skulls and long bones and so on. Anderson's work has revealed the following:

- It was not possible to reunite skulls and long bones in the various crates, although groups of bones within individual crates were occasionally found to belong to discrete individuals.
- Two skulls had existing accession numbers and 59 new numbers were allocated.
- The group includes archaeologically recovered specimens and probable chance finds, most of which are likely to be from Ipswich and the surrounding area, as well as possible anatomical specimens.
- Based on the number of skulls, this collection represents a minimum of 40 individuals.
- A relatively small number of specimens had evidence of disease or injury, including possible unhealed weapon cuts, dental abscesses and rickets.

Anderson concluded that in terms of scientific study, this collection is of limited value and suggested that only 9 out of a total of 61 accessioned specimens or groups were worthy of retention in the collection (Anderson 2009).

Also research on the natural history collections by Ann Ainsworth, the Assistant Curator of Natural History at Ipswich, has shown that there are 65 'specimens' in the Natural History collection. Of these 15 are without any supporting documentation. The majority were formerly in the collection of Claude Morley, a Suffolk naturalist who died in 1951 and who clearly had encyclopaedic interests. Only a very small number, seven, appear to have a definite Ipswich or Suffolk provenance and were probably collected from gravel pits.

As it has become available this information has been communicated to HAD. Our discussions on these points have thrown up a number of challenges and questions:

Firstly, there is the scale of the challenge that we face in assessing our collections. We now have a reasonably clear picture of the total number of human remains in the collections in both Colchester and Ipswich, but this in itself is not enough we need to fully understand their significance. This may be

expressed in terms of provenance (where does the skeleton come from), context (is it a single find or part of a larger group) and its date. In addition information on gender, age, diet, disease, injury or any other distinctive characteristics is also of interest. Some of this data is archaeological and some osteological requiring the input of several subject specialists. To obtain this input requires funding which at present we do not have. However, we have been holding a parallel series of meetings with colleagues from Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service to consider the possibility of a joint approach across the East of England region. This could lead to a bid to the Effective Collections programme of the Museums Association which is designed to help museums make better use of their collections.

Secondly, once we have exhausted all the possible avenues of research relating to particular group of human remains, these may be identified for disposal. The museum service has some limited experience here with a Christian reburial at East Mersea churchyard and a prehistoric reburial at the Great Tey Bronze Age site. Very briefly in the East Mersea case in 2004 some human remains, including a skull, were uncovered by the tide on the beach. The police pathologist identified them as being more than 100-years-old and, following consultation with the Essex Coroner, the museum service undertook the reburial of the bones. This was achieved with the assistance of the vicar and local community of East Mersea. In the other case the museum assisted the local archaeological society with the reburial of some recently excavated Bronze Age cremated human remains. The remains were buried in replica rather than the original vessels which were retained by the landowner and the event was entirely secular with no Pagan representative present.

We have, however, never undertaken reburial on a large scale and the HAD guidance note, 'Practicalities for Reburial', is of considerable practical assistance in this regard. The sections dealing with containers and burial grounds are of particular interest. The guidance on containers covers the type and size to be used and helpfully gives some

suggestions on suppliers. Under burial grounds useful information is provided on natural burial.

Thirdly there is the issue of how to ethically display human remains which was, of course, how the dialogue with HAD commenced originally. Although we might use very different language, in broad terms the Pagan community and museum archaeologists can agree that there is an essential connection between human remains and the artefacts which in many cases were buried with them. In the forthcoming redisplay of Colchester Castle Museum we will definitely be seeking to display human remains and their associated grave goods together. Indeed this already happens, most notably in the case of Marcus Favonius Facilis, a centurion of the XX Legion whose cremated remains, burial container, grave goods and stone memorial are all displayed together. With regard to the display of the 'Druid's Grave' it is felt to be entirely appropriate to display the cremated human remains alongside the grave goods. We would also absolutely agree that the redesigned galleries in the Castle need to express connections between the displayed artefacts and the landscape from whence they came. Lastly we will also be happy to consider HAD's views on a quiet space within the galleries; a quiet space is after all a quiet space and may be used in a variety of ways by our visitors.

So where next? It is a modern cliché to say that we have embarked on a journey, but I do believe that Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service has come a long way over the last eighteen months in our thinking about human remains. Initially we were largely concerned only with the storage issues associated with human remains in museum collections. If we thought about display issues at all it was only in a rather limited way focussing on the purely scientific benefits of the presentation of human remains in museums. Our engagement with HAD has provided a forum in which to develop our thinking, refine our approach and gain a new understanding. I hope that in the future we will be better equipped to care for those human remains that we hold in trust including, in those cases where it is appropriate, dignified reburial.

## Bibliography

Anderson, S 2009 *Ipswich Museum: Assessment of human remains of unknown or uncertain provenance*. Unpublished report.

Crummy, P, Benfield, S, Crummy, N, Rigby, V and Shimmin, D 2007 *Stanway: An Elite Burial Site at Camulodunum*. The Roman Society.

HAD 'Practicalities for reburial'. Unpublished guidance note.

(A version of this paper was given at the 'Care of Human Remains' conference organised by HAD at Leicester on 17 October 2009.)

Philip J Wise  
Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service

## Conference Impressions: SMA Annual Conference 5-7 November 2009

Archaeologists are a very dedicated bunch who have a unique perspective on the world they survey: perhaps this is due to the emotional scarring of Archaeological Theory but it is evident in the regular meetings of Museum Archaeologists. As an outsider, though similarly scarred, I was struck by the commonality of purpose shown by all the attendees in their passion to preserve and utilize their collections to inform and influence their museum visitors.

Although the theme for this year's conference was computer-centric there was also some excellent archaeology. One of the joys of any archaeological conference is the opportunity to learn: and the first day's presentations were no exception. They clearly demonstrated the importance of curated material and the value of reassessing existing collections. For me the highlight was Frances Healy actually making clear exactly what Bayesian statistics were all about.

Det. Sgt. Vernon Rapley of the Art and Antiques Unit of Scotland Yard was probably the most shocking: to an archaeologist the sight of unprovenanced, recently exhumed, antiquities are the equivalent of bloodied body parts in a horror epic, except that these artefacts are only too real. Equally shocking,

considering the use to which the profits are put, is the lack of effort on the part of governments to shut the trade down; or that valuable cultural material is viewed by some as their next fix. The following day, at yet another archaeological conference, I listened to Ulrike Guerin of UNESCO describe the *Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*: looting of heritage sites is endemic and we must all play a part in making such looting unprofitable.

Karl Harrison combined the forensic with archaeology by reviewing how archaeological practice can be used to recover buried evidence and manage the chain of evidence: the highlight of this talk was the poor quality of the evidential archive and the importance of being able to reassess material when new science or evidence is presented which might affect the outcome of a criminal retrial. The forensic theme was also picked up by Richard Osgood looking at the specialized scope of military archaeology.

The keynote speaker, Laura Watts, completed the first day with a very dramatic presentation of the taphonomic process. We all understand, as long as we survived theory, that our assumptions and prognostications are based on a very small sample. Laura took events that were happening today, selected a sample of evidence and suggested how that evidence might be interpreted by an archaeologist in the future. This talk brought to life the work of Ortner and Binford in a very real way.

The theme of the conference was on digital technologies and the various aspects of collecting, storing, archiving and disseminating archaeological information digitally. Computer technologies are used essentially in two ways, firstly for managing archaeological projects, which are moving more and more towards data collected digitally (born digital), stored, analyzed and archived; and secondly, the use of editing software and digital imagery to present museum collections to the wider public. The key connection being that it will be this latter process that will need to be used to present data collected by the former. Though unspoken throughout the talks, but clearly

voiced during the discussion, was the idea that a museum's or institution's digital strategy has to become a central theme in their planning, a part of the ***Vision***, not just a convenient, or inconvenient, bolt on to an existing strategy. Without funding or line management support, neither digital nor internet delivery projects can be implemented; certainly not ones that can capture a viewer's imagination.

Dan Zambonini asserted that the main reason for viewing a museum's web site was to discover opening times and directions: ironically, when taking part in a survey of web site usability, I was asked to locate this very information in the web site of a nationally important museum and was unable to do so without assistance from the interviewer. I was told that I was not alone in failing this task.

Finally, for me, one of the highlights of the conference was Chris Bailey's description of the digitization of the structure of the Cutty Sark and how the digital model was being used to help manage the development of a new museum and the programme of preservation for the ship. This was not originated as an archaeological project so our determination that this was a wonderful example of the practice of building's archaeology and what were they going to do with the primary data, was something of a shock to the speaker. Chris will be returning to Greenwich with some questions of his own to answer.

Alan Gillott

### **Minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting held on Friday 7 November 2009 in Winchester Guildhall**

Thirty-three members were in attendance.

1. Apologies were received from Mark Hall, Roy Stephenson and Peter Robinson.

#### 2. Minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> AGM

The minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting held in Leeds were approved.

#### 3. Matters Arising

No matters arose.

#### 4. Hon. Chairman's Report

The chairman's report is copied here verbatim:

This is my third and final report to Conference. I wish to thank all the members of the SMA Committee who have worked so hard to support the Society and myself over the last year and indeed throughout my term as Chairman. A particular mention must go to those members of the Committee who are standing down at this AGM.

Firstly, Hedley Swain who has undertaken various roles on Committee including Vice-Chairman, Chairman and most recently Editor; Hedley's experience and wise counsel will be greatly missed.

Secondly, Christine Longworth, again a long-serving member, a former Training Officer and who following the sad loss of Chris Hellier took on the role of Treasurer. Christine has been tenacious in managing the Society's money and leaves our accounts in a very healthy state.

Thirdly, the Vice Chairman Mark Hall who has ably maintained the link between SMA and the Scottish membership and kept the Committee in touch with matters north of the border.

Lastly, Thomas Cadbury who has been the Training Officer for several years.

To all these I offer my personal thanks and those of the Society as a whole.

I would also like to acknowledge publically my deep gratitude to the two secretaries who have so ably supported me, initially Elizabeth Walker and subsequently Caroline McDonald.

The most significant event for the Society during the past year has been the appearance of the long awaited revision to PPG 16 known as 'Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment' and the accompanying 'Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide' written by English Heritage. Both of these documents deal with archaeological archives and museums in a very unsatisfactory manner and fail to

demonstrate that archaeological fieldwork is undertaken primarily for the public benefit. Robust responses to both the Department for Communities and Local Government and English Heritage have been submitted on behalf of the Society.

I was invited to give a presentation on PPG16 and museum archaeology at the Institute for Archaeologists Conference in March and this enabled me to explain the Society's concerns about planning guidance to a wide audience within the archaeological community. A version of my paper was subsequently published in *The Archaeologist*.

We have been watching events in Bristol and I have written on your behalf expressing concern about the future of archaeology in the city museum, particularly the maintenance of a permanent archaeology gallery. I have also written to North Somerset Council about the proposed reduction in the budget of the museum at Weston-super-Mare and reminded the Council of the importance of heritage and its responsibilities to the wider community.

#### 5. Hon. Vice Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chair did not submit a report.

#### 6. Hon. Secretary's Report

The Secretary thanked those who had helped her organise the conference in Winchester, in particular Gail Boyle, Nicola Scott, Christine Longworth and Helen Rees. She apologised for the technical hiccup of the day before and thanked everyone once again for coming.

#### 7. Hon. Editor's Report

The editor thanked Philip Wise for his kind words and help with the current journal. He reported that he is currently editing the Leeds conference proceedings.

#### 8. Hon. Training Officer's Report

The training officer did not submit a report. The chairman explained that the current training officer has reached the end of his term and the Society is now seeking someone to take on that role. Laura Pooley continues as the second training officer in a support and administration role.

Two training events have been arranged for Spring 2010 (details were not available at the meeting) and it is hoped to hold a day event at Luton Museum in the summer. Members were advised that emails would be sent and the website updated once details were confirmed.

#### 9. Hon. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that the subscription increase was continuing to make a difference to the Society's financial stability. A good income was received from the Leeds conference which was supported by income from publications. Savings made by publishing the newsletter digitally mean that the society has moved from a position of deficit in 2008 to being in credit in 2009. This means that the society is in a strong position to fund project work.

The treasurer reported that the society's former Yorkshire Bank account closes for good on 20 November 2009.

In conclusion the accounts were reported to be in a healthy state and the Society would not be looking to raise the membership rates. Interest accrued on the Society's accounts continues to be reinvested every 3 months.

The accounts were formally approved.

#### 10. Hon. Membership Secretary's Report

Due to an error in proceedings the membership secretary was not given the opportunity to report

#### 11. Committee 2008-9

Philip Wise has now completed his 3 years as chairman and will be standing down. Dave Allen offered to fill the role. He was proposed by Philip Wise, seconded by Kay Ainsworth and duly elected.

Mark Hall has now completed his 3 years as vice-chairman and will be standing down. Gail Boyle offered to take the role. She was proposed by Hedley Swain, seconded by Nicola Scott and duly elected.

Christine Longworth has stepped down as treasurer. Martha Lawrence offered to fill the

role and was proposed by Philip Wise, seconded by Gail Boyle and duly elected.

Hedley Swain has offered to continue to edit the Leeds proceedings but will be standing down shortly. Philip Wise offered to act as editor until someone else could be found to fulfil the role. He was proposed by Hedley Swain and seconded by Caroline McDonald and elected in the interim.

Oliver Blackmore has offered to become the Welsh representative. Claire Cheshire and Caroline Wilkinson also offered to join committee as ordinary members. These three members were proposed *en bloc* by Nicola Scott, seconded by Christine Longworth and duly elected.

The posts of training officer, publication sales and the Scottish representative remain vacant.

#### 12. Any Other Business

The society formally recorded its thanks to Philip Wise for his time and effort as chairman.

#### 13. Date and Venue of Next AGM

This will take place the first Friday of November, offers for a venue were invited and this will be announced as soon as possible.

The meeting closed at 12.40pm.

### **People in Museum Archaeology**

#### **David T-D Clarke (1923-2009)**

David Tyrwhitt-Drake Clarke, who died aged 86 shortly before Christmas, was one of the leading figures in museum archaeology during the mid-20th century.

Born in St Albans, David Clarke read Classics and Classical Archaeology at Gonville and Keyes College, Cambridge. After graduating in 1947 he first worked on Sheppard Frere's excavations at Canterbury before taking up a studentship at the British School of Archaeology in Athens. For a time David taught classical archaeology in Alexandria before becoming keeper of antiquities at Leicester in 1950. Here he was

very active, initiating the Jewry Wall Museum project which was completed with the opening of one of the most significant post-war museums in 1966. David was also involved with local archaeology, serving as the Honorary Secretary of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. In 1963 he was appointed Curator at the then Colchester and Essex Museum where he would remain until his retirement in 1988.

At Colchester he laid the foundations of the modern museum service overseeing significant developments at all five museums. In particular David initiated a very successful programme of temporary exhibitions in the Castle Museum, and wrote a series of scholarly, but very accessible, guides on the town, its museums and its Roman heritage generally. A major archaeological achievement was the re-founding in 1964 of the Colchester Excavation Committee which was eventually to become the Colchester Archaeological Trust; David served as Honorary Secretary from 1972-1988. David will also be remembered for the leading role he took in the recovery of the 1969 Colchester Hoard of over 14,000 medieval pennies found by workmen at a site in the High Street.

Even in retirement David Clarke continued to be an active SMA member; I remember that he joined the field trip during the 1991 Sheffield conference and battled through rather inclement weather to view Bronze Age barrows in the Derbyshire Peak District. He also on one occasion wrote a characteristically robust letter to the *Museums Journal* defending the record of himself and his contemporaries in their stewardship of museums and their collections.

David was married to fellow archaeologist Joan Kirk, a former Assistant Keeper of Antiquities at the Ashmolean Museum, who predeceased him and together they had four children.

Philip J Wise

(A fuller obituary of David Clarke by former SMA Chairman Mark Davies appears in the Annual Bulletin of the Colchester Archaeological Group no. 49, pages 4-6.)

## Conferences

### **SMA Day Conference on Sustainability and Museums Stockwood Discovery Centre, Luton**

**30 June 2010**

This free conference organised by the SMA will look at the role of sustainability in recent and current major museum building projects. It will include a guided tour of the Stockwood Discovery Centre and three case studies drawn from London and the South-East: Stockwood itself, the Museum of London and Colchester Castle Museum.

A year of massive rebuilding and refurbishment saw the transformation of the former Stockwood Park Museum into a new visitor attraction and museum that opened on 12 July 2008. The Stockwood Discovery Centre was made possible thanks to a £3.7 million cash injection from the Heritage Lottery Fund along with £1.2 million Objective 2 European Funding. The Centre is designed with environmentally green and sustainable principles in mind. It tells the stories of real people behind the collections, exploring the history of the region from prehistoric times to the evolution of Stockwood House and the Farley estate.

A booking form will be available shortly, but in the meantime please send any enquiries to: [philip.wise@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:philip.wise@colchester.gov.uk)

Places are limited and we will operate a waiting list. Please do inform us if you need to cancel.

There will be no charge for the day, and tea and coffee will be provided, but please make your own arrangements for lunch. There is an excellent restaurant on site or bring your own sandwiches to eat in the grounds.

### **SMA Annual Conference 2010: 'Good News from the Front Line'**

Dates: 11th-13th November 2010

Venue: to be confirmed, but likely to be in the Midlands.

Against a background of one of the worst recessions in living memory this conference will focus on positive developments in museum archaeology including the expansion in volunteering, sustainability and major projects coming to fruition.

Papers are now invited for the conference and suggestions to include a brief summary should be sent to the Hon Secretary via email, [caroline.mcdonald@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.mcdonald@colchester.gov.uk)

For information on registration please visit our website [www.socmusarch.org.uk](http://www.socmusarch.org.uk) or contact Caroline McDonald.

### **Community and Public Archaeology: Exploring the Present, Defining the Future**

Friday 11th June – Sunday 13th June 2010

Archaeology for the people or of the people? The rise of archaeological projects involving local people has sparked debate about the ethos of the exciting new sub-discipline of community and public archaeology. This conference will draw out important themes highlighted by recent and ongoing projects in the UK, exploring the wider issues which face everyone involved.

Speakers will include Tim Schadla-Hall (University College London), Andrew McLellan (Pitt Rivers Museum), Dr Mike Heyworth (Council for British Archaeology), Pete Connelly (York Archaeological Trust), Dr Sian Jones (University of Manchester), Dr Faye Simpson (University of Exeter), Jim McNeil, (South Yorkshire Archaeology Service), Dr Gill Hey, (Oxford Archaeology), Colin Merrony (University of Sheffield), Anni Byard (Portable Antiquities Scheme), Tom Dawson (University of St Andrews SCAPE Trust), Dr Kathryn Roberts (CADW) Russel Coleman (Headland Archaeology) and Diana Morton (Culture & Sport Glasgow).

The conference will be held at Rewley House, Department for Continuing Education, University of Oxford and is supported by English Heritage.

The fee of £72 includes: Registration, tea/coffee and evening reception sponsored by the Council for British Archaeology.

For more information contact: Short Courses Administrator, OUDCE, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JA. Tel: 01865 270380 or email [ppdayweek@conted.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ppdayweek@conted.ox.ac.uk)

## Exhibitions

### **Skin & Bone: Life & Death in Medieval Perth**

21 January 2010 saw the formal opening, by Scotland's Minister of Culture Fiona Hyslop, of Perth Museum & Art Gallery's current archaeological exhibition, *Skin & Bone: Life & Death in Medieval Perth*. The exhibition is part of Perth's celebratory year, 'Perth 800', marking the 800th anniversary of the charter granted by King William, the 'Lion', and confirming the town's royal burgh status.

The exhibition charts the archaeology and history of the town from the 11th to the 16th century. The *Life* gallery of the exhibition displays a wide array of material culture



A view of the exhibition (© Perth Museum & Art Gallery)

under the themes: Origins, Castle and Defences, Port of Trade, Streets and Vennels, Buildings and Rigs, Master Craftsmen, Everyday Pleasures & Pains, Religion and Food and Drink. The gallery is rounded-off with a look at the history of excavation in the town, including archive footage of the Perth High Street excavation 1975-77. The majority of the things on display have been recovered from excavations in the town over the past 40 years, including Perth High Street, Meal Vennel (1983) and Horsecross (2003). But there are also significant loan items on display including the Guildry or Lockit Book (courtesy of the

Guildry Incorporation of Perth), the Perth Psalter and the Perth Hammermen Book (both courtesy of the National Library of Scotland), the Perth Hammermen's offering box (courtesy of St John's Kirk), a 14th-century copy of the 1210 charter (courtesy of Perth & Kinross Council Archive) and several religious artefacts (courtesy of National Museums Scotland). The *Death* gallery airs the theme of people and pets through a display of the skeletal materials of several individuals (children, men – including a murder victim – and a woman) and several fighting, working and pet dogs.

This is a rich, colourful exhibition for young and old. Both can try their hand at dressing up or playing a medieval game when they have exhausted looking at the fascinating array of objects.

The exhibition runs until 29 December 2010 and the museum is open Monday to Saturday 10am – 5pm, admission free.

### **The Medieval Mind: Art Treasures from East Anglia**

This exhibition at Colchester Castle Museum explores the ideas and beliefs of people in the Middle Ages through the marvellous variety of art objects they left behind. The objects on display range from exquisite examples of church art to personal items owned by ordinary individuals. They are drawn from collections all over East Anglia including the Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge, Norwich Castle Museum and Ipswich School. There are also rarely seen treasures from the collections at both Colchester and Ipswich.

Amongst the items on display are several illuminated manuscripts including the magnificent Colchester Antiphony, an early music book which was made for a king of Sicily around 1250. There are also religious paintings, such as the mysterious 'Green Lady of St Osyth', painted glass, alabaster and wooden carvings and metal objects including crucifixes and a reliquary.

The exhibition will be displayed in two parts. The first part will run until 4 July with new exhibits being added for the second part which will be on show from 17 July until 30 January 2011.



The rarely displayed town charter granted to Colchester by Henry V in 1413 (detail) (© Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service)

## Membership Matters

### New Training Officer

There is a vacancy for a second Training Officer to work with Laura Pooley in organising the SMA's long running and valued training programme. Anyone interested in serving on the Committee in this role should contact the Hon. Secretary, Caroline McDonald. If there are any SMA members who are currently working towards becoming an associate member of the Museums Association then do consider serving on committee as this is an excellent way of undertaking a CPD activity.

### Back Numbers of 'The Museum Archaeologist'

A supply of back numbers of 'The Museum Archaeologist' is available from Philip Wise. These will be of particular interest to anyone currently working towards becoming an associate member of the Museums Association as they contain a wealth of original papers written by leading museum archaeologists. For more information see the Society's website [www.socmusarch.org.uk](http://www.socmusarch.org.uk) or email [philip.wise@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:philip.wise@colchester.gov.uk).

### And Finally...

Seen in a museum store somewhere in Hertfordshire, the following newspaper cutting:

'Archaeologists have a problem

### SO MANY FINDS, BUT NOWHERE TO PUT THEM

Wanted: A small store room for goblets, a Tudor drain, military accoutrements and an 11th century pottery kiln.

So many treasures from the past are being unearthed at Batterdale, Hatfield, that archaeologists working on the site are becoming embarrassed because they have nowhere to store them.

As still more relics come to light, the problem of storage becomes acute. The salvage team, all members of Hatfield Archaeological Society, want a room in which they can sort out and reassemble broken pieces.'

The cutting is dated 16 August 1968. Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.

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