



ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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My affection for elephants began when, aged 16, I was visiting my expat parents in Dublin, and met the baby elephant at the Zoo. So of course I agree that poaching and the illicit trade in ivory are abhorrent and must be stopped. But destroying antique art is another matter.

In February, in a Westminster Hall debate responding to an e-petition, MPs considered bringing in a complete ban on ivory trading. Rachael Maskell, MP, thinks ancient art and artefacts made from ivory are 'a shameful part of our history'; she described 'tak[ing ivory] off the shelves of our museums' as 'progressive'. None of those proposing a total ban addressed the need for evidence that a ban would save any elephants.

After the debate, Martin Levy (*Apollo*, 7.ii.17) commented that 'Even some of the staunchest supporters of the conservationist position acknowledged the cultural and personal resonance of works emanating from a multitude of cultures, across the millennia and that such objects required a measured exemption from a 'ban'. Such a ban 'is one of the largest threats to the preservation of Western decorative art,' said David Starkey. 'Some of the greatest artworks in the world contain ivory,' said Simon Thurley. 'We need to have guarantees that pre-1947 ivory can be traded ... [or] museums will not be able to add to their collections.' The British Museum said it 'supports any efforts to protect elephants ... and to curb the illegal trade and export of ivory, but we are also clear that this should not include antique ivory works of art. There is no public benefit in restricting the display or movement of ivory works of art made before 1947 and legislation should not extend to cover actions carried out before that date.'

Jonathan Jones, art critic, wrote, 'If we stop ourselves looking at ... pre-modern ivory we will be philistines and bigots, congratulating ourselves on a victory over art. The next step is cultural destruction. We should leave this deadly line of thinking to Islamic State.' (*The Guardian*, 16.ii.17)

Please ask your MP to support a sensible proposal.

The Government's white paper, 'Fixing our broken housing market', aiming to 'reduce the obstacles to house building and help local authorities, developers and SME builders build the homes Britain needs', mentions heritage only in footnotes. It does include proposals to increase fees and thus funding for planning departments; to firm the implementation of planning permissions; consider developer track records; and give greater protection for non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest and ancient woodland. For details of how to respond (by post or online by 2 May 2017), see pp. 71–72 at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing_our_broken_housing_market The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has promised £3.8 million for 'Bats in Churches', a five-year partnership between Natural England, the Bat Conservation Trust, Historic England, the Church of England and Churches Conservation Trust. There will be trials of new techniques to protect bats yet minimise the costly effects of their droppings, which 'restrict activities, damage historic artefacts and put a strain on those who look after the buildings.' They will build up professional and volunteer expertise and share the best solutions with others. Learn more at hlf.org.uk/about-us/news-features/bats-and-churches-set-harmonious-future.

If all that's too serious, try Donaeld The Unready (@donaeldunready) who's Making Mercia

150 YEARS OF BEING ROYAL Tim Champion, President

The Institute received its royal charter from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II in 1962, but we have been 'Royal' for much longer than that. The word first appears in print in the *Archaeological Journal* on the title page of Volume 24 for 1867, so we have been Royal for 150 years. Much of the credit for this achievement seems to have been due to the Marquis Camden, the Institute's President from 1862 until his sudden death on 6 August 1866. The report of the Institute's Proceedings at the start of the 1866–67 session, on 2 November 1866, records the death of the late President, whose 'last public act, ... a few days before his lamented decease, had been to obtain Her Majesty's gracious permission to prefix the word "Royal" to their title'. Lord Camden, who was also President of the Kent Archaeological Society, had been an assiduous supporter of the Institute, and had been present at the recent Annual Meeting held in London in July 1866, when the only excursion outside the capital had been to Windsor and Eton on 21 July.

It is not clear quite why the royal title was granted, but there had been good relations between the Institute and the royal family, especially with Prince Albert, who had been the Royal Patron until his death in 1861. For a number of years in the 1850s and 1860s the Institute organised temporary exhibitions of antiquities in its rooms in London, and a 'Temporary Museum' during the Annual Meeting. Items from the royal collections had often been lent for these occasions, and Prince Albert had been instrumental in facilitating these loans, as well as attending some meetings of the Institute. It may have been the Institute's visit to Windsor Castle that had been the occasion for Queen Victoria to recognise this connection.

A RIGHT ROYAL DAY OUT Pete Wilson, Hon. Secretary



Holyrood House
(J. Beck)

The Institute has been awarded a Charitable Gift of £2,500 from the Patron's Fund, the charitable fund set up to acknowledge the work of the charitable organisations for which Her Majesty, The Queen acts as Patron, on the occasion of her 90th birthday. The Gift will be used for our project 'A Right Royal Day Out', the aim of which is to give people who would not usually visit historic monuments, the opportunity to experience some of the UK's key sites.

We will purchase Family tickets to Royal sites in each of the four home countries: The Tower of London, Caernarfon Castle, Holyrood House, and Hillsborough Castle, and working through Members of RAI Council and/or local partner organisations and local schools, these will be made available to families from areas near the various sites.

Sir Stuart Etherington, Chair of The Board of Trustees for The Patron's Fund, said: 'The Patron's Fund is very pleased to be able to support the RAI with its valuable work. The RAI is among hundreds of organisations for which The Queen acts as a Patron, which between them make a difference to causes and communities in the UK and throughout the Commonwealth.'

The award represents a significant addition to our work in promoting interest in the historic environment and to meeting our charitable objectives, and the generosity of The Patron's Fund is gratefully acknowledged.

Subsequent to the award from the Patron's Fund, The William and Edith Oldham Charitable Trust have kindly offered an additional grant of £1506 to allow the project 'A Right Royal Day Out' to be extended to include the royal sites of Eltham Palace and Greenwich within the historic County of Kent.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Current Archaeology Awards 2017

In their ninth year, these awards again celebrated the projects and publications that made the pages of CA over the last year, and the people judged to have made outstanding contributions to

archaeology. There is no panel of judges, but they are voted for entirely by the public. The winners are announced at *Current Archaeology Live!*, held this year on 24–25 February, at Senate House, London. This year's winners are:

Archaeologist of the Year: Mark Knight

Book of the Year: *Images of the Ice Age* by Paul Bahn

Research Project of the Year: Rethinking Durrington Walls – Stonehenge Riverside & Hidden Landscapes Projects / National Trust

Rescue Project of the Year: The Must Farm inferno – Cambridge Archaeological Unit / University of Cambridge

Archaeological Innovation of the Last 50 Years: LiDAR, as exemplified by the New Forest National Park Authority

Current Archaeology Live! 2018 will be held in February 2018, with further details available at <https://www.archaeology.co.uk/vote>

ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE RESEARCH GRANTS

The Institute awards the following grants annually:

Tony Clark Fund Up to £500 for archaeological work and dating

Bunnell Lewis Fund Up to £750 towards archaeology of the Roman period in the UK

RAI Award Up to £5000 towards archaeological work in the UK

Please download an application form at <http://www.royalarchinst.org/grants> or write to the Administrator.

Closing date for applications : 11 December 2017. Awards announced in April 2018.

RAI Cheney Bursaries

As a result of a bequest left by Frank Cheney, the Institute has a small fund of money to enable students to attend conferences or RAI meetings. An allocation is available annually from which individuals can apply for a maximum sum of £200. Please check with the Administrator that money remains in the yearly fund before you apply. Students who wish to apply for a bursary should email admin@royalarchinst.org.uk or write to the Administrator, RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BE, at least six weeks before the event they wish to attend, stating: the institution in which they study, the event they wish to attend, the sum of money requested, a breakdown of how the money would be spent and a summary (up to 250 words) of why they would like to attend the event and in what way this would be useful to them. Successful applicants may be asked to produce a brief report of the event for the Institute. In 2016, the Institute supported four students, from UCL and the universities of Bournemouth and Durham with awards to help them to attend the Institute's Annual Conference (for their report, see p. 14).

RAI Dissertation Prizes

The RAI holds two competitions for dissertations on a subject concerned with the archaeology or architectural history of Britain, Ireland and adjacent areas of Europe. In even-numbered years, the competition is for the best dissertation submitted by an undergraduate in full-time education, the Tony Baggs Memorial Award. In odd-numbered years, the prize is awarded to the best dissertation submitted by a Master's student. Nominations are made by University and College Departments. The winner receives a prize of £500 and the opportunity for a paper based on the dissertation to be published in the *Archaeological Journal*. The chief criteria considered are (a) quality of work and (b) appropriateness to the interests of the RAI as reflected in the *Journal*.

The Tony Baggs undergraduate prize, covering years 2015 and 2016, was awarded to Bethan Boulter from the University of Leicester for her dissertation, *Sex Estimation of a 19th-century Coventry Population Using a Predetermined Odontometrical Technique*.

Tony's son Barnabas presented her with her prize at the Institute's meeting on 14 December 2016.



The Tony Baggs prizewinner, Bethan Boulter, with Barnabas Baggs (R) and the President (L) (J. Baggs)

RAI Research Grants, 2017

Research grants for 2017 have been awarded to the following projects:

Vicki Cummings *Tombs of the North*

Peter Halkon *Analysis and publication of a site near Elloughton, E. Yorks*

Joanne Kirton *Bamburgh Castle's West Ward*

Gordon Noble, Kevin Edwards and Claire Christie *Early agricultural settlement of Shetland*

Nick Overton and Irene Garcia-Rovira *Rock Crystal in the British Early Neolithic?* (Tony Clark Memorial Fund)

Robert Wallace *Bridge Farm* (Bunnell Lewis and Tony Clark Memorial Funds)

RAI Research Grant Reports

In place and time: dating and analysing the early agricultural settlement of Shetland

Claire Christie, Gordon Noble and Kevin Edwards

Researchers from the University of Aberdeen, along with volunteers from Archaeology Shetland, excavated a prehistoric house, structure and field system at Troni Shun (HU 25018 50723) on the West Mainland of Shetland in July 2016. Prehistoric houses and field systems in Shetland represent some of the best preserved examples of early farming settlements in Britain. The aim of the excavation was to characterise the remains at Troni Shun, and gain insights into the development of the site and to place it within its environmental context.

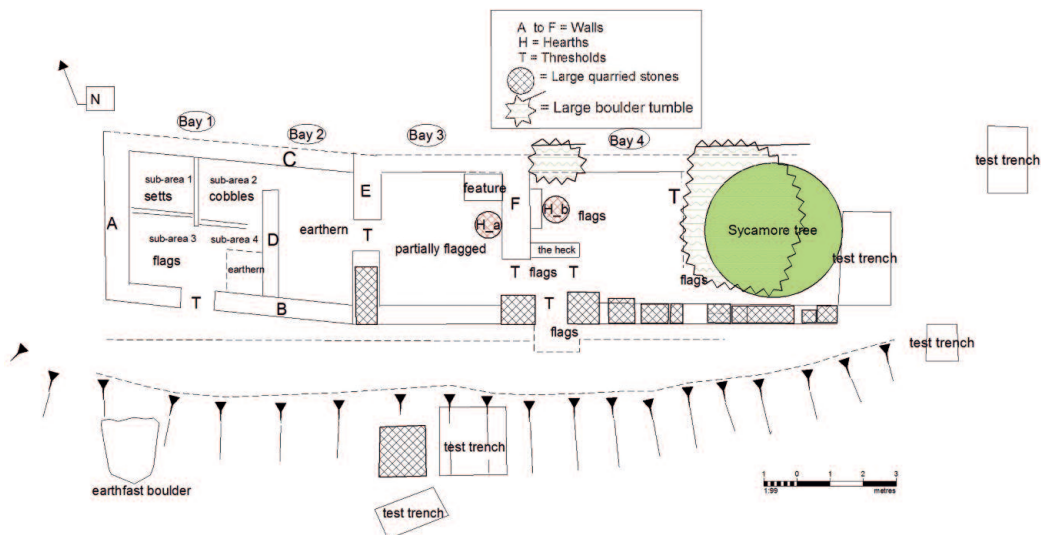
The work at Troni Shun included detailed mapping through the use of high resolution aerial photographs (supplied by HES), topographical survey, and the excavation of portions of the house-structure and sections of the field walls. The main focus of the investigation was excavation of the main house with a trench focusing on the interior with a section through the house wall. This trench revealed a complex construction and use history. The interior of the house has been extensively remodelled with the addition of large facing stone forming a skin around the inside of the building. Alongside this is a complex sequence of floor layers hinting potentially at different functions through time. The ongoing analysis of recovered artefacts, samples and archaeomagnetic dating of the hearth will shed further light on the



Volunteer Deborah Lamb holding a stone pot lid
(C. Christie)

occupation sequences and activities. A further trench excavated through the wall of a different structure, c. 30 m to the north, demonstrated evidence for floor layers, indicating it may be a further house. Trenches at points across the surrounding field walls revealed walls of drystone construction from under which environmental samples were taken.

Analysis of environmental samples recovered from within the house-structure and underneath the field walls is ongoing. This has the potential to place the site within its environmental context and relate onsite activity to wider environmental change through a comparison with the existing palynological data (Edwards and Whittington 1998). Initial analysis of the samples submitted for radiocarbon dating revealed that peat was used as fuel making the proposed future work applying OSL and archaeomagnetic dating essential.



Nidderdale 2016 plan (E. N. Hintze)

The Ashelby Pasture Project, Nidderdale, North Yorkshire Earl N. Hintze

In 2016, the Nidderdale Chase Heritage Group with archaeologist Janis Heward resumed excavation at Fountains Earth, Nidderdale. The structure sits on a cut and fill platform on the north-east side of the valley, forming a terrace c. 25 m × 10 m across the 200m contour.

Trenches were placed to determine the extent of the building to the south-east, and to expose the external wall footings to the north-west and south-west and open up the space between the structure and the edge of the building platform.

A five-bay linear structure lying north-west – south-east, 22 m × 5 m has been exposed. The walls generally survive to a height of 2 or 3 courses of roughly dressed gritstone. The north-east wall is a retaining wall set against the hillside. Large worked stones have been incorporated into the structure, some of which form corners, possibly serving as a base for raised crucks.

Internal features define a domestic (south-east) end and an agricultural (north-west) end, each with its own entry. The agricultural end is not structurally tied in to the domestic end. The threshold leads to a partially flagged floor, with areas of setts and cobbles separated by a narrow channel. A smaller bay within this addition is accessed from Bay 3. The domestic entry on the south-west elevation opens out to a small lobby with rooms to right and left of a cross wall. The

main house has a cobbled hearth and a further room to the south-east. Both have flagged floors and evidence of lime plastering. To the north-west is a small back kitchen containing a hearth and a waist-high stone structure with a recess at the front. The two cobbled hearths sit back to back against the dividing wall, with no evidence of a chimney stack.

Features such as separate doorways, back to back hearths and lack of a chimney suggest a c. sixteenth-century construction date. Over 800 finds have been retrieved: pottery, window and bottle glass and metal. The next phase of work will focus on publication of an excavation report to contribute to the history of early vernacular buildings in Upper Nidderdale.

The Dietary Impact of the Norman Conquest (Tony Clark Fund) Ben Jervis, Richard Madgwick, and Elizabeth Craig-Atkins

Nine hundred and fifty years on from the Battle of Hastings this project seeks to explore the impact of the Norman Conquest on everyday life through the study of dietary change. Funding was acquired to undertake a study focused on the city of Oxford. The project integrates stable isotope analysis of pre- and post-conquest individuals (from All Saints Church, Christ Church Cathedral and Oxford Castle) with the palaeopathological analysis of these same individuals with a small



Cardiff University student Lizzie Nicholson preparing bone samples for isotope analysis (R. Madgwick)

programme of organic residue analysis of contemporary cooking pots (samples kindly provided by John Cotter, Oxford Archaeology). This methodology is intended to provide insights into the dietary impact of the Conquest at the individual scale, building on previous work by Naomi Sykes, which focused on the zooarchaeological evidence from across England and northern France.

Typically, carbon and nitrogen isotope analysis provides a single snapshot of the contribution of meat, marine foods and plant foodstuffs to the diet of an individual. We are utilising a new technique, incremental isotope analysis. This works by sampling dentine from teeth to understand childhood diet. By taking multiple samples from different areas of the tooth, changes in diet (and also dietary stress) can be tracked through the life-course. At the time of writing the results of this work have not been fully analysed. However, through the use of this technique it will be possible

to move from simply understanding how the foodstuffs consumed changed in the eleventh century, to exploring the implications of the Conquest on health, for example through the identification of periods of famine or food abundance. Over the next few months we will be working to draw our data together to understand better the impact of this pivotal event on everyday life.

The research has generated a great deal of interest, with members of the project team being interviewed on BBC local radio and producing an article for *The Conversation* (<https://theconversation.com/pepper-pig-and-fewer-bodily-emissions-how-the-norman-conquest-changed-englands-eating-habits-67000>), to coincide with the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings in October 2016.

Hatcliffe Top: faunal analysis (Bunnell Lewis Fund) Steven Willis

The Central Lincolnshire Wolds Project is focused upon recovering evidence for past settlement and use of a landscape hitherto little explored archaeologically. It has examined a transect between Caistor and Market Rasen to the eastern fringe of the Wolds as they give way to the flat lands of the Marsh. The multi-period ritual focus and subsequent Roman Roadside settlement on Caistor 'High Street' straddling Nettleton and Rothwell parishes were published in 2013. Volume 2 focuses on the Waithe valley, including Hatcliffe Top. Investigation was a collaborative undertaking by University of Kent and the North East Lincolnshire Archaeology and Local History Society. With



Excavations underway at Hatcliffe Top, Trench D (S. Willis)

fieldwork completed attention has turned to preparation of the publication, including study of the animal bones by James Rackham.

The site occupies higher ground at the eastern edge of the Wolds overlooking the point where the Waithe opens to the Marsh. This position allowed for the exploitation of a number of environments and was doubtless a significant point in movement through the landscape. The main evidence dates to the fourth century AD, despite the site being on the eastern fringe of Lincolnshire when this was, by conventional thinking, a frontline, exposed to North Sea raiders. Trenching revealed a relatively complex sequence with secure pottery groups providing good dating, consistent with the assemblage of c. 180 coins. Hatcliffe Top was evidently flourishing in the Late Roman period with intense agricultural activity including carcass processing

and horn-working, seemingly serving as a collection centre.

Bone preservation was good with around 28 per cent of the assemblage precisely identifiable and measurable. Further bone was recovered from bulk samples, notably rodents and amphibians. Overall the composition of the assemblage shows a pattern not dissimilar from Roman levels at the earlier Nettleton/Rothwell site, reflecting local environments suitable for cattle, sheep and pigs. Cattle were comparatively large and some may represent traction animals; horse is well-represented suggesting horse rearing via valley and/or Marsh grazing, or that the site received animals from the Marsh. The fourth-century date of this assemblage is important as a period for which faunal remains are not well-known at rural sites across Lincolnshire.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2017

Spring Meeting Thursday 11 – Sunday 14 May at Whitby, led by Julian Litten and Stephen Sherlock (details in this mailing)

Summer Meeting 8–15 July to Southern Ireland, led by Hedley Swain (details in this mailing)

Forthcoming in 2017

Autumn Day Meeting 28 October, at St Albans, led by David Thorold (details to be confirmed)

RAI 8th Annual Conference 2017 17–19 November to be held at York, *The Arras 200 – Celebrating the Iron Age* (see below and in this mailing)

Please check our website for news and early details, at www.royalarchinst.org/events

As soon as they are confirmed, full details and booking forms for Meetings will be made available on the Meetings Programme page <http://www.royalarchinst.org/meetings>. Places are limited, so please book promptly. If you would like further details of any of these meetings sent to you, please send your e-mail or postal details to the Administrator, RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, London, W1J 0BE or admin@royalarchinst.org or to Caroline Raisson, RAI Assistant Meetings Secretary, 48 Park Avenue, Princes Avenue, Kingston upon Hull, HU5 3ES, or csraison@gmail.com.

ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2017

The Arras 200 – Celebrating the Iron Age

17–19 November, Yorkshire Museum, York, with an optional visit to the Hull and East Riding Museum in Hull on 19 November. (N.B. This is a non-residential conference.)

Organised by the Royal Archaeological Institute in association with the Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society and East Riding Archaeological Society, this conference will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the first excavations of the

Middle Iron Age cemetery at Arras (E. Yorks.), and coincide with an exhibition, at the Yorkshire Museum, of material from those excavations.

The opening keynote lecture will be given by Dr Fraser Hunter, and the programme will include



The Pocklington 'Speared Corpse' burial (P. Halkon, courtesy MAP)

lectures by leading professionals in the field and early-career archaeologists.

Details of the programme, fees and arrangements are in this mailing.

Conference fee: £70 (Early Bird offers until 31 July: £50 for RAI, YAHS and ERAS members / £60 for non-members), includes teas and coffees (York is well-provided with places for lunch).

Booking deadline: 1 November 2016.

For further details please send your e-mail or postal details to the Administrator, RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, London, W1J 0BE or at admin@royalarchinst.org

MEETINGS NOTES

AUTUMN DAY MEETING, 1 October 2016: Knole House MAUREEN AMORY

This Meeting was one of those special occasions when RAI members find themselves privileged to be at the edge of recent discoveries. We were visiting the National Trust's Knole, near Sevenoaks in Kent, one of the greatest of historic English mansions, currently benefiting from a major programme of conservation.

The day's brief reminded us that Knole and its landscape have been in use for thousands of years. Not named in the Domesday Book of 1086, but probably assessed as part of the large manor near Otford, the sub-manor of Knole is first mentioned by name in a land grant of 1281, referring to properties inherited from Robert de Knolle. James Fiennes, later Baron Saye and Sele, acquired Knole in 1446; upon his execution in 1450, his son and heir sold it to Thomas Bouchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, for £266 13s 4d. Palace to four Arch-

bishops, then a Tudor royal house, and since 1603 a family home, the fifteenth-century house was developed by Thomas Sackville, first Earl of Dorset, Lord Treasurer and cousin of Elizabeth I. The Sackvilles still resident, it came into the care of the National Trust in 1947.

Caroline, our Assistant Meetings Secretary, met most of us at Sevenoaks Station for a luxury coach-ride to Knole. After a pause at the park gate, something of a Needle's Eye, we crossed the wonderful hilly, bosky park, picturesque with deer and the occasional conscientious runner, to come upon the grand spread of the house, with long facades and graceful skyline.

Nathalie Cohen (National Trust and member of RAI Council), and Alastair Oswald (University of York Department of Archaeology and responsible for the field survey of the grounds), led our investigations, mainly in areas as yet closed to the public. We spent the morning outdoors, in the Private Garden (thanks to Lord Sackville's permission) and park, and the afternoon exploring cellar and attic floors. In addition we visited the ambitious new state-of-the-art conservation area developing in the barn and hayloft. The early nineteenth-century Orangery, overlooking the garden, was given over to hospitality for us.

(Among the Orangery's classical plaques and statues there was a true rarity, a tall and shapely Buzaglo stove of 1774, formerly heating the draughty Great Hall but now retired. It is a three-tiered cast-iron beauty, standing on four legs and topped with finials. Named after the Moroccan immigrant inventor who patented it in London in 1765, it cleanly and efficiently burned coal in its lowest tier, venting smoke and fumes safely away through its elegant body, proving a godsend to the heirlooms of a stately home. Now only this one and one in the USA are to be seen. Admiration of this prime example has led me to digress ... See *NT Knole Conservation Team Blog, part 4.*)

Welcomed in the Orangery, we armed ourselves as best we could against a downpour, and, our haven locked behind us, proceeded with Al Oswald into the Private Garden to discuss the 'Knole in Flux' repair programme, and research on the garden. There has been a garden at Knole for 500 years (under Bouchier, then under the ownership of Henry VIII and the long ownership of the Sackvilles, including the Lennard tenancy).



Mr Buzaglo's stove (C. Raison)

Unusually an enclosed garden within a larger walled area, it has often consisted, as now, of formal lawns and borders and the Wilderness. We stood beside a little lavender-plot, echoing Bouchier's, for an earnest look at the masonry-and-timber east front. The largest known Historic England conservation programme of some £20 million is due for completion in 2018; we fully appreciated the alarm on discovering that hardly more than scanty wall-rendering had protected priceless collections within from the elements without and the necessity of waterproofing the roof before us.

Drenched, we paddled up the grassy path towards the ancient and famous Wilderness garden. There is a very long landscape narrative at Knole; we learned that, beneath the present trees, a former quarry pit and four induced springs had been discovered, indicating that Lennard, sixteenth-century tenant of the Sackvilles, had to

make the best of an industrial landscape in forming his garden. Back on the lawns sloping upwards from the house, we noted the sturdy remains of an old wall, with a door marooned strangely above our level, showing the height of a former garden-terrace. After splashing further uphill and into the trees, we returned to appreciate fine views down onto the house, realising that we were probably benefiting from a former inward-looking raised walk. Further, a tantalising significant gap in the maps of Bourchier's time, copied for us by Al, makes one wonder what other features were intended. There have been suppositions that Henry VIII was involved in the construction of the gardens, perhaps, as at Nonsuch, playing fashionable geometric games in garden layout. Our heads were full of archaeological surmise as we withdrew into the dry shelter of the Orangery for hot coffee.

Facing the rain again, we struck out from the grand turreted gatehouse into the park to traverse on and near Echo Mount, studying the landscape. We had been wisely warned not to approach the rutting buck among the descendants of Bourchier's deer. Knole's park can properly be described as timeless, largely unchanged for centuries, escaping even Picturesque 'improvements' – perhaps thanks to its natural assets, or to Sackville conservatism which also preserved the house.

At our vantage points, aided by Al's map, we heard that archaeological evidence from the dry-valley landscape of the park ranges over vast eras. LiDAR supported the discovery of lynchets, and the relics of an extensive early field system, possibly Bronze Age. There was some indication of Neo- and Mesolithic settlement, including some burned material, at the end of the walled garden. Inevitably a number of medieval trackways had been detected. There were also signs of levelling – some would like to imagine for what would be the earliest of cricket grounds. That very morning, on his walk, Al had picked up a fragment of burned flint-core and a musket ball – typical findings easily revealed because of the very thin topsoil. Before us a 'round barrow' shape redirected the lynchets – possibly around a windmill – and Al's dog Basil had assisted in finding an earthwork near the house front. The discovery of two perfect square compartments had raised possible com-

parisons with the bowling greens of Nonsuch. We admired an enclosed 250-year-old mighty sycamore pollard before returning to the Orangery to find a banquet – quiches and hot peppery chicken rolls, salads and cheese aplenty, wine and cordials and at least four luxurious varieties of cake – spread for our hungry delight. A gratifying morning came to its ideal conclusion.

As happens, the outdoor visits took place in persistent rain and we spent a bright dry afternoon warmly indoors. Assembled in (the possibly Henrician) Green Court we were briskly divided into two groups. Mine moved swiftly through Stone Court, past the Great Hall screen towards Water Court, into a kind of hatchment-room-cum-kitchen-lobby, with a fifteenth-/sixteenth-century ceiling and set of staff bells, used to store modern technical gear. Climbing bare dark stairs, past faded doors labelled 'Pigeon Loft' and 'Miss Hutchinson's Room', and up two more dusty flights, we emerged into a remarkably long light gallery, windowed on both courtyard and estate sides. Floor and roof sagged disturbingly towards the middle of its length, weighed down by the heavy lead clock formerly sited over the centre (later fortunately set in Clock Tower). This attic was known as Retainers' Gallery, apparently because of objects even now retained there, such as furniture. The plaster ceiling sports splendid Sackville leopards in their diamond-shaped compartments, and the walls carry graffiti of many periods – including the Second World War.

At the end of this gallery a door was opened to reveal a little painted stairway – real balusters one side, matching painted ones the other – but we were to turn the corner to the right, along another side of Stone Court. Here the slatted, plastered ceiling was hanging open, showing the roof-space above – and we were delighted to learn that the galleries will be shown in their present state, graffiti and all, a true and revealing record. In this stretch, in a central pile of sweepings, amazingly a seventeenth-century letter had been found, from correspondence between the stewards of two houses discussing the exchange of chattels. We had been told that the gallery was a lower-status route to a very high-status bedroom – and via a little link passage to our left (marked with graffiti about snow-clearance in the 50s) we found ourselves in the King's Bedroom, immediately above the grand

room long known as the King's Room. The bedroom was still in a fascinating state of discovery, with the floor timbers opened. Here we were to be confronted with the highlight of the day.

The seventeenth-century floor-beam fronting the fireplace bears carpenter's marks along its length, plus an unusual set of marks in a mesh pattern; these have proved to be ritual protection-marks set to repel spirits and demons entering via the hearth on air-currents. Demons are compelled to follow lines; hence a mesh is a demon-trap. The carpenter's marks and these 'witch-marks' alternate all around the fireplace. The work is dated to a period when the Gunpowder Plot (1605) had raised the need for extra protection, and King James was himself both interested in and wary of witches; clearly this bedroom was to be as protected as possible. The discovery of these marks started a hunt, and similar sets have since been identified in other great houses, including the Tower of London and Kew Palace. The news will have been published well in advance of our *News-letter* – but it was exciting to witness the evidence, there before us. We were quite elated as we returned to Green Court to switch groups.

In Clock Court we noted a little turret window said to be visible inside, as indeed it was when we reached the long, low cellars (again via the hatchment-room-cum-lobby with the staff bell-board). These buttery cellars, below the north range of Stone Court and formerly accessible from Queen's Court, strike one now as family junk rooms – ancient prams, bedsteads everywhere, plus odd blocked doors, windows, pointed arches, cupboards. There was even an internal drainpipe for taking water from seven acres of roof down into the vast cistern (serviced by divers) beneath Water Court. There are probably more rooms under Knole to discover but there are no plans to do so as yet! The fine timber ceiling and the various remains of fifteenth-century wall-paintings suggest that this was a wine- and beer-cellar also used for entertaining, guests drawing their drink straight from the barrel, a known domestic habit of the time. The paintings, red, yellow, white and black, were described to us as 'competent but not excellent'. We made out remnants of a foliate band with figures beneath it (the head of Christ, framed by a spandrel; a kneeling supplicant figure), and some heraldry (Plantagenet royal arms; the arms

of Bouchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, of his parents and of his brother, the Earl of Essex, and of Essex's wife). Similar painted badges survive elsewhere in the house. You would certainly be alert to the status of your host as you drew your beer.

Our final discovery lay in Stable Court. Here the barn and rebuilt hayloft (the original barn having repair bills from 1480, and having lost its roof to fire in 1887) are in the later stages of becoming an ultra-modern conservation studio and learning centre. The studio will focus on Knole materials (furniture, paintings, textiles and other specialisms) for two years, and then take on a wider role. It was absorbing to learn how modern conservation work can be accommodated in a finely-preserved ancient building. The ground floor will be a storage area, benefiting from an environmental-control wall-lining over the original wall, to cut down dust. The curiously long, thin lift was adapted in shape to make allowance for a medieval culvert below. In the upper level the reconstructed roof and the wall-top are battened for acoustic purposes. A concrete band on the upper wall became necessary when the huge wall proved to have no foundations: metal rods



Converting the Great Barn (A. Williams)

penetrate from the concrete down into the earth. In the midst of the great floor area there is even an insulated sealed unit, for the use of noisy gear such as band-saws.

Ancient landscape and early garden features, revelatory witch-marks, fifteenth-century wall-paintings, the prowess of modern conservation and a wonderful lunch – a day of insight and satisfaction. Our party might well have quoted the Sackville family motto: *Jour de ma vie!* We made our grateful farewells, very appreciative of the skills of Al and Nathalie and her colleagues, who made us welcome and informed us so well, and of excellent planning for the visit by Nathalie and Caroline. We headed for our cars or coach – some of us in the dry, others caught in the day's next downpour – and left Knole under a brilliant rainbow.

ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE CONFERENCE 2016, 21–23 October: The Neolithic of Northern England EMMA WATSON (CHENEY BURSIST)

The eighth RAI Conference exceeded all my expectations. It was impassioned, humorous, enlightening and exciting. The speakers provided overwhelming evidence and positive arguments for an essential reappraisal of the Neolithic period of northern England. Richard Bradley set the bar very high on Friday evening, with his Keynote Speech about his and Aaron Watson's work in the Lake District's Langdale Fells. His talk was anecdotal, funny and light-hearted, yet clearly conveyed his huge knowledge and passion both for archaeology and for the prehistory of northern England.

In fact, knowledge and passion were key features of all the talks given over the weekend. The speakers provided 'a great tour de force' and encouraged audience participation. Both archaeological themes in general, and those specific to the Neolithic, provided a huge insight into activities around northern England. All debates were underpinned by a deep interest in the archaeology of northern England and generated lively discussion both within the lecture theatre and afterwards.

Ideas of reiteration and cleansing were introduced by Julian Thomas in his re-evaluation of his

earlier excavations in south-west Scotland. Seren Griffiths presented a passionate argument for the need to reconsider our current understandings about the Mesolithic/Neolithic transition in northern Britain. She argued that the present interpretation of sites should be challenged, by looking at any new evidence uncovered, in order to move from data to narrative, rather than using data to reinforce what we think we already know. Alex Gibson demonstrated the potential for the discovery of new prehistoric sites, through geophysics and excavations in the Yorkshire Dales. He also re-examined known monuments with surprising results, such as the finding that Castle Dykes henge in the Yorkshire Dales is actually an Iron Age monument.

The theme of reassessment within the Neolithic period was touched on by many speakers, especially with regard to new Early Neolithic and other prehistoric dates revealed by Bayesian radio-carbon dating. Seren Griffiths, Alex Gibson, Alison Sheridan, Clive Waddington and Paul Frodsham all widened the archaeological debate with their analyses of specific Neolithic and prehistoric sites in northern England. Frodsham provided the results of the first modern-day excavation of the well-known monument, Long Meg and her Daughters, and its relationship to the adjacent enclosure, shown to be earlier than the stone circle. Waddington looked at changing climatic conditions and their effect on the Mesolithic–Neolithic transition in Northumberland and northern England. Using lithic scatters and environmental evidence in relation to monument distribution, Helen Evans and Antony Dickson (with work from Denise Druce) re-evaluated the evidence for Neolithic settlement in north-west England.

New light was shed on Neolithic artefacts and prehistoric artistic expression. Neolithic votive depositional activities were revealed through a huge commercial archaeological project at Stainton West, Carlisle, presented by Fraser Brown. Bradley and Watson demonstrated links between the Copt Howe Rock Art site and the Pike O'Stickle Neolithic axe factory. This had led to new ideas about the far-reaching exchange networks of the Early Neolithic.

The national distribution of Neolithic causewayed enclosures and long mounds was reviewed, with identification of many new extant Early

Neolithic monuments in northern England. Al Oswald provided an insight into the viewsheds and soundscapes around 'atypical' northern causewayed enclosures, whilst Yvonne Luke looked at topographical and situational aspects of the Yorkshire Dales' long mounds. Andrew Fitzpatrick and Paul Frodsham offered a revealing assessment of an important single Early Bronze Age cairn and its contents. The re-excavation of the Kirkhaugh cairn, Alston, in the Upper Pennine region, disclosed the burial of a high-status male, who was possibly a metal prospector at one of the most important metal-ore fields in Britain.

In summary, this conference provided a much-needed forum to discuss the Neolithic of northern England. All the speakers, and the audience, expressed a willingness to think 'outside the box', to address important questions in order to further

the archaeological debate. In his closing comments Richard Bradley noted that the conference demonstrated a close interplay between academic and commercial archaeology. He commended the archaeological work, the quality of the analyses and the efforts to complete projects with final publication reports. We look forward to the publication of the conference in the near future.

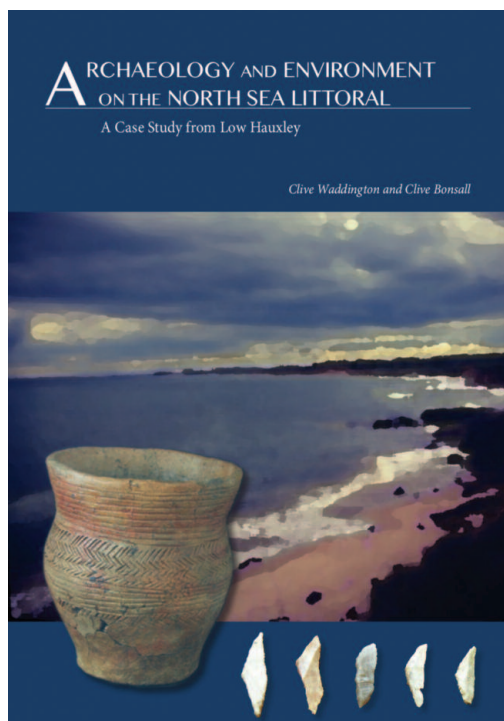
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Northumberland Wildlife Trust has generously agreed to waive postage charges (usually £6) for *Archaeology and Environment on the North Sea Littoral: A Case Study from Low Hauxley* by Clive Waddington and Clive Bonsall, making the price £30 to RAI members. For information about the volume go to: <http://www.nwt.org.uk/shop/product/archaeology-and-environment-north-sea-littoral-case-study-low-hauxley>. **To get the discount you must order and pay by telephone:** call NWT on 0191-284-6884, stating that you are an RAI member, and the £6 discount will be applied to your order.

The Trust will be putting profits from sales of the volume into similar projects in their area, should you feel moved to forgo the discount (in which case you can order online)!



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Some second- or third-year degree students under 26, nominated by their archaeology department,

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Last chance to acquire RAI paper publications

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Review of Gift Aid Declarations

The Institute would like to ensure that the details are up to date for all members who have signed a Gift Aid Declaration. In order for the Institute to claim gift aid, you must have paid or will pay an

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The RAI office

The Institute's Administrator will usually be at the Society of Antiquaries on the second Wednesday of each month from October to May, between 11 am and 3 pm. The direct telephone number is 07847 600756, the email is admin@royalarchinst.org and the postal address is RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, London, W1J 0BE.

Audit and Investment Committee

Council is looking for a new member for the Institute's Audit and Investment Committee. An Institute member with legal or financial expertise would be welcome. There is only one meeting per year of the committee. Any member who would like to be considered should write to the Administrator.

ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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NEXT ISSUE Copy for the next issue must reach the editor by the end of May 2017 for publication in August 2017.

THIS ISSUE'S COVER PICTURE: Looking south from Echo Mount, Knole, across a probably Iron-Age lynchet to a medieval trackway (the beech trunk fell in the 1987 hurricane), taken by Andrew Williams at the Autumn Meeting 2016
