



Secretary's Notes

Council met again at the British Museum on 25th January. Firstly an apology, in the last newsletter I had indicated that the next issue of Medieval Ceramics would be out by the end of the year, unfortunately delays have meant that it only went to press last week. Council and the Editorial Committee will work to ensure that Medieval Ceramic 33 is published by the end of 2012 provided we have enough papers of sufficient quality.

The main topic of discussion at the last Council meeting was the issue of training for both specialists and those less experienced with handling ceramics. A number of suggestions were made and these will now be pursued as Alice Forward will work with Council to draw up a strategy which should see a new programme of specialist training days and more general training initiatives developed over the coming year. This work will dovetail with the project funded by the legacy from Sarah Jennings to develop a range of factsheets on various subjects associated with medieval ceramics.

Details of the upcoming conference are included with this newsletter but I would like to let you all know that the Group's Annual General Meeting will be held during the conference at the Centre for Manx Studies, Douglas. As I highlighted in the Newsletter we are also seeking nominations for a new Treasurer and Regional Groups Officer. If you are willing to stand for either position please contact me by April 30th. As with last year in order to reduce costs we will not send out postal copies of AGM material unless specifically requested to do so. Information regarding nominees for positions and the agenda will be emailed out at the end of May and will also be posted on the website.

Andrew Sage Secretary

MPRG Conference 2012

The 2012 MPRG conference will take place from 21-23 June at the iMuseum of Manx Heritage, Douglas, Isle of Man. The theme of the conference is 'Ceramics on the Edge'. Papers will cover a range of topics; taking us from the edge of the Byzantine Empire to Ireland, via Scandinavia and the UK and from the early medieval period to the 20th century. The Gerald Dunning Memorial Lecture entitled 'The Isle of Man: central or marginal in the ceramic history of these islands - a case study', will be given by Peter Davey. In addition, two trips around the island are planned at the end of the conference.

A full list of papers and booking information is attached to the newsletter. Further details can be found at the conference website:
http://www.liv.ac.uk/manxstudies/mprg_2012/

conference papers and more contributions from her many friends and colleagues. Further details of this will be posted on the two groups' websites when they are ready.

In addition to this event, council are moving forward with the production of a series of datasheets, to be funded through a bequest made to the group in Sarah's will. These will cover a range of topic and will become freely available via the MPRG website.

MPRG on Facebook

The MPRG Facebook group is continuing to grow, with membership approaching 150 people. The group offers a forum to discuss mystery sherds (recent topics include a possible Saintonge aquamanile, a 17th century ceramic grenade and mysterious pottery from Whitby) as well as to raise awareness of conferences, events and pottery in the news. If you have a Facebook account why not join? Simply search for Medieval Pottery Research Group.

Ben Jervis Assistant Secretary

Sarah Jennings Memorial Conference

MPRG and the Association for the History of Glass are organising a one day conference in honour of the late Sarah Jennings.

The day will consist of papers on the theme of 'Recent Research and New Discoveries in Glass and Ceramics'. The Wallace Collection, London, have kindly made available their lecture theatre for the event which will be on Friday 16th November 2012. The day will end with a wine reception. A programme and booking arrangements for the conference will be available in the summer.

Many more people than can speak in one day will wish to pay tribute to Sarah therefore MPRG and AHG are planning to publish a volume in the MPRG Occasional Paper series dedicated to Sarah, which will contain the

Welsh Regional Group Meeting

The group will meet to discuss recent discoveries in the region, with an emphasis on the North Wales region. The meeting will be held in Oriel Ynys Mon, Llangefni, Anglesey on 26th May, from 10am until 1pm (arrival and coffee from 9:30am). After lunch the group will head over to Gwynedd Museum & Art Gallery to view their medieval ceramic collection. There is a charge of £3.50 for morning refreshments. Lunch and transport is not provided but do let us know if you have trouble getting between the two venues. We will probably eat lunch in the Oriel Café or a

nearby pub but please feel free to bring your own food. Remember to bring along sherds for some show & tell!

Please contact either Sian Iles or Alice Forward to book a place as we will need to place tea & coffee orders for the correct number of people.

There are still back copies of Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales volumes 11, 12 and 13 still available at £5 each. Anyone interested in purchasing these should get in touch with Sian Iles.

Sian Iles (sian.iles@museumwales.ac.uk) and Alice Forward (ForwardA1@cardiff.ac.uk)

Reference material available from North Yorkshire.

Ten years ago excavations ahead of a new water pipeline discovered an early-16th century kiln and a large dump of wasters at Healey in North Yorkshire.

The site lies about 5km west of Masham and is located between Jervaulx and Fountains Abbey, the fabric is a reduced green-glazed ware in the same tradition as Humberware. Initial comparisons with material from these two monastic sites suggest that material identified there as Humber-type are in fact from Healey. After lengthy delays this material is in the process of now being analysed and it is anticipated that this work will be completed by the end of the spring.

The quantity of pottery recovered was very large (about 1500kg) and it is clear that it is not going to be possible to retain the entire assemblage. Consequently there will be sherds available as reference material to specialists who wish to have them. Some reference material will be sent to relevant local reference collections but any specialists who would like some sherds sent to them as reference material should contact Andrew Sage (andrew.sage@dunelm.org.uk).



Cistern from Firs Farm, Healey, North Yorkshire.
Image supplied by Northern Archaeological Associates.

Andrew Sage

Southampton Ceramic Research Group Conference: In Honour of Prof. David Peacock

This event brings together scholars who are exploring applications of recent techniques or approaches to archaeological ceramics. Some such applications are in their infancy, while others have reached a more mature stage. Either way, their impact on the study of archaeological ceramics need to be critically assessed. Our speakers represent a variety of areas of expertise and will bring you outside your comfort zone. We hope that both emerging and established scholars will benefit from exposure to fresh ideas and methodologies, and that we can lay the foundations of an up-to-date and integrated platform from which research on archaeological ceramics can evolve. The event is held in recognition of Professor David Peacock's many pioneering contributions to the field. It is hosted at the University of Southampton with the support of the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group, the Study Group for Roman Pottery, and the Medieval Pottery Research Group. It will take place at The University of Southampton from 19th-20th October 2012. A full programme and booking information will be available in a few months time.

New Publications

We have been made aware of two publications on pottery produced by local societies, which are available for purchase.

A POSSIBLE POTTERY WORKING SITE AT COVE, FARNBOROUGH, HAMPSHIRE

A planning application for demolition of a bungalow and building five new homes at Cove, Farnborough, Hampshire, was granted with a condition for a watching brief in order to investigate possible evidence of connections with the known Surrey - Hampshire 'border-ware' pottery production sites in the immediate vicinity. The non-funded work was undertaken by North East Hampshire Historical and Archaeological Society (NEHHAS) and ground work on the development began in March 2009. Limited trial trenches and excavations of various features suggest two phases of pottery related activity, from 1370 to 1500 and from 1550 to 1700. Although no kiln was found, the substantial evidence of pottery dumps and wasters, a clay pit and post holes, and their close proximity to one another, suggest that this may have been a pottery working area in association with a nearby kiln.

Some 62kg of sherds were recovered and analysed, split between coarse border-ware (9%), white border-ware (60%) and red border-ware (31%). The majority of vessel forms were kitchen and sanitary ware, typically, chamber-pots, tripod pipkins, costrels, bowls and dishes, with few examples of decoration.

The 77 page report, illustrated and with colour plates and including a comprehensive historical background to the Cove pottery industry, is available from NEHHAS. tonywright10@btinternet.com

MEDIEVAL POTTERY FROM SKEGBY IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: A DESCRIPTION OF KILN WASTERS

This short volume (36 pages) has been produced by the Sherwood Archaeological Society and describes a group of medieval pottery sherds excavated at Skegby, Nottinghamshire. The pottery is of Nottingham Splashed Ware, dated to the 12th-14th centuries. The report

discusses the decoration and form and is well illustrated. Copies are available for £3.50 (£5 including postage) from Robert Smith (robert.smith1931@ntlworld.com).

EXCAVATIONS IN AYR 1984-87

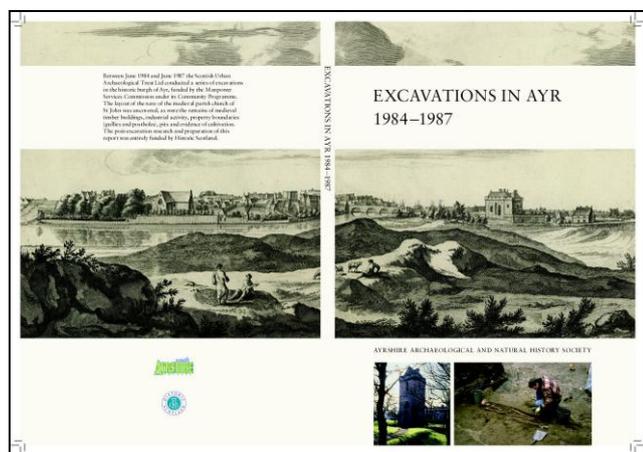
By David Perry

Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society

£10 plus postage and packing

The Manpower Services Commission schemes of the 1980's became well known amongst the archaeological community especially as many in the profession started their careers as either members of the workforce or supervisors of a project. The Ayr Archaeology Project was one of many such schemes that were based in an urban environment that set out to try and understand more about the locality based on a combination of archaeological excavation and documentary research. In many cases in Scotland this has been the only time that such archaeological research has ever taken place. The West Coast of Scotland in particular remains poorly understood in the medieval period and from what little work has taken place has proven to be markedly different in terms of trade links and material culture from the East Coast. This Historic Scotland and South Ayrshire Council funded monograph includes the study of an important group of imported French medieval ceramics from the sites investigated which includes wares from the Beauvais, Saintonge and Loire production areas. There is also a full consideration of the apparent local pottery industries which are also represented in these assemblages.

Please contact Derek Hall (Derek.hall1@blueyonder.co.uk) if you would like to order a copy.



Obituaries

Alan Jacobs

The death of Alan Jacobs in March came as a great shock. Alan was well known to many members of the group, having worked in Worcestershire, Hampshire, Chester and most recently, Essex. He had a keen interest in Roman and medieval pottery and completed an MA in Ceramic and Lithic analysis at the University of Southampton. I met Alan whilst he was assistant keeper of archaeology at Hampshire Museum Service and his good humour (and horrendous jokes), passion and enthusiasm was always refreshing and encouraging. He was everything one could hope for in a museum curator – knowledgeable, enthusiastic and always eager to help. He will be sadly missed.

Ben Jervis

Yann Hollevoet

Yann is best known for his work in Flanders, particularly the Bruges area. Between 1986 and 1990 he undertook research into 'The Houtland area in Roman and early medieval times: continuity or cultural divide? An archaeological contribution to the occupation history of inland Sandy Flanders'. Throughout the late 1980s Yann and his *compagnon de route* Bieke Hillewaert undertook several archaeological rescue operations, necessitated by the expansion of the harbour of Bruges and other building projects in the area. In 1991, Yann started working for the IAP, further exploring his favourite study area until the end of 1999. The most important excavations of that period took place at Ettelgem, Oostkamp, Oudenburg, Roksem, Sint-Andries (Brugge), Snellegem, Varsenare and Zerkegem. During that period, Yann was also responsible for the archaeological watching briefs that accompanied the construction of a pipeline in the province of West-Flanders. At the start of this project, the attention for archaeology was so minimal that it gave the term 'rescue archaeology' an even more desperate, fatal sound than it already had. In 2000, Yann left the IAP to become an assistant at Ghent University. Towards the end of 2002 he returned to the state services, this time to coordinate a group of colleagues that, at that time, started to develop archaeological heritage management as an independent responsibility within the Flemish governmental administration. He sadly passed away in January 2012.

Within the life and work of Yann Hollevoet pure research clearly was not the single focus of attention. The care and management of our heritage took an equally important place. According to Yann, research without social debate was as irrelevant as heritage management without research. On top of that, he advocated that the broader public should never be forgotten and should be addressed on all levels. Consequently, they should also, and always, be invited to participate. On the Flemish level, Yann was, in many respects, a frontrunner. He promoted preventive archaeology at a time when state services and universities almost exclusively concentrated on research excavations. This largely resulted from an experience at the beginning of his career, when he witnessed how, through the expansion of the harbour of Bruges, a whole prehistoric and historic landscape was destroyed while only a group of young archaeologists (including himself) tried, as well as they could, to record the devastation. Fortunately, this pioneering work helped to change public opinion and influenced the attitude of politicians, eventually leading to the establishment of preventive archaeology as an accepted and much needed part of heritage management in Flanders.

Together with Bieke, Yann developed - for the first time - a clear view on the Merovingian and Carolingian occupation of the inland border of the Flemish coastal plain. Most parts of Flanders still lack such a corpus of interpretation for the Dark Ages and his achievements received international acclaim. Lifting the results from rescue archaeology to a higher interpretational level, Yann attracted the attention of renowned scientists from across the Channel, such as Alan Vince and Helena Hamerow, and published his results together with them. Meanwhile, he was also active within the French scientific community, and his contribution about early medieval ceramics at the famous colloquium of Outreau was a milestone. Yann was fond of the area around Bruges, of the early Middle Ages, and of the pots he excavated. The latter especially for the story they told, but also because of their sober design, making them things of sheer beauty. It was no coincidence that Yann's office desk was decorated with early medieval replicas.

Anton Eryvncck (Flanders Heritage) & Wim De Clercq (Ghent University)

Conference Calendar

28th May 2012: Welsh Medieval Pottery Research Group Regional Group Meeting. Llangefni, Anglesey.

30th-31st May: Des Pots dans la Tombe. An international conference on pottery from medieval funerary contexts, Caen. See literature attached to newsletter (email copies only).

21st-23rd June: Medieval Pottery Research Group Annual Conference and AGM, Isle of Man. See attached details and booking form.

9th-12th July 2012: International Medieval Congress, Leeds.

29th August – 1st September 2012: European Association of Archaeologists Conference (Incorporating the Medieval Europe Congress), Helsinki.

19th-20th October 2012: Southampton Ceramics Research Group Conference in Honour of Prof. David Peacock.

16th November 2012: 1 day conference in memory of Sarah Jennings.

7th-9th March 2013: Prehistoric Pottery Around the Baltic. Pottery Studies around the Baltic Sea, Skagerack and Kattegat, Lund. Contact thomas.eriksson@geol.lu.se (call for papers deadline 15th June 2012).

REMINDER

2012-2013 subscriptions are now due. If you have not paid, please contact Lyn Blackmore (lblackmore@museumoflondon.org.uk) to arrange payment by cheque or standing order.

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