



Monthly eNewsletter

March 2021

Hi everyone,

This month we received the excellent news that friend of the Society, Prof. Paula Reimer won the Current Archaeology Archaeologist of the Year 2021 award. This was in addition to receiving the Archaeological Institute of America's Pomerance award for scientific contributions to archaeology. Both awards recognise Prof. Reimer's significant contribution to the advancement of carbon dating, particularly through the development of calibration curves and the "IntCal". These are very well deserved awards to mark Prof. Reimer's achievements and the Society is grateful to have had her provide us with lectures and tours of the ¹⁴CHRONO centre and their AMS machine.

This month also saw the Survey Group holding their first virtual meeting in preparation for when we can begin to visit sites and monuments again. Mal Conway has taken over as group co-ordinator and provides an update in this eNewsletter.

Best wishes,

Duncan

Editor

Lectures 2021

We now have a programme for lectures for 2021. Zoom links will be emailed out to members and anyone can watch on our public YouTube channel - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_axPKzQwK60Pm6VOQUgLTw

26 April **The Life and Times of Takabuti in Ancient Egypt and in Belfast**
Professor Eileen Murphy, QUB

31 May **Take me to church. A look at two Early Medieval enclosed settlements in County Armagh and their associations with early church sites**
Gavin Donaghy, Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd

28 June **An update on the findings of the 2018-19 Downpatrick Cathedral Hill excavations**
Brian Sloan, QUB

27 September **Movements and connections between Ireland and Scotland (and beyond!), from around 4000 BC to around 1500 BC**
Dr Alison Sheridan, National Museums Scotland

25 October **The transitory character of society in Gaelic Ulster**
Dr Katharine Simms, Trinity College Dublin

6 December **Reconstructing Ireland's Castles: An Archaeological Interpretation of the Environs of the Irish Tower-House**
Dr Michael O'Mahony, Queen's University Belfast

Discovery 2021! Conference

We are starting to plan our annual Discovery conference for November. As the world continues to be uncertain, we are planning on hosting it virtually, with the hope that we may be able to have some face-to-face event as well as streaming lectures on-line. We are still at a very early stage and have yet to decide on a format. However, we would like to give our members and the public the opportunity to contribute to the conference. If you have been carrying out research in your local area, your favourite monument, or anything else and would like to share it with the conference then please send your idea to us. To allow the committee to assess contributions, please send an abstract of 300 words (maximum) outline what you wish to present to Ruairí Ó Baoill at r.obaoill@qub.ac.uk

Further information about the conference and a link for registration will be available on our website later in the year - <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/uas/Conference/>

If you missed any of our previous conferences you can view the programmes and paper abstracts on our website - <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/uas/Conference/PreviousConferences/>

Survey Group

The field survey group have resumed meetings in 2021 and instead of face to face have been meeting via zoom, meeting twice so far this year, with further zoom meetings planned on our usual dates of last Saturday of the month. Since Harry Welsh stepped down as the fieldwork coordinator, Malachy Conway has stepped into the role and was confirmed at a committee meeting in January. The main focus of the group's activities so far this year have been around dealing with a backlog of nine reports from our previous field surveys and thanks to the efforts of the group members all of these reports should be completed and online this coming April. The group is also looking at pulling together a provisional programme of field survey targets for this year, which we hope can be activated once there is sufficient easing of restrictions. This programme includes proposed surveys at Murlough Nature Reserve, Co. Down, to record some WWI practice trenches and remains of hut bases linked to WWII training on the site, one of the last ruined farmsteads on Divis and The Black Mountain that the group have not previously visited and a 'stone circle' garden feature located at Florence Court, Co. Fermanagh. In addition, the group are also planning a new fieldwork activity, condition monitoring of field monuments. This activity would see individuals visit monuments, on National Trust property in the first instance and complete a record of their condition using a pro-form record sheet which they then submit on-line. So far 15 members of the group have signed up to take part in the condition monitoring and the training for this will be arranged this April subject to and in line with restrictions on numbers of people who can meet-up outside. Finally, the survey group has also welcomed 4 new members this year, 3 of whom are post-graduates at Queens. If any members wish to take part in the activities of the survey group, or would like to attend any of the on-line meetings, simply register your interest through Duncan Berryman (dlberryman@gmail.com) or Malachy Conway (malachy.conway@nationaltrust.org.uk) to get the zoom link.

Online Activities

Blitz 80

PRONI, in partnership with the Northern Ireland War Memorial are presenting a series of presentations to mark the 80th anniversary of the Belfast Blitz.

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/talks-and-events-proni>

Garranes: An Early Medieval Royal Site in South-West Ireland

ArchaeoPress have published this book OpenAccess - <https://archaeopress.com/ArchaeopressShop/Public/displayProductDetail.asp?id=%7bF4F8FD55-02FA-479D-9DCD-CA14F4C65E58%7d>

This monograph presents the results of an interdisciplinary project conducted 2011–18, where archaeological survey and excavation, supported by various specialist studies, examined this historic landscape. Garranes is a special place where archaeology, history and legend combine to uncover a minor royal site of the early medieval period. The central ringfort has been identified as Rath Raithleann, the seat of the petty kingdom of Uí Echach Muman, recalled in bardic poetry of the later medieval period. Those poems attribute its foundation to Corc, a King of Munster in the fifth century AD, and link the site closely to Cian, son-in-law of Brian Bóruma, and one of the heroes of Clontarf (AD 1014). This study provides new evidence to connect the location of Rath Raithleann to high-status occupation at Garranes during the fifth and sixth centuries, and explores its legendary associations in later periods.

ARCH talks

<http://www.archhighland.org.uk/>

Many of these already have waiting lists so PLEASE cancel if you decide not to attend, so that the space can be allocated to those on

the waiting list. Since even with requests to cancel in such circumstances, only between 2/3 and ¾ of people booking usually attend, so in most cases we are also able to release tickets on the night. Further information and booking links to EventBrite can be found on the ARCH website in the [Events calendar](#).

Tuesday 27 April, 7:30pm

The Galloway Hoard: an update

Talk by Martin Goldberg, NMS. This talk also has a waiting list. Note that Martin along with Michael Hirst will also be talking about the Galloway hoard on Thursday 25th March in a talk organised by National Museums of Scotland.

Tuesday 25 May, 7:30pm

Exploring funerary architecture and symbolism in the Scottish Highlands

Talk by Lorraine Evans

Current Archaeology Live! 2021

the pre-recorded talks have been uploaded to the [Current Archaeology YouTube channel](#) They include a wide range of talks, including Nick Card on Ness of Brodgar, David Breeze and Matthew Symonds on Hadrian's wall, Alex Fitzpatrick on zooarchaeology from Covesea Caves, Coralie Mills on dendrochronology.

FutureLearn - free online courses

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses>

14 June 2021 – 27 June 2021 and 18 October 2021 – 31 October 2021- Archaeology: from Dig to Lab and Beyond (2 weeks)

Start anytime England in the Time of Richard III (6 weeks)

Start anytime - Health and Wellbeing in the Ancient World (6 weeks)

Start anytime - The Book of Kells: Exploring an Irish Medieval Masterpiece (4 weeks)

Many other courses available on all sorts of subject matter.

New Books

Prehistoric Forteviot - Kenneth Brophy & Gordon Noble

Royal Forteviot - Ewan Campbell & Stephen Driscoll

Council for British Archaeology, £30 each

Many members will have an interest in early Scotland, due to its close connections with Ulster, and will have visited some of the Pictish sites. These volumes present the results of several seasons of survey and excavation at the Pictish royal site of Forteviot, south of Perth, and its surrounding landscape. The Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot project sought to investigate the landscape around the Pictish royal site of Forteviot and understand it in a wider geographic and chronological context. The first volume looks at the prehistoric landscape and examines a palisaded enclosure, a cremation cemetery, and henges. The second volume presents the results of survey and excavation at the royal site, and places this alongside studies of the Pictish carved stones, high crosses, and metalwork. There is even a discussion of the Byzantine influence that may have shaped the structures and activities at the site. These are beautifully produced volumes, supplied throughout with colour illustrations; the reconstruction drawings really help to bring the site to life and help us imagine how it would have appeared. These books provide excellent insights into prehistoric and Pictish society and the evolution of an important landscape from the Neolithic to the early modern period.

Ireland Encastellated AD 950–1550 - Tadhg O’Keeffe

Four Courts Press, £40

This book looks at Irish castles from a European perspective, drawing many parallels and placing them in the context of current knowledge regarding English and continental castles. One key aspect of this is considering whether the earliest castles should be pushed back to the 10th century, rather than after the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, this would bring Ireland into line with the rest of Europe rather than being an outlier. This book questions many assumptions we may have had about Irish castles and helps open up considerable debate about these buildings, all backed up by extensive research and numerous examples.

Vivre au Château - Peter Ettel, Anne-Marie Flambard & Kieran O'Conor (eds)

Brepols, €43

This volume is the proceedings of the Château Gaillard conference on European castle studies and contains many interesting papers, the theme of which was life in the castle. Five of the papers directly relate to castles in Ireland, these include studies of stronghouses, life in Gaelic castles, comfort in tower houses, Black Tom's house in Kilkenny Castle, and gardens within castles. Other papers provide a wider context to life within Irish castles, such as discussions of castle chapels, artefacts in castles, unfortified elite buildings, deer parks, and the economy of life in castles. The publication is extensively illustrated with colour images, plans and diagrams. It must be noted that several of the papers are in French and German, although there are English summaries of all papers. This is a vital book for anyone seeking the latest in castle research and provides a nuanced approach to castles, progressing beyond the defensive functions and considering how these buildings were also residences.

Picts and Britons in the Early Medieval Irish Church - Oisín Plumb

Brepols, €55

The interactions of the islands around the Irish Sea was instrumental in shaping the church in Britain and Ireland. The influence of Irish saints on the British church is well known, but this book looks at the influence of Picts and Britons on the Irish church. This work goes beyond Patrick and discusses many of the other churchmen who shaped the early Irish church. It is very interesting to consider these influences and provides an informative perspective on the development of Christianity in Ireland. This is an important book for anyone interested in the early Church in Ireland and its development.

The French Works of Jofroi de Waterford - Keith Busby

Brepols, €90

This is a transcription of three French texts produced by a fourteenth-century Franciscan monk in Waterford. There is an overall introduction and introductions to each text, with extensive notes, a glossary, and an index of names. This work demonstrates the use of French within medieval Ireland for the production of literature and scientific texts, in this case works that have been

translated from Latin to French. It is also interesting to discover how the medieval process of translation operated, as it was more like interpretation than a modern translation and added material of various sources to the original text. The discussion and introduction of this book are in English, but the texts remain in French. This will be a very interesting book of anyone interested in the literary practices and the distribution of knowledge in medieval Ireland.

Bronze Age Worlds: A Social Prehistory of Britain and Ireland - Robert Johnston

Routledge, £34.99

This book explores the relationships and development of kin groups in the Bronze Age and how we may be able to understand these from archaeology, such as metal hoards. It emphasises three areas for the creation of kin groups – journeys, dwellings, and landmarks. These were the places that had the biggest influence on groups of people. Part of the journeys was gift giving and the trading of objects, thus creating relationships between social and family groups. This book provides interesting ideas about the development of kin groups within Britain and Ireland and is useful for developing our understanding of Bronze Age society.