From the President

This is the last newsletter of my presidential term, which comes to a formal end at the AGM announced herein. It has been a pleasure and honour to serve you, and taking a moment to reflect, which is something that we rarely get the chance to do, I look back on three years that have been at times insanely busy, emotionally mixed, and very intense both for the Society and for the world of Norfolk archaeology as a whole.

For NNAS in many ways it has been a difficult winter; as most of you will know the old year ended badly when we lost our much loved and absolutely pivotal college Trevor Ashwin on Christmas day. You will find a short obituary opposite, which will be followed up more thoroughly in Norfolk Archaeology, once we get used to having to produce it without him. We also find ourselves looking for a new Excursions Secretary, the pressure of fulfilling two roles having once again proved unreasonable for a member of council. (If you are interested in that role please do look closely at the advertisement on page 10 – it’s a really interesting one, and could be a lot of fun if you were not trying to combine it with another important role!)

We do, though, have some good news about volunteers to Council. Two Assistant Secretaries have come forward, Carol ?? who is assisting Roger Bellinger as treasurer, and ????? who has become our minute taker – freeing up Ed as Hon. Secretary to take a more active role in discussions. We also welcome Dr Rik Hoggett back to the Norfolk Archaeology team, and Sue Anderson, who will be the new Newsletter and Website Secretary and has edited and designed this publication. Between them they have managed to address a large part of the gap created by the loss of Trevor – the fact that it takes at least two people just to show how much he did for us.

It’s also been a mixed time for archaeology more widely in the county. Despite our joy at Norfolk County Council not cutting the Finds Identification and Recording Service last year, major changes are still afoot. The role of County Archaeologist has gone, and although this Society delegated me to write to NCC for clarification (which I have done, twice and to no response) we have not been able to get to the bottom of how archaeology will be represented in senior council management in future. It may well be that they don’t know themselves…

The other concerning news is the decision to close NPS Archaeology, better known to many of you as NAU or ‘The Unit’ – that is to say the last remaining vestige of the former County Council Archaeological Unit. Because of the pseudo-privatised structure of its ownership, by NPS Group which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Norfolk County Council, this move was not subject to the public consultation many of you might have expected, and despite a rear guard media campaign there is nothing that can be done to prevent it. Redundancies have already taken place, and the resulting loss of local expertise will pay itself out over time. As Peter Wade Martins has recently commented in the press, the issue of concern now is how to make sure that the company’s fairly extensive excavation backlog is properly and fully published. Staff have been kept on to do this but it remains to be seen whether they, or the available funding, will be sufficient to the task in hand.

There is good news as well though. Some signs are showing that after a long period of recession, funding for projects and initiatives seems to be picking up. There is work about – I myself am about to go into a full time heritage job for the first time in four years, and developments are restarting leading to jobs for diggers, in fact if anything UK archaeology is experiencing a skills shortage. The voluntary sector remains strong and vibrant. The Easter holidays have marked the beginning of fieldwork for a number of projects including the SHARP fieldwalking season, and new test-pitting at Tasburgh as part of the Imagined Land project.

Evenings and weekends are finally light enough, and very often dry enough, to get out of doors so please enjoy it. Have a great summer.

Sophie

Trevor Ashwin - Obituary

Trevor Ashwin, archaeologist, died on Christmas Day, 2016, aged 53. He came down from Yorkshire in 1989 to work in the Norfolk Archaeological Unit as the director of a series of excavations along the line of the Norwich southern bypass. His task was daunting, and involved four major sites, predominantly prehistoric and funerary, several minor ones, and a wholly unexpected cemetery of the late 7th to early 8th century AD along with a watching brief over the full length of the road. The fieldwork, brilliantly carried out in sometimes tricky circumstances, was published in two volumes of East Anglian Archaeology in 2000, Volume II, on the Anglo-Saxon cemetery, being written by his colleague, Kenneth Penn. Trevor’s synthesis at the end of Volume I shows just how deeply he was able to think about his subject and how wise was his interpretation. His 1996 paper on ‘Neolithic and Bronze Age Norfolk’ in the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society also shows this thoughtful and intelligent approach. He was no mere archaeological technician.

In 1992–3 he took on the excavation on a substantial Middle Iron Age site in advance of the construction of the new alignment of the A11 at Park Farm, Silfield, Wymondham. This was a difficult site to excavate, the first of this date on the Boulder Clay to have been examined on any large scale in Norfolk. Again the published report, in Norfolk Archaeology for 1996, is a model of clarity. In 1995 Trevor tackled the West Runton ‘elephant’, which in the event turned out to be a mammoth. At the base of a cliff and in the full glare of media attention he managed to record and extricate the delicate remains of this enormous creature to a very high standard, despite the fact that at this time the remains were thought to antedate the appearance of early man in Britain, i.e. that the project was palaeontological rather than archaeological.

Trevor’s incisive mind, the clarity of his prose and his ability to pay attention to detail as well as to the broad picture made him ideal for the task of preparing reports of other

Andrew Rogerson
As a voluntary Guide in Norwich Cathedral I was intrigued to read in the last edition of the NNAS newsletter that the Lady Chapel had once been used as the Chapter House. This seemed to me to be inherently unlikely so I went to see Judy Sims in the NNAS Library. She brought out for me John Weever’s Ancient Funeral Monuments. On page 796, after the section on St Luke’s Chapel, he says, ‘In the Chapter House there is a goodly monument to the memory of Sir Thomas Windham knight…’

This started a trail of detection which led into as many cul-de-sacs as discoveries.

Weever was writing in 1631 and the Lady Chapel was demolished in the 1560s, so it could not have been the Lady Chapel that he thought was the Chapter House. The next chapel along is the Jesus Chapel. Thomas Wyndham’s tomb, now between pillars in the north aisle, is one of the more peripatetic of the Cathedral’s monuments. It was initially placed in the Lady Chapel, but when that was demolished, the tomb was moved to the Jesus Chapel. So that confirms that it was the Jesus Chapel that Weever described as the Chapter House.

But was he right? I am very wary of unsubstantiated statements and the fact that one was made several hundred years ago is no guarantee of its accuracy.

At first I thought that he had simply got it wrong but Weever could not have been unaware of the demolition of the medieval Chapter House and, of course, after the Dissolution the Dean and Chapter needed to meet somewhere. Was their meeting place also known by its medieval name as the Chapter House?

Gudrun Warren kindly sent me the following references. In the introduction to the NRS volume of excerpts from the first two extant chapter books it says: ‘In the earlier period the meetings are stated to have been held simply in the Cathedral Church, but in 1620 and onwards they were convened in domo capitulari…’ (p. 7) Then in 1570 an entry records that after the Bishop’s Visitiation had been finished, the injunctions arising from the Visitiation were ‘delyverid in the chapter house’ (p. 29). When the then beadle and organ blower was being reprimanded for his behaviour (1618), the witnesses are described as ‘all there in the Chapter house at this present’ (p. 53). Finally, reporting the presence of the Bishop in 1620, he with others ‘entered into the chapter house’ (p. 54).

So there was definitely an area called ‘The Chapter House’, from 1570 at least. Unfortunately, none of the above tells us where the Chapter House was. I also wondered whether the present unusual seating in the Jesus Chapel had been deliberately chosen to reflect that of a medieval chapter house, or even to replace such an arrangement. Blomefield’s ‘Essay’ published in 1806 identifies the Jesus Chapel as the Chapter House and Consistory Court, so I think one can safely assume that there was seating. However, in Bell’s Cathedral series, published in 1900, a photograph clearly shows a chapel devoid of seating.

Then I read in Atherton, Norwich, Church, City and Diocese, 1096–1996, on p.542, the statement that the Jesus Chapel was used as the new chapter house and vestry. Gudrun got to the Record Office before I did and sent me the following: DCN 24/3, fo. 108r includes this:

‘That Jesus Chappell shall be the Chapter house for this Cathedral & fitted with new [can’t work out this word] for that purpose.’ It seemed QED – until I looked at the date of the reference, 1671, and Weever wrote in 1631. Even allowing for the fact that the Dean and Chapter were in abeyance from 1649–1660, the dates still don’t add up.

At that the trail ran cold and I have to admit that I cannot completely solve the puzzle.

Pat Wagstaff

The Lady Chapel and the Chapter House

The Entrance to the Jesus Chapel by John Sell Cotman (Creative Commons licence)
Norfolk Archaeological Trust’s Imagined Land
Exploring and Celebrating the History on our Doorstep

The Norfolk Archaeological Trust has been awarded a grant of £74,700 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for an exciting project based at two Trust sites. The ‘Imagined Land’ two-year project will offer local people at Tasburgh and Burnham Norton the chance to explore and celebrate the heritage of the sites at the heart of their communities, through practical research and creative activities.

The project will include geophysical survey of both sites, and documentary research undertaken by volunteers who will be mentored by members of NAHRG. There will also be a programme of archaeological ‘test-pits’ in gardens and fields outside the scheduled monument areas to provide additional information on the setting of these enigmatic sites. Volunteers will be mentored by experienced members of Caistor Roman Project, with over-all supervision from Giles Emery of Norvic Archaeology.

This research will then be used as the starting point for creative arts work – writing, music and craft making – culminating in historical pageants devised and created with local communities, including schools. Dr Sara Helen Binney has been commissioned through the Norwich Writers Centre to lead creative writing; and other arts professionals will be commissioned as the project progresses. The aim is to provide opportunities for everyone in each community to get involved.

Contact Project Manager Simon Floyd if you would like to find out how to get involved in the project:
Email: imaginedland1@gmail.com Tel: 07896 781574 sites.google.com/site/imaginedlandprojectnorfolk

Society Lecture Reports

The Brecks from Above: Re-mapping the archaeology of the Brecks

Sophie Tremlett, of the Norfolk Historic Environment Service spoke to the society on Saturday 4th January 2017.

‘Brecks from Above’ is an aerial mapping project, part of the English Heritage initiative, The National Mapping Program to discover new sites, provide an accurate record of their location and form, plus an understanding not for archaeological excavations at present but to protect them from damage either by farming, forestry, roads or housing projects. 100,000 recent and historical photos of 695 sites, many taken by Derek Edwards, plus specialist archaeological photos from the Gressenhall Library and from Historic England have been accessed. The project combines with ‘Revealing the Landscape’, a new survey of the main forested areas, led by the Forestry Commission. This uses LiDAR, a form of scanning which is able to penetrate woodland more than other forms of remote sensing or ground survey.

LiDAR involves flying over the landscape and sending down laser pulses – the time taken for a laser pulse to be reflected back builds up a picture of the relative height of the land and vegetation below. It provides a detailed relief of ground features, revealing the extent and survival of sites.

Sophie explained how the Brecklands is a distinctive environment with a unique range of sites. The poor soil has resulted in temporary fields or ‘Brecks’, often lightly ploughed creating short-lived arable farming and forestry areas which later reverted back to heathland. This has helped to preserve many sites but also damaged the archaeology of others. Thetford Forest is thought to have had a relatively benign effect on surviving ground features, even protecting earthworks from the damage that farming and development causes.

In March 2014 the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) confirmed the award of nearly £1.5million to the Breaking New Ground Landscape Partnership, enabling a £2.2m scheme to deliver a range of exciting heritage and landscape projects in the heart of the Brecks. This has concentrated on mapping 75 sq.km. of an area between Thetford and Brandon where a central area of forest feeds into heathland at the margins. It has revealed unknown,
Spring 2017 – 9

funerary landscape of cemeteries and mounds to the west and north of Weeting show a confirmed at Weeting Rising and plantations of Bronze Age ring ditches and barrows have been identified. Bronze Graves where additional features – pits, shafts or Mesolithic but mainly Neolithic like Grimes Gravels. Iron Age remains are evident at Brandon and Thetford and there is a Roman settlement at Hockwold where post-holes of timber buildings provide extensive new evidence of substantial settlement. A medieval site at East Weeting is surrounded by a moat with enclosure platforms and fish ponds, but the exact dating is complicated. Rabbit Warrens – boundaries, mounds, artificial enclosures – can be seen at Weeting and Thetford. Mundford earthworks are a new discovery, plus there is a post-medieval enclosure at West Tofts.

On the aerial photos, numerous marks showing ridges and furrows are the result of continuous ploughing resulting from agricultural expansion in the 17th–19th centuries, but this ceased in the 1880s due to agricultural depression and much of the land reverted back to heath and plantation. Other photos show linear gulleys or shallow trenches on the heaths as at Brome Hall but it is not clear what these are or how they were caused. Signs of land improvement – water meadows – can be seen at Lynford and Stanford. Flint mining continued up to the 1950s at Brandon with mining pits and knapping works. The Brecks Military History Project has looked at Elveden where WW1 tank development took place, and at Weeting Hall buildings. The camps show quite a history of pill boxes, trenches, pits and craters. RAF Banham has signs of Cold War activity.

The Mapping Program has plans for another Landscape Project – Brecks Stage 2 – an additional 94 sq.km. survey around Northwold, Didlington and King's Forest. Also there is the Broads Aerial Perspective to look at water mills, marshes, etc., using volunteers, to start in 2019.

See: www.breakingnewground.org.uk/our-projects/a-future-for-all/the-brecks-from-above/

Edmund Perry

Gründungsviertel excavations, Lübeck, Germany

Dr Dirk Rieger of Bereich Archäologie Lübeck gave a splendid lecture, in almost faultless English, to the Society on Saturday 14th January. His subject was the five-year long excavation recently completed at the Gründungsviertel, or ‘Foundation Quarter’, of the hanseatic city of Lübeck.

The work extended over 12,000 square metres of the city, downhill from the principal parish church, the Marienkirche.

Lübeck, a World Heritage site since 1987, was firebombed in 1942 causing widespread destruction of the medieval historic centre. Rebuilt in the 1950s, the post-war structures are now being replaced with modern buildings designed to follow the footprints of their medieval predecessors. In this way, contemporary architecture will help to retain the ‘sense and spirit of place’ of the ancient city. The archaeological excavations, costing some €12 million, were undertaken in advance of rebuilding.

The astonishing discoveries, in deposits often over five metres in depth and waterlogged, included some 162 12th-century timber buildings, ninety 13th-century and later brick buildings, more than 100 cess pits (earth-, wooden- and brick-lined), twenty wells, four streets, and hundreds of thousands of artefacts. The results uncovered evidence for Slavonic activity, the earliest phases of the 12th-century German town, and much from the high medieval commercial period when Lübeck was the ‘Queen of the Hanse’.

The quality of preservation was frequently remarkable. One timber cellar was found with its ceiling beams collapsed on to the floor; the beams could be dated by dendrochronology to 1166. Another wooden cellar of c.1175 stood almost to full height with the lintel of its door intact and in place, access being provided by a brick staircase. A timber ‘Toilettenhaus’ or latrine shed was found with side-by-side lavatory seats, one of which had a small step in front of it, rare evidence (apart from toys) for children in the archaeological record.

Portable objects included a wooden birdcage dated to around 1250, stylies for accounts, chests, and seals of merchants as well as a pair of spectacles, cloth seals and shears, whetstones, herring barrels, shoes, purses, and even a mirror.

The excavation, which was directed by Dirk, is currently being written up. He aims to complete the report by the end of this year, a fine example of prompt assessment and synthesis. The report will have great value in Britain as well as Germany, long historic links between the two countries being frequently visible in the archaeological record.

Questions after the lecture showed that the audience had not only thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon but had been astonished at the quality of the discoveries.

Brian Ayers

The ‘toilettenhaus’ © Bereich Archäologie Lübeck

Cropmarks of the Roman settlement at Hockwold photographed on 13 July 1989 (Norfolk Historic Environment Record TL7587ABR) © Norfolk County Council. Photo by D. Edwards

Using numerous aerial photos, Sophie explained that early features are not Palaeolithic or Mesolithic but mainly Neolithic like Grimes Graves where additional features – pits, shafts and galleries – have been identified. Bronze Age ring ditches and barrows have been confirmed at Weeting Rising and plantations to the west and north of Weeting show a funerary landscape of cemeteries and mounds including two additional barrow mounds.
Excursions

Saturday 29th July – King’s Lynn
A walk through historic riverside streets to include important archaeological sites from the 1960s – Lynn’s medieval history ‘underground’. Also visits to the Minster and St Nicholas Chapel as well as the German Hanse House built c.1480. Meet at 11am outside the Town Hall on Saturday Market Place. Lunch will be between 1–2pm (there are several restaurants/cafes to try) and the tour will finish about 3pm. Tea at True’s Yard Fisherfolk Museum for those wishing to extend the tour.

Saturday 29th July – River Yare on Wherry Maud
Maud is the last of the clinker-built trading wherries to sail on the Norfolk Broads and rivers. She started her working life in 1899 as one of a small fleet of private trading wherries, ending her days as a dredging cargo boat. She was rescued in 1981 by Vincent and Linda Pargeter, who spent 18 years on her restoration, finally recommissioning her in 1999 on Wroxham Broad. £15 (includes membership to the Maud Wherry Trust). Contact Alistair Graham Kerr (psgeditor37@gmail.com) for more details.

Four-day visit to Inverness
The Society has never yet made a trip by air and we feel the time has come to take on this new form of transport and visit Scotland before it achieves independence and becomes a foreign country!

Our ex-County Archaeologist, Brian Ayers, who has taken us on so many great holidays in the past, has offered to lead an excursion in which we will fly from Norwich to Aberdeen, on Friday 29th September, be transported by coach to a hotel in Inverness for three nights and return to Aberdeen and then Norwich on Monday October 2nd.

We will have to leave Norwich very early – at 06.45 in the morning, arriving Aberdeen at 08.05 and Brian has suggested the following provisional programme:

Day 1: Huntly Castle, Elgin, Spynie Palace, Sueno’s Stone
Day 2: Tain, Portmahomack and the Cromarty Firth (possibly including Groom House on the Black Isle for Pictish stone collection)
Day 3: Loch Ness including Urquhart castle, Culloden (very good visitor centre and well-displayed small battlefield) and Fort George
Day 4: Clava Cairns, Cawdor Castle and possibly Loanhead Stone Circle (departing Aberdeen 16.10 and arriving Norwich 17.30)

The cost of the trip is £490 per person with a single supplement of £126 per person. You can see there is a considerable advantage in sharing rooms!

If you wish to join the party please send a deposit cheque of £100 per person to Roger Bellinger at 9 Aspen Way, Norwich NR4 6UA with your full names, address, phone number and e-mail address. Spaces are limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Notices

Subscriptions
Subscriptions were due on 1st January and those of you who do not pay by standing order are asked to send cheques to the Hon. Treasurer, Roger Bellinger, at 9 Aspen Way, Cringleford, Norwich NR4 6UA. Alternatively, direct credits can be made to the Society’s bank account, 20-62-53, A/c 90661015. Subscription rates are unchanged at £21 single, £25 Joint and Household.

AGM
The 2017 AGM will be held on Sept 9th at 1pm, before the Lecture by Sarah Cassell, Norfolk’s Medieval Angel Roofs at Norwich Castle Museum. Please note that there will be no printed booklet for the AGM. The relevant documents will be sent digitally to all those who have given us email addresses, and will also be available on the website.

Newsletter contributions
Please send contributions to the newsletter to Sue Anderson at sue@spoilheap.co.uk or via the NNAS mail address. Copy is preferred in digital format, with text and illustrations supplied as separate files. Illustrations should be a minimum of 300 dpi and at least 150mm wide, and you must have copyright permission to use them.

New Hon. Excursions Secretary
The trustees thank Alistair Graham Kerr for his work organising excursions during the past three years. His resignation means the society needs someone to arrange excursions for the summer months of 2018.

The post involves booking visits, advising on travel, ensuring parking, toilet facilities and refreshments are available; arranging for expert guides where possible, or printing information sheets etc., as an ‘added value’ component of the visit; issuing notices to the membership and advertising excursions on the website and by e-mail. The excursion programme should reflect the needs, capacities and range of membership interests, covering a variety of monuments/places/tours/walks, mostly within Norfolk, divided between weekdays and weekend, with reasonable prices. The post-holder has to budget for each excursion, agree charges with the Treasurer, collect payments and send them to the Treasurer. Where possible, a Health & Safety check should be carried out and a Risk Assessment sheet produced.

Applications should be sent to the Hon.Gen.Secretary, Edmund Perry, at nnas.secretary@gmail.co.uk
The Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society

Founded in 1846, the society is one of the oldest archaeological societies in the country. Throughout its history it has attracted all those interested in the archaeology and history of Norfolk.

During the winter months, lectures on archaeological and historical subjects are arranged. In the summer and autumn, visits to sites, houses and churches in various parts of Norfolk and further afield are organised.

The Society publishes Norfolk Archaeology, the major academic journal for the archaeology and history of Norfolk. It has an extensive library at 64 The Close, Norwich, which members can use for their own research.

Membership, subscriptions and contacts

Individual Membership £21
Household Membership £25
(2 adults and up to 4 children living at the same address)
Junior Membership (under age 18) £5
(Juniors and children of Household members aged 8–16 are automatically entitled to membership of the Norwich branch of the Young Archaeologists’ Club)

All communications about new membership should be sent to:
The Honorary Membership Secretary, Alistair Graham Kerr, Casemate, 7 Burgh Castle Marina, Butt Lane, Burgh Castle, NR31 9PZ

All communications about the Society’s journal should be sent to:
The Honorary Editors, Dr Jon Gregory and Dr Sarah Spooner, School of History, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ

All other communications should be sent to:
The Honorary General Secretary, Edmund Perry, Wild Grasses, Rectory Road, East Carleton, Norwich, NR14 8HT, email nnas.secretary@gmail.co.uk

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