

NASNEWS

Newsletter of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society

Website: www.northants-archaeology.org.uk

April 2009

We have news of two local meetings, unfortunately both on the same day, and apologies for giving such short notice.

RESCUE AGM AND OPEN MEETING

To mark the tenure of Roy Friendship-Taylor as Chair of RESCUE - The British Archaeological Trust, they are holding their AGM and open meeting on Saturday, 25th April at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, Guildhall Road, Northampton as a joint meeting with NAS.

The Rescue AGM, for members only, begins at 12am, and will be followed by the open meeting at 2pm. Entry to the afternoon meeting will be £3 for members and £4 for non-members.

Bob Zeepvat (Archaeological Services and Consultancy)
Commercial archaeology in recession

Andy Chapman (Northamptonshire Archaeology)
Publishing the Raunds Area Project

Brian Giggins (formerly Milton Keynes planning archaeologist)
Buildings as upstanding archaeology

CBA SOUTH MIDLANDS SPRING CONFERENCE

On the same day, Saturday 25th April, CBA South Midlands will be holding their Spring Conference at Church Hall, Elstow, Bedfordshire, starting at 9.30am.

Grist to the mill: recent work on windmills and watermills

Speakers will include:

Andy Chapman	<i>Medieval watermills at West Cotton and the Tansor windmill</i>
Michael Hardy	<i>Lacey Green windmill</i>
Gary Marshall	<i>The Stowe Estate sawmill</i>
Stan Cauvain	<i>Pann Mill watermill</i>

The conference admission fee, £10 on the door, includes the entrance charge to Elstow Moot Hall, which will be opening especially for the conference.

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I would like to thank those members who have taken the trouble to contact me to pass on their compliments about the new look of the journal. It has been pleasing to see such a positive response to these quite radical changes, and we have even gained a few new members as a direct result of this new look. The journal has been distributed to all members and institutions, so if we have inadvertently missed anyone, please let me know.

One of the few negatives was the response from Northampton Museum and Art Gallery. As you would expect, they have taken the journal since its origins in the 1970s, after all, in the past many museum staff had been members of NAS and served on the council. Unfortunately, those days are long gone and a package appeared containing the offered journal with a covering letter explaining that "as we have no Keeper of Archaeology" ... "I am returning this copy".

A letter was sent to Cllr Jean Hawkins, the Heritage Champion on Northampton Borough Council, expressing our surprise and disappointment at this decision. We pointed out the sad situation that you would be able to see a copy of the journal in New York, Frankfurt and other cities around the world, but not in Northampton Museum (although copies are still taken by the Central Library, Northampton and Kettering Library). As a result of the vigorous and prompt response by Jean Hawkins, the Museum does now have a copy of the journal, but the initial response still says much about the low priority of heritage within our local government authorities. This is partly a response to financial constraints, but I believe it also reflects the attitudes of the new breed of staff that work in these organisations today. The County Council fares little better, as we were asked if we could provide a copy free of charge to the Historic Environment Record since they no longer have a budget for purchasing such frivolous items as reference books.

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No sooner has one journal gone out than the next is in preparation. If anyone has any reports, short summaries of fieldwork or any notes, please contact the editors. It would be particularly good to see some contributions from the affiliated local societies that are active in fieldwork, particularly the Upper Nene Archaeological Society, as we haven't had an update on Piddington Roman villa for some years, and also from CLASP (Community Landscape and Survey Project) and their many fieldwork projects, and perhaps something from the other end of the county as well. Notes for contributors are available on our website.

The next volume will follow the same A4 format with colour illustrations, but will certainly be a slimmer volume than the last, where more material came in than anticipated. On the computer screen the size of the volume didn't matter a great deal and full realisation of what we had created only came when the printed copies arrived and took over half of my office. Hauling them to the Post Office also provided much healthy exercise, particularly for my wife, and the postage costs were also significantly higher.

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