

NASNEWS

Newsletter of Northamptonshire Archaeological Society

www.northants-archaeology.org.uk

September 2003

NAS AGM – Advance Notice

The Society AGM for 2003 will be held sometime after the middle of November. Date, venue and speaker will be circulated as soon as confirmed. It is hoped to distribute copies of the new Journal, volume 30, at the AGM. Come along and collect your copy! Those unable to collect will receive their volume through the post in the usual way. Work is already well advanced on compiling Volume 31. The *Archaeology in Northamptonshire* book is still delayed after the publisher pulled out earlier in the year. Negotiations continue to find a suitable alternative publisher.

NAS Subscriptions

All members are reminded that subscriptions for 2003/2004 were due on 1st September 2003. Subscription rates remain unchanged at £10 for individuals, £12 family, £8 student and £15 Local Association. We would encourage members to sign up to Gift Aid as this provides some valuable additional income to your Society. **Please send subscriptions and requests for a Gift Aid form to Martin Tingle, The Dial House, High St, Creton, Northants NN6 8NA as soon as possible. Thank you.**

‘Protecting Our Historic Environment: Making the System Work Better’

This is the title of the review consultation launched in July by the Department of Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS). This major, perhaps once in a generation consultation focuses on proposals for reforming the system by which England’s historic environment (historic buildings, archaeology and landscapes) is protected. The report suggests bringing together all the current designations (Listing, Scheduling, Conservation Areas, Battlefield and Historic Parks and Gardens Registers) into a single, unified list of historic sites and buildings of England. It is also proposed to transfer responsibility, for maintaining the new list from the Secretary of State to English Heritage and that responsibility for processing SMC applications be devolved to Local Authority teams. The creation of sub-regional pools of expertise to advise local authorities is also mooted. Comments are sought by DCMS by 31st October 2003. Copies of the review paper are available on the DCMS website at <http://www.culture.gov.uk> and then go to the part of the site entitled historic environment. Paper copies are available from Eve Truman at DCMS, 2 Cockspur Street, London SW1 Y 5DH.

Members may be interested to know that the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) have brought together very helpful information and links about the DCMS current review at <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/conservedesignationreview/>

A further consultation on the future of Sites and Monument’s Records (SMRs) has also been published by DCMS – entitled ‘Historic Environment Records: Benchmarks for Good Practice’. Available from the same sources as above.

CBA South Midlands AGM

AGM at 2pm Saturday 18th October 2003. To be followed by ‘Higham Ferrers’, a talk by Steve Lawrence of Oxford Archaeology on the recent excavations of the newly confirmed small Roman town. Venue is Rectory Cottages, Church Green Road, Bletchley All enquiries to Christine Edbury, 18 North Street, Middle Barton, Chipping Norton, Oxon OX7 7BJ (Tel: 01869 347013).

County Council Historic Environment Services Update

As reported in the last issue of NASNEWS, Northamptonshire County Council finally scrapped its proposed wholesale cuts of its Historic Environment Team, formerly known as Northamptonshire Heritage, earlier in the year. This followed vigorous local and national lobbying. The County Council heritage provision has however still been substantially reduced over that once enjoyed. Myk Flitcroft now heads the team, taking over the role that used to be known as the County Archaeologist. One full time SMR Officer and a Historic Environment post (archaeological planning/conservation) complete the team along with a part time historic buildings conservation officer. NASNEWS understands that it is hoped to add a further part time conservation officer in the near future. In addition, the new HLF funded Northamptonshire Finds Liaison Officer is based with the team in County Hall – see below.

Marked Window Leads

Members may be aware that some post-medieval window leads are marked on the inside by the wheels of the mill by which they were extruded. The commonest marks are a personal name, sometimes abbreviated, and a date. Geoff Egan at the Museum of London is collating information on such marks and would like to know of any such leads whether at first hand, or from secondary sources. For those wanting to know more about such marks, see the paper by Geoff and others in volume 20 of *Post Medieval Archaeology* 1986, p303-309. Geoff can be contacted at gegan@museumoflondon.org.uk

New Northamptonshire Finds Liaison Officer Commences

After 4 years as the Portable Antiquities Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) for Northamptonshire, Rhiannon Harte left earlier in the summer to take up a new post with the National Forest. A replacement Northamptonshire Finds Liaison Officer has been recruited and commenced work on 1st September – Tom Brindle. Tom is originally from Devon and has studied archaeology at Cardiff and York Universities. Tom can be contacted care of the County Council's Historic Environment Team, PO Box 163, County Hall, Northampton NN1 1AX. Tel: 01604 237249.

The Northamptonshire Portable Antiquities scheme is wholly reliant on voluntary reporting of archaeological artefacts found by members of the public, especially metal detectorists. In common with posts elsewhere across the country, the local post is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, with Resource, the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries and the Government's advisor on such matters, having responsibility for co-ordinating the scheme's administration. As part of the national scheme, the Northamptonshire Finds Liaison Officer post has been secured until the end of March 2006. Further details of the national scheme can be found at the website www.finds.org.uk This includes descriptions and illustrations of some of the finds recorded to date in Northamptonshire. The site also includes contact details for Finds Liaison Officers across England and Wales.

We welcome items to include in NASNEWS.

Deadline for inclusion in the next issue is the end of December 2003.

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