

NASNEWS

Newsletter of Northamptonshire Archaeological Society

February 2005

NAS AGM 2004

The AGM 2004 was held at Northampton Guildhall on November 30th. The Society continues to do well, membership having recently climbed back above the 150 mark, small in national terms maybe but nonetheless encouraging when many such societies are witnessing continuing declines in membership. The officers for 2004-05 are as follows –

Chairman & Editor	Martin Tingle
Vice-Chairman	Roy Friendship Taylor
Secretary	Andy Chapman
Treasurer	Ian Barrie
Membership Secretary	Pat Chapman
NASNEWS Editor	Graham Cadman

Ordinary members of Council: Mike Rumbold, Burl Bellamy, David Waller, Michael Webster & Bob Kings. Further details on the AGM including editors report and the accounts are available on the Society website, address at the top of this newsletter. The occasion also marked the launch of our new publication '*The Archaeology of Northamptonshire*'. In addition there was an excellent lecture by the well-known archaeologist Dr Francis Pryor entitled 'Life in Prehistoric Flag Fen: 35 years of research in a nutshell'.

SUPPORT OUR LOCAL MUSEUMS!

According to recent press reports, Northampton Borough Council has taken the decision to place its museum into a specially-created Trust. This move follows some well publicised moves by the authority to balance its budget for 2005 and to keep down the level of increase in its Council Tax. A victim of budget cuts in past years, concerns are bound to be heightened about the longer term future of the Museum and its position as one of the town's cultural gems. If trust status is pursued, this must be accompanied by sufficient support and safeguards to ensure the museum's long term viability. In the wake of the closure of Daventry Museum, Northamptonshire cannot afford to see yet another of its cultural lights switched off. Northampton's proposed Cultural Mile, of which the Museum is a key part, is entirely laudable, we do not want to find we are left with only a Cultural Few Metres. Contrary to findings and polls at national level, where public interest and support for our heritage and the past has never been stronger, it has been reported that Northampton Borough Council's own recent consultation exercise reached a very different conclusion with museums being rated lowly against other essential services. It is up to all of us to make our voices heard and to let local and national politicians in Northamptonshire know that care of our heritage, and in particular that shop front to our past - our museums, is of key local concern. The message should be, 'support our local museums!'

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

The new book, *The Archaeology of Northamptonshire* is now available! It has 200 pages with 125 illustrations (B&W and colour). The book has been edited by Martin Tingle and contains chapters written by a variety of locally based authors – as detailed in the last NASNEWS and on the Society website. The book is on sale in bookshops with a recommended retail price of £21 (local discounts may apply). It is also available by post from the NAS at £12.99 plus £2.50 postage for NAS members and £14.50 plus £2.50 postage for non-members. Please make cheques payable to N.A.S. and send orders to NAS, Dial House, High Street, Creaton, Northants NN6 8NA..

30th ANNIVERSARY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

The NAS photographic competition launched last year as part of our 30th Anniversary celebrations, is having its closing date extended to 1st January 2006. Members of NAS, of other local societies in Northamptonshire and anyone else with an involvement or interest in the archaeology of Northamptonshire is invited to enter. The competition theme is a record of any aspect of archaeology within Northamptonshire in the last 30 years. This can involve field survey, excavation, post excavation work, finds, historic landscape, historic buildings, industrial archaeology, a NAS or other local society event or activity or indeed any aspect of the wide field of archaeology as practised in the historic county of Northamptonshire.

The photographer whose photograph best represents the competition theme, as judged by the NAS Committee, will receive a cash prize of £50. A second prize of £25 will also be awarded. In addition two junior prizes (aged 16 or under), each of £20, will be awarded. A copy of the competition rules and an application form are available on request from Graham Cadman, contact details below.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY VOLUME 31

The latest volume of the NAS journal (for 2003) is now out. In addition to the annual round-up of fieldwork for 2003 and several short archaeological notes, the main papers are concerned with three Bronze Age burial sites, the evaluation of an Iron Age settlement at Wilby Way, Great Doddington; a medieval manorial farm in Irthlingborough; a medieval tenement in Weldon and another in Higham Ferrers. Copies are being distributed to members. If you are up to date with your subscription and have not yet received your copy please contact the NAS Editor, Dial House, High Street, Creaton, Northants NN6 8NA.

PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT & REGIONAL PAS NEWSLETTER

Two recent Portable Antiquities Scheme publications of note are the Midlands PAS Newsletter No 2 which features amongst other objects, a fine silver Medieval Cross Pendant from Northamptonshire and the very well produced and illustrated PAS Annual Report for 2003-04. Both are available free from Tom Brindle on 01604 237249 or at tbrindle@northamptonshire.gov.uk

ENGLISH HERITAGE FREE LEAFLETS

Three new free advice leaflets were published during 2004 by English Heritage with Defra and others. Part of the series *Farming the historic landscape*, the titles are,

- *Caring for archaeological sites in grassland* (product code 50909)
- *Caring for archaeological sites on arable land* (product code 50910),
- *Caring for farm buildings* (product code 50911).

Available through the HELM (Historic Environment Local Management) website at www.helm.org.uk or through English Heritage Customer Services Dept on 0870 333 1181 or email customers@english-heritage.org.uk

NAS members may also be interested in 'Change and Creation', a programme of debate and consultation launched by EH in November as part of an attempt to better understand the nature and value of the later 20th century landscape, how people perceive it and how and why should we manage change to it in the future. Further details are available on <http://www.changeandcreation.org> and in the programme booklet, *Change and Creation: historic landscape character 1950-2000*.

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