



# NASNEWS

Newsletter of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society



Website: [www.northants-archaeology.org.uk](http://www.northants-archaeology.org.uk)

## Spring 2020

Dear NAS members

I hope you are all keeping safe and well, especially so as many of us are at the wrong end of the age spectrum.

Despite the many negatives, the current period of lockdown does provide opportunities to read those books that have been on your shelves for so long, perhaps even some back copies of the journal, and maybe there is even that report you had been planning to write one day but had never found the time to get it started.

### NASNEWS

We had been putting together a spring NASNEWS listing the many forthcoming events through April and May, but as they have, of course, all been cancelled there wasn't a great deal left, so you'll have to make do with me instead.

### NAS accounts

I have almost got through the torturous process of transferring the NAS bank and building society accounts across to my name as the new Treasurer, but I still have to finalise online access to the bank account, and without that I can't finalise the accounts for the previous financial year. The frustrating thing is that I know the overall figures at either end of the year but need access to all the monthly statements to determine the exact figures for income and expenditure. However, in short, we are still in a very healthy position.

### The journal

Having finally completed the monograph for an Iron Age site that I excavated in 1998 (but well worth the wait, although just across the border on outskirts of Rugby, so not quite a Northamptonshire site), my sole archaeological focus is now pulling together the next issue of the journal, the Northampton special edition, something else well worth the wait since it was first promised some years ago.

I will obviously now have more time than anticipated to focus on that, as our various

planned excursions to jazz and modern art in London and a trip to the West Country to tie in with the Brick Society AGM are all cancelled.

However, there is still much to do on the journal so I will stick to saying that it will be published as soon as possible, either later this year or early next year, depending on how things go.

### Cresswell Crag Appeal

In a separate email there will be an appeal from the Cresswell Crag Centre, our only Palaeolithic cave site with cave art on the walls, and also with a good visitor centre, guided cave walks and a strong education programme for schools.

This is their first year without any local government funding, so it would have been challenging anyway and the coronavirus lockdown now threatens their survival. So please consider either a donation or perhaps buying something from the online shop (although purchases cannot be posted until the lockdown ends).

### Andy and Pat visit the Palaeolithic caves of northern Spain

Cresswell Crag was of particular interest to me as in early March Pat and I spent five days in northern Spain visiting Altamira and other cave sites across Cantabria, staying at a very nice hotel on the sea front at Santander. By the middle of the week the shadow of coronavirus was looming and on our final cave visit on Thursday afternoon we were the penultimate group to enter the cave before they were all closed at the beginning of the Spanish lockdown of all public facilities.

Friday afternoon we got back to Bilbao and after checking in at the hotel a group of us went straight to the Guggenheim Museum (what an amazing building) to make an early evening visit, when it was nearly empty, just in case it got closed down (although as it turned out it was still open on the Saturday as it is not publically owned).

Saturday afternoon we arrived at the airport, which was also very quiet as many of the flights had been cancelled, and were much relieved to get our BA flight back to London.

This looks like being our last adventure for some time, and so sad to see such a high death toll in Spain, despite the fact that they put an effective lockdown in place far more rapidly than we have in the UK. Our local corner shop has only just put up notices about social distancing!



Pat admiring the stunning decorated roof of the Altamira replica cave



The Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

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