A GREAT YEAR FOR ARCHAEOLOGY
AT NEWCASTLE!

What a year for archaeology at Newcastle! New people, new research projects, amazing students combined with dry and sunny fieldwork weather made it unforgettable.

Welcome to the 2018/19 Newsletter! So much has happened in the last 12 months that it’s been difficult to summarize it all in one document. I can only hope the following does justice to everyone’s activities. We have pages devoted to student activities within and outside of the school, to the launch of new research projects, and everything that is new and exciting in Archaeology at Newcastle.

The department grew significantly as we welcomed many new staff members and we look forward to their contributions to our community and the suite of new modules they will lead. This momentum is bound to continue into next year as we launch our new BSc Archaeology programme, develop new laboratory spaces dedicated to geoarchaeology, expand paleobotany and zooarchaeology teaching collections, and acquire the latest equipment for lab and fieldwork. What’s more, we’ve just been named one of the top 5 archaeology departments in the country by The Guardian. I can’t wait to see what next year brings!

Eric Tourigny, Newsletter Editor
Dr John Blong

An environmental archaeologist with a background in geoarchaeology, paleoecology, lithic technology and paleoethnobotany. John joins the Paisley Caves project looking at initial human settlements of North America and human responses to environmental change.

Dr Rob Collins

Already familiar to many here, Rob joins us in a new role as Lecturer in Material Culture. He is interested in landscapes and artefacts of Roman Frontiers, currently focusing on Hadrian’s Wall and the changing material culture of frontiers in the late Roman Empire.

Dr Chantal Conneller

Chantal joins us as Senior Lecturer in Archaeology, specialising in the European Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic. She is particularly interested in studying technology and materials, mortuary practices and human-animal relationships.

Dr Ashley Coutu

Ashley is Lecturer in Medieval and Historical Archaeology, specialising in biomolecular methods like stable isotope analysis to understand material culture. She conducts fieldwork in eastern and southern Africa.

Dr Maria Duggan

After completing her PhD with us, Maria returns as a British Academy postdoctoral Fellow. Maria is a specialist in Roman and Byzantine ceramics and is interested in Late Antiquity trade and early medieval western Britain.

Dr Mihail Mitrea

Native of Romania, Mihail joins us as a Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellow working on a project titled “Sacred Landscapes in Late Byzantium”. This is an interdisciplinary project looking at late Byzantine hagiographical compositions.

Dr Eric Tourigny

Eric joins us from Canada as Lecturer in Historical Archaeology. He uses animal bones to investigate how people interacted with animals in the past. His interests include pet-keeping in Victorian Britain and colonial foodways in North America.
The first stage of a Heritage Lottery funded (HLF) project began this year allowing Rob Collins and Sam Turner to put together a team looking at and evaluating heritage at risk along the Hadrian’s Wall UNESCO Site. The project will also look at stone sourcing and dispersal by examining remains of the Wall to better understand where the stone was first quarried, and how it was later used by examining castles, churches, farms and other more recent structures that recycled the Wall’s fabric. Working with volunteers and communities, the project will research, assess, and address factors that impact on the deterioration and survival of the site. The project will engage visitors and residents while allowing us to better understand Hadrian’s Wall in its ancient landscape and its role in the communities that have lived alongside it. The year finished with the project team submitting its application for the second stage of funding to allow them to deliver the project over the next three years (2018-2021), providing hundreds of opportunities for volunteers to be involved!

New staff associated with project

Dr Nicky Garland

Nicky joins us as Project Support Officer. He previously completed his PhD on Territorial Oppida in Iron Age and Roman Britain, focusing on multi-scale analysis of complex settlements to better understand their function.

Kerry Shaw

Kerry is the Volunteer Co-ordinator and Community Liaison Officer for the Project. A native of the North East, she has developed community projects along the Wall for the past 10 years and is passionate about helping others get involved with the World Heritage Site on our doorstep.
The museum has been transformed in 2018 as part of the Great Exhibition of the North, with archaeology galleries dramatically remodelled to accommodate the important loans that have come in for the museum’s ‘Which Way North’ exhibition. The biggest changes have occurred in the Hadrian’s Wall Gallery where the model of the wall was temporarily covered over to create a massive display plinth for diverse objects including the space suit of the first British astronaut, Helen Sharman.

As part of the exhibit, the museum has on display Henry Moore’s darkly atmospheric prints of Stonehenge. These have been a welcome addition to our Ice Age to Iron Age prehistory gallery.

Earlier this year, we hosted a small exhibition in collaboration with the School of architecture, planning and landscapes. Entitled ‘Living Bricks’, it gave us the opportunity to showcase a number of innovative bricks developed by the School’s experimental architecture group, but it also provided a chance to display some of the important bricks from the archaeology collections, including Babylonian (pictured) and Roman bricks, and recent examples from colliery brickworks in the North East.
The archaeology team is also kept busy supporting a number of projects, working on future exhibitions and supporting research visits. One key project was the creation of a community curriculum on Ancient Greece and involved collaboration with staff and students from the School of History, Classics and Archaeology and Belsay School in Northumberland. The idea was to develop a curriculum that takes advantage of local resources, in this case the museum’s Shefton Collection of Greek Archaeology. We produced a range of teaching resources and trialled these with the children at Belsay School. The participating children especially enjoyed creating artworks that were directly inspired by Greek objects from the museum. The children’s artworks, alongside Greek material from the museum, will form the basis of an exhibition at Belsay Hall, opening in September 2018.

We hosted many research visits over the course of the year, making extensive use of archaeology and ethnographic collections. One of the most memorable was Dr Irene Hundleby from Otago University in New Zealand who was visiting museums in the UK to record Maori instruments. She documented our various Maori flutes as well as a trumpet and gave us an impromptu demonstration of a small Maori flute (nguru) that she had brought with her.
Project launched on April 19th, 2018, using the archaeological remains from two houses in Pompeii and Herculaneum to create a new dialogue between contemporary art and archaeological remains. The project explores the relevance of Roman Wall paintings and artefacts for today’s fine art practice and tests how artists can respond to the histories and complex nature of important archaeological sites within a contemporary context.

The project is led by Catrin Huber (Fine Arts) in partnership with Archaeology’s Professor Ian Haynes, Dr Thea Ravasi and Alex Turner. Site-specific installations are on show in Herculaneum’s House of the Beautiful Courtyard and Pompeii’s House of the Cryptoporticus until January 2019.

Images courtesy of Expanded Interiors.
New Research Group on Experimental Archaeology!

New postgraduate-led research group **EXARN** aims to bring together Experimental Archaeology researchers and encourage, aid and inform both students and researchers interested in the topic. Plans are already underway for a conference to be hosted at Newcastle on the 27th and 28th of October, 2018.

Between the 17th and 27th of July, undergraduate and postgraduate students were at Jarrow Hall Anglo-Saxon Farm, Village and Bede Museum to recreate ancient copper production using only techniques and equipment available at that time (pictures). There will be further opportunities for students to take part in similar experiments!

*Pictured: Clay crucibles and nozzles were used in smelting processes (left). Picking out slag fragments from crucible (right).*
This year’s field schools took place close to home in Northumberland and far away in Italy, Spain and the Isle of Man. Here are pics of students discovering the past.

**Field Schools**

Students investigate the remains of a 14th to 16th century mill located on the grounds of Wallington Hall, a country house and National Trust property. (Photo credits to Nicky Garland)

**Below:** Students excavate an area around a surviving mill-stone.

**To the right:** A section reveals the buffeted walls of the old mill race where water travelled from the mill, back towards the river.

**Above:** Students conduct geophysical survey of the Wallington grounds in order to identify archaeological features before conducting excavations.
In June and July, 2018, students were on the Isle of Man investigating Neolithic and Bronze Age mortuary practices (c. 4000 to 1500 BC). The weather was hot and dry and the site productive. The team’s finds were exceptional including different types of pottery, complete stone tools and a large number of cremation burials within inverted urns. The remains were carefully excavated and will provide valuable information about life on the island and interactions with other communities across Britain and Ireland.

Above: Undergraduate student Amy holds up her find of a complete arrowhead (close up in inset).

To the left: The round barrow under excavation. All photo credits to Rachel Crellin.

Above Left: Students record locations of finds.

Above right: A cordoned urn burial excavated by students.
This summer, Newcastle University students continued to explore the multi-stratified prehistoric site of Case Bastione in central Sicily. The site’s occupation spans from the Late Neolithic to the Middle Bronze Age (approx. 4th to 2nd millennium BC).

Research is currently focused on reconstructing the natural environment surrounding the village and the investigation of numerous clay-lined pits unearthed from Late Copper Age horizons. These closely resemble copper smelting installations but chemical analyses suggest other uses.

Top: Ongoing excavations on site.

Middle: Group photo (note addition of shade over excavation area!).

Bottom right: Students wash the many finds they’ve uncovered (also done in the shade!).

Photo credits: Marco Romeo Pitone
In summer of 2017, Students from Newcastle and the University of Granada followed Chloe Duckworth for a three-week field season at the medieval site of Alhambra (a UNESCO World Heritage Site). They worked with British and Spanish professional archaeologists to uncover the furnaces and workshops that served the world famous palaces of the Alhambra.

Students learnt the basics of archaeological excavations, were taught about modern techniques, including chemical analysis with handheld X-Ray “guns” and the use of photogrammetry to recreate spaces in three dimensions.

They also gained valuable experience of engaging with the public. An estimated 20,000 people pass through the site daily and this engagement formed a crucial part of their work.

The team took a break in summer of 2018, but plan to be back in the field soon.
Archaeology will receive new lab space for sediment micromorphology. New equipment will allow us to produce thin sections of lithics, ceramics and bone to examine under the microscope. The new space should open in the autumn of 2018.

Sediment micromorphology has become an increasingly important tool in geoarchaeology, but there are few places that offer training in slide production and analysis. We are in the process of setting up a new Masters module that will include both, to offer this as an external CPD course as well as using to train our postgraduate students.
Mareike Ahlers tells us about her recently completed PhD, the future, and her time at Newcastle.

My research looked into early Neolithic mortuary structures in Britain, Denmark and northern Germany, assessing similarities and differences as well as their social implications on Early Neolithic communities. While there are strong typological similarities in long-barrow architecture across North-West Europe, the underlying structures can be very different. Some structures found in Denmark and Britain are so similar that a close connection between the two regions could be proposed, yet looking at the actual treatment of the dead within these structures suggests otherwise. While single burials in individual structures emphasise a funerary tradition focused on individuals in Denmark, British sites show collective burials. Influences from mainland Europe seem to have impacted the British landscape to a greater extent, reflecting an earlier emergence of megalithic tomb structures, while earlier Northern Denmark sites reflect local burial traditions carrying on from the later Mesolithic. Either way, monumental places like those long barrows (as well as Neolithic round barrows) were not only places of burial but also for memory and gathering in Early Neolithic communities. They were communally built locations where memories were made and remembered, and where social structures were renegotiated.

My research was supervised by Dr Chris Fowler, one of the leading archaeologists in my field. Coming from a small archaeological department in Germany, I was impressed by the range of opportunities given to postgraduates at Newcastle. Of course, it also helped to receive a fully funded scholarship through the Northern Bridge Doctoral Training Partnership and Newcastle University. I specifically enjoyed the collegial environment, PhD students were always welcome to research seminars or extracurricular activities and our opinions on matters regarding the department were always heard and valued. The support I experienced from the school, fellow PhD students and staff was outstanding.

I am currently applying for Post-doc research positions across the UK, and I am also looking into a career as a Heritage Consultant in industry. Throughout the final stages of my PhD, I worked part-time as a site assistant and as an Assistant Heritage Consultant with a small local archaeology consultancy.

I would advise anyone joining this department to get involved in things. Research seminars are a great opportunity not only to keep up to date with current research, but also to meet and mingle with colleagues and guests either in the pub or over dinner. School events are always fun (not to mention the free wine) and are also important to network within the department, and who knows, maybe some interdisciplinary projects will come from these new relationships.

-Mareike Ahlers, PhD
“The winter trip to Rome was not only going to be my first time in Rome, but also my first time in Italy and mainland Europe. Everyone was expected to present on a monument of their choosing, and mine was The Arch of Constantine, which leads me to share my main take-away from the experience. I was absolutely in awe of the triumphal monuments – The Arches of Severus, Constantine, and Titus, as well as the Columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius. I’ve always had a “top-down” perspective on the past, and seeing how the Emperors chose to portray themselves to the public captivated me. I had been fascinated with the Romans long before the trip, and my first time there was of special significance to me personally. The combination of the sheer historical significance of Rome, the camaraderie between my colleagues, and the leadership of the trip’s director made for an experience I will never forget.” - Rafael Socarras

“Over the summer break, I undertook a placement at Pre-Construct Archaeology, working alongside Roman pottery specialist, Eniko Hudak. This was an excellent opportunity to gain experience in recognising, quantifying and cataloguing pottery assemblages.

I assisted with finds processing, identified pottery from a Roman site in London, and recorded and quantified sherds using appropriate methods. With Eniko’s skilled guidance and encouragement, I became confident in identifying the various pottery fabrics and vessel forms, whilst also gaining knowledge of the Roman pottery industry in Britain and across the Empire.

I analysed the data to produce a report. I was able to interpret and use the pottery to date phases of the site; show how the pottery was used and deposited; explain trade and contact with other sites; and suggest status and fashion choices of those who owned and used the objects.

I thoroughly enjoyed the placement and gained invaluable knowledge and experience that will help further my studies and career.” - Katie Mountain
MA students joined Ian Haynes and a team of seasoned archaeological geophysicists from Newcastle and Cluj as part of ongoing work on the Apulum Hinterland Project. The Project seeks to understand the impact that Rome’s largest conurbation north of the Danube had upon the local landscape and has so far investigated a range of sites. This season’s work focussed on a further phase of magnetometry and resistivity and included work at a site unknown before the Project was launched. Conditions were often difficult and a freak snowfall made resistivity work especially challenging (as Visiting Researcher Jon Allison and MLitt student Douglas Carr are discovering in the upper picture). While preparing for the survey, MA student Wyatt Rowe came across a stamped tile produced by the *Legio X Gemina*. The distribution of legionary tile across this part of Transylvania is a notable and distinctive feature of the archaeological landscape.
The Archaeology Society kicked off the year with our ever-popular Family social, which is always a great way for all the year groups to get to know each other. There were some insightful guest lectures given by Andy Bates and PhD student Amber Roy on experimental archaeology and Early Bronze Age stone tools. We finished up Semester One with a fantastic night at the Great North Museum with live music, a quest to find hidden treasures around the Museum’s exhibition rooms and of course, plenty of free refreshments!

Semester two saw some of our new events, such as ‘ArcSoc Challenge’, where teams from each year group went head to head in a University Challenge style quiz. We hosted an Alternative Careers event which was a success, with some Newcastle Alumni coming back to discuss their career trajectory after graduating. During the Easter break, the society visited Prague, seeing sights like the National Gallery, the grand Palace and the stunning Cathedral. As well as this there were, of course, plenty of visits to historic pubs and bars around the city. We ended the year on a high with our annual end of year Ball. It’s always great to see how well archaeologists can scrub up when we’re not in the trench!

Watch this space for what ArcSoc will be getting up to next year. We’re sure to have another fantastic year!

Ellen Wiltshire, President.
I studied BA (Hons) Ancient History and Archaeology and MLitt Archaeology at Newcastle University, graduating in 2013. I became interested in Roman pottery during the second year of my undergraduate studies and focused both my undergraduate and postgraduate research on Romano-British ceramics, especially mortaria, under the guidance and support of Dr James Gerrard, Dr Kevin Greene, and Dr Mark Jackson.

My undergraduate dissertation was submitted to the John Gillam Prize of the Study Group for Roman Pottery, and I received a Postgraduate Excellence Scholarship from the School of History, Classics and Archaeology. Soon after graduating I joined the Romano-British Ceramics project run jointly by Newcastle University, the Cluster for Interdisciplinary Artefact Studies, and Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA) as a Research Technician, where I first started to work with larger assemblages of Roman pottery from a range of sites around London excavated by PCA.

After the project ended, I joined Historic Royal Palaces at Hampton Court Palace as an Assistant Cataloguer and helped to complete the first full inventory of their archaeological and architectural collections. In 2015, I re-joined PCA as a Roman Pottery specialist and have been working there since. Now, I work for all of our offices and get Roman pottery assemblages from all over the country, from Winchester to Durham. I work with wonderful artefacts and I really enjoy doing exactly what I studied for. My job is not only about cataloguing pottery, but also includes plenty of research and publication opportunities, presenting at conferences, creating and delivering training workshops for our field staff, volunteers, and various community archaeology groups, and promoting finds studies to the wider community on social media.
Two Newcastle University projects are recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Archaeological fieldwork at a 10th-century city in Spain, led by Dr Chloe Duckworth, has contributed to its listing as a UNESCO World Heritage site. The site of Medina Azahara is one of the most famous monuments of Muslim-ruled Spain, and was built to be the centre of a new, Spanish caliphate in the 10th century AD. The palaces and government buildings were excavated in the early 20th century, but until recently, almost no work has been done on the associated caliphal city.

Chloe and her team have been non-destructively mapping the city, using geophysics and a pioneering technique of in situ chemical analysis, that reveals pollution patterns associated with important industrial activities at the site. This research has been central to the successful inscription of the site on the World Heritage list, as it is the only project to foreground the city itself, and the lives of its ordinary inhabitants. The work has also been praised for using the site's excellent state of preservation as a unique testing ground for the development of new archaeological field methodologies.

The team includes members from Newcastle and Bournemouth Universities in the UK, and the University of Cordoba, in Spain. Work will resume in January 2019.

Newcastle University’s Gertrude Bell Archive has been recognised by UNESCO as a collection of global significance. Nominated by Dr Mark Jackson and Ian Johnson, the unique record of around 10,000 objects, including letters, diaries, and photographs by explorer and archaeologist Gertrude Bell, dating from 1871 to 1926, is one of only a handful of UK archives inscribed into the International Memory of the World Register.

Bell travelled globally as an archaeologist, explorer and diplomat. The archive includes a unique record of people and places in the Middle East during the transition from the Ottoman empire to the establishment of the modern states after World War I. The photographs preserve a precious record of communities and cultural contexts many of which have changed dramatically over the past century. Visit: https://bit.ly/2PyarsL
Current and former students and staff help promote archaeology to the next generation!

The Young Archaeologists’ Club (http://www.yac-uk.org/) is a national organisation co-ordinated by the Council for British Archaeology. There are branches all around the country, all run by teams of volunteers. Two of those branches are based here at the University: one for children aged 8-14, and the other for the 14-18 age group. Several of our current students were former YAC members! YAC meets once a month, for a varied programme of activities. The little kids (led by Rob Young, former student Hannah Flint and two of this year’s graduates, Dean Stamp and Eleanor Harrison) really enjoyed building UNESCO World Heritage sites from Lego, investigating human remains in the Wolfson Lab and visiting the Roman Army Museum at Carvoran.

The older group (led by Jane Webster, James Gerrard and another former student, Tori Park) enjoyed sessions on glass from the past, Stonehenge and Gertrude Bell with Chloe Duckworth, Chris Fowler, and Mark Jackson; and were introduced to the Portable Antiquities Scheme by Andy Agate. Professor Turner sacrificed some of his lawn to allow both branches to experience a mini dig in June (thanks Sam!) and we’ve also recorded the graveyard at Alnham church. We are always looking for student volunteers, and for those intending to go on to a career in teaching or in public heritage, YAC is a great place to gain some voluntary experience. Contact Jane Webster (jane.webster@ncl.ac.uk) if you want to find out more.
**Congratulations to All**

**Our Graduates!!!**

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**Award Winners**

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<tr>
<th>Award Name</th>
<th>Winner</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gladys Bettess Prize</td>
<td>Eleanor Harrison</td>
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<td>(Best undergraduate degree result—BA Hons Archaeology)</td>
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<td>Richmond Prize</td>
<td>Daniel Cockling</td>
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<td>(Best performance in Stage 2)</td>
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<td>RM Harrison Prize</td>
<td>Robert Sinclair</td>
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<td>(Highest dissertation mark)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ray Field Award for Prehistory</td>
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<td>(Exceptional achievement in prehistoric archaeology)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gertrude Bell Prize</td>
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<td>Fred Bettess Prize</td>
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