

## Archaeology Newsletter

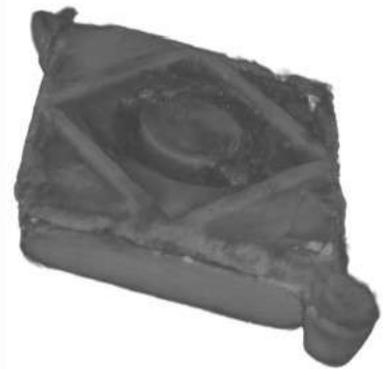
# The Screen and Trowel

September 2021

Covering the past two years of life in the Newcastle Archaeology community: **September 2019 to September 2021.**

### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

- Hadrian's Wall Community Archaeology
- The earliest evidence for art in Britain
- Beneath the streets of Rome
- Student fieldwork projects
- What's new at the museum
- Chloë's on TV!
- Early human settlements in North America
- And much more!



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# Community Archaeology on Hadrian's Wall

The Hadrian's Wall Community Archaeology Project (WallCAP) continued to work through the pandemic, and commenced fieldwork following the relaxation of restrictions.

In March 2020, the project flipped to a predominantly digital offer in a bid to keep their 350 volunteers engaged, motivated and active over the course of the lockdowns and subsequent uncertainty. Activities included an online public conference, a social media photo campaign, launching a monthly online series of public talks, delivering online volunteer training on both the Heritage at Risk and Stone Sourcing and Dispersal strands of the project and supporting volunteering from home to research the features of Hadrian's Wall (e.g., turrets, milecastles etc...) to populate the first ever Geographic Information System (GIS) map for the site.

Eager to get their hands dirty again, fieldwork commenced as soon as restrictions eased at Cambeck in Cumbria where the team (including volunteers, yippee!) revisited a 2019 excavation to try and identify the exact location of the river crossing of Hadrian's Wall.





Over summer, the team returned to the Corbridge Playing fields (following the 2019 dig). This time looking for the northern fringes of the Roman town. They discovered that there was complex sequencing of archaeological layers indicating that the town was both active and quite large for a long period of time, across the second and third centuries. One of the trenches showed evidence of industrial buildings/workshops and the other trench showed several phases of a Roman street with different periods of buildings along it.



The [WallCAP website](#) and [Volunteer Portal](#) are key places to go to for more info on the project. Volunteers contributed to excavation, finds washing, surveying historical buildings, database testing, understanding the geology of the Hadrian's Wall corridor and investigating where all the stones have gone from the Wall. All training given and no previous experience necessary. There's something for everyone!



If you'd like to know more then please visit the website or contact Kerry Shaw, Volunteer Co-ordinator and Community Liaison Officer for WallCAP: [kerry.shaw@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:kerry.shaw@newcastle.ac.uk)

# Project launch: TerraSage

AHRC-funded project to look at Terraces as Sustainable Agricultural Environments



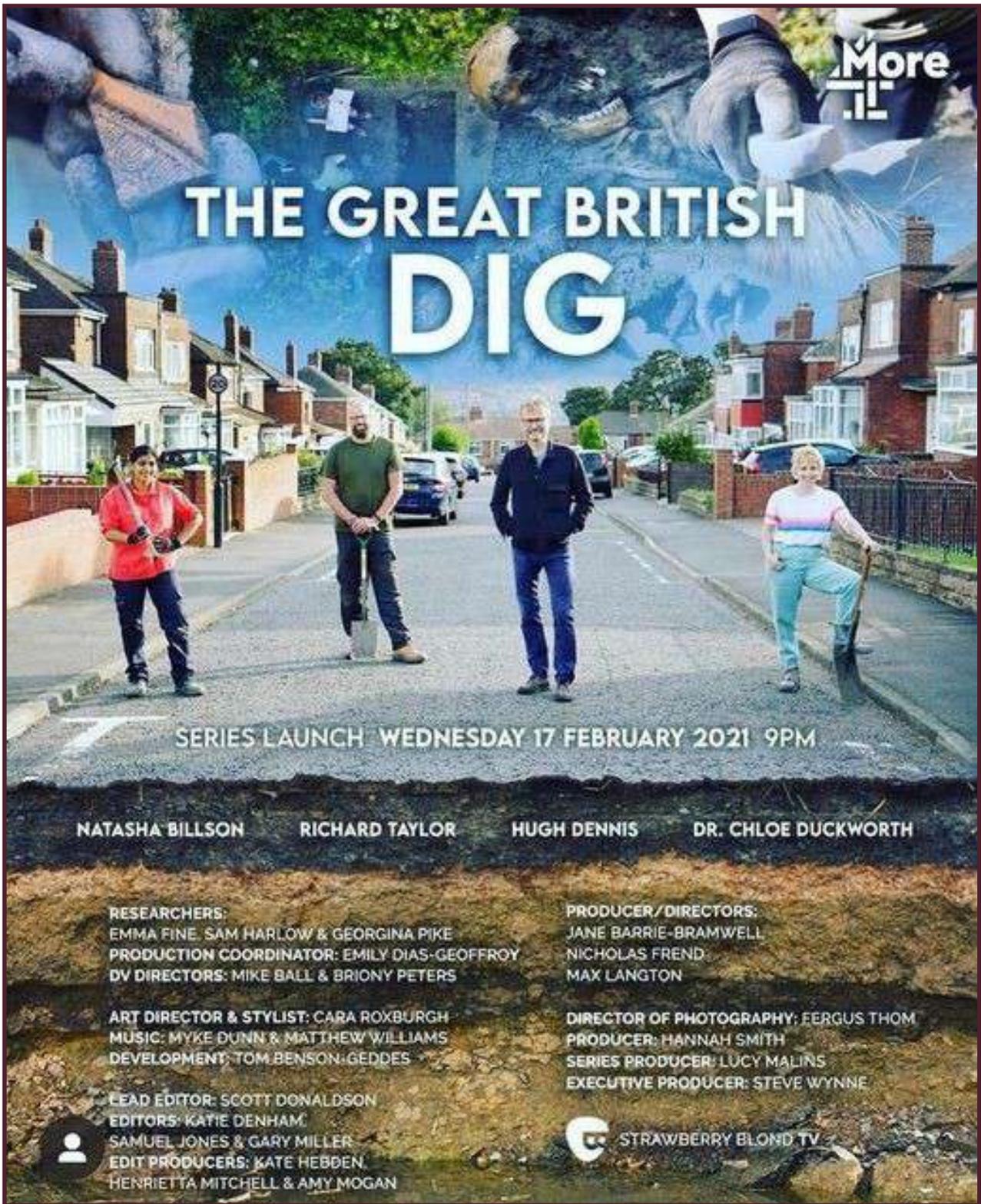
New project led by Sam Turner and Lisa-Marie Shillito, in collaboration with partners at the University of St. Andrews and the Universidad de Granada, will investigate the history of agricultural terraces, a ubiquitous landscape present throughout the world that is important for the production of food and management of water resources, yet woefully understudied.

Team members will employ a new technique for dating terraces alongside geoarchaeological analyses and broader landscape surveys to revolutionise our understanding of past terrace systems and reveal the societal, economic and environmental strategies that underpin their construction, evolution and abandonment.



Terraces are prominent features in agricultural landscapes across the world and several terraced landscapes are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. This project will investigate case studies from around the world and involve: 1. the characterisation of sedimentary sequences through optically-stimulated luminescence (OSL) equipment; 2. studies in sediment micromorphology via portable X Ray fluorescence, microfaunal and organic bio-marker analyses; and 3. Landscape analyses and modelling using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) methods developed by team members. We can't wait to hear about project results!





# THE GREAT BRITISH DIG

SERIES LAUNCH WEDNESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2021 9PM

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HUGH DENNIS

DR. CHLOE DUCKWORTH

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STRAWBERRY BLOND TV

This year marked the exciting launch of **The Great British Dig** television series featuring our very own Dr Chloe Duckworth! The series launched to much critical acclaim (we were the critics, we think its good). Featuring the archaeology of back gardens throughout the UK., the series features digs in Nottingham, North Yorkshire, Kent, South Shields, and, of course, Newcastle. We were thrilled to see so many familiar faces on our screen including some of our current and former students. The programme was so popular, that it was renewed for a second series, currently being filmed!

# Rome Transformed

A year in the life of our European Research Council-funded project investigating the urban development of Rome



Whether operating metres beneath the streets of Rome, or piloting drones high above its famous skyline, members of the team all share one goal, to understand the evolution of the city over eight crucial centuries of its development. To address the big questions, to explore how changing ideas about politics, religion, and security, were shaped in Rome and the wider Mediterranean world, it is vital to master the detail. Underpinning our inter-disciplinary project is a robust programme of archaeological exploration covering the story of the city from the Rome of Augustus to the time of Charlemagne.

The sheer scale of surviving evidence in the eastern Caelian, the focus of our research, takes quite some getting used to. Indeed, all the team members are continually impressed by the size and complexity of the remains. In places the ancient streets and buildings lie over 10 metres below the modern ground surface. Sometimes we can get to these through tunnels and passageways, sometimes we can only get a glimpse of the buried structures through geophysics. In other areas, buildings of equal interest to us, such as the city walls, the great aqueducts, and two giant basilicas tower over today's cityscape. Whenever we can access the exposed remains of buildings, whether above or below ground, we record it using a combination of laser scanning and drone footage, while undertaking detailed structural analysis of its phasing and function.



Above: Scanning the Claudio-Neronian aqueduct (Haynes); Below: Exploring the late Antique Baptistry of the Basilica of the Holy Cross (Ravasi).



Working with many fantastic partners, we have undertaken a broad array of studies this year. Integral to our research is the largest geophysical survey ever undertaken in the City. We use ground penetrating radar (GPR) extensively, while targeting other areas with electrical resistivity tomography (ERT). Much of this work has now been completed, despite COVID, but as you can imagine given that some of it incorporated stretches of the city's busiest roads, while other elements took place across an array of historic sites and public parks, it has been intensely complicated to organise and undertake.



Left: Documenting part of the so-called House of Aufidia Valentilla (Haynes); Right: Analysing remains of the Varian Circus (Haynes).

This September we were at last able to bring our bigger teams to Rome to continue with the programme of structural analysis. It was a very busy time, but together colleagues managed to record the remains of the one of Rome's best-preserved amphitheatres, the remains of the largest chariot racing circus in the world (which was the Varian Circus by the way, not the Circus Maximus), areas of palatial housing and the Basilica of the Holy Cross, a church of extraordinary historical importance, constructed partly out of the halls of an imperial palace. In the process we made an array of discoveries, from previously unrecorded graffiti at the circus, to traces of the original colour scheme at the amphitheatre.



Left: Ground Penetrating Radar survey of in front of the Lateran Basilica; and (right), over the streets of Rome! (Photos by Haynes).

# Research Recognition

Two(!) Newcastle Archaeology projects receive  
Current Archaeology Awards in 2020

A Newcastle University project recording recently discovered Roman graffiti exposed on a cliff side (pictured below) won for **Rescue Project of the Year**. A project run jointly with the Universities of York and Chester earned the award for **Research Project of the Year**! That project is titled 'Life beside the Lake: opening a new window on the Mesolithic in Star Carr' and featured the excavation of one of Britain's most well-preserved Mesolithic site, revealing it was occupied for longer, and by a more sophisticated culture than was previously thought.

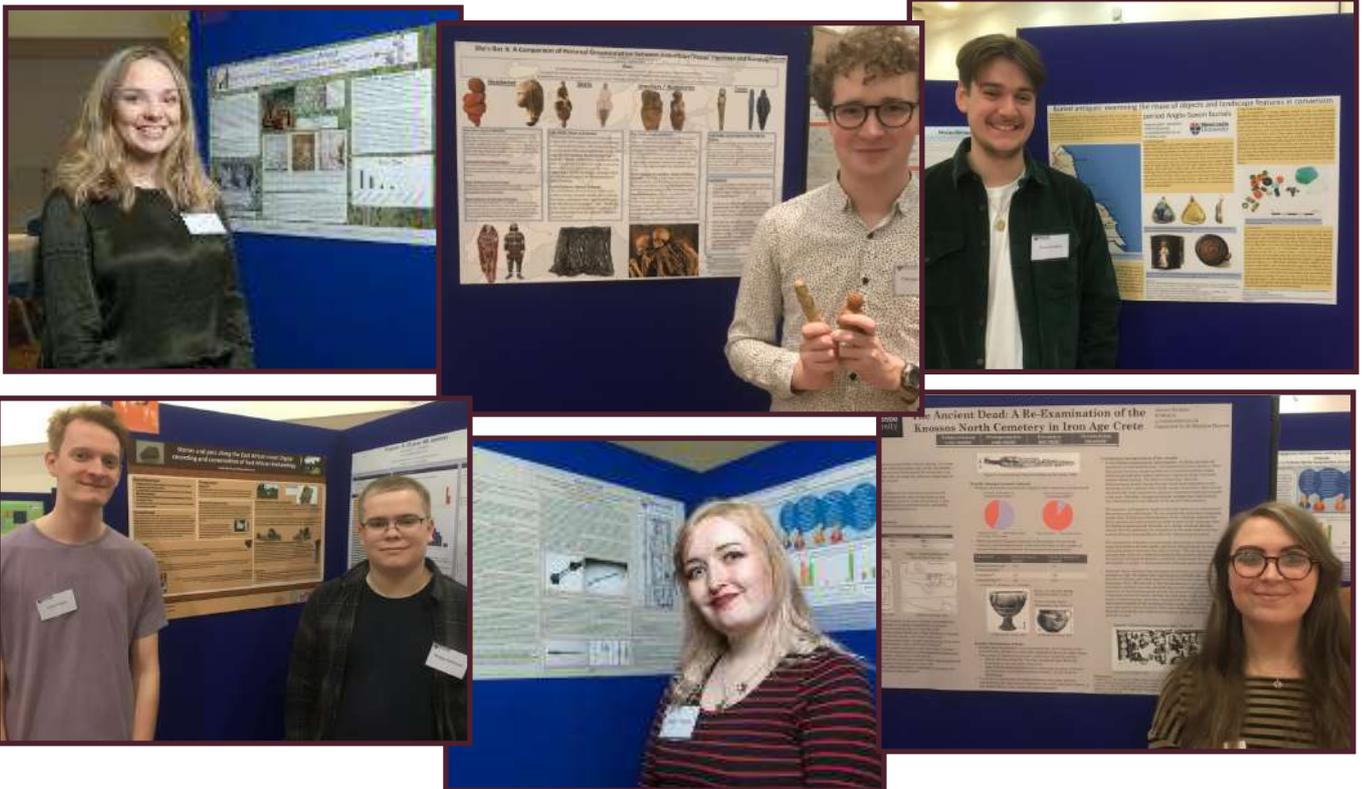


Dr Sally Waite received the **Catherine Cookson Award** for her project 'Corporeal Pedagogies: Using the Shefton Collection for Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching'. This is a student-centred, interdisciplinary project involving our school, Fine Art, the Faculty of Medical Science, and the Great North Museum. It aims to investigate the value of haptic methods in promoting student learning. It proposes an experimental and experiential pedagogical approach, exploring ancient and contemporary notions of corporeality and embodiment in art, archaeology, and medicine, through a series of collaborative student workshops using the Shefton Collection of Greek Archaeology held at the Great North Museum (GNM). Pictured here is Sally working with students at the GNM.



# Scholarship Winners

Year 2 undergraduate students applied for funding to support their own research projects to conduct over the summer months. In 2019, seven of our students won the scholarship! Funding was provided by Newcastle University.



## Research Projects

**Jenny Banton**—Feminising the Orient: The Use of Chinese Wallpaper in 18th- and 19th-Century English Country Houses

**George Blackwell**—She's got it: A comparison of personal ornamentation between Gravettian 'Venus' Figurines and Burials.

**Rowan English**—Buried antiques: examining the reuse of objects and landscape features in Anglo-Saxon conversion period burials

**Jacob Marvin and Philipp Rethwisch**—Stones and pots along the East African coast: Digital recording and conservation of East African Archaeology

**Bethany Milburn** —Bound to the staff: An investigation of seiðr and Viking "witches" in the archaeological record of early medieval Scandinavia

**Jessica Watkins**—The Ancient Dead: A re-examination of the Knossos North Cemetery in Iron Age Crete.

# Hadrian's Wall Fieldschool

The summer of 2021 marked the first season of our fieldschool on the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site. The occasion also marked the first opportunity we got to meet with our students in person following the pandemic's lockdowns. What a great way to get to know new students and welcome back returning ones. The weather was great too!

Thanks largely to geophysical surveys conducted at Birdoswald fort on Hadrian's Wall in the 1990s, we knew that many buildings lay beyond the walls. We wanted to learn more about the lives of people who used these buildings. We also wanted to know about how Hadrian's Wall itself functioned, so our students opened up trenches in both the settled area and the space between Hadrian's Wall and its outer ditch.

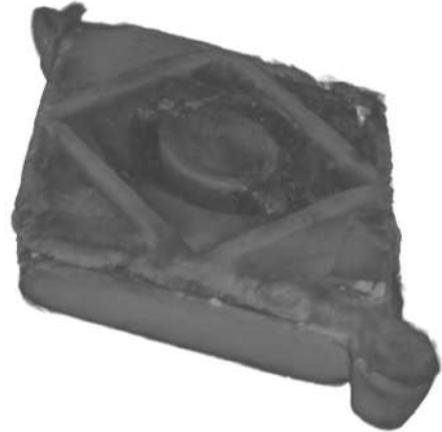


To deliver the very best training for students, the project was run as a unique collaboration with Historic England's Archaeological Projects Team and further facilitated by English Heritage, the organisation that oversees care of the Birdoswald site. Not only did the project prove to be a great learning opportunity for all, but it also delivered some fantastic results. Substantial structures were identified, providing evidence of Roman and post-Roman use of the site, raising interesting questions about the longer-term history of the site too.

Images: (Top) Newcastle Archaeology students next to one of the season's three trenches on the final day of excavations. (Left) remains of a monumental rectangular building discovered by the team.



A number of finds were also discovered over the course of the excavations. Including two small Roman altars and a Roman seal box. The later was scanned with our Micro-CT, penetrating the dirt and corrosion to reveal the intricate pattern of decorations that adorned the surface (photo below).



The next few years of student excavations will help address the questions regarding what exactly these buildings were used for during the Roman and later occupations with a focus on the more 'ordinary' houses within the extra-mural settlement. One thing is for certain, we look forward to getting the opportunity to train the next generation of archaeologists at this fantastic site!

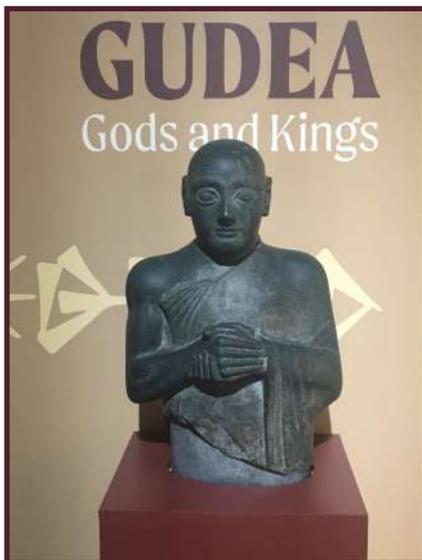


Above left: Newcastle university students showing off their finds including a very large fragment of amphora and a ceramic tile fragment with an animal paw print. Bottom: Students excavating Roman buildings in the extra-mural area of the Birdoswald fort.

# New at the Museum

## Andy Parkin reports this year's activities at the Great North Museum: Hancock

The past year was a challenging one for the Great North Museum. Covid impacted so many of our plans and we spent a significant amount of time closed to the public. A major disappointment was the fact that our exhibition '*Ancient Iraq: New Discoveries*' was open to the public for less than a week before the museum had to close. This exhibition highlighted some of the spectacular Iraqi archaeology from the collections of the British Museum. It displayed Summerian material, including cuneiform writing tablets, from some of the first cities anywhere in the world. It also focused on the Roman Empire's eastern frontier and Rome's confrontation with the powerful Parthian Empire.



Left: A statue of the Summerian King Gudea , part of the 'Ancient Iraq: New Discoveries' exhibit. Right: Details from an online tour of the exhibition created to allow virtual access during the pandemic

The pandemic forced the museum to think differently about how it reached its audiences and we developed a number of on-line resources and virtual tours to allow people to access exhibitions and collections remotely. We created a virtual tour for 'Ancient Iraq: New Discoveries' to allow visitors to experience this exhibition in a virtual form (<https://bit.ly/3Dx20Xy>). In addition our Assistant Keeper of Archaeology's work on our North American collections, which had been funded by the Headley Trust, was showcased in an on-line exhibition called 'Creative Power' (<https://www.creativepower-gnm.org.uk/>).



Left: Image of Belsay Hall, located in nearby Northumberland and focus of the 'Greece Recreated' exhibit. Right: Elements of the Shefton Collection on display at the Great North Museum.

Archaeology staff from the museum were also involved in the development of two online exhibitions. 'Greece Recreated' (<https://greece-recreated.com/>) explored the ways in which the legacy of Ancient Greece impacted on the 19th-century hall and landscape at Belsay in Northumberland. 'Stories from the Archive' (<https://www.storiesfromthearchive.org/>) opened up a small fraction of Professor Brian Shefton's extensive archive to shed light on the stories behind some of the objects now on display in the museum's Shefton Gallery of Greek Archaeology. Both these online exhibitions showcased the work of staff and students from HCA, including Dr Susanna Phillippo, Dr Sally Waite and PhD student Daisy-Alys Vaughan.

Lockdown provided an opportunity for the museum to progress the work it had already started around decolonisation. A number of new policies, such as a repatriation policy, were instigated and curatorial staff began to think about how the museum might develop a decolonisation programme. This included writing blogs to inform our audience of the work we are doing (<https://bit.ly/3oVdDnn>).



World Cultures exhibit at the Great North Museum.

The museum also welcomed a number of archaeology students for their fieldwork placements. They experienced a variety of different museum jobs, including archival work and gallery maintenance. They were also involved in the preparation and delivery of events the museum organised for the Festival of British Archaeology. This is the first time we took on several students for placement but it is certainly something we would like to build on and offer fieldwork opportunities in the future.

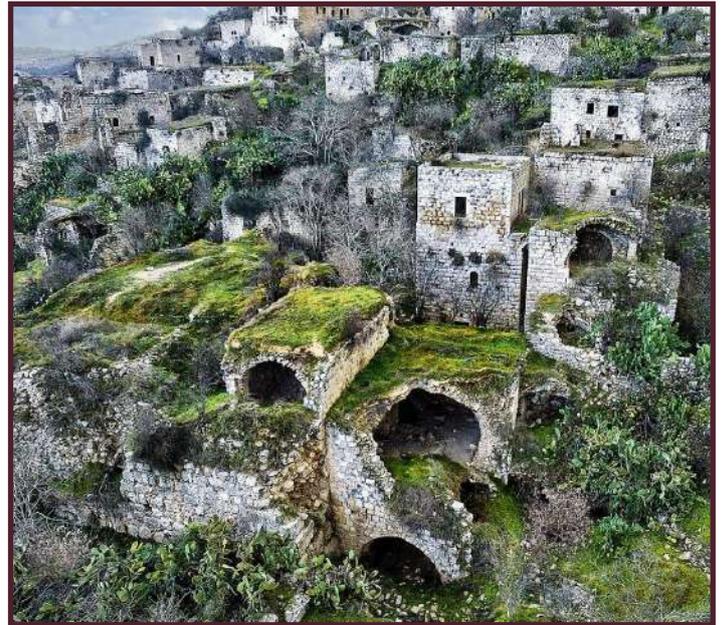


## Archaeology @Newcastle forms part of unique, international graduate school, training students on cultural heritage in relation to spatial planning and design

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Funded by the EU's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, the HERILAND project brings together researchers from six institutions with an aim to empower a new generation to devise and guide trans-disciplinary, cross-sectoral and mainstream planning and design strategies for regenerating European heritage and landscape, fostering social inclusiveness, and creating socially, economically and sustainable future landscapes.

At Newcastle, the project is led by our school's Graham Fairclough and Sam Turner as well as John Pendlebury and Maggie Roe from the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscapes.



Heritage is now commonly approached through the lens of landscapes, perceived as spatial and temporal palimpsests of memories and meanings, socially constituted and continuously redefined and co-designed. In the planning of these landscapes for the future, those palimpsests are often considered building blocks and sources of inspiration, with which to guarantee place making, community cohesion and economic exploitation, all vital elements in several UN Development Goals. However, spatially-based concepts, visions and regulations on the relationship between people and their living environment, heritage and space, still differ largely between academic disciplines, sectors or states; to serve a future generation of heritage planners, HERILAND will consider these issues thorough theoretical analysis as well as methodological and operational points of view. Attention is focused on the socio-political, economic and governance dimensions in perceiving and shaping the living environment and the roles attributed to heritage (tangible and intangible), with transnational, cross-cultural comparative research of heritage discourses, ethics, governance and practices.

# Welcome HERILAND colleagues!

**Farnaz Faraji**



Farnaz obtained a B.Sc. in Architecture from University of Tabriz and a Master's in Conservation and Revitalization of Historic Sites and Buildings-Urban Heritage Conservation from the University of Tehran. She has worked with NGOs as a research manager and Conservationist and participated in three studies ordered by the Municipality of Tehran. Her interests are in industrial heritage conservation, cultural landscape, heritage studies, and appliance of socio-technological tools for conservation of urban heritage. Her research focuses on Citizen Science and big data for collaborative, heritage- based planning of city development.

**Tina Meparishvili**



Born in Georgia, Tina completed her Bachelor in Architecture at the Academy of Arts in Tbilisi before moving to Germany for a Master of Arts in Heritage Conservation and Site Management at Brandenburg Technical University. Having worked in the field of Tourism, Heritage Conservation and Management, Tina is excited to have an opportunity to apply her knowledge and experience to fundamentally explore the challenges that mass tourism creates in the historic districts of Rome.

**Rusudan Mirzikashvili**



Rusudan studied Architecture at the Tbilisi State Academy of fine Arts, and received postgraduate degrees in Conservation of Monuments and Sites (University of Leuven) and in World Heritage Management (University College Dublin). Her research focuses on historical landscapes, community-led local development and participatory governance.

**Anna Tonk**



Anna obtained a BA from Utrecht University and was the first at Leiden University to complete a Double MA Degree in Critical Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe, graduating from the second MA (Korean Studies / International Studies) at Yonsei University where she studied the social aspects of a redevelopment process of a Seoul city neighbourhood, and wrote a critical thesis on political narratives in (ceramic) heritage museums. After briefly working in the heritage sector in The Netherlands, she joined fieldwork in a Portuguese mountain area in decline.



# Explore the Past with Us

Teaching and Learning Resources in History, Classics and Archaeology

## New teaching resource for primary and secondary schools

'Explore The Past With Us' is a fantastic new and **FREE** teaching and learning resource for young people, parents and teachers, produced by our team.

With many schools and colleges shut around the world due to the Coronavirus pandemic, this new website provides teachers and parents with a series of learning activities for children in various age groups, from primary school to those who are 16+. The website was created by our own Drs Jane Webster, Sally Waite and Thea Ravasi, and covers topics from prehistory and Ancient Greece to the study of World War 1 and the civil rights movement.

Take a look at the range of materials and share the link widely with educators:



## NUAct Fellow

### Dr Louise Rayne joins us through prestigious fellowship, investigating water management in the ancient Sahara

For my fellowship I'm researching water management in oases in the northern Sahara and investigating applicability to future sustainability. Oases face challenges from climate change and pressures on resources. Understanding how past irrigating societies dealt with problems such as scarce resources, drought, flooding and political change could inform future resilient practices, but unfortunately traditional water management is poorly understood, and traces of earlier canals are rapidly being destroyed by modern activities. I'm addressing this by using satellite data to map traces of water management features and their natural environments and will use fieldwork and archived data to understand chronology and capacity. I have been using open-source satellite imagery to map natural hydrological resources in Morocco, particularly focusing on the valley of the Draa river.



# Congrats to our newest PhDs!

Dr David Astbury— 'Exploring long-term landscape development in south-east Northumberland using orientation analysis'



Dr Lucy Cummings — 'Rethinking the henge monuments of the British Isles'

Dr Nigel Porter— 'Warrior departure iconography on Athenian painted pottery: an examination of the link between changes in departure imagery and the social and political environment of Athens between 600-400BC'

Dr Amber Roy (pictured with supervisor Dr Chris Fowler) — 'The use and significance of Early Bronze Age stone battle-axes and axe-hammers'

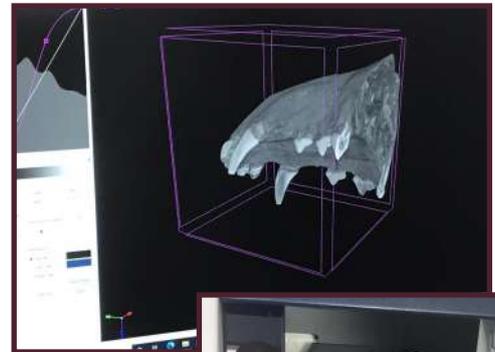
Dr Evan Scherer—'*Terrae amissae*: A Comparative Study of South West Germany and Transylvania in the Third Century'

Dr Thomas Whitfield—'Liberty, property, materiality: An historical archaeology of protest and resistance in later 18th-century England'.

## New Labs!

### New labs and equipment follows big investment

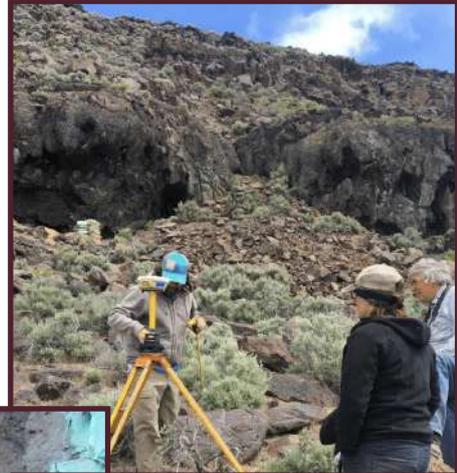
We are delighted to have been awarded £748k from the AHRC Capability for Collections Fund, and a further £134k of UKRI World Class Laboratories funding, to develop the Newcastle Material Culture Analytical Suite (NeMCAS). This enabled us to expand and upgrade existing facilities, providing a unique state of the art facility for archaeological materials and heritage science research in the centre of the north east region.



# Paisley Caves

**Work is completed on project investigating one of North America's earliest archaeological sites**

Located in an arid and desolate part of south-central Oregon, USA, the Paisley Caves represent one of the earliest archaeological deposits in North America. A NERC-funded project led by Dr Lisa-Marie Shillito in collaboration with UOregon and UBristol, was completed in 2020, contributing new information to the debate over the nature and timing of the first arrival of humans in the Americas.



By the project's end, Lisa's team achieved many milestones:

- They developed a new method for identifying coprolite species using lipid biomarkers, which overcomes some of the taphonomic problems associated with ancient DNA.
- They confirmed an early date for the presence of people in North America.
- They were able to use dietary information from coprolites to reconstruct human diets and how these changed from the Pleistocene through to the Holocene.
- They challenged the idea that early humans in the region focused on large mammal hunting, by identifying a broad-based diet reliant on small-medium mammal hunting and the collection of insects and plants from a range of habitats.

Read more about the project here:

<https://research.ncl.ac.uk/>



# Museum Placement

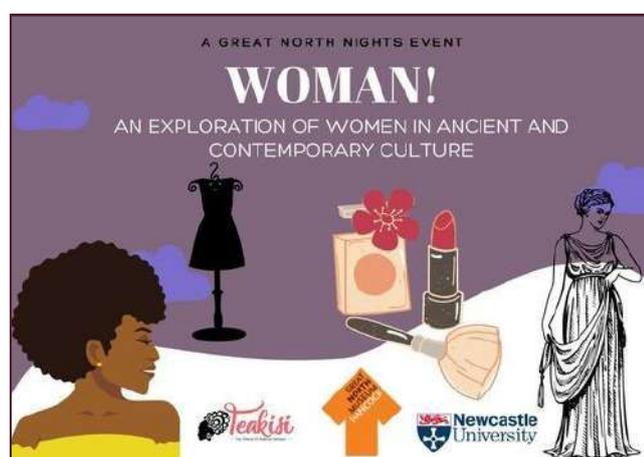
**BA Archaeology student Anna Robson writes about her placement experience at the Great North Museum.**

My placement week at the Great North Museum allowed me to learn about and research the ethnographic collections housed at the museum. The aim was to begin to create a short object biography on the pieces of African currency currently held in storage, seeing what their history was and comparing them to collections in other museums. This research will be supplementing my undergraduate dissertation on decolonising the curriculum and learning outreach for children. An example of an object I have been looking at are the 'Manillas' (pictured) which were used in the transatlantic slave trade as currency used by Europeans.



I also assisted postgraduate student Daisy-Alys Vaughan in her work on the provenance of four Greek vases from the Shefton collection. Getting my first taste of archiving work, my task was to sort through Professor Brian Shefton's auction catalogues from the 1960's through to the mid-1980's. Often it felt like finding pieces of hidden treasure as some catalogues even contained Shefton's annotations, drawings, newspaper clippings and correspondence with auction houses such as Sotheby's. We also had talks from Morgan Fail from the learning team at TWAM and Andrew Parkin, Keeper of Archaeology. We also created exhibits with objects from the Shefton collection for an exhibit on Women in Ancient Greece held in September 2021.

It has been extremely beneficial for me to experience a museum setting for my placement as curatorial work is the career path I am aiming for. It has been even more amazing for me to work in the museum which has given me so many of my childhood memories. I hope to make an impact in the museum work I do in the future the same way the Great North Museum has impacted me.



# International Placement

## PhD student Violetta Tsenova writes on her experience with an AHRC-funded Placement Scheme

Last academic year I spent three months working with the Interaction Lab at the Cooper-Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum in New York City as part of my research into digital technologies and heritage interpretation. The Interaction Lab is a Research and Design (R&D) space which focuses on emergent technologies and aims to bring a holistic interactive design to the Cooper-Hewitt's visitor experience.



During my time with the Lab I focused on two projects in Experience Design (XD). I looked into the existing interactive tool shaping the visitor experience and museum operations – The Pen (pictured below). It is designed as an alternative to mobile app experiences where each visitor receives a digital Pen tool upon arrival. It allows them to “collect” exhibition objects, digitally interact with them on site, and access them remotely. I outlined implications for future designs which address more nuanced reasons why technology often “fails” us in museum experiences.



I also researched the XD and interactive exhibits at other museums which meant I got a free entry to all museums in NY (and in other states too)! This part of my project was focused on how stories are presented, whose “voices” do the interpretation provide and which ones are excluded, and how museum spaces are organised for visitors with ranges of abilities to navigate inside. Collating these insights was fantastic as they shaped how I approached my PhD in the months following the placement and their implementation into my Virtual Reality design.

# Experimental Archaeology

Our Stage 3 students welcomed the end of lockdowns with a chance to take part in experimental archaeology projects at nearby Jarrow Hall Museum. In these photos students successfully built all components of a Bronze Age-replica furnace in which to smelt metal and fabricate an axe head. Other activities included prehistoric antler working, experimental pottery making and building a traction trebuchet.



# Welcome New Colleagues!

## Diana Blumberg

Diana joins the lab team as our new technician and as the technician for the TerraSagE project. Her research interests include archaeometallurgy, archaeomineralogy and ancient glass objects and production technology, especially of the Roman period. She's worked many seasons as finds supervisor in Pompeii and Portus in Italy and on many UK Sites.



## Dr Francesca Carboni

Francesca joins the Rome Transformed project as a historical research associate, working on archival documents and contributing to the understanding of the Eastern Caelian building environment's development from the fourth to the late 8th century CE. She has previously taken part in many excavations and restoration works throughout Rome, Italy and the Mediterranean.

## Dr Sophia Germanidou

Sophia obtained her PhD from Athens University in the field of Byzantine Art and Archaeology and joins us as Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow on the landscape archaeology projects "Hydromedie" and "TerraSage". She worked for many years for the Greek Ministry of Culture and her current research interests are in water management (water collection, terracing) and hydraulic technology



## Dr Jane Harrison

Jane joins our WallCap team as Community Archaeologist. Her first ever excavations were on Hadrian's Wall and since then she has run many community-based archaeological research projects involving and training local volunteers from Orkney to Oxfordshire. Jane's role in the project includes planning, implementing and managing fieldwork and contributing to project reporting.

## Kathryn Murphy

Kathryn also joins our WallCap team as Project Support Officer. She moved to the UK from Canada in 2015 to complete an MSc in GIS and Archaeology. Her interests are in the use and application of technical methods in archaeology and how they can help us answer archaeological problems and queries. As part of the team, Kathryn will be managing the GIS for WallCap, assisting with survey and fieldwork as well as conducting research.



## Dr Thea Ravasi

Thea joined the Rome Transformed project as its Archaeology Research Associate. Her current research focuses on Roman residential and thermal architecture but she also published extensively on Roman trade and economy. She is particularly interested in the social, cultural and economic relationship between elite residences and imperial properties in the Roman Empire. As a former museum curator and educational officer, she strongly believes in the importance of outreach for academic research and has worked extensively in Italy and the UK on numerous outreach projects

## Dr Christopher Sevara

Chris joins the TerraSAGE team as research associate. He is a landscape archaeologist with expertise in archaeological prospection, geospatial analysis and remote sensing data processing. His research interests currently focus on understanding connections between social and environmental change in later pre and early historic landscapes in the western Mediterranean, and along the Nile river in modern-day Sudan. Chris is also a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Vienna's Department of Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology.



## Dr Duncan Wright

Duncan became Lecturer in Medieval Archaeology in October 2020 and will be leading modules on this topic as well as act as the Archaeological Fieldwork Convenor for our students. Duncan specialises in medieval settlement and landscape archaeology, and has a particular interest in the articulation of elite power. He is currently researching the role and status of early medieval metalworkers and the transformation of high-status residences. Duncan will be leading the fieldwork modules.

# Our Newest PhD Candidates

## Zoe Ainsworth

Zoe's AHRC-funded collaborative doctoral award, 'Historic landscape change in Northumberland's upland valleys (HiLand)', is supervised by Sam Turner and Francesco Carrer at Newcastle and Chris Jones at the Northumberland National Park Authority. Her project will combine new and established landscape archaeology techniques to explore the development of landscape character in upland Northumberland in the Middle Ages. Results will feed back into heritage-led spatial planning and landscape management strategies.



## Alessandro Armigliato

Alessandro received Northern Bridge DTP funding for his project entitled 'Prehistoric copper technology in Italy: towards a new model'. He will examine smelting and metalwork residue from Neolithic and Bronze Age sites in northern Italy through multidisciplinary approaches (material sciences, experimental archaeology) and a reappraisal of social theory of technological change to foster a new understanding of prehistoric copper and bronze technology.

## Phyllida Bailey

Phyllida joins the ERC Rome Transformed team for her project entitled 'The environmental impact of political, military and religious changes in the Eastern Caelian' supervised by Ian Haynes and Lisa-Marie Shillito. The project uses environmental data to illuminate the interplay between the natural environment, resource exploitation and successive transformations of the city of Rome.



## Eleanor Harrison

Eleanor received AHRC Northern Bridge DTP funding for her PhD project "Single burial traditions & identity in Britain and Ireland, (4000-2500 BC)", supervised by Chris Fowler & Lisa-Marie Shillito at Newcastle, and Janet Montgomery at Durham. This project will provide the first detailed consideration of specific Neolithic burials through theoretical and bioarchaeological methods



### **Guillem Domingo Ribas**

Guillem's PhD addresses the relationship between pastoral practices and landscape through case studies (medieval Dartmoor, UK; 20th-century Aspromonte, Italy; today's Göksu river valley, Turkey). Combining archaeological, historic and ethnographic data with GIS to unravel how pastoralism influenced the formation of historical landscapes and in turn how

### **Thomas Lawrence**

Thomas' AHRC funded project, 'Britain inside or outside of Europe during the Mesolithic-Neolithic Transition', focuses on social interactions between Mesolithic and Neolithic British populations in the fifth & fourth millenniums through lithic analyses and statistical modelling. He aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the transition, highlighting the social complex-



### **Roxana Montazerian**

Roxana joins the ERC Rome Transformed team for her project entitled 'Comparative cost analysis of major construction projects in the Eastern Caelian', supervised by Ian Haynes and Thea Ravasi. Roxana holds a Masters in Architectural Engineering and Sustainability. Her PhD will bridge architectural, historical and archaeological studies, using 3D visualisation, computer programming and GIS to explore new paths for data analysis.

### **John Pearson**

Following an MA with us, John returns for an AHRC-funded PhD entitled "Experiencing Medieval Craft Practice: New Approaches to Glass Production in Islamic Iberia". John will use our experimental area at Jarrow Hall, to reconstruct a medieval, Islamic glass workshop from Murcia, Spain. The work will provide valuable insight into technological innovation and transfer, the chemical and pollutive effects of medieval industry, and the ethnography of glass production. It will result in an informative film as well as a text.



### **Elettra Santucci**

Elettra joins the Rome Transformed team for her PhD 'Sustaining Rome: The supply and use of water in the Eastern Caelian'. An architect, she will combine hydrology, hydraulic engineering, water modelling and archaeological analyses to explore water supply to south-east Rome and beyond. Offering an important new perspective on the role of water in sustaining successful transformations of the city.

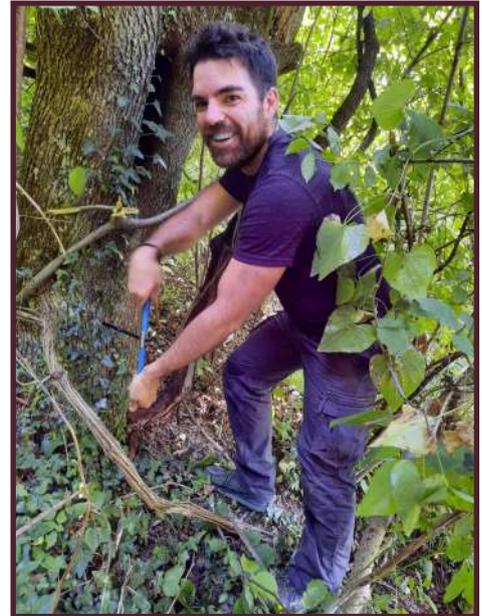
# Marie Skłodowska

**New M. Skłodowska Curie Fellows join the Newcastle Team!**

**Dr Filippo Brandolini**

## **Historic Landscape and Soil Sustainability**

This project investigates relationships between sustainability and landscape heritage, especially soil loss and degradation over time. It takes a multidisciplinary approach combining archaeology, Historical Landscape Characterisation (HLC), geosciences, and computer-based geospatial analysis (GIS) and modelling (RUSLE - Revisited Universal Soil Loss Equation). Objectives are to quantify the impact of human activities during the Late Holocene in order to create spatial models to inform sustainable conservation strategies for rural landscape heritage, focusing on two mountainous regions with historical and cultural similarities but in different climatic zones of Europe (1- Tuscan-Emilian Apennines, Italy; 2- Northern-mid Galicia, Spain).



**Dr Mick Atha**

## **Characterising Hong Kong's Upland Historic Landscape**

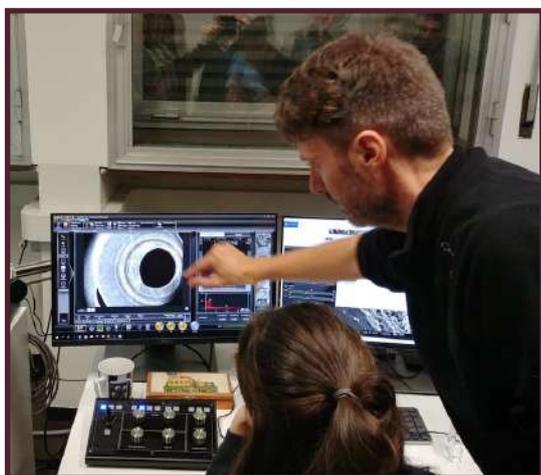


The lowland hinterlands of HK evidence human activity spanning 6,500-years, including prehistoric fisher-hunter-foragers, early historical salt-makers, and later historical rice farmers. In contrast, the mountainous uplands are viewed as 'Nature' and largely ignored by archaeologists. However, a brief review of remote sensing data reveals a diversity of past human activity in HK's uplands waiting to be investigated. This project adopts an innovative GIS-based interdisciplinary approach combining landscape archaeology, geosciences, historical research, remote sensing, scientific dating and digital geospatial analysis in order to address this significant gap in knowledge. The study includes an inter-regional comparison with mainland China, and the Philippines.

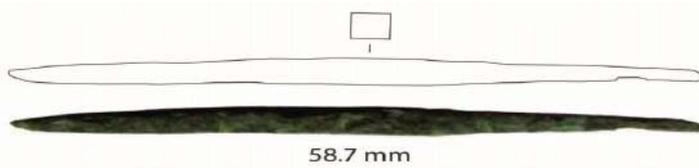
# Curie Fellowships

## Dr Stefano Viola - What This Awl Means?

New project will reveal the uses and social significance of some of the earliest metal objects from Europe. Dr Viola joined us in January 2021 to carry out the first ever study of prehistoric awls. This is a class of long copper/bronze points commonly found in Europe in the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age, from 5000-1600BC. Despite being widespread, these enigmatic objects—some of the earliest to be made from metal in prehistoric Eurasia—have never been studied for their ancient functions and social meanings. Working with Dr Dolfini, Stefano will investigate the awls through a



multidisciplinary approach, integrating experimental archaeology and metalwork wear analysis (a technique Newcastle University leads in). The project will shed new light on the transition between stone and metal ages and overturn orthodox narratives claiming that prehistoric metallurgy was a male-dominated craft.



## Dr Camilla Bertini — Glass Making and Trading in Medieval Europe

Dr Bertini received funding from the EU to join us as MSC Fellow studying medieval vessel glass from across Europe through a combination of chemical, archaeological and historiographical analyses. The project investigates the production, trade and recycling of glass from the 7th to 10th centuries AD. It will produce the first detailed mapping of the changing production technologies of glass in this period and the trade routes followed by different glass production methods. The project will also review social and economic factors influencing practices such as recycling with an aim to gain fresh insights into this crucial period in glass production history and technological evolution.



# Dissertation Prizes

## Two of our MA students won national prizes

### Adam Leigh— Winner of the Royal Archaeological Institute's Masters Dissertation Prize

Title: Considerable Geometric Precision: can the Bi type cursus be considered a regional phenomenon?

Aims were to address cultural variation and regionality in the conception, planning and execution of cursus monuments. The morphology and setting of monuments displayed a correlation of attributes, and the typological classification was deemed coherent and useful. This conclusion was used to engage with wider ideas about regionality, cultural identity and cultural transmission. It concludes that the Bi cursus was spread through links between communities, possibly by 'specialists', carriers of the knowledge required to execute this form of cursus monument. Bi cursus represents a technical elaboration of the cursus monument, enhanced by the esoteric knowledge inherent in its planning and favoured by communities privileged or receptive to this knowledge. It was a phenomenon adopted in select regions, distinct in its planning and effect and contributing just as much to the distinctiveness of these regions.



### John Pearson— Winner of the Philip Rahtz Award for the best postgraduate dissertation in medieval archaeology (Society for Medieval Archaeology)



Title: Text, transformation and practice— Experimental experiences and the archaeology of glassmaking in Medieval Spain.

In Spain, glassmaking was likely subject to long-term changes over extended time and our knowledge and understanding of it, particularly for the medieval period, is limited. This study's interweaving of textual evidence, original research on workshop practice, archaeological, archaeometric, and practical experiment within a theoretical framework, is unprecedented for glass. The study places the late medieval *infima* glassmaking recipe in an alchemical context, demonstrating through experimental reproduction that it is a credible guide to basic glassmaking technology in medieval Spain. Ten glassmaking experiments inform consideration of scale and range of craft production, techniques used, and degree of craft specialism in medieval Spanish glassmaking. Together with the experimental experience generated and observations of workshop practice, the experiments suggest new areas of experimental research focussed on understanding the holistic practice of medieval glassmaking and how that might be reflected and detected in Spain's archaeology.

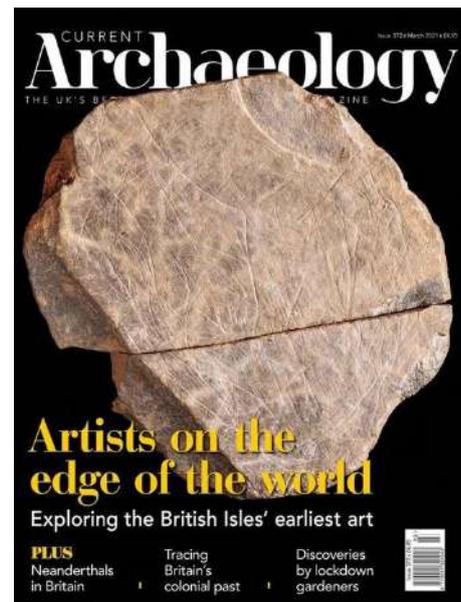
# Earliest Art in Britain

Dr Chantal Conneller leads research on this remarkable find

Newcastle University led excavations in Jersey uncovered the earliest known example of art recovered from the British Isles. Ten fragments of stone plaquettes extensively engraved with abstract designs during fieldwork held between 2014 and 2018. The plaquettes were made by the Magdalenians, an early hunter gatherer culture dating from between 23,000 and 14,000 years ago.



Above: one of the plaquettes engraved with abstract designs. Right: the cover of Current Archaeology Magazine featuring another of the plaquettes.



# Do all Dogs go to Heaven?

Dr Eric Tourigny 's research on pet cemeteries receives global attention



Eric's recent survey of the UK's oldest and largest pet cemeteries revealed the changing role of animals in England over the past 140 years; from friends to family members and a new place in the afterlife. In collaboration with The Royal Parks, Eric gave an online presentation to a global audience of 500-700 last October (just in time for Halloween). You can catch the presentation on YouTube (<https://bit.ly/3x83WLR>), including a virtual tour of the 19th-century Hyde Park Pet Cemetery in London (pictured).

# Dig for Archaeology

## New campaign launched by Dr Chloe Duckworth puts focus on the country's need for archaeology

From the Mary Rose to Richard III, archaeology is a major driver of the heritage industry & the UK hosts the top archaeology departments globally. However, the discipline faces a triple threat from cuts to funding, a national skills shortage and proposed planning reforms. Chloe Duckworth leads the 'Dig for Archaeology' campaign to draw public and government attention.



Archaeologists dig in over planning reforms row - BBC News  
Experts warn history and heritage could be lost if they are excluded from the government's new plans.



**Dr Chloe Duckworth**

The campaign highlights the contribution of almost £250 million that commercial archaeology makes to the UK's economy, and the importance of heritage tourism - which is constantly reinvigorated by fresh archaeological discoveries and supports 386,000 jobs across the UK.

They also promote the unique set of skills archaeologists hold as individuals trained in both the sciences and humanities, producing graduates proficient in a range of disciplines from forensics to urban planning.

So far the campaign has been a huge success in drawing attention to the issues and many public figures have come out in strong support. And its working....! The government as reversed its plans to cut university funding for archaeology. But we still need to ensure they recognize the importance of heritage and archaeology when it comes to the proposed streamlining of the planning process.

"The current exclusion of archaeology from the forthcoming Environment Bill must be challenged. Archaeology and heritage play important roles in shaping our landscapes, and are fundamentally entwined with the natural environment."

Rt. Hon. Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb FSA



**Follow the Campaign**  
[@ForArchaeology](https://twitter.com/ForArchaeology)

# Where are they now?

## We caught up with two recent graduates from the MA Archaeology programme

Olivia Russell is from Louisiana and completed her MA in Late Antique, Medieval and Byzantine Archaeology with us in 2019/20. Following the completion of her degree, Olivia returned to Louisiana and began a full-time job as a field archaeologist for a commercial firm based in New Orleans. She has also submitted proposals to present her research at a few Medieval conferences and is working on a proposal for a PhD project.

Right: Olivia at the Kisatchie National Forest in central Louisiana.



Jessica Petrie completed her MA Archaeology degree in 2018/19 and tells us she has since moved to Boulder, Colorado where she works as a full-time archaeologist for a commercial company. She has since been involved in many projects, including a 2,000 acre survey that resulted in the identification of multiple Indigenous archaeological sites.

Left: Jessica also managed to visit Machu Picchu before the pandemic.

# Congratulations to all our Graduates!



## Prize Winners

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### Gladys Bettess Prize

(Best undergraduate degree result—BA Hons Archaeology)

Sam Hogarth

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### Richmond Prize

 (Best performance in Stage 2)

Emily Kelso

& Martha Jones

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### RM Harrison Prize

 (Highest dissertation mark)

William Dawson

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### Ray Field Award for Prehistory

(Exceptional achievement in prehistoric archaeology)

Rosie Skipp

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### Gertrude Bell Prize

(Exceptional contribution to archaeology at Newcastle)

Sophia Newton

& Jessica Scott

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### Fred Bettess Prize

(Notable contribution to archaeological fieldwork)

William Dawson

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