



# CARDIFF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY CYMDEITHAS ARCHEOLEGOL CAERDYDD

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Apr 2023/May 2023 Issue

## Chepstow

### History of the Town

Chepstow is positioned on the west bank of the River Wye as the main coast road crosses from Gloucestershire to South Wales. Around 1070 the area was granted to William fitz Osbern along with the earldom of Hereford. The castle and St Mary's Priory date from this time and the town was laid out by 1075.

Originally known as 'Stroguil' its name had changed by the 14<sup>th</sup> century to 'ceapstow' meaning 'market place' to emphasise its commercial nature. The 308 burgess plots established it as a borough and port.

The town wall, known as Port Wall, ran from the Castle's west tower, enclosing an area of 113 acres and built around 1272-78.

Escaping the worst of the Welsh wars, the town experienced a decline in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century did its industrial and maritime activity combined with the arrival of the railway lead to the whole of the walled area coming back into urban use.

### St Mary's Priory

In 1071 William fitz Osbern, cousin to William the Conqueror, established a Benedictine Priory on the site. It was a daughter house to the Abbey he had founded in Cormeilles in Normandy. Never large or rich, most of the Priory buildings were demolished following the dissolution by Henry VIII in 1536. A few buildings continued in use as business premises,

becoming a brewery in the 19th century and the Co-op creamery until 1963. From the 17th century some of the Priory's remaining large cellars were used by wine importers. During the 19th and early 20th centuries the site was largely terraced housing with a school and the livestock market.



The Church was built for the Priory, and has been a place of worship for over 900 years. Little is left of the original building, with only the lower half of the West front, the walls of the nave and the base of a pier that supported the tower surviving. The Church was divided, parishioners using the nave and monks the chancel and transepts. After the dissolution,

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the nave remained in use, and the rest decayed, resulting in the final collapse of the central tower around 1700. In 1706 a smaller tower in Queen Anne style was built above the original west front with its Norman carved decoration. In 1841, extensive alterations were made, including the removal of the side aisles. Later this work was considered disastrous, and from 1889 there was nearly two decades of further restoration, including attempts to reverse this earlier damage.



The 15th Century Font

The bowl is supported on a central shaft, which stands on an octagonal plinth, surrounded by seven flying buttresses. There is a very similar font at Henbury across the River Severn which may have been made by the same craftsman. For many years, it was left outside in the churchyard and consequently it is now very badly weathered and unusable.

A much earlier Norman font was dug up in the churchyard and now mounted on a suitable base stands next to the Della Robbia Chapel and is used for all baptisms.



The Worcester Tomb

In his book 'An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire (1801)', Archdeacon Coxe informs us that 'On the south side of the chancel is a tomb of free stone painted and gilt.' This was before the 1841 renovations and so this original location cannot be pin-pointed. The guidebook of 1905 states that the monument had been much mutilated and that it has recently been restored by the Duke of Beaufort.

There are two full-length figures depicting Henry Somerset, 2nd earl of Worcester, and his second wife, Elizabeth, in their coronation robes. Henry, who died in 1549 at the age of

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53, had succeeded to his father's Earldom in 1526 during the reign of King Henry VIII. The Earl served as one of the champions of English chivalry with Henry VIII at the Field of Cloth of Gold. The Earl and his wife took part in the coronation ceremonies of Anne Boleyn, carried a covered cup of gold at the christening of Elizabeth and was one of the 27 peers who sentenced Anne Boleyn to death in 1536. Elizabeth was the second daughter of Sir Anthony Brown KG the standard-bearer to Henry VIII.

William, the third earl, was a great favourite of Queens Mary & Elizabeth, and was one of the 42 Commissioners appointed to act with 5 of the judges for the trial of Mary Queen of Scots in 1586. The following year his brother Thomas died in the Tower of London having been involved in a conspiracy in favour of Mary.



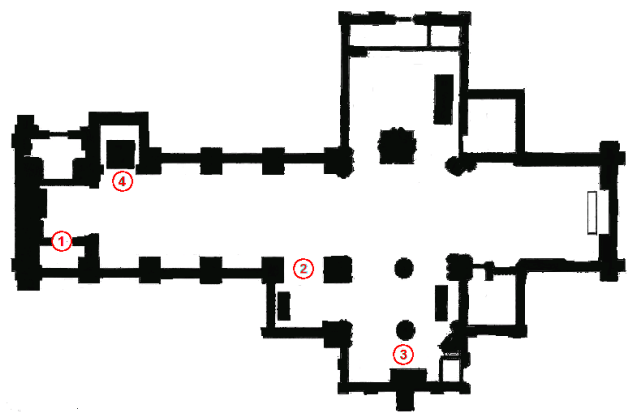
The Cleyton Monument

The Inscription reads: In Memory of Thomas Shipman & Margaret his wife (daughter of John

Maddock of Wollastone Gen.) & their 12 children. Also Richard Cleyton Esq who was married to Margaret the Relict of the above mentioned Thomas Shipman, 1620.

Margaret was born in Wibdon in Gloucestershire c1536. She married Thomas Shipman, a yeoman farmer at Mathern in 1556. Thomas and Margaret had 10 daughters and 2 sons. All of the children are depicted on the monument and all of her children except Anne and Elinor died in infancy.

Thomas Shipman was a wealthy man, making his will in 1581. He died 10 years later. Margaret remarried becoming Margaret Cleyton in 1595. Richard was a man of substantial means, making his will in July 1605, making a generous bequest to erect a school. He was buried on 4 August 1605. This probably made Margaret the town's wealthiest resident, living at No 1 High Street (Gatehouse). The effigy on the monument was made during her lifetime and shows a good representation. Making her will in 1627 she died 3 months later and was buried 19 April 1627.



(1) The Medieval Font, (2) The Norman Font (3) The Worcester Tomb (4) The Cleyton Monument

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Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association

### Visit - Chepstow Priory Church

Lead by

Jeremy Knight

St Mary's Priory church is under threat. It is an important landmark in the town with a long history. MAA president Jeremy Knight will lead a tour of the church and talk about the history and architecture of the building, which is open to CAS Members.

Wednesday 19th April 2023

1.45 for 2.00pm start

The visit is free, donations towards the work of Chepstow Priory Friends will be taken up at the end of the visit.

### Other Religious Houses

Apart from St Mary's Priory, there were several other religious houses in Chepstow; St Anne's old Chapel & St Ewen's chapel in Bridge Street, and St Thomas's in St Thomas's Street.

### The Bridge



There had been earlier wooden bridges on the site since Norman times, but the current road bridge was constructed of cast iron in 1816 during the Regency period, by John Rastrick of Bridgnorth, who greatly modified earlier plans by John Rennie. The bridge crosses a river with one of the highest tidal ranges in the world.

Next issue Chepstow Castle.

**CAS visited the Chepstow Walls in 2000**

## Highlights from the Magazines

**Current World Archaeology Apr 2023-May 2023**

Knossos - Seeking the labyrinth

Mountain rock art at Saimaluu Tash - Battle chariots and ploughing scenes at an altitude of 3,000m

Qasr Bshir - Conserving a special Roman

Spotlight: Unboxing Palmyra - The archive of Harald Ingholt

## FEATURES

Asterix's legacy at Alésia - the legacy of Julius Caesar's defeat of Vercingétorix and the Gauls

Aquincum - A museum and archaeological park in an urban setting

Manchester Museum - The golden mummies of Graeco-Roman Egypt

Object - Hand of Irulegi

### Minerva - Archaeology & Art Mar-Apr 2023

Making their Name - Maya Artists

Knossos - Ashmolean Museum Exhibition

Island Lives - Objects from Crete, Cyprus and Sardinia Reveal their Stories

Palatial Pleasures - the Former Palace of the Farnese Family in Parma

The Theatre of Epirus - Stories of a Famed Oracle & a Celebrated Victory

Divine Intervention - Minerva: Cultivating Wisdom

The Antiquarian - Sylvanus Griswold Morley (1883-1948)

### British Archaeology Mar-Apr 2023

In Search of Picts - The Rich Historic Landscape of Aberlemno

Crossrail: an Underground journey

Benin Archaeology - the Promise of a new Nigerian-British Project

This is Archaeology - Impacting Heritage, Landscapes & Lives

Culver Hole, Gower - A medieval Dove House

No 68 Market Place, South Cave, Yorkshire

### Current Archaeology March 2023

The Knowe of Swandro - Excavating eroding archaeology on Rousay

St Bartholomew the Great - Tracing the history of London's oldest surviving church

Re-Excavating Arminghall Henge - A Burnt Timber Circle from Prehistoric Norfolk

From Rat Nests to Lost Mines - Exploring Archaeological Pathways in the National Trust

Defending the Dreaming Spires - Civil War Ramparts Discovered in Oxford

Gladiators: A Cemetery of Secrets - Cirencester's Corinium Museum Exhibition

Roman Women - Tracing Female Archaeologists of the Roman Frontiers

Odd Socs - The British Cartographic Society

### Current Archaeology April 2023

Druce Farm Roman Villa - Celebrating a Community Dig in the Heart of Devon

Echoes from the Arena - Exploring evidence for Gladiators in York and Cirencester

Stand 'Easy' - Searching for the Band of Brothers at Aldbourne

Cosmati at Canterbury Cathedral - Piecing together the History of a Medieval Mosaic

Secrets of a Secluded Life - Updating the story of the All Saintes Anchoress.

Tudor Treasure - Exploring an Artefact Rich in Royal Imagery

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Conserving the Keep - Orford Castle

Labyrinth : Knossos, Myth & Reality -  
Ashmolean Museum Exhibition

Odd Socs - Royal Photographic Society

### Ancient Egypt Mar-Apr 2023

Egypt's Golden Couple - Akhenaten and  
Nefertiti

Proto-Villages of Stone Age Egypt - Neolithic  
Settlements of the Western Desert

Francis Frith in Egypt

Going for Gold - Reconsidering Mummies from  
the Greco-Roman Period

Golden Flies as Military Awards - It Doesn't Fly

The Royal Cache at Deir El-Bahri 1881

The Afterlife of two Egyptian Stools

The Temple of Nekhbet-Hathor at Elkab

Object Highlight - A Golden Statuette of Amun

## Quiz

1. Roman fort and gold mine in Carmarthenshire
2. Egyptian Goddess of truth and order
3. Old name for a region equating roughly to western Ukraine
4. Sumerian goddess of the planet Venus
5. Flagship of Christopher Columbus, originally named 'Marigalante'
6. British general and archaeologist, author of 'Excavations in Cranborne Chase'

7. Name given to Anglo-Saxon nobles

8. Upper part of a church containing a row of windows

9. Small piece of material used to make a mosaic

10. Necropolis in southern Egypt where burials began in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dynasty

## Past Events

### Lecture: 26th January 2023

#### Updates on the Five Mile Lane Excavations.

Rachel Morgan, Senior Project Manager/Heritage Consultant, Red River Archaeology.

In 2019 Rubicon Heritage Services were given a watching brief over Road Improvements on the A4226. The area was known to have prehistoric to Iron Age activity in addition to a previously discovered Roman villa.

In the subsequent excavations, residual prehistoric artefacts from the Neolithic 4300 - 2200 BC such as flint scrapers and arrowheads were found, along with burnt sheep remains and hazelnuts.

Bronze Age evidence showed the cultivation of cereals and hazelnuts. A beaker burial was uncovered dating to 1950 BC. Both tanged and leaf-shaped arrowheads were also found along with a late Bronze Age skeleton. One area contained a possible roundhouse and enclosure. A rare late Bronze Age skeleton of National importance was discovered.

The Iron Age period was represented by the remains of Whitton Lodge Roman villa, initially excavated in 1956. Roman occupation seems to have started in the 2nd to 3rd century and ended in the 4th century. Other domestic

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undefended Iron Age settlement buildings were excavated, showing the extent of the domestic landscape. Rachel explained the construction of the West and North ranges of the villa along with its hypocausts and field systems. A quern stone and some Samian ware were uncovered along with four cremations and one burial in a coffin.

There were three areas of secondary metal working on the site containing slag waste. Smaller tools had been found on earlier digs.

Site SMR3 included an early medieval corn dryer. However, the most surprising area was the Burial Monument Mound, which contained over 429 individual inhumations, in 15 phases of burials. 12th century Medieval pottery was found amongst the cists, with possible coffin burials present. Stresses to child bones showed poor health conditions. There was even a rare crouched burial. A medieval keyhole shaped grain dryer 1015-1049 was found in site SMR19.

### Lecture: 9th February 2023

#### Death in Ancient Egypt.

Professor Alan B Lloyd, who kindly stepped in to replace the advertised Prof. Vicki Cummings at short notice.

The religion of death is by far the best-known aspect of ancient Egyptian civilisation. It has its beginnings in the Prehistoric period, and aspects of it survived well into the Roman period. Like all religious systems it embodied two aspects: a belief system and an action system. The belief system was the driver and was generated by two factors: the concept of the nature of the person and the concept of the nature of life after death. This body of belief gave rise to a complex system of ritual action, which was designed to ensure the continuous survival of the deceased as a fully

functioning personality in the afterlife. The lecture explored in detail this corpus of belief and the action which constituted one of the greatest achievements of Pharaonic culture.

Professor Lloyd started by explaining the vital essence, b3, k3, name, shadow and heart which made up an individual. There was a need for grave goods of ready items to aid the dead on his journey in the Afterlife. He explained the physical and ritual devices required, the tomb or mustabas, including their offering chamber and sealed doorways and the involvement of festivals to remember the Dead. Stelas were often erected for poorer families. The Offering tables included an offering formula in the form of hieroglyphs.

Professor Lloyd went on to discuss the anointing and mummification of the body and use of conoptic jars and Shabtis, a sort of personal slave in the Afterlife to complete all the menial tasks given to the deceased.

He summed up the use of the Book of the Dead and its depiction on the sarcophagus and walls and the use of gold paint to represent godly perfect skin and Lapis Lazure Blue to represent the hair colour of the Gods. A summary of the opening of the mouth concluded a very detailed lecture on death in Ancient Egypt.

### Lecture: 23rd February 2023

#### Hillforts and Hilltop Settlement in Late Antique Western Britain: Fifty Years on from Arthur's Britain.

Dr. Andy Seaman, Lecturer in Early Medieval Archaeology, SHARE, Cardiff University.

Andy first discussed the pioneering work achieved by Leslie Alcock of the University of Glasgow, and his excavations at Dinas Powys hill fort, Cadbury Castle in Somerset and a series of major hillforts in Scotland. Based on this

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work he had formulated a vision of defensive hillforts up until the 8<sup>th</sup> century in Britain. Andy then decided to re-examine these assumptions by looking at what we now understand of their uses.

There was little evidence of actual defensive works at Dinas Powys, for example, as described in Alcock's 1971 *Arthur's Britain: History and Archaeology AD 367-634*. The locations such as Clun, Dinas Powys and Dunadd seemed more suitable for a prince and his warband only.

From a 20<sup>th</sup> century perspective, it seems hillforts may be more of a statement of defence or a stronghold in times of crisis only. And more of a centre for trade, exchange or production, a focus for negotiation and possibly residential. Some were monastic, others not.

A new light was shone on old sites and their use in the landscape, movement or visibility. Did they have different functions? Degannwy on a rocky hillock; Tintagel on a defendable coastal causeway; Cadbury, a contour fort; St Michaels Mount, a tidal island; Dinas Emrys, a craggy hilltop or the in-defendable Glastonbury Tor.

Did these places share memories or stories in the Landscape, such as the site described in the Mabinogion? Were they temporary or persistent places? What drove the inhabitants away? Maybe it was plague, economic, social or religious change.

A new chronology for the use of hillforts is required, and whether these dates were giving the full picture. Degannwy was struck by lightning and destroyed by the Saxons but had been rebuilt to be mentioned during the Viking Age.

Andy looked at the destruction and vitrification of the defences as a method of closing, cleansing or for political change. Ditches at Dinas Powys had been deliberately backfilled.

He also looked at the movement and visibility potential for Dinas Powys and at Hillforts at the edge between land and sea, such as at Tintagel. Hillforts could also be related to Estates or poly-focal clusters.

Hillforts could become assembly points. Some derived from earlier shrines and temples, such as at Maiden Castle. Uley, Brean Down and Pagan's Hill relate to temples, churches and even burials. Another use could be hunting, violence or ritual, such as the spears and axes found at South Cadbury.

Andy concluded by explaining where we are now and whether Alcock's ideas still apply. He then set out what we should do next, and which areas required further examination. Another very interesting and comprehensive talk by Andy.

### Lecture: 9th March 2023

#### Annual General Meeting

Our presiding Chairman, Chris Jones-Jenkins presided over the Meeting on Zoom and all last year's committee were again re-elected for the current year. A programme of summer trips was unveiled. The AGM was followed by our very entertaining annual short quiz, again enjoyed by everyone.

## Future Events

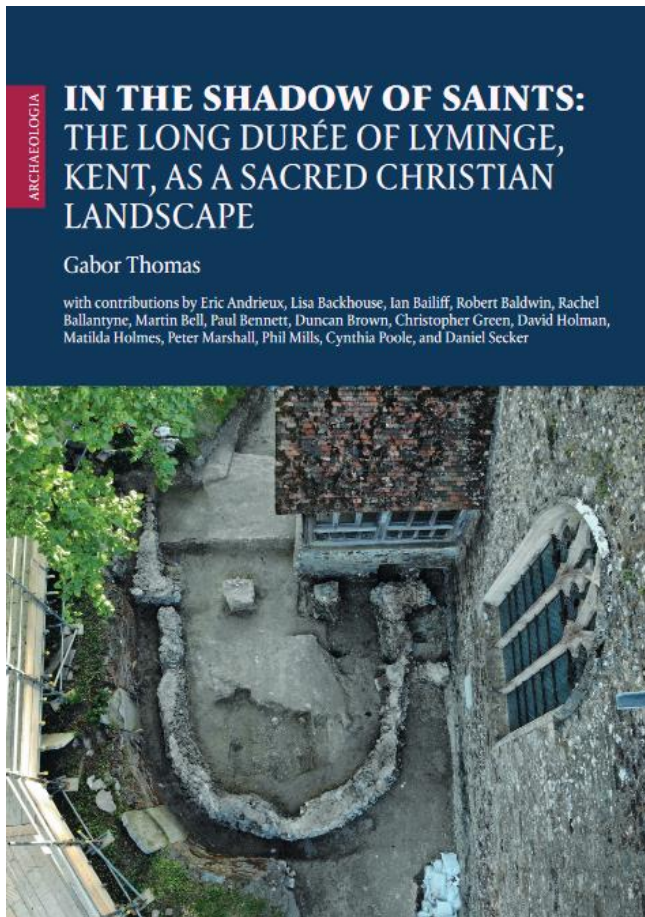
### Evening Trips

The programme of dates and evening trips was proposed at the AGM and will be distributed shortly.



# Links to Websites

### Open Access eBooks :



### **In the Shadow of Saints - the Long Durée of Lyminge, Kent, as a Sacred Christian Landscape**

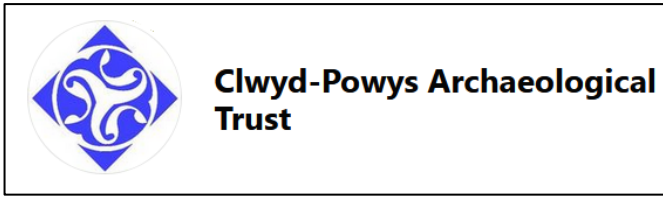
Originating in the seventh century as one of the 'Old Minsters' of Kent, Lyminge has one of the longest continuous Christian histories in Britain. Drawing upon the results of two campaigns of re-investigation in the early 1990s and 2019, this paper elucidates this trajectory through a rigorous reassessment of archaeological remains in Lyminge churchyard, originally explored by the antiquary Canon Jenkins in the 1850s. This work generates fresh insights on the structural archaeology of the churchyard and Jenkins' influence on the interpretation and public presentation of Lyminge's early Christian heritage. New details of the seventh-century

apsidal church are presented, allowing its place within 'Kentish Group' churches to be appraised with greater confidence, and aspects of the operational sequence of such buildings to be reconstructed for the first time. A fresh examination of structural foundations to the west of the apsidal church, and the current parish church of SS Mary and Ethelburga, charts the monumental development of the site into the Late Saxon period and beyond, offering insights into the commemorative processes bound up with the long-term evolution of the cult focus. Findings beyond the churchyard, from previous research excavations by the University of Reading, are also woven into the current study to contextualise developments within the monumental core, providing an exceptionally rare integrated 'big picture' perspective in the study of early medieval monastic archaeology. The results of scientific dating, and the analysis of bioarchaeological data, are applied to reconstruct the lived experience of the monastic community during the Viking Age, and to chart the complex settlement transformations during Lyminge's afterlife as a secular minster church and seat of archiepiscopal authority. Complementing other recent work on the long-term development of monastic landscapes, this paper vividly demonstrates how the enduring mythology of the golden age of Anglo-Saxon saints influences the interpretation of sacred Christian heritage and how archaeological approaches can inform narratives of these potently meaningful places.

[https://www.sal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/SAL\\_ARCHAEOLOGICAL\\_112\\_eBook.pdf](https://www.sal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/SAL_ARCHAEOLOGICAL_112_eBook.pdf)

## EVENTS & LINKS

### Recorded Previous Lectures:



### **Twmbarlwm 2019 - 2020: CPAT and Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society investigations**

CPAT and Twmbarlwm Society excavations at Twmbarlwm, an Iron Age hillfort with fantastic earthworks located on a high point above Risca near Newport. - Chris Matthews explains all.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iF10nTlzCv4&t=1080s>

### **Uncovering History at Hay Castle**

A site that has been in private hands for probably over 900 years was put on the market in 2011 when the previous owner Richard Booth decided to sell the castle. A group of local people got together forming a charity, the Castle trust and the castle was purchased thanks to a very generous donation and then in 2016 they finally successful in getting a 5 million pound HLF grant.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ci\\_NMtix7e0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ci_NMtix7e0)

### **Recent Archaeological Investigations in Brecon Beacons National Park by Black Mountains Archaeology**

Richard Lewis and Dr Rhys Morgan discuss the sites of Garnddyrys Forge & Hills Tramroad, Tyla Quarry Cartshed and Clydach Ironworks.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTk-hFggtv4>

### **The Bryn Oer Tramroad: History, Form and Function**

In Spring 2022, Black Mountains Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority to conduct an archaeological watching brief and walkover survey during conservation works of the Bryn Oer Tramroad in Southern Powys.

Within this talk, the history and archaeology of the Bryn Oer Tramroad is reassessed in consideration of the data collected during the watching brief and walkover survey. This data comprises intricate details of the tramroad, including its constituent features - most notably drainage systems, turnouts and gateways - and the stratigraphic sequence of its construction. Throughout the talk, this data is combined with previous research to formulate a thorough archaeological narrative of the tramroad.

In form, this talk is divided into four parts. The first part outlines the history of the canals to which the Bryn Oer Tramroad, and others like it, were connected. The second part discusses the historical context of the tramroad. The third part provides an archaeological evaluation of the tramroad. Finally, the fourth part discusses the comparative importance of the tramroad within the context of late 18th and early 19th century transport networks in Southeast Wales.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3PinxdJUEg&t=308s>



### [Situating Viking Age Memorialisation in Southwest Scotland and the Irish Sea Area](#)

Dr Danica Ramsey-Brimberg reveals how Early medieval southwestern Scotland has long been an area in which interactions between different groups of people occurred, creating a distinct place with a vibrant culture. The Viking Age was a particularly impactful period from the turn of the ninth century to the eleventh century. Combining textual references with physical forms of evidence, particularly burials and sculpture, reveals how much of an impact the Viking Age had on the modern-day areas of Dumfries and Galloway. Different groups introduced a mixture of ideas and practices directly from Scandinavia and other areas of the Viking Age world, including the Irish Sea area and up along the coast of western Scotland. However, elements were also fused together, creating entirely new entities unique to Dumfries, Galloway, and their surrounding area. By looking closely, these ideas and practices underscore southwest Scotland significant position amid the larger landscape of the Viking Age world and reflect the transforming and hybridizing society of southwest Scotland.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pn2u6mD4QAs&t=467s>



### [Castell Nadolig and the Penbryn Spoons: A new investigation](#)

A New Investigation - Dr Toby Driver & Professor Andrew Fitzpatrick

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVr9Df-CHic>

### [Fonmon Castle Landscape Archaeology Project](#)

Results from the First Two Years of Survey and Excavation - Lecture by Dr Andy Seaman, Lecturer in Early Medieval Archaeology.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjR\\_9XDcbo&t=40s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjR_9XDcbo&t=40s)



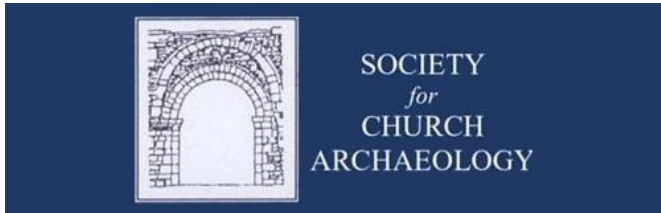
### [Archaeological Discoveries of the A428 with Lucie Collett](#)

MOLA archaeologist Lucie Collett talks about uncovering fascinating finds, from 2000-year-old beer brewing to flint tools belonging to some of the earliest inhabitants of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

Excavations on the A428 are being undertaken by archaeologists from MOLA, as part of the proposed National Highways Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvement Scheme.

<https://youtu.be/gx3gfDIVXXU>

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### Dr Gabor Thomas - Contextualising the Church Archaeology of Lyminge, Kent

Lecture to go with the above Open Access Book.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ln6HBIOREbw>

## Answers to Quiz

1. Dolaucothi 2. Maat 3. Ruthenia 4. Ishtar 5. Santa Maria  
6. Pitt Rivers 7. Thegns 8. Clerestory 9. Tessera 10.  
Saqqara