

(14) MANY THANKS FOR THE REPORT, MARTIN



# SPRING UPDATE

Appleby Archaeology Group

February 1999

## Members Evening

I want to begin this newsletter by congratulating those members who took part in the January meeting. They gave five excellent talks which together made a very enjoyable evening. (For those who missed the meeting, Phyllis Rouston has written a summary of the talks overleaf). I hope we can do this again next year.

## Membership

The groups new committee met for the first time on 19th January and the issue of membership renewal was discussed. Several members have enquired about this and it was decided that an annual subscription paid by all members each January would help to simplify the situation.

Subscriptions are therefore due now! However it was decided that members who joined recently (since September 98) need not renew until January 2000. I hope this clarifies matters. Please use the renewal form provided in order to keep our records straight.

I hope everyone has found something of interest during our first year and will continue to take part in the group. If anyone has any suggestions for future activities or ideas about what they would like to get out of the group then please get in touch.

## Book Library

The book loan scheme outlined last summer was reviewed by the committee as there has been little response to this so far. It was recognised that the idea could be simplified by including a 'Requests Section' in the newsletter. If anyone has a request for information or would like to locate or borrow a book, then send details to me and it will be included in the next Update.

The next committee meeting will be held on 13th April.

Martin Railton

## Remember Subscriptions are now due

Please complete the membership renewal form and return with payment to:

Appleby Archaeology Group: HILLSIDE,  
NEWBIGGIN, TEMPLE SOWERBY, CA10 1TE

If you joined after 1st September 98  
you need not pay until January 2000

## SPRING EVENTS:

### Archaeology and Religion

#### EXCAVATIONS AT DACRE CHURCH

*Rachel Newman*

**Tues 2nd Mar.** Appleby Grammar School 7.00pm

An evening with Rachel Newman who has wide experience in archaeology and will introduce us to the Mediaeval period. Was there an Anglo-Saxon monastery at Dacre? Listen to the evidence and decide for yourself!

#### VISIT TO SHAP ABBEY

**Sun 18th April**

**2.00pm**

Enjoy an afternoon visit to the ruins of Shap Abbey and a walk around some of the abbey lands. Harry Hawkins will be our guide to the site and surrounding landscape.

Meet in the Abbey Carpark

#### Cult or Creed in Roman Cumbria?

*Georgina Plowright*

**Tues 4th May** Appleby Grammar School 7.00pm

What does it mean to be religious in Roman times? Georgina Plowright, curator at Chesters fort and Corbridge, will explore this issue with reference to the archaeology of the period.

#### Field Trip: THE WHITHORN DIG

**Sun 23rd May**

**12 Places**

**Cost: £8.50**

We will spend the afternoon at Whithorn where there are extensive excavations open to the public, including an early Christian monastery and Viking trading post, Priory ruins, Carved stones and an exhibition centre. On the journey there will be time to examine some impressive prehistoric chambered tombs at Cairnholy. (For the prehistorians among us!). Please use the form provided to book a place.

Meet minibus at 9.00am, Chapel Street Carpark, Appleby. Bring a packed lunch

---

AGM and Member's Evening held at Appleby  
Grammar School 12/1/99

Martin Railton gave a brief report on the first year of the Appleby Archaeology Group, during which membership has grown from 2 to 57. The financial report was tabled. A small committee is now being formed to formalize the business and to involve more members in the activities of the group.

Chairman: Martin Railton      Tel 61633  
Publicity: Georgina Plowright      Tel 61303  
Treasurer: Aileen Tyers      Tel 61633  
Secretary: Phyllis Rouston      Tel 53463  
Research Officer: Patricia Crompton      Tel 51464

Five members presented interesting and informative talks.

We started off with a trip along Hadrian's Wall. Anthony Smethurst, using some lovely slides demonstrated the main features of "The wall" visiting forts, milecastles, turrets, sites of bridges and mills. It was interesting to note that both the North Tyne and the Irthing have since changed course. The ditch and the vallum were clearly seen as was the structure of the wall itself including conduits near Birdoswald suggesting that it was very wet in that area in Roman times. Evidence of changes in the plan of the wall and rebuilding were illustrated as were buildings in which stones from the wall were subsequently used.

Georgina Plowright outlined the evidence of the presence of a Roman Fort at Kirby Thore. An aerial photograph showed the outline of a major part of the fort although there is little to see on the ground. The site is on the Roman road from Carlisle to York and on The Maiden Way. Finds of quarry inscriptions suggest that it may have been built by legionaries and grave stones indicate that it had at some time been a cavalry garrison. It was occupied from 80's to 4th century AD and may have been a depot for lead mining and perhaps gypsum. Many of the artefacts found over the years are in the British Museum. The potential site of the civilian settlement has been the subject of recent excavations.

We moved to the medieval period when Harry Hawkins spoke about Shap Abbey outlining its history and showing slides of archaeological features not normally seen by visitors to the site. The Abbey a Premonstratensian house was founded in 1190 at Preston Patrick moving to Shap in 1200, it was suppressed in 1540. The archaeological features included earth works to the west, precinct walls to the east, and a mill race. Tracks can be seen leading down to a ford to the south and to the mill, a well used hollow way leading to fields can be seen. Cultivation terraces and a deer park, which may post-date the Abbey are evident at Wet Sleddale the site of one of the Abbey's Granges, at Regill Grange there is evidence of a chapel but a substantial bank remains a mystery.

Staying with the monastic theme Patricia Crompton described the work she had done researching Appleby Friary. The Friary founded in 1281 and dissolved in 1543 was a Carmelite House (White Friars). The friars would have been self sufficient, the Friary is mentioned in a number of local wills. Using a series of maps she described the site on Battlebarrow, pointing out features eg site of wells, sikes draining to the Eden, fields used for cultivation, and the fish ponds. The buildings of Carmelites were seldom large or elaborate and probably soon fell into ruin with the stone being used for other building. There is evidence of dressed stone used in nearby houses and a 14th century window can be seen built into the barn on the site.

The evening concluded with Celia Kinnersley describing her discoveries on the site of the tithe barn for Brampton which lies at the west end of the churchyard of Long Marton Church. There is little left of any buildings but through the searching of documents, local knowledge and an ability to remove couch grass Celia was able to present a clear picture, not of the original tithe barn but of the threshing barn and horse house that replaced it. The barn was in use from the late 17th century until the 20th. In the 1950's the horse house fell down with some of the barn, by the 60's it was scarcely used except by tramps, it was demolished in the 70's. Diagrams circulated showed the arrangement of buildings on the site, and the construction of the barn and horse house circa 1900.

Phyllis H Rouston Tel 017683 53463

---