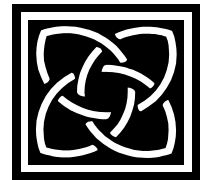


Appleby Archaeology Newsletter



Volume 13 Issue 4 : Winter 2010

Group News

Accompanying this Newsletter you should find the Minutes of last year's AGM and the Agenda for next. The AGM will be held on Tuesday 11th Jan. Subscriptions are now due and it would be helpful if you could use the enclosed form. You can either send payment straight to the membership secretary (see below) or alternatively pay at the AGM.

Following our appeal for new Committee Members Jennifer Callis and Carol Dougherty have stepped forward and said they would like to join the Committee. Carol has gone even further and said she is also happy to take on the role of Membership Secretary. Her address is on the Renewal Form. Our heartfelt thanks to both Carol and Jenn!

Another piece of news which I think will please you is that we've been awarded a grant by the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society (CWAAS) to carry out C14 tests on samples from the last Brackenber excavation. You may remember that back in 2009 we managed to get some potentially datable material from the ditch infill. Carbon 14 tests are expensive but we felt that getting a date for this phase of the site is very important. It is very encouraging to find that CWAAS agrees and we are very grateful to them for their generosity. I hope we shall be able to tell you the results early in 2011.

In the meantime let me wish you all

**A Merry Christmas
and Best Wishes for 2011**

Martin Joyce



The Scots

At their October meeting Appleby Archaeology Group enjoyed a return visit from Sheena Gemmel. Last year she spoke on the Picts. This time her talk was on *The impact and legacy of the arrival of the Scots in Dalriada in the 5th century.*

People from the north coast of Ireland mounted raids on the west coast of Roman Britain in the 3rd and 4th centuries. The Romans called them the Scotii. After the Romans left Britain the northern part was peopled by three distinct groups. In the north and east of what is now Scotland were the Picts; in the west and in present day Cumbria and Wales were the Britons and in the east, south of the Forth, were the Angles. By the 5th century the Scots had settled and formed the kingdom of Dalriada in what is today Argyleshire, the Mull of Kintyre and associated islands. Over-population in Ireland is probably the reason why the Scots sought new territory. The west coast of Scotland was easily reached by sea and there were few Pictish settlements in the area. The Picts occupied the fertile lands on the east coast, and a mountain spine similar to the Penines separated Dalriada from Pictland. There is very little physical evidence of Dalriada and most information comes from Irish and Northumbrian



Map showing extent of Dalriada in western Scotland

documents. Significant among these are Adoman's "Life of St Columba" in which sea voyages are mentioned 56 times and a 7th century document "the

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Senechus” which records such details as households, the number of ships and the number of men able to sail them.

The kinship group was the main unit of society and each group had a leader or sub-king who owed allegiance to a high king. There was an unusual form of succession known as “tanistry“. The successor, had to be sound in body and mind and was elected before the death of the reigning king. He was chosen from within the kinship group but was not necessarily a direct descendant of the king.

The Scots were seafarers who travelled south and west reaching as far as the Mediterranean. There is little evidence of their domestic life in Dalriada but what there is suggests that they had small farms where they grew oats and barley, and reared cattle (which were half the size of today’s animals). Fishing provided a further food source.

Sheena spoke about two sites of power which were both in commanding defensive positions. Dunollie was a hill fort overlooking Oban Bay and is mentioned in The Irish Annals. Dunadd was on a rocky outcrop, then surrounded by marshland, situated between Loch Fyne and the Sound of Jura.

Both sites have been excavated. The most recent excavation was at Dunadd where small tools, crucibles and casts for brooches were found. Evidence of trading was found in the form of shards of continental pottery, fragments of glass and traces of a yellow dye from the eastern Mediterranean. The Scots were a cultivated people. On the rock face there are intriguing examples of rock art and, in a hollow, there is the deeply carved outline of a human foot. It is thought, by some, that the king would place his foot in the carved footprint at his inauguration.

The major legacy of the Scots from Dalriada was the revival of Christianity after the fall of the Roman Empire. It is known that when they arrived from Ireland they were Christian and had adopted a monastic system. In 563 St Columba (521-597), an Irish prince and monk who had studied at Clonard Monastery in Northern Ireland, came to Dalraida where he established a monastic community on Iona. This became the most influential centre of Christianity in Britain in the 6th and 7th centuries.

Missions went out from Iona to convert the Picts and Angles. Records tell us that St Columba converted the Northern Picts and that in the 7th century missionaries from Iona were a major influence in the conversion of the Angles of Northumbria.

There was an emphasis on learning and literature in the monasteries, and texts, poems and hymns were written and illustrated on Iona. St Columba is credited with transcribing three hundred books and the monastery library contained Greek and Latin texts as well as early scientific works. With the arrival of the Vikings these texts were lost. Some, such as the Book of Kells, may have been

dispersed to other monasteries for safe-keeping. This is thought by some to have been begun on Iona and then taken to Kells in County Meath where it was completed. The Book of Kells is now a prized possession of Trinity College Dublin.

Dalriadan culture reached its high point in the 8th century when its decorative artwork in jewellery, illuminated texts, and carved stone crosses reflected Irish, Pictish and Northumbrian influences.



The carved footprint at Dunadd

The Viking raids started in the late 8th century and Iona was first attacked in 795. The Scots, whose influence by this time had spread eastwards and southwards, reached an accommodation with the Picts and the two kingdoms merged to form the Kingdom of Alba under Kenneth mac Alpin. His successors ruled Scotland until the 13th century.

Sheena concluded by emphasising the legacy left by the Scots of Dalriada and answering a number of questions, She was thanked and warmly applauded for a fascinating glimpse into a period of history that was new to many present.

Phyllis Rouston

Excavations at Brougham in 2008

Ian Miller, Senior Project Officer, Oxford Archaeology North, attracted a large audience to the November meeting when he spoke on the *Excavations at Brougham in 2008 - The Long Way to Publication*. Ian explained his title by emphasising that excavation was only part of the investigation of a site, and that the work of data gathering and interpretation is a long process, and that publishing the results takes time. He began by reviewing the information about the site prior to the 2008 excavation.

The Romans probably arrived in the area around 60 AD and built a fort at what appears to have been a strategic position. The site lies south of the confluences of the rivers Eamont and Lowther and at the intersection of two Roman roads. The medieval castle was built in the north east corner of the fort and the fort, now a scheduled monument, has never been excavated. Observations made by antiquarians suggested the presence of a vicus or civilian settlement in the vicinity of the fort.

In 1967/68 a rescue dig in advance of the straightening of the A66 revealed the largest area of cemetery associated with a fort, that had been excavated in the north at that time. Two hundred and ninety three funerary features were recovered. The finds were puzzling and it is only recently that advances in scientific and statistical techniques have led to their re-examination. In 2004 a report was published and we now know that this is a third century cemetery which was probably the burial place for the whole community. Men, women and children were cremated and buried there, as were cavalry from the garrison. Evidence suggests that the cavalry may have come from the Danubian frontier and intriguingly two women were burnt with horses and military equipment on their pyres. Following the publication of this report Penrith Museum hosted an exhibition titled *Into the Hands of the Shades* in Autumn 2005.

In 1991 prior to the installation of a gas pipeline, excavations at Fremington just to the east of the fort found the first evidence in Cumbria of sixth to seventh century Anglo Saxon sunken featured buildings. Many of the finds associated with these buildings were Roman. Around the same time surveys in fields north of the A66 at Frenchfields recorded possible evidence of the vicus. A number of features were noted including roads, buildings, cobbled yards and ditches which could have been field boundaries.

In 2007 United Utilities asked Oxford Archaeology North to evaluate the proposed route of the Hackthorpe-Penrith waste water pipeline as this would lie close to the fort and cemetery site and it was important to determine the route that would least damage the archaeology. In very wet weather during the summer of 2008 a 10m wide corridor was excavated along the agreed route.

At the eastern end of the site two cremation burials were found possibly indicating the edge of the cemetery found in the 1960s. A pit, which may be another sunken dwelling, was noted and indicates occupation of the area after the Romans left. There was evidence showing that the Romans cultivated the fields to the west of the fort. Ditches, track ways leading to the fields and watering holes for animals have all been identified. Pollen anal-

ysis has found charred grains of wheat, oats and barley, and the presence of alder and heather which may have been used for bedding. Results of further environmental analysis and carbon dating are awaited.

Evidence found directly south of the fort suggests that the vicus extended both north and south along the Roman road from Ribchester to Carlisle. The excavation revealed a road leading to the southern entrance of the fort with roads branching off and buildings lining them. The buildings appear to have been timber built on stone foundations and to have been rebuilt over time. One had been reconstructed in stone, which is unusual and suggests that it was an important building.

The artefacts found on the site begin to give us a picture of the life of the people who lived in the vicus. They would have been traders and craftsman along with the unofficial wives and children of soldiers garrisoned in the nearby fort. The vicus is thought to date back to the first century AD.

Over a thousand shards of pottery were found including Samian ware, a red glazed pottery produced as table ware from the first to the third centuries. This pottery usually bears the name of the potter or workshop and can be dated. No Samian ware was found from the second or third centuries, but there were shards of pottery, imported from Germany, which were dated to the third and fourth centuries. Much of the pottery is still being examined by experts. Pottery gaming counters and the remains of drinking vessels suggest that gambling and drinking were enjoyed.

Finds of copper and alloy buckles, of brooches and of jet and pewter buttons give some clues as to how clothes were worn. Other finds included third century silver dinarii and jewellery. The glass and jade beads hint at necklaces and, along with a jet pendant and ring, suggest that the women who wore the jewellery were of some status. An indication of the less wealthy is found in the spindle whorls made from broken pieces of pottery.

Ian summed up by saying there were still data to be interpreted and samples to be analysed and dated. But the information already known about the fort, the civilian settlement and cemetery at Brougham has shed light on the life and times of the Roman occupation in the north of England, and these findings are of national significance.

Phyllis Rouston



LDNPA Conference : 2010

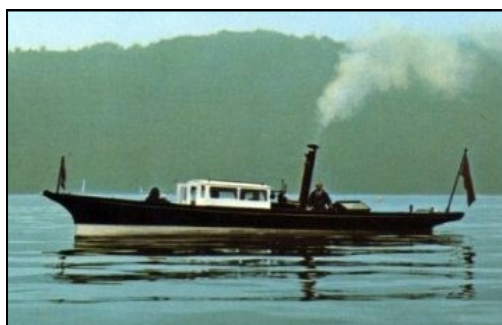
This year's Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) Conference maintained the best traditions of this long-established event as a low-cost and entertaining day out. However we were warned by the Chairman that its future is now uncertain. The Authority is nervously awaiting decisions about its funding following a near thirty percent cut in the budget of its parent body, the Department of Rural Affairs. Given the strong support evident in a near-capacity audience, however, it seems that the LDNPA ought not to find too much difficulty in weathering the coming storm.

Eleanor Kingston was the first speaker of the day and she gave us a quick review of the recent achievements of the LDNPA's archaeologists. Following last autumn's disastrous flooding there has been particular emphasis on the conservation of historic monuments and she showed a fascinating series of slides demonstrating how preventative maintenance had restored a number of curious water-toughs on farmland at Lorton.

The main meat of the day was delivered by Jamie Lund who described fieldwork and documentary searches on the Sizergh estate ahead of possible extensions of the National Park. It was impressive to see how much new information could be unearthed by a systematic and determined approach using professional leaders to coordinate the work of local volunteers.

A talk on Longhouse Structures by John Hodgson led to a detailed and extremely interesting description of an excavation of a farmstead in Eskdale by students from Birmingham University. One particular variation of longhouse design utilised a double wall which it was surmised had been infilled with bracken – a sort of early cavity-wall insulation!

The day concluded with a talk on Historic Boats by Diana Matthews of the Windermere Steamboat Museum Trust. There may not have been much archaeology here but she had some beautiful slides of early steam launches and it provided a nice conclusion to the day. Last year, of course, the Conference



Steam launch "Dolly" on Windermere

was followed immediately by the Cockermouth floods. One wondered if Diana's watery tale might precipitate a repeat performance. Fortunately not!

Martin Joyce

Winter Programme

2009 Excavation at Boroughgate, Appleby

Tuesday 14th December

Martin Railton
North Pennines Archaeology

AGM and Members' Evening

7.00pm Tuesday 11th January

Dr Stephen Walker will describe his research into the enigmatic "stone men" of **Nine Standards Rigg**

Excavations at Abbeytown

Tuesday 8th February

Jan Walker

West Cumbria Archaeological Society.
Jan will bring us up to date on progress on this long-running Community Project excavation

Gypsum Mining in the Eden Valley - 200 years of underground industrial history

Tuesday 8th March

Ian Tyler
Keswick Mining Museum



SENDER:

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