



ULSTER
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

Newsletter

Summer 2022

Editor: Duncan Berryman

School of Natural
and Built Environment,
Queen's University Belfast
Belfast BT7 1NN

newsletter.ulsterarcoc@gmail.com

Find us online at: uas.society.qub.ac.uk

Find us on Facebook and Twitter (@UlsterArcSoc)

Email us at: ulsterarchaeosoc@gmail.com



Lectures 2022

We will continue to hold lectures over Zoom, and the Secretary will announce should there be face-to-face meetings again. Zoom links will be emailed out to members and anyone can watch on our YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/c/TheUlsterArchaeologicalSociety>

25 th July	40 Years 'a Digging. Reflections of an Irish Field Archaeologist Ruairí Ó Baoill, Centre for Community Archaeology
29 th August	Larne Lough. A Forgotten Seascape Stephen Cameron, Antrim County Archaeological Society
26 th September	Exploring Ulster's hidden medieval landscape Dr Laura Patrick, Queen's University Belfast
31 st October	The Tara Research Project Roseanne Schot, The Discovery Programme
28 th November	The Archaeology of Hunter-Gatherer Ireland Graeme Warren, University College Dublin
12 th December	Mullyash Mountain and the Ulster Warriors: the extraordinary history, iconography and geology of the claimed pagan statues of Ulster Richard Warner

Discovery 2022! Conference

The Discovery 2022! Conference will be held on Saturday 12th November.

We hope this will be again held in the School of Natural and Built Environment, Queen's University Belfast, as well as online. However, this cannot be confirmed at this stage.

Fieldtrips

7pm Monday 22nd August – walking tour of Newtownards

Meet in Conway Square (the central market square of the town) near the town hall. The tour will take in sites around the town centre. Sensible footwear is recommended, although most of the walk is on pavement. There are several car parks around the town, parking in most is free after 6.30pm.

Other fieldtrips will be notified by email from the Hon. Secretary

Other Diary Dates

National Heritage Week (Ireland) – 13th to 22nd August.

See <https://www.heritageweek.ie/> and social media.

European Heritage Open Days (Northern Ireland) – 10th and 11th September with week-long digital events taking place from 5th – 11th September. You can keep up to date with all things EHOD and much more by signing up to the LoveHeritageNI

newsletter <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/d/079FA3D572DB0718> or following on social media.

Archaeology Ireland/National Monuments Service 5th Annual Conference –

2nd Oct. Boyne & Beyond. At Dublin Castle or

online. <https://archaeologyireland.ie/conference-2022/> Book via

Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/boyne-beyond-tickets-332848848867>

"Idols and Unclean Things": The Gortnacranagh Figure and its Context

A one-day conference and photographic exhibition on the Gortnacranagh figure and its context.

20th August 2022. Rathcroghan Visitor Centre, Tulsk & Online.

Book here: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/gortnacranagh-idol-conference-online-tickets-369259102917?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

The Conference

In autumn 2021, archaeologists from Archaeological Management Solution announced the discovery of a late Iron Age human-shaped wooden figure from a wetland at Gortnacranagh, northeast of Tulsk, Co, Roscommon. The remarkable artefact made international news. It came from a rich archaeological site within the broader Rathcroghan landscape, where for several millennia people deposited objects, human remains, and animal remains into the water.

This conference will bring together international experts to explore the Gortnacranagh figure and the site in its broader context.

Keynote Lecture and Programme

Dr Melanie Giles, University of Manchester will deliver the keynote lecture (on the Roos Carr figures), and officially unveil the replica Gortnacranagh figure and its new display.

The programme will include talks by Dr Katharina Becker (UCC), Dr Ben Geary (UCC), Cathy Moore (Archaeology and Built Heritage), Dr Eve Campbell (AMS), Dr Daniel Curley (RVC), and Dr Ros Ó Maoldúin (AMS).

Photo exhibition - "Unmasked: Portrait of Gortnacranagh"

The event will also include an in-person and virtual photo exhibition by John Channing (AMS). The exhibition titled, "Unmasked: Portrait of Gortnacranagh", is a series of portraits of the archaeologists who excavated the site of Gortnacranagh. The exhibition will be digitally screened as part of the conference programme.

Discovery 2022! Sixth Annual Review of Archaeological Discoveries in Ulster conference – 2nd call for papers

The sixth Discovery conference will be held on Saturday 12th November 2022. This year will mark the 75th anniversary of the first meeting of the UAS. The conference will present recent archaeological research, but it will also look at 75 years of growth in Ulster archaeology. Since 1947 there have been many advancements in our understanding of the past and how we do archaeology. This year's conference is a good opportunity to reflect on these changes.

We hope to be able to hold the conference physically in Queen's University. However, it is too early to tell and further details will be provided in a future Newsletter.

The conference organisers would be grateful to hear from anyone who would like to present a paper at the conference. Papers can

cover recent research, excavations, community initiatives, or reflect on the development of archaeology over the past 75 years. Papers will be 20 minutes in length. Please send a title and a short (max 200 words) abstract to duncan@ulsterarchaeology.org by 22nd August.

February Lecture

The February lecture was given by Dr Finbar McCormick on the subject of holy wells. A full report will be included in a subsequent issue of the Newsletter.

April Lecture

The Society's April lecture was given by Dr Linda Boutoille, of Queen's University Belfast. Her lecture was titled "If I had a hammer": Bronze Age metalworkers and their tools.

The Irish Bronze Age produced some of the most spectacular examples of gold artefacts. In particular are the ribbon torcs and lunulae. The production of these artefacts required incredible skill

and creativity, which is even hard to recreate today.

Much of the metalwork produced in the Bronze Age was cast in moulds. Moulds were made with the shape of the object and decoration, which were filled with molten metal. This allowed large objects to be created, such as swords and daggers. The moulds were made from stone, clay, or metal. Plastic deformation was also used to transform a solid piece of metal into an object. This involved hammering the metal into a sheet and shaping it into the desired object. This could make the metal brittle. However, this technique could make objects that were much thinner and lighter than cast objects. The hammer and anvil used in shaping the object could have been metal, stone, or wood.

Metal working tools have been found in a range of locations, particularly in hoards, settlements, graves, or as stray finds. However, tools for casting and plastic deformation are not normally found in the same context. The most complete collection of metal working tools was found at

Génelard, Saône-et-Loire (France). This contained some finished objects (knives, a spearhead, pins) along with anvils, a stone hammer, bronze hammers, and a bronze mould. The stone hammer was a recycled polished stone axe head. Finds from Bishopsland, Kildare, are the best selection of metalworking tools in Ireland. This included an anvil, hammers, chisels, and a hand vice along with other tools and personal objects. The anvil was small and cruciform, it would have been embedded in a block of wood and would have been used for delicate work, especially gold working. Both these hoards contained flesh hooks, used to remove meat from a cooking pot. This suggests a connection between metal working and communal feasting. The small collection of tools found at Lusmagh, Offaly, contained 2 metal hammers, a metal anvil, and two chisels. The tools appear to have a different pattern to those at Bishopsland and Génelard, suggesting a different origin. Tools in hoard deposits appear to be exclusively for plastic deformation and the size indicates they were

mainly for jewellery and goldsmithing.

Casting moulds have been found across Ireland. These can be divided into two phases: Omagh phase (c.1700-1600 BCE) and Killymaddy phase (1600-1400 BCE). The Omagh hoard contained casts to produce tanged spearheads, socket spearheads, dagger blades, and an anvil. The Killymaddy (Antrim) hoard had moulds for casting various spearheads, dirks, tanged knives, daggers, and sickles.

Stone casting moulds were most commonly found during the Killymaddy phase and do not appear to be contemporaneous with metal working tools. It is possible that casting and sheet metalworking were two distinct practices carried out by different craftspeople.

There are 18 known late Bronze Age settlements with evidence of metalworking. Lough Gur (Limerick) was one of the earliest domestic complexes to have evidence of metalworking, fragments of a clay mould were

found within a house. Rathgall (Wicklow) was a defended enclosure, excavations produced over 2000 fragments of clay moulds for swords, spearheads, axe heads, and gouges. There was clearly industrial production of metal objects. Dun Aengus (Galway) is a cliff-top stone fort which had hundreds of fragments of clay moulds for swords, spearheads, pins, and bracelets, as well as crucibles. Here there is also evidence for large-scale metalworking alongside evidence for communal feasting. The King's Stables (Armagh) had 18 fragments of clay moulds within a narrow trench alongside the ritual pool. Deposition of metal artefacts in pools is common in Ireland but rarely found elsewhere. Haughey's Fort (Armagh) has not produced any tools or moulds for metalworking, but there is evidence of metal objects. This was a defended place used for feasting. Within settlements, there is no evidence of metal tools, thus the craftspeople must have been using alternative materials. There is also little evidence for spatial organisation within the settlements, metalworking appears

to have been carried out in domestic settings.

The inclusion of metalworking tools within graves was a feature across Europe, but none have been found in Ireland. A burial at Sao Pedro do Estoril (Portugal) was accompanied by pottery vessels, archery bracers, metal weapons, gold spirals and 2 stone tools for metal working. Grave 3 at Los Cipreses (Spain) had two hammer/anvil stones, a halberd, two daggers, one bead, an arm bracer, and some pottery. Casting moulds were found in grave 5 at Spokojna Strret, Legnica (Poland). A burial at Puls (Germany) contained several weapons and artefacts along with a metal hammer. Many of the burials appear to have been high-status individuals, but some were normal graves. It is hard to tell if all tool burials were craftspeople or whether metal working tools became status symbols.

During the Bronze Age, the metal worker's tools were made from a range of materials, showing a knowledge of the mechanical capacity of metal and the effect of different materials. Metalworking

took place within domestic dwellings and high-status sites, suggesting a range of functions and purposes. Evidence of Bronze casting is often found alongside evidence of communal feasting, indicating a gathering of metalworkers or a community. Like meat, weapons and objects could have been distributed among the guests. Bronze Age society was complex, with specialist craftspeople (goldsmiths, etc.) and domestic producers (making tools).

Duncan Berryman

May Lecture

The Society's May lecture was given by Dr James O'Neill, of Ulidia Heritage Services. His lecture was titled Bricks, Steel and a lot of Concrete: The Defence Heritage Resurvey of Northern Ireland.

The Defence Heritage project started in 1997 as part of the Defence of Britain Project under the Council for British Archaeology. Volunteers across Northern Ireland identified 326

sites. The focus of this work was the four main periods of conflict that affected Northern Ireland – WW1, WW2, The Cold War, and The Troubles. There were 738 sites recorded in the Defence Heritage database.

In 2018, the Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership commissioned a survey of the WW2 airfields at Toome and Cluntoe. This revealed there was a significant issue of under-reporting of monuments within the areas of the airfields. The HED mapviewer only had a single point to mark the airfield, but there was a huge number of features surrounding the main runway that were also important to understanding the site. This was also highlighted during the Binevenagh and Costal Lowlands Defence Heritage Mapping survey. Ballykelly and Limavady airfields were surrounded by features and structures.

The airfields were the first issue for the resurvey of defence heritage. There were three airfields dating to pre-WW2. Several large structures survived at these airfields. WW2 saw a massive expansion to 19

airfields and two flying boat stations. There were five types of airfield needed for various parts of the RAF or others – fighter command, bomber command, coastal command, RN Fleet Air Arm, USAAF. Most airfields had a three-runway layout. Bishops Court was the first airfield to be recorded. It was marked on the HED map as a single dot, it is now recorded as 236 dots and shown as covering a much wider area than previously identified. It retains a lot of the original WW2 buildings and had several Cold War-era buildings. Early hangars still remain at many sites, these were for the repair of planes. A T2 hangar at Maghaberry had its original cladding and gantry crane, dating it to 1941 and its use in the construction of aircraft that was dispersed from Shorts during the Belfast Blitz. Dispersal areas for aircraft spread them around the airfield and kept them safe from enemy attack. Some buildings were used for training gunners, pilots, and ground crew. Within the buildings were graffiti and posters reminding us of the people that lived and worked in these buildings.

Alongside the airfields were dispersed living sites, including barracks, ablution blocks, and latrines. At Maghaberry there was a field full of bases for Nissan huts, most airfields would have such huts. Many also had air-raid shelters to protect against bombing raids on the airfields.

The airfields were defended with pillboxes and other defensive features. There are more pillboxes on airfields than other places, such as coastal regions. At Limavady, there was a gas decontamination unit complete with its Portland filter to protect against gas in the air.

Around the coast, there were pillboxes and other defences to slow attacks by landings while forces were prepared in-land. Stop Lines were established along rivers to prevent further progress of the enemy, by blowing up bridges. Several towns were turned into forward defence localities, with 360° defences.

There were four anti-aircraft gun defences. There's a higher survival rate of heavy anti-aircraft defences

in Northern Ireland compared to England. Radar was also installed across Northern Ireland.

Troop training ranges were constructed across the country. At Dunseverick there was an anti-tank training range with a track for a tank to be moved along. At Fecarry there was a small arms range with marker gallery for targets and the backstop hillside, which was devoid of vegetation because of the amount of lead from training shots.

Facilities were built with the possibility of nuclear forces being deployed here. Ballykelly had operational readiness platforms for V-bombers in case the home bases in England were destroyed and they had to be relocated. The Royal Observer Corps had 59 bunkers built across Northern Ireland. These bunkers fitted 3 men with supplies for 14 days, they would have recorded the force of a nuclear blast and wind conditions for the fallout.

The condition of these buildings has been deteriorating, as most are derelict. Field clearance has

resulted in the loss of things like dispersal pans. However, there has been reuse of many buildings. At Bishops Court, the barracks have all been converted into holiday homes. The bomb aimer at Cluntoe and control tower at Mullaghmore have both been converted to houses.

There is now 3,826 monuments recorded in the database. 152 sites have been recommended for scheduling and 48 sites for listing. The project is ongoing and will definitely uncover many more sites.

Duncan Berryman

Ecclesiastical Routeway: Templepatrick to Mallusk

Overview

This routeway roughly follows parallel to the Old Coach Road between Mallusk and Templepatrick B25 but slightly to the north. It was first identified on a Digital Elevation Model (DEM) while surveying the area surrounding the Norman Motte at Roughfort (not on the SMR). The feature appeared as a double edged linear routeway traversing

east/west. The feature can be traced eastward mostly in the Google Earth 2010 dataset right to the edge of the old burial ground which is the site of what the SMR describes as a multiperiod church & graveyard with well, souterrain & bullaun.

Description

On first observation it could be argued that this is the remnant of an earlier Coach Road and the current B95 is just a realignment of the feature. The feature can be traced very clearly running eastward, however it terminates right at ANT056:040 which is the Vicarage of Maynblosse, the site of an early/medieval ecclesiastical site. The routeway crosses the Ballymartin Water at a set of rapids which was most likely a ford. The 3rd Edition 6" maps show 'Stepping Stones' at this point.

The routeway can be traced westward to just beyond Roughfort where it converges on the line of the existing B95 thereafter there is no individual representation of the routeway. Extrapolating the line however leads directly to the medieval ecclesiastical site

recorded in the SMR as a church, burial ground & holy well: St Patrick's Church & St Patrick's Well and slightly further on to what is now Castle Upton.

The SM7 file authored by Clare Foley in 1978 states that the Mallusk site was founded by the Knights of St John of Jerusalem and in the 14/15th Century they also founded a strong castle and church or temple at what is now Castle Upton at Templepatrick.

Interpretation

The line of this routeway clearly connects these 2 sites. It is striking just how straight this routeway is and the fact that there appears to have been clearly defined edges, either as walls or ditches or both. This would indicate that there was some sort of graded surface in between. There is a small 65m section mid-way between Roughfort and Mallusk Cemetery which is still used as a lane at 54.684122°, -6.014660°

David Craig

Images on the back of Newsletter.

New Books

Female Monasticism in Medieval Ireland: An Archaeology – Tracy Collins Maguire
Cork University Press, £35

This is the first book to explore the archaeology of female monasticism in Ireland. Collins takes us beyond a study of the architecture of nunneries and location in the landscape. She uses these aspects to provide a detailed discussion of daily life within Irish nunneries, the position of women in Irish medieval society, as well as the experience of death. Throughout, the book is well illustrated with coloured figures helping to demonstrate the details discussed. This is an essential book for anyone interested in Medieval Irish society as it enlightens a neglected area.

Animals and Sacred Bodies in Early Medieval Ireland – John Soderberg
Lexington Books, £81

This book looks at life in the medieval monastery of Clonmacnoise but attempts to widen our perspective on early medieval society by considering the intersection between religion

and economics. This study focuses on the assemblage of animal bones found at Clonmacnoise and how the raising, slaughter, and consumption of these animals made the monastery sacred. Through this work we are shown the monastery and religious life through the eyes of the lowest classes who brought their cattle to be slaughtered, rather than through the eyes of monks or abbots who are so often the focus. Soderberg's research gives us a valuable new understanding of the interaction between the secular and the sacred in early medieval society.

Grave Goods: Objects and death in later prehistoric Britain – A. Copper, D. Garrow, C. Gibson, M. Giles & N. Wilkin
O'Brien Press, £11.99

Grave goods are important in archaeological research, often being seen as representing identities. This book presents the results of a research project into the grave goods of British Prehistory. This research examined six regional case studies around Britain to look at national, regional,

and local patterns in the deposition of grave goods. The book opens with a retrospective on the study of grave goods before going into the detail of the project methodology and discussing the results. Despite being associated with the dead, much of this work draws out the stories of life and the material culture that the grave goods were part of before their deposition. This book provides an interesting perspective on death and society in prehistoric Britain.

Material Exchanges in Medieval and Early Modern Europe – M.E.Naum, J.Linaa & S. Escribano-Ruiz (eds)
Brepols, €75

The exchange of goods across Europe is often taken for granted, due to the regularity of trade during the Middle Ages. The essays in this book discuss the trade in some of the more mundane items, such as pots and glass. These studies remind us that all types of material were traded and transported across Europe. One paper looks at the movement and meaning of pilgrim badges, while another looks at men's shoes

in the 17th-century eastern Baltic region. These are probably not ground-breaking research papers, but they do enhance our understanding of everyday objects and interactions across Europe.

Art and Archaeology

I was recently alerted to the art work of one of our more recent members, Seanna O'Boyle-Irvine, but unfortunately just missed her recent exhibition inspired by Irish Rock Art in her home town of Whitehead. You can see the press item here, notwithstanding the misleading headline!

<https://www.irishnews.com/arts/2022/04/27/news/rock-of-ages-ancient-celtic-rock-art-inspires-modern-exhibition-2652001/> I was intrigued, and had a look at her website

<https://www.misehandmade.com/> to see some of her other work. Hugely impressed, I contacted her to find out more.

Seanna is an entirely self-taught artist, inspired by her love of Irish archaeology which she has been studying at NUI Galway.

<https://www.nuigalway.ie/courses/>

[adult-and-continuing-education-courses/archaeologyofirelandonline/ediploma/](https://www.nuigalway.ie/courses/archaeologyofirelandonline/ediploma/). She started off making small pieces of furniture such as three-legged stools and side tables, made from a variety of locally sourced sustainable wood. Each has little pieces of decoration with Neolithic to "Celtic" designs included. She then started making multi-media pieces using symbols from cup-and-ring marked stones, creating a series of works based on some of the best known Irish rock art sites. These were shown at the exhibition mentioned above.

By the time I met Seanna, most of the pieces were sold, but I knew I had to have one, so I commissioned her to make me a piece based on the rock art at Ormaig, Kilmartin Glen, Argyll. Not for one moment did I have any concerns that I wouldn't like it, but I am blown away by her talent and am absolutely delighted with the result. Now I need her to make me a side table, as soon as she has time!

Seanna also collects bog oak and bog pine (with permission) and has used this to create beautiful sculptures. QUB has dated this wood to c 3000-5000 BC. Her next

exhibition at the Theatre at the Mill, Mossley, will showcase this work from 2nd to 30th September.

<https://theatreatthemill.com/flax-gallery/seanna-oboyale-irvine-artefacts-our-archaeology-in-sculpture/> . (Walk-in, no booking

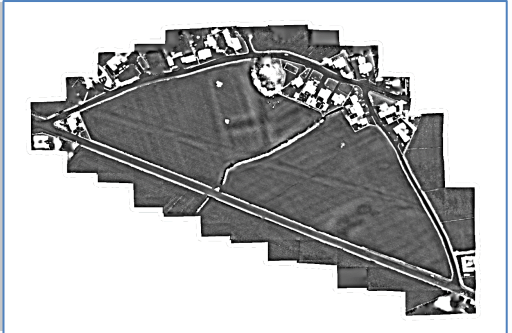
required) I'm sure she will appreciate the support of the UAS membership, so if you get a chance, go along and see the exhibition. See you there!

Anne MacDermott

President, Ulster Archaeological Society

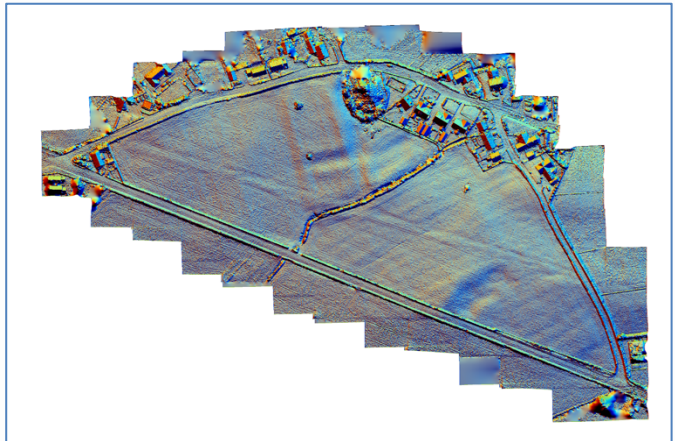
Ormaig Rock Art,
Argyll





Hillshade derived from drone acquired photogrammetry of Roughfort

Drone elevation derived Local Dominance Filtered (RVT)



Drone derived Hillshade lit from 16 different directions (1RVT)

Only metal detectorist find I could locate. Made of bronze and found not far off the line if the routeway

Ecclesiastical Routeway: Templepatrick to Mallusk