

# The Trowel

Newsletter of the Archaeology Section, University of Chester  
Winter 2010

Issue 8



## New Lecturer Appointed

The department is very pleased to welcome another full-time member of staff appointed as a Lecturer in Archaeology in September 2010. **Dr Anne Teather** is a specialist in the British Neolithic. She completed her PhD, which examined structured deposition in British Neolithic flint mines focusing on the architecture of the mines and their deposits, in 2008 at the University of Sheffield. She has excavated at sites in Scotland, Wales and England, including as a team member of the influential [Stonehenge Riverside Project](#), a collaborative enterprise involving the Universities of Sheffield, Manchester, Bristol, Bournemouth and University College London. In addition to her work on Neolithic archaeology, Anne is also one of the leaders of [British Women Archaeologists](#). This flagship organisation offers support, information, inspiration, networking and professional development for women working in all aspects of archaeology and heritage.



Anne Teather - Lecturer in Archaeology

## Professorial Promotion and Staff News

**Howard Williams** was promoted to Professor of Archaeology in August 2010. Howard has also been awarded a prestigious Leverhulme Trust Research Project Grant that will fund a new three-year project looking at tombs and memorials in English cathedrals called *Speaking with the Dead*. The project, which has been awarded over £200,000, is co-directed with Professor Philip Schwyzer, an expert in Renaissance literature at the University of Exeter.

**Meggen Gondek** was promoted to Reader in Archaeology in October 2010. Over the summer

she co-directed with Dr Heather James, University of Glasgow, an excavation of a unique Bronze Age triple cist burial monument as part of the SERF project (Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen).

**James Pardoe** was granted a sabbatical during the academic year 2010-2011 to complete a major piece of research on literary tourism. James recently gave a paper on interpretation issues of historic cities as part of the Portico Project. The Portico Project is funded by the EU and involves the cities of Chester (CWAC), Ghent, Utrecht and Cologne.

## Chester Archaeology Society Dissertation Prize

The 2010 Chester Archaeology Society annual Dissertation Prize was awarded to **Alison Smithson**, a combined History & Archaeology student, for her dissertation entitled: *'An Army of Ordinary People: Religious Nonconformism in Chester and South-west Cheshire 18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. Alison's research will also have the chance to be published in one of the Society's upcoming journals. Special mention also to the other nominees for the prize: Jessica Murray for *Power, Identity and Social Organisation within the Community of the Iron Age Hillfort Castle Ditches, Tilsbury: a Study of the Spatial Organisation of the Hillfort and its Hinterland* and Ruth Nugent for *Feathered Funerals: Birds in Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Rites*.



Alison Smithson receives her prize from  
CAS Chairman, Phil Miles

## Student wins national dissertation prize

**Ruth Nugent** won the prestigious 2010 John Hurst Dissertation Prize for the best undergraduate dissertation in medieval archaeology for her work on Anglo-Saxon burial rituals. The prize is awarded by the Society for Medieval Archaeology. The annual award is made to the undergraduate dissertation that makes the most original contribution to medieval archaeology (from AD 400 to 1,600) and Ruth is 'surprised and delighted' to have been selected from a whole range of submissions from the UK and Ireland. Ruth was presented her prize at the Society's AGM on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December. The Department is very proud of her outstanding achievement.



*Ruth Nugent and Professor Howard Williams celebrate her achievement*

## Project Eliseg

In late July, Howard and Visiting Professor Dai Morgan Evans conducted collaborative fieldwork with archaeologists from Bangor University involving a range of students from both universities and local volunteers. Project Eliseg investigated the Pillar of Eliseg near Llangollen, Wales, one of Britain's most famous but enigmatic early medieval sculpted stones. The dig revealed the composition of the undated mound upon which the Pillar is situated and found evidence of post-medieval visits to the monument. The project investigated the environs of the mound and further work is planned for 2011. An open day on the dig attracted hundreds of visitors. Updates and images from the project can be found on the project's website: <http://projecteliseg.org/>



*Students excavating at the Pillar of Eliseg*

## The Department moves to a new home

Over the summer months, the Department of History & Archaeology moved to a new location in the Binks Building on the main Chester campus. The new premises provide a large central office, already affectionately named the 'Hub.' In addition to our space in Binks, the archaeologists also have a new Workroom located in Small Hall. This new facility provides us designated equipment storage, finds storage and processing areas and a practical/lab-based teaching space.

## Recent Staff publications

Content, S. & Williams, H. 2010. Creating the Pagan English, in M. Carver, A. Sanmark & S. Semple (eds) *Signals of Belief in Early England: Anglo-Saxon Paganism Revisited*, Oxford: Oxbow, pp. 181-200.

Gondek, M. 2010. Constructing Sacred Space – Soil, Stone, Water & Symbols: Early Medieval Carved Stone Monuments from Tillytarmont, Aberdeenshire, in A. George, D. Hawley, G. Nash, J. Swann & L. Waite (eds) *Early Medieval Enquiries*, Bristol: Clifton Antiquarian Club, pp. 318-333.

Gondek, M. & Noble, G. 2010. Together as one: the landscape of the symbol stones at Rhynie, Aberdeenshire, in S. Driscoll, J. Geddes & M. Hall (eds) *Pictish Progress: Pictish Studies for the 21st Century*, Leiden: Brill, pp. 281-306.

Williams, H. 2010. At the funeral, in M. Carver, A. Sanmark & S. Semple (eds) *Signals of Belief in Early England: Anglo-Saxon Paganism Revisited*, Oxford: Oxbow, pp. 67-83.

Williams, H. 2010. Engendered bodies and objects of memory in Final Phase graves, in J. Buckberry & A. Cherryson (eds) *Later Anglo-Saxon Burial c. 650 – 1100 AD*, Oxford: Oxbow, pp. 24-36.



University of  
Chester

### Contact us:

Department of  
History & Archaeology  
University of Chester  
Parkgate Road  
Chester  
CH1 4BJ  
01244 511000  
[archaeology@chester.ac.uk](mailto:archaeology@chester.ac.uk)