



Monthly eNewsletter

April 2021

Hi everyone,

This month the UAS has taken the decision to update our health and safety statement in light of the easing of COVID-19 restrictions in Northern Ireland. Whilst we still can't meet together for lectures or trips, we recognise that current government guidance allows for small groups to undertake outdoor activities while social distancing and taking other precautions. The committee continues to review the available guidance and will update as the situation changes.

Hopefully by the time you read this you will have joined us for Prof. Murphy's lecture on Takabuti, the Egyptian mummy in the Ulster Museum, or you will have caught up with it on our YouTube channel. You should also be aware of the recently published book about this research (if not, there's more information at the end of this eNewsletter). If you want to find out more about the research that was carried out and talk to the experts, then you can join a one-day online seminar on Saturday 8th May.

Best wishes,

Duncan

Editor

Lectures 2021

We now have a programme for lectures for 2021. Zoom links will be emailed out to members and anyone can watch on our public YouTube channel - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_axPKzQwK60Pm6VOQUgLTw

31 May **Take me to church. A look at two Early Medieval enclosed settlements in County Armagh and their associations with early church sites**
Gavin Donaghy, Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd

28 June **An update on the findings of the 2018-19 Downpatrick Cathedral Hill excavations**
Brian Sloan, QUB

27 September **Movements and connections between Ireland and Scotland (and beyond!), from around 4000 BC to around 1500 BC**
Dr Alison Sheridan, National Museums Scotland

25 October **The transitory character of society in Gaelic Ulster**
Dr Katharine Simms, Trinity College Dublin

6 December **Reconstructing Ireland's Castles: An Archaeological Interpretation of the Environs of the Irish Tower-House**
Dr Michael O'Mahony, Queen's University Belfast

Health and Safety Statement Concerning Activities in 2021

With the increasing numbers of people now being vaccinated against Covid-19, and the continued fall in the number of confirmed cases, it is possible that in the next few months the Ulster Archaeological Society (UAS) may be able to resume some small-scale outdoors activities, such as the surveying of buildings and monuments. This would involve very small numbers of people participating and that would be carried out under strict social distancing and other necessary health and safety measures. These activities will be undertaken by people who are members of the UAS Survey Group. The priority of the Ulster Archaeological Society remains the health and safety of our members and the general public. We will, as always, be guided by Government health advice about what activities are safe and unsafe to resume in the coming months. Any small-scale outdoors activities that the Society may consider recommencing would be accompanied by very rigorous Risk Assessments, including Safe Systems of Work. These will cover the potential risks of the exposure to and spread of Covid-19. All actions and requirements specified must be adhered to in order to prevent such a possibility. Any resumed activities would be conducted safely and in accordance with current Government health guidelines.

For the foreseeable future and until we are advised by Government health guidance that it is safe again to do so, it will not be possible or desirable to resume face-to-face activities that require the sharing of vehicles, the sharing of the same equipment by multiple persons, the sharing of facilities, food or accommodation and any activity that does not allow for adequate social distancing. Such activities currently include conferences, study tours, field trips, workshops and lectures. Realistically, the UAS may not resume these types of face-to-face activities until 2022.

In 2020, the UAS relied on remote/ digital technology to allow the Society to safely and very successfully continue to carry out a large number of activities in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic. This year we will continue to rely on the same technology to help us. The UAS realizes that the social and collegial aspect of UAS

activities is one of the things that most attracts people to the Society. We hope that it is not too long until we are able once again to meet up with old friends and colleagues in person.

We will, of course, keep UAS members updated about all forthcoming UAS activities in the coming weeks and months. Please continue to check the UAS Facebook site and website regularly for details.

With all best wishes,

Ruairí Ó Baoill

UAS President, on behalf of the Committee of the Ulster
Archaeological Society

24th April 2021

Discovery 2021! Conference

We are starting to plan our annual Discovery conference for November. As the world continues to be uncertain, we are planning on hosting it virtually, with the hope that we may be able to have some face-to-face event as well as streaming lectures on-line. We are still at a very early stage and have yet to decide on a format. However, we would like to give our members and the public the opportunity to contribute to the conference. If you have been carrying out research in your local area, your favourite monument, or anything else and would like to share it with the conference then please send your idea to us. To allow the committee to assess contributions, please send an abstract of 300 words (maximum) outlining what you wish to present to Ruairí Ó Baoill at r.obaoill@qub.ac.uk

Further information about the conference and a link for registration will be available on our website later in the year - <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/uas/Conference/>

If you missed any of our previous conferences you can view the programmes and paper abstracts on our website - <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/uas/Conference/PreviousConferences/>

The Life and Times of Takabuti in Ancient Egypt: Investigating the Belfast Mummy

The mummy of Takabuti is one of the best known antiquities in the Ulster Museum, Belfast. Takabuti was a young woman who lived in Egypt during a tumultuous period, around 600 BC. Her mummy was unwrapped and investigated in Belfast in 1835. The results of the Takabuti Project (2007-2009 and 2018-2020) have culminated in the publication of a new book – The Life and Times of Takabuti in Ancient Egypt: Investigating the Belfast Mummy – which will be launched at the end of the seminar. The presentations in the seminar are based on sections of the book and have been designed to complement these.

While the focus of the book is on Takabuti, the research also shows how the combination of archaeological, historical and inscriptional evidence with multidisciplinary scientific techniques can enable researchers to gain a wealth of information about ancient Egypt. This not only relates to the individual historical context, ancestry and life events associated with Takabuti, but also to wider issues of health and disease patterns, lifestyle, diet, and religious and funerary customs in ancient Egypt.

The project has demonstrated how researchers act as ‘forensic detectives’ piecing together a picture of the life and times of Takabuti. Questions addressed include – Who was Takabuti? When did she live? Where did she come from and where did she reside? What did she eat, and did she suffer from any diseases? Did she suffer a violent death, and how was she mummified and prepared for burial?

You can register for the seminar here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/takabuti-seminar-tickets-148733081651>

The seminar is free, but booking is essential.

Programme of the day

9.30-9.45 Conference Welcome & Introduction to the Takabuti Project - Professor Rosalie David and Professor Eileen Murphy

Session 1 – TAKABUTI: THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

9.45-10.00 Life and Death in Egypt during the 25th Dynasty - Professor Rosalie David

10.00-10.15 Takabuti's Arrival in Belfast and the First Scientific Studies - Professor Eileen Murphy

10.15-10.30 The Orientalist Rev Dr Edward Hincks (1792-1866) - Dr Gerry Millar

10.30-10.45 Takabuti's Coffin - Dr John Taylor

10.45-11.00 Live Question and Answer Session

Session 2 – TAKABUTI DURING LIFE

11.00-11.15 Radiocarbon Dating and Takabuti - Professor Paula Reimer

11.15-11.30 Takabuti's Teeth - Dr Roger Forshaw

11.30-11.45 Stable Isotope Analysis and Takabuti's Diet - Dr Jenefer Metcalfe

11.45-12.00 Mitochondrial DNA of Takabuti - Dr Konstantina Drosou

12.00-12.15 Takabuti's Hair - Dr Andrew Gize

12.15-12.30 The Face of Takabuti - Professor Caroline Wilkinson and Dr Sarah Shrimpton

12.30-1.00 Live Question and Answer Session

LUNCH BREAK

Session 3 – TAKABUTI'S HEALTH, DEATH AND MUMMIFICATION

- 1.45-2.00 Takabuti: In Life and How She Died - Dr Robert Loynes
- 2.00-2.15 Takabuti's Health: Proteomics - Professor Anthony Freemont
- 2.15-2.30 Takabuti's Mummification - Dr Robert Loynes
- 2.30-2.45 Takabuti's Mummification Resin and Packing Material - Dr Keith White
- 2.45-3.00 Takabuti's Legacy - Dr David Tosh

3.15-3.30 Live Question and Answer Session

3.30-4.00 Launch of: The Life And Times Of Takabuti In Ancient Egypt: Investigating The Belfast Mummy

Professor Chris Johnson Pro-Vice Chancellor, Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, Queen's University Belfast

Online Activities

PRONI

PRONI has a number of online lectures throughout May and June.

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/talks-and-events-proni>

They also have many of the previous talks on their YouTube channel to watch whenever you want - <https://www.youtube.com/user/PRONIonline/featured>

The Burren: Heart of Stone

This is a series on RTÉ looking at the history of the Burren through the genetic make-up of its inhabitants - <https://www.rte.ie/player/series/the-burren-heart-of-stone/SI0000008368?epguid=IP000064777>

Time Team

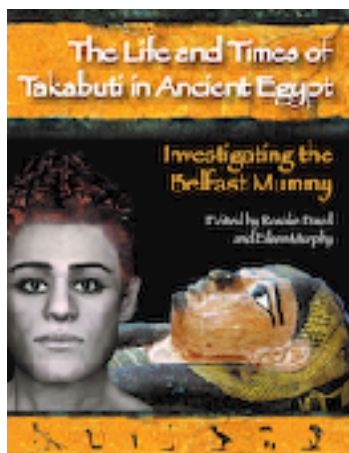
Most people reading this will remember Time Team when it was on the TV. With the support of the viewers, Time Team is making a 'come back' online. You can help to support them and watch the new excavations they carry out. They also have an online shop where you can get fleeces, books, and kit so you look like you have been on the show!

<https://www.timeteamdigital.com>

British Museum

While the British Museum is still closed (hopefully reopening in May 2021), you can learn more about their past exhibitions through their podcasts - <https://www.britishmuseum.org/the-british-museum-podcast> Also book for upcoming online lectures about their collections - <https://www.britishmuseum.org/exhibitions-events>

New Books



The Life and Times of Takabuti in Ancient Egypt - Rosalie David & Eileen Murphy (eds)

Liverpool University Press, £9.99

Anyone who has visited the Ulster Museum will know the Egyptian mummy Takabuti. This book presents the results of a long running research project focused on finding out more about the life and death of Takabuti. The contributions to the book provide a detailed study of the mummy through modern scientific methods, showing us how she lived, how she died, and eventually how she was mummified. Other contributions discuss life in the 25th Dynasty in Egypt, the trade in mummies, and how Takabuti got to Belfast. This is a beautifully produced volume, with extensive illustrations and diagrams to explain the text. This book will be of interest to anyone who knows Takabuti or who wants to find out more about ancient Egypt.

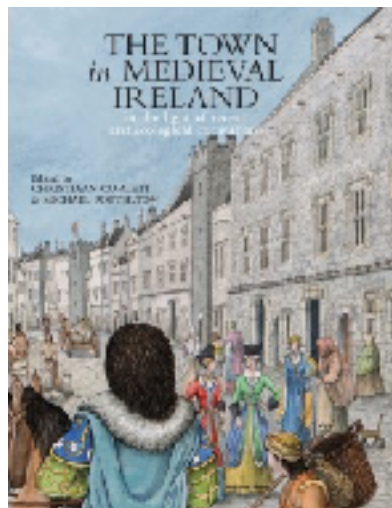
*The
Early Medieval
Hand-Bells of
Ireland and Britain*
CORMAC BOURKE



The Early Medieval Hand-Bells of Ireland and Britain - Cormac Bourke

Wordwell Books, €50

This majestic book is the culmination of many years of research into the hand-bells of early medieval Ireland and Britain. The majority of this volume is taken up by the catalogue of hand-bells, providing key information about each bell along with extensive illustrations and maps. The first part of the book is a comprehensive discussion of the historical context of the bells, their production, design, use, and preservation. We gain a great insight into how hand-bells were created and their importance in the religious practices of the Middle Ages. This work is scholarship of the highest standard and makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of life and religion in the early medieval period. This excellent research is complemented by high quality production, the book's layout is clear and is illustrated throughout with copious images and drawings of the bells. This is a significantly important publication that will be of interest to a wide audience.



The Town in Medieval Ireland in the light of recent archaeological excavations - Christian Corlett & Michael Potterton (eds)

Wordwell Books, €35

Corlett and Potterton have been editing volumes on evidence from medieval excavations in Ireland for over a decade, and they now turn their attention to towns and urban centres. The majority of the papers are drawn from the south east of Ireland, reflecting the concentration of medieval urban settlement. The chapters cover well-known sites, such as Dungarvan, Wexford, and Kildare, and include a range of monuments, including priories, churches, houses, town defences, and water mains. But there is also discussion of the deserted town of Rindown (Roscommon) and the Gaelic market at Lough Key. As with the other books in this series, this is an invaluable resource to those researching medieval Ireland. The book is produced to Wordwell's usual high standard and extensively illustrated throughout.



Contrasts of the Nordic Bronze Age: Essays in Honour of Christopher Prescott - Knut Ivar Austvoll et al. (eds)

Brepols, €110

This book contains a diverse range of papers about life and landscapes in Bronze Age Scandinavia. It is the first in a new series from Brepols on the archaeology of northern Europe. There are a number of papers about technology and objects, providing insight into the daily lives of the people. Many of the papers take a wider approach and consider monuments within a landscape and social context. There are several papers about domesticity and houses, one of which discusses the Bronze Age houses of Galicia. This volume will be of use to anyone interested in the Bronze Age and makes a significant contribution to the topic. If future books in this series are produced to the same standard, then we can look forward to the advancement of our understanding of northern Europe from the Palaeolithic to the Early modern period.