



January 2023 Newsletter

Happy New Year! Welcome to the first Peeblesshire Archaeological Society newsletter of 2023. We hope that you had a wonderful Christmas!

In this edition:

1. Previous lecture: Dr John Reid, *Trimontium - the face of Roman Scotland* (pp.1-2)
2. Next lecture: Dr Lindsey Büster - *Underworld Encounters – A Prehistoric Mortuary Complex on the Moray Firth* (pp.2-4)
3. Dr Piers Dixon - *Shootinglee Excavation Project – post-excavation research work* (p.4)
4. *Edinburgh, Lothians & Borders Archaeology Conference 2022 – talks available* (pp.4-5)

1) Previous lecture: Dr John Reid, *Trimontium – the face of Roman Scotland* (Eastgate Theatre)

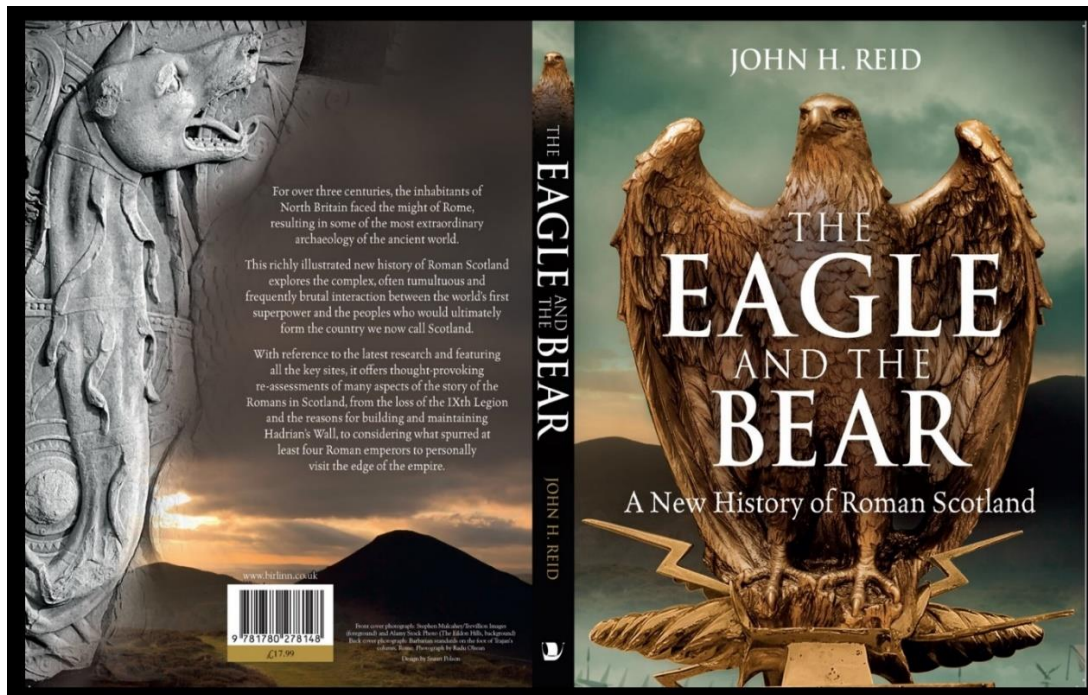
On **Tuesday 13 December** intrepid PAS members faced the challenging snowy conditions and joined the [Tweeddale Society](#) in welcoming [Dr John Reid](#), chair of the [Trimontium Trust](#), to the Eastgate Theatre in Peebles.

Dr Reid's illustrated talk '[Trimontium – the face of Roman Scotland](#)' was a fascinating insight into the development of the stunning new-look museum at the heart of Melrose. Attendees also got a sneak peek at some of the Trust's exciting plans for the future.

Members will also be interested to learn that John has penned a new book on the history of Roman Scotland. '[The Eagle and The Bear](#)' will be published by Birlinn in 2023 and we will let members know when the book is available to buy.



The bath-house at Newstead's Roman Fort (image courtesy Dr John Reid)



The Eagle and The Bear – A New History of Roman Scotland (book cover image courtesy Dr John Reid)

2) Next lecture: Dr Lindsey Büster, *Underworld Encounters – A Prehistoric Mortuary Complex on the Moray Firth*

People have engaged with caves ever since the earliest human settlement of these islands. As well as providing places for occupation and shelter throughout prehistory, caves were often associated with the worlds of the dead and the spirits, producing evidence for burials, funerary rituals and votive deposition.

As our invited guest speaker this month, we look forward to welcoming [Dr Lindsey Büster](#) (Canterbury Christ Church University/University of York) who will be giving an online presentation on 'Underworld Encounters: A Prehistoric Mortuary Complex on the Moray Firth'. Lindsey's talk will be delivered via Zoom on **Thursday 19 January** commencing at **7.30pm**.



View of the impressive series of caves at Covesea on the Moray coast
© Dr L Büster



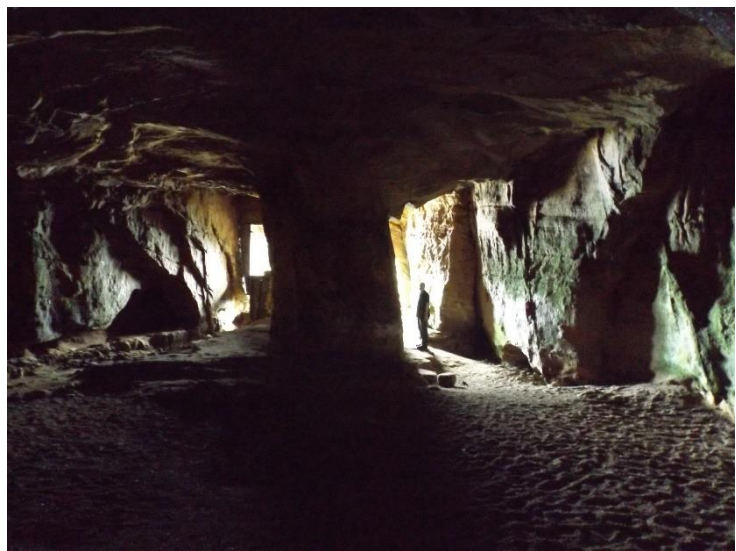
The Sculptor's Cave, Covesea, on the south shore of the Moray Firth, takes its name from the series of enigmatic Pictish symbols carved around its entrance walls.



The Pictish symbols at Sculptor's Cave include carvings of a salmon and a crescent-and-V rod
(© Dr L Büster)

These symbols, however, mark the end of more than a millennium of funerary and ritual activity stretching from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman Iron Age. Recent fieldwork suggests that the Sculptor's Cave was by no means unique; in fact, it was just one of a series of caves that together formed a coastal mortuary landscape with its origins in the Neolithic, and perhaps even earlier. This talk presents the results of recent work and examines the broader significance of the Covesea Caves for exploring the complex relationship between the living and the dead.

Lindsey is a Lecturer in Prehistory at Canterbury Christ Church University and a Post-Doctoral Research Associate on the COMMIOS Project at the University of York. She specialises in the archaeology of Bronze and Iron Age Britain and Europe, with a focus on prehistoric demography, funerary archaeology and cave archaeology, and co-directs the *Covesea Caves Research Project*. Together with Professor Ian Armit, she was co-author of 'Darkness Visible: The Sculptor's Cave, Covesea,



Interior of the Sculptor's Cave, Covesea



from the Bronze Age to the Picts' which won the Saltire Society's award for Scottish Research Book of the Year 2021.

Lindsey's talk will be live streamed via Zoom on **Thursday 19 January** commencing at **7.30pm**. PAS members will automatically receive an email invitation and link to the event.

3) Shootinglee Excavation Report – post-excavation research work in 2021-2 – Dr Piers Dixon

Thanks to the generous grant-aid awards from the [Hunter Archaeological Trust](#) and the [Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology](#) in 2021-2 significant progress has been made on the post-excavation work associated with the Shootinglee Excavation project.



17th century ladies spur after conservation (picture courtesy Piers Dixon)

Funding was sought to support two main strands of research work, one environmental and the other artefactual. The attached report from [Dr Piers Dixon](#) provides the results to date.

The overall research project is ongoing.

4) Edinburgh, Lothians & Borders Archaeology Conference 2022 – talks available

For those unable to attend the 20th [Edinburgh, Lothians & Borders Archaeology Conference](#) in November or indeed for those who wish to revisit some of the talks PAS members will be delighted to learn that thanks to East Lothian Council's Archaeology Service all the talks are now available to watch online. To access the



content simply follow this link ->

<https://www.johngraycentre.org/about/archaeology/archaeology-events/edinburgh-lothians-borders-archaeology-conference/archaeology-conference-2022/>

and then select the talks you are interested in. Each video will play in YouTube.

**** Please note that you may need to increase the volume during playback as the recording level appears fairly low for some of the talks ****

As a reminder, the conference programme was as follows:






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CHAIRS	Morning: John A Lawson (CECAS) Afternoon: Andrew Robertson (East Lothian Council)	1405-1430	PRESTON TOWER – RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK Bruce Glendinning (CFA Archaeology)
0900-0930	Registration, tea & coffee	1430-1455	TREASURE TROVE IN EDINBURGH, THE LOTHIANS AND THE BORDERS Antony Lee (Treasure Trove Unit NMS)
0930-0950	WELCOME 20 YEARS!!!	1455-1505	Discussion
0950-1015	SURVIVING THE INDUSTRIAL ERA – THE NEOLITHIC, BRONZE AGE AND IRON AGE OF WEST EDGE, LANG LOAN Maureen Kilpatrick (GUARD Archaeology)	1505-1535	COFFEE/TEA BREAK
1015-1040	UNEARTHING A DARK AGE LEGEND AT DRUMELZIER Dr Ronan Toolis (GUARD Archaeology)	1535-1635	FROM SMALL THINGS... Updates from around the region UNEARTHING A BEAST – THE GREAT SEA SERPENT Harry Francis (CFA Archaeology) REVISITING OLD HAUNTS; UPDATED EXCAVATION IN EDINBURGH OLD TOWN Kirsty Dingwall (Headland Archaeology) 1722 WAGGONWAY - RESEARCH AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS FROM SCOTLAND'S FIRST RAILWAY Gareth Jones (1722 Waggonway Project) ROSUN KILNS - AN UPDATE Rob Engl (AOC Archaeology Group) EXCAVATION OF PROBABLE ENCLOSURE DITCH, DALHOUSIE MIDLOTHIAN Rachel Frame (CFA Archaeology) SHOOTINGLEE POST-EXCAVATION AND LOCKDOWN EXCAVATIONS 2020-22 Piers Dixon (Peeblesshire Archaeology Society)
1040-1050	Discussion		
1050-1115	COFFEE/TEA BREAK		
1115-1140	CAMMO, THE NEVER-ENDING STORY... Christine McPherson (EAFS)		
1140-1205	TIMBERS, TREES, AND TIME: THE SOUTH-EAST SCOTLAND OAK DENDROCHRONOLOGY PROJECT Dr Coralie Mills (Dendrochronicle)		
1205-1230	COWBOYS AND INDIANS? THE SKELETAL EVIDENCE FOR VIOLENCE IN EARLY MEDIEVAL SOUTH-EAST SCOTLAND Angela Boyle (University of Edinburgh)		
1230-1240	Discussion		
1240-1340	LUNCH		
1340-1405	UNBOTTLED: EXCAVATIONS AT THE FORMER EDINBURGH & LEITH GLASSWORKS, SALAMANDER STREET, LEITH Katie O'Connell (AOC Archaeology Group)	1635-1645	Discussion
		1645	CLOSE

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to seeing you soon.

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