



Secretary's Notes

2014 saw a few changes for the Medieval Pottery Research Group with a newly elected President and other members to council. It was a year characterised by cross-Europe meetings with conferences in Istanbul for the European Archaeological Association and Lisbon for the annual MPRG meeting. There have been many successful regional meetings and study groups.

One particular success I would like to share again is our new online resource which provides a selection of out of print MPRG journal articles for free. New articles will be added, so don't forget to check back regularly: <https://www.scribd.com/medievalceramics>.

Volume 34 of the MPRG journal was successfully delivered to members in autumn 2014. This volume brought together papers presented at the MPRG 2012 conference on the Isle of Man and thanks goes to Peter Davy and Harold Mytum for co-editing this edition. Thanks must also be extended to Derek Hall for all his work as editor. If any member would like to contribute to future volumes then further information, including the style guide, is available on the website. Any enquires should be directed to the Editorial team: <http://www.medievalpottery.org.uk/contrib1.htm>

MPRG is wonderfully active and 2015 promises to be another year packed full of exciting of events. This winter newsletter contains a number of conference announcements - including the call for papers for the MPRG annual conference - providing further opportunities for people to come together and a call to members to contribute to an English Heritage resource assessment. As always, your news and notes are very gratefully received (lots of pictures please!), and I look forward to being able to share these with the Group.

Alice Forward, Assistant Secretary

The John Hurst Travel Fund

The John Hurst Travel Award was established in 2007 in order to provide financial assistance to MPRG members for research. Each year a total of £200 is available and over the last 7 years this has supported a number of people, including Chris Kuhne in 2013 (MPRG Newsletter 78), Micalala Sinibaldi and Tania Casimiro in 2012 (MPRG Newsletter 75) and Rebecca Bridgeman in 2009 (MPRG Newsletter 66).

For anyone interested in applying to the Fund further details and the application form can be found on the MPRG website here ().

This year Heather Crowley, a Doctoral Student at Cardiff University was successful in her application to the fund, supporting her travel to Jerusalem. Her report is below.

Research on post-crusader pottery in Frankish settlements

Between the 7th and 10th September 2014 finances from the John Hurst Travel Fund facilitated my research at the repositories of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

The research undertaken during this period involved the examination of two collections of ceramics from sites north of Jerusalem, dating from the Crusader, Ayyubid, and Mamluk periods. While pottery from the excavations at the medieval village of Khirbat Ka'kul was published in 2006 (Boas), ceramics from the site of Khirbat al-Kurum have yet to be discussed in detail. Both village sites are of interest to my PhD research on Frankish rural settlement. The radical difference in the physical layout of the two communities, Khirbat al-Kurum, a Frankish 'new town,' and Khirbat Ka'kul, a settlement excavated with room types traditionally associated with indigenous communities, prompted questions as to whether the ceramic record in these villages also diverged. Vessels

with different forms, fabrics, and decoration could potentially indicate habitation by different ethnic groups, while similarities between the ceramic typologies from both communities could also have important implications.

The site of Khirbat al-Kurum was also notable because of the presence of a Mamluk kiln, the extensive nature of which was clear during my time at the repositories, where kiln bars, wasters, and extensive quantities of identical diagnostic forms are preserved and merit further research.

Preliminary study of the pottery has yielded interesting results, but the ceramic record of both sites primarily stresses the importance of the area in the post-Crusader period. The kiln at Khirbat al-Kurum and the abundance of ceramics surviving from Khirbat Ka'kul suggests a dynamic population in the area during the Mamluk period, warranting dedicated research on the topic.

Boas, A. J. (2006) 'The Medieval Ceramics from Khirbat Ka 'kul' *Atiqot* 54. 99-104.

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The Archaeological Reference Resources Project

The Archaeological Reference Resources Project is inviting the Medieval Pottery Research Group to collaborate with this new project.

English Heritage has commissioned Rachel Edwards (Arboretum Archaeological Consultancy) and Hal Dalwood (Hal Dalwood Archaeology and Heritage) to carry out a survey of the range of specialist reference resources used by researchers in the archaeology sector.

The project will create a database of all synthetic archaeological reference resources used in the study of artefacts and ecofacts, including physical reference collections, published catalogues and corpora, and online catalogues. The findings of the project will be documented in a report to English Heritage and disseminated to the profession. This project is an outcome of the broader English Heritage Strategy for Developing Research Resources led by Dan Miles of English Heritage: www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/research/strategies/research-resources/.

Project Aims:

1. Identify the reference resources currently available/being used by the archaeology sector.
2. Create a point-in time database of these reference resources and record basic information on their composition, coverage, date, availability, access, etc.
3. Identify and collate information about any barriers to the use of these reference resources. For example if they are out of print.
4. Identify and collate information on threats to existing reference resources e.g. curation and maintenance of reference collections.
5. Assess the costs and benefits of developing and maintaining an online database of these resources as a tool for use by the sector.
6. Highlight major gaps and weaknesses in coverage and currency of reference resources.

Project Outputs:

1. The project database will be compiled from an extensive literature search. The draft database will be enhanced and expanded through collaboration with specialist groups. The database will include information on the currency of, and any problems with access to, individual Reference Resources, as well as issues with their future maintenance. The completed database will be a point of reference for English Heritage. Preliminary consultations indicate that members of ALGAO (England) would find such a database useful in assessing project designs and grey literature reports, and that academic archaeologists would find it a useful resource for teaching students.

2. The project report will provide an overview of the use of Reference Resources by the specialist sector and highlight the gaps and weakness in current provision. The identification of gaps will be undertaken in collaboration with specialist groups. The broader issues of curation and maintenance of Reference Resources will also be considered. The project report will also examine the role of Reference Resources in archaeological resource management, including to what extent the use of Reference Resources is a requirement in project briefs. The project report will consider the potential for such requirements to raise standards in fieldwork and post-excavation. This part of the project will be conducted in liaison with ALGAO England. The project report will assess the cost and benefits of maintaining the project database as an online resource.

Information on the project and updates on progress will be available on the project website and blog (www.archaeologicalreferenceresources.uk). You can also contact the project team directly via the project email account: info@archaeologicalreferenceresources.uk.

Review: The European Association of Archaeologists 2014 Conference, Istanbul. Bridging a gap

Ever since I became a member of the MPRG I have been a great believer in fostering contact with ceramic colleagues across Europe. In the late 70's and 80's this was started by regular contacts with our friends in the Low Countries and the likes of Frans Verhaege and later Koen de Groote became regular points of contact for discussions about trade and dating of pottery. How could such European contacts be widened? Thanks to Maureen Mellor my first encounter with the European Archaeological Association (EAA) was at the St Petersburg conference in Russia in 2004 where the seeds were sown for the now dormant Ceramic Production Centres in Europe project (CPCE). Running for several years and making important links with colleagues in Eire, Italy, Poland, Serbia, Hungary and Norway this project foundered with the inability to raise sufficient grant aid to progress. Then as now projects seemingly based on material culture were difficult to champion.

Through CPCE I became a regular attendee at EAA's in Lyon (2005), Cork (2006), Cracow (2007), Riva del Garda (2009) and the Hague (2010). All of these were fantastic experiences but to be honest that was largely due to the location rather than the conference programme which back then had little of medieval or ceramic interest. But then Medieval Europe joined up with the EAA and by 2014 Istanbul had popped up on the horizon as a conference venue! Suddenly sessions with a medieval (and a ceramic) focus became an integral part of the proceedings. So in early September of this year I found myself standing outside a partially floodlit Aya Sophia having just flown in from Edinburgh. The conference took place in two University buildings on the north side of the city which were in easy reach of the old town using an excellent tram system (Istanbul tip no 1 always stay in the Old town). Both venues were well suited to the many different sessions taking place in them and the main one hosted space for several bookstalls and a central garden area that became the focus for lunch and coffee breaks and as usual was probably where most of the archaeological discussions took place! My session on medieval parks had a small ceramic component from Scotland and Czechoslovakia but the highlight from an MPRG point of view was Joanita Vroom's 'Medieval Master Chef' session which featured several excellent papers on ceramic use and European cooking habits. I have already lined up at least one of them for a future volume of Medieval Ceramics. The Istanbul conference also hosted a seminar of the Medieval Europe Research Committee (MERC) which will promote study and exchange of medieval subjects at future EAA conferences.

In 2015 the EAA moves to Glasgow in Scotland and MPRG is promoting an accepted session 'Border cultures: Pottery and the social dynamics of border regions in medieval Europe'. I recommend the EAA as an excellent way of making new contacts across Europe and hope that many of you will consider offering papers to the session (contact jervisb@cardiff.ac.uk).

Derek Hall
Co-Editor Medieval Ceramics and member of the MERC committee

Rachel Edwards and Hal Dalwood

Call For Papers:

The European Association of Archaeologists 2015

MPRG are organising a session at EAA 2015, held in Glasgow.

We welcome papers from all our members and hope to develop a pan-European forum and opportunity for people to gather together and encourage friends to participate in pottery discussions and debates.

<http://eaa glasgow 2015 .com/session/border-cultures-pottery-and-the-social-dynamics-of-border-regions-in-medieval-europe/>

MPRG 2015, Doncaster

The next MPRG conference is to be held at Doncaster Museum on June 6th 2015. The call for papers has been sent out via email and further details will be available on the website.

Dates for the diary

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Conference 2015, Cardiff

The IfA conference for 2015 is being held in Cardiff. The theme of the conference is *Future of your Profession*. Further details can be found here: <http://www.archaeologists.net/conference/2015info>

MPRG Publications

Details of MPRG publications can be found on the MPRG website <http://www.medievalpottery.org.uk/publi.htm>

Occasional Paper 2: Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics (UK £4.50 excl. P&P)

Occasional Paper 3: *The Harlow Pottery Industries*, by Helen Walker and Wally Davey (UK £16; Europe £18; USA £21: All include P&P)

Occasional Paper 4: *'Genius in a Cracked Pot' - Late Medieval Reduced Wares: A Regional Synthesis*, by Anna Slowikowski (UK £12; Europe £14: All include P&P)

Occasional Paper 5: *Sourcing Scottish Redwares*, by Derek Hall, George Haggarty and Simon Chenerey (UK £22.50; Europe: £24: All include P&P)

Occasional Paper 7: *The Ipswich Ware Project. Ceramics, Trade and Society in Middle Saxon England*, by Paul Blinkhorn *et al.* (UK £16; Europe £20: All include P&P)

Back issues of Medieval Ceramics and copies of the guide to Medieval Ceramic Forms are also available. For further information on publication sales please contact Lyn Blackmore (lblackmore@museumoflondon.org.uk)

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