



Secretary's Notes

The Group's Annual General Meeting took place during our one day conference, held at the Museum of London on 11th June. Duncan Brown was re-elected for a second term as President and we are delighted to welcome two new ordinary members, Phil Jones and Sian Iles, onto council. The conference also saw the launch of the Research Framework for Post-Roman Ceramic Studies in Britain and the Group would like to take this opportunity to thank Anne Irving for her tireless work in bringing this to publication. Talking of which... MPRG are also pleased to announce that two new occasional papers, Late Medieval Reduced Wares and Scottish Redwares, have now been published. Details of how to obtain your copy can be found below. The conference itself was a great success, with a range of papers being delivered around the topic of 'new research', including recent work on Anglo-Saxon cremation urns, post medieval production sites in Glasgow and Somerset and medieval pottery from Southampton and Pontefract. Next years conference will be a 3 day event held on the Isle of Man, from June 21st-23rd.

Prior to the AGM, Council met on 18th May. In accordance with the strategic plan a new agenda has been adopted, which allows themes to be addressed and that should allow us to pursue a number of avenues for forwarding the Groups agenda more effectively. A key area that council are keen to address is training, and we would like to hear any requests or ideas people have about the kind of training MPRG can facilitate and how this can be achieved. In response to requests from members, council also discussed our response to the IfA's Southport Report into the implications of PPS5, a number of the recommendations therein dovetail well with the Group's long term aims. Another key area for the Group is dissemination, communication and research. A number of changes are being made to the MPRG website to help achieve these aims, and recently a Facebook group was launched, to allow members to share images of problem sherds and discuss pottery or wider issues. The group currently has around 50 members and this is steadily rising. Council will next meet on 21st September. As usual, if you have any issues which you wish to be raised at this meeting, contact the Secretary.

Finally, contributions for the next newsletter should be sent to the Assistant Secretary by **Friday 18th November 2011**.

Ben Jervis Assistant Secretary

Important Notice About the Newsletter

In order to save postage costs and cut down on wastage, Council has decided that the newsletter **will no longer be mailed out in hard copy automatically**. If MPRG has an email address listed for you, the newsletter will be sent to this address. If MPRG does not have an email address, we will continue to send a copy through the post. If you wish to still receive a postal newsletter, don't think the group has an email address listed for you, or your email address has changed, please contact Lyn Blackmore (lblackmore@museumoflondon.org.uk). This change will only affect personal members.

Ben Jervis Assistant Secretary

Research Framework

The MPRG is pleased to announce A Research Framework for Post-Roman Ceramic Studies in Britain has recently been published and complimentary copies are being sent to each MPRG member. Further copies can be downloaded from <http://mprgframework.info/>

This document provides a focus for post-Roman ceramic studies in England, Scotland and Wales. Its aim is to inform all archaeologists during the development of local, regional and national research programmes, as well as period specific strategies. Part one is a Resource Assessment and survey of the profession. Part two

presents the Research Agenda and Part three the Strategy to achieve it. Part four lists the expected outcomes.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this project over the last 18 months. It would not have been possible without input from so many people.

Anne Irving

An Unusual Use for a Potsherd!

A colleague working in Dorset has brought to my attention a curious find of pottery.

He has been excavating at St Mary's Church, Chickerell, near Weymouth and has uncovered this unusual shrouded/wrapped burial with a large potsherd placed between the lower legs. The chances of it getting there accidentally are realistically negligible - it's a fresh sherd and by far the largest from the site - and the base-remnant is deliberately hooked below the right leg.

The burials are E-W aligned and originally external to the church. In 1834, the north aisle was build enclosing them.

Could this be an example of superstitious beliefs? Apparently, there are Anglo-Saxon burials where objects have been buried to 'trip up' the ghost. The pottery has not yet been examined, but I understand that form and fabric suggest a late medieval-early post medieval date. It seems a very late date for such superstition to be rife but if witch bottles are buried in walls and horseshoes placed

over lintels right up until the modern day, then perhaps we should not be so surprised!



Photo: Terrain Archaeology

If anyone has seen anything like this before please let me know.

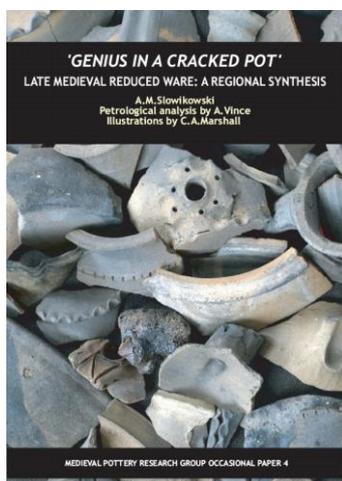
Anna Slowikowski

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New Occasional Papers Launched

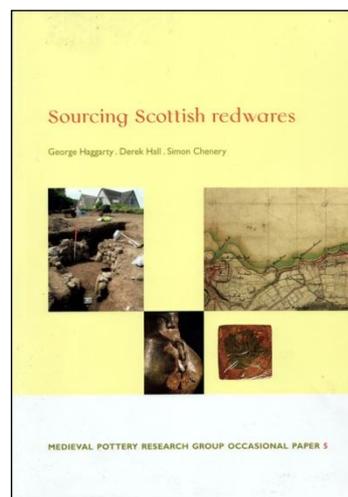
We are pleased to announce the publication of Occasional Papers 4 and 5: Late Medieval Reduced Wares: A Regional Synthesis by Anna Slowikowski and Sourcing Scottish Redwares by George Haggarty, Derek Hall and Simon Chenery.

Funded by English Heritage the regional synthesis of Late Medieval Reduced ware draws together research on pottery from six production sites in the south-east Midlands. Detailed characterisation of the pottery, supported by petrological and chemical analyses, has shown that it is possible to distinguish the products from each site, both by fabric and form. Varying manufacturing techniques were identified and using archaeomagnetic dating, documentary evidence and the characteristics of the pottery a chronological sequence suggested for the study sites.



Sourcing Scottish Redwares examines Scotland's extensive iron-rich clay sources which were exploited for the production of pottery, tiles and later bricks, from the 13th century onwards. Supported by Historic Scotland the authors used inductively coupled plasma-mass

spectroscopy (ICP-MS) in conjunction with the British Geological Survey's national geochemical database of stream sediments to study groups of iron-rich pottery from a wide range of Scottish production sites. Over 600 samples were analysed, including four groups of 12th century or earlier Border Redwares and comparative material from the Continent and England. The results suggested that the Scottish redware industries were far more complicated than previously thought. Building on the work a draft Scottish redware vessel typology and research strategy has been created which includes medieval, post medieval, and industrial pottery as well as floor and roof tiles.



Priced at £12 and £22.50 respectively these important regional studies can be ordered using the order form accompanying this newsletter. Until 1st November 2011 both publications can be bought at a discounted price of £30 (Europe £34).

The Editorial Committee

Reports Made Available on National Museum of Scotland Website

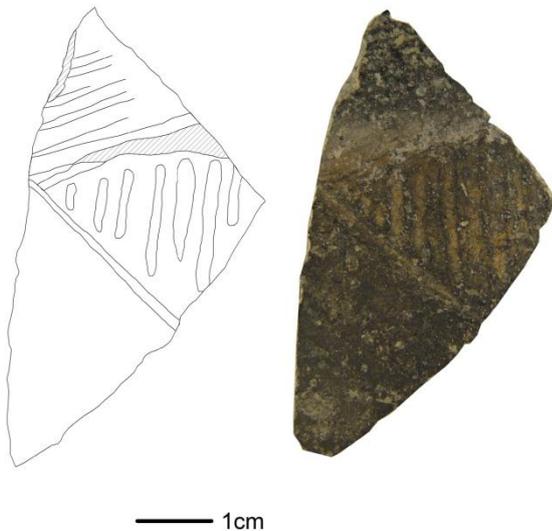
A number of reports have recently been made available through the national museum of Scotland website, including a number of reports by George Haggarty. To search the archive visit <http://repository.nms.ac.uk/>.

Sherd from Leffinge-Oude Werf (near Ostend, Belgium)

This pottery sherd was found during excavation at the early medieval site of Leffinge-Oude Werf (near Ostend, Belgium), with an occupation dating between the early 8th and the 12th century. The fabric is of a grey colour, dense, fine and hard-fired, with moderately frequent inclusions of chalk and fine sand/quartz. Its outer surface is of a darker shade and lightly burnished. The grooved decoration consists of a triangular shape (or part of a lozenge?) shaded with groove lines, and parallel lines on one side of the triangle.

This type of fabric and decoration are unknown in medieval Flanders. Suggestions for its identification have ranged from Iron Age (highly unlikely given the site's geomorphological setting) over Early Saxon to medieval

Slavic wares, as well as a type of decorated calcareous ware found at Canterbury. However, none seems to fit the description very well. Any further suggestions would be most welcome.



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MPRG Website

The MPRG website is currently undergoing a number of changes. Until recently the site was managed voluntarily by Victoria Bryant, Maggie Noke and Oliver Russell at Worcestershire HER. Last year council decided to outsource the management of the website to a professional provider. Recently the site was transferred to the CBA who will be managing updates to the site. We hope that this move will allow the site to develop and be kept up-to-date more easily.

In order to freshen up the site we would be keen to receive images which can be used on the site (perhaps of particularly interesting vessels or attractive groups). Also, if you know of any websites which may be of interest to members, these can be added to the links page. If you have anything which you would like added to the site, or ideas of how it could be improved, please get in touch.

The group has also recently started a Facebook group. The idea behind this is that offers a forum where members can post images of problem sherds or interesting sherds and also post links which may be of interest to other members of the group. To find us search for 'Medieval Pottery Research Group' on Facebook or click the link on the MPRG website www.medievalpottery.org.uk.

Ben Jervis Assistant Secretary
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Mystery Sherd from Iona

Help is sought to identify this mystery sherd from Iona on the west coast of Scotland. It was recovered during the 1979 excavations within the grounds of the abbey, which revealed a series of early medieval features. The sherd stands out in this assemblage as distinctly non-local in terms of form, fabric and decoration.

The handle has been decorated with an applied wavy strip which appears to run the length of the handle, with a second shorter applied strip applied towards the lower end. Stamped decoration is also present, with four impressions present on this surviving section, placed either side of the applied strip.

The well-sorted, heavily quartz-tempered fabric is remarkably distinctive when compared to the rest of the ceramic assemblage, evidently deriving from a more organised potting industry than that which existed along the west coast of Scotland in the first millennium AD. Any suggestions as to the potential provenance of this vessel will be gratefully received!

MPRG Conference 2012

The next MPRG's 3 day conference will be held on the Isle of Man on the 21st - 23rd June 2012. with an optional extra day or two for site visits etc. It will be held in conjunction with the Centre for Manx Studies and Manx National Heritage. The theme of the conference will focus on 'ceramics on the margins' (i.e. of NW Europe), looking especially at areas outside normal market patterns and political control. Even at this early stage if you would like to register interest or put yourself forward as a potential speaker, send a very short abstract to George Haggarty, e-mail: haggartyg@aol.com

George Haggarty Meetings Secretary

Meetings and Announcements

FIRST MEETING ON BYZANTINE AND OTTOMAN ARCHAEOLOGY

This free conference, entitled 'Fact and Fiction in Medieval and Post-Medieval Ceramics in the Eastern Mediterranean. Are we on the right track?' will be held from 21st-23rd October at the University of Amsterdam. The conference will be accompanied by excursions, including a trip to a Delft Ware factory and a guided tour of Amsterdam. For more details contact Joanita Vroom (j.a.c.vroom@uva.nl).

FOLLOWING FINDS: FROM SITE TO STORE. A MEETING ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS IN MEMORY OF PENNY MACCONNORAN

Museum of London Archaeology and the Museum of London invite colleagues and friends to join in this one-day meeting in honour of the great contribution made to London's archaeology by Penny MacConnoran, who died in July 2010. The meeting will be held in the Weston Theatre of the Museum of London on 10th September 2011, 10.00 -17.30

The programme will address Penny's main interests and areas of expertise: processing, conservation and archiving, and finds research. Particular emphasis will be on new research in the study of artefacts in and beyond London.

Speakers will include Jon Cotton, Marit Gaimster, Francis Grew, Lynne Keys, Gus Milne, Jacqui Pearce, Frances Pritchard, Beth Richardson, Ian Riddler, Roberta Tomber, Aidan Walsh, Angela Wardle and Sue Winterbottom

Registration is £10 which includes morning and afternoon tea and coffee. Lunch is not provided but can be found close by, or at one of the museum cafés. There will be a social event in the evening which people can come to if they knew Penny but don't want/aren't able to attend the day meeting.

Venue to be announced shortly.

For further details contact Lyn Blackmore on 0207 566 9325 or email lblackmore@museumoflondon.org.uk

SOCIETY FOR MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY STUDENT COLLOQUIUM

The Society for Medieval Archaeology is pleased to announce the Call for Papers for our 2011 Student Colloquium. We welcome proposals for papers from across the medieval period (5th to 16th century A.D.) from all

geographical areas. Papers from subjects other than archaeology but which have a broader medieval significance will also be considered.

The SMA Colloquium provides a platform for postgraduates and early career professionals to share their research. This year's event will be held at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at the University of Cambridge and will incorporate a fieldtrip culminating in the Annual Brixworth Lecture on 30th October. For further details contact medievalarchaeology@googlemail.co.uk

THE 27TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ACADEMIE INTERNAIONALE DE LA PIPE

The 27th annual conference of the Académie Internationale de la Pipe will be held in Novi Sad, Serbia from the 5th to the 8th of October 2011. Its theme will be 'The Turks abroad: the production, distribution, iconography and influence of Ottoman pipes and pipe-makers in Europe and beyond (16th to 20th century)'. The conference will be held in the City Museum within the medieval fortress of Petrovaradin. There will an opportunity to study pipe collections from museums all over Serbia and to hear of finds from recent excavated sites in the region. Papers are also invited on the subject of the much wider area of Ottoman influence beyond the Empire both in Europe and further afield. For further details or offers of papers please get in touch with Divna Gačić (divnagacic@gmail.com).

SCOTTISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL FORUM

The Scottish Archaeological Forum conference on 'The Experience of Technology' will take place at the University of Glasgow from 22nd-23rd October. The main attraction is a keynote address from Prof. Olivier Gosselain. For further details visit: <http://www.scottisharchaeologicalforum.org.uk/>

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