

Seminar programme

Gresham Hotel, Dublin, 30 August 2007

Welcome & introduction

*Rónán Swan,
NRA Head of Archaeology (acting)*

Old routes to new research: the results of the Edercloon wetland excavations and aims for the future

*Caitríona Moore,
Excavation Director, Cultural Resource Development Services Ltd*

The palaeoenvironmental potential of waterlogged deposits and their contribution to archaeological investigations

*Scott Timpany,
Archaeobotanist, Headland Archaeology Ltd*

Twomileborris on the N8 Cullahill to Cashel

*Micheál Ó Droma,
Excavation Director, Valerie J Keeley Ltd*

Fauna & *fulachta fiadh*: animal bones from burnt mounds on the N9/N10 Carlow Bypass

*Auli Tóurunen,
Zooarchaeologist, Headland Archaeology Ltd*

Excavation at Clareabbey on the N18 Ennis Bypass, Co. Clare

*Sébastien Joubert,
NRA Archaeologist*

Excavation of a multiperiod site at Rahally, Co. Galway

*Gerry Mullins,
Excavation Director, Cultural Resource Development Services Ltd*

The Ballyhanna Research Project—an introduction

*Michael MacDonagh,
NRA Senior Archaeologist*

An overview of the palaeopathological analysis of the medieval human remains from Ballyhanna, Co. Donegal

*Caitríona McKenzie,
Osteoarchaeologist, Queen's University, Belfast*

Osteoarchaeological analysis of the disarticulated material from the Ballyhanna human skeletal assemblage

*Róisín McCarthy,
Osteoarchaeologist, Institute of Technology, Sligo*

Multi-elemental analysis of human archaeological bone

*Tasneem Bashir,
Analytical Chemist, Institute of Technology, Sligo*

Extraction and amplification of ancient DNA and sex determination in human medieval skeletal assemblages

*Sheila Tierney,
Biomolecular Scientist, Institute of Technology, Sligo*

The new national monument at Lismullin and other recent developments on the M3

*Mary Deevy,
NRA Senior Archaeologist*

Fragments from the past: the prehistory of the M3

*Eimear O'Connor,
Archaeological Researcher, Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd*

Travels through historic times—the early and late medieval archaeology of the M3

*Jonathan Kinsella,
Archaeological Researcher, Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd*

Early and late medieval historical research on the M3: sources, contexts and analyses

*Anne Connon and Margaret Murphy,
Consultant Historians*

Glossary

Anglo-Norman Descendants of the Normans, who ruled England following its conquest by William of Normandy in AD 1066. In AD 1169 Ireland was invaded by the Anglo-Normans.

Anomaly A term used in geophysical survey (see below) referring to differences in the Earth's magnetic, electrical and other properties.

Artefact Any movable object that has been used, modified or manufactured by humans.

Assemblage All of the artefacts found at a site, including the sum of all sub-assemblages at the site.

Barrow An earthen burial mound, generally dating from the Bronze Age and Iron Age.

Bronze Age The period dating from *c.* 2400 to *c.* 600 BC that succeeded the Neolithic period and saw the introduction of the use of bronze for tools and weapons.

Bullaun A large boulder with an artificial basin-like cavity on its upper surface, used to grind various substances or to hold water. Bullaun stones are frequently associated with early ecclesiastical sites.

Burnt mound A mound of burnt stones that can be found in isolation or in association with a *fulacht fiadh* (see below).

Cloister A covered walk or arcade forming part of a monastic building, which usually ran round the sides of a quadrangle, with a wall on one side and windows or an open colonnade on the other.

Cloister garth An open space surrounded by a cloister.

Core A lump of stone from which pieces are removed for the purposes of tool production.

Crannog A lake settlement, mainly dating from the early medieval period, built on an artificial, or artificially enlarged, island.

Cremation The practice of burning the dead. In prehistoric Ireland ashes were commonly placed in a pottery vessel and buried in a pit or cist.

Crucible A small, coarse pottery vessel for holding molten metal during smelting or casting.

Débitage Detached pieces of stone from larger stone cores that are discarded during the process of stone tool production.

Dendrochronology A dating method based on the study of tree-rings as a means of providing precise calendar dates.

Drystone walling Walls constructed of stone without the use of mortar.

Ecofact A naturally occurring object or substance found at an archaeological site, or other sealed deposit, that provides information pertinent to archaeology (e.g. fauna, flora, pollen and soil).

Enclosure A piece of ground surrounded by a boundary such as a wall, bank or ditch.

Environmental Impact Assessment The process for anticipating the effects on the environment caused by a development. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the document produced as a result of that process.

Environmental Impact Statement See Environmental Impact Assessment, above.

Feature This term refers to any component of an archaeological site, such as a post-hole, pit, wall, ditch or any deposits that may have accumulated on the site.

Flint A hard, brittle siliceous rock with conchoidal fracturing properties that is highly suitable for the manufacture of edged tools.

Fulacht fiadh A site, generally dating from the Bronze Age, consisting of a horseshoe-shaped mound of burnt stones, a hearth (or hearths) and trough(s). These sites were used to heat water for a variety of purposes and are also known as ancient cooking-places. Archaeologists often prefer to refer to such sites as burnt mounds (see above).

Geoarchaeology An approach to the study of archaeology using the methods and concepts of the earth sciences.

Geophysical survey Methods of exploring below the surface of the ground by measuring the soil's magnetic susceptibility, electrical resistivity and other properties.

Henge A more or less circular enclosure, normally with the bank outside the ditch and often enclosing a circle of stones.

Inhumation The burial custom by which the body was laid in a grave.

Iron Age The final period of prehistory, beginning around 600 BC. Iron superseded bronze for the manufacture of tools and weapons in this period.

La Tène The site of an Iron Age votive deposit of metal artefacts, some bearing distinctive curvilinear decoration, at Lake Neuchâtel, Switzerland. La Tène has given its name to La Tène art and to the second period of the European Iron Age.

Medieval The period succeeding the Iron Age, from the advent of Christianity in the fifth century up to the early 16th century AD.

Mesolithic The Middle Stone Age, c. 7000–4000 BC, when Ireland was first settled by early hunters and foragers.

Ministerial Direction The authorisation given by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, in consultation with the National Monuments Service of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the National Museum of Ireland, for archaeological works on approved road schemes.

Neolithic The New Stone Age, c. 4000–2400 BC. Frequently defined by the beginnings of farming.

Osteology/oste archaeology A branch of archaeology that deals with the study and analysis of human and animal skeletal remains.

Palaeoenvironment An ancient or past environment.

Palisade A stake- or post-built defensive barrier, often positioned on top of an embankment or rampart.

Post-excavation work A general term applied to those tasks to be undertaken following the fieldwork stage of an archaeological project.

Post-hole The void or soil-filled hole where a post once stood.

Post-medieval The period after the medieval period, often taken to be the period after the dissolution of the monasteries around AD 1540.

Prehistoric Any period for which there is no contemporary documentary evidence.

Prick spur A short spike that attaches to the heel of a rider's boot and is used to urge a horse forward.

Quern-stone A large stone used for grinding grain into flour. The four main categories of quern found in Ireland are saddle, beehive, disc or rotary and pot querns.

Radiocarbon dating A dating method that measures the decay of the radioactive isotope Carbon 14 (¹⁴C), which is present in all organic material.

Rath A circular earthen enclosure, otherwise known as a ringfort.

Record of Monuments and Places A list of archaeological sites with accompanying maps recorded on a county-by-county basis by the State. Inclusion in the list affords archaeological sites certain legal protections.

Ring-ditch A circular monument, very similar in structure to a henge but generally much smaller. Many have been discovered to be ploughed-out barrows (see above).

Ringfort A defended farmstead, mainly dating from between the seventh and ninth centuries AD, enclosed by one or more concentric earthworks comprising a bank and outer ditch.

Ring-pin Early medieval dress-fastener, usually of copper alloy, with a swivel ring inserted through a perforation in the pin.

Roadtake The land area to be occupied by a proposed road.

Site A term used to define places of archaeological interest.

Slag Partly vitrified non-metal residue and waste material left behind after the smelting of a metal ore or in glass-making.

Souterrain A long, narrow, stone-walled subterranean gallery, usually with a slab roof. Some have small chambers off the main passage.

Stick-pin A straight pin of metal, bone or wood, often with an ornamental head. Worn as a dress accessory and typically early medieval in date.

Stratigraphy The laying down of layers one above the other. A succession of layers should provide a relative chronological sequence.

Test excavation A limited form of archaeological excavation whose purpose is to establish the nature, extent and, if possible, the date of archaeological deposits and features by excavating small areas.

Topographic survey A survey that measures the elevation of points on a particular piece

of land and presents them as contours on a plot.

Viking (Vikingur) Scandinavian word for seafaring raiders from Norway, Sweden and Denmark who ravaged the coasts of Europe from about the seventh century AD onwards.

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