

# Guernsey Museum Archaeology Group Newsletter

## September 2010

Hello all,

Just a quick update, before I disappear for a few weeks... more about that below.

### L'Erée

Duncan Garrow and Fraser Sturt started work on the Neolithic/Bronze Age site at L'Erée last week and they already have some promising finds – another hearth, and lots of pottery and flint. They are happy to have local volunteers joining in so if you have some time to spare do go and see them – they will be there until Friday 17 September, though note that they won't be working on this coming Friday afternoon or Saturday (11th). On the Saturday afternoon, however, there is a visit by the Junior Section of La Société Guernesiaise at 2pm, so if you are a junior person or have one close at hand, do go along if you can.

### Herm

Chris Scarre starts this season of work on Herm this Wednesday, and I know that some of you have already arranged to spend some time there. Chris's arrangements are a little more formal than those for L'Erée, so if you want to dig there please contact me or Tanya first. I assume that there will be some sort of guided tour of this season's excavations before Chris finishes on 25 September, and will let you know as soon as I have a date and time for that.



Still on the subject of Herm, many of you probably saw the report in the Press of the wonderful stone axe picked up there by a visiting Jerseyman a couple of weeks ago. Chris Scarre will be excavating a small area around where the axe was found to see if there is any other dating evidence to go with it. The axe itself is quite small – 15cm

long – and very similar in form, although not identical, to the smaller variety we have here, several of which are on show in the museum. The photo below shows the Herm find alongside a plaster cast of a museum example. As you can see from the photographs, this one was not finished, since the hole doesn't go right the way through – although by my calculations there is only about 3mm of stone left in the middle, so it's a bit of a mystery as to why it was abandoned at this point. As some of you know, I have doubts about the authenticity of several of the examples of this style of axe which are in the museum, so this one – the first to be recorded for 150 years or more – is really a very important find.





### **Airport**

We have temporarily suspended work at the airport site while there is so much else going on (not least because all our tools have been pinched!). Although there is still a fair amount of pottery and flint coming out, we have a disappointing lack of features – just a few rather vague postholes and a ditch which seems to peter out half way across the site. However, we will carry on with this later in the month, at least until the water level rises to turn it into a duck pond...

### **Dates for your diary**

A couple of lectures coming up in the autumn: on Thursday 14 October, Jason will be talking about the recent work at the Nunnery in Alderney – is it Roman, or is it not? On Thursday 11 November, I'll be giving an expanded version of the lecture I did at the recent Small Islands conference, on 'Different Iron Ages' – how our interpretation of the Iron Age in the Channel Islands keeps changing. Both at Candie, 8pm.

### **The incredible Fulk**

Back in February 2009, we spent a very cold morning walking the fields behind Richard Keen's farmhouse at Les Prevosts, St Saviour's. Amongst the 1,500 or more finds – mostly post-medieval pottery – there was one coin, I think found by Margaret. It has recently been cleaned by Rex,



and what appeared at first glance to be a rather corroded and unexciting object has turned into an interesting silver coin. A colleague in Cambridge has identified it for me: it's a billon (base silver) *denier* of Fulk V of Anjou, nominally dating between 1105 and 1129, although it may have been struck posthumously. A good find, and although I'll have to check, I think it's one of the earliest medieval coins from the island.

### **I'm off!**

From 20 September until 20 October, I'll be taking a month's leave to go back to Oxford and finish off the research for my book on 'Coin Hoards of Iron Age Britain', which I was working on before I moved back to Guernsey in 2007. Although I will be keeping an eye on my e-mail during this time, I'll be delegating as much as I possibly can to Kit and Tanya (sorry guys...). So if you have any questions or queries about what's going on, please contact them first, either by phone (700477 or 07781 131061) or by email ([tanya.walls@cultureleisure.gov.gg](mailto:tanya.walls@cultureleisure.gov.gg), [christopher.hughes@cultureleisure.gov.gg](mailto:christopher.hughes@cultureleisure.gov.gg)). And I look forward to catching up with you all later in October.

All the best  
Phil