



ULSTER  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY

# Newsletter

Autumn/Winter 2018

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Editor: Duncan Berryman

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## From the Editor

2018 has been yet another busy year for the UAS, and probably the highlight of it has been the success of our second Discovery! conference. This is now firmly an annual event and definitely **the** conference for the archaeology of Ulster. This year we had an even larger audience (there was hardly a spare seat to be had) from across Ireland and further afield. Our President has written a short report on the conference later in this issue.

As always, we have had a full programme of events and lectures in 2018. The Committee are in the process of finalising 2019's programme, but I can assure you that it will be just as exciting. Full details will be distributed to members in the new year.

We are trying to reduce postage costs. If you would like to only receive a digital copy of the Newsletter, then please let us know when you renew your membership.

**Duncan Berryman**  
Editor

### **Subscriptions are due on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019**

Subscriptions are due on the 1st January 2019. Please send cheques for £20 (full) or £7.50 (retired) to the Hon. Treasurer, Lee Gordon, at the address on the cover of the Newsletter. You can also use PayPal on the website –

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# Diary Dates

## Lectures

Monday 8pm, Elwood Building, QUB

28 <sup>th</sup> January	Paul Gosling	Folklore of the Táin
25 <sup>th</sup> February	AGM	NB: AGM starts at 7.45pm

## Workshops

4th March – Identification and analysis of bones (Prof Eileen Murphy)

## Field Trips

18<sup>th</sup> May – One-day trip

17<sup>th</sup> June – Evening trip

8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> November – Discovery 2019! Conference (Elmwood Building, QUB)

Contact Ken Pullin for info on [ulsterarchaeolsoc@gmail.com](mailto:ulsterarchaeolsoc@gmail.com)

# Annual General Meeting

The 77<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Ulster Archaeological Society will be held in the Lecture Theatre, Queen's University Elmwood Building, Elmwood Avenue, Belfast BT9, on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019, commencing 7.45pm.

## Agenda

1. President's Address.
2. Minutes of 76<sup>th</sup> AGM held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018.
3. Honorary Secretary's Annual Report for 2018.
4. Honorary Editor Ulster Journal of Archaeology Annual Report for 2018.
5. Honorary Editor UAS Newsletter Annual Report for 2018.
6. Honorary Treasurer's Annual Report for 2018.
7. Election of Officers.
8. Election of two Ordinary Committee Members (3-year term).
9. Election of Honorary Auditor.
10. Business of which notice has been given.
11. Any other business.

Notices of motion and nominations for officers and committee positions should reach Mr Ken Pullin, Hon. Secretary, Ulster Archaeological Society, (c/o School of Natural & Built Environment, Elmwood Building, QUB, Belfast, BT7 1NN) not later than Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

The President, three Vice Presidents, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Editor Ulster Journal of Archaeology, Hon. Editor UAS Newsletter and Hon. Auditor are elected annually. Two Ordinary Members of the General Committee retire annually and are not eligible for re-election for one year.

Following the business of the AGM there will be a PowerPoint presentation of the Society's field trips during 2018 and an illustrated account of the activities of the Survey Group during the year.

## Survey Group News

Our 2018 season ended at the end of August, with a survey of excavation trenches in the area around Temple Water and the Yew Terraces at Castle Ward, County Down. In addition to carrying out this survey, our members actually formed the excavation crew.

Directed by Malachy Conway, the National Trust archaeologist, the aim of the excavations was to locate and learn about the remains of historic paths in the historic landscape and in this, the crew were particularly successful.

Sincere thanks to Mal for inviting us to take part in this very worthwhile project. In addition to this, the geophysical survey team carried out an earth resistivity survey in the area of the Yew Terraces, looking for evidence of a series of formal steps there and other features associated with this. The results are still being processed, but are already showing some interesting anomalies.

Another development for the team was the acquisition of additional geophysical survey equipment,

which can be used to provide pseudo sections of sub-surface features, such as ditches and walls. The team were provided with training in this equipment by a representative of the manufacturer and are looking forward to deploying it in the near future.

We made our way to Rowallane at the end of September, in order to address our backlog of reports to be written. At that time it stood at fourteen, but by the time of writing, this had been reduced to eight and it is hoped to reduce this further, before the new season begins in Spring next year. Seventy-two reports have now been published on the society website and from the numerous comments we receive, it seems that they are being widely consulted by members of the public, which after all, is the whole point of doing UAS surveys.

In the New Year, we are looking forward to a programme of training on our survey equipment. This is important as we have many new members, but it does no harm for the rest of us to refresh our memories on what has become a

very wide range of survey equipment. Also next year, we hope to strengthen our links with the Archaeology Society of Queen's University, with a view to encouraging students to take an active part in the activities of the UAS survey group. We always welcome new members to the group and it is encouraging that our membership remains vibrant.

We are also looking forward to another year (our fourteenth season of surveys) and to getting out and learning more about the fascinating archaeological resource that we have in Northern Ireland. We would like to thank Mal Conway for making the facilities at Rowallane available to us over the Autumn and Winter to carry out our research and report writing. Mal has been a true friend of the group since it was established and intimately involved in its success.

**Harry Welsh**  
**Fieldwork Co-ordinator**

## Discovery 2018! Second Annual Review of Archaeological Discoveries in Ulster conference

The Ulster Archaeological Society and Archaeology & Palaeoecology, School of Natural and Built Environment at Queen's University Belfast, jointly hosted the Discovery 2018! Second Annual Review of Archaeological Discoveries in Ulster conference on November 3rd and 4th 2018 at Queen's University Belfast. The conference celebrated the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the Third Series of the Ulster Journal of Archaeology. The Journal, which remains the main repository for the publications of licenced archaeological excavations and other papers on archaeological research in Ulster, is still going strong and the most recent volume (Vol. 73) was published in July 2018.

The Discovery 2018! conference launch took place on the Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November with a wine reception and the launch of an exciting new book *Life and Death in Medieval*

*Gaelic Ireland. The skeletons from Ballyhanna, Co. Donegal* written by Dr Catriona McKenzie (University of Exeter) and Professor Eileen Murphy (Head of Archaeology and Palaeoecology, QUB). The book was launched by Michael MacDonagh, Chief Archaeologist with the National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht who also gave a riveting conference keynote address describing the work of Ireland's National Monuments Service in managing archaeological discovery.

On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November, there was a full day of 16 short presentations and the wide range of papers, once again, gave a taster of the interesting archaeological work currently being carried out across Ulster by heritage institutions and bodies, commercial archaeological companies and community groups.

There were talks on the county museums of Down and Monaghan and the activities of the Ulster Archaeological Society's Field Survey Group during 2018. There were also papers on new research

at Emain Macha/ Navan Fort, Ballynahatty prehistoric landscape, Drumclay Crannog, Co, Fermanagh, medical treatment and care of the sick in early medieval Donegal, the archaeology of The Nine Years War, the development of the walled city of Derry~Londonderry and the 20<sup>th</sup> century coastal defence batteries at Grey Point Fort, Co. Down and Lenane Head, Co. Donegal. Other papers presented at the conference discussed the results of excavations at Cathedral Hill, Downpatrick; Mountjoy Fort, Brocagh, Co. Tyrone; a late-19<sup>th</sup> century munitions tunnel and railway at Carrickfergus Castle, Co. Antrim and excavations at a multi-period site at Baronsgrange, Carryduff, Co. Down.

Papers on Irish material culture included ones on lignite bracelet production in the north of Ireland, the enigma of aceramic periods in the Irish Late-Prehistoric and Early Historic eras and important geological discoveries from Ulster monuments.

Our thanks to all the speakers who kindly agreed to share their

discoveries with us, the people who chaired the various conference sessions, those who assisted in the hosting of the conference and, especially, everyone – both members of the public and members of the archaeological community – who came together to discuss and learn about the new archaeological projects, research and publications taking place in Ulster. The conference was generously supported by funding from the Culture and Society Research Cluster in the School of Natural and Built Environment at Queen's University Belfast and we are very grateful for their support.

The Discovery 2018! conference was a great success and 130 people attended over the two days, a really fantastic turnout. The annual Discovery conference is now established as the most important yearly archaeological conference in Ulster. As last year, photographs from the weekend have been put on both the UAS Facebook site:  
[www.facebook.com/The-Ulster-Archaeological-Society-190943297657719/](https://www.facebook.com/The-Ulster-Archaeological-Society-190943297657719/) as well as the 'Archaeology at Queen's'

Facebook site:  
[www.facebook.com/archaeologyatqueensbelfast/](https://www.facebook.com/archaeologyatqueensbelfast/) An archive of material relating to the conference will shortly be put up on the UAS website  
<https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/uas/Conference/>

The planning for the Discovery 2019! conference has now started, and it will take place at Queen's University Belfast on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2019. Information about the conference will be supplied to UAS members as details are confirmed. We hope to see you all there!

**Ruairí Ó Baoill**  
**President**

## September Lecture

Our September lecture was given by Dr Stefan Bergh, NUI Galway. His talk was entitled "The Mullaghfarna & Turlough Hill prehistoric 'settlements', more than meets the eye".

Bergh opened his lecture by discussing the landscapes of Swedish Lapland, where landscape features have names that are invisible to the observer. Mountains are also important to societies, they were seen as a link between heaven and earth. They were often places of ritual and occasionally domestic dwellings.

About 100 Irish Neolithic houses have been found, they were both circular and rectangular and were generally in clusters. Middle Neolithic houses were round and found on different types of land to the houses of earlier periods. Very few middle Neolithic houses have been found, possibly because they were insubstantial structures. About 15 roundhouses have been identified on the slopes of Knocknarea, west of Sligo.

Turlough Hill is just north of the Burren and has a limestone pavement across its summit. Across the hill are a number of features, including a summit cairn, house structures, and a labyrinth structure. There were 146 houses, which were all roundhouse and appear to form clusters. A number of the structures were u-shaped rather than fully round, but these appear to have been associated with full roundhouse, possibly these were storage areas. Some of the houses were built on top of the pavement, but many were quarried into it. Although there was no dating evidence within these structures, they are very similar to the Neolithic houses on Knocknarea. Excavation provided no further clues to the dating. The limestone bedrock had developed fissures (as seen elsewhere in the Burren) after the houses fell out of use, probably removing all artefacts.

The labyrinth was made up of a low bank, but is difficult to see on the ground today. A large enclosure nearby had a few houses against the ramparts, but the interior appears to have been empty.

There was also a long cairn on the saddle between the two summits of the hill, it was about 90m long and had a snaking shape.

The houses appear to be domestic in character, and there is no evidence of settlement elsewhere in the landscape. But Bergh thinks they must have served a ritual function. They represent a single phase of construction (as none overlap) and respected the ritual monuments. It is possible that the houses on the two summits represent two groups of people, each with their own monument, and this was a neutral meeting point for them.

Mullaghfarna is part of the Brickley Mountains in south Sligo. It also has a large cluster of houses, these are on the Doonaveragh Ridge and only accessible by a flight of rock cut steps at the far end of the plateau. These were believed to have been the homes of the passage tomb builders.

Trial excavations revealed neolithic artefacts, such as chert scrapers and flint knives. Datable material indicated three phases of use –

3200-2900, 2400-2200, and 1200-900 BCE; these are Neolithic, Chalcolithic, and Bronze Age. There were 166 houses and 100 auxiliary spaces associated with the houses. Although different in form to those at Turlough hill, they were also both built on the surface and quarried into it. Most were 8–12m in diameter, but some were up to 20m. There were four larger oval structures in a line across the middle of the plateau and the smaller houses were clustered around these. Some of the houses in the north were only accessible through their neighbours. Some had paths quarried out of the bedrock leading away from their doors.

There remain many questions about these sites. They are similar in the number of houses, and they are both on inaccessible upland. Bergh suggests that these would have been important sites in the landscape that would have been known to the people in the surrounding areas. It is possible that these were places of seasonal gatherings, much like the Sami reindeer herders' church villages. But they had prominent positions

within the landscape and were important in the development of social hierarchies in the Bronze Age.

**Duncan Berryman**

## October Lecture

The Society's October lecture was given by Dave Pollock of Archaeografix. His lecture was on his excavations at Barryscourt Castle, which have recently been published as part of the Archaeological Monograph Series of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht by Wordwell Books.

In 1183 Phillip de Barry and Gerald de Barry visited their estates in Ireland, Barryscourt was their caput. When David Barry fell out of favour with the crown in 1580, he destroyed his favourite castle at Barryscourt, but it was soon repaired and he held out here against Hugh O'Neill in 1599. By 1645 the Barrys had moved to other castles, such as Castle Lyons, and the tower came under

bombardment as it was held by Confederate forces.

The castle is a large tower house, with projecting corner turrets on three corners. It sits in the south west corner of a bawn, which was later turned into a farmyard. The site is at the edge of Cork harbour and controlled the only land bridge to Fota Island, where cattle could be safely housed.

The vault of the tower has been dated to 1400, making it a very early example of a tower house. The tower is formed of two blocks, but is of a single construction. The chapel in one of the turrets has a cinquefoil window dating to the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century, supporting the date of the vault.

The earliest structure on the site was a stone building beside a stream that flowed through the bawn. This had a timber element within the stream and may have been a mill. What appears to have been a sluice gate was dated to 1197. Whatever this structure was, it was not a castle.

The bawn wall was constructed after the tower house, as it abuts it. The north west corner appears to have exposed foundation courses, suggesting that the ground level was originally higher at that point. The wall probably cuts a bank created from the moat, which was contemporary with the tower house. To the east, the stream was diverted round the edge of the bawn and may also have fed the moat to the west.

Buildings were constructed against the bawn wall, with one range against the western wall and another against the northern wall. The building closest to the tower house appears to have been a two-story stone structure, possibly a chamber. Most of this wall was taken up by what appears to have been a hall. There is evidence of windows in the bawn wall at first floor level and wall footings to support a timber building. However, the timber building appears to have been free-standing, suggesting it was constructed before the bawn wall. This hall had a cellar under it, accessed from the bawn. In the north-western corner there was

another two-story building, although its function is unclear. The northern range of buildings were timber-framed and left little trace in this area.

Within the yard of the bawn there was significant activity. The buildings of the north range were removed and a large, sub-rectangular enclosure was created with walls almost as wide as those of the bawn. Small drains had been created within this enclosure, suggesting the ground was irrigated and that this was a garden. There was evidence for the creation of planting beds within the enclosure and in the area north of the tower house. Three large pits in front of the hall have been interpreted as planting holes for trees, which would have provided shelter in this enclosed garden.

A structure was uncovered in front of the tower house doorway. This is unlikely to have been a building, but it may have been a platform or porch. The current doorway dates to the renovations of 1581. The platform is associated with another planting bed that ran north-south in front of the tower house. The

original door is unclear, but there is a small doorway on the first floor that accessed a single turret room and the basement. Perhaps the original door to the rest of the tower house was beside this and we have the remains of a stairway.

A garden has also been identified at Ormonde Castle, Carrick-on-Suir. Here there is evidence for a cobbled yard with planting beds. Historical evidence shows it was constructed in the fifteenth century.

Barryscourt presents a very interesting view of life in medieval Ireland. The construction of a manorial complex here (possibly represented by the timber hall and stone chamber) was the first substantial structure on the site. This was superseded by the tower house, which appears to be of an early date. In the following years, we see the construction development of the bawn, with more buildings. The garden features were probably added in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, about the same time as David Barry was renovating the castle. The presence of a garden

shows that life for the elites was significantly more pleasant and more modern than we often think.

**Duncan Berryman**

## November Lecture

The society's November lecture was given by Stephen Cameron from the Antrim county archaeological society. The society has spent 20 years researching the lesser known archaeological sites of County Antrim, to do this the society employs Stephen and Ingrid Pruner as administrators and researchers. Stephen's lecture was titled 'Rediscovering the Lost Sites of East Antrim' and presented the results of some of this research.

The first site was Lealies Rath, a typical early medieval rath on farmland southwest of Larne. The site is marked on the early editions of the OS maps, but was not recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record until the ACAS carried out their research. It is now listed as ANT 40-089. The site is a faint earthwork with the fields,

bisected by a modern field boundary. The rath is between 30m and 40m in diameter, making it fairly typical in size, if on the larger side.

The next site was Ballytober Cliff top enclosure. This spectacular site is situated on the edge of an escarpment south of Knock Dhu. The nature of this site is obscure, it may have been a small promontory fort, but it has also been suggested that it is a burial cairn. On the lower slopes below the enclosure was a small hillock marked on early OS maps. This hillock was named Gallan, which can be translated as 'standing stone'. Located near these monuments was a processional way along which cattle were driven to bring them up the hillside and on to the promontory fort at Knock Dhu. It is possible that these monuments were associated with this movement of cattle.

The third site discussed in this lecture was Ballyhampton Earthworks. These earthworks are one mile west of Larne and are relatively invisible in a field of grass. They are composed of two

parallel banks in the field, with a lane running off at a right angle and there is a long cut running across the field and through the structure defined by the banks. Documents from 1306 record a church at Ballyhumton, which was a *mensall* of the bishop surrounded by evil neighbours. An early map depicts this site with a cross and what appears to be the letter B, possibly indicating a church held by the bishop. It is, therefore, possible that the earthworks of Ballyhampton are the walls of the medieval church. This is supported by the discovery of coffin fragments, human remains, and building material when the mill race was cut through the site, this was the long feature running through the field. The mill race was first recorded on the 1860 OS map, thus it must have been cut a few years prior to that. Unfortunately, all artefacts have been lost and cannot be studied to confirm the date of this structure.

Just north of Larne is the site of a water mill in Ballyruther Townland, near Ballygally. This site left little trace, but was identified by a long ditch running off a hillside and

beside an overgrown mound. On visiting the site it was evident that this mound was the remains of a building, with bits of masonry and roofing slate on the ground. It quickly became evident that the ditch was originally a mill race and that this was a water mill.

Knockintennon revealed one of the most enigmatic sites the society has invested yet. The top of this small hill appears to be enclosed by a ditch and bank, although the area is now heavily overgrown with gorse and very hard to survey. Local rumours talk of a doctor's stone on the site, although what that might be is unclear. There are clearly piles of stones within this enclosure, suggesting the possibility of a megalithic tomb, or even a tumbled house structure.

One of the most significant sites discussed was the Larne Viking burial. This burial was found on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1840 while workmen were constructing a railway line to the port. The skeleton was described as being of gigantic proportions and had a sword and other objects. The grave goods are now in Alnwick Castle and the skull

is in a box in Trinity College Dublin. It has been suggested that this burial was associated with the sea battle in Larne Lough between Jarl Einar (Wry-Mouth) of Orkney and king Conor of Ireland. It's known that there were also Vikings fighting on Conor's side, as Einar hunted them and killed them after the battle. The Heritage Map Viewer places this site to the west of the harbour. However, it is more likely to have been to the north, where the promenade is today. The workmen who found the burial were constructing a mineral tramway to bring goods from the quarry to the north of Larne to the port. The newspaper report from the time also placed the burial in this area described as Bank Head.

The ACAS had also carried out a lot of work to discover the true location of Clondrumalis Church. The SMR places it in the middle of Larne Lough, but map and place name evidence suggest its real location. The church is first mentioned in 1306 and was associated with a Norbetine monastery. The area of Gardenmore, on the edge of Larne, was named after the large

gardens of a priory. The Downe survey map suggests a church beside Gardenmore and John Speed's map labels it as Chevet, which can be translated as part of a church (Pevsner's architectural dictionary describes it as the chancel with surrounding ambulatory and radiating chapels). This may have been the missing church. Locating it in the modern landscape is slightly more problematic. But cist burials with human remains and one with horse bits were found during road works on the Tower Road. It is possible that these were burials in the graveyard associated with this church.

This was a very interesting lecture, bringing many new sites to the attention of the UAS and showing us the excellent work that the Antrim County Archaeological Society has been doing for many years.

**Duncan Berryman**

## Co. Tyrone Field Trip

18<sup>th</sup> August 2018 Leader: Dr Ian Meighan

A good attendance (approximately 30) for this annual geological event, but unfortunately Claire Foley was indisposed so could not co-lead.

The trip began at the An Creagán Centre where, over coffee, the leader gave a short talk on the geology of Co. Tyrone and displayed specimens of parts of ophiolites (obducted fragments of oceanic lithosphere) and other relevant lithologies, all from very diverse localities – Cyprus, Oman, Lanzarote, South Africa, etc. He also utilised the buildings at An Cregán to demonstrate the local rock types (e.g. pink Tyrone granite).

The first field locality was by the church at Carrickmore where we examined a stone tomb (category uncertain). The monuments was constructed from the local dolerite of the Ordovician Tyrone Ophiolite.

After lunch (at An Cregán) came the main event of the day, namely the Neolithic Creggandevesky Court Tomb. This very spectacular example was excavated by Claire Foley (and the local farmer) and is described by her in detail in our current Journal (Volume 73). The monument was constructed mainly of local igneous rocks (gabbro, dolerite, granite, etc. of the Ordovician Tyrone Igneous Complex) in the form of glacial erratics. The leader demonstrated his exciting recent discovery that two of the jambs are ultramafic igneous rock (virtually 100% dark minerals and no quartz): these were derived (as glacial erratics) from the ultramafic component of the Tyrone ophiolite which has never been seen in outcrop! (See Claire's UJA paper for more details). The locally derived sandstone (probably a roofing material) was also demonstrated. In contrast to the other lithologies, this is not glacial material and must have been collected at outcrop and taken to Creggandevesky by the Neolithic tomb builders.

The final locality (after 'a bull in field' scare at Creggandevesky)

was the Beaghmore Stone Circles and Stone Rows. Again, Tyrone Igneous Complex glacial material. Overall a good day of congenial company and no rain! Thanks once again to our driver Jim Watterson and to the staff at An Creggán.

**Ian Meighan**

## New Books

*The Wealth of England*, Susan Rose

*Oxbow Books, £40*

This book explores the production and trade of wool in medieval England. Rose discusses the care of sheep, how and where wool was traded, and the importance of this trade to the crown. The Irish wool trade has been less recognised, but wool was exported from Dublin, Cork, Drogheda, and Waterford, thus there must have been sizable flocks in Ireland. This is a very interesting book for anyone wishing to read about medieval society, trade, and agriculture.

*Becoming and Belonging in Ireland ADc.1200–1600*, edited by E.

Campbell, E. FitzPatrick & A.

Horning

*Cork Uni Press, €39/£35*

This volume has a range of chapters discussing many different aspects of identity in late medieval Ireland, many focusing on Gaelic society. Friends of the UAS have contributed many of the chapters, such as Audrey Horning, Colm

Donnelly, Eileen Murphy, Colin Breen, Paul Logue and James O'Neill. This book reflects current research into the everyday lives of people in medieval Ireland, thinking about where they lived and the interactions between groups, particularly between the Gaelic and the English. This contribution deepens our understanding of Irish society and presents a more nuanced view than may have been previously considered.

*Medieval Ireland*, by Clare

Downham

*CUP, £22.99*

This book could almost be a companion volume to the History of Ireland volumes. It focuses on the period from the 5<sup>th</sup> century to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and tells the story of the island of Ireland. Downham divides the book into two parts, covering 400-1100 and 1100-1500, within these chapters land use, economy, society, politics, religion, and the arts are discussed. The Irish landscape is a constant theme, having a significant influence on events. This book provides a good introduction to medieval Ireland, discussing

important themes while attempting to be objective and break away from the effects of periodisation and politics.

*Life and Death in Medieval Gaelic Ireland*, by Catriona McKenzie & Eileen Murphy  
Four Courts Press, €50

Many members will have attended the launch of this book at our Discovery 2018! Conference. This book discusses what we have learnt about Gaelic society from the excavation of a cemetery at Ballyhanna, Co. Donegal. Detailed descriptions of the skeletons are used to reveal what life would have been like for these people in the Middle Ages. A number of the chapters are devoted to the types of diseases that these people would have suffered from, such as joint diseases, circulatory disorders and tuberculosis. Other injuries showed the types of everyday physical stresses these people endured and the violence that occurred. Most interesting is the chapter on medicine and treatment, this combines historical accounts of treatments with the archaeological evidence. The book is illustrated throughout with

pictures of the relevant bones, as well as with graphs and tables. This work brings these people, and their community, to life, showing us the health problems they faced and how they coped with them; it is an important book for the study of medieval Gaelic Ireland.

*The Backbone of Europe*, edited by Steckel, Larsen, Roberts & Baten  
Cambridge University Press, £75

In a similar vein to *Life and Death in Gaelic Ireland*, this volume explores life and health in Europe through studies of skeletal remains. The papers in this volume study populations in Europe over the past 2,000 years, analysing the impact of economics, climate, and urbanisation on the health of the population. This book is filled with interesting discussions on society and people. But it is very data heavy, with numerous tables and graphs. If you are someone who loves the science behind archaeology, then this book is for you.



# Discovery 2018!

