



Stay in touch! If you have an interesting topic you'd like to share or a question just get in touch and we'll publish or try to answer.

We were able to welcome several new members to our first meeting of 2022 held a week later than planned due to Storm Dudley. Meetings are held on every 3rd Wednesday each month at the Village Centre, Great Ecclestone.

2022 Meeting Schedule:

All at 7.30p.m.

Wednesday 16 March

Wednesday 20 April Annual General Meeting

(Speaker: Gary Thornton – *The Romans in the Fylde*)*

Wednesday 18 May

Wednesday 15 June

Wednesday 20 July

Wednesday 17 August

Wednesday 21 September

Wednesday 19 October

Wednesday 16 November

December & January No Meetings



The Centre, Great Ecclestone. Entrance arrowed.

Note the AGM on 20 April. This is when we agree any changes to our society including for example subscription fees for the year which become due from 1 May. It's also an opportunity for members to be nominated for a place on the Executive Committee. This year we're looking for nominations for various positions including Chair, and Vice-Chair but all the committee places are open to any member. In addition to these officers and Treasurer and Secretary we have a planning group, a Social Media supervisor plus up to 3 further members.

At the AGM we also usually have a guest speaker.

*This year Gary Thornton, a long-time member of WA and former Treasurer, is speaking on *The Romans in*

The Fylde, based on his extensive experience of metal detecting and coin finds.

Ordinary meetings don't usually feature external speakers, except very occasionally, and are generally given over to reports on our latest digs when members are able to ask questions or put forward ideas about our findings.

The Brunanburh debate.



Some members will perhaps remember former Chairman Brian Rigby's short talk on his conviction that the famous Battle of Brunanburh in 937AD was fought at Brindle near Chorley. The site of the battle isn't known although descriptions of the slaughter occur in many ancient sagas and so many locations lay claim. The pub in Brindle even has a stained glass window (left) as 'evidence'.

The recently-circulated newsletter from our friends at Wigan Archaeology publicised a new suggestion by researcher Jonathan Starkey that this battle that possibly laid the foundations of the English state may well have taken place around Wigan (*The Battle of Brunanburh – At Wigan - see Wigan AS Newsletter 03/22 for full description*).

TV archaeologist Michael Wood argues for somewhere in the east of England and that the name should be spelled *Brunnan...* and not *Brunan...*, while

Wirral Archaeological Society and American historian Michael Livingstone strongly support the claim of Bromborough on the Wirral, largely based on local conviction, some place names and some as yet unconfirmed archaeological finds. (<https://www.wirralarchaeology.org/pages/wirral-archaeology-and-the-search-for-the-battle-of-brunanburh/>).

But what about Bryning (with Warton) where in former times the local inn was known as 'The Bloody Pluck', supposedly commemorating the rather messy death of a fugitive from the battle, or our own Bourne Hill near where legendary local ladies chased off fleeing Danes with their pans. See also <http://wyresearch.blogspot.com/2006/11/grave-confusion.html> for historian Brian Hughes's thoughts on Viking graves at Garstang and Inskip.

This *blogspot* item from November 2006 (sadly Brian Hughes no longer maintains the site) also suggests that King Aethelstan (the ultimate victor) established his war camp at the abandoned Roman station at Walton-le-Dale, a suggestion revived in Starkey's paper (above).

Many of the claimed battle sites are based on place names. Bromborough for example is said to derive from Brunburg meaning Bruna's stronghold or possibly 'the fortress of brown stone', or 'the dark man's fortress' (<http://www.wirralhistory.uk/origins.html>). Most of the other variations of brun, bryn, brin, burn may also derive from similar Old English or Anglo-Saxon origins. The 'double-n' version of Brunnanburh favoured by Michael Woods is believed to derive from Old English fortress (or hill) with a spring or stream. That would apply to Bourne Hill, perhaps.

The name 'Fylde' may derive from Old English 'fyllan' that has a secondary meaning: *to cause to fall, strike down, fell, cut down; throw down, defeat, destroy, kill; tumble; cause to stumble; gefylled w.d.g. bereft.* It

may also, but less likely, derive from the Old English word for field/plain which was 'feld' but that also has a secondary meaning of 'battlefield'.

Just to round off this debate I'll mention three papers brought to my attention. In July of last year Brian Rigby who was researching the topic for a talk planned for this year gave me a copy of a paper by John R. Kirby *Identifying Brúnanburh: ón dyngesmere – the sea of noise*. A little later in October, I received a draft paper from a researcher, Anthony A. Pearson, entitled *Brunanburh 937: A geological, geographical and toponymical re-evaluation of the battle-site*. Then, a few weeks ago, Gary Thornton, who had remembered Brian's and my interest, sent me a copy of a paper from the *Over-Wyre Historical Journal Vol IX*, of 2003, written by one of the founder members of Wyre Archaeology, W H (Headley) Lawrenson, entitled *Brunanburh Discovered*.

The first and last of these three papers put forward strong arguments for the battle having been fought in north-west Lancashire around Lancaster and Heysham (a sea arch in Morecambe Bay, long-since collapsed, was known in the 13thC as Bruneberh) while Anthony Pearson's paper, an exceptionally well-researched and wide-ranging analysis, taking in ancient documents, current and ancient topography, geography, place names and military logistics and deployment, puts the battle field firmly in the Kirkham/Warton/Walton-le-Dale triangle.

Maybe no-one will ever identify with certainty the site of the Battle of Brunanburh and I wouldn't rule out Wigan (OE *wigan* – to wage war) but I think the North Lancashire case is pretty strong.

Old English translations are taken from the on-line 'Old English Dictionary' <https://old-engli.sh/dictionary.php>

WEBSITES WORTH VISITING

Lancashire's Roman Roads (David Ratledge): www.twithr.co.uk
Roman Roads Research Association: <http://www.romanroads.org>
Lancashire Archaeological Society: <https://lancsarchaeologicalsociety.wordpress.com>
Wigan Archaeology Society: www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk
University of the 3rd Age: <https://u3asites.org.uk/lytham-st-annes>, <https://u3asites.org.uk/wyre-lancs>, <https://u3asites.org.uk/preston>

Membership Benefits: Full Membership: 10 meetings with voting rights, group membership of Council for British Archaeology and CBA(NW) and Lancashire Local History Federation, free training, participation in digs, basic kit loan, personal dig insurance, WA Newsletter, Wigan AS and Lancashire Local History Federation newsletters, Lancaster Uni's Centre for Regional Studies circulars. (£12 individuals, £18 two family members at same address, full-time students up to age 21 free). **Associate Members:** newsletter and circulars as above (£5).

WYRE ARCHAEOLOGY OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

Acting Chair	Dave Berry
Immediate Past Chair	Chris Clayton
Treasurer	Simon Millward-Hopkins
Secretary	Dave Hampson
Committee Members	Mike Edwards, Peter Scott, Helen Coulthard, Andy Jackson.
	Two Vacancies.

CONTACTS

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