



**Celebrating 50 years of the Society for Museum
Archaeology
SMA Annual Conference
Programme**

**National Museums Liverpool
Museum of Liverpool, on 13th-14th of November 2025
and livestreamed**

Thursday 13th November 2025

Optional field trips (prebook only)

10:00-10:45 **Treasure: History Unearthed**
Curatorial exhibition tour with Heather Beeton, Finds Liaison Officer for Merseyside, Manchester and Cheshire
Additional charge £4 per person.

11:00-11:45 **Tour of Princes Dock 'Solidity equal to ... the old Pyramids'**
Archaeologist tour of Princess dock with Mark Adams, Principal Archaeological Consultant, Headland Archaeology

Registration and Welcome

Tea, Coffee provided

Please make your own lunch arrangements

9:45-12:15 Registration
12:30-13:05 Welcome
Liz Stewart, Head of Museum of Liverpool, NML

Session One: Showcasing the Archaeology of Merseyside

Chair: Liz Stewart

12:45-13:05 **From Basin to Dock to Museum: The Excavation of Manchester Dock, Liverpool'**
Mark Adams, Principal Archaeological Consultant, Headland Archaeology

- 13:05-13:25 **Collaborating in reviving an archive: The Yoward archive of Cast Iron Grave Markers at the Ironbridge Museums and Archives**
Harold Mytum, Professor of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology, University of Liverpool
- 13:25-13:45 **‘Norton Priory: Monastery to Museum. Celebrating 50 years and inspiring the next chapter**
Lynn Smith, Archaeology and Collections Director, Norton Priory Museum Trust
- 13:45-13:55 Questions Session

13:55 -14:10

Comfort Break

Session Two: Archiving

Chair: Elsa Price

- 14:10-14:30 **Vindolanda’s Archives: Looking to the Past**
Bethany Goodman, Assistant Archivist, Vindolanda Trust
- 14:30-14:50 **“It’s no longer about the Box sizes”**
Helen Parslow, Archives Officer, Albion Archaeology
- 14:50-15:10 **Community Archaeological Archives; A perspective from Kent**
Andy Ward, Curator, Kent Archaeological Society
- 15:10-15:20 Questions Session

15:20-15:40

Refreshment Break

Tea, Coffee provided

Session Three: Digital

Chair: Jenni Butterworth

- 15:40-16:00 **Connecting Distributed Collections in the Digital Era: Preliminary Work with the John Garstang Archaeological Collection**
Joanne Fitton, Deputy Director of Libraries, Museums & Galleries, University of Liverpool
Gina Laycock-Criscenzo, Curator, Garstang Museum of Archaeology
Ashley Cooke, Head of World Museum, National Museums Liverpool
Alex Fitzpatrick, Collections Information and Access Developer, University of Liverpool
- 16:00-16:20 **Quire as a Digital Output Tool for Archaeological Archives**
Renee Trepagnier, Doctoral Researcher, Collaborative Doctoral Project University of Bristol and the Ashmolean Museum
- 16:20-16:40 **Edinburgh’s First Burghers: Revealing the Lives and Hidden Faces of Edinburgh’s Medieval Citizens through Innovative Technologies and Interdisciplinary Approaches**

*John A Lawson, Regional Archaeologist, The City of Edinburgh Council
Archaeology Service (CECAS)*
*Maria MacLennan, Senior Lecturer, Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) Mettje
Hunneman, Visual Artist and Founder, VIDEOLAB Studio Orsolya Czére,
Laboratory Technician of Archaeology and Palaeoenvironment, University
of Aberdeen.*

16:40-16:50

Questions Session

17:00

Close

19:30

Conference Dinner (prebook only - additional charge)

Nova Scotia

25a Mann Island, Liverpool L3 1BP

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Friday 14th November 2025

10:00-10:15

Registration and Welcome

Tea, Coffee provided

Session Four – Hot Topics

Chair: Sian Isles

10:15-10:35

Fifty Years of Dealing with Human Remains in Museums

Headley Swain, Chief Executive, Brighton & Hove Museums

10:35-10:55

Archaeology and the persistence of mystery

Jenny Durrant, Freelance

10:55-11:15

**‘Times they are a changing’ – how do we best communicate
archaeology for multiple audience needs?**

Neil Redfern, Executive Director, Council for British Archaeology

11:15-11:35

**From Ledger to Digital: Community-Centered Redocumentation and
Smart Tools in West African Museum Practice**

Gabriel Mateson, Curator, University of Ibadan

11:35-11:45

Questions Session

11:45-12:00

Comfort Break

AGM and Awards

Chair: Ben Donnally-Symes

12:00-12:15

Annual General Meeting

Ben Donnelly-Symes, Chair, SMA

12:15-12:30

2025 Awards

Kevin Booth, Vice-Chair, SMA

12:30-12:40

2024 Grant Recipient: Access For All: Treasures of Oxfordshire

Angie Bolton, Curator of Archaeology, Oxfordshire Museum Service

12:40-12:50	2024 Grant Recipient: King Harold II Axe Display <i>Ian Channell, Museum Manager, Epping Forest District Museum Trust</i>
12:50-13:00	2024 Grant Recipient: The Bidston Hogback Stone <i>Elsa Price, Lead Curator of Archaeology, National Museums Liverpool</i>
13:00-13:40	Lunch <i>Sandwich Buffet Lunch Provided</i>
13:45-14:15	Keynote The SMA at Fifty – Mission accomplished or more to do? <i>Philip Wise, Heritage Manager, Colchester and Ipswich Museums</i>
	Session Five – Communities Chair: Georgina Barrett
14:15-14:35	My Jewellery, My Story: How Bronze Age beads inspired new community connections <i>Helen Sharp, Curator (Archaeology), Leicestershire County Council Museums</i>
14:35-14:55	It's not all about the finds: managing Kings Weston Roman Villa <i>Kate Isles, Senior Curator of Archaeology, Bristol Museums</i>
14:55-15:15	The Peterborough Archaeological Archive Enhancement Project: a non-practitioner centred data creation project <i>Samantha Paul, Heritage Consultant, Freelance</i> <i>Jay Cumberworth, Archaeology Collections Officer, Peterborough Museum</i>
15:15-15:25	Questions Session
15:25-15:40	Refreshment Break <i>Tea, Coffee provided</i>
	Session Six – Using Collections Chair: Elsa Price
15:40-16:00	Access Across Eras: Celebrating 50 Years at Durham's Museum of Archaeology <i>Gemma Lewis, Curator, Museum of Archaeology, Durham University</i>
16:00-16:20	Putting the archaeology back into the antiquarian: analysing the Dr HA Fawcett Collection of Typology for archaeological significance. <i>Gail Boyle, Freelance</i>
16:20-16:40	Archive Archaeology at London Museum: A Retrospective <i>Glynn Davis, Senior Curator, Yorkshire Museums Trust</i>
16:40-16:50	Questions Session
	Summary and Close
16:50-17:00	Closing Remarks <i>Ben Donnelly-Symes, Chair, SMA</i>

**Celebrating 50 years of the Society for Museum
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Field trips**

The SMA includes a field trip option for all delegates to the annual conference. These are arranged for the morning of the first day of the conference. The 2025 conference offers two field trip opportunities which will both meet at the main venue, the Museum of Liverpool. Trips are by prebooking only on the Eventbrite page.

Treasure: History Unearthed Curator Tour

*Curatorial exhibition tour with Heather Beeton, Finds Liaison Officer for Merseyside,
Manchester and Cheshire
Additional cost of £4pp*

Treasure means different things to different people. For those who work or are interested in archaeology it has a very specific, legal definition. Treasure: History Unearthed brings together objects from North Wales, Cheshire, Lancashire, Manchester and of course Merseyside to showcase the most extensive collection of Treasure displayed in the North West, in periods from the Bronze Age to the 1700s.

Curated by National Museums Liverpool's archaeology team this is the first archaeology exhibition at the Museum of Liverpool. It isn't about a specific place, period or theme, but about how history, science and storytelling gives Treasure objects meaning beyond their legal status.

Tour of Princes Dock 'Solidity equal to ... the old Pyramids'

*Archaeologist tour with Mark Adams, Principal Archaeological Consultant, Headland
Archaeology*

Often described as 'the second city of the British Empire' Liverpool's prosperity from the 18th to early 20th century depended in large part upon its dock system which enabled import of raw materials such as cotton, sugar and tobacco and the export of finished goods across the world. Construction of the docks began with Old Dock which opened in 1715 and by 1900 the dock estate extended for some 7 ½ miles along the Liverpool shore of the Mersey, with further extensive docks on the Wirral coast. This tour will look at a short section of this landscape, from the graving docks at Museum of Liverpool, via the Three Graces to Princes Dock to the north.

Celebrating 50 years of the Society for Museum Archaeology SMA Annual Conference Conference Dinner

The SMA organises a conference dinner on the first night of the conference as an opportunity for informal networking between delegates.

The 2025 conference dinner is being hosted at Nova Scotia, 25a Mann Island, Liverpool L3 1BP. The venue is an independent bar and eatery just stones throw from the Museum of Liverpool.

The additional cost includes a 2-course meal. Drinks may be purchased at the bar.

Delegates can prebook onto the conference dinner via the Eventbrite page for an additional cost of £21. Bookings for the conference dinner will close on the 9th of November. We will not be able to facilitate additional bookings after this date. Please let us know if you would like to attend when prompted during the booking process. Menu selections will be requested separately by form, please ensure to note your dietary preferences where applicable. Menu choices cannot be amended after the closing date.

Nova Scotia is named after the domestic historic area around Liverpool's dry or graving docks, known as Canning Dock. The area once held dwellings, shops, inns, hostelries and workshops and around 200 people called this area home. The buildings were demolished in the early 20th century to make room for Irwell Street warehouses. In the early 21st century the area was developed again to what we see today.

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Venue Information**

Each SMA conference is hosted somewhere different to increase representation and accessibility.

This year's conference is being hosted by National Museums Liverpool at the Museum of Liverpool, Pier Head, Mann Island, Liverpool L3 1DG. The venue is a free to visit museum. The special exhibition is normally charged at £5 per ticket but a discounted rate and tour is being provided as part of the SMA field trip.

Facilities

The Museum of Liverpool has the following facilities:

- Information desk on the ground floor
- Toilets across all floors, accessibility to wheelchair users with gender neutral toilets on the first floor
- Baby changing facilities on the ground and second floor
- Lifts to all floors
- Cloakroom and buggy park (£5 by card with £3 refund on return on wrist band). Large luggage will not fit in the lockers but typical cabin luggage will
- Cafe and shop
- Wheelchairs are available to borrow
- Prayer room on the second floor

Further information can be found at the venue's website:

<https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/museum-of-liverpool#section--whats-on>

Transport Links

There are six blue badge parking spaces available which must be prebooked, at least with 3 days notice. They are about 30 meters from the entrance of the museum. They can be booked by emailing: MoLManager@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

There is no public parking at the museum but there are numerous paid for car parking options in close proximity. If arriving by car please research car parking ahead of arrival to find the best option for you.

The nearest car parks include: Liverpool One, NCP Liverpool Rumford Street and Princes Dock Multistory car park. Please note this is for information sharing purposes only and not recommendations or endorsements.

If arriving by train, Liverpool Lime Street is the city's mainline station, which is around a 20 min walk from the museum. You can also connect onto the local Merseyrail service at Lime Street, taking this underground rail to Liverpool James Street which is only a 5 min walk from the museum.

If arriving by bus there is a bus and coach station at Liverpool One, a 9 minute walk to the museum. This station also provides bus links to Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

More info to help you plan your travel: <https://shorturl.at/RMdeA>

Other Venues

National Museums Liverpool has additional venues across the city which are free to enjoy. Although the Maritime Museum and International Slavery Museum are closed for redevelopment, the World Museum and Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool are open. Further out from the city are Sudley House in Aigburth and Lady Lever Art Gallery on the Wirral.

Please see the NML website for more details: <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/>