

**INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY / BRITISH MUSEUM MEDIEVAL SEMINAR
2022–23 PROGRAMME**

Meetings commence at 6.15pm

**Wednesday 7th December 2022 (Christopher Ingold Building – XLG1)
The Sir David Wilson Lecture in Medieval Studies by Professor Judith Jesch
(University of Nottingham): *Digging the Orkney Story***

The lecture will present what a range of Old Norse-Icelandic sagas and other texts have to say about Orkney and Shetland in the Viking Age. In it I will attempt to sift these various textual perspectives and establish how they tell the story of the arrival of Scandinavians in the Northern Isles. The significance of the chronological gap between events and texts will be explored using a method I like to call the 'stratigraphy of texts' that may explain the potential relationships between sagas and their historical settings, and thereby provide some insights into the source-value of sagas. The lecture will also consider some archaeological evidence in an attempt to explore how this can be brought into dialogue with the relevant texts.

A joint meeting with the Institute of Historical Research Earlier Middle Ages Seminar, **followed by a launch party for the seminar series in the IoA Sixth Floor Staff Common Room**

**Tuesday 25th April 2023 (IoA room 612)
Dr Helen Gittos (University of Oxford): *Sutton Hoo & Syria: The Anglo-Saxons who served in the Byzantine Army?***

The Sutton Hoo ship burial is the most famous example of what we now call princely burials. The recent publication of the example from Prittlewell (Essex) has brought our knowledge of them into sharper focus but some questions remain. Here I want to focus on one of them: why were these men buried with so many objects from the East Mediterranean? The conventional view is that they probably acquired them as gifts or through trade. But I want to argue for another explanation which opens up a new view on this period of early Anglo-Saxon history.

**Tuesday 16th May 2023 (IoA room 612)
Dr Gareth Williams (The British Museum): *Thor's Hammer pendants from England in the light of recent finds***

Thor's hammer pendants have until recently been comparatively rare finds in Britain and Ireland. Studies of the Vikings in Britain and Ireland have tended to continue to re-state this rarity, ignoring the fact that there has been a steady rise since the millennium in the number of hammer pendants recovered both through archaeological excavations and through metal detecting, with the current corpus including more than 40 examples from England alone. This paper highlights some important recent finds, and considers the distribution, typology and chronology of the wider corpus in their wider historical and archaeological context.

CONVENORS

Sue Brunning (BM) sbrunning@britishmuseum.org

Andrew Reynolds (IoA) a.reynolds@ucl.ac.uk

Meetings Secretary: Iain MacDonald (IoA) iain.macdonald.20@ucl.ac.uk

Sponsored by the World Archaeology Section (IoA) and the British Museum