Forensics find Viking clues

By CLIFFORD BIRCHALL

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“In the North West of England, Scandinavian major place-names are most concentrated around the Wirral peninsula and West Lancashire. These two regions possess the only definite examples of the place-name ‘Thingwall’ (from Old Norse þing-völlr meaning ‘Assembly Field’) in England, indicating settlements of sufficient density and autonomy to warrant their own parliaments,” Prof Harding says.

“Moreover, the intensity and distribution of minor place name elements attests to the persistence of a Scandinavian-influenced dialect through the centuries that may reflect the intensity of the original settlement.

“This onomastical evidence is supported by archaeological discoveries such as jewellery, weaponry or treasure hoards at Meols, Crosby, and Cuerdiale or Hiberno-Norse ring-headed crosses and hogback tombstones which reflect Scandinavian presence.”

But Viking blood is still running strong in the veins, too. DNA samples in both areas reveal this. The researchers’ chosen marker is a relatively frequent lineage in Norway, Shetland, Orkney and the Isle of Man, but rare in most mainland English and Welsh samples.

The samples from men with old surnames from both West Lancashire and Wirral show a strong increase in the proportion of it with respect to their ‘modern’ counterparts and suggests a strong Scandinavian input into the population.

How strong will be revealed by Profs Harding and Jobling together with Judith Jesch, Professor of Viking studies at the University of Nottingham. The event will be hosted by the West Lancashire Heritage Association at 7pm at the David Lloyd Leisure centre in Abbey Lane, Knowsley, Liverpool, on Tuesday, November 27, which is Lancashire Day. Tickets cost £6 and can be obtained from the West Lancashire Heritage Association by calling 01695 573350 or e-mailing patrickwaite@hotmail.co.uk

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Middle West Visitor Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Nick joins the team at Barrons

Barron Independent Mortgages are welcoming on board Nick Lowe as the newest member of the team. Nick is a qualified mortgage consultant, with an extensive background in financial services. After leaving university, Nick started his career with the Yorkshire Building Society and has spent the last five years advising clients on their mortgage needs. He joins the company, which offers independent mortgage advice, from a mortgage arm of a busy estate agency in Manchester specifically dealing with people buying and selling homes so he can appreciate the need for a prompt and knowledgeable service.

And having recently moved house, he knows from his own experience exactly what clients expect from their mortgage consultant and can sympathise with the problems they are under in making one of the hardest financial decisions in their life and how time consuming and stressful mortgage negotiations can be.

He explained, “When you come to Barrons, you will have an advisor who can source the whole range of products available on the market. And with the market being so competitive and mortgage suppliers really trying to court customers at the moment, there are huge savings out there if you know where to look.”

When Nick isn’t imparting his expert financial knowledge to clients he likes to make his opinions heard on the stands of his beloved Manchester City football club. A season ticket holder, he manages to get to most home games.