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PLEASE NOTE
 Engagements and Marriage Notices MUST be accompanied by the signature of BOTH parties concerned

Deaths

PARKER AMY
 27th October, 2007. Aged 83 years. Peacefully in hospital after short illness. Dearly beloved wife of Eric, much loved mum of Sandra and mum in law of Eddie, dear grandmother of Martin and great grandmother of Sophy, Charley and Harry. Service and cremation at Southport Crematorium on Monday 5th November at 11.30 a.m. Family flowers only, donations if desired and payable to British Heart Foundation c/o Dean Brothers Independent Funeral Directors, Deans Court, 76 Gores Lane, Formby, L37 7DF. Tel. 01704 872023.

TURNER HENRY HOWARD (HARRY)
 On 27th October, 2007. Peacefully in Dale Park Nursing Home, aged 92 years. Beloved husband of Olive. Dearly loved dad of Maureen and Roy, a very special grandfather and great grandfather. Will be sadly missed by all family and friends. Funeral Service at Holy Trinity Church, Formby on Friday 2nd November at 10.00 a.m. followed by committal at Southport Crematorium. Family flowers only by request but donations are being gratefully received for Holy Trinity Church (cheques preferred please). Donations and further enquiries please to Moisters, 25a Sefton St, Southport PR8 6SG Tel. 01704 501501.

Ruby Wedding Anniversary

RUBY ANNIVERSARY
OWEN PETER & MARY



Happy 40th Wedding Anniversary to our Mum and Dad
 Thanks for everything you do for us
 Love Trevor, Ali and Paul
 To our special Nainy and Taiddy on their special day
 Love Robert and Megan
 XXX

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DNA's the hi-tech way of digging up history of Vikings

Years of research are about to be unveiled

By **CLIFFORD BIRCHALL**

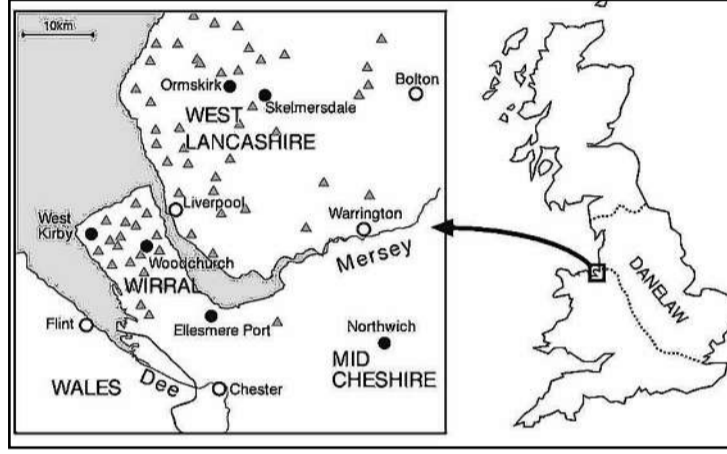
FORENSIC tools have taken the place of trowels as researchers unearth the North West's Viking past.

History has come alive thanks to a project based on volunteers' DNA, which will appeal to towns like Formby with a Viking heritage.

Guided by myth and a maze of Viking place-names, they sought out men whose families had lived in West Lancashire or Wirral for generations – men with surnames dating back to the area before the 17th century.

A unique DNA marker – a Y-chromosomal haplotype to be precise – plots male family history as it hardly ever alters, even over hundreds of years.

Professor Stephen Harding, from the University of Nottingham, and Professor Mark Jobling of the University of Leicester, will reveal the results of their team's years of research at a special evening on Tuesday, November 27th, in Knowsley, for the West Lancashire Heritage Association, which has members from Formby. These results are about to appear in the major scientific journal *Molecular Biology and Evolution*, published by Oxford University Press.



● **Legends to Figures: On the Wirral peninsula and in West Lancashire, sampling locations for the 'modern' samples are shown by filled circles; the unfilled circles show major towns for orientation. Grey triangles show the locations of Scandinavian major place-names**

"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 onomastic evidence is supported by archaeological discover-

ies such as jewellery, weaponry or treasure hoards at Meols, Crosby and Cuerdale 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, at the event hosted by the West Lancashire Heritage Association at 7pm at the David Lloyd Leisure centre in Arbour 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

We didn't call the police in those days - we took the problem to them

● **IN the third installment of his memories of working at Formby Point, former National Trust (NT) Ranger Dave Wilkinson recalls the arrival of the first vehicle and his boss's 'hands on' style of policing the reserve...**

SOME time after the Trust began operations at Formby, the head warden Arthur Brown was provided with a short wheel-based Land Rover.

It was second-hand and had been originally in use with the NT in the Lake District. Some other basic equipment was provided, a chain saw, wheelbarrow, axes, spades etc. Nothing particularly "high tech".

The accommodation did not improve or indeed change. All the equipment (such as it was) was kept at Golf Cottage and brought to work by Arthur each day, as required.

In accordance with NT policy, volunteer wardens began to be appointed.

Those whose names I can remember were Stephen Minion, Arthur Tate, Tom Gaffney and Paul Percival.

Interestingly none lived locally and all travelled from Liverpool two or three times each week. In those days a green armband, badge and by-law authority card were issued.

In direct contrast with that of today, there was never (in my time) any active policy of conservation or education of the public at Formby.

The "style" of wardening was quite authoritarian. This was I suspect, a throw-back to Arthur Brown's Weld Blundell days when the estate was private.

Arthur carried a weighted stick and made sure that all the wardens followed his habit. He stood no nonsense and I saw him use his stick to good effect on more than one occasion.

I know that he had been on the receiving end of one or two beatings in his Weld Blundell days and I think it was a case of making sure

that he always had the upper hand.

They were different times. No radios or mobile phones and you could often be many miles from the nearest telephone or any other form of assistance.

He thought nothing of "bundling" half a dozen young lads in the back of the Land Rover and taking them to Formby Police Station if he thought that they had caused damage or had stolen something.

I can recall being with him in Blundell Avenue one Saturday morning. We had received a complaint of a number of Army Cadets camping on NT land to the south of Blundell Avenue.

They were allowed to do this, as a portion of the land was at that time leased to the MoD as a training area. However, Arthur's informant had told him that they were deliberately "barking" a number of young trees.

On our arrival there were several tents *in situ*, plus a number of badly damaged

young trees. Although there were two adult instructors present, no-one would "own up" to causing the damage.

Arthur told them to pack up their tents and quit the land. The instructors refused, saying that they had permission from the MoD.

Arthur was very annoyed and started to pull down the tents, instructing me to do likewise.

While we were doing this we noticed that a fair quantity of new wood (planks, timber etc) was stacked nearby. Also inside one of the tents were various tools (electric drills etc).

At the time the nearby Harington Barracks housing estate was in the course of completion and it was fairly obvious that the wood and tools had been stolen from there.

Without further ado the two instructors and six cadets (by the point of his stick) were locked in the back of the Land Rover by Arthur and delivered to the Police Station post haste,

while I was left guarding the booty!

We did not telephone the police in those days (no telephone) – we took the problem directly to them.

Despite National Trust ownership, the barbed wire fences and signs remained in place for many years.

The philosophy seemed to be that if the public were kept to the well-trodden paths and roads, there would be less likelihood of fires, damage and other unauthorised acts. The end result would be less work for Arthur and his wardens.

Not only that, the asparagus growers (mainly the Aindow brothers) were quite influential and were anxious to ensure that public access was kept to a minimum.

● We will print more of Dave's recollections next week, but remember the whole series can be viewed online by clicking on the Times Past blog at www.formbytimes.co.uk