

The Association for the History of Glass Limited

Spring 2021 Study Day: New Research in Ancient Glass

12th May 2021

The meeting will be held via Zoom

10:00 a.m.

Introduction by Dr Daniela Rosenow, Academic Research Fellow at the Griffith Institute, Oxford University

10:05 a.m.

Katharina Schmidt (Director of the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology (GPIA), Amman)

'Iron Age Glass from Mesopotamia with a Focus on Transparent Glass'

The lecture examines glass finds and their manufacturing techniques from Mesopotamia and adjacent regions in the Iron Age period. In particular, the group of "cast and cut" vessels and inlays represents the most important group of glass objects in this period. Within this group, transparent glass occupies a special position since it first appears in the 9th century BCE and occurs only in Neo-Assyrian palatial contexts of the city of Nimrud. The lecture will deal in detail with the transparent glass vessels and their use in the Neo-Assyrian palace context in Nimrud.

10:35 a.m. (approx.)

Martine Newby-Haspesslagh (Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and independent glass scholar)

'A Blast from the Past: The Place of the Shofar in the Corpus of Ancient Jewish Glass'

The shofar is integral to the practice of the Jewish faith, a sacred object typically made of a ram's horn that is used, and has been used, since Biblical times to mark Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, among other ceremonies. The use of the shofar is first mentioned in *Exodus* and *Leviticus* and examples have been depicted in early carvings and synagogue frescoes, usually to one side of the Temple Menorah.

However, what is less well known are the handful of surviving examples made in blown glass. This talk will examine a Roman era example from a private collection here in London and compare it to others preserved in museums as well as to contemporary depictions including those on other ancient Jewish glasses, on both mould-blown eulogae and sandwich gold-glasses.

11:05 – 11.20 Break

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11:20 (approx.)

Sally Cottam (Honorary Secretary of the *Association for the History of Glass*)

'Unfinished Business: The Jennifer Price glass archive'

Jenny Price was one of world's most eminent scholars of ancient glass and an enthusiastic and much-admired President and member of the Association for the History of Glass. Her prolific body of published work includes hundreds of reports on Roman glass from Britain and beyond, as well as books, journal articles and conference contributions. Jenny continued her research despite periods of poor health and was working on a number of projects right up until her death two years ago, in May 2019. As her literary executor I have been exploring opportunities to complete her unfinished projects and make this valuable research available to a public audience. At the heart of this unpublished archive is a catalogue of the Romano-British Glass in the British Museum, a project stretching across several decades and one particularly close to her heart. This presentation looks at the challenges of handling an important literary estate, the problems that arise when dealing with an unfamiliar, complex and unfinished research project and the most effective strategies to bring such projects to fruition.

11:50 (approx.)

Victoria Sainsbury (Post-doc, Institute of Archaeology, Oxford University)

The glass of the earliest king halls: Analytical Results from Lyminge

The Anglo-Saxon settlement at Lyminge is characterised not just by its early age, but also by the amazing richness of the fifth and sixth century layers. Among the many finds from the site, perhaps the most extraordinary is the collection of glass. Over 550 glass finds came from these early layers alone. The sheer volume of material, as well as the presence of both moiles and droplets, challenges the view that glass vessels were not made in Anglo-Saxon England. An analytical pilot study was undertaken to understand the origin of this material, and to assess how reliant this early industry was on imports or recycling roman remnants.

12:20 (approx.)

Denise Allen (Independent glass scholar)

Some new glass finds from excavations in Exeter and the South-west

The lecture will discuss some interesting new glass finds from excavations in Exeter and the South-west: a few choice fragments from within the legionary fortress in Exeter, from the nearby supply base at Topsham and from two villas in Dorset. Not always visually spectacular, they nevertheless add to the discussion about the role of Roman women in the trade of glass containers or their contents, the recycling of glass fragments for further use, and the range of possible uses of glass tesserae found amongst excavated assemblages.

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