

The Basiliscoe Mercury 447

The Internet newsletter for the arms and armour community

A very full newsletter, with many interesting stories: slings, shields, swords, graves and animals. Plus nautical items, and skeletons.

Arms and armour in the news

Ancient arms

Mesolithic axe and/or fishing harpoon

<https://www.livescience.com/archaeology/richly-decorated-antler-from-stone-age-sweden-was-used-as-battle-ax-and-fishing-harpoon>

The ballistics of slings

<https://ww2.aip.org/scilights/how-far-will-the-sling-bullet-go>

Piece on Yale's painted Roman shield

<https://news.yale.edu/2025/02/21/painted-shield-once-wielded-roman-soldiers>

French necropolis investigated - rich weapons burials

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2025/04/armed-in-death-swords-reveal-warrior-graves/154969>

Early medieval sword fittings found in German excavations

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2025/04/archaeologists-solve-the-mystery-of-the-deserted-castle/154951>

Battles, towers and forts

Mysterious medieval castle on the Rhine turns out to be Roman tower

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2025/04/archaeologists-solve-the-mystery-of-the-deserted-castle/154951>

Drought and invasions

<https://phys.org/news/2025-04-extreme-drought-contributed-barbarian-invasion.html>

Beasts of assorted varieties...

How old is the amber Gummy Bear? (very, very, old)

<https://www.jpost.com/archaeology/archaeology-around-the-world/article-851007>

Mammoths and human carvings - the implications

<https://www.zmescience.com/science/anthropology/these-400000-year-old-mammoth-tusks-carved-by-early-humans-may-be-the-oldest-evidence-of-prehistoric-intelligence/>

Horse hunting in prehistory

<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/ancient-horse-hunters-behavior-modern>

Iron age chariot wheel found near Inverness

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx2yw30y8p9o>

Roman horse cemetery excavated in Germany

<https://greekreporter.com/2025/04/17/ancient-roman-horse-cemetery-germany/>

New book on Constantinople's Hippodrome

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/new-medieval-books-the-hippodrome-of-constantinople/>

War elephants on the crusades?

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/war-elephants-crusades/>

Grave stories

Gladiator attacked by lion...

<https://www.newsweek.com/archaeology-roman-gladiator-bite-attacked-lion-spectacle-york-2063087>

Studying Viking bones, with emphasis on trauma

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/vikings-and-violence-what-bones-reveal-about-norway-and-denmark/>

<https://phys.org/news/2025-04-clues-bones-vikings-violent.html>

Battle-scarred skeletons unearthed in Peru

<https://www.livescience.com/archaeology/massive-circular-tomb-filled-with-battle-scarred-people-unearthed-in-peru>

Who killed King James III?

<https://www.historyextra.com/period/medieval/this-medieval-king-was-hunted-down-and-brutally-murdered-and-we-still-dont-know-who-killed-him/>

Through the arrow-slit . . .

Investigating Fonmon Castle, Wales

<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/2910738-new-clues-uncovered-from-excavations-at-fonmon-castle>

Visiting Kronborg castle

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/travel/article/20250416-inside-the-fortress-that-inspired-hamlet>

Through the gunloop...

17th century walls of Southsea back on view

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cm2583556d4o>

Two replica cannon mounted on Cornish battery

<https://www.voicenewspapers.co.uk/news/replica-cannons-placed-at-gun-battery-that-protected-historic-cornish-port-783834>

Cannons to the left, cannon to the right

4 iron cannon in the Bahamas go for restoration

<https://www.tribune242.com/news/2025/apr/22/ammc-removes-long-wharf-cannons-for-restoration-and-repositioning/>

Winchendon Civil War era cannon restored

<https://eu.thegardnernews.com/story/news/local/2025/04/16/civil-war-era-bronze-cannon-restored-in-winchendon-ma-eugene-m-connor-american-legion-post-193/83098151007/>

One of New Zealand's German trophies back on display

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/hawkes-bay-today/news/how-a-rare-cannon-became-a-cherished-symbol-of-waipawa-history/JYLUGCUGT5CDZGKQ3VJZHJQUQ4/>

Miscellany

Byzantium's double-headed eagle

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/double-headed-eagle-byzantium/>

17th century frescos discovered in Roman villa

<https://www.euronews.com/culture/2024/11/25/electrician-discovers-17th-century-frescoes-hidden-behind-false-ceiling-at-romes-villa-far>

Excavating a Thirty Years war military camp in Germany

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2025/04/thirty-years-war-camp-excavation-sheds-light-on-military-life/154989>

Back to the front

Podcasts about Culloden and General Wolf released

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/trusts-join-forces-to-explore-cullodens-complexities>

Investigating an American Revolutionary Battlefield

<https://ridgefieldhistoricalsociety.org/uncovering-ridgefields-revolutionary-past-archaeologists-begin-historic-battlefield-study/>

Living in the past

India's sword-wielding Granny

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyqqz9mr6yo>

Café Basiliscoe

Tudor cheese

<https://www.theguardian.com/food/2025/apr/18/take-it-cheesy-the-fascinating-disgusting-world-of-dairy-curd-in-the-tudor-era>

Princesses and Amazons

New book on Swedish queens

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/new-medieval-books-the-queens-and-royal-women-of-sweden/>

Into the 20th century

Mysterious tunnels found under Belgian house

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2025/04/homeowner-discovers-hidden-tunnel-beneath-townhouse/154976>

Decoding an artist's response to WWI

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/culture/article/20250423-the-masterpiece-full-of-coded-messages-about-ww1>

World Heritage

Mongolian arrowheads and other artefacts found in Museum reserves

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2025/04/artefacts-from-genghis-khan-era-rediscovered/155013>

Nautical news

Investigating the maritime iron trade from 16th century Sweden

<https://www.marinelink.com/news/thcentury-iron-salvaged-swedish-shipwreck-525053>

Remains of early 18th century naval battle found off Sicily?

<https://unn.ua/en/news/artifacts-from-the-naval-battle-between-spain-and-england-in-1718-found-in-sicily>

1724 wreck off Croatia, with cast-iron and wrought-iron guns

<https://total-croatia-news.com/lifestyle/hvar-shipwreck/>

Two Danish slave-ships found off Costa Rica

<https://www.vikingskibsmuseet.dk/en/news/researchers-to-investigate-whether-costa-rica-shipwrecks-are-danish-slave-ships>

18th century trader found in the Virgin Islands?

<https://stthomassource.com/content/2025/04/14/archaeologists-explore-historic-shipwreck-in-coral-bay/>

Update on exploration of HMS *Agamemnon* in Argentina

<https://divernet.com/scuba-news/wrecks/divers-explore-nelsons-eggs-bacon-off-uruguay/>

Getting to grips with the Fighting Temeraire

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/culture/article/20250415-jmw-turner-at-250-why-his-greatest-painting-the-fighting-temeraire-is-so-misunderstood>

Mystery of the car on the wreck in the Midway

<https://www.jpost.com/archaeology/archaeology-around-the-world/article-851180>

Museum news and exhibitions

News

Sudan's Museums at war

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5y4lxxj055o>

Museum developments

Mauritshuis reveals research into three Rembrandts

<https://artdaily.com/news/181079/Rembrandt--Mauritshuis-presents-results-of-research-on-three-paintings-from-its-collection>

Museum musings

Taking charge of Hitler's legacy

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2025/04/17/how-the-imperial-war-museum-became-the-reluctant-owner-of-an-official-portrait-of-adolf-hitler>

Conservation corner

All about medieval blacksmithery

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/more-than-makers-of-swords-the-hidden-life-of-medieval-blacksmiths/>

Exhibitions

Gladiators in Dorchester

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2025/25-april/books-arts/visual-arts/art-review-gladiators-of-britain-at-dorchester-museum-and-art-gallery>

Rudolf II in Paris

<https://artdaily.com/news/181387/Prague-under-Rudolf-II--How-art-and-science-shaped-a-new-vision-of-nature>

Veneto-Cretan art in Venice

<https://artdaily.com/news/181432/El-Greco-and-the-legacy-of-the-Veneto-Cretan-School-shine-in-landmark-Venice-exhibition>

The iron harvest at Kansas City

<https://artdaily.com/news/181238/-Iron-Harvest--opens-at-the-National-WWI-Museum-and-Memorial>

Books

Edited by Stephen H Rigby: ***Historians on Robin Hood: The Outlaw's Legend in the Later Middle Ages***

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/new-medieval-books-historians-on-robin-hood/>

Popular Culture

Tales of King Arthur and Merlin found in manuscript

<https://arkeonews.net/rare-theses-of-merlin-and-king-arthur-found-in-13th-century-manuscript/>

Events

Calls for Papers

15-16 May 2026 Brussels: Army of Flanders

https://icomam.mini.icom.museum/call-for-papers-army-of-flanders-15-16-may-2026/?fbclid=IwY2xjawJrIDRleHRuA2FlbQlXMQABHjbfq0bGm25lZsYMWmsfzmRHPxlrIFGHTNuOsIFSaJ4srApsLDCHnLXovxza_aem_wUUbH_3FcPd4dmgTNMuL9w

Sales, fairs and auctions

28 April – 9 May 2025, Munich

Herman Historica

<https://www.hermann-historica.de/en>

22 May 2025 Paris

Swords and cannon

<https://www.giquelloetassocies.fr/en/catalog/163011-tentationdeg3?saleSlug=tentationdeg3&>

Firearms auction in Denver in May

<https://artdaily.com/news/181420/Morphy-s-May-13-15-Firearms-Auction-well-stocked-with-coveted-NFA--19th-C---WWII-guns->

Websites and downloads

1066 etc Henry VII, Spanish victories, legacy of the Rus

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/the-rise-of-henry-tudor-with-nathen-amin/>

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/historian-uncovers-unusual-rewards-for-victory-in-late-medieval-spain/>

<https://www.medievalists.net/2025/04/rus-legacy-russia-ukraine/>

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