

MEDIEVAL EUROPE 1992

From 21–24 September the Society jointly hosted *Medieval Europe 1992* together with the York Archaeological Trust and the University of York, Department of Archaeology. The conference was held at the University of York and was attended by over 700 people. Up to nine sessions were running concurrently during the three days on the themes of Art and Symbolism; Death and Burial; Exchange and Trade; Maritime Studies, Ports and Ships; Religion and Belief; Rural Settlement; Teaching of Medieval Archaeology; Technology and Innovation, and Urbanism (where at times two sessions were running).

On 24 September a plenary session was held which was chaired by representatives of the three organizing bodies together with Dr Frans Verhaege.

Prof. Martin Carver summarized the results of a feedback session with the intention of determining how successful the conference was and where, if anywhere, it could have been improved.

Dr Peter Addyman then made a case for a pan-European approach to the conservation and management of the medieval archaeological resource. He outlined the way in which medieval archaeology had developed in the United Kingdom along the twin routes of landscape studies and urban archaeology, both of which were now widely recognized as being distinct sub-disciplines within medieval archaeology. The case was then made that the UK experience was of great value to those Europeans whose governments or institutions did not afford the medieval archaeological resource the degree of protection it deserved. This view was echoed from the floor by contributions from Poland and France. It was agreed unanimously that the four people on the podium should be delegated to write to various international institutions, such as the European Commission and UNESCO, which had the power to influence the treatment of archaeological deposits by national governments on behalf of the participants at the conference, emphasizing the concern felt about the destruction of rural and urban evidence without adequate recording or mitigation.

Dr Verhaege then spoke about the dangers which the academic study of medieval archaeology faced in a time of recession. It was widely perceived as being a minor element within the study of archaeology or the study of history. He proposed that an international association for the study of medieval archaeology should be set up and that amongst other things this body should sponsor workshops and congresses such as that at York. This was put to the vote and agreed. The four people on the podium were given authority to set up a working party.

Finally, our president, Dr Helen Clarke, thanked everyone for coming then thanked the organizers: John Oxley, for acting as liaison officer for central and eastern European participants; Cathy Speight, who did a lot of work behind the scenes; Julian Richards, who acted as chairman of the organizing committee; and Sarah Jennings, who in her role as secretary of the organizing committee had been responsible for liaison with the speakers, the university and the participants and without whom the conference would probably never have happened.

ALAN VINCE