

77th Sachsensymposium Conference 2026

Detailed Programme Schedule

Saturday 29/08/2026

Registration and Opening Plenary

12.30 – 13.00	Registration	James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
13.00 – 16.00	Pictish Stone Artefacts and live Stone Carving Demonstration	Meet at James MacKay Hall
17.30 – 19.00	Opening Plenary Session Keynote lecture: Gordon Noble	Aberdeen Town House, Union Street
19.00 – 20.00	Welcome Reception	Aberdeen Town House, Union Street

Sunday 30/08/2026: Day One

08.30 – 09.15	Registration	James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
09.15 – 09.20	Welcome and announcements	King's College Conference Centre (KCCC), University of Aberdeen
	Session I (a): Defended settlements and landscapes of the Roman Iron Age and Early Medieval period	KCCC, University of Aberdeen
9.20 – 09.40	Retreat to the hills? Uncovering Roman Iron Age and Migration Period hillforts on Bornholm	
09.40 – 10.00	Late Roman Warfare, Stone Fortifications and Barbarian Loot – Comparing Öland and Scotland	
10.00 – 10.20	Castris in finibus Westfalaorum – early medieval hill forts in focus	

10.20 – 10.30	Group Discussion		
10.30 – 11.00	Refreshments		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
	Session I (b): Defended settlements and landscapes of the Roman Iron Age and Early Medieval period		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
11.00 – 11.20	The Fortified Viking Age – analysing how ringfortresses, hillforts and settlements reveal varied types of conflict landscapes	Dr. Mads Dengsø Jessen	
11.20 – 11.40	Defence, Defeat, Victory. Signs of conflict in southern Jutland, 1st-5th centuries AD	Dr. Pernille Kruse	
11.40 – 12.00	Shaping Power: Defensive Networks and Political Geography in Eastern Jutland, Denmark	Dr. Mads Ravn	
12.00 – 12.20	Weaponry and its meanings in Early Medieval Frisia (400 800 AD)	Dr. Diana Spiekhout	
12.20 – 12.30	Group Discussion		
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
	Session I (c): Defended settlements and landscapes of the Roman Iron Age and Early Medieval period		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
13.30 – 13.50	Bamburgh Castle, Northumberland: an Anglian royal centre and associated cemetery	Dr. Sam Lucy	
13.50 – 14.10	How To Pict Your Landing Site: a GIS assessment of the maritime potential of Moray Firth coastal promontory forts in the Early Medieval period	Mr. Patrick Moorehead	
14.10 – 14.30	Building conquest and resistance? How Roman and Iron Age actors in Scotland shaped their built environment to shape the nature of their contact and conflict	Dr. Tanja Romankiewicz	
14.30 – 14.40	Group Discussion		

14.40 – 15.10	Refreshments		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
	Session II: Situating conflict: Local and International Connections		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
15.10 – 15.30	This means war? Interpreting and presenting evidence for prehistoric conflict in Scotland	Dr. Matthew Knight	
15.30 – 15.50	Shake those Butts: Rattling the enemy and martial display in Pictland	Miss Leanne Demay	
15.50 – 16.10	War and Cremation on Sueno's Stone, Forres: an interpretation of the conical structure	Professor Jane Geddes	
16.10 – 16.30	Images of Warriors and War on Pictish Sculpture	Mr. John Borland	
16.30 – 16.50	The Viking Great Army and the end of Fortriu: The Croy Hoard Revisited	Dr. Adrian Maldonado	
16.50 – 17.00	Group Discussion		
17.30 – 19.00	Reception		Linklater Rooms, University of Aberdeen
19.00 – 20.00	Keynote Speaker Plenary Session Dr Sue Brunning and Dr Annina Wyss Schildknecht		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
	The unarmoured man: Archers and the Battle of Hastings on the Bayeux Tapestry	Dr Sue Brunning	
	From Refuges to Power Centers: Hilltop Settlements and Conflict in the Central Alpine Region (3rd - 9th ce)	Dr Annina Wyss Schildknecht	

Monday 31/08/2026: Day Two

08.00 – 08.30	Delegates arrive at the Excursion departure point	University of Aberdeen – Meet at KCCC
08.30 – 18.00	Excursion to key archaeological sites across NE Scotland Lunch and refreshments will be provided	Various
19.00 – 21.00	Meeting of the Coordinating Committee	Sir Duncan Rice Library, University of Aberdeen

Tuesday 01/09/2026: Day Three

08.30 – 09.00	Registration		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
09.00 – 09.10	Opening address by the Management Board and the Coordinating Committee		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
	Session III: Models of Warfare		
09.10 – 09.30	Give War a Chance: Warrior Honor as an Anti State Instrument in Iron Age Western Scandinavia	Lars Erik Gjerpe	KCCC, University of Aberdeen
09.30 – 09.50	Drowning by numbers – weapon parts in the detector material from West Zealand and the implications for the notion of a martial society in the first millennium.	Trine Borake	
09.50 – 10.10	War! What is it?	Dr Dagfinn Skre	
10.10 – 10.30	Naval Warfare in Scotland and the Baltic in Late Antiquity	Professor Alex Woolf	
10.30 – 10.40	Group Discussion		
10.40 – 11.10	Refreshments		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
	Session IV (a): Burial Record and Weaponry		KCCC, University of Aberdeen

11.10 – 11.30	From burial to battlefield Contradictory sources to the development of military technology and organisation in the barbarian north in the first five centuries CE	Ph.d. Rasmus Birch Iversen	
11.30 – 11.50	A Resurgence of Power? – Weapon Graves and Martial Identity in Southern Jutland from the Pre-Roman to the Early Roman Iron Age	Mr. Mads Leen Jensen	
11.50 – 12.10	Suspicious wealth and a sword burial. A pirate island in 5th century western Norway?	Dr. Håkon Reiersen	
12.10 – 12.20	Group Discussion		
12.20 – 13.20	Lunch		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
13.20 – 14.20	Poster Session		Multimedia Room, KCCC
	Session IV (b): Burial Record and Weaponry		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
14.20 – 14.40	The Iconography of War – Weapon Burials of the Early Roman Iron Age in the Lower Elbe Region	Dr. Melanie Augstein	
14.40 – 15.00	An early Viking raid to the East: investigating war gear from the 8th century mass burial in two boats from Salme, Estonia	Dr. Ragnar Saage	
15.00 – 15.10	Group Discussion		
15.10 – 15.40	Refreshments		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
	Session V: From Events to the Longue Durée (Past and Present)		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
15.40 – 16.00	Archaeology and the 'barbarica conspiratio' of 367CE: a critical response	Professor James Gerrard	
16.00 – 16.20	Did Raedwald fight for Byzantium? Reconsidering military adventure as an explanation for Mediterranean material culture in England in the late 6th and early 7th centuries.	Professor Christopher Scull	

16.20 – 16.40	Making the March: Saxons and Britons in a Frontier Landscape	Dr. Andy Seaman	
16.40 – 16.50	Group Discussion		
19.00 – late	Conference Dinner & Ceilidh (<i>Ticketed event – please register in advance</i>)		
			Elphinstone Hall

Wednesday 02/09/2026: Day Four

08.30 – 13.00	Registration		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
09.00 – 09.10	General information		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
	Session VI: New approaches and findings		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
09.10 – 09.30	Under Pressure: war, diplomacy and architecture of power	Dr. Xenia Pauli Jensen	
09.30 – 09.50	New Data, Old Narratives? Metal-Detector Finds and Warrior Ideology in First-Millennium Estonia	PhD Tuuli Kurisoo	
09.50 – 10.10	Weapon burials: origins and potentials	Dr. Thomas Matthews Boehmer	
10.10 – 10.30	No weapons, no conflicts? The southern Baltic zone in the Roman Iron Age	Prof. Dr. Jan Schuster	
10.30 – 10.50	Warrior Culture and Kinship: revisiting early Anglo-Saxon weapon burials in light of ancient DNA	Professor Duncan Sayer	
10.50 – 11.00	Group Discussion		
11.00 – 11.30	Refreshments		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen
	Session VII: Conflict and Elites		KCCC, University of Aberdeen
11.30 – 11.50	The Battle at Danevirke in AD 974 and its Aftermath. Insights into 10th-Century Military Tactics and Power Dynamics, and the Political Consequences of a Greatly Underestimated Historical Event	Dr. Thorsten Lemm	

11.50 – 12.10	The Northwest Slavic Lutizen Uprising of 983 against the Ottonians	Dr. Jens Schneeweiss	
12.10 – 12.30	Weapon development and martial practices in Denmark (ca. 600-1200 AD)	Gustav Hejlesen Solberg	
12.30 – 12.50	Constructing the Warrior Elite: Weapon and Equestrian Burials in Early Medieval Poland (c. 975–1100)	Dr Sławomir Wadyl	
12.50 – 13.10	Hedeby/Schleswig as a place of conflict and de-escalation (9th–13th centuries)	Dr Volker Hilberg	
13.10 – 13.20	General Discussion and Close		
13.20 – 13.30	Invitation to the 78th Sachsensymposion		
13.30 – 14.30	Grab and Go Lunch		James MacKay Hall, University of Aberdeen

