PRESS RELEASE

**UNEARTHING THE MYSTERY OF MALKIN TOWER**

DATE: FRIDAY 6TH JULY 2018

Students from Canada, the United States and the UK have been digging for evidence of witchcraft up on the hills above Blacko. The archaeology students are excavating a field close to Malkin Tower Farm, which was possibly on the site of the home of 'Old Demdike' and where the Pendle Witches met on the day they were arrested: Good Friday in 1612.

The 'dig' is part of a community archaeology project being run by the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership. The international team is led by Professor Charles Orser of Vanderbilt University in Nashville Tennessee, with support from the Archaeology Department at University of Central Lancashire in Preston. They are working at the site for five weeks and the focus is on finding out more about everyday life in the Pendle area in the seventeenth century. A one day training day in 'basic archaeology skills' was attended by 10 local people last Saturday and supported by some of the students.

Rick Peterson, Senior Lecturer in Archaeology at UCLan said "We have uncovered a great deal of evidence in the first three weeks of the project. In one area we have discovered a large amount of 17th and 18th century pottery. This is exciting but we have also found evidence for what may have been a timber building buried beneath 19th century fields."

Several pieces of flint, possibly from a nearby Iron Age settlement, have also been discovered. It is suspected these have been moved through ploughing and other farming activity.

There is a free Open Day on Wednesday 18th July where members of the public can visit the site to see what is going on and what has been found.

Tours will run at 11am, 12pm, 1pm and 2pm and include a shuttle bus from and back to Nelson town centre. Each tour will last approximately 1.5 hours including transport. Please note that places are limited and booking is essential, there is no public parking at the farm.

For more information or to book your place please email volunteer@pendle-hill-lp or call 01200 420420.

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Images of students working at Malkin Tower are attached. Notes to Editor below…./

Notes to Editor

* The Pendle Hill landscape partnership is led by the Forest of Bowland AONB.
* The partnership aims to:

1. restore, enhance and conserve the heritage and landscape of Pendle Hill
2. reconnect people with their past and their landscape
3. bring the two sides of the hill together
4. create a sustainable future for the environment, heritage and for visitors' experience of Pendle Hill

* The scheme was awarded a National Lottery grant of £1.8million by the Heritage Lottery Fund in January 2018. These funds will be delivered from 2018-2022 and will be matched with a further £1m raised locally.
* The scheme is made up of a dozen projects which safeguard the area's wildlife and heritage and improve people's access to this popular countryside area. We will do this by providing opportunities for training and volunteering; by supporting research and devising creative and digital interpretation to inspire a new generation about our heritage; by restoring important landscape features, and by working with communities to re-tell the stories of radical Pendle people. The scheme will increase pride in this special place and raise aspirations amongst communities, and it will bring in new investment to support the environment and the economy.
* The Pendle Hill landscape partnership is supported by National Lottery players through the Heritage Lottery Fund and by the Forest of Bowland AONB. Partners include representatives of parish councils, the landowning and farming community, Pendle and Ribble Valley Borough Councils, Lancashire County Council, statutory bodies, tourism businesses and volunteers.
* Projects will be delivered by the AONB team, plus local delivery partners including In –Situ Arts, the Dry Stone Walling Association, Mid Pennine Arts and Ribble Rivers Trust.
* The Pendle Hill LP covers 120 square kilometres, stretching from Gisburn down to Whalley, and from Clitheroe across to Nelson and Padiham.
* The Hill is well known as a beauty spot and is heavily visited by residents of the local towns: it is a perfect place for walking and cycling. The area's heritage is dominated by the story of the Pendle Witches, but there are lots more stories to tell including the founding of the Quaker movement, non- conformists and radicals, Roman and Bronze Age settlers, medieval farming systems and early industrial developments. The network of dry stone walls and hedgerows give the area a distinctive feel, and the landscape is also important for its wild moorland, rare birds and woodlands.
* For further information contact the LP Development Officer [cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk) on 07891 537835 / 01200 420420 see the project website at <http://www.forestofbowland.com/Pendle-Hill-LP> or visit our Facebook page 'Pendle Hill Project' for up to date news and views.

**About the Heritage Lottery Fund**

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk). Follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/heritagelottery), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/heritagelotteryfund/) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/heritagelotteryfund/) and use #HLFsupported.