

ERAS News

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,

No. 100 SEPT. 2023



Petuaria ReVisited: Brough. General view of the main trench from the newly discovered bastion

Photo: P. Halkon

*Petuaria ReVisited ~ Skipsea Brough Visit ~ Rosemary Cramp ~ Southburn Museum ~
Scorborough ~ St Marys Church ~ Dig Ventures Site ~ Model Makers ~ Audience Network*

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Comments or contributions are always welcome. Send to Newsletter Editor, Kate Dennett,
455 Chanterlands Ave. Hull. HU5 4AY Tel. 01482 445232 katedennett@katedennett.karoo.co.uk

Other enquiries to the Secretary, John Deverell john@deverell.karoo.co.uk

To enquire about your subscription status contact the Treasurer
Colin Parr, 32 Woodgate Rd, Hull. cparrateras@outlook.com

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ERAS LOCAL NEWS . . .

Avenues Fountain

For the sake of all those ex-Hullites living far away, I could not resist including a picture of the new fountain on Victoria Avenue in Hull. It is the result of consistent fund-raising efforts by local 'Avenues' residents, looks pretty good and is very similar to the original, demolished in the early 20th century. It might give fans of artefact chronologies pause for thought. Stylistically – perhaps 130 years old but cultural sensitivities make it very 'now'. (ie without the naked mermaids which feature in the Westbourne Avenue fountain).



Beverley Treasure House Closure

The Champney Road Treasure House Building will be closed for up to a year, whilst major changes are made to the premises, including the transfer of registration services from Walkergate. The Champney Road gardens are being landscaped to make them more suitable for a wedding photography venue and general access by the public. The scheme is funded mainly by the sale of Council premises in Cross Street and Walkergate House. During the work, the library will be temporarily located across the road in County Hall.

Margaret Nicholson

I was sorry to hear of the passing, in June, of long-standing ERAS member Margaret Nicholson, She was latterly in charge of the East Asian costume displays in the room opposite the lecture theatre we use at Hull University, but before retirement, was a

University librarian. Her funeral at Hull Minster was very well attended and I think it was a surprise to her family who were not from this area, to see how many friends and contacts she had and how many organisations she belonged to. Margaret helped to hand deliver ERAS newsletters for me in the Avenues/Dukeries area of Hull.

Help Needed Delivering newsletters – Beverley area and Hull Avenues area

If you can help, twice a year, by delivering a few newsletters, to save postage costs, it would be appreciated. We have a lot of members in Beverley and our deliverer for the area is no longer available. The Avenues and Dukeries area in Hull also needs someone to help – even if you can't do it every time. Members still seem to like to receive a printed copy of ERAS News and we are trying to do that if possible. We have a team of five people, but it is not really enough, so please get in touch if you can help.

Jorvik Viking Centre Talk

See the back page for details of what promises to be an interesting Historical Association talk about the Jorvik Centre, which has undergone many changes in its 40 year life, having to cope with, not just the recent post-covid economy, but with floods and major technical and IT advancements.

Tophill Low Open Day

Our publicity stall at Yorkshire Water's Tophill Low Open day was very successful with plenty of helpers and a steady stream of visitors all day. It can be great fun helping out with these events as most people, especially the children, who visit the stand become quite fascinated by the artefacts we have on show and are thrilled to be able to handle pottery sherds and animal bone from archaeological sites. We can easily show you what to do if you want to help out, so please get in touch if you are interested in future events.

History Book Fair, Saturday Sept 16

Please support this event at Hull Minster, if you can. ERAS will be having a stall and there is always a good atmosphere, with lots of interesting browsing material even if you do not buy anything. (And the new Minster café at the south side is excellent)

Newsletter in Full Colour

As a treat for the 100th issue, of *ERAS News*, you will see we have gone to the expense of printing in full colour for once. Hope you appreciate it!

Editor

Petuaria Revisited

Excavations at Brough 2023

Peter Halkon and James Lyall

The aims of the excavation this year were threefold: to continue to examine the sequences in the north-east corner of the defences, to locate the Roman road running in to the east gate of the walled area, and to continue to involve the wider community in exploring their Roman past. All three objectives were achieved although new questions arose during the course of the excavation.

After four days of preparation which included topsoil stripping and removing garden fences, excavation commenced on Saturday 15th July, to coincide with the Roman festival, and concluded on Monday 31 July. Three trenches were opened: DD which reopened and slightly enlarged the one opened in 2021 and 2022 at the northwest corner of the Burrs playing field, out of the scheduled area, DE continuing the trench opened in 2022 in the garden of 30 Welton Road, and DF in a new trench at the back of the garden of 6 Wrygarth Avenue, adjoining the back garden of the previous address.

In trench DD the sections which had been cut across the ramparts in 2022 were continued as far as possible down to the natural sand and the basic sequence initially proposed by Dr Philip Corder in his 1934 excavations was confirmed, although the precise chronology has still to be verified through pottery analysis. The earliest features cut into the natural sand were several phases of post holes and sleeper beam slots to support Corder's "sand" rampart and sufficient charcoal from the beam slots survived for radiocarbon dating. It was not possible to excavate these fully in all section cuts. It was noticeable that the sand rampart contained much pottery from the late first and early to mid-second centuries AD, including samian from southern and central Gaul, Black Burnished ware from Poole Harbour, and various colour-coated fine wares, mainly from the Nene Valley, and possibly the Rhine and Mosel. There was a surprising amount of animal bone and oyster shell from this deposit and large snail shells, many of which had been pierced, suggested that these too had formed part of the diet.

The "sand" rampart was succeeded by one largely comprising clay, which had probably been extracted from beneath the natural sand as the fort ditches were excavated, with laminated layers presumably derived from turfs. The "clay" rampart had been placed on a layer of flat stones of Cave Oolite limestone. As expected, finds from this

feature were less common, although an almost complete folded beaker in a fabric resembling those excavated at North Cave was found, which had just evaded one of Corder's excavation trenches.

At some stage the clay rampart had been cut back and faced with a stone wall. The wall had been crisscrossed by Corder's 1934 excavation trenches, particularly on its interior, in his abortive attempt to find an internal corner turret. Paradoxically on the penultimate day of our excavation, as the disturbed rubble left by the earlier excavations and stone robbing was cleared, an alignment of in-situ stones, some of which were still mortared together was spotted. This is almost certainly the remains of the northwestern wall of the internal turret that Corder had been looking for and appeared to correspond with an alignment of stones at the east side of the trench.

Perhaps the major discovery in terms of the defences was the foundation, several courses high, of a turret projecting from the main curtain wall, which unlike those excavated by Corder was D shaped rather than rectangular (Front cover photo). It may match those added at each side of the north gate excavated by Wachter at Brough House. Corder had missed this by inches and his trench had removed the point at which this turret joined the curtain wall. Due to a tree and potential encroachment into Scheduled areas, it was only possible to uncover part of the inner wall and wall core. Some calcite gritted pottery sherds are associated with this, although no rim sherds were present to aid dating. The shallow



*Fig. 1. James Lyall photographing the Roman road.
Photograph: Peter Halkon.*

foundations and construction techniques resemble those in some of the coastal defences known as the Saxon Shore forts and may have been constructed in the reigns of usurper emperors Carausius and Allectus. This fits well with the hypotheses of Corder and Wachter that Brough may have served as a naval base. Former ERAS Secretary Bryan Sitch, whilst a curator at the Hull and East Riding Museum identified a peak of coins of Carausius from Brough.

In trench BF the surface of a Roman road was discovered (Fig. 1). The property owner had uncovered it soon after moving into the house around 40 years ago, but it was not recorded. The cambered surface of large stones overlay a layer of clay and there was an earlier surface of gravel below. The northern edge had been damaged by relatively recent rubbish pits, the contents of which included wooden panels probably from a door, and beer cans!

In Trench BE, in the adjacent garden, work continued from the 2022 season. More Roman pottery including the whole profile of a Dr18/31 samian bowl (a form which can be dated to AD 120-160) was found in the same black deposit at the southeast corner of the trench which had produced much pottery, bone, and oyster shell in 2022. This is likely to be a ditch fill, but waterlogged conditions made it difficult to determine its dimensions. A further layer of silty clay and peaty material in the northern section of the trench yielded some surprises, for it contained worked and unworked roundwood and roots of alder and hazel. Amongst the wood were irregular pieces of limestone and under this a full antler, (Fig. 2) from a red deer, in excellent condition and other bone fragments. The relationship between this deposit and the layer above which produced Roman pottery is unclear, as there was no Roman pottery in it, however there was plentiful material for both radiocarbon dating and palaeoenvironmental analysis.

Special finds were fewer this year, although during tidying the trench after machine stripping, a head from a pipeclay figurine was found. This may portray Apollo or possibly a Roman emperor as it was wearing a diadem resembling those on later Roman coins. All the deposits were systematically metal detected and sieved, and items recovered included part of the hinge from *lorica segmentata*, (a type of armour composed of wrought iron strips), and several coins including Hadrianic and Constantinian issues.



Fig. 2 Antlers in the waterlogged fill of a possible ditch
Photograph: Peter Halkon

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to the following: Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society and East Riding Archaeological Society for financial support, NuLawn and Yorkshire Plant for topsoil stripping and backfilling, Partee Marquee for shelter enabling the excavation to continue in wet weather, to the Wharram and Baker families for allowing us to excavate in their gardens and showing such interest. Thanks are due to members of the Elloughton cum Brough PFA and Petuaria ReVisited committee members, particularly Martin Credland, Chris Hannard and Matthew Parkes for their active participation. Special thanks to Lucy Crosbie, John Deverell, Jonny Farley, Colin Parr, Mick Proctor, Alison Spencer and Claudia Telbis, Fiona Waddingham who took on particular responsibilities allowing the smooth running of the excavation and to the many volunteers without whose work none of this would have been possible.

Many thanks also to the authors for producing this short report for the newsletter, so promptly. Editor

CBA YORKSHIRE, AUTUMN SHOWCASE **Golden Lion Hotel, Northallerton, 10am- 5pm**

The programme for this meeting includes talks on: Jet and jet mining; A Medieval house in Wakefield; A Roman burial at Garforth; Conservation work on Clifford's Tower, York; Excavations on a monastic sheep farm; Excavations at Kipling House Farm. There will be an open forum debate on the future of the CBA at both regional and national levels which can be accessed either live or by Zoom.

For more details check the CBA Yorkshire website

Southburn Archaeological Museum

A letter from Bill Coultard

On behalf of Southburn Archaeological Museum, I would like to send our thanks to the ERAS members who participated in our open evening on 7th June. It was a great opportunity for us to meet old friends and make new ones, based on our shared interest in the archaeology and history of the East Riding and beyond. One of our volunteers, Pauline, said that this sort of event is a pleasure because you were interested and interesting visitors and that makes for an enjoyable experience for all concerned.

Thank you for your kind donations. We are a not for profit organisation run by unpaid volunteers and we seek to keep volunteer subscriptions low as we value people's participation and enthusiasm rather than seeking to build bank balances. When we need funds for specific purposes, we have often been able to obtain them from bodies such as Defra and the Lissett Windfarm fund.

If you would like to visit the museum when it is less busy, you would be very welcome. Although your visit was mainly adults, we welcome families and groups with children and will schedule visits if you ring us on 01377 271180. We have activities for children and toys for those who just need to play! In recent years we have developed a good working relationship with King's Mill Special School, Driffield. They have found that our welcoming approach and 'hands-on' activities for children and young adults can make a positive experience for all involved.

We are very fortunate to have great support from JSR Farms but, like many organisations, we are still recovering from Covid and the challenging business environment since then. We are looking to rebuild our management structure and volunteer base so would welcome new members to help with various tasks such as running a library, acting as treasurer or secretary, helping out with IT skills, or sharing their interest in history and archaeology with visitors. If you are interested in helping, please contact us on 01377 271180. Thankyou all.
Bill Coultard and all the SAM volunteers.

Since the above letter was written, Margaret has told me that Bill has been in hospital and is now recovering after an emergency heart operation. We send our best wishes and point out that the need for volunteers at this excellent little museum is now more pressing than ever, so do give them a ring if you feel you can help.

2024 ERAS SUBS REMINDER

OH DEAR!

20% OF OUR MEMBERS

HAVE FAILED TO PAY THE NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATE

Subs make up around 90% of ERAS's income and I hate reminding everyone again, but this year we have lost out on around £250 in subscription payments because people have not contacted their bank to change their Standing Order.

If you pay by Standing Order, please check that you have revised your payment to the new rate, as shown below. **ERAS CANNOT AMEND YOUR STANDING ORDER FOR YOU.** Standing Orders are not the same as Direct Debits, which are more flexible.

Similarly, we cannot amend any recurring payments you may have made via PayPal. If your recurring payment is made out to the old rates you will have to cancel that payment and set up a new recurring payment at the new rate.

Although subscriptions aren't due until the 1st of January 2024, I know some of you like to renew early. Since January 2023, subscription rates have increased by £5 across the board, to:

Ordinary membership £ 20

Family membership £25

Student membership £10

If you have any queries regarding your subscription, please don't hesitate to contact me either by telephone or at

cparrateras@outlook.com.

We need your subs to pay for publication of our well respected East Riding Archaeologist volumes, for lecture room hire, Field Studies room hire, supporting archaeological projects, printing, website, publicity events and all the other activities which ERAS does.

Colin Parr (Treasurer)

Skipsea Brough Site Visit

In May, twenty members visited a Medieval site in Skipsea village, in the Holderness area. It was being excavated by York University as a training dig, and is the first year of a six year project which will include investigating what could be a 10-11th century timber hall as well as looking at parts of the adjacent Skipsea Baille Mere, a large body of water which the better known Norman 'Skipsea Castle' would have overlooked.



*Fig. 1. One of the large postholes being excavated.
Photo: Kate Dennett*

We were shown round by Elaine Jamieson and Jim Learie (Fig. 2) who explained that it might seem as though they were not making much progress, but they were taking their time with the work and concentrating on accuracy and understanding the processes. The first year archaeology students were learning both digital methods of recording and the traditional site skills, which are so important. As their tutors explained, they are preparing for a future working in the commercial sector which at this point in time has no specific method of recording. Whilst traditional methods might sometimes be required, depending on site circumstances, it is unlikely that there will, in the future, be sufficient storage facilities for records which are all hand-drawn. The site was immaculate, the sections were very vertical, the strings and tapes were taut! Excellent.

It was noted that the archaeology was very close to the surface of the plough soil and drone photographs had identified what were thought to be twelve large postholes (Fig. 1) of a structure possibly associated with the castle. At the time of our visit an aisled timber hall was being considered as an interpretation, but there was a long way to go. At one end of this structure, there was evidence of several buildings with floor surfaces overlain by burnt wattle and daub, creating plenty of identifiable chronological sequences. These smaller buildings were not thought to be domestic, as little pottery or bone was associated with the features, but this might change as the excavation progresses.

Part of the this year's work also involves searching for the edge of the nearby mere and we walked further on, to land at Brough Farm, where small-scale excavation was revealing peat and some large well preserved timbers and possible pre-historic evidence. The mere - now completely dry - was one of several in Holderness and still existed in the 12th century. The mound, known as Skipsea Brough Castle is thought to sit on part of a natural gravel ridge and may have been built on top of an earlier feature. The mound had been included in a major project, funded by the Leverhulme Trust, which undertook coring on several motte and bailey castle mounds where it was thought there was Neolithic evidence (mainly in the south of England). However, they all turned out to be Norman in date, except Skipsea Brough, which gave a mid Iron Age date! This is not a usual result for the UK, but is often found on the continent. The jury is still out, but the site warrants further work as the Iron Age dates were consistent.



Fig. 2. Some of the ERAS visitors listening to Jim and Elaine explaining the site.

The visit was arranged by Peter Halkon and Matt Walker, to whom thanks are also due.

ROSEMARY CRAMP (1929-2023)

By Sylvia Usher

“I hope you realise that’s the oldest post-Roman stained glass in Europe’. Rosemary Cramp’s words directed at me Jarrow monastic site, summer 1973

Professor Rosemary Cramp, who died in April, was a pioneer in establishing Anglo Saxon monastic archaeology. Overall her work was fundamental to the knowledge and appreciation of ‘The Golden Age of Northumbria’. I was very lucky as a student at Durham University, 1958-61, to have Rosemary as a tutor, and I know she did more than any other teacher to make me really think.

I was a volunteer, on the excavations at St Peter’s, Monkwearmouth, and St Paul’s, Jarrow several times in the 1960s and 1970s. Excavations at both sites revealed much of the layout of an early Christian monastery. I remember a 1970 day conference on ‘What did an Anglo-Saxon monastery look like?’ In other words, how do you know if you have found one? The St Gall monastery plan from 900 was the earliest guide. The two Northumbrian sites were excavated before the geo-physics and other scientific approaches used in this century, were available to archaeologists. Direct analysis of the structures and finds were our leads to understanding what we found. Rosemary Cramp’s excavations are credited with opening up so much more about early monastic buildings and communities in England.

Miss Cramp became the junior Archaeology lecturer at Durham in 1956, a time when excavation was predominantly about Roman Britain. Studying the Anglo Saxons was mainly about reading Bede and being aware of Lindisfarne and the Synod of Whitby. Today this appears very limited, as indeed it was - and the great expansion of understanding was mainly due to Rosemary Cramp’s work. Knowing the archaeology department when it was in the ‘Old Fulling Mill’ – on the famous pictures of Durham Cathedral overlooking the river Wear, the old mill is the small stone building at the water’s edge - I know it was inadequate in the building and the facilities.

In those days, 90% of the attention was given to the Roman Army and the Hadrianic frontier and this academic dominance was understandable. Rosemary Cramp’s work, together with the researchers she inspired, transformed academic and general understanding of the importance of archaeology from the decline of the Roman Empire

into the early modern period for northern England. Some parts of her work have wider implications. Her vision in creating the Corpus of Anglo Saxon Sculpture, gradually covering every county, is ongoing with a team of specialists. This exemplifies the monumental work she did in building up a much wider understanding of England’s history.

Excavating with Rosemary Cramp was fun, despite the ‘*Here’s rum to warm you and keep you working*’ ethos. She was appreciative and discussed the daily progress with everyone in the team. She wanted the local community to understand how special their area was. She believed museums should stimulate questions and enjoyment, and this continues to be shown in the displays at Jarrow Hall and at Bede’s World, the museum beside the Jarrow site, which includes examples of crops grown in the 8th century. She decided that some quarries of the Anglo Saxon glass should be created into a small window for the church. Rosemary Cramp inspired those who knew her, and her legacy continues her determination to understand and respect Anglo Saxon achievements.

Various Autumn Events

Mary Anning Rocks

Exhibition about rocks and fossils, based on the well known 19th century fossil hunter Mary Anning. Yorkshire Museum, Museum Gardens, York until 20th September. .

Open Tuesday – Sunday 10am – 5pm.

Tickets Adults £9.50 walk-in, £8 online, Children £4.75/£4. (Sounds expensive but allows access to the museum for 12 months.)

Historical Book Fair at Hull Minster

Sat. Sept 16th . Something of an institution now, this event has book and map sellers, and local history society and archaeology stalls and all manner of quirky small groups to interest you.

Stamford Bridge Heritage Society 1066 Festival

Sat. 30th Sept. 11am-4pm. Stalls, living history camp, live re-enactments, weapons displays, family games, historical crafts.

Adults £5, under 14s and SBHS members free. Please use public car park YO41 1BR and access the site, which is close to the river, via the footbridge.

CBA Yorkshire Autumn Showcase. Northallerton

October 21st, see page 5 for details of the programme of this meeting at the Golden Lion Hotel.

New Occasional Series
A Spotlight on Interesting People in ERAS -
1. Maxine and Brian Birkett
Replica and Model Makers

We both trained as research engineers in the electronics industry and have naturally enquiring minds. After leaving the electronics industry, many years ago, we ran a model making business for over thirty years. The models we made were of large scale historical narrow gauge 19th century railway carriages, all very finely detailed and made from high quality materials. As well as woodworking, they included many white metal castings for which we made the original patterns and moulds.

Over the years many people have asked how we came to be involved in both archaeology and making replica artefacts. Like many people our first exposure to archaeology came via TV programmes such as *Meet The Ancestors* and the often derided *Time Team*. Our interest was spurred on by the discovery of ‘ancient’ pieces of pottery in our garden. We joined ERAS and took the pieces to our first Field Studies meeting, then held at Southburn Archaeological Museum (SAM) where Ian Rowlandson identified them as Medieval in date. Enthused, we began helping ERAS members wash and process the pottery finds from SAM’s archive and subsequently the Arram Farm dig. We have since been involved with many community archaeology projects in Yorkshire. At that time our thoughts turned to the artefacts held at Southburn, many of which were just fragments of items such as brooches; what did a complete brooch look like and how was it worn? And what of the loomweights, how were these actually used?

Our combination of skills and our interest in living history led us to explore these questions by making our first historical replicas based on finds from SAM. The first two we made were a replica of an Anglo-Saxon Small Long Brooch and a working example of a warp weighted loom. The brooch would prove to be the first of many kinds of brooch reproduced and the warp weighted loom would open up a whole world of investigations into textile production and dyeing, largely led by Maxine. Eventually we decided to retire from our full time making of model railway carriages and this led to us making historical replicas as a small business *Living Past*, which is now our part time employment. Our replicas are sold across the world via online sales channels, many bought by historical re-enactors and craftspersons but we also supply museums and history centres.

Research is a vital part of the process, as it is essential to understand an artefact fully. For example when producing Viking weights and gaming pieces, knowing how these may relate to each other is important, although it must be said this is not always a clear cut matter.

Scaling is another area of importance. Working from scaled photographs is something we were both well used to, but sadly many artefacts remain poorly recorded – even by museums. Sometimes either scale or measurements, or both, are missing from the photographs or they have been scaled differently in each plane. In this case the photos must be re-scaled using any available measurements. Oblique photographs can be re-processed via graphic software, such as Gimp, to give an image that is true, as long as there is either a grid or two straight lines within the photo, to work with.

Two different methodologies can be applied to producing a replica. The first uses the traditional methods – and involves learning how the artefact would have been made originally. The second method could be described as ‘the end justifies the means’ and involves using modern manufacturing processes to produce the finished article. Both methods have their merits, the latter particularly in a commercial world or where access to bronze casting or glass enamelling is limited and substitute techniques are used.

Possibly the most challenging commercial piece made so far has been a replica Roman folding knife (below) with a stylised hound and hare handle, most likely used for shaving. The complex mould required and the folding mechanism itself raised a number of challenges. We continue to make ‘one off’ replicas for our own enjoyment including weapons such as the Kirkburn sword and items which crop up whilst working on archaeological projects. At Petuaria ReVisited, 2022, we were there when a wire Roman ring was found, also a fragment of a Medieval spindle mould. We made a replica of the ring fairly quickly and the fragment



of mould was reproduced, enabling research into how the mould was used to be carried out. Our interest in natural pigments and dyes also came in useful for replicating some of the painted Roman wall plaster found on the excavation.



*Diamond twill weave on a warp weighted loom.
Photo: M & B Birkett*

As mentioned earlier, Maxine has specialised in the field of textile related artefacts. We now produce many weaving tablets and rigid heddle looms, whilst natural dye samples are ever popular. Maxine also holds natural dye workshops, largely for history groups which we are associated with and we have also done demonstrations further afield. Many hours of practice on the loom has led to learning how to achieve more advanced weaving patterns such as the diamond twill weaves which, combined with naturally dyed wools show the rich costume fabrics that were available to our ancestors. We also produce a variety of spindle whorls from various periods of history, the most interesting being from Salfleetby in Lincolnshire. The Salfleetby whorl carries runic inscriptions on its base and circumference whilst its extremely irregular shape makes it a fascinating object.

We have been fortunate to be able to run our last two businesses from home in our small workshop extension. Many tools would be familiar to most woodworkers, such as medium and miniature circular saws, fretsaws and jigsaws, but we do use advanced tools such as laser engravers and 3D

printing. Fine work is often carried out using scalpels and small files, particularly when creating the original patterns for metal casting. Metal casting requires specialist materials – lead-free pewter is cast into high temperature silicon moulds and other metals such as silver and lead are cast into ceramic moulds. We have our own pottery kiln for producing loom weights and tiles and some electro-plating is also carried out. All in all, a wide variety of tools, equipment and skills is needed.



*Replica of the Salfleetby spindle whorl
Photo: M & B Birkett*



*Replica Viking trading weight (Colonsay)
Photo: M & B Birkett*

We continue our involvement with Southburn Archaeological Museum, although our efforts are now focussed on Stamford Bridge Heritage Society, where Brian has been the Chair for the last seven years and Maxine acts as Membership Secretary. The Society has recently established a living history site in Stamford Bridge and continues to promote and invest in the highly significant heritage and archaeology of the area.

Maxine and Brian Birkett
www.livingpast.co.uk
info@livingpast.co.uk

ERAS Field Studies Visit To 'Dig Ventures' Roman Site



Dig Ventures is an organisation which carries out Crowd Funded excavations, which people pay to take part in whilst being supervised by professional staff. They have been operating in the Driffield area of East Yorkshire since 2017. They hosted an ERAS visit recently and Ben Swain is pictured above showing ERAS members the Roman pottery finds from this season's dig. The site was first found by metal detectorists who contacted *Dig Ventures* and asked them to investigate. Since 2017, parts of a Villa and a possible Mansio (what Ben described as the Roman's version of a Service Station) have been recorded, but this year's excavation is concentrating on a ladder settlement in the adjacent field, already known from aerial photographs. Diggers in Trench 12 were aiming to obtain dating evidence for one of the enclosure ditches and had also found a crouched burial in a shallow oval grave adjacent to the ditch. Thought to be a young person of Iron Age date, the skeleton was somewhat fragmented, but the dental evidence was interesting. There was considerable tooth loss and other dental abnormalities which might suggest the condition could have been related to the person's demise. The skeletal evidence will be examined in detail by osteologists at York University. In Trench 13, a domestic building was represented by two parallel alignments of postholes, of a size which would suggest they were



Trench 12, with enclosure ditch in foreground and oval grave (emptied) centre left. Photos: Kate Dennett

for load bearing structural posts, with evidence for an internal partition. There were large refuse pits at each side of the building and much Roman pottery and some glass has been excavated from these contexts. The pottery evidence so far, would suggest a domestic site rather than military or industrial and no Iron Age pottery has so far been found. The site is being recorded digitally as far as contexts etc are concerned, but specific features and sections are being drawn in the traditional way.

The information given to us, is of course still tentative and at an interim stage, so final interpretations could change. Many thanks to Matt Walker for arrangements and to Ben Swain of *Dig Ventures* for showing us round. It was good to see several new members attending this visit, as well as the old hands. Some of us retired archaeologists were just longing to get into the trenches and start revealing those features, super quick, but we restrained ourselves - or were too old and creaky to do it anyway!

ERAS Field Studies Visit to Scarborough Iron Age Square Barrow Cemetery

The day of the planned visit was one of high winds and constant rain, so at the last minute, we took the decision to cancel and hopefully reschedule the visit. However, an intrepid few - about four people - didn't see the email and turned up on site. The rain stopped and the sun came out and they had a lovely time! What is more, the land owner was so

impressed by their dogged persistence that they were treated to a tour of the adjacent site where the old Manor House stood.

Watch out on our website or emails for another visit to this site, which is the only place where (if the grass length and lighting conditions are right) you can see that the mound of a square barrow was indeed square - and not simply a round mound within a square enclosure, as most of the continental Iron Age 'square barrows' are perceived to be.

ERAS Field Studies Visit To Beverley Westwood

By Angela Fawcett

On Wednesday 5th July our Field Studies group took to the Westwood pastures to explore the archaeological landscape with local expert and ERAS stalwart Richard Lamb. It was a perfect summer evening for a stroll and the late sunlight meant we were able to take our time moving between archaeological features. We explored the prehistoric barrow burials scattered around the higher ground, talked about Roman field systems, medieval trackways and attempts to create water diversions and dewponds for animal husbandry. In terms of industry we saw evidence of lime production and also flour production from the many mills which have operated on the Westwood over the centuries.

The archaeology continued into the 20th century - a mortar spigot base is still present and evidence of agricultural production – both spotlight the importance of the pasture during the Second World War. Leisure pursuits are obvious today as the Westwood is a popular place for picnics, walking and the best place to sledge in East Yorkshire – but we also saw the development of the racecourse and the golf course. Previous generations also used the Westwood for bull-baiting which had been banned from the town and this cruel process is marked by the bullring which is still present on the pasture. You'll never find it unless you've been shown though!

We could have managed another couple of hours at least. There is so much to explore and learn on this remarkable, historic pasture. It was such a privilege to learn so much about this important landscape. Many thanks to Richard Lamb for giving up his time and extensive knowledge of this historic landscape to our members.

Keep an eye on emails and social media for our Field Studies programme. We always meet on the first Wednesday of every month (except January). If you haven't been to one of our sessions before, you will be made most welcome. The meetings are always informal and friendly – so don't be shy and come along!



The slanting evening or early morning light shows up features best on Beverley Westwood.

Photo: Matt Walker

Commercial Archaeology Sharing Excavation Results

Commercial archaeology companies ie those usually doing archaeological work related to the legal Planning Conditions imposed on building and other developments, sometimes get a lot of flak for their failure to involve the general public and 'amateur' archaeologists, although we don't usually have this problem in our area. Well done to Cotswold Archaeology, (which I follow on Instagram) for really making an effort to be inclusive and share their results. In July they held an excellent webinar via Eventbrite about their excavation of a multi-period site with more than twenty Bronze Age barrows on Oakley Down near Cranbourne Chase. There was plenty of chance for participants to ask questions, everyone could be heard and the tech systems worked well. The site had evidence for burials from the early to middle Bronze Age and it was thought that, unusually, one of a group of five barrows had been flattened in the Late Bronze Age, to accommodate the expansion of a settlement. (LBA settlements are rare in the area). In Area 1 of the site, a central grave contained five crouched burials but was only 25 cms beneath the current ground level and so had been damaged by ploughing. Excavation is ongoing and I look forward to hearing further results. *Kate Dennett*

Peeking Under the Floorboards, St Mary the Virgin, Lowgate, Hull A talk by John Buglass



Engraving showing St. Mary's Church in 1780

This well-attended talk, put on by the 'Friends of St. Marys' in June, reminded us how much, in the 21st century, we are protected from the messiness of life and death. John Buglass of (JB Archaeology Ltd) has been monitoring refurbishment work at the church over the past two years. The 14th century St Marys was one of the earliest brick-built churches in Hull, along with Holy Trinity and the former Augustinian Priory. The tower was added in the 15th century and in the 16th century, the west end of the church collapsed. Further parts were demolished during the ravages of Henry VIII, but the church continued to be used and a new brick tower was built in 1697. According to the fashion of the time, in 1826 the brickwork was plastered over with cement and then drawn with stonework patterns, to imitate ashlar blocks. However in the 1860s, a major restoration by Sir George Gilbert Scott included the cladding of the building with an ashlar facing.

In 1637, records show 48 plague burials took place at St Marys. In the 1700s internal (intramural) burials were still common. It is known that in many churches, shallow graves were dug in the middle aisle, and the coffin deposited within, the earth being thrown up against the pew doors – showing how useful pew doors were! In graveyards, it was often difficult for mourners to get near the grave, also for the coffin to be lifted over the piles of earth. In 1848 the St Marys churchyard was deemed to be full, but due to a plague outbreak, burials continued at the rate of five or six per day, until it was closed in 1849. During the recent monitoring work, several empty coffins were noted within the church. It is known that when the 'improvement' work had been done inside the church in the 1860s, many ledger stones were lifted

and moved out into the churchyard. It is thought that living descendants of the people buried in these internal graves might have taken the opportunity to have the bones of their forbears re-located along with the ledger stones recording their details. The removal of the grave stones from within the church caused considerable controversy at the time.

Because the graveyard was reported in the 1860s to be several feet above the street level, it was 'reduced' which must have been a very messy business, and meaning it is likely that the earlier burials are now those which are closest to the surface. There was even a rumour that contractors took excess human bones from other local churches at this time, and sold them to bone meal manufacturers for use by farmers!

The refurbishment work recently carried out at the church became necessary partly because the improvements carried out in Victorian times, when the church was much enlarged, included the removal of the roofs of some of the underfloor brick-built burial vaults, leaving significant voids, which the Victorian builders simply floored over. These are now manifesting themselves as dangerous 'soft-spots' in the flooring and have to be dealt with.

As John pointed out, '*improvements*' to a building are often a matter of current perceptions or fashion. Work which removes Medieval parts of a building might be seen by one generation as an improvement, but might be judged as otherwise by subsequent generations. The recent monitoring work has revealed and recorded the 14th century south aisle wall, which had originally been the external wall of the church. Also, a stone column was seen to have been placed slightly off-centre to the earlier brick column foundation, on which it was built. Many caches of previously disturbed bones were encountered, as is common in church and graveyard archaeology. (These are usually re-buried, with respect, in a suitable and adjacent space.) Several empty communion wine bottles were found under the pew platform. A full report will be made when the work has been completed.

It is worth keeping an eye on the 'Friends of St Marys' events as they are quite varied and the church is a much friendlier, open, welcoming and physically warmer place than it used to be, with coffee, tea and cake usually on offer too. St. Mary's is also a regular and generous supplier of hot meals and other help to local homeless people or those in need.

***Talks by the Hull Branch of
The Historical Association
At the Nordic Centre (formerly the Danish
Church) Osborne Street, Hull. HU1 2PN***

Forty Years of Jorvik Viking Centre.
Dr Chris Tuckley, Head of Interpretation and Learning at Jorvik.
Wednesday, 4th October,

The Eurovision Song Contest and its Politics in Post-Cold War Europe.
Dr. Catherine Baker of University of Hull.
Thursday, 16th November.

A Fishbone in the City's Throat. Navigating American Civil War Memories in Public Spaces.
Dr. Helen Williams of University of Hull.
Thursday, 29th February

All talks start at 7.30pm. Entry £3, students free.

***Archaeology Audience Network
Consultation Meeting at York***

I wasn't quite sure what to expect from this meeting held at York University's King's Manor building in York, this summer. I attended somewhat reluctantly as nobody else from ERAS was going and they seemed to want ERAS to be represented. The AAN is a group of non-profit archaeological companies and includes CBA, ADS, Molas, Dig Ventures, York Archaeology, Oxford Archaeology and Wessex Archaeology, as well as other related organisations. The aim of the meeting was to meet a range of 'users' of archaeology and to find out how they access and use data and how easy they find it to negotiate the systems. We were paid in vouchers for our attendance and given ample refreshments.

There were representatives from Archaeology On Prescription, Young Producers (an organisation with English Heritage), the Roman Roads Research Association, commercial companies and students, but there were perhaps not enough attendees to make the day really worthwhile for the organisers. Neil Redfern, the director of CBA introduced proceedings and spoke of how important it is to understand who the audience is. He also pointed out that although most archaeologists have moved beyond the question of 'Why' we do archaeology, people on the periphery and outsiders still ask this question. After the introduction we split into two interestingly different groups for discussions on how we use and access data.

ADS (Archaeological Data Service) is the well known digital repository based in York and was founded two years before Google, so is considered quite old! ADS collects all the UK data, but it comes mostly from developer-led archaeological companies. People who submit data to ADS can say (via Oasis?) which parts of the data are to have open access. ADS does not get much data from community projects. They would like to change that, and this meeting was aimed at helping find out how those 'other' groups assemble, store and use their results.

Molas, an educational charity associated with the Museum of London, was also interested in expanding their audience.

Various points came out of the discussions:

1. It was seen that there was a need to establish digital standards for archaeological data.
2. Better Research Frameworks need to be established.
3. Community skills need to be developed in digital data collection and designing for specific audiences.
4. Terminology, for researchers seeking data, is a problem, as different digital sites use different terms.
5. Grey Literature in local Historic Environment Record Offices can remain inaccessible for many years if they are part of longterm work such as quarrying, thus reports are often in the interim form, thus not deemed suitable to be made public.
6. University search engines are pretty good and should perhaps be used as a template.
7. There were problems with the Historic England archives access and Heritage Gateway is not easy to use.
8. All archaeological data needs to be drawn together.

During the summary of the meeting, while trying to bring something up on screen there was an exclamation from the ADS man 'We're having trouble finding that site – have to try a different route' Well, that said it all! A follow up meeting which will be 'hands-on' for digital research is arranged for September.

Kate Dennett

Lectures for 2023/2024

This season's lecture programme has been designed to highlight the amazing wealth of Yorkshire archaeology, covering all three Ridings of the historic county and periods from the Neolithic to the Industrial Revolution.

The Geoarchaeology of Roman Sites and the reuse of their building materials.

Richard Myerscough, a former teacher at Bridlington School, part time lecturer in Geology at Hull University, and leading light in projects around Flamborough and Tophill Low, has become one of the leading experts in the geology of Eastern Yorkshire. In this lecture he will be discussing the rocks of the region and their uses in the construction of Roman buildings and their reuse in churches and other structures.

Chariots Spears and Swords – Excavations on the Iron Age Cemeteries in Pocklington. Paula Ware.

Following the publication of the full report, *Chariots, Swords, and Spears: Iron Age Burials at the Foot of the East Yorkshire Wolds* edited by her longtime colleague Mark Stephens, Paula Ware, Managing Director at MAP Archaeological Practice Ltd, will be providing what is bound to be one of the most exciting lectures in this season. Excavations at Burnby Lane and The Mile, Pocklington revealed two chariot burials with horses, the Mile chariot buried intact with upright horses positioned as if pulling the vehicle. In the floor of the chariot lay the skeleton of a male above a highly decorated shield. Scientific research has provided remarkable details of the life and death of well over a hundred occupants of these internationally significant Iron Age cemeteries.

The Elsecar Industrial Heritage Project – John Tanner and Tegwen Roberts

Elsecar, is an industrial village near Wentworth Woodhouse, S. Yorks, developed in the 18/19th centuries by the Earls Fitzwilliam. Through projects involving the local community, it has become a successful heritage centre (<https://www.elsecar-heritage.com>). Dr John Tanner, project manager for Barnsley Museums and Dr Tegwen Roberts, Heritage Action Zone Project Officer, who gained her Doctorate at Hull University, will be providing insights into this important place in Yorkshire's industrial past.

Excavations around Hull Minster - Ken Steedman

It seems appropriate, approaching Christmas, that Ken Steedman, who has recently returned to Hull and rejoined Humber Field Archaeology, is giving a lecture on the excavations which have taken place

around the former Holy Trinity Church, now Hull Minster. During the creation of a new café and other alterations to the building and its environs, much has been revealed about the development of the church from its 13th century beginnings and the burials around it.

The Aldborough Roman Town project – Martin Millett (University of Cambridge).

Professor Martin Millett, recently retired as Laurence Professor of Classical Archaeology at Cambridge University and now President of the Society of Antiquaries of London is no stranger to ERAS. He has done much to shed light on the Roman archaeology of E. Yorkshire through various fieldwork projects, but in this lecture he will be discussing the major fieldwork on the Roman Town at Aldborough, once Civitas Capital of the Brigantes, who occupied what are now north and west Yorkshire, which he has been undertaking in collaboration with Dr Rose Ferraby <https://www.classics.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/aldborough-roman-town-project-1>. The first phases have already been published as *Isurium Brigantum: An Archaeological Survey of Roman Aldborough* by Rose Ferraby and Martin Millett, by the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Excavations at Skipsea - Jim Leary and Elaine Jamieson (University of York).

In May ERAS members were privileged to be given a guided tour of these excavations at one of our most important monuments, Skipsea Castle, by the presenters of this lecture. (See article in this newsletter)

March Lecture still to be confirmed

Annual General Meeting, followed by lecture

Excavations at Burton Agnes and the Burton Agnes Chalk Drum – Mark Allen (Allen Archaeology).

Hailed as one of the most important prehistoric art objects discovered this century, the decorated chalk cylinder, known as the Burton Agnes chalk drum, was found during pre-development excavations by Allen Archaeology. Closely resembling the Folkton drums, it featured in the British Museum "blockbuster" World of Stonehenge exhibition in 2022. It was found along with a chalk ball and polished bone pin associated with the burials of children. We are very privileged in having Mark Allen, Director and founder of Lincoln based Allen Archaeology to talk about these important discoveries.

Programme Secretary, Peter Halkon

Autumn - Winter Lecture Programme

All lectures start at 7.30pm in Lecture Theatre LT.1 in the Wilberforce Building of Hull University, Cottingham Rd, Hull. There are usually *British Archaeology* magazines to loan and second hand books for sale.

- Weds. 20th Sept.** The Geoarchaeology of Roman Sites and the Reuse of Their Building Materials.
Richard Myerscough
- Weds. 18th Oct** Chariots Spears and Swords – Excavations on the Iron Age Cemeteries in Pocklington.
Paula Ware.
- Weds. 15th Nov.** The Elsecar Industrial Heritage Project - John Tanner and Tegwen Roberts
- Weds. 20th Dec** Excavations Around Hull Minster - Ken Steedman
- Weds. 17th Jan.** The Aldborough Roman Town Project - Martin Millett (University of Cambridge).
- Weds. 21st Feb.** Excavations at Skipsea - Jim Leary and Elaine Jamieson (University of York).

March lecture to be confirmed

- Weds. 17th April** AGM at 7pm, followed by lecture at 7.30pm
Excavations at Burton Agnes and the Burton Agnes Chalk Drum –
Mark Allen (Allen Archaeology).

FIELD STUDY MEETINGS

These are usually held, throughout the year, on the **first Wednesday of each month**, at 7.30 pm in the upstairs meeting room at St. Nicholas Community Centre, Holmechurch Lane, Beverley. In the past we have worked on sorting and cataloguing pottery sherds or learning to do site drawings, but the meetings are pretty flexible. In the summer months outdoor trips or site visits might be held instead of the indoor meetings.

No experience is necessary, everyone is welcome, you don't have to join the group, just turn up and enjoy whatever they are doing, but please check our website first, or contact our organiser, Matthew Walker.

m.walker_1985@hotmail.co.uk

Cut here -----

Renewal / Membership Form,

I would like to join ERAS **OR** Please renew my ERAS membership for 2024 (due Jan 2024)

Name

Address

.....

Post Code Tel. No.

I enclose cheque for **£20 single / £25family/ £10 fulltime student** made payable to East Riding Archaeological society . Or join via our website and pay digitally.