

ERAS News

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,

No. 101 MARCH 2024



Leo from Melbourne having a great time trying to identify some of the animal bones from our handling collection, at the Pocklington District Heritage Trust open day

Photo: K. Dennett

*Roman Town at Aldborough ~ Horse Legs ~ Pocklington Open Day ~ Skiff Lane RB Kiln
Geo-Archaeology Groups ~ Danum Museum ~ Britain's Lost Rain Forests ~ Lost Wax Casting
Field Studies Group ~ Who's Who in Local Archaeology ~ Constitution Change & AGM*

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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

www.eras.org.uk

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ERAS LOCAL NEWS . . .

Changes to the Constitution

Please read through the document enclosed with this newsletter, as it is what you will be voting for, at the AGM, to adopt as ERAS's updated Constitution. It aims to comply with Charity Commission guidelines and is written in clear terms. We are obliged to notify all members and we hope this will be the last change for many years.



Dumble Farm – Water as Far as the Eye Can See

ERAS members Fiona and Will from Arram have reported consistent flooding to their land, close to the River Hull. Attempting to adapt, they had worked with Natural England, under a stewardship scheme, to change their mixed arable and dairy farm into a wetland 'conservation project with animal experiences'. (Their 200 dairy cattle needed ryegrass which cannot cope with constant inundation). However, the current flooding is causing problems feeding even the much reduced cattle numbers (70). Neighbouring farms have lost their winter wheat crops to the floods. A combination of increasingly wet winters and decreasing drainage and dredging is seen to be the cause. Can we imagine that this is what it might have been like for Iron Age farmers in the well documented marine transgression in the Humber and Foulness Valley area in 800-500BC? As sea levels started to rise and water flowing out into the estuary started backing up, vast areas would have been similarly flooded as despairing food producers considered possible tactics and their ability to adapt to change. Interesting times indeed.

New Archaeology Storage Facility

David Marchant reports that E. Riding Museums have recently acquired some desperately needed storage space above Goole Library and further space will soon be available. The Council might otherwise have had to refuse the deposition of new archive material from commercial excavations. Currently, the existing library shelving is being used, but if

funding is available it is hoped that roller racking can be installed. Storage of archaeological finds for use by researchers in the future is a major problem that really needs to be solved, as increasingly specialised scientific testing means that more information than we can currently imagine will, in the future, be gleaned from such excavated and stored material. As long as it can be deposited, catalogued, stored securely in the correct atmospheric conditions, and retrieved by a curator, most of it does not necessarily need to be stored in or close to a museum, as has been done traditionally.

Excavation at Clarence Mill, Hull

Humber Field Archaeology has carried out an exploratory excavation on the site of the former Clarence Mill on the east bank of the River Hull, as part of the East Bank Urban Village project. Land between Drypool and Myton Bridges is to be developed with up to 850 new houses. Depending on the findings of the initial investigation, there is the possibility of a community excavation on the site, in the summer.

Pocklington Conference

Hosted by Pocklington District Heritage Trust, this event in November at Burnby Hall was very well attended. Tony Hunt of Yorkshire Archaeological Aerial Mapping had us marvelling at what data can be extracted, with the aid of the right software, from aerial imaging. Technology originally developed for defining crop health and ripeness is transforming our archaeological knowledge. Using another technique - thermal imaging - Tony had identified possible standing stones at the entrance to Thornborough Henge, also the building layout at Meaux Abbey. Accurate to 10cm, it means large areas can be surveyed very quickly. Alison Spencer gave an excellent talk on the survey work of FFWAP and other talks were from Clare Whitely, Rachel Baldwin, Chris Cumberpatch, Pete Wilson and Peter Halkon.

Thornborough Henges

All three of the triple monuments, near Ripon, are now owned by English Heritage, the most northerly, wooded and best preserved henge having recently been purchased. Might another ERAS coach trip be in order this summer??

Help Needed Delivering newsletters –

If you can help, twice a year, by delivering a few newsletters, in the Brough/Ferriby area, also Avenues and Dukeries area in Hull, to save postage costs, it would be appreciated.

Editor

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 7.0pm, WEDS. 17th APRIL, 2024
ROOM LT2, WILBERFORCE BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF HULL

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the last AGM held on 19 April 2023**
- 3. Matters Arising**
- 4. Amendments to the Constitution**

5. Reports from Officers

- (i) Chair
- (ii) Treasurer

6. Committee 2024/5

6.1 Election of Officers

Committee Nominations are:

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Chair | Peter Halkon |
| Vice Chair | Fiona Wilson |
| Secretary | John Deverell |
| Treasurer | Colin Parr |
| Programme Secretary | Peter Halkon |
| Editor | Matthew Reeves |
| Marketing & Social Media | Enya Horton |
| Field Studies Officer | Matthew Walker |
| Records Officer | John Deverell |
| Newsletter Editor | Kate Dennett |

Any other nominations for the above posts are welcome and should be sent to the acting secretary John Deverell no later than 20th March (john@deverell.karoo.co.uk). Members wishing to nominate somebody should seek their agreement before doing so.

6.2 Election of 5 Ordinary Committee Members

Four ordinary members who are willing and eligible to stand for election are:
Valerie Fairhurst, Stuart Leadley, Graham Myers, Jennifer Wilson.

Additional nominations are welcome and may be made in advance or from the floor of the meeting. Members wishing to nominate somebody, should seek their agreement before doing so. In the event that there are more nominations than places, an election will be held.

7. Election of Auditor

Dave Abel has agreed to continue as auditor.

8. Report by the ERAS Trustees

9. Any Other Business

The meeting will be followed at 7.30 pm by a lecture –
Excavations at Burton Agnes and the Burton Agnes Chalk Drum – Mark Allen (Allen Archaeology).

The Lost Wax Casting Process Thoughts on beeswax

The 'lost wax' casting process, used to produce metal items in the Bronze Age, Iron Age and onwards, must have required a large amount of beeswax. Other sorts of fat or indeed plant-based waxes might have been used to make the original item around which a mould would have been built up in many layers, by dipping in liquid clay, but beeswax is the only material I can think of, which will withstand handling without melting to the touch and which will take the application of decorative detail. During a stint on ERAS's stand at the Pocklington District Heritage Trust open day last year, people seemed very interested in my photos from a lost-wax casting workshop week in Ireland a few years ago, where we used authentic materials and methods. In attempting to make bronze horns, bells, axes, spears and adzes, we worked in a canvas tepee, lit the furnace with a striker and kept it going with leather and bone bellows. We re-used everything - wax, fragments of copper and tin (bronze) and even the broken fired clay moulds which could be crushed and used in the making of crucibles which will withstand extreme heat. Interestingly, the whole process left very little evidence in the ground.

For the ancient metal-working industry, beeswax must have been in high demand, and a beekeeping visitor to our ERAS stand at the Pocklington Heritage Trust Open Day was happy to tell me that he estimated that the proportion of wax yielded by our modern bees is approximately five pounds of honey to one pound of wax. Apparently English Black bees were very docile and less likely to sting, but were mostly wiped out by the 1920s. It is thought that in medieval and post medieval times, skeps of these more docile bees were kept close to houses, often hung under the eaves. Perhaps bees were even more plentiful 2000 -3000 years ago. There is certainly evidence that the Ancient Egyptians kept bees and used their products.

The Irish workshops described above and known as Umha Aois, (pronounced - oova eesh) are still running annually, I believe, and attract a variety of specialists, such as experimental archaeologists, artists, metallurgists and jewellers - most of them far more experienced than I was at this craft. It was extremely hard, smokey and dirty work, but very interesting and rewarding. (We did cheat a little by using a jeweller's electric saw to remove sprue from finished items)

Kate Dennett

Horse Legs - its not every day we are given such a gift!

ERAS member and retired vet, Claudia Telbis was helping on the animal bone section of our stall at the Pocklington District Heritage Trust open day when a lady mentioned that she had two horse legs at home. Her son was a farrier at Newmarket and had, for professional interest, retained the lower legs of a racehorse which had had to be destroyed after an accident, some years ago. She went on her way, but reappeared later in the day, bearing a large cardboard box and asked if we would like to have the horse legs to add to our collection. Why would we refuse? Claudia, with her veterinarian expertise, took charge of the bones - (already well prepared and cleaned) - and took them home to lay out and study. Although one or two small parts are missing, they make an interesting collection and will no doubt be handled, with awe and curiosity by many people in the future. The animal bone collection has always been a big attraction on our stand (see front cover) and if children, or indeed adults, are having difficulty trying to identify the animal each bone has come from, we ask - 'Do you think it is a large bone from a small animal or a small bone from a large animal?' We are always amused when, as sometimes happens, younger children (not Leo!) look at the large horse tooth and ask if it is from a chicken. There is a sort of toddler logic there, as it does resemble a sturdy head and beak, though it would be a fearful chicken! (Thanks to Colin Parr for the drawing and photo below) -



We explain to older children that it is important for archaeologists to be able to distinguish between human and animal bones, because, if you find human bone whilst working on an active building site, certain legal procedures have to take place and the building work usually has to stop until it can be ascertained whether a human burial has been uncovered. As a general rule, the bones most easily confused with human ones might be those of a deer, in terms of weight and shape. People love to handle the bones and our collection is now getting a bit worse for wear but its worth this small loss if it awakens a curiosity in people.

Skiff Lane RB Pottery -

What next?

In 1996, Humber Field Archaeology recorded a significant quantity of Romano British greyware pottery during a watching brief prior to the development of a lorry park, at Skiff Lane, Holme on Spalding Moor, fulfilling the conditions of a Watching Brief required by the Planning process. (The site was not being destroyed but simply concreted over). Subsequently, ERAS was offered the opportunity, just for interest, to examine part of the site further, record any possible kiln and retrieve associated pottery. The well-preserved base of a clay lined pottery kiln was found. It had a 1m long flue leading to an oval furnace, 1.6m long and 1.25m wide with parts of the pedestals, which would have held up a kiln floor, remaining (see cross section below). The floor probably comprised radial clay bars, some of which survived. Many potsherds were found in the outer flue area and thousands more, just beneath the surface, within what appeared to be an arc three to four metres to the west ie easy throwing distance from the kiln. ERAS members recovered most of these 'waster' sherds, obviously damaged by various kiln mishaps (temperature shock, badly stacked or carelessly extracted items?). There was little evidence of bloating or sagging in these sherds.

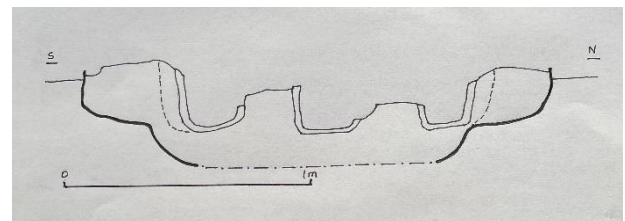
The kiln and surrounding area, of approx 66sq.m, were recorded in plan and section with 24 contexts being identified. The large assemblage of sherds together with kiln furniture and roof material, were packed in sacks and taken to Castle Warehouse in Hull, where ERAS's Field Study Group spent many months washing and sorting any identifiable sherds into categories, by vessel form (shape). The commonest vessels were loop-handled, narrow mouth jars, followed by wide-mouthed jars and flanged bowls. There were also flagons, colanders and pedestal based jars and a few flat-based dishes. The fabric, decoration and range of forms from this kiln were almost identical to those recorded by Corder at Throlam, only 90 metres to the southwest. ERAS had also started to label the sherds with pen and ink, but Hull and East Riding Museum suddenly required the space we were using, for it to be developed as the reception and shop area of the re-designed museum. The sherds had to be hurriedly packed away until another space could be found in which to do the work. They were put into 46 large museum boxes which were labelled and stored at HERM for several years until the Field Studies group decided to work on them again, one box at a time. It is not known where the kiln furniture and roof material is currently stored.

The original sorting work done in the Castle Warehouse premises in 1996 was basic, and bearing

in mind that all the sherds were 'wasters' was never intended to be a detailed survey, but simply an attempt to estimate the range of forms being produced at the kiln. However, since the group started work on the sherds again, many years later, a much more detailed form of recording has taken place, involving more time, effort and supervision. Much of value has been learnt about pottery study by the group members and a good set of drawing has been produced of the sherds so far examined. Thus even if we were to do no more, it has been a valuable project in terms of learning, even though only about eight of the 46 boxes have been examined and catalogued at this more intense level. Although Colin Parr has produced some very interesting statistics from the work done so far, results cannot be seen as representative of the whole assemblage, simply because most of the 46 boxes contained sherds which had already been subject to some level of sorting in 1996. Other boxes contained sherds with decoration or of specific interest. Thus it would be misleading to draw conclusions from the eight boxes already studied as, having been pre-sorted, they cannot be representative of the assemblage as a whole.

So, what to do next? What will we learn about RB pottery production in the area if we complete the long study at the intensity that it has been started? Will we have the resources and enthusiasm to complete the other 38 boxes at this micro level of investigation? Can we do anything with the information so far gleaned, when it cannot be representative of the assemblage? Some people in the Field Studies group said they really enjoyed doing the work and would like to continue, whereas others might feel they never want to see another sherd of Roman greyware in their lives. Discuss!

If you wonder what sort of thing we discuss at our committee meetings, this is a good example. If you have any suggestions about the way forward, we would love to hear from you, especially if you are a pottery specialist.



Cross section of the kiln's flue/potchamber showing the pedestals which would have held up a floor of clay bars on which the pots would have been stacked for firing. There would have been a domed clay and wattle roof.

Anybody else visited the new Doncaster Museum?

Known as *Danum* and housed in a swanky new glass building which incorporates the frontage of a much loved local landmark, formerly the Girls' Grammar School, the building includes a library, art gallery and museum all run by the Council, and qualifying as a National Portfolio Organisation. Many thanks to Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society (YAHS) Prehistory Section, for organising this guided tour and talk with curator Peter Robinson. I was surprised that *Danum* had not been on my radar before. It was planned before and during the Covid crisis and opened in 2022 so congratulations must go to the team for achieving so much at such a difficult time. There is much to like about this place, not least the integration of the various services, so that visitors to the library or art gallery can easily visit the museum. Appropriately for Doncaster there are two railway engines, much rail equipment and ephemera on display on the lower floor (which I did not have time to visit). As a special visitor group, we appreciated the chance to handle some original artefacts, such as Bronze Age axes and spears, set out in the study room for us, by Peter Robinson.

However, many of us were taken aback at the lack of a sense of development or timeline in the archaeological displays. For example, medieval items were displayed close together in large glass display units together with Roman items, with no sense of their date, use or context. We felt it might have worked for school groups guided by a teacher and working on themes, such as pottery or weapons or food, but for the general visitor it was confusing, with little labelling or numbering. There were several interactive digital stations aimed at exploring selected items in detail, but as few of the artefacts were numbered, it was impossible to link them up to the digital data available. The only 'timeline' seemed to be restricted to the 'Star' items of the Doncaster collection, which had been selected for special treatment. Thus confusingly, a Roman stone altar was displayed in the same small showcase as a fragment of a Paleolithic hand-axe and Bronze Age axes. The general impression was 'Wow, look at all this impressive stuff found in the Doncaster area!'

On a positive note, visitor numbers are well up. I would certainly encourage you to go and would be really interested to hear what you think of this new facility. It has a comfortable well appointed and well stocked café and is an easy walk from the railway station.

The Lost Rainforests of Britain

By Guy Shrubsole

(Collins, 2022. Paperback £10.99)

I am not offering this as a 'Book Review' for I am not qualified to offer an academic consideration of this one. You might realise from earlier book suggestions that I am more comfortable filtering through books on the periphery of archaeology – those which touch on our relationship to the landscape and which might encourage us to have a wider outlook on how things might have been in the past. This book about the all-but-lost temperate rainforest zones of Western Britain was a revelation to me.

I was given the book as a gift and thought that it might be too specialised, as it is really a book for botanists and moss specialists - and I know little about *cryptogams* (ferns, mosses lichens and liverworts) but I found it a compelling read. Colour photographs reveal a series of quite magical, wet, atmospheric landscapes, with deep dells and distorted oak groves, dripping with mosses and lichens, a habitat so much more widespread in the past and with which our Iron Age ancestors would have been familiar. Shrubsole says, 'most of what we know of the Druids is enjoyable rubbish made up by 18th century antiquariansand embroidered by modern pagans.' However, once one sees, via the painstaking research of Shrubsole and his associates, how extensive these gloomy, wet, lush and misty landscapes with their gnarled and stunted oakgroves, were in the west of Britain, it transports one back to the Celtic world, making it easy to imagine the powerful influences wielded by spiritual presences lurking in such areas.

It can take us humans a long time to completely destroy a natural habitat and nature doggedly resists. I was reminded of the time many years ago, when botanist ERAS members surveyed the now open pasture of Beverley 'Westwood' and found that plants such as Wood Anemone and Wood Sorrel, normally shade or woodland loving species, were still hanging on, in the tiny areas of shade created on the downward side of cattle tracks and even within the shady depths of hoofprints – a reminder that the pasture once was the West Wood.

Shrubsole's research is aimed at preserving what is left and looking at ways of helping the habitat to regenerate, by preventing overgrazing by sheep. He worked with GIS mappers, digitally stitching together maps in an effort to identify areas where topography and climate combine to make this type of habitat possible. He discusses (*cont. from previous*

page) landscape use, fern collecting history, the pharmacological use of mosses and lichens, sheep grazing regimes, place names, myth, magic and the Mabinogion – all with impeccable notes and references. On the assumption that most archaeologists are interested in the landscape and not just ‘finds’, I just had to share this book. It is endorsed by Chris Packham and George Monbiot, amongst many others and was the Sunday Times Science Book of the Year. You might hate it, but I loved it!

Kate Dennett

Who's Who in Archaeology - in Hull and the East Riding

If you are new to archaeology and want to know how to access various archaeology related information, here's a little summary.

Humber Historic Environment Records (HER) Formerly known as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)

Under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act, maintaining an Historic Environment Record is a new Statutory Duty for Local Authorities. The government views HERs as an important starting point for anyone interested in the archaeology, built heritage and history of an area. They can provide information on buildings, sites and ‘finds’ and are a primary source for planning, development-control work and land management. For this type of enquiry, please contact the HER directly and they will be able to provide specialist advice. Within our local HER are **Victoria Bowns**, Senior Historic Environment Record Officer, **Neil Holbrook**, the Historic Environment Record Officer and **James Goodyear** the Development Management Archaeologist.

Victoria.bowns@eastriding.gov.uk

neil.holbrook@eastriding.gov.uk

James.goodyear@hullcc.gov.uk

Commercial archaeology companies usually have to pay a fee for access to information, but it is generally free to students or the general public doing their own personal research. Unfortunately, physical access to the paper records, at Northumberland Avenue, Hull is currently restricted, due to remedial building work, but you can search on the Heritage Gateway by visiting <https://bit.ly/36gpzVG>

Or you can email archaeology@hullcc.gov.uk

Or find them on Facebook @HumberHER

Thanks to Victoria for providing the main paragraph above. Any errors are my own (*editor*).

East Riding

East Riding Museums are headed up by Museums and Archive Manager, **Nial Adams**. As Museums Registrar, **David Marchant**, has a broad portfolio, being responsible for dealing with documentation and collection care across the six sites which comprise the service. He also deals with collection enquiries and manages the collections database and website. He liaises with commercial archaeological companies over the deposition of their archives and does all the cataloguing for the archaeological collections. There is a small budget for ‘Treasure’ purchases and for conservation of key items. Dave, a long term ERAS member, also runs the school placement programme at the Treasure House and is curator for Skidby Mill and Hessle Whiting Mill looking after the collections there and the work of volunteer teams.

The old position of ‘County Archaeologist’ no longer exists.

Hull Museums

The curator at Hull & East Riding Museum, in High Street, Hull, with its fabulous archaeology displays, is Roman specialist, **Paula Gentil**. Being in an urban area, I would guess there are a great many school visits and children's events to organise. Identification by museum staff of any ‘finds’ made by the public, under the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) will take place on May 3rd, August 2nd and November 1 from 11am.

Commercial Archaeology Companies

Our local archaeological company is Humber Field Archaeology, (HFA) headed up by **Peter Connolly**. The unit operates on a commercial basis, competing for jobs (which may or may not involve excavation) with other UK companies. There are many commercial companies operating in E. Yorkshire - some, such as Oxford Archaeology, are large organisations based in the south, but operating all over the country. HFA also carries out public benefit (community) archaeology projects.

University of Hull. Sadly, archaeology, as a subject, is no longer taught here, though very many current fieldworkers qualified at Hull. Each year, ERAS Programme Organiser and retired lecturer **Dr. Peter Halkon** arranges for at least one of the commercial companies, to give ERAS a lecture on their current work. At the beginning of each lecture season, we used to have a combined lecture called ‘A Round-up of Work in the Area’, but it was felt the sites described deserved more than the hurried ten minute multi-presentations which resulted. Former archaeology lecturer **Dr Helen Fenwick** gives invaluable help with technology at ERAS lecture.

(Lecture Summary)

Aldborough Roman Town Project

Prof. Martin Millett, University of Cambridge

The village of Aldborough in North Yorkshire, stands on the site of *Isurium Brigantum*, a Roman town - 'capital' of a huge administrative area, approx. the area ruled by the Brigantes in pre-Roman Britain, stretching from the east right over to the west coast and up to Hadrian's Wall. The town continued on after the Roman period, but its later decline means it is now a village in a rural area, thus there have been plenty of opportunities for various interested parties to investigate the Roman remains. Over 100 different archaeological interventions (that we know of) have taken place and Prof. Martin Millett's long-term project, set up in 2009, to re-examine earlier excavations, has been very successful. Evidence has been garnered from the pre-Roman era to the post-Roman times - 5th-6th c AD.

Rather than digging new trenches, the project has focussed on deeper analysis of existing data and the application of modern survey techniques, to the site and surrounding landscape. A limited amount of re-excavation of earlier digs was carried out but nearly 120 hectares of magnetometry work has been done. Ground-penetrating radar produced particularly impressive results, enabling the viewer at this lecture, to see a selected small area, onscreen, going back in slices of time, through rural layers, abandonment, industry, occupation phases, to the first Roman buildings with distinctive apses, overlying an agricultural landscape. Other work revealed a 2nd century blacksmith's workshop, overlying a cobble surface, also substantial late Roman and post-Roman timber buildings. One street of the Roman town had been re-surfaced at least eight times. There were high status rubbish dumps, evidence for intensive metal working and much re-use of stonework. There was also evidence for military presence.

In looking at evidence of ploughing revealed by geophysics, the team were able to deduce that the unusually regular, precise, plough marks must have been created by using an ard on a frame, leading to the conclusion that this more sophisticated style of ploughing, represented a Roman clearance for building, dating to c AD70, rather than pre-Roman agriculture. Thus it seems that the moment of the foundation of the town has been established. It had been thought the town was planned in AD100 but several pieces of evidence now put this back to the 80s and 90s. Two huge postholes were seen to cut through the buried soil of plough marks and it is not

known what these represent, but they are the earliest structural evidence (possibly a trading community?). It is known that Roman mineral exploitation (coal, silver, and lead) was happening within ten years of the conquest and the town's position on the river Ure may be the reason why it grew so rapidly with quays developing, to enable distribution and export of both mined material from the Pennine area, and manufactured goods. Chemical analysis of the soils showed evidence for serious industrial pollution and re-excavation of some areas produced extensive physical evidence for lead processing and early blacksmithing, using coal. Over 3,500 nails were recovered and analysis showed that iron was being sourced from all over Britain. It is thought the site was probably supplying Hadrian's wall with metalwork. High status goods were also being manufactured, but were being transported out of the area, leaving little evidence. The Cambridge team worked with metal detectorists (including expert ERAS members) to screen all the excavated soil from the site.

The earliest known archaeological investigation seems to have been in 1660, but some of the early excavations had not been precise or well recorded. In re-examining a 1770's excavation, which had found what was thought to be the Forum, Millett's team managed to insert an extra trench, from which they were able to get to the base of the building and establish the date of the Forum.

A 1924 excavation, carried out by a local schoolteacher and other volunteers, attempting to trace the course of the Roman road was never published. It seems that once the gateway to the town had been found and artefacts started to be recovered, the trenches and the recording became somewhat vague and inaccurate. Buildings representing what was thought, at the time, to be an early phase of the town, are now known to be part of a system of warehouses associated with tax-gathering on the outskirts.

Large-scale augering in areas outside the town, showed there had been alleviation, and a palaeochannel showed that the original course of the river had changed. This work also allowed the production of pollen diagrams and a cereal cultivation map. Other evidence associated with food production comprised the many large stone basins thought to be used for crop processing, and huge amounts of quernstones.

I was not going to do lecture summaries any more, as they are available online, but I couldn't resist sharing such an interesting lecture. Any errors are due to my somewhat erratic note-taking.
Editor

Local Research Groups

Richard Myerscough

(Despite having strangely food-based acronyms, the following three fairly loosely organised groups might be of interest to ERAS members. Editor)

The following three local, community based research groups have recently been formed to explore the fascinating geo-archaeological and historical nature of the area which one day, we hope, will be granted UNESCO Geopark status.

TOAST (Tophill Low Archaeological and Survey Team)

This group is based at Yorkshire Water's Tophill Low nature reserve and is also a multi-disciplinary community-based group which is researching the history of the nature reserve from the end of the Ice Age, to the present day, using field walking, augering and map/photo analysis. The group meets three times a year on site or online via TEAMS, when members receive an update on the ongoing research together with a presentation on an aspect of the local landscape and its history. The next meeting is on Monday 18 March at 10am with TEAMS from 10.30am.



Reconstructed enclosure on top of a rebuilt mound on the site of an original prehistoric enclosure at Tophill Low. Photo; Richard Hampshire.

FEAST (Flamborough Excavation and Survey Team)

This interdisciplinary group was set up to explore the archaeology, geology and history of the Flamborough Headland using a variety of techniques, such as geophysics and surveys. The group meets online, via ZOOM, three times a year and publishes a newsletter for its members who also receive reports of geoarchaeological investigations

that have taken place. Other events such as field trips and lectures are planned. The next Zoom meeting is on Tues 9th April at 10.30am.



The remains of Flamborough Castle.

Photo: R. Myerscough

WRAP (Yorkshire Wolds Re-assessment Project)

Since two important papers on the Wolds, have been published – *Wonders of the Wolds (Food for Thought)* York Archaeological Trust, 2020, and *Surface and Subsurface Fault Mapping in the Yorkshire Wolds, UK.* (BGS) there has been much interest in the possible effects of the geological faulting which occurs on the chalk, resulting in variations in outcropping, durability, and fragmentation of the stone. A very loosely organised research group is looking at the significance of this faulting on the Yorkshire Wolds landscape, and how it might have affected settlement, boundaries, food production and building. The group includes archaeologists, geologists, historians, landscape and building researchers.



Faulting (visible in the hedgeline and on the surface) and resulting in outcropping of certain types of chalk, may be mistaken for evidence of human activity, such as the building of 'entrenchments' or ditches and banks. These fault lines, which can run for long distances across the landscape, are mostly well recorded by geologists, but are perhaps less well known to archaeologists.

Photo: Kate Dennett

What the Field Studies Group has been up to since September.

Matthew Walker

September marked the last meeting where we could take advantage of the lighter evenings and it just so happened to be a lovely evening, when Les Hebb kindly hosted a very insightful tour of the buildings and history of Bishop Burton. We aim to have more tours like this in 2024. The October meeting was a social event where I talked with members about my career as a commercial archaeologist, looking also at how the industry works in a wider sense. In November, members had the opportunity to catalogue and record part of an assemblage of Roman Pottery (see article, page 6) consisting of wasters from a local kiln. Peter Halkon hosted the evening and provided an introductory workshop on how to identify types within the assemblage.

Our final meeting of 2023 was hosted by Osteologist Vaughan Wastling, who provided a rare opportunity to learn about human bones. He used real examples and archives to demonstrate how to record skeletal remains in the field, how to identify pathological diseases and what the bones can tell us about the individual. In February we started the new year by examining more of the Roman pottery assemblage and building on what we learnt in November.

ERAS EVENT

Geology/History Walk

with Richard Myerscough

Friday 10 May, 10am – 4pm

Guided walk visiting the Selwicks Bay (beach) Flamborough Nature Reserve and High Stacks (clifftop paths only), the Chalk Tower and Flamborough Castle (exteriors only). Walking distance approx. 5 miles. Bring your own lunch or go to local cafes. Please wear suitable footwear, not trainers or flipflops. Be aware of the usual coastal hazards of steep muddy paths, metal stairs, slippery rocks, steep unstable chalk and clay cliffs with long drops etc. Meet at 10am at Selwicks Bay Flamborough. TA254710.
Postcode YO15 1AR.

What3Words pure.swims.bench

Booking is necessary and numbers limited to 20.

Contact Field Studies Officer, Matthew Walker
m.walker_1985@hotmail.co.uk

(If you book, then find you cannot go, please notify Matthew so someone else can fill the place)

Hull & ER History Association with Beverley Civic Society. Joint meeting Thurs 11 April.

The Peasants' Revolt – A Talk by Dr. Helen Killick and Prof. Andrew Prescott.

Recently re-examined 14th century records have shown that the Peasants' Revolt was far wider than previously thought. It affected half of England, with York, Beverley and Scarborough being the most northern towns affected. Riots in Beverley were more violent than in most other towns. Prof. Prescott and Dr. Killick, from the 1381 research team will speak on the topic at St Mary's Church, Beverley, at 7.30pm. (doors open 7pm.)

Visitors are welcome and HA will charge £3 though Beverley Civic Society usually charge visitors £5 – so perhaps ERAS members should seek out the HA treasurer! Further details on

www.herha.org.uk/events

Tophill Low Open Day 9 June

ERAS will be having a stall at this excellent event at the Yorkshire Water site. Please contact anyone on the committee if you would like to help with this. It is usually a really fun day and we can soon teach you anything you need to know about our displays. We have a crib-sheet for the answers to the animal bone quiz and you learn as you go along, how to answer the various questions from the general public. We would love some younger people to get involved.

Experimental Kiln Firing June

Matt Walker is hoping to organize a Field Studies event in June, so keep an eye on the website.

CBA Festival of Archaeology & Community (National event). 13th – 28th July

Lots of behind the scenes training is taking place regarding Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Organisation, with various Festival Clinics on offer. (more details on CBA website).

Petuaria Revisited - Excavations at Brough

It is hoped to carry out more excavation at Brough this year, but on a much smaller scale – possibly checking out the Roman road in the garden adjacent to the one in 2023, also looking at the north-eastern Roman defences. Further geophysical surveys are also planned.

Antiquarian and History Book Fair at Hull Minster Saturday 14 September

ERAS will be having their usual stall at this event, so please come and support it, either by buying or helping to sell.

Autumn - Winter Lecture/Field Studies 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. 20 March. Lecture - Life, Death & Rubbish Disposal in Roman Norton, Excavations by J.B Archaeology, 2015 – 16. Dr. Pete Wilson

Weds 3 April. Field Studies Meeting

Weds. 17 April AGM at 7pm, followed by lecture at 7.30pm
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 was found along with a chalk ball and polished bone pin associated with the burials of children. We are privileged to have Mark Allen, Director of Allen Archaeology to talk about these discoveries.

Weds 18 Sept. New lecture season - See next newsletter, which you will receive in early Sept. (or website) for details.

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 some activities or visits may have limited numbers, so please check our website first, or contact our organiser, Matthew Walker.

m.walker_1985@hotmail.co.uk

ERAS Online Publicity

Marketing and Social Media Officer, Enya Horton, has recently been improving our online presence and as at February, 2024, we have 1275 online followers. She is hoping to livestream some of our Field Studies activities this year, which should get us much more interest. The committee, having got to grips with Paypal etc, have found our membership is increasing and interest in Field Studies is rocketing.

Cut here -----

Renewal / Membership Form,

I would like to join ERAS **OR** Please renew my ERAS membership

Name

Address

.....

Post Code Tel. No.

Email

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