

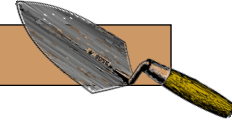


Appleby Archaeology Newsletter



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Summer 2012



Group News

First of all, a warm welcome to Dorothy Ashton, Gabriel Blamires, Elisabeth Hodgson, Dorothy Macfadzean and John Millard who have all joined Appleby Archaeology recently. We look forward to seeing you at some of the summer events and next season's lectures in the Supper Room. Membership is now at an all-time high (71) so your committee feels it must be doing something right!

Feedback

We've no wish to rest on our laurels, however, and feedback from the Group is something we take very seriously. You may remember that the last newsletter included a survey form designed to poll member interests. We had an excellent response to this (20 returns) and you might be interested to hear the results. Fieldwalking (scored 18), attracts most enthusiasm, followed by Landscape Survey (14) and Excavation (14). Topographic survey (11) and Geophysics (10) are least popular - well, that geophys kit is heavy and nobody is getting any younger! Overall, people are keen to do a broad range of fieldwork activities.

Response to feedback

So, by way of response we've scheduled a couple of extra activities for the summer. First of all, on Thursday 19th July, there'll now be a Finds workshop to follow-up the interest sparked by March's field-walking workshop. And secondly, sometime later in July, we think it would be good to spend one or two days at Brackenber with the theme of "Identifying and Recording Bronze Age Barrows". There are further barrows on the moor which it would be very useful to record and survey, to compare with what we excavated last year. We will probably time this to coincide with The Festival of British Archaeology. Further details will follow by email.

Hornby Hall

We are still taking bookings for the trip to Hornby Hall on 7th July. There are currently 8 seats available for this trip leaving from the Appleby area, with a possibility of another 3. We'll be leaving at around 9.30am. If you would like to travel to see this exciting site (details in the insert with the last newsletter) or, indeed, if you wish to take your own car and offer some more seats, please contact Richard Stevens on 01228 558794 or by email at app.arch@richardstevens.plus.com by the end of June. The only obligation is to chip in something for fuel.

Have a good Summer.

Best wishes, *Martin Joyce*

Fieldwalking Workshop

The fieldwalking workshop at the end of March attracted so much interest that we eventually had to close bookings and put enquirers onto a reserve list. We all enjoyed the day very much and it's certain that we will want to repeat the event. Unsuccessful applicants for the first session will be contacted again once we've got a firm plan. Annie Hamilton-Gibney, our tutor, began the day with a detailed exposition of "how to do field walking and what to look for". This was then followed by an opportunity to examine a collection of typical artefacts recovered by previous fieldwalking forays. This was extremely useful as it enabled everybody to "get their eye in".



Look what we got! Annie Hamilton-Gibney displays the day's accumulated finds

The facilities at Brampton village hall were excellent; the hall was pleasantly warm and tea, coffee and biscuits seemed to be permanently on tap. After a sandwich lunch and a sociable chat we set off for the freshly-ploughed field which Annie had earmarked for us.

The field was set amongst rolling pasture overlooking the Eden to the east of Appleby. It had been ploughed, rolled and seeded but the farmer was content that fieldwalking would cause no damage as long as we followed the procedures that Annie had outlined for us - no digging and dis-

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Whitley Castle Roman Fort - report on the launch of Epiacum Heritage Ltd

Phyllis Rouston and I recently attended the launch event of Epiacum Heritage Ltd. This is a company formed by the landowner of Castle Nook Farm near Alston, the site of Whitley Castle. The company has been granted £49,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund in order to promote and provide some basic facilities at the site. The event attracted around one hundred people, including representatives from English Heritage, who have been investigating the site for the last five years, intensively so for the last two. Others attending the launch included tourism interests, local organisations such as our own and some local people, many of whom were becoming involved with the Project as volunteers or organisers. There is always a strong community element to anything happening on Alston Moor and this development is no exception.

There were a number of displays at the event, providing



Whitley Castle from the air - photograph courtesy of English Heritage

an insight into the ways the Project will develop – these include education, provision of guides and leaflets, information boards, as well as organised and guided walks around the site. There will also be efforts to advertise the unique attractions of the site more widely – at the moment the fort is hardly known, except by specialists, outside the surrounding area.

We enjoyed a 30 minute double act from Paul Frodsham and Stewart Ainsworth which was mostly unscripted and highly enjoyable. Afterwards, Stewart led 40 or so people on a guided walk around the site. Knowledge of the site has increased dramatically recently because of the work carried out by English Heritage as part of the Miner-Farmer Project and as a result the walk proved to be extremely informative.

It is not currently part of the Project to carry out excavation of any part of the site but the now famous molehill surveys are intended to become a regular feature.

There will be a 'Friends of Epiacum' organisation and

Stewart Ainsworth has agreed to become President. Members will receive various privileges such as exclusive events and a regular newsletter. Membership will be just £10 per year and if you have internet access, a form will soon be available for download from the Project website www.epiacumheritage.org. If you have no access to the internet and would like to become a member, please give me a call on 01228 558794 and I will send you a copy.

Richard Stevens

Update on the Altogether Archaeology Project

The final meeting of the Appleby Archaeology Group's 2011-12 lecture season welcomed Paul Frodsham to the Public Hall. Paul is the Historic Environment Officer for the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership, as well as an author of a number of books with archaeological themes. He had last addressed the Group in 2010, prior to the start of the AONB's 'Altogether Archaeology' pilot Project and the purpose of his latest talk was to update the Group on the results of the Project, as well as the plans for the future.

The Altogether Archaeology Project is a lottery funded and community based programme of archaeological activities of various kinds, all taking place within the area covered by the North Pennines AONB. The Project timeline starts in the Middle Stone Age and takes in everything up to and including the Industrial Archaeology of the 19th century.

Paul began by explaining that his own archaeological career had begun in Northumbria and he confessed that his early impressions of the North Pennines had been that there was nothing much of interest there. However, he was by now fully aware of his mistake and he went on to say that, although the area covered by the AONB has no World Heritage sites and indeed, with the exception of the lead mining landscape, few others considered to have national significance, the archaeology is nevertheless of great importance because it reflects the everyday lives of the people who have inhabited the region over a continuous period of some 7000 years.

More than 400 volunteers had taken part in the pilot Project, many of them participating in a number of the activities, which had included archaeological excavations, guided walks, landscape surveys, finds recording and workshops. They included people who came with many years interest in history and archaeology, as well as some who had no previous knowledge and experience. They

had come both from within the boundary of the AONB and also from neighbouring areas. All the activities within the Project had been carried out by the volunteers under the supervision of professional archaeologists and had included training in the various techniques required.

Paul went on to give the meeting a short but prolifically illustrated summary of all the activities which had so far taken place. The landscape survey at Holwick, in Tees-



Excavating the Maiden Way - photograph courtesy of Altogether Archaeology

dale, had discovered the imprint of habitation dating from the Mesolithic to the present, with a huge number of sites in a comparatively small area. The search for a 13th century hunting lodge belonging to the Bishops of Durham in the village of Westgate, Weardale, thought to be lost, had revealed through excavation massive walls and a beautiful spiral staircase before being reburied. In the east of the AONB, an excavation at Muggleswick Grange, which had been built for the Priors of Durham, also in the 13th century, had discovered a high quality building in the shadow of the standing remains. The Maiden Way, a Roman Road connecting the forts at Kirkby Thore & Carvoran, had been excavated near Whitley Castle to the north of Alston and the foundations drawn and photographed. The Tortie Stone, a boulder with rock art carvings near Hallbankgate, had been excavated and Mesolithic flints had been found, together with a probable Bronze Age house, in the near vicinity. The excavation of a supposed Roman Signal Station on Brackenber Moor, on land owned by the golf club, was of particular interest to the members of Appleby Archaeology, many of whom had participated. This site eventually proved to be a cemetery containing a number of Bronze Age burials.

Other activities had included taking part in a long term Newcastle University excavation on Bollihope Common, a survey of molehill casts around the Roman fort at Whitley Castle, where English Heritage are currently conducting a project & where a small bronze dolphin had been discovered during a walk over the site, an air photography workshop and cataloguing earlier finds from the North Pennines at the Bowes Museum. There had also been a

number of organised & guided walks, to locations including Binchester Roman fort and Nine Standards Rigg.

Paul then went on to explain that, following the award of a Project development grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, he had been involved talking to various groups and individuals throughout the area, putting together a programme of work for a three year extension to the Altogether Archaeology Project. The details of the programme



Pottery from Muggleswick Grange - photograph courtesy of Altogether Archaeology

had been largely completed and in March a full application for funding had been made to the HLF, with a decision expected in June. The Fund had encouraged the Project since the beginning and Paul told the meeting that he was hopeful of success. With fingers well and truly crossed, he outlined some of the exciting ideas being worked on for new project modules, including Long Meg, Garrigill, Geltsdale, Allendale and a focus on the early Medieval, Saxon and 'Dark Age' period in the AONB. There would also be the possibility of further work on the pilot project modules.

Paul concluded his talk by emphasising that the North Pennines AONB was absolutely full of undiscovered archaeology, the extent of which was only now being realised. The reason for this had been largely because the area was remote from most centres of research and had been to some extent overlooked. The Altogether Archaeology Project was an opportunity to correct this paucity of knowledge and it was inspiring to know that it would be carried out in the main by local volunteers.

Richard Stevens

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infect your boots before you start. I thought we looked quite an impressive army as we set off, walking in parallel lines at 5metre intervals. Conditions were apparently not quite ideal since there had been no rain to wash the dust off exposed material, but bits of pottery and lots and lots of clay pipe fragments soon began to accumulate in the plastic bags we carried. Very occasionally there would be a call for our leader to examine a claim for a more exotic discovery - a fragment of flint, or a stamped piece of pottery, perhaps - in which case, if approved, a GPS record would be made and a small victory dance executed.

It was a lovely, dry day, but a cold wind ensured that we didn't hang about much and so the field was completed in about an hour. Then we all got together to see what had been found. It was the first time that this particular field had been "walked" and a surprising amount had been accumulated. Nobody had found the flint arrowheads and knives which were undoubtedly out there somewhere, but Stephen Walker had found a classic gun flint and there was one really nice translucent flint flake. So we all went home feeling extremely pleased with ourselves.



The field-walkers in action

I think Annie may have started something, as ever since attending the workshop I've been looking at "interesting" fields and wondering when they might next get ploughed.

Martin Joyce



Summer Programme

An evening stroll in Mallerstang

Tuesday 12th June

A walk over Birkett Common to examine a possible prehistoric settlement site and other historic remains. On the way home we plan to explore nearby Pendragon Castle. Park near the quarry at NY 773 033 at 6.30pm. Boots are advised. For further details contact Stephen Walker on 017683 74824 .

Fieldwalking Finds Workshop

Thursday 12th July

A follow-up finds-washing and identification workshop for those members who took part in the field-walking workshop earlier this year. See enclosed booking form for details

Day trip to Hornby Castle

Saturday 7th July

Site visit & conducted tour of excavations at Hornby Castle in the company of Erik Matthews.

This will be a full day car sharing trip from Appleby to the site in North Yorkshire. Please contact Richard Stevens at

app.arch@richardstevens.plus.com or on 01228 558794 if you would like to come along. Please be aware that this is an active excavation site where the facilities are basic. A packed lunch and suitable clothing are advised

Medieval drainage, sanitation and health

Tuesday 9th Oct

Autumn Lecture Programme

(note - no September lecture this year)

Don O 'Meara (WA Archaeology)

An environmental analysis of the medieval approach to drainage, sanitation and health



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