

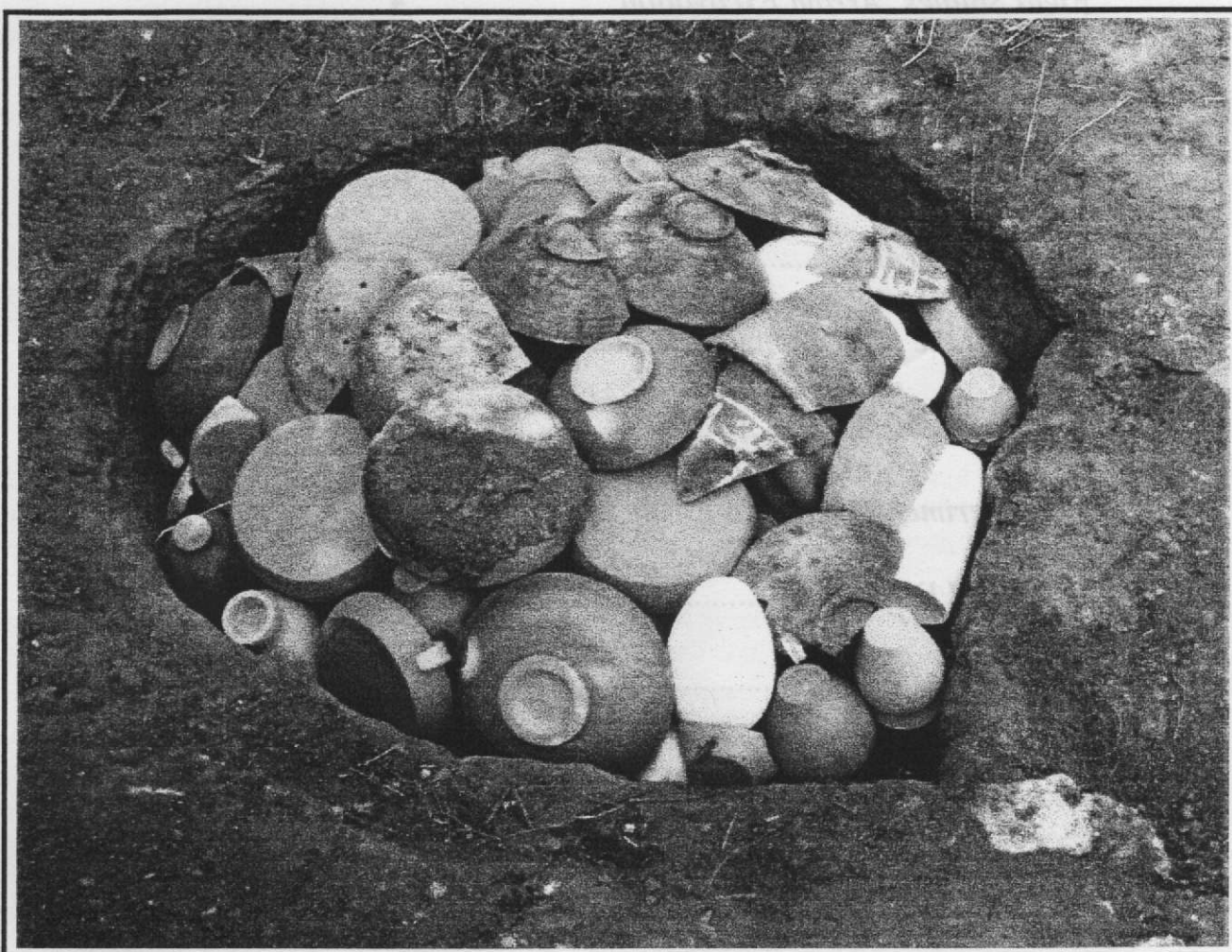
# ERAS News

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EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

No. 59 NOVEMBER 2004

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*The kiln loaded ready for roofing, at an experimental Romano-British kiln firing by Beryl Hines of the East Anglian Potters' Association. Summer 2004*

*photo: Rod Mackey*

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*Arram Excavation ♦ Experimental Kiln ♦ British Archaeological Awards  
Science Page ♦ Committee ♦ Local News ♦ From the Bookshelf ♦ Quiz ♦ Diary*

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# ERAS Local News ....

## PLEASE RETURN BORROWED JOURNALS

If you have journals borrowed from ERAS we would appreciate their return, no matter how long you have had them. When returning volumes, please sign them back in the book, which Enid Waudby always brings to lecture and field study meetings, otherwise they remain signed out to you. The following British Archaeology volumes are missing.

1996 - Vols. 10, 13, 14, 16, 20  
1997 - Vols. 21, 25, 26, 28, 29  
1998 - Vols. 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39  
1999 - Vols. 40, 41, 43, 44, 49, 50  
2000 - Vols. 51, 52  
2002 - Vols. 65, 67  
2003 - Vols. 69, 70, 71, 72  
2004 - Vol. 76

We cannot continue the system if journals are not returned, so please search your shelves.

## ARTEFACT HANDLING

Hull Museum staff were grateful to ERAS members who helped with artefact handling days during the summer holidays. Bill and Margaret Coultard, Janet Teece, Gill Ainsworth, Matthew Phillpot, Sue Young and Brenda Doyle each put in one afternoon. It involved supervising and encouraging the public in handling artefacts from the museum's school collection and explaining their function. There are comprehensive crib sheets to go with all the material so volunteers do not need an encyclopaedic knowledge, but rather an empathy with people. The object handling days were a great success and Craig is hoping to run them again next summer.

## E. HERITAGE URBAN COMMONS SURVEY

English Heritage have finished looking at Westwood, Figham and Swinemoor in Beverley, as part of their survey of urban commons. Results will be published later in a general volume on urban commons but Rod Mackey, who supplied a lot of the information is hoping, with the support of English Heritage, to produce a small popular book on the Westwood. A public lecture on the commons, was given by Mitchell Pollington of English Heritage at Beverley Library. The information given was of a fairly general nature but people were able to see some excellent aerial photographs on screen, includ-

ing a rare set from 1917, put together in a collage and held by the County Record Office in Beverley.

## VENUE FOR DECEMBER FIELD STUDIES

December's Field Study meeting will be at the usual venue and **not** at Hull University as previously announced. We will probably be labelling, and trying to fit together, some pottery sherds from Arram.

## THE SECRET RESISTANCE IN WW II

ERAS member, Alan Williamson started doing some research as part of the Defence of Britain Project and became interested in one particular aspect- East Yorkshire's second world war secret underground bunkers. These were set up for the use of secretly trained guerillas based around Britain's coastal areas in case of an invasion. Thinking he might write an article for an ERAS publication, Alan, with assistance from Charlie Mason, carried on researching and the result is a book recently published by Middleton Press, entitled *East Riding's Secret Resistance*. The 128 page book has 26 drawings and 79 photos. It is available from local bookshops, price £14.95. ISBN 1 904474 21 7

## NEW HUMBER WETLANDS BOOK

*The Humber Wetlands The Archaeology of a Dynamic Landscape* is a new book by Robert Van de Noort, which aims to be a synthesis of English Heritage's Humber Wetlands Project. It is certainly readable and well produced, with good clear maps and an attractive cover, but whether it is a good choice for the seriously academic bookshelf, will be left to Terry Manby who we hope will review the book for a future newsletter.

## PAM GARDAM

Members will be saddened to hear of the death of ERAS member, Pam Gardam on September 3rd. Pam was a dedicated botanist and a retired school teacher and had been a member of ERAS for many years. She regularly attended lectures and field studies meetings, and during our Bainton survey carried out a botanical survey at the 'Hilly Fields' site. She also did some paintaking research on Bainton family history records, for the same project. ERAS offers its sympathy to Pam's sister and family.

Kate Dennett

# *Field Studies: Excavation at Chapel Garth, Arram*

Excavations by Will and Fiona Wilson and ERAS during 2003 and 2004 have revealed part of an Iron Age and Romano-British site, containing evidence for settlement, agricultural and industrial activity in the form of bronze working.

The village of Arram is situated to the north of Beverley in the middle Hull valley, on the river's tributary, Arram Beck. The relief is subdued and poor natural drainage has been improved by artificial drainage systems, the subsoil geology comprises glacio-fluvial sands and gravels and post-glacial alluvium and peat. The site itself lies on clay ground adjacent to the floodplain areas known as Arram Carrs. Pollen assemblages from the carrs reflect a very wet and open sedge fen, with a surrounding dry land landscape near devoid of woodland cover for the Iron Age or later.

## **Excavations in 2003**

In the summer of 2003 a resistivity survey was carried out, but unfortunately the clayey land didn't produced very comprehensible results. A gridded field walking survey produced a spread of pottery running diagonally across the field in a north-east/south-west direction, spanning a period from late Iron Age to late Roman. Two fourth century coins and a first century spear head were also found.

A small evaluation trench produced the terminal of a large ditch (Enclosure Ditch 1) and part of a small curving ditch interpreted at the time as possibly being a roundhouse drip gully. The large ditch, about a meter deep, contained an enormous quantity of Iron Age pottery, also the complete top of a beehive quern at the lip of the ditch with part of another broken quern at the very base. Further quern fragments were also found during field walking giving a total of 11 separate querns.

## **Excavations in 2004**

Prior to this year's excavation, a contour survey of the site was produced, which put the features already found into context with the changes in land surface and showed some potential areas for future work. The evaluation trench from 2003 was then extended to uncover an area of approximately 320 square metres.

One of the first features to show below the topsoil was what appeared to be a square cornered building in the east side of the trench, possibly a timber posted structure with wattle walls. Unfortunately it seems likely that it came from a late phase of the site and only survived in a very shallow form, because within two days the darker clay had oxidised and despite careful spraying and trowelling

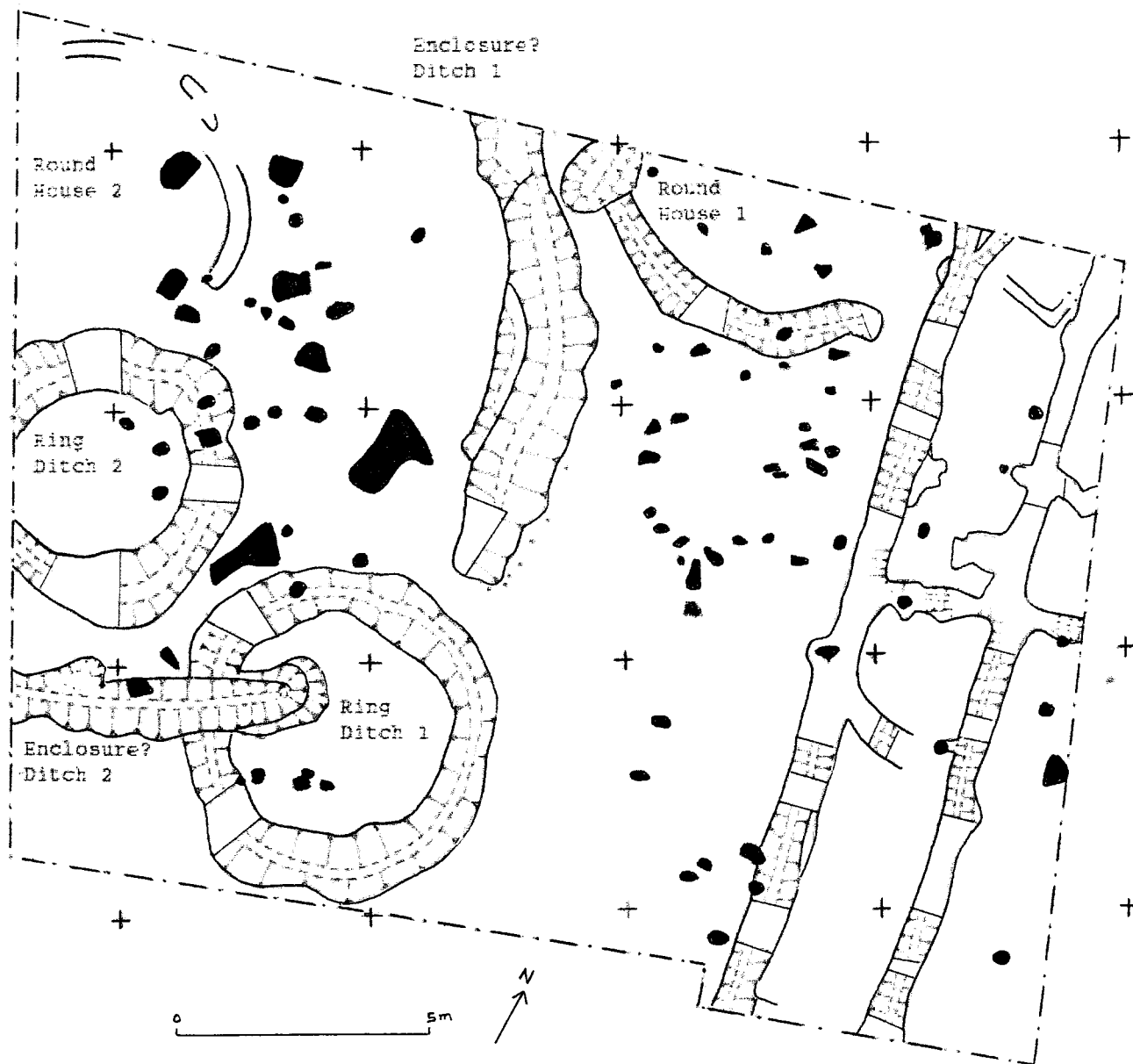
was never visible again. Fortunately it was recorded when it was initially seen.

Further to the west of the trench more of the possible roundhouse gully was uncovered. Upon re-excavation of last year's evaluation trench it was found that what had tentatively been interpreted as a shallow drip gully, was a quite substantial, continuous, ring ditch (Ring Ditch 1) with no evidence for an entrance. The lowest part of the ditch fill yielded some interesting pieces of mould fragments, thought to be associated with bronze working, and there was also animal bone, including a pig's jaw. The most dateable evidence from the ditch fill came in the form of a deposit of Iron Age pottery, typical of the type found all over the site. This was overlying the articulated right rear leg of a small horse. There was no hoof, nor any obvious butchery marks. Directly beneath was a deposit of Dragonby type Iron Age wheel thrown pottery, (generally produced between the 1st century B.C. and the 1st century A.D). It is likely that, because Ring Ditch 1 and also several features cutting it, had silted up before evidence for Roman activity, it dates from the 1st century B.C.

Further excavation showed that the ditch had been cut on the west side by a linear ditch (Enclosure Ditch 2) which terminated in the centre of the ring ditch. Sometime after silting up, what appears to be a large deposit of small fragments of baked clay, many with flat sides, was tipped into it. It now seems feasible that Enclosure Ditch 2 is connected with Enclosure Ditch 1, and possibly reflects an enclosure entranceway between the ditch terminals. Further sections were put across Enclosure Ditch 1, producing a quantity of pottery, some preserved timber, animal bone and teeth and a bronze brooch pin.

Bronze working material occurs both in the base of Ring Ditch 1 and on the sealed land surface beneath its central mound. It also occurs in the later phase of Enclosure Ditch 2 and demonstrates bronze working on the site over a period of time, although the nature of the soil allows silting up of ditches over a relatively short period of time. The evidence can be compared to that of bronze working activity which took place at Kelk, in the upper Hull Valley. Bronze casting using the lost wax method can be inferred at Arram due to the occurrence of crucible, sprue cups, mould fragments and props, all similar to those found at Kelk.

In the northwest of the excavated area, the latest phase seemed to be dominated by a series of clay-filled post-holes, one of which contained burnt bone which may relate to cremation. A group of four postholes forming a



Plan: Graham Myers

square pattern may represent a 'four post' structure, of the type often interpreted as a granary. In this area, there appears to be a further shallow, roundhouse drip gully (Roundhouse Gully 2) with a south-east entrance, also several silt filled post holes, which do not appear to be associated with the round house, some with preserved timber, and further deposits of burnt bone. Cutting the south side of Roundhouse Gully 2, another ring ditch (Ring Ditch 2) was revealed, lying quite close to the first. It had a slightly irregular shape and could perhaps best be described as the having the shape of a rounded triangle. There is little evidence to show any function for Ring Ditch 2, although it appears to have been recut several times and again there were many pieces of bronze working debris in the fill. There is also evidence for the clay capping in the centre of this ring ditch, possibly having being dumped back into the ditch, suggesting deliberate levelling, although no Roman artefacts were found to support this theory.

To the east side of the trench another roundhouse drip gully was uncovered (Roundhouse Gully 1) again with a south-east entrance, but considerably deeper than Roundhouse Gully 2 and with postholes at regular intervals around the internal space. There is also the possibility of an associated square cornered structure showing to the east of the roundhouse. Remnants of a possible third roundhouse drip gully shows to the south-east of Roundhouse Gully 1.

Cutting Roundhouse Gullies 1 and 3 are two parallel north-south linear ditches that cross one or more east-west shallow gully features. It is unclear if these gullies are contemporary with the ditches but is likely that the ditches themselves are of a similar period. Dating evidence from pottery assemblages including Roman greyware and burnished pottery, suggests a mid Roman date. Linear Ditch 1 produced a Celtic coin, identified as being a Corieltavi, South Ferriby type, dating from 45-10 B.C.

## *Field Studies: Excavation at Chapel Garth Arram*

and showing a right facing horse with a right facing boar on the reverse. If the coin is bronze, as it appears to be, then it is a previously unknown type, as all others found have been silver. At present, we are awaiting identification from the British Museum.

Even at this early stage in the excavation, Arram appears to be a significant site, providing further knowledge about settlement and industry in the Iron Age and Roman period in the Hull Valley, with particular reference to the wetland margins. Tentative phasing suggests what may be an open settlement of roundhouses, post-dated by the ring ditches. It is unclear what the ring ditch features were used for and whilst on other Iron Age sites they have sometimes been interpreted as being associated with hay stacks, industrial activity has also been suggested. This latter seems a more likely interpretation as there are signs of burning on the clay surface in the centre Ring Ditch 1, adjacent to the dump of burnt clay fragments.

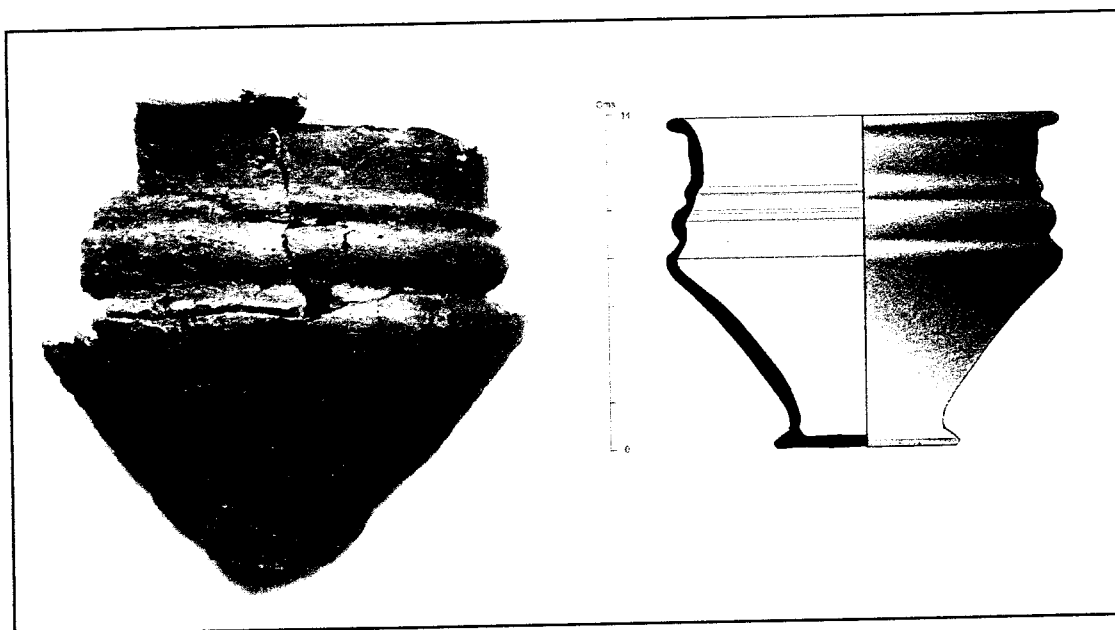
The third major phase appears to be that of an enclosing ditch with a south-east entrance of late Iron Age date. Deposition of clay suggests an internal bank and there is some evidence for an external fence. Inside the entrance two large clay filled features may represent substantial posts, producing a clearly defined and possibly gated entranceway. At present, the earliest Roman phase identified is represented by the 2nd or 3rd century linear ditches, which may represent a trackway or boundary ditches. The possible square cornered building in the east

of the trench is also likely to be of Roman date.

The economy of the site is represented both by agriculture and bronze working. Animal bone assemblages show pastoral activity by the presence of horse, cattle, fowl, pig and sheep/goat. Although no analysis has yet been done to identify the presence of grain, the large quantity of querns discovered along with a possible granary, suggest crops were being grown and processed on the site. The proximity of the site to Arram Carrs infers utilisation of the wetlands. These may have provided summer grazing and hay for fodder, reeds and rushes for thatching and peat and brushwood for fuel and light construction; fishing and fowling may have also provided additions to the local diet. Resources however would need management to avoid over exploitation. To date, Arram is only the second known Iron Age bronze-working site within the Hull Valley and one of only three in the territory of the Arras culture, a main user of bronze work. Certain production activities may have been preferentially located in marginal areas of the landscape, for cultural or economic reasons. Closeness to a watercourse may provide the necessary requirements for industrial activity, as well as the obvious benefits of waterborne trade, a possible inlet for the Lincolnshire produced coin and pottery and an outlet for bronze items.

Further coring is to be carried out shortly and it is hoped that excavation will continue next summer.

*Fiona Wilson*



*Wheel-made Dragonby type pot from context 123, (Ring Ditch 1) Chapel Garth, Arram.*

*Drawing and photo: Rod Mackey*



# Science in Archaeology

## The South Cave Swords

In September 2002 a cache of Iron Age weapons was found near South Cave by members of East Yorkshire Metal Detecting Society. It was excavated by Humber Archaeology Partnership after the society promptly reported the find to the Portable Antiquities Scheme Officer at York. The cache has now been conserved by York Archaeological Trust after English Heritage provided funding. The cache consisted of five iron swords complete with highly decorated copper alloy scabbards and no less than 33 iron spearheads.

Conservators found that the swords had been damaged in antiquity and at least two repairs had been made to the decorated scabbards. The copper alloy scabbards display a wealth of decoration, including repousse decoration (where a pattern is hammered in relief from the reverse side of a metal sheet), cast openwork, enamel and applied blue and red glass mounts.

The organic elements of the scabbards survived well and contain a mixture of materials identified as bone, antler, wood or horn and ivory mounted between copper alloy rings. The swords appear to have been laid very precisely one on top of the other in the ground, with the largest and most highly decorated at the top. The spearheads had been carefully placed next to the swords and had possibly been tied together with a leather binding.

The weapons had been deposited in an oval-shaped pit, the side and top of which were carefully lined with amphora sherds. The pit was cut into a pre-existing ditch containing local pottery and animal bone. A geophysical survey revealed regular linear features representing ditches, suggesting that a so-called 'ladder settlement' covered the area in which the cache was discovered. Aerial photography previously carried out has also hinted at the existence of a defended enclosure on the hill to the north and east of the site. Study of the swords suggests a Late Iron Age date contemporary with the associated pottery from the late first century AD.

More information in:

Yorkshire Archaeology Today. May 2004  
(York Archaeological Trust)

## Glue on the Wetwang Chariot Fittings

Scientists at the British Museum have analysed material on the harness fittings found in the chariot burial at Wetwang. Using a technique called gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS for short) they found that the dark brown/black friable adhesive which held the coral studs (and in two cases, repaired them) on the terret rings and strap unions was made from birch-bark tar mixed with a softwood (probably pine) resin or tar. This mixture is previously unknown, though the use of birch-bark tar as an adhesive is known in contexts ranging from the middle Palaeolithic to the Middle Ages. In the Mesolithic it was chewed, presumably for some narcotic, medicinal or pleasurable effect. However, the Iron Age chariot fittings from Wetwang are perhaps the most exquisitely crafted items with which birch-bark tar glue has been associated to date.

More information on the Wetwang chariot burial:  
Past 38. (August 2001)

[www.ucl.ac.uk/prehistoric/past/past38.html](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prehistoric/past/past38.html)

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/lj/archaeologylj/wetwang\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/lj/archaeologylj/wetwang_01.shtml)

[www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/pee/peereex.html](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/pee/peereex.html)

More information on the tar at Wetwang in:  
Past 47 (July 2004)

[www.ucl.ac.uk/prehistoric/past/past47.html](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prehistoric/past/past47.html)

More information on chewing tar in:  
British Archaeology. 21 (Feb 1997)  
Antiquity 73 (1999)

*Paul Brayford*

## The Quick Quiz

1. Which emperor set in motion the invasion of Britain?
2. Who led the legions into Scotland before abandoning the fort at Inchtuthill in Perthshire?
3. Which treasure, probably made in the eastern empire was found in Suffolk in 1942?
4. Which island was thought to be a centre of Druidic culture?
5. What was the Roman name for Brough?
6. In what year was the Boudican rebellion?
7. How long is Hadrian's wall?
8. What is the name of the Roman fort in a castle in Portsmouth harbour?

*Peter Walker*

# From the Bookshelf

As you are aware, ERAS members can obtain a reader's ticket for the Brynmor Jones Library at the University of Hull. This ticket allows access to the book and journal collections, although you cannot take books out. To get your reader's ticket, go to the Library reception desk and say you are a member of the East Riding Archaeology Society and would like to have a reader's ticket. You might have to show your ERAS membership card.

## JOURNAL REVIEW

### *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*

(Library catalogue GN 700 P9)

The Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society (also known simply as PPS) is published annually by the Prehistoric Society. Originally founded as the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia in 1908, the current name was established in 1935. The Prehistoric Society now has an international membership of around 2000 members. The Prehistoric Society's interests are world wide and extend from the earliest human origins to the emergence of written records, and this is reflected in the articles that are published in its journal.

The Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society was first produced in 1935. It usually appears in December so we are waiting for the 2004 issue as I write this review. As with *Antiquity*, which was reviewed in the last newsletter, the library has a full run of the journal thanks to the addition of the Ted Wright Collection and the continued subscription through ERAS donations. The articles in each journal are always varied and although they do provide an essential port of call for anyone tracking down original excavation reports from sites in England, they also provide details on research and excavations much further afield. As an example of the contents, listed below are the articles that appear in Volume 69 from 2003.

*The Survey and Excavation of a Bronze Age Timber Circle at Holme-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, 1998-9.*

(Mark Brennand and Maisie Taylor)

*Beyond Star Carr: The Vale of Pickering in the 10th Millennium BP*

(Chantal Conneller and Tim Schadla-Hall)

*An Early Mesolithic Seasonal Hunting Site in the*

*Kennet Valley, Southern England.*

(Chris Ellis, Michael J. Allen, Julie Gardiner, Phil Harding, Claire Ingre, Adrienne Powell and Robert G. Scaife)

*The Middle Palaeolithic Site of Karabi Tamchin (Crimea, Ukraine): 1999-2001 Excavation Seasons.*  
(A. Yevtushenko, A. Burke, C.R. Ferring, V. Chabai and K. Monigal)

*Mesolithic to Bronze Age Vegetation Change and Human Activity in the Exe Valley, Devon.*

(R.M. Fyfe, A.G. Brown and B.J. Coles)

*Off-site Artefact Distribution and Land-use Intensity in Turkish Thrace.*

(Burçin Erdogu)

*Archaeological and Palaeo-environmental Investigations of the Upper Allen Valley, Cranborne Chase, Dorset (1998-2000): a New Model of Earlier Holocene Landscape Development.*

(Charles French, Helen Lewis, Michael J. Allen, Robert G. Scaife and Martin Green)

*Long Mounds and Megalithic Origins in Western France: Recent Excavations at Prissé-la-Charrière.*

(Chris Scarre, Luc Laporte and Roger Joussaume)

*A Cup-marked Stone from Dan-y-garn, Mynachlog-Ddu, Pembrokeshire, and the Prehistoric Rock-art from Wales.*

(Timothy Darvill and Geoffrey Wainwright)

*A Middle Bronze Age House and Burnt Mound at Bestwall, Wareham, Dorset: an Interim Report.*

(Lilian Ladle and Ann Woodward)

*Ceramic Petrology and Prehistoric Pottery in the UK.*

(Elaine L. Morris and Ann Woodward)

*Another Look at the Cuxton Handaxe Assemblage.*

(Andrew D. Shaw and Mark J. White)

*A Middle Palaeolithic Site at Lynford Quarry, Mundford, Norfolk: Interim Statement.*

(W.A. Boismier)

## BOOK REVIEW

**Hinton, D.A. 1990. *Archaeology, Economy and Society*. London: Seaby.**

(Library catalogue DA 130 H6)

Anyone interested in the development of settlement, society and trade in England from the departure of the Romans through to the sixteenth century can't go wrong with this book. Mixing archaeological data with historical accounts, the book is divided into



## From the Bookshelf

nine chapters, each looking at a specific time span. It begins with an examination of the early evidence for settlement at such places as West Stow and Yeavinger with a chapter on the fifth and sixth centuries, subtitled 'reorganisation among the ruins'. The next two chapters examine the development of Christianity and Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. A further chapter examines the impact of the Viking invasions, followed by a chapter looking at the development of towns. The final four chapters examine the developments from the eleventh century through the sixteenth with the final chapter subtitled 'Into a new age?'

An extensive collection of notes guides the reader to further books and articles. One minor problem with the book is the small number of illustrations. Although this book is now 14 years old and many new discoveries have extended our knowledge of these periods of England's development, in many ways this book has stood the test of time. It is still an enjoyable read and an excellent place to start to find a general background to the big themes of development from the fifth to sixteenth centuries.

### NEW TO THE LIBRARY COLLECTION

**Andrews, K. & R. Doonan 2003. *Test tubes and trowels*. Stroud: Tempus**  
(Library catalogue CC 75 A5)

Following hot on the heels of last newsletter's 'new to the library' review is another Tempus publication. This time the book provides an introduction to the ways in which scientific techniques are used in archaeology. Divided into seven chapters, each dealing with- well, that is the main problem with this book. The chapter headings don't give much clue when you open this book. Headings such as 'Organising production' and 'Identity and power' may suggest you picked up the latest book by an up and coming theory-head. The only one which gives some indication of content is 'Searching for provenance', which explores the different techniques that have been applied to detect the provenance of artefacts.

Instead of finding a useful guide to the different scientific techniques you find yourself stuck in a quagmire of trying to locate the section of the book in which to find the techniques you are wishing to

study. There are some good points. In some sections you do find useful diagrams explaining the methods, sampling and applications of a range of techniques. Once you have found the technique you are interested in then there is a good, detailed explanation of how it is undertaken. Each chapter also has a case study showing how particular techniques have been applied to different archaeological questions.

For those of you who want to find out about a particular technique in an easy reference guide, this book is not for you, and there are many more out there that will serve you better (for example the fail safe choice of Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn's *Archaeology: theories, methods and practice*, now on its fourth edition). If you are interested in the ways in which archaeologists study subjects such as power and culture, then *Test tubes and trowels* provides you with the information on the techniques which can be used, just be prepared to be faced with a large quantity of archaeological theory which needs further explanation than is given in this book.

The main problem with all Tempus publications is their means of referencing. Once again, the book is only accompanied by a list of suggested reading with only 28 references for a book of 156 pages.

### OTHER RECENT LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

- O'Connor, T.P. 2000. *The archaeology of animal bones*. Stroud: Sutton.  
Hall, R.A. & H. Kenward 1990. *Environmental evidence from the colonia*. York: York Archaeological Trust.  
Cummings, V & A. Whittle 2003. *Places of special virtue*. Oxford: Oxbow.  
Gaffney, C & J. Gater 2004. *Revealing the buried past*. Stroud: Tempus.  
Habu, J, 2004. *Ancient Jomon of Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
Rapp, G. & C.L. Hill 1998. *Geoarchaeology: the earth-science approach to archaeological interpretation*. Yale: Yale University Press.  
Pauketat, T.R. 2004. *Ancient Cahokia and the Mississippians*. Cambridge University Press.

Helen Fenwick,  
Lecturer in Archaeology,  
Department of History, University of Hull

## *Make the Most of YAS*

Please make the most of ERAS's affiliation to the Leeds based Yorkshire Archaeological Society, which has its own premises, paid archivists and a wonderful library (You need to take your ERAS card to get free access). The president, Peter Addyman has listed twenty ways in which people can help YAS and some of them are listed below. If you can contribute in any way at all, please contact our representative, ERAS chairman Paul Brayford or YAS, at Claremont, 23 Clarendon Rd, Leeds.

You could-

Donate unwanted archaeology or history books to the library or to the ongoing second hand book sale.

Volunteer some time, such as one day a month to help practically in the library or archives, especially if you are skilled in this area.

Adopt a book and see it come back to life. Some of the 50,000 volumes are in need of professional conservation and sponsorship for this work starts at £50.

If you have a business, think about buying advertising space in a YAS publication

Consider making a donation to YAS in your will.

Critique the YAS. The society welcomes comments, good or bad. Send to the Suggestions Box at Claremont

Join YAS as an individual

Help to publicise YAS by telling friends about dayschools and other events

Help with packing, despatching and mailing if you live near Leeds or with distributions by delivering material from Leeds to members in your local area.

Maintaining premises and historic documents and books is a costly affair and YAS desperately needs more support. In ERAS, although we pay a lot for room hire, we do not need to worry about building upkeep, conservation and staff costs, and can keep our funds for excavation and publication. Individual YAS membership is £40 with an additional fee for membership of the different sections.

## *Committee Discussions*

Your committee meets every two or three months, depending whether there are any major issues to be discussed. Below is a brief outline of some of the topics discussed at the last meeting.

**Mortimer Celebrations:** special day being planned with talks at University and visits. Date to be co-ordinated with plans for special museum display.

**Budget & Reserves Policy:** the meeting adopted the policy set out by the treasurer, whereby some funds are earmarked for specific items such as publication.

**Disability Rights:** discussion re compliance with access regulations. mainly for groups with own premises.

**Archivist:** someone is needed to keep a file of press cuttings etc and someone also needed to keep track of where ERAS property is stored and when loaned out. No volunteers.

**VFIM:** Peter reported on progress with the project.

**Resistivity Surveys:** discussion re future projects. Meter to be returned for updating to automatic logging.

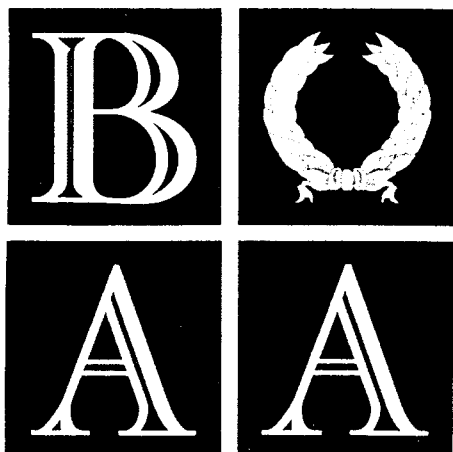
**Publication update:** ongoing problems with funding for Volume 11 (by Stead and Rigby)

If anyone has any thing they would like to bring to the attention of the committee, please telephone, email or write to secretary Rose Nicholson (see membership card for details).

## *Valley of the First Iron Masters Special Project Launch*

Please see the separate insert for details of the launch at Hull and East Riding Museum and at Hull University. You need to contact Peter Halkon by email or post if you would like a ticket for this event, which is the culmination of a years work funded by the National Lottery with input by the Universities of Hull and Cambridge.

## The British Archaeological Awards, 2004



Rod Mackey and Kate Dennett, at the British Archaeological Awards ceremony in Belfast, receiving ERAS's finalist's certificate for the Easington excavation.  
Photo: Mike Brooks.



ERAS's excavation of the Bronze Age Barrow and Neolithic occupation site, at Easington in 1996-1997 led by Rod Mackey was entered for this year's British Archaeological Awards in the Pitt Rivers Award category. This is for excavations carried out mainly by volunteers, (although projects may be professionally led) and there were 18 entries. Many ERAS members worked on this difficult and not easily accessible site over two 11 week periods in 1996 and 1997 and post-excavation work is ongoing. We were delighted to be informed that the project was on the short list and that we were invited to go to the awards ceremony in Belfast at the end of October.

Although we didn't win the main award, ERAS, along with three other groups, each received an impressive finalist's certificate. The winner was Rugby Archaeological Society for its excavation of the Tripontium bath house, part of a major, long term excavation. There were 15 different categories of awards to be presented, including the Scholarly Publication Award, the Young Archaeologist of the Year Award, the Heritage in Britain Award (for long term preservation of a site) and the Keith Muckelroy Award (for published work on maritime archaeology). The event was chaired by Prof. David Breeze with an introduction by Prof. Gerry Mc Cormack, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Queens University, Belfast and a vote of thanks by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu. Afterwards, we were all treated to a swanky buffet and wine reception.

This year the judges had decided not to make an outright cash award to the winner of the Pitt-Rivers cat-

egory, but to allow each of the finalists to put in a request for funding to the Robert Kiln Trust, which normally sponsors this award. ERAS has already received £3000 funding for post-excavation work, including £700 earmarked specifically for the flint report, but the committee will discuss which aspect of the post-excavation work is in most need of further funding. We are currently awaiting the pottery report and the flint report.

Ex Hull University student Philip Clark was a finalist in the Mick Aston Award for the best presentation of an archaeological project to the public. Philip was not able to be present but Rod Mackey received the certificate on Philip's behalf. The presentation ceremony was followed by a CBA weekend event 'The Best of Ulster's Archaeology' with talks on aspects of Ulster archaeology, a dinner hosted by Francis Prior, visits to local sites, the Beatrice de Cardi lecture given by Julian Richards, a good supply of wine and of course being Ulster, lots of merriment!

Archaeology in N. Ireland is run on a somewhat different basis from the rest of Britain and excavation may only be carried out under license. There was the beginning of what might be termed some 'lively debate' about this issue as some people are against licensing. However, it was pointed out that N. Ireland is actually complying with the terms of the Valetta Convention. It was decided that a better time for such debate would be later on during the AGM, (for which we were not staying) and so we did not hear the outcome of this potentially interesting discussion.

Kate Dennett

# *An Experimental Romano British Kiln Firing*

In August the East Anglian Potters Association held their annual get-together at Shotley in Essex where potters can experiment with different types of firing and share their expertise. An experimental, Romano-British kiln, constructed from clay, and fired on two previous occasions was used by Beryl Hines to fire her own pots and several contributed by other potters. She was aiming to produce completely 'reduced' pots. Reduction occurs with iron-rich clay when the external oxygen supply is cut off and all the oxygen within the kiln is used up by the fire. The fire then takes the oxygen it needs from the ferrous oxide of the clay, resulting in pottery of a black or dark grey fabric. The clay first fires to red, then cream as the first stage of reduction, through grey and finally to black. (Partial reduction may occur when pots are tightly stacked upside down or one inside the other).

The keyhole shaped pit, lined with clay about 15cm thick, had a single clay pedestal in the centre to support the floor of the firing chamber or oven above. The oven floor, similar to those of the Crambeck kilns, consisted of a clay platform perforated with holes, to draw the fire and allow the smoke and heat to travel upwards. Sometimes, RB kilns, such as that excavated by ERAS at Skiff Lane, Tollingham, have a floor consisting of radiating clay bars, which may be supported on a peripheral ledge. Others have a solid floor with a chimney at one end. The position of the Shotley kiln, tucked away in a corner of a hedged field, was not ideal for getting a good and consistent updraught, but was chosen simply to be unobtrusive in what was really a garden.

Beryl had used Wattisfield clay, which contains tiny flecks of mica, giving a slightly sparkly effect, to make both dimpled and plain jars, and some shallow bowls all of which she had already 'biscuit' fired in an electric kiln. This initial, brief firing dried the vessels enough to allow them to be transported. After stacking the pots in a mound on the perforated shelf of the kiln, flattish sherds of previously fired pottery were placed over the top in a thin layer in an attempt to retain heat and provide some support for the roof. There is apparently archaeological evidence for this process. On top of this, a layer of dried grass about 10cm thick, was used as a protective covering before the application of the clay roof.

Clay, water and sawdust were mixed in an old bath and spread in handfuls over the dried grass to make a slightly domed roof, about 6cm thick. A stick was used to make several vent holes in the roof and clay

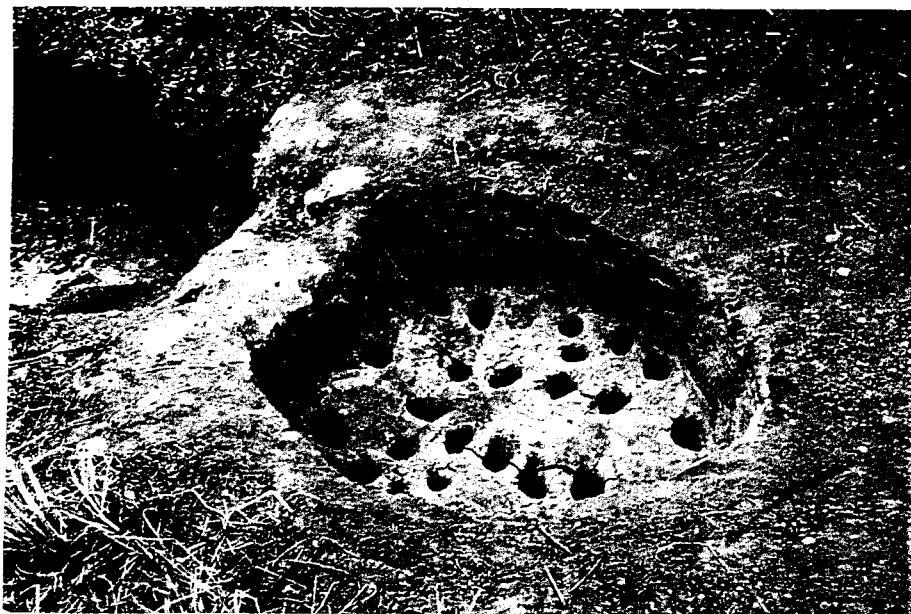
bungs were made ready to fit the holes. In order to monitor the temperature, a kiln thermometer, with a digital display, was inserted through the clay roof. A fire was lit in the mouth of the kiln and as it is important to build up heat gradually in this sort of kiln, it was stoked slowly and carefully for the first 6-7 hours, until most of the moisture was driven from the clay walls and roof. Failure to do this could result in an explosion. More holes had to be made in the clay roof to encourage the fire to draw through. We felt that twigs rather than hay might have supported the rather flat clay roof into a better dome shape, with more air space between the pots and the roof. The fire should have been stoked all night but there were no volunteers and it was left until early the following morning, when the real heat build-up was attempted.

Even with continual stoking (a surprisingly skillful and searingly hot job) it proved very difficult to raise the temperature beyond 400° c. Previous firings of the same kiln had been carried out using consistently sized short pieces of timber which were easier to position and gave better temperature control. Fuel available on this occasion was more varied in size and type and included much domestic waste wood. Recent rainfall leading to high levels of ground moisture may also have been a contributing factor.

It did appear that the layer of sherds was also preventing the fire from drawing and the roof, being by then baked hard, could not be further perforated. After several hours without much progress, part of the roof was removed to allow the fire to draw better. The thermometer had to be removed as the wires were being damaged by the heat. Beryl had to use her experience to judge when the required 800° c had been reached. At this point it was time for the reduction process. The fire box was fully stoked with wood, then the whole kiln was quickly clamped down to exclude all air, using bungs, kiln fleece (cheating- this insulation is a bi-product of space travel!) and a thick covering of sand and soil.

After several days cooling, the kiln was opened and Beryl reported that she was delighted as the pots were completely reduced and had a slightly burnished appearance. She wondered whether this could be due to paint or tar on some of the fuel used. Rod Mackey suggested it might be due to the severe level of oxygen reduction producing a chemical lustre of pure iron on the pot surface. There was no difference between the pots which had been biscuit fired before hand, and those which had not.

*Kate Dennett*



*Top left: The oven floor ready for loading.*

*Centre left: The kiln being loaded and the stoke pit being cleaned out ready for use.*

*Top right: Making the holes in the clay roof. The bricks in front of the fire arch in the stoke pit were placed temporarily to help the fire to draw. The large hole to the left had been made by badgers since last year's firing. (Please note, No badgers were injured in this experiment!)*

*Centre right: The perforated clay roof, with thermometer in position, just before the fire was lit.*

*Photos: K. Dennett*

*Left: Some of the pots made by Beryl Hines and fired in the experimental kiln. Photo: B. Hines*

## Odds & Ends

### ERAS- A BIT POSH IN 1929!

Searching through Volume 26 (1929) of the ever useful Transactions of the East Riding Antiquarian Society, recently for some references, it was noted, from a list of members given, that there seemed to be a surfeit of clergy, minor aristocracy and military. From only 136 members listed, there were fourteen 'Reverends', five Colonels, two Lords, a Lady, a Captain, a Baronet, a Member of Parliament, an Archbishop and a Venerable Archdeacon. Oh yes, and someone who listed both their winter and their summer residence.

### TONY PACITTO DAY

The dayschool at Helmsley, organised as a tribute to the work of archaeologist Tony Pacitto, who died earlier this year was a sell-out success, with most of the big names of East Yorkshire archaeology contributing. Tony Pacitto had an innovative approach to archaeology, took many aerial photographs over the years and became very interested in developing geophysical survey techniques and metal detecting. He will be remembered with great affection by many of our older members. Some of Tony's smaller equipment, such as tapes and ranging rods etc have been donated to ERAS by his widow.

### BUTCHERY TECHNIQUES

Krish Seetah's butchery techniques talk at last month's Field Study meeting was excellent (although not quite as advertised). He had intended to use a carcass to demonstrate but unfortunately the technician at his Cambridge University department had not had time to prepare it. Krish, having only very recently returned from the US, had to make do with his own collection of diagnostic bones, including a deer skeleton. He showed how, for example, disease and traction in the lifetime of the animal and post mortem butchery, weathering, burning, chemical action or gnawing by other animals could be recognised on the bones. Left and right handed butchery cuts could be recognised on hung, carcasses and many other features were pointed out. There was the opportunity to handle and closely examine a wide range of animal bones and Krish, who previously worked as a butcher, showed examples of the butchery knives he had collected from different parts of the world.



Angela Gowland looking at some of the bones from Krish Seetah's collection.  
Photo: Val Fairhurst

### LIFE IN ROMAN BRITAIN

#### NEW EVENING CLASS AT GOOLE

ERAS secretary Rose Nicholson, who works in the museum at Scunthorpe, will be teaching a new evening class in Goole, from early next year. The ten week course entitled *Life in Roman Britain* will focus on the lives of specific people. Classes will be at The Courtyard, Boothferry Road, Goole, from 7pm-9pm, starting on January 10th.

The course will only run if enough people express an interest, so if you think you might like this class, please contact Rose on 07770 470443 for further details or

The Centre for Lifelong Learning  
University of Hull  
Cottingham Road,  
Hull

### QUICK QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Claudius, 2. Agricola, 3. Mildenhall treasure, 4. Anglesey
5. Petuaria, 6. AD60, 7. 73 miles, 8. Portchester Fort

## *Dates for your Diary*

- Wed 17 Nov** ERAS Lecture, Anthony Crawshaw: Archaeology and Aerial Photography
- Sat 20 Nov** Prehistoric Metals as Treasure.  
YAS dayschool, speakers on the Treasure Act and the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the Sedgeford hoard, Iron Age votive deposits at Fiskerton, the helmet and hoards from E. Lincs, the Snettisham treasure, an Iron Age weapons cache from E. Yorks, metalwork at Ferrybridge Henge, Sheffield University, 10am - 5pm. £15-YAS members, £18 non members, £10 students ( SU ID card). Bookings by Nov 13, to YAS Hon. Sec., Claremont, 23 Clarendon Rd, Leeds. Cheques payable to Yorkshire Archaeological Society. Enclose SAE
- Sat 20 Nov** Archaeology in West Yorkshire  
Day school at Leeds Metropolitan University, Beckett Park Campus. £10 or £16 incl. buffet lunch. Booking forms- Linda Birch, 0113 289 8280 or W. Yorks Joint Services, PO Box 5 Leeds LS27 0QP
- Wed 1 Dec** ERAS Field Studies Meeting. (Labelling pottery from Arram).NB in normal Percy St. venue
- Mon 12 Dec** Launch of the Valley of the First Ironmasters Virtual Reality Project. University of Hull
- Wed 15 Dec** ERAS Lecture, Ed Dennison: Recent Work at Sheriff Hutton Castle
- Wed 5 Jan** ERAS Field Studies Meeting
- Wed 19 Jan** ERAS Lecture, Andrew Foxon: The Archaeology of the Isle of Man
- Wed 2 Feb** ERAS Field Studies Meeting
- Sat 12 Feb** CBA Yorkshire, Annual Symposium, Tempest Anderson Hall, Yorkshire Museum, Museum Gardens, York. Details later.
- Wed 16 Feb** ERAS Lecture, J.D.Richards: Ingleby Viking Cemetery
- Wed 2 Mar** ERAS Field Studies Meeting
- Wed 16 Mar** ERAS Lecture, Edwin & Joyce Gifford: The Building and Trials of a Bronze Age Ferriby Ship
- Wed 6 April** ERAS Field Studies Meeting
- Sat 16 April** A Celebration of the work of Canon Greenwell, YAS Weekend at Durham, details later
- Wed 20 April** ERAS AGM 7pm, followed by lecture, Angela Boyle: The Ferrybridge Chariot Burial
- Sat 30 April** Iron Age 'Chariots'; New Sites- New Insights.  
YAS dayschool at Bradford University. Details later.

ERAS lectures are held in Room S1, Wilberforce Building, Hull University, at 7.30pm. Members free, visitors £1. Field study meetings are at 7.30pm upstairs at the Friends Meeting House, Percy St, off Albion St, Hull. No commitment is necessary, just come and help to plan and carry out projects etc.

I would like to join ERAS from Nov 1st 2004 (This covers you until Dec 2005)

Name(s).....Address.....

I enclose a cheque payable to ERAS for £..... (£5 \*fulltime student, £15 ordinary member, £20 family)

Send to the treasurer, Lesley Jackson, 24 St Stephens Close Willerby , E. Yorks. HU10 6DG

\* Students please give institution, course & year .....