

ERAS News

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

No. 57 APRIL 2004



Part of the Iron Age fortifications at Stanwick

Photograph: Angela Gowland

*Beverley Westwood Survey ♦ Arram Excavation ♦ Vindolanda Trip ♦
Local News ♦ Volunteer Opportunities ♦ Diary Dates*

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ERAS Local News

DONATION FROM RAY KETCH

ERAS would like to thank Ray very much for his donation of a large run of Current Archaeology magazines. They will be housed in the BJ Library at Hull University and very conveniently fill in most of the gaps in the Library's run of this periodical. Those which are duplicates of the University collection will probably go to the loan system operated by Enid Waudby at ERAS meetings. Ray and Marjorie don't get out and around as they used to do, but are still very interested to hear about ERAS activities.

FOULNESS VALLEY WEBSITE

The website is taking shape and the team have twice been to Field Studies meetings to show work in progress. These glimpses promise it is going to be a super product and staff have been out gathering and inputting new data hot from the trowel!

APRIL 21st- YOUR AGM at 7.00pm

Please try and come to the AGM which starts half an hour before the next lecture. There's no danger of being roped in to help with anything if you aren't willing but it is disheartening for the committee if people don't get there in time. Details are included with this newsletter and we are very happy to receive any nominations for the committee, either beforehand or at the meeting itself.

After the lecture, everyone is welcome to sample the free wine and nibbles and to browse the bookstall and it is a good opportunity for newer members to get to know a few people in the society.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF YORKSHIRE

The Archaeology of Yorkshire: an assessment at the beginning of the 21st century. This excellent volume, edited by Manby, Moorhouse and Ottaway, has had a reprint run and is available post-free from Kate at meetings (01482 445232) or from YAS, Claremont, 23 Clarendon Rd, Leeds (£20 plus £6.00 postage).

ANGLO-SAXON CRAFTS

This recent 192 page book, researched and written by Kevin Leahy and published by Tempus is on sale at ERAS meetings, price £16 (RRP£17.99). It covers timber, bone and antler, textiles, leather, pottery, glass, iron, non-ferrous and precious metalworking and discusses the role of the craftsman in Anglo-

Saxon society. There are 28 colour photographs and plenty of line illustrations.

MONTY PIDGEON

Those who remember Monty Pidgeon will be sad to hear of his death in February this year. Older members will remember him with affection as a great archaeology enthusiast and others may remember him more recently, shakily but gamely, cutting the cake at ERAS's 40th birthday party. Monty was a most reliable volunteer on the 1960s Walkington excavation, doing painstakingly accurate work to a standard which was a credit to himself and ERAS. He is remembered most of all perhaps for his unfailing courtesy and helpfulness. Several members attended his funeral at Holy Trinity Church, Hull, where Monty had many friends, having been an active member of the congregation for many years.

EXCURSION TO VINDOLANDA

If you are interested in a visit by coach to Stanwick Iron Age site, Hadrian's Wall and Vindolanda Roman fort and museum, on May 22nd, get your cheque and booking form (see page 6) in the post.

EASINGTON BARROW EXCAVATION

ERAS has entered the 1996/7 Easington barrow and Neolithic settlement excavation for the 2004 British Archaeology Awards. This award is for a project carried out by an amateur group, although it may be headed by a professional. About fifty members took part in this rescue excavation run by Rod Mackey and although it seems a long time ago now, work is ongoing on the material archive. Results from the second batch of charcoal samples submitted for radio-carbon dating have only recently been received from English Heritage and specialist reports are being carried out by Terry Manby, Peter Makey and Pat Wagner. A short, interim report appeared in Volume 10 of *East Riding Archaeologist* and a full report will be published when the pottery, flint and environmental specialists submit their results. So watch this space to see if we get anywhere in the awards this year.

NEWSLETTER

Many apologies for the lack of lecture summaries, will do better next time!

Kate Dennett

Field Studies Work

Roman Villa Site, Bishop Burton

We mentioned in the last newsletter that documentary research was being carried out in an attempt to find the site of a possible Roman villa near Bishop Burton, with a view to ERAS carrying out a resistance meter survey. The research has not been very fruitful, and it appears that all references do refer back to a single source. However, aerial photographs in the vicinity have shown up two separate groups of buildings in a field known to produce Roman material and this would certainly seem to be a possibility for a survey.

Medieval Coin from Walkington

The coin found by Richard Coates during the Walkington Henge resistance survey and illustrated in the last newsletter was promptly identified, from the photograph by Craig Barclay of the Hull and East Riding Museum as a London mint farthing of Edward I, in the class IV-VII range. When we get around to showing him the coin itself, he will probably be able to refine the classification.

Possible Geological Features

The very odd resistivity survey results from both Walkington and Newbald have still not been interpreted satisfactorily. Whilst an archaeological interpretation has not been entirely ruled out, and further investigation probably needs to be carried out, geological features do appear to be the most likely. We are still thinking about this one.

Beverley Westwood- Ongoing Resistance Survey

The work on Beverley Westwood, being carried out by ERAS volunteers as part of English Heritage's survey of urban commons is going well. About 25 members have done at least one day with the meter and a few stalwarts have done many days. At the end of each day, Rod Mackey has emailed the results to those who helped. We have almost finished the area close to Black Mill and the golf course, having taken over 43,000 readings! Work is slower on the Westwood than on an arable field, because the meter prongs need to be pushed through the thick turf root system.

Work was restricted to weekdays on the golf course area but on phase 2, opposite the race course, we will be working weekends. It gets rather tedious for the supervisors if they have to be there every day, to start proceedings off, so it is useful if volunteers can do two consecutive days, so they know where to start on the second day. On the Westwood, we cannot put in many labels for the grid layout and certainly cannot leave anything upstanding in case people or animals trip or injure themselves, thus locating where you are on the grid is not easy.

If you have already sent in the form from the last newsletter, indicating when you are able to help with the survey, then we will telephone you when we are ready to start the second phase. If you are a new member who did not fill in the slip, but would like to help, please ring Kate on 01482 445232.

In phase 1, a larger area than anticipated has been surveyed, as we wished to follow various features showing in the results, to discover whether they respected, overlaid or were cut by other features. Possibly due to the nature of the clay subsoil, neither the Bronze Age barrows nor the Iron Age barrows show up very well on the ground.

The survey has revealed a series of unexpected linear features, approximately on the same alignment as the town gallop, the natural contours of the land and possibly the 17th century race course. They seem to suggest ploughing with a deeper furrow approximately every 5 metres and are separate from the area known to have been ploughed in the 2nd world war, (which shows up well on both aerial photographs and the resistance meter survey.) However, they might be associated with some sort of previously unrecorded drainage work and we are currently making enquiries. It has been suggested that ploughing may have taken place during the Napoleonic Wars, but further research is obviously necessary and further study of the results may reveal more.

It has been interesting to see results recorded over areas where it is possible to associate the readings with the surface conditions. The turf on the Westwood in general has a well developed root system and even at this season the grass is long and lush. However, the long sweeping fairway of the golf course, where the grass is constantly kept short, shows up distinctly on our results as a consistently mid-grey area. This presumably is because less of the rainwater is being retained and used by the short grass, allowing more to seep into the ground and resulting in lower resistance readings. Very low readings which might be expected in the case of an underlying ditch, filled with a humic, moisture retaining fill, would show up as very dark. The golf tees which presumably have been built up with a deeper loam and are also kept constantly mown, give low readings and thus show up quite dark.

English Heritage is to carry out a topographical survey, using GPS, over the same (and possibly wider) area, this month and our grid points have already been tied in, so that the two surveys can be linked.

Kate Dennett

Volunteer Opportunities

ARRAM EXCAVATION, JULY 2004

Our own excavation project run by Fiona and Ian Wilson on their land at Arram is due to start in mid-July, when the crop comes off, but all depends on the weather and they will not know for sure until about a week before the start. If you have already filled in the form, from the last newsletter, expressing your interest and giving your phone number/email address, **we will contact you in early July or as soon as we have a start date.** The excavation cannot cope with a great many people all at once and we will want to arrange some sort of rota at weekends, when it is likely to be busiest. It is most useful if people can come for several days in succession, or even a whole week, rather than for odd days, but that will be looked at nearer the time.

The Iron Age/Romano-British site was partially excavated last year (see previous newsletter) and Fiona is hoping to open up a much larger area this year. All volunteers will receive a copy of ERAS's beginner's guide to excavating. They will also have to sign to say that they are fit, have an up-to-date anti-tetanus jab and have read and will abide by the health and safety guidelines which will be drawn up. Although the ERAS/CBA insurance covers volunteers, it is only valid if the proper precautions have been taken.

A site hut has been acquired for daily storage of finds, site records etc and there will be a portaloos on site. Ian and Fiona are negotiating the hire of a mechanical excavator to strip off the topsoil and ERAS has some tools available, but you will have to provide your own trowel. Parking should not be too much of a problem, if the weather is dry, when cars will be able to pull onto the verge, but obviously car sharing is preferable if possible.

There are lots of other opportunities and below is just a sample from the 'Briefing' section of the last issue (No. 75) of the CBA magazine *British Archaeology*. Others are listed in Kircubright, Pembrokeshire, Hampshire, Shropshire and Essex.

Hampshire

The NE Hants Historical & Archaeological Society are holding several long weekend excavations on the Roman road from Winchester towards London. Dates are 30th April-3rd May, 28th- 31st May, and 27th -30th August. Both experienced and novice excavators and students are welcome. Cost - £10, for which you can join all weekends. The training manual (£6) must be read by all novices. During these weekends, a training course is available at £34. Minimum number of days is one and under 16s must be accompanied by an adult. For details contact the project director Dr Richard Whaley, on btl.pcil@ukonline.co.uk or at 2 Rotherwick Court, Alexandra Road, Farnborough, GU14 6DD (Please include sae)

Norfolk

Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (SHARP) Norfolk, is open to people of all ages and not restricted to university students. The project has fieldwork opportunities for volunteers during the period 4th July - 13th August. There are a range of courses, some 1-2 days and others lasting for 6 days. For details, go to www.sharp.org.uk or contact Chris Mackie on 01485 570452

Northumberland

The Bamburgh Research Project includes excavation of an Anglian cemetery, an early saxon port, the west ward of the castle and a range of geophysical surveys. No experience necessary and training given, but priority given to applicants who want to come for the full 10 weeks. Cost £110 per week including camp site and food. (Price reduced after the first 4 weeks) There are also spaces for non-accredited volunteers, with no minimum stay. For details, contact the project director, Paul Gething, 125 Crombie Ave, York, YO30 6DW Tel. 01904 330727 email paulgething@bamburghresearchproject.co.uk Web www.bamburghresearchproject.co.uk

Visit to Vindolanda Fort & Museum, Hadrian's Wall

A 33 seater coach has been booked for a day visit to Vindolanda Roman Fort and Museum on Saturday 22nd May, stopping en route to look at the Iron Age site of Stanwick. If you would like to book for this trip, please return the form below, together with a cheque payable to ERAS, no later than April 22nd. You can bring friends/family. If you don't want to cut your newsletter, just send in a copy of the form.

The coach will leave from outside Debenhams, Ferensway, Hull, at 7.30 am prompt. It would be advisable to bring a flask/drinks for mid morning, rather than stopping for coffee, although there will be a toilet stop. Stanwick (map ref. NZ:180115) is a massive Iron Age earthwork enclosure near Forcett, just north of the A66/Scotch Corner. Part of the rampart has been reconstructed and the Tofts, an area of probably undefended early settlement can still be distinguished in the landscape. Further details of the site will be sent to those booking for the visit.

Plans for the afternoon have yet to be finalised, but we hope to get to Vindolanda about 1.00pm and to drive a short way along the route of Hadrians Wall, either before or after the visit to the museum and fort. Much depends on traffic and weather. There is a cafe at Vindolanda for lunch, but if you want to make the best use of the time, bringing a packed lunch to eat on the coach would be the better option. You could spend about an hour in the museum and two hours looking around the fort, although many people spend all day there. The museum is excellent

and has wonderful photographic details and transcriptions of the famous wooden writing tablets found. There is a reconstruction of a Roman Temple and of a section of Hadrian's Wall, as well as all the usual bookshop/souvenir shop stuff.

About 20 minutes drive west of Vindolanda there is also the Roman Army Museum, which is showing the new *Eagle's Eye* film, an aerial view of the whole of Hadrians Wall. It takes about an hour and a quarter to go around the Roman Army Museum including the film and there is a discount if you visit both Vindolanda and the Roman Army Museum. However, I don't think time will allow for both sites, to be seen fully, so we might be able to arrange for the coach to take those who desperately want to see the Roman Army Museum, if they can drag themselves away in time, although I would guess that most people would rather stay at the Vindolanda for most of the time.

Group rate entry for Vindolanda is £4.05 per adult, or £3.42 for senior citizens or students (with a student card) and £2.61 for children. Group rate entry including both Vindolanda and the Roman Army Museum (at least 15 required for group rate) is £6.40 or £5.44 for students or senior citizens. I would have to book ahead for a group to visit either site and as it will be complex to arrange, please just indicate your preference on the form, but pay **only for the coach travel, at this stage**. I will probably collect the entry money on the day.

VISIT TO STANWICK, HADRIAN'S WALL AND VINDOLANDA

Name..... Tel.....

Address.....

I would like to book places at £14.20 coach fare each for the trip on Saturday 22nd May, 2004

My booking includes children, students (with student card) and senior citizens.

I enclose a cheque made payable to ERAS for £..... for the coach fare.

..... of my party would probably like to spend the afternoon at Vindolanda Roman Fort and Museum.

..... of my party would probably like to have a brief look at the above and then go to the Roman Army Museum.

Return form and cheque to K. Dennett, 455 Chanterlands Ave, Hull, HU5 4AY by April 22nd.

Dates for your Diary

- Mid April** ERAS Phase two of the resistivity survey on Beverley Westwood (see page 4)
- Apr 15-17th** Cresswellian Art in European Context, a major conference at Creswell, Derbyshire, to mark the discovery of Britain's first Palaeolithic art. Scaffolding will be erected in Church Hole cave for viewing of the art during the conference. For details email p.pettitt@sheffield.ac.uk
- Wed 21 April** ERAS AGM 7.00pm followed by lecture- Roman Signal Stations on the Yorkshire Coast: recent excavations and research, Patrick Ottoway, of York Archaeological Trust. Followed by free wine and nibbles and a bookstall.
- Fri 23 April** Managing Change in Yorkshire's Historic Landscape. Yorkshire Wolds Heritage Trust, Annual Sledmere Lecture by Dr David Frazer of English Heritage. 7.30pm Sledmere House. £17.50, including supper. Booking essential. Contact Margaret Cowell, 01377 256358
- Sat 8 May** Prehistoric Metals as Treasure. Day School at Sheffield. Details from Jennym.editing@virgin.net
- Sat 22 May** ERAS Visit to Stanwick Iron Age Site and Vindolanda Roman Fort/Hadrian's Wall.
- Sat 22 May** The Archaeology of Ancient Woods and Wooded Landscapes. South Yorkshire Biodiversity Group & S.Yorks ECONET. At the Centre in the Park, Norfolk Park, Sheffield. Contact Paul Howden-Leach Tel. 0117 9546072 or web www.shu.ac.uk/sybionet
- Sat 12 Jun** Suffolk's Coastal Archaeology from the Air. A day conference by English Heritage and Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, to mark the completion of the aerial survey of the coast. For details, contact Cain Hegarty, Tel 01793 414813 or email cain.hegarty@english-heritage.org.uk
- Mid July** ERAS- Excavation at Arram starts (see page 5)
- Wed 15 Sept** ERAS Lecture. The 'Reports' Meeting- The first lecture of the season- A round up of new work in the region.

All ERAS lectures are held in Room S1, Wilberforce Building, Hull University, Cottingham Road. at 7.30pm, members free, visitors £1.

Field study meetings are at 7.30pm at Friends Meeting House, Percy St, off Albion St, Hull. No commitment is necessary, just come and help to plan and carry out projects etc. Meetings generally go on throughout the summer, but if you are a new member, you could phone 445232 first, to make sure we aren't out on site.

Please renew my ERAS membership, from Jan 1st 2004 (If you joined between September and December 2003, your fee already includes 2004)

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