

# *ERAS News*

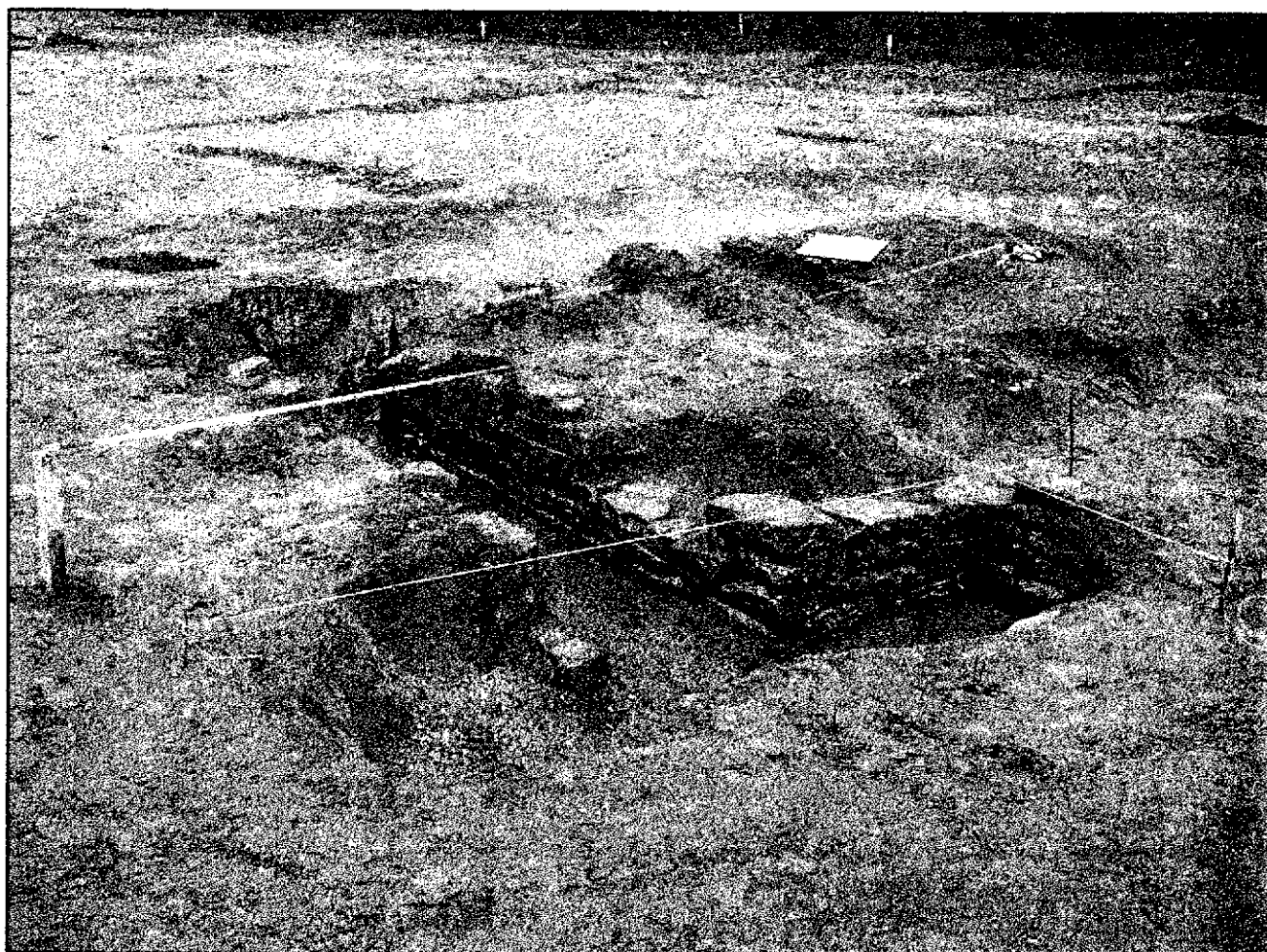
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EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

No. 52

NOVEMBER 2002

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*Stone crop dryer from Phase 2 of the North Cave site*

*Photograph: Humber Field Archaeology*

*Resistivity Survey · Sea Henge · North Cave · Hull Waterfront*  
*Field Study Notes · Ask the Expert · Quiz · Committee News · Odds & Ends · Diary Dates*

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# *ERAS Local News ....*

## **THANKS TO E.R.A.R.T.**

Many thanks to the East Riding Archaeological Research Trust which has purchased some books for ERAS. Several more are due to be bought in the next few months. They will be housed at the University of Hull's Brynmor Jones Library for the foreseeable future, where they can be read by members and possibly loaned if this can be arranged. The following titles have been purchased so far.

Bog Bodies, Sacred Sites and Wetland Archaeology. (Coles, Coles & Jorgenson)

Economy and Society in Prehistoric Europe. (Sherratt)

German Stoneware 1200-1900. (Gaimster)

Old Sleaford Revealed (Elsdon)

Pottery Produced and Traded in North-West Europe 1350-1650 (Hurst, Neal & Van Beuningen)

The Late Roman Transition in the North (Wilmott & Wilson)

The Palaeolithic of Britain and its Nearest Neighbours: Recent Trends (Colcutt)

## **LETTERS PAGE**

We would like to introduce a letters page in ERAS News and already have a couple of letters waiting. If you have anything to praise, comment on, complain or enquire about, please send your views to any of the three addresses on the back cover. We cannot guarantee to publish everything and if a letter is very long the editors retain the right to publish extracts only, so please try to be concise.

## **HELP!**

If anyone feels they can take on the enveloping, labelling and posting of just **one** single issue of the newsletter, please contact Kate Dennett on 01482 445232 or put your name on the list in the foyer at lecture meetings.

It involves picking up the box of 270 newsletters from the printers in Hull (Holy Trinity Church Square), asking the treasurer to post you a set of address labels, collecting the A4 envelopes from Kate, (or buying some and reclaiming the cost) putting the newsletters in the envelopes, getting one weighed and buying the appropriate number of 2nd class stamps, (reclaim the cost from treasurer) sticking the stamps on and posting the envelopes. They won't all go in one post box so you might have to give them in at a post office or go to your local depot.

We are trying to get a list of people (individuals or a couple of friends perhaps) who would be willing to do just one posting each. Newsletters are due to go out in February, May, August and November. There will be a list up in the foyer at the lecture meetings so please do your bit and fill in at least one date.

## **MAGAZINE LOANS**

Enid Waudby has taken over from Sue Gibson organising the loan of British Archaeology magazine. If you have any magazines, loaned from ERAS, still lurking on your bookshelves please return them so others can take advantage of the system. (Even though you have had them for years and feel they are now part of your library, we would like to have them back some time!)

## **UNIVERSITY LIBRARY TICKETS**

Your reader's ticket for the University of Hull, Brynmor Jones library obtained through ERAS is valid for one year only, but can easily be renewed at the administration desk. Please take your membership card with you, although the library should have an up to date list of members.

## **WETWANG CHARIOT BURIAL UPDATE**

If any one missed Rod Mackey's talk at Beverley Library last month and would like to see the latest images resulting from the British Museum's conservation work on the items from the burial, you can find them on

<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass>

then put **wetwang chariot burial** in the search box and double click any of the 6 images to get more.

## **JANUARY LECTURE**

The speaker for January's lecture has still to be finalised but we can guarantee it will be good, so don't be put off by the fact that there is no title yet. Please do come along. November's lecture (similarly, a surprise topic) by Colin Merroney of Sheffield University speaking on Medieval monasteries as business units was excellent and gave an unusual and interesting angle on monasteries

## **GREETINGS**

Happy Christmas to everyone and here's hoping for another successful ERAS year in 2003. (NB. There is a membership renewal form for you on page 14).

## *Resistivity Survey work: possible henges near Rudston*

A good opportunity arose this summer to test out ERAS's new resistivity meter against a standard meter, when Winchester PhD student Jeremy Webster asked ERAS for volunteers to help with a survey of possible henges, showing as crop marks West of Rudston. The logistics of surveying large areas are quite important, as once the initial grid is set out, there is not enough work for more than 2 or three people at a time. One day or half day per volunteer is probably enough and a continuous trickle of volunteers over several days is needed, as the work can be repetitive and tedious. A good number of volunteers came forward for this survey and Jeremy was able to get it done more quickly than he had anticipated. (During the first few days, plenty of work was available on cattle control duty at this site, the herd being extremely curious about our vehicles parked in the field and at times had to be kept from investigating the pegs, tapes and ropes laid out).

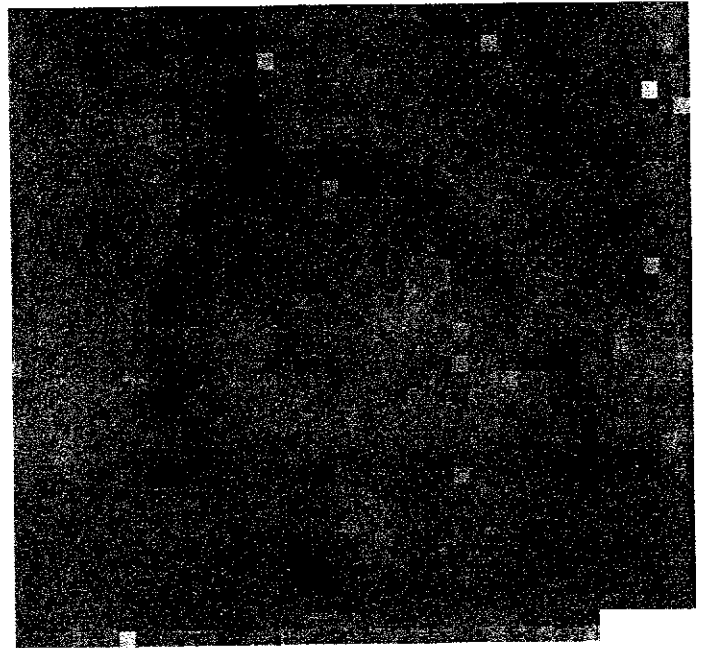
Using the same grid, left in position, once Jeremy had started his survey, we were then able to use the ERAS meter to survey two of the three crop marks and compare the results. All the ERAS survey work was done at one meter intervals and then downloaded onto Rod Mackey's PC. It would seem from the results that the D shaped feature in Area 1, surveyed by Jeremy at both one meter and half meter intervals is unlikely to be a henge and could simply be a stock pen of almost any pre-medieval date, with an entrance in the north west corner. The ditch is very narrow and there seems to be no sign of a bank. Ridge and furrow running ENE/WSW appears to overlie it..

Jeremy comments that although it is an unlikely contender for a henge, it parallels similar henges in Dorset which he is planning to survey next year. He notes that the feature is almost identical in plan, in terms of size, shape, position and entrance orientation to one at Chapel Down Farm, Six Penny Handley in Dorset.

The circular feature to the south in Area 2 appears to be a substantial, continuous ring ditch and is therefore more likely to be a round barrow than a henge. Although no central burial is obvious from either of the one meter surveys, it is possible that a half meter survey could show up more detail. However, a chalk

filled grave may not provide enough contrast to show up on a resistivity survey.

The second earthwork (shown below) slightly to the north in Area 2 and surveyed by Jeremy only, might, he suggests, represent a form of Neolithic sub-rectangular enclosure similar to that investigated at Kirkburn (I.M. Stead 1991) which I.A.Kinnes (1991) parallels with the most familiar format of the



*Northernmost feature in Area 2.*

*Copyright: J.Webster*

causewayed enclosure. However, he says, the existence of small causewayed enclosures north of the Trent Valley is essentially unproven.

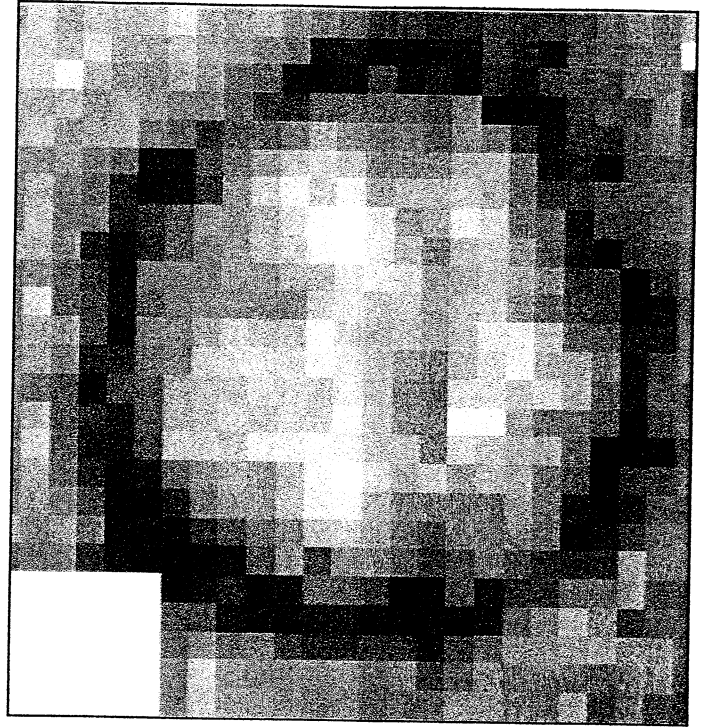
Jeremy is hoping to return to E.Yorkshire next year to do some more work, with the help of ERAS volunteers, on possible henges, known from aerial photographs. ERAS member Paul Brayford is looking into various possibilities for our own ongoing resistivity survey work and is liaising with the SMR and with Terry Manby and Rod Mackey as to the most useful areas for us to tackle.

*NB. On all the photographs, North is to the left side. The images on the right hand page are a different scale from the one above, however in all cases, each small square represents one square metre.*

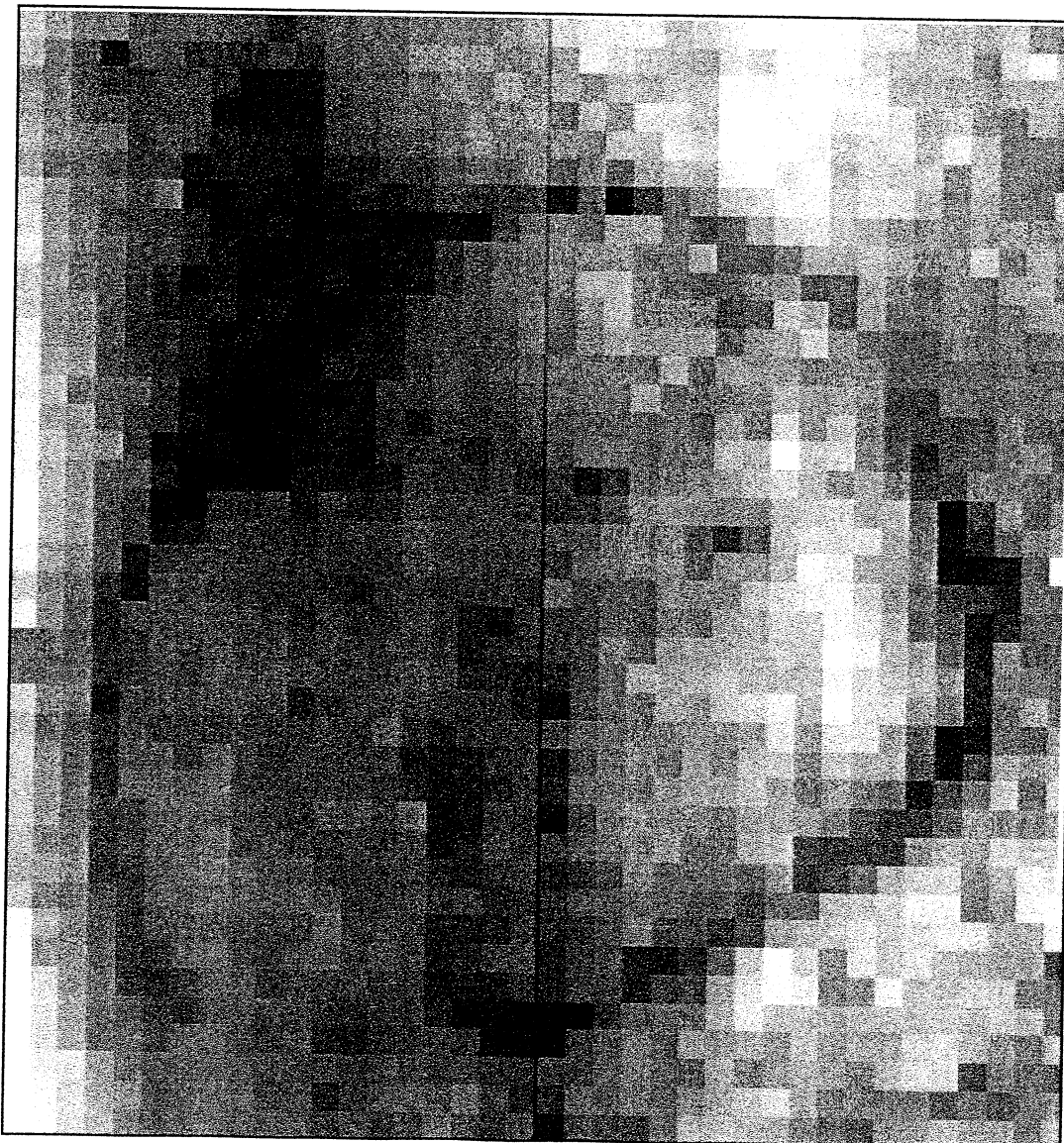


*Above: Crop marks west of Rudston. (Photo looking east) The large D shaped feature on the left is in 'Area 1' referred to in the text. The diagonal, right-angled linear feature is probably part of a Romano-British field system. 'Area 2' is close to the right hand hedge line (no longer in existence) towards the top of the picture. The ring ditch is barely visible on this image. The two short, broad marks lying parallel in the foreground are possibly the side ditches of a small long barrow.*

*Photo, Copyright: Ed Dennison (EDAS)*



*Above: Ring ditch, surveyed by ERAS in the south part of Area 2, immediately right of the hedgeline (now removed).*



*Left: Enclosure, overlaid by ridge and furrow. Surveyed by ERAS, and interpreted as a probable stock enclosure of indeterminate date.*



# *ERAS lecture summary: Seahenge*

*Maisie Taylor, October 2002*

Dr Maisie Taylor, a timber specialist of the Flag Fen Trust, gave a lecture to the society on the monument popularly known as Seahenge. The monument, an ellipse of 55 closely set oak posts surrounding an upturned tree trunk was sited on what is now an intertidal zone at Holme-next-the-Sea near Hunstanton in Norfolk. The fact that it was exposed for only 1 - 4 hours each day was only one of the factors which meant that excavation work was problematical. There was a certain amount of opposition to the excavation and much publicity, due to the interest of several different factions, both local and national.

The coastal area concerned is suffering badly from erosion and the peat beds which have been building up on top of the clay since Neolithic times and which covered and protected the monument in an anaerobic environment, are being rapidly lost to the sea. Study of the excavated timbers of 'Seahenge' shows that there was not only surface erosion, but also damage extending approx. a third of a metre beneath the surface from molluscs burrowing into the timber. These shellfish favour the oxygen rich environment of the intertidal zone. In view of the rapid deterioration suffered over the previous four years by an adjacent monument, which was not excavated, nor even sampled, Maisie Taylor commented that she has no doubt whatsoever that the excavation of 'Seahenge' was indeed the correct option. Considerable detail concerning the excavation was reported in the media and the lecturer therefore concentrated mainly on the results of post-excavation work. It should be noted that the monument is not a henge and was certainly not in the sea, the coast being considerably further away at the time of construction.

The timbers were positioned with the bark on the outside and the flat, cut, and presumably light coloured, surface facing inside. A combination of dating methods showed that all the timbers, with the exception of one which blocked the entrance, were felled between February and June, 2049BC. The timbers immediately opposite the entrance were less flat, more rounded and bulky than the rest of the timbers making up the circle. Immediately opposite the entrance was a dark timber, which appeared to have been damaged by lightning.

Once excavated, the timbers were taken to the Flag Fen centre where there are specialised facilities for storage and study. It has been possible by studying the distribution of posts which came from the same tree, to put forward a theory as to how the circle was planned out and constructed. It appears that a few posts marking out the circle were positioned first and then the gaps were filled

in afterwards. There was no wood debris in the hole made for the central tree trunk (which was one and a half metre into the ground) and this led to the conclusion that the trunk was inserted before work on the circle was started. A surprisingly small amount of wood debris was found in the immediate vicinity, no twigs or large pieces of wood, but only the flat chips typically produced by trunk splitting. Study of the position of the debris that was found indicated a possible dumping point for the cut posts within the circle and a small arc just outside the circle where final adjustments were perhaps made to the posts. The small amount of debris found, would seem to indicate that the main preparation work on the timbers took place further away from the site.

Study of the tool marks showed no evidence of the use of stone tools, all the marks being typical of the use of bronze tools. Statistical analysis of the tool marks showed that at least 51 different axes were used - an unexpectedly large number for so early a date. Further statistical analysis revealed a good match between the toolmarks and the blade sizes of previously known bronze axe finds. It is interesting to note that within two hundred years of the introduction of bronze tools, the felling technique was well established and has hardly changed since.

Some of the timbers were cut flat at the base, while others were v shaped and it was evident that some trees had provided more than one length of timber. The timbers were inserted approximately one metre down in the bedding trench, apparently randomly either upside down or right way up. However, working on the calculated height of the trees used, and measuring the taper of the posts it was thought it might be possible to estimate the original height of the monument. No evidence of a surrounding ditch was found, nor was there any evidence for a roof. As part of a study of the monument, a replica was built and it was found that the acoustics were most impressive.

The function of the monument is not known but its alignment was obviously important. After much work, it has been possible to calculate that the rays of the sun would have shone through the forked entrance timber and struck the dark timber, directly opposite the entrance, on mid summer's day in the year 2049BC. There was no sign of any repair work being carried out on the structure and it was not thought to have been in use for a prolonged period.

Ref: Current Archaeology No.165, p339. No.167 p 417-424.  
and the Seahenge Website

Kate Dennett

# *ERAS lecture summary: North Cave*

*Trevor Brigham, September 2002*

The excavation at N. Cave, in February-June 2002, was the 3rd phase of a series of archaeological investigations on the Newport Rd Quarry site for Humberside Aggregates and Excavations Ltd. All appear appear to be late Iron Age to late Roman, most of the activity apparently being 2nd- to 3rd-century in date.

Phase 3 consisted of an extensive open area excavation with evaluation trenches extending to the west. The excavated area was located using the results of aerial photography and geophysical survey, both of which suggested the presence of a small nucleated settlement, perhaps several farmsteads, linked to a further nucleus to the north-west (which will hopefully be excavated in 2003 as Phase 4) by a ditched WNW/ESE driveway. The driveway continued eastward into the edge of the Phase 2 field, where the east end of the settlement was located in late 2001.

The archaeology consisted of the remains of several large ditched enclosures, each subdivided several times, perhaps representing expansion or contraction. The nucleus seems to be split by a clear narrow east-west strip, perhaps representing a boundary track between two separate main concentrations; the east end of this was seen in Phase 3.

The enclosures contained the eavesdrip ditches and postholes of several roundhouses and smaller circular or ovoid structures, which may be rick bases, as well as concentrations of postholes and linear gullies. The latter may be eavesdrips surrounding rectangular buildings of more typically Romano-British form, although the roundhouses could also be early Romano-British, rather than Iron Age. It is quite possible, however, given the attractive location next to

the former shore of the Humber estuary, that the settlement has a late Iron Age origin. Other features included stone concentrations, probably the remains of damaged corndrying kilns, similar to a better-preserved example from Phase 2 (below left)

The very large pottery assemblage, insofar as it has been examined, is overwhelmingly Roman, late 1st-4th century, with the main concentration being 2nd-3rd century. Several isolated crouched inhumation burials and cremations have been found on the site so far, mostly near the fringes of, but still within, the occupied area. Of these, only one, from Phase 3, is currently datable, from the presence of several complete pots of late 2nd-early 3rd century date, (below left).

An evaluation in the west of the quarry in preparation for Phase 4 did not find any further human remains, although as the nature of the settlement is the same, more are likely to appear. Trenches were laid across the western end of the driveway and several field boundaries, and a large sub-circular feature was examined; this was the focus of a concentration of pottery, suggesting a house site, with a second subsidiary road along its eastern edge, forming a T-junction with the main driveway.

Humber Field Archaeology gratefully acknowledges the assistance of many ERAS members during the course of the Phase 3 excavation. Several have gone on to volunteer on further sites throughout the summer, and we hope that this relationship will continue in future years.



*Left: burial from phase 3, with several complete pots of the late 2nd and early 3rd century.  
(Copyright: Humber Field Archaeology)*

# *ERAS lecture summary: Hull Marina (Island Wharf)*

*Trevor Brigham, September 2002*

A three-week excavation by Humber Field Archaeology was undertaken in 2002, in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the Island Wharf area and was followed by a further four weeks excavation. It was intended to locate the line of the north shore of the estuary, prior to 18th- and 19th-century reclamation, and part of the moat of a Civil War artillery fort, built by the Parliamentary defenders of Hull in 1643.

In the first phase, there were two excavation trenches. The southernmost, nearest the Humber, overlay the 17th- or 18th-century waterfront, which consisted of a clay bank, protected by an angled stone frontage resting on courses of brickwork. Behind it were traces of a second set of angled stones, part of a demolished earlier riverwall. Much longer stretches of both are still to be excavated. It is unclear at the moment whether one of these structures formed part of the river bank which was breached by the Parliamentarians in 1643 to hamper the besieging Royalist army, but the stonework was probably in place by the 1680s, when it seems to appear on a hand-coloured panorama by Francis Place (Ferens Art Gallery).

The second trench was sited near the possible location of a Civil War moated artillery battery, the Mount Fort, erected by Parliamentary forces in 1643 as part of a defensive ring of outworks around the walled City. Instead, a series of large clay-filled features, were found, and although a quantity of 17th- and 18th-century pottery and tobacco pipes was recovered, suggesting that there may be Civil War-period activity, the moat of the artillery fort was not identified.

## **The History of the Site**

A house and rectangular garden shown on the Phillips map of Hull (1715) was thought to have been built on this site after the Civil War, possibly as a replacement for the Grainswicke, a house built just before the War, and demolished to make way for the fort. The Mount Fort housed three guns, and played an important part in preventing Hull from falling to besieging Royalist forces. The site of the house and fort are thought to lie mainly under the boatyard,

although the south side should extend into the area of the site.

A road leading to Hessle Gate, the south-western entry to the medieval and later City, would also have passed a little further north. During the Civil War, the Gate was protected by a half moon outwork. An attack on the half moon in 1643 was prevented by a counterattack by 100 musketeers from the Mount.

The direct route between the site and the City was interrupted by the construction of Humber Dock (now the Marina) in 1809. The Docks, including Humber Dock, Prince's Dock (1829) and Queen's Dock (1778) broadly followed the line of the City's medieval defences.



*A view of the probable 17th -18thc river wall.  
(Copyright Humber Field Archaeology)*

The reclamation of the area south of the medieval waterfront to allow the construction of the docks took place from the early 19th century. Thick clay dumps from the digging of the new docks was used in the reclamation process, sealing the old waterfronts. Albert Dock to the west of the site opened in 1869. Railway goods yards were constructed along the northern side of the docks, occupying most of the site until the 1960s-70s. Subsequently, the substantial goods sheds to either side of Wellington Street were cleared, with the tracks removed to the north of the street relatively recently to make way for the housing estate behind the site. Concrete slabs and foundations of the sheds remain on site today as the only traces of its former use.

*Trevor Brigham*



# *ERAS lecture summary: 54-57 High St. Hull*

*Trevor Brigham, September 2002*

## **Hull's Medieval Waterfront**

A four-week excavation, the first of two phases, was excavated during the summer in advance of a proposed new office building. The excavations were intended to locate the line of successive medieval waterfronts forming former banks of the River Hull, together with traces of related buildings and artefacts.

The present course of the River Hull dates back to the 12th or 13th centuries. Prior to that, there were at least two channels (the Auld Hull and Sayer Creek), separated by a wet, low-lying area. The canalisation of the Hull along Sayer Creek allowed the foundation of Wyke, predecessor of Hull, by the monks of Meaux Abbey. Wyke was purchased by Edward I in 1293, who founded Kingston upon Hull with a view to using the site as a supply base during his Scottish campaigns.

High Street (or Hull Street) broadly marked the line of the west bank of the new canal, with merchants' houses and warehouses on the west side of the road. By the later 13th and early 14th century, the area to the east of High Street was being reclaimed as merchants sought to extend their properties at the expense of the river. Previous excavations in the area between High Street and the River Hull, particularly at Chapel Lane Staith in 1978 and 2000 and Blaydes Staith in 1989, has uncovered the structural evidence for activity in the medieval and later periods.

The excavated remains consisted of sections of successive waterfronts, with the original bank of the River Hull located near the High Street frontage at Chapel Lane Staith in 1978. The waterfront structures found consisted of well-constructed timber revetments, each built using substantial posts supporting plank cladding, and retained by a system of horizontal braces. The earliest of two waterfronts excavated at Chapel Lane Staith in 2000 contained a section from a late 14th-century boat, with the planks still articulated. They were backfilled with dumps of dredged river clays and household waste, which were compacted to form wharves for the construction of warehouses and other structures.

## **The Site**

The site was formerly occupied by a series of warehouses of 18th- and 19th-century date, demolished relatively recently. These would have replaced earlier structures of probable 17th-century origin, a few of which remain in High Street. The varied brickwork visible in the walls around the site reflect the different periods in its development. Below were still earlier medieval buildings, but no traces of these have survived in the area that has been looked at so far, largely because of the number of cellars and foundations which have been constructed in the last 200 years. No waterfronts have yet been discovered, although we expect to find these in the second phase, early next year.

Below the brick cellar walls, foundations and floors of the successive post-medieval buildings, the main features of the site to date include what appears to be a dock or inlet, cut into the natural river silt. This dock, probably of 14th-century date, may have served the property on the opposite side of the road, which was partly excavated in 1999.

In cut at the base of the dock are two parallel timber drains. These have plank sides and lids, and may also have plank bases. They could have been used to drain surface water or have been connected to a craft/industrial premises, and were probably inserted after the dock had been blocked and filled in, restricting drainage. Their depth and shallow angle of incline suggests that they continue under High Street.

## **Site Finds**

Finds from the site have included a range of medieval and later pottery, leather footwear (including a boot and a long pointed shoe), part of a wooden spoon and bowl, a china spoon, possibly of early porcelain, and late 18th- or early 19th-century moulded plaster architectural decorations. One of the later brick warehouse floors was also constructed using an intricate interlocking pattern of specially-moulded angled bricks.

*Trevor Brigham*

## *Things your committee discusses...*

Several members have requested to know what the committee discusses at their meetings. In the previous newsletter, we told you about the committee's recommendations to the All Party Parliamentary Group for Archaeology. The committee has met three times since that article was written and some of the items discussed are listed below.

**Museum staffing levels-** It has been noted that staffing levels at Hull and East Riding Museum (HERM) seem to be declining rapidly and the committee wrote to Hull City Council expressing concern. ERAS, along with other interested organisations which had commented, eventually received a most unsatisfactory reply and is still in correspondence with the Council over this matter. ERAS did of course write in support of HERM when the Council was applying for 'designated' status some time ago. 'Designated' status is given in recognition, amongst other things, of outstanding collections. It also means that a certain level of staffing must be maintained. The granting of 'designated' status was presumably useful when the Hull City Council was applying for funding for the 'Museums Quarter.'

**Two Lottery Applications-** ERAS has put in an application for £1500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a laptop computer for use in conjunction with the resistivity meter. We are waiting a response.

ERAS as the lead applicant of a consortium with Hull and Cambridge Universities has put in a bid for £93,679.00 from the Heritage Lottery Fund Revenue Grants Programme, for a visual reality, interactive 'Virtual Landscape' of the Foulness Valley, to be produced at Hull University. A major application, such as this takes up a lot of committee time as it is important that everyone understands their responsibilities. We are awaiting a response.

**Public Participation in Archaeology-** CBA are carrying out a survey on the above topic and ERAS along with other societies has been asked for any views; responses are to be under 4 headings-

1) Examples of good practice. 2) Barriers to public participation. 3) Ideas for overcoming those barriers. 4) Any other relevant comments. The committee is in the process of formulating a response and any

views are welcome.

**Book fair-** The treasurer paid out £12 fee for a stall at the annual Beverley Local History Bookfair. (Worthwhile, as we took over £200 in book sales and new member ship fees)

**Membership Forms-** The secretary had updated the forms and got 1000 copies done.

**Social Event-** We usually sell around 50 tickets for these events (even though membership is over 250). It seems the venue of the Friary at Beverley is an attractive one to members and the committee decided to stick with the same place. A Saturday in February seemed to be suitable and booking was to go ahead. Last year, the Tap & Splile ran a bar for us, but didn't make enough profit to make it worthwhile for them. It was decided to return to the idea of 'bring your own drinks'. Details will go out after Christmas, in a separate mailing.

**Shire Books-** The secretary asked the treasurer for an update on the sales figures for Shire books and asked if it was worthwhile ordering any more. The treasurer said the society was definitely making a profit on the books and it was a popular service to members, so was worthwhile continuing.

**Sue Gibson-** The committee agreed to send a letter to Sue Gibson, thanking her for all her help over the years and wishing her well in her work in Namibia.

**Representatives-** Members represent ERAS on various other committees. Rod Mackey and Gill Ainsworth attend ERCC Conservation Area Advisory Committee meetings, Helen Fenwick represents us at CBA meetings in York and Kate Dennett represents us at YAS meetings in Leeds. She also receives notices from the Council for Voluntary Services in Hull and occasionally attends meetings.

If any member is interested in representing ERAS at one of the East Riding Conservation Area Advisory Committee meetings, which are always held during the working daytime, please contact Rod Mackey (866816) who will give you details.

Kate Dennett

# *Field Studies Group Notes ....*

## **October and November meetings**

**Enid Waudby** reported on progress with the investigation of the incised rock found on the beach at Gorleston, near Great Yarmouth. She had been in touch with rock art specialist Stan Beckinsall and with Bryan Ayers at Norwich. The Borough Council is apparently the legal owner of the stone and is currently investigating where the rocks (imported as part of a coastal protection scheme) came from. It seems they might have been in position for 10 years. Apparently an offer has been made to remove the stone to a place of safety before it gets damaged or covered over by sand in the winter gales. We hope to have photographs and an article in the February newsletter

**Rod Mackey** talked about a watching brief he had carried out recently, prior to the extension of Newbridge Quarry outside Pickering, on behalf of Guildhouse Consultancy, Beverley. After stripping of the area, various features were recorded, including part of a rectilinear field system of possible IA/RB date. Also revealed was the construction trench of a large roundhouse, approx. 13 metres in diameter, with a posted doorway to the SE, 2 groups of post holes and a large square barrow with no central grave. Follow-up work on excavation and recording was to be carried out by MAP. (The excavation has now been completed, the report is being written, and the quarry has been extended over the area.)

A new member, Richard, brought along a collection of pottery picked up on his land near Thearne and some flint tools from Norfolk. Rod Mackey was able to identify and comment on the pottery, which

included Roman greyware as well as medieval and post-medieval sherds.

Richard brought along aerial photographs of the area and was interested in following up information already gained about Medieval ridge and furrow near Thearne and evidence of various other earthworks in the vicinity. There was also some discussion on local place names and their origin and meaning.

**Peter Bartle** reported that further excavation work was being carried out on Iron Age settlements at the Whitby Abbey site.

It was noted that Mel Giles (a long-standing ERAS member) had been in the news, carrying out work on some of the wolds earthworks, and giving evidence for the likelihood of ranching during the Iron Age period.

## **Susan Gibson- VSO work in Namibia**

Many members will be interested to know that former committee member and field study group supporter Sue Gibson, who for several years organised the magazine loans at ERAS meetings, has gone to Namibia for a two year stint with Voluntary Service Overseas.

If anyone (particularly primary school teachers looking a project) is interested in maintaining contact and finding out more about the work Sue is involved in, please contact the editor and you can have Sue's email/postal address in Gobabis, Namibia. She will be working in administration, in connection with various health, IT and small business projects.

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## **QUIZ - MIND YOUR 'P's**

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All the answers to this month's quiz start with the letter P. If the answer contains more than one word, the first will begin with P.

1. The oldest period in prehistory.
2. A type of megalithic tomb.
3. An Indo European people from Turkestan.
4. The pottery of the Windmill Hill culture.
5. The study of small slices of rock to identify its origin.

6. A seafaring people who lived in the area of modern Lebanon and Syria.
7. A fort of the Saxon Shore, now containing a Norman castle.
8. The origin of the bluestones of Stonehenge.
9. The name of the wars between Rome and Carthage.
10. A soldier turned archaeologist who excavated at Cranbourne Chase.

*Quiz: Peter Walker*

## *Ask The Expert ...*

### **Question: Can you please explain how a resistivity meter works?**

This method of geophysical surveying works by measuring the resistance of features beneath the soil to an electrical current passed through the ground. What is mainly being revealed in the readings obtained is the varying moisture content of the ground. The meter will not tell you whether these features are man-made or geological, thus interpretation is the key word.

The basic kit consists of two metal probes fixed to the base of a carrying frame at a set distance apart and wired to a logging meter, usually fixed to the top of the frame. A second set of probes connected by a long lead provides the necessary general background readings for comparison.

An electrical current, usually supplied by batteries, is passed from one of the probes on the frame and arcs through the ground to the other probe. The amount of resistance encountered is measured and compared to the general background reading obtained from the two remote probes which have been inserted in similar soil (usually about 15m away). Results are calculated automatically and show as a numerical read-out on a small screen on the meter.

To begin a survey, a series of 20 metre square grids is usually measured out and then the first one is laid out with parallel lines of pre-marked ropes. It is vital to be able to locate the position of the first grid accurately on a large scale OS map. The grids must be laid out with right-angled corners otherwise the cumulative error as more grids are added will make cause great inaccuracy.

Readings are taken by walking the grid (zig-zagging up and back down between the parallel ropes) inserting the probes a short distance into the ground and recording the result every meter along (or half meter if more accuracy is required) An audible signal is given as soon as the meter has logged the reading. On ERAS's meter, the screen shows the line number and the position number of the next reading to be taken, so it is easy to check ones position. Using 1 metre intervals a 20 meter grid gives 400 readings.

It is important when the remote probes are re-positioned, as might be necessary when starting a new grid, that they are placed in such a way that the same reading is obtained as that from the last point on the previous grid. (although the adjustment can be made on PC afterwards if necessary, providing the new reading has been recorded).

At the end of a day's surveying the logged data can be downloaded onto a PC and using the appropriate software can be viewed and printed out as a digital image. If a laptop computer is available, the image can be viewed on site, which is useful for planning the next stage of the project or deciding whether the current survey area needs to be amended.

Interpretation of the results needs a certain understanding of stratigraphy. A humic-rich ditch fill would normally give a low resistance as it would retain moisture. However, if stony material from deep down, (ie. from the original digging of the ditch) was piled onto a bank and later tumbled back in, this could result in a high resistance reading. In general buried walls, roads or other stony features will be dryer and thus give a higher resistance reading.

Ridge and furrow will show up well and can sometimes mask more interesting features, so you need to be aware of it, particularly when surveying a small area where the interpretation might be less obvious. Living trees and hedgerows take a lot of moisture from the ground and adjacent readings will be high. Dummy readings can be inserted when it is necessary to avoid obstructions within the grid area.

Resistivity surveys give best results over large areas and are not particularly useful on heavy clay land. Spring or Autumn when conditions are neither excessively wet or nor excessively dry are the best times for surveying.

We are always delighted to have questions, so please keep them rolling in. This answer was not done by an expert, but we hope it explains the basics.

Kate Dennett

# Scarborough Museums Public Consultation

Scarborough Borough Council has appointed an independent consultancy, EGERIA, to carry out a major study to identify options for the future of their museums and art galleries. Key points are

- 1) How and where the service should be developed for residents and visitors.
- 2) Caring for and interpreting the collections and historic buildings currently occupied.
- 3) Potential role in Scarborough's urban renaissance, its tourist economy, national curriculum and lifelong learning.
- 4) How relationships with independent museums can be developed.

EGERIA would like to hear from anyone interested in responding to the following questions. You can copy this page and send it to EGERIA or write a separate letter if you wish.

*What do you feel are the museums' and gallery's greatest strengths?*

*Where do you feel is the greatest room for improvement?*

*Are there any current activities/services/buildings that you feel should not be changed under any future developments?*

*What services/programmes would you like to see the museums and art gallery provide in the future?*

*Any other comments?*

*Would you describe yourself as*

*A regular visitor to the Rotunda museum* Yes/No

*Regular visitor to the art gallery* Yes/No

*Regular visitor to Wood End Natural History Museum* Yes/No

*Member of an organisation that supports/partners the work of Scarborough's museums and art gallery* Yes/No

*Member of other community organisation* Yes/No

*Name and contact details (not essential)*

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Please return your comments to Rosemary Ewles  
105 Greenway Avenue, London E173QL  
or email them to  
rosemary.ewles@egeria.org.uk

## **Public Consultation Meetings**

**Sat 30 Nov. 11.00am Boden Room, Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough.**

**Mon. 2 Dec. 7.30pm Whitby Museum, Pannett Park, Whitby.**

You could attend the November meeting in the morning and then go to the Joint ERAS/YAS talk on Mills and Milling at Scarborough Library at 2.0pm



# Odds and Ends

## Brothel Madam!

Archaeologists often talk about high status sites, but it seems archaeologists themselves are regarded, in some quarters, as high status. Val Fairhurst spotted an interesting item in the Daily Telegraph (29.10.02) which reported a case heard at Exeter Crown Court in which a woman admitted running a brothel. It was apparently not a budget establishment, but an ivy-covered former rectory with 4 poster beds. Passing sentence, the judge said that the defendant was of previous good character and seemed to pride herself on the quality of the clientele, *who included an archaeologist*.

(Incidentally, sentence was suspended, because the woman was suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome).

## Monk's Potty?

Peter Walker notes that Rievaulx Abbey is back in the news again. A stoneware flagon, possibly German 16th century, has been found in what was probably a latrine, by American tourists at the Abbey. In perfect condition, the glazed brown pot has generated considerable interest. It seems the pot, containing human waste and sediment might have been used at night and accidentally lost by a monk, fumbling in the candlelight. Samples from the cess pit have shown that the monks probably ate apples, blackberries and strawberries and it is possible that the waterlogged earth will have preserved other organic materials, such as leather, textiles or wood.

## A New History of Swanland

Derek Brooks' local history group has produced the first book of a 4 part series 'A New History of Swanland'. It covers the 18th and 19th century and is available from Cygnet Bookshop, Swanland for

£7.50 (p&p extra). Ring Derek on 01482 634284 for further details.

## Orkney 2003

The ERAS trip to Orkney, July 8th-15th, is fully booked up and we have a waiting list of 4, but if you are still interested please contact Kate Dennett and you can be added to the waiting list. We have 21 people and do not want to take any more as self-drive transport is not easy to obtain. Orkney, sadly, is starting to be a destination for the major cruise companies who are probably given preference when it comes to transport hire, as they can offer whole season contracts. Those who have booked will be getting more details and a request for the air fare within the next couple of weeks

## Major English Heritage Report

English Heritage has just published its State of the Historic Environment Report 2002, the first *overall* report on the historic environment which includes the landscape. The Daily Telegraph has picked it up and has reported on the threat to Dominic Powlesland's 2000 acre study area in the Vale of Pickering. Plans are afoot to try to buy the site and save it from further damage by agriculture. It was reported that potato growing, which causes particular damage to the archaeology, is unfortunately being encouraged in the area.

The Hull Daily Mail carried a picture of EH inspector, Keith Miller at the Iron Age square barrow cemetery, Scarborough. He is reported as commenting that many E. Yorkshire sites have already been damaged by arable farming and development pressure and that more investment is needed to ensure the survival of sites. 'Historic sites are a finite resource' he said 'and once lost, are gone forever.'

**Membership renewals are due on Jan 1st. To save the society postage in having to send out so many renewal reminders, please use this slip.**

I would like to renew my ERAS membership from Jan 1st.

Name(s).....

Address.....

I enclose 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

## *Dates for Your Diary*

- Sat 30 Nov** Public consultation meeting on the future of Scarborough's museums 11am Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough.
- Sat 30 Nov** Mills & Milling in N E Yorkshire, joint meeting with YAS, ERAS & Scarborough Archaeological & Historical Society. 2pm Central Library, Scarborough.
- Sun 1 Dec** Hull Museums Quarter, High St. Hull. Christmas Extravaganza. Children's activities etc.
- Wed 4 Dec** **ERAS Field Studies Meeting**
- Wed 18 Dec** **ERAS lecture**, Barry Kemp (Macdonald Institute for Archaeology, Cambridge University) Amarna, the City of Akenhaten
- Wed 8 Jan** **ERAS Field Studies Meeting**
- Wed 15 Jan** **ERAS Lecture**, title to be confirmed
- Sat 1 Feb** CBA Yorkshire, Annual Symposium at Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens, York. Further details from Linda Smith, 3 Lodge Lane, Brompton, Northallerton, DL6 2QW Tel. 01609 776013
- Wed 5 Feb** **ERAS Field Studies Meeting**
- Sat 22 Feb** **ERAS Annual Supper**. The Friary, Beverley. Details to follow
- Wed 19 Feb** **ERAS Lecture**, Mike Richards, The Evolution of Human Diets
- Fri Mar 14 -** Weekend conference 'Scotland in Ancient Europe.' The Neolithic and Early Bronze Age in Scotland in their European Context. Details- Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Royal Museum, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF or email f.ashmore@nms.ac.uk
- Wed 19 Mar** **ERAS Lecture**, Henry Chapman, Gateway to Death or Ghost Village- re-assessing Sutton Common
- Sat 29 Mar** Weekend conference, at Bede's World, Jarrow, Northumberland. 'Yeaving: context, continuity, kingship.' Speakers include Anthony Harding, Colin Haselgrove, Martin Carver. Details from Col O'Brien, email C.F.O'Brien@ncl.ac.uk web, www.bedesworld.co.uk

### ADVERTISEMENT

#### YORKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY

Yorkshire Family History has a data-bank of more than half a million entries relating to Yorkshire men and women, mostly before 1550. A search for a surname and its variants costs £12.50 but there is no charge for an unsuccessful search. Enquiries with address and a cheque payable to Yorkshire Family History should be sent to the Biographical Data-Base, Minster Library, Dean's Park, York YO1 2JD

### Quiz Answers

1. Palaeolithic
2. Passage grave
3. Persians
4. Peterborough Ware
5. Petrology
6. Phoenicians
7. Porchester
8. Preseli mountains (S.Wales)
9. Punic wars
10. Pit Rivers