

ERAS News

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, No. 92 SEPTEMBER 2019



Fig. 1. Test pits at Queensgate allotments, Bridlington

Photo: R. Myerscough

Local News ~ Lecture Summary – Excavating Engels ~ Queensgate Allotment Survey ~ Flag Fen visit ~ New Committee Members ~ Book on Effigies ~ Events Diary ~ ERAS Lectures

Contents

<i>Local News</i>	3
<i>Survey at Queensgate Allotment, Bridlington</i>	4
<i>Lecture Summary: Excavating Engels</i>	7
<i>Visit to Flag Fen</i>	8
<i>New Committee Members</i>	8
<i>Events Diary</i>	9
<i>Interpreting Medieval Effigies</i>	10
<i>ERAS Diary</i>	11

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ERAS LOCAL NEWS . . .

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Treasurer, Colin Parr

Field Studies

Michaela Stones has taken over from Graham Myers as leader of the Study Group and thanks go to Graham for all his work. Michaela has lots of plans for the future, though at the moment, the group is still working on sorting and labelling the many pottery sherds (all rejects) from a Roman kiln. You will be shown how to handle and sort the pottery and helpers are still needed, so join them at 7.30pm on the first Weds of the month at St Nicholas Community Centre, Holmechurch Lane, Beverley or contact Richard on coates8@coates8.karoo.co.uk

Conference in memory of Tony Pacitto

This conference at Hull University, in April, sold out well in advance. For some delegates it was an opportunity to meet up with old friends and to hear updates of new work in the region, by experienced, well respected speakers. For me the most memorable talks came from Paula Ware of MAP and from Tony Hunt. The recent Iron Age chariot burials excavated by MAP are spectacular, especially the two ponies, upright in a grave and accompanied by at least six pigs and exceptional quality grave goods including brooches and a decorated shield with wood and leather surviving. The future research value in terms of cemetery statistics, DNA data, and stylistic studies which these burial sites will provide is tremendous. Tony Hunt, of Yorkshire Archaeological Aerial Mapping, an MA student, gave a presentation of images taken by his drones which use DroneDeploy software to clarify and analyse sites in the region. Amazing stuff, which is casting so much more light on known sites as well as

discovering new ones. For a conference summary see the University of Hull's ebulletin, Issue 894.

Excavations at Kipling House Farm

The results of this year's dig will come too late to be included in this newsletter, but you might just have time to volunteer, if you contact Peter on a.p.halkon@hull.ac.uk The work will be from 2nd - 15th September, but you must let Peter know first if you are going to visit or dig.

Possible Visit to Ireland

We have always arranged our own ERAS holidays, but our insurers have reminded us that this is a liability. We have asked Brightwater Holidays to quote us for a group visit next year - possibly to Dublin museum, which has many Bronze Age gold artefacts and ceremonial items, as well as bog bodies and a logboat. Newgrange and Knowth or other sites could be included. Details will be posted on the website as soon as we have them. For the visit to be viable, we would need commitment from a good number of members.

'Tony' Brewster Memorial

Pictured below, is the memorial, in St. Peter's, churchyard, Winterringham, N. Yorkshire, to Thomas Cape Mason Brewster, better known as 'Tony'. Sponsored by East Riding Archaeological Research Trust (ERART) and private donations (including ERAS) the stone bears images of a Rock Rose (*Cistaceae*) representing Tony's Staple Howe excavation and his chariot reconstruction based on his 1971 Garton Slack excavations. Tony was an East Riding school teacher, who initially worked on excavations part time and then went on to become a fulltime excavation director for the Ministry of Works in the 1960s. He was also a WEA tutor and led archaeology weekends at Wrea Head, inspiring a generation's interest in archaeology.



Photo: D. Powlesland

Editor

Interim Report on Excavations at Queensgate Allotment, Bridlington, E. Yorkshire TA.179674

Richard Myerscough & Geoff Wilson

Over the last four years an archaeological survey has been undertaken on a number of allotments (423/425/431/Community Area/Wildlife Area) by members of Bridlington U3A, Queensgate Allotment Society (QAS) and Bridlington Civic Society. The survey was carried out under the supervision of Geoff Wilson (QAS) and Richard Myerscough (QAS/U3A) as a number of one metre square test pits (Fig. 1, front cover), which due to the nature of the ground rarely went below 30cms.

All artefacts collected were catalogued with the number of the appropriate allotment and recorded on chronological base maps for the site. Where possible the surveyed allotment was first walked and surface finds collected, recorded and added to the base map(s) prior to digging. Due to the seasonal nature of allotments, digging could only be carried out in the winter months (November to February) but a watching brief is to be maintained throughout the year as individual allotments are cultivated. Meanwhile the continuing education of individual allotment holders to recognise archaeological artefacts yields more material. Stratification of the test pits was not possible due to almost continual working of the brown stagnogley soils (Dent 2010) and it was not unusual to recover Roman pot sherds next to Neolithic flint blades both imbedded in glacial till.

The allotments are the last remnants of an area known since the Middle Ages as 'The Moor' (Neave 2000) which was crossed in the past by several streams flowing off the fault truncated dip slope of the Chalk (with the Ipswichian Buried Cliff) and is regarded as the western extremity of 'Doggerland' (Gaffney, Fitch and Smith 2009). The site was in part exploited in the Middle Ages for use as fish ponds, associated with Bridlington Augustinian Priory. Much of remaining area was a waste land supporting animal farming and small 'allotments', small holdings and gravel extraction with no recorded history of being built on, until the expansion of nearby Queensgate in the early 20th century. The area was prone to flooding, as indeed it still is today and the cause of this was revealed by the investigation. The area is underlain by the impervious Late Devensian Holderness Till Glaciogenic Formation (Skipsea Till Member) the

weathered top of which lies some 30 cms below the surface and it was not unusual for a test pit to fill up with water when the impervious boulder clay was reached; hence the flooding issue both on site and in neighbouring streets. The surface is not uniform, with evidence for cryoturbation, gravel filled channel cuts (Figs. 2 and 3, back cover) and kettle holes (Ellis 1987).

In June 2019 a geophysical survey (Fig.4) was undertaken by members of East Riding Archaeological Society (ERAS) of an uncultivated area used as a car park. The resistivity survey showed linear features which may be interpreted as land drains, water pipes and electricity cables, plus a number of different features which will be excavated in Autumn, 2019, together with allotment 244. This latter site is yielding a large number of Edible Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) shells and might comprise a midden, which could date to any period from the Roman to the Victorian. Further evidence on the site, indicative of human consumption of shellfish, includes Common Mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) and Common Limpet (*Patella vulgata*).

The artefacts relate to a wide archaeological period, but as already stated, stratification was not possible due to continual disturbance of the overlying soil. Geologically, the Skipsea Till Member yielded typical erratics from Northern England, Scotland and Scandinavia and as this was 'bed rock' the excavations did not proceed below its surface. A 20cm augur was used to establish that the till had a localised and undulating base, with channels and kettle holes.

The artefacts found included:

Mesolithic	Flint blades and waste, hammer stones
Neolithic	Pottery, flint arrow heads and waste, stone axe? quern/sharpening stone? hammer stones
Iron Age	Pottery, quern/sharpening stone? slag?
Roman	Pottery, slag? shellfish
Medieval	Pottery, glass, shellfish, slag?
Post Medieval	Pottery, shellfish, clay pipe stems
Victorian	Pottery, glass, metal, clay pipe stems, shellfish
Modern	Pottery, metal, plastic, glass

A literature search suggests that the Queensgate Allotment site may be unique within Bridlington, preserving, as it does, some 10,000 years of history, probably because its geological location and liability to flooding has discouraged development.

Queensgate Allotment site 22nd June 2019 v 4

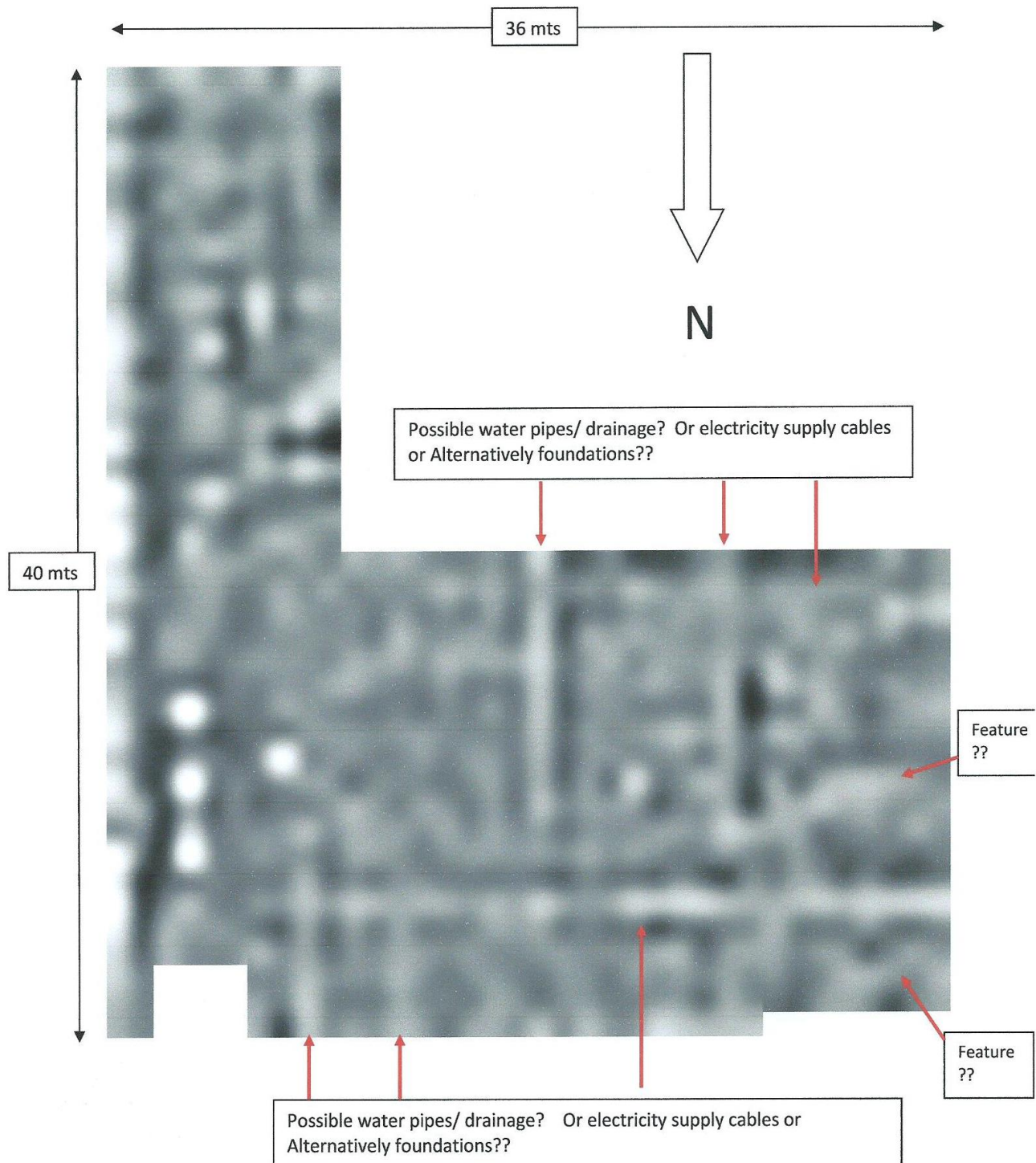


Fig. 4. Geophysical Survey

(Editor: I cannot guarantee that the more subtle detail of this plot will show well on the page after photocopying.)

It was noted that probable Bronze Age Barrows were recorded nearby (Fenton -Thomas 2009). The nearest recorded excavations were at Kirkgate (Earnshaw and Watkins 1984) (TA 176679) which yielded Neolithic flakes, Medieval and post Medieval pottery, while the excavations at Sewerby Cottage Farm (TA185693) yielded Neolithic, Iron Age, Roman and post Roman artefacts (Fenton – Thomas 2009). Further to the East, Beacon Hill, Flamborough (TA 225693) yielded Bronze Age and Neolithic flakes and pottery (Moore 1963). This site was located on the Chalk, overlain by the Late Devensian Sewerby Gravels (Myerscough 1996).

Research at the site will continue for years to come and slowly a picture is emerging of a low lying seasonally flooded plain on the western edge of Doggerland (now Holderness) crossed by stream channels with isolated meres and kettle holes (Van de Noort and Ellis 1995). Since Mesolithic times such an area would have attracted hunter gatherers and later animal farmers, but why Holme on Spalding Moor Roman pottery (Corder 1930) is so common remains a bit of a mystery, as no other recorded site in Bridlington (at present) has yielded so much, except perhaps the excavation of the West Hill Housing Estate (TA 170669?) in the 1940's where an excavation yielded Romano-British pottery and Iron Age round houses for which no reports appear to survive (Loughlin and Miller 1979). A possibility being presently explored is that the Queensgate site could be an unrecorded Roman cemetery with cremation vessels and offering dishes. Finally, at the time of writing, there are rumours of finds of worked flint on a neighbouring allotment at Bessingby (TA171665) and this will be investigated and reported on.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the Committee and plot holders of Queensgate Allotment Society, the owners (ERYC) and the staff of Bridlington Central Library. Many thanks to individual members of Bridlington and Driffeld U3A, Bridlington Civic Society and Queensgate Allotment Society who turned out in all weathers throughout the winter months. Thanks also to members of The Augustinians for providing oral history of the West Hill Site and to Dr Peter Halkon, Dr. T. G. Manby and Dr Pete Wilson for identification of artefacts. Many thanks to Richard Coates and his team from ERAS for undertaking the geophysical survey.

This report is produced in memory of the late Christopher Wright of Bridlington U3A and YWT

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Supporting Archaeology

If you want to support archaeology you can do no better than to join CBA, the Council for British Archaeology. The £40 fee, includes digital and printed copies of the excellent magazine *British Archaeology*, six per year. (magazine only - £33, digital only - £26.99). It has a wide viewpoint, up to date info on new finds, book reviews, policy issues and major articles such as, aDNA studies or Radiocarbon dating and all with lots of brilliant full colour photos. Excellent stuff.

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Editor

ERAS Lecture Summary
Excavating Engels
Dr. Mike Nevell. 17 April 2019

I had approached this particular lecture with a certain amount of cynicism as I have always held the view that major archaeological excavations, being labour intensive and thus expensive should be reserved for time-periods about which we know and understand little. However, Dr Nevell, in discussing evidence for 18th and 19th century industrial housing in the Manchester area, debunked this view, right from the start and I ended up (almost) convinced. This summary is, as usual, written up from hurriedly taken notes at the lecture and any errors are purely my own.

Editor

There was a major population increase, starting around the beginning of the 18th century. Although 19th century OS maps appear to have documented the intensive housing in the Manchester and Salford area, it has been suggested that many large areas of housing were filled in on maps, without individual houses being checked. It is also known that some houses recorded as 'back to backs', were in fact two-room deep houses. Many of the worst workers' dwellings had already been swept away by the mid – late 19th century and thus went undocumented. It should be pointed out that such houses were not built as slums, but a process had taken place, whereby spacious Georgian properties, often with large yards and gardens, were gradually split up into tenements.

This piecemeal backyard infilling (from around 1770 to the early 20th century) resulted in very densely occupied areas, without adequate facilities. Some houses were built especially for workers - 'Blind-back' houses built in the 1820s had no windows in the back wall, often had shallow foundations and were built of poor quality bricks. (It is known that under-fired and over-fired bricks from kilns were sold off cheaply to local builders.) Such housing often had no solid flooring and no staircase, relying on a ladder for access to the upper floor. Houses known as 'two up, two down' would often be occupied by separate families in the upstairs and downstairs rooms.

By the mid 19th century, some areas of Manchester and Salford had the most crowded conditions in Europe and the Manchester Guardian published pictures showing the worst of it. Engels described it as 'frightful' and 'hell on earth'. Other industrial towns and cities, Glasgow and Birmingham in particular, had similar areas. There was often no

running water, and the shared earth closet would be down an alleyway, with a standpipe for fresh water, positioned further down the alley. Cemetery studies in modern times certainly show the impact of such poor conditions on the human body.

Irish immigration had contributed to the population increase and although the wages of a town labourer would be better than those of a country farm labourer, many still struggled to survive. Possessions were few and rubbish was thrown in earth closets or middens and was removed and eventually spread on fields. Thus, at least for the White Cross area of Salford, there is little material evidence of these 30,000 Irish immigrant people in the archaeological record. With careful study, some evidence of phasing is becoming available, in the cycle of immigrant settlement. At migrant entry points, the local housing was occupied by the extremely poor, until eventually, as they became slightly better off, they moved on to adjacent areas and the process repeated itself.

Local charities campaigned for better housing and in 1904, a Housing Quality Map was produced, using colour coding for different standards. Local Board housing (an early planning system) was slightly better, having at least some regulation on standards of ventilation, toilet provision, etc and was built as a response to a major cholera outbreak.

Although we have a broad picture of conditions, because development was fairly rapid, the details of people's lives are not present in the archaeological record. For example, originally spacious domestic Georgian architecture which had been gradually infilled with dense occupation was then swept away without record. In the early 20th century, such properties often became industrial premises, which in turn, as housing demand grew in mid 20th century, with the insertion of modern plumbing, lighting and glazing, reverted to domestic use. Many of the interim stages – such as the insertion of gas lighting are unrecorded.

Socially aware figures, such as Rowntree, Cadbury and Salt recorded conditions and campaigned for better housing. Indeed it is known that Rowntree would stand in the streets and just observe what people were doing and how they lived their lives, often documenting this in detail. Thus there is plenty of evidence of people's responses to industrialisation, but the archaeology can test out these views and fill in the missing details. The real value of the archaeology, said Dr. Nevell, is in its research potential.

Flag Fen Visit

The weather was not ideal for our coach trip to Flag Fen, but what's a bit of rain to seasoned ERAS travellers? (especially as most of the Flag Fen display is undercover, in visitor facilities). There were displays associated with the eight Bronze Age boats, found nearby at Must Farm, Whittlesey, in 2011/12 and now being conserved at Flag Fen. In a long-term process, three of the boats, fragmented, are soaking in polyethylene glycol (PEG), and the other five are held in scaffolding cradles whilst being sprayed with PEG. The Must Farm settlement was destroyed by fire, but the rapid burning, collapse and subsequent submersion has resulted in excellent preservation of organic items, even the contents of food bowls. For the latest summary of the site, see 'The Must Farm pile-dwelling settlement' in *Antiquity* 93 (2019).

The flag Fen Bronze age platform, so famously excavated by Francis Pryor's team and now displayed in a covered wet environment has somewhat deteriorated since our last visit, although complex efforts are being made to preserve it. The painted backdrop of different seasons on four surrounding walls (see below) is very atmospheric. However, I was dismayed by some of the statements on the display boards, such as, '... *The dangers and dignified nature of religious ceremonies would have meant that children were not allowed to attend*' We really do not know this and such sweeping statements just give archaeology a bad name.

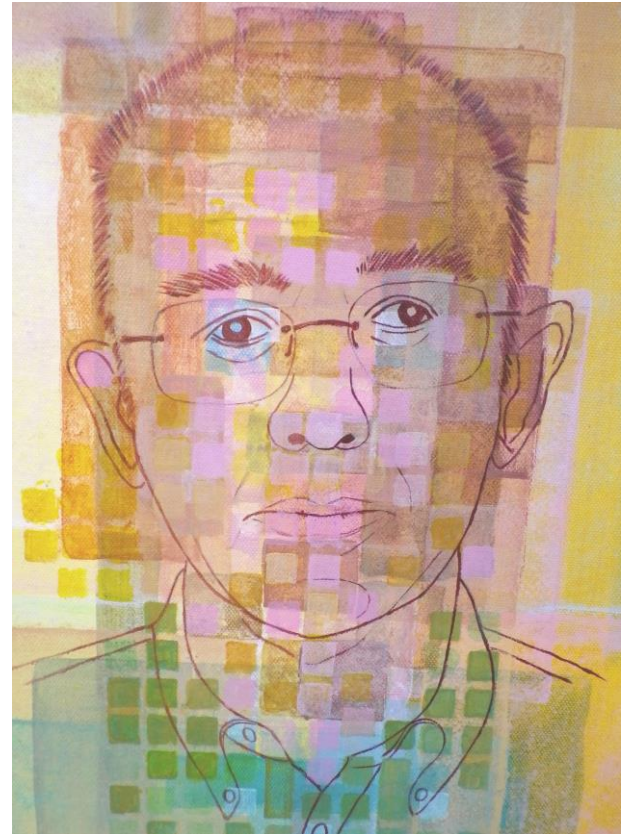
We had time for a quick visit to Peterborough Museum, which has excellent displays, though it deserves a bigger and more modern building, in view of the quality of its collection. Many thanks to Angela Fawcett for organising the visit.



New Committee Members

Two new committee members, Michaela Stones and John Parks, were elected at the AGM in April and I asked them to tell me a little about themselves, to share in the newsletter.

John Parks



John, who lives in Hedon, originally trained as a design draughtsman and after a long career in charge of the drawing office at BP Exploration, has now retired from his last job of management in a local company supplying technical support to the oil, gas and chemical industry. He tells me that he is a practical guy, interested in art, engineering, architecture and archaeology and he sounds, to me, like a very useful person to have on the committee.

He first became interested in archaeology by watching Time Team and says he has learnt most of his archaeology from a close friend and colleague, who is also on the committee. He really appreciates the sharing of knowledge in this way. John loves handling archaeological pottery and is fascinated by the link it provides with skilled people of the past, who, just like him, made things from whatever was available to them. John does indeed make all sorts of interesting and beautiful items and as he also paints, thought he would provide his picture as a self portrait. Thanks John. (It does look amazing in colour, but we can't afford colour)

New Committee Members (contd.)

Michaela Stones



Michaela, who lives in N. Lincolnshire and has just taken over the running of the Field Studies Group, tells me that as a farmer's daughter she has had a spade in her hand for most almost the whole of her life. Her first job, after leaving school was as a stable girl, but she currently works for one of our local archaeology companies, Humber Field Archaeology (HFA) as a commercial field archaeologist. She has a first class degree in Archaeology and Medieval History and more recently completed an MA, comparing the Roman pottery of East Yorkshire with that of North Lincolnshire. Michaela says she has always been interested in all types of archaeology, but if pressed to choose a favourite, she would go for the prehistoric periods. She, somewhat reluctantly, sent me this brilliant picture. Thanks Michaela.

Events For Your Diary

Sept 2nd-15th. Excavation with Peter Halkon at Kipling House Farm. Contact Peter on a.p.halkon@hull.ac.uk before attending.

Sat 14 Sept. Heritage Open Days. (HODS) Archaeology of Beverley Westwood Walks, 10.30am and 1.30pm . **Bookings only**, via Colin Parr. Also ERAS stall and surveying on the Westwood near Fishwick's Mill

Sat 21 Sept, Local Book Fair, Hull Minster.

Come and help on our stand, or buy from the large range of sellers in Hull Minster.

Historical Association (Hull Branch)

Visitors are welcome and a donation of £2 at lectures is requested from non-members. Meetings are at the Danish Church, in Hull city centre. Details of full membership of the Historical Association is on www.history.org.uk, or for local membership, at £10 , contact Sylvia Usher, usher@usher.karoo.co.uk

Thur. 3 Oct. How did Martin Luther King change the USA from 1955-2019? Prof. Tony Badger.

Thur. 21 Nov. Peterloo and After – A Yorkshire Perspective. Prof Martin Chase, Leeds University.

Thur. 30 Jan. New Perspectives on the 'Crusader States' Dr. Natasha Hodgson, Nottingham Trent University.

Thur. 20 Feb. Blood and Sand: Gladiatorial Games in the Roman Empire. Dr Andrew Fear, Manchester University.

Thur. 19 Mar. Cosmography and the Circle of Thomas More. Prof. Janet Clare, Hull University.

Thur. 30 Apr. History Leads us from the Past to the Future. Robert. J. Bell, Founder of the History Troupe

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Hull and East Riding Museum, High St, Hull

Fri 27 Sept, 11am – 1pm Finds Identification Session. Take your finds in to be identified by the experts. –

University of Sheffield

Fri. 13 Sept. Birds in Archaeology, Study Day

Aimed at students, professionals, bird enthusiasts. £100/£70

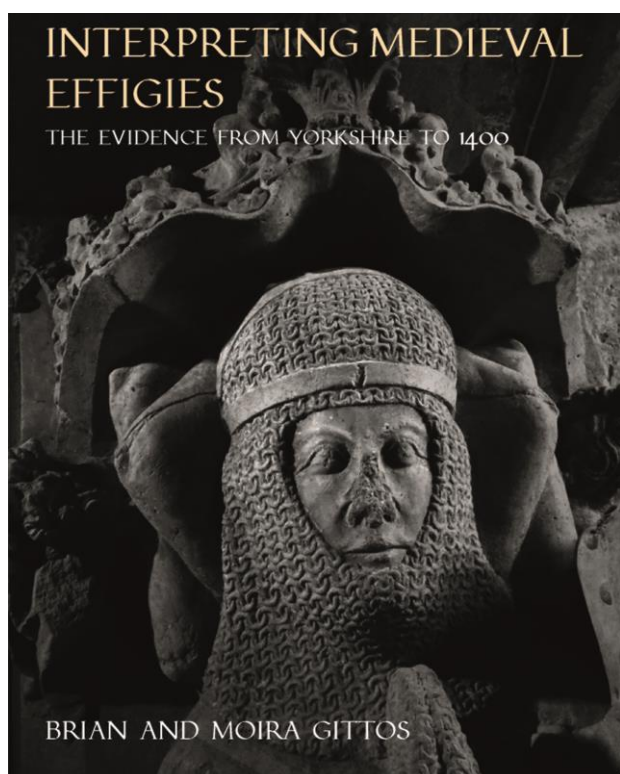
<https://tinyurl.com/y6sn8tb8>

Nov. 2 – Dec 1 Association for Environmental Archaeology, Conference, Sheffield University.

<https://tinyurl.com/yxct5f2a>

Plans for Maritime Museum

Proposals for improving and expanding the displays in Hull's Maritime Museum in the old Dock Offices include opening up and roofing an inner courtyard and linking views of Queens Gardens with images of how the space looked when it was a dock. Exactly what is needed. *Editor*



I received a request to publish the following publicity article (edited slightly) written by the authors of a new book (above) and whilst I have not reviewed the book personally, it would seem to be relevant to our readership.

Yorkshire's medieval church effigies are the subject of a new book entitled *Interpreting Medieval Effigies: The Evidence from Yorkshire to 1400* by Brian and Moira Gittos. It is the end product of more than 40 years research. Effigies constitute a valuable resource and painstaking examinations have revealed a wealth of information. This includes, details of the costume worn, the way the figures were carved, how they were originally displayed, their subsequent history and whom they might commemorate.

Fifty three of the 231 figures are to be found in the East Riding, with important collections at Howden and Swine. One of the earliest Yorkshire effigies lies in the churchyard at Middleton-on-the-Wolds and is a rare type of memorial forming the top of a table tomb. It can be shown to date from about the mid 13th century. The knight at Butterwick is remarkable for being unfinished and the husband and wife, carved from a single stone at Lowthorpe, are also noteworthy. They are shown as if in bed, with a tree of life sprouting from their bodies and the heads of their thirteen children set amongst the branches. Comparisons with other sculpture in Yorkshire show, for example, that the sculptor who made some of the finest figures (included the de Metham pair in Howden Minster) also did carvings for the nave of York Minster.

The concluding section describes and interprets just a single monument, that of a priest, at Welwick. Although its intricately carved canopy is damaged, examination and analysis of its structure reveals that light from a window was cleverly channelled through the structure for dramatic effect. Comparison of the carving with work in Beverley Minster and consideration of the church's history have lead to the conclusion that the tomb with its effigy commemorates William de la Mare, Provost of Beverley and key members of the team who were responsible for the renowned Percy Tomb at Beverley also created the Welwick monument (pictured below)

Amongst the downloadable appendices accompanying the book is an illustrated catalogue describing every effigy in detail, which provides a considerable resource for anyone interested in Yorkshire's medieval effigies. The research has already spawned successful conservation projects at Escrick, Bilton Ainsty and Womersley. However, there is always more to be discovered from this rich source of material and understanding the thinking of the men who made the monuments is a fascinating and unending challenge.

Book details

Interpreting Medieval Effigies: The Evidence from Yorkshire to 1400 is hardback, xx & 241 pages, with over 300 black & white photographs, 77 colour plates, a full listing of effigies and a distribution map. It is accompanied by a further 246 pages of downloadable appendices, including, an illustrated catalogue of all the effigies covered by the book. ISBN 978-1-78925-128-0, it is published by Oxbow Books at £40. Available from all good booksellers and directly from the publisher at www.oxbowbooks.com.



ERAS Diary 2019 - 2020

Wed 18 Sept	Lecture – A round-up of work in the region, by Ed Dennison (EDAS), Sam Griffiths (Citizan) and Peter Halkon (University of Hull)	
Wed 2 Oct	Field Studies meeting	
Wed 16 Oct	Lecture – Tegwen Roberts & Carl Lewis, Elsecar and Hull Action Zones (HAZ)	
Wed 6 Nov	Field Studies Meeting	
Wed 20 Nov	Lecture – Milica Rajic,	Sheffield Castle (working title)
Wed 4 Dec	Field Studies Meeting	
Wed 18 Dec	Lecture - Steve Sherlock,	Prehistoric Redcar (working title)
Wed 15 Jan	Lecture – Martin Carver,	Sutton Hoo (working title)
Wed 5 Feb	Field Studies Meeting	
Wed 19 Feb	Lecture – Charlotte Wilkinson	A day in the life of an archaeological conservator
Wed 4 Mar	Field Studies Meeting	
Wed 18 Mar	Lecture – Shaun Richardson	Burton Constable before Brown: the development of an E. Yorks country house landscape up to c1750
Wed 1 Apr	Field Studies Meeting	
Wed 15 Apr	AGM at 7pm followed by Lecture – Martin Brown	Henges and Hand Grenades

All lectures are at 7.30 pm at the University of Hull, Cottingham Rd. Hull, in Wilberforce Building's main lecture theatre. (NB. This is the room on the east side of the high level walkway, not the one we used to use, opposite the cafe) Non-members are welcome (£2 donation).

Field Studies meetings are at 7.30, St Nicholas Community Centre, Holmechurch Lane, Beverley usually on the first Weds of each month, but please check the website or Facebook, as other events are sometimes held. Contact the secretary Richard Coates on coates8@coates8.karoo.co.uk

If you do not wish to use our website or pay by Paypal, you can do it using the form below.

Cut here

Renewal / Membership Form,

☐ I would like to join ERAS **OR** ☐ Please renew my ERAS membership for 2020 (due Jan 2020)

Name I enclose cheque for **£15 single / £20family/ £5 fulltime student**

Address

.....

EmailTelephone.....

Please make cheque payable to ERAS & return to membership secretary Colin Parr, 32 Woodgate Rd, Hull HU5 5AH



Fig. 2, Artist's impression of the Queensgate site at the end of the last Ice Age.

Marian Myerscough



Fig. 3 Plot 425. Gravel filled channel